CHAPTER - II

SOCIO-CULTURAL LIFE OF THE TANGSAS
OF THE CHANGLANG DISTRICT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH
Arunachal Pradesh became a full-fledged state on February 20, 1987. Till 1972, it was known as NEFA (North-East Frontier Agency) comprising of five districts – Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and Tirap – named after the major rivers flowing through each of them. It has been given the Union Territory status on January 20th, 1972 renamed as Arunachal Pradesh. The capital of the state is Itanagar. The name of the capital is derived from the historical ‘itafort’ meaning ‘fort of bricks’ built in the 14th Century A.D. (Dutta, 1992).

Arunachal Pradesh is bounded by Bhutan, Tibet, China and Burma in the north and north-east and spreading over an area of 83,743 sq. km. along the southern slopes of the Patkai Hills around the Brahmaputra Valley, Arunachal Pradesh stands like a sentinel of the country in the north-east. For effective administration, it was divided into eleven districts namely Tawang, East Kameng, West Kameng, Upper Subansiri, Lower Subansiri, East Siang, West Siang, Dibang Valley, Lohit, Changlang and Tirap with administrative headquarters at Tawang, Seppa, Bomdila, Daporijo, Ziro, Pashighat, Along, Anini, Tezu, Changlang and Khonsa. Recently, on September 22, 1992, the Lower Subansiri district has been divided into two districts. The six circles viz., Itanagar, Doimukh, Sagelee, Mengig, Kimin and Balijan are bifurcated from Lower Subansiri district and
are included in the new district called Papun Pare with its headquarters at Doimukh.

The People

The inhabitants of the state can broadly be classified into the Indo Mongoloid racial group. The major tribal contributors to the great association in the state are some twenty five groups namely:

1) The Monpas, Sherdukens, Akas, Khowas, Mijis, Nishing (Bangnis) and Sulungs of Tawang, East and West Kameng districts.
2) The Nishings, Apatanis, Hill Miris, Tagins and Na of Upper and Lower Subansiri districts.
3) The Adi groups, Membas and Khembas of East and West Siang districts.
4) The Mishmi groups, Khamptis, Singphos, Meyors or Zakharings of Lohit and Dibang Valley districts.

The Geography

The horse shoe-shaped territory of Arunachal Pradesh located in between latitude 26°.28′N and 29°.30′N and longitude 91°.30′E and 97°.30′E is a beautiful mountainous area with high hills and valleys. The heights of the mountain peaks show a great variation ranging from 6400
metres to 1829 metres in the Tawang District. The highest peak is Kangte (7090 metres) in the Tawang District.

Five major rivers - Kameng, Subansiri, Siang, Lohit and Tirap with a large number of tributaries have drained the water of this vast area to empty in the Brahmaputra. The main sources of these rivers are the Himalayas in the north and Patkai Hills in the South. These rivers besides providing food to the people in form of fish have of late provided hydel power projects to illuminate the hitherto formidable land.

The climatic condition prevailing over the entire area of Arunachal Pradesh is highly influenced by the extremely variable nature of the terrain. The vegetation of the whole of Arunachal pradesh varies greatly in relation to the respective elevation of the different regions. Forests of Arunachal are the most important wealth. Wild banana and bamboo grow abundantly throughout the state. Some of the tribal communities use the banana leaves for roofing their houses. Besides serving as building material the varieties of bamboos have help the people of Arunachal in developing a wide range of basketry for their household and other needs. The local people of Arunachal Pradesh thrive on many forest products.
The History

Till the advent of the Ahoms in Assam, Arunachal Pradesh was an unknown country to the historians and the travellers. For the first time in the history of the area, mention of Arunachal Pradesh appears in the Ahom chronicles and the Muslim accounts of the 17th Century. Much earlier to that in the epic age, Arunachal Pradesh has been mentioned as the abode of the Hindu Gods and Goddesses (Dutta 1992).

Archaeological evidence has shown that palaeolithic as well as neolithic men did inhabit this region. But after that follows a long gap in the knowledge till 10th Century A.D. when the cultures from the Brahmaputra Valley began penetrating these hills. Thus the foothills of Arunachal are studded with ruins of forts, temples, etc. belonging from the 10th to 16th centuries. The 17th and 18th centuries saw the rise of Buddhist cultures in the Western and Eastern flanks of the territory.

Three categories of sites/monuments are found in Arunachal Pradesh. Firstly, are the traces of the political and cultural forces from the Brahmaputra Valley that extends themselves into the hills. Among these falls the ruins of forts, temples, ponds and roads. Secondly, are the Buddhist cultures of stupas, chortens, monasteries and other structures. Thirdly come the stray traces of past events...
from local history. Among them fall some stokades, canals, carved stones, walls, etc.

The widely scattered archaeological remains which bear testimony to the rich cultural heritage of Arunachal Pradesh are gradually being brought to light. The ruins so far brought to light are Bhismaknagar palace in Dibang Valley, Malinithan in the foothills of West Siang, Itafort in the foothills of Lower Subansiri and Noksa Parbat in the foothills of East Kameng. Besides, there are few other sites of importance such as Parasuram Kund, Mudfort and Siva Linga in Lohit, a Buddhist stupa in Tirap district and Bhalukpang in West Kameng, Tamreswami temple in Dibang Valley.

**Origin and Migration**

The people narrate their origin on the basis of myths prevalent among them though no written records are available. Adi myth and belief about the first man on earth and his struggles for life says that "Pedung Nane" the great spiritual mother of the millions, gave birth to millions of children and released them on earth to find their own fortunes. Her youngest and the last issue was a human body" (Oshong Ering). That first man was later known as Tani the ancestor of the Adis. He had to struggle a lot for survival and establishment of human supremacy on earth. Similar
mythological belief exists in the society of Apatanis, Nishings, Hill Miris, Tagins, and the Miris of Brahmaputra valley. All these people feel very proud of calling themselves the descendants of the first man Abo Tani.

Similar to the myths of origin, the stories of migration are also varied and many. The tribes to the north of Brahmaputra Valley point towards north for their migration while those in the south say that they have migrated either from Upper Burma or from Hukong Valley across the Patkai Hills (Dutta 1992).

Language

Linguistically, Arunachal Pradesh may be called the Paradise for the linguist. The major tribal groups with their sub-groups speak some 60 to 70 dialects independent of each other, although they all belong to the Tibeto-Burmesian branch of the Sino-Tibetan family of languages. None of the tribes have any script for their languages except Khamti who has its own script and a relatively important literature. Although the people do not have written literature yet the oral literature is quite abundant in mythology, folk lore and folk songs. They can express many shades of meaning by the elaborate system of modes and aspects, necessary for their concept (Dutta, 1992).
Plate I
A view of Changlang town.
Introduction of Changlang District

This study is focussed on the Tangsas of Changlang District of Arunachal Pradesh. The Changlang district is situated in the south-eastern part of Arunachal Pradesh. It is surrounded by the State of Assam and Lohit district of Arunachal Pradesh on the north, on the south by Burma and on the West of Tirap district and on the east by China.

Meaning of Changlang

The original word "Changlangkan" is normally used as "Changlang" only, in normal course of talk. The very meaning of the original word "Changlangkan" is as follows:

Chang - a species of poisonous herb/wild walnut generally used for catching fish by mixing it to river water.

Lang - represents cutting of the branches for the above species of herbs to set its fruits as well as its leaves for using it in the river to catchfish.

Kan - is the top of the hill.

As such the general meaning of the word Changlang is that a hill top where the people discovered the poisonous herbs and cut and collect the branches, fruits, etc. for using it in the water to catch fish.

The particular Kan is, however, located 10 kms. away from present Changlang near 17th Mile in Margherita Changlang Road (Kenglang, 1989).
The tribes inhabiting the district are known as the "Tangsas". The meaning of the word "Tangsa" is "Tang" meaning hill and "Sa" meaning children. Therefore, literally, it means "children of the hills" (Kenglang 1989).

The Tangsas are a group of scheduled tribe Changlang district in Arunachal Pradesh. The main sub-tribes of the Tangsas are:

The Lungchang are mostly inhabitants of Changlang and Miao - Circle and the Mokloms are inhabitants of Khemiyang. Some of the Mokloms have migrated to Miao Circle in 1968 and 1969.

The Pangas mostly reside in the Manmao and Nampong circles. They are few in number. They have settled in Miao and Bordumsa circles also. The "Tikhaks" mostly reside in Nampong, Manmao and few places in Miao circle. The "Tutsas" are a small group of Tangsas. They are the inhabitants of Changlang circle along Changlang - Khonsa road. Recently, in 1990 the Tutsas have been recognized as a major tribe and they are no longer considered under the Tangsas. Each sub-tribe speaks a dialect of its own distinct from the dialects of the other sub-tribe.
The Tangsas are medium stature and well-built. Their features are decidedly Mongolian. The younger generation crop their hair but the older people wear their hair long, tied into a bun at the top of the head.

Origin of the Tangsas

The Tangsas’ common belief is that they originated in a hill called Masai Sinrapum, which is supposed to be somewhere in the east beyond Burma. In other words they consider themselves as a migrant population wherever (in search of cultivable lands for their livelihood) they may be living at present (Dutta, 1992).

Trade in the Village

Inter-village trade is common among the Tangsas. The Tangsas chiefly trade in handloom products, tea-leaves, salt and beads for daos, fishing nets, spears, pen-knives, and opium.

These articles are sometimes purchased with money and sometimes even barter system is practised to a certain extent. There is no particular medium of exchange but bamboo tube of tea-leaves is counted as one unit. For example, a fishing net of medium size is exchanged for eight tubes of tea-leaves and a dao or a spear for four. Money,
however, is gradually replacing their indigenous medium of trade.

Village Councils of Tangsas - Continuity and Change

The village councils in Changlang district of Tangsa tribe signifies its age old traditional custom carrying a promising preservation of its endless tradition in continuity with time bound changes. The changes that have taken place are economical in nature.

The village councils of the Tangsas are popularly known as "Khaphung" which means settlement of a case while "Mingphung" symbolizes a settlement of dispute of two or more villages. On the other hand Mingphungwa refers to the council members who settles the disputes of the villages (Rekhung. 1993).

Selection or Illigibility of Phungwa

The Phungwa or Council members of "Khaphung" are generally constituted of one member from each clan of the village. To be a Phungwa one must have age old experience and should have the memory of past events of the village or society. According to the tradition, Tangsa women are not entitled to be council members though they may have better experience than any male council member. But it is not a direct attempt to lower the status of women within the
Tangsa society as Tangsa women have ample rights of claim and place their grievances before the court of village councils in the nick of time. On the other hand the Tangsa women have an important role to play during the festivals so far as traditional songs and dances are concerned. They also play an active part in household activities and social welfare.

The Phungwa in Tangsa society is neither selected nor elected by the community. It is purely on the basis of their merits (Rekhung, 1993).

Head of the Village Council (Khaphung)

The "Lungwang" (Chief) is the Head of the 'Khaphung', i.e. the village council. There is a pertinent reason to have a Lungwang or Chief right from the origin of the Tangsa society. The practice of having a Lungwang in the Tangsa society exists even today and the main role of the Lungwang is to lead the whole village in every sphere of social and cultural life. The Lungwang has to perform a great deal during war and peace. The Lungwang can be compared to any present day political administrator. The Lungwang is the real commander of the village and is assisted by Ngungwa of the village, who also enjoys a high status and respect from the villagers. He performs special rituals on the occasion of hunting a tiger or hornbill and
in return he is offered with fine teeth of tigers or the longest fur of hunted hornbills.

The Lungwang is neither selected nor elected by the villagers or village councils, but enjoys or holds the post traditionally on the basis of hereditary from the fore-fathers. The Lungwang should be active, well-trained and well-experienced in village affairs. The post of Lungwang is not terminable even if he is not active or under aged. In case he is under aged he has to perform as a Lungwang and he must attend the "Khaphung", i.e. village council till he attains the right age (Rekhung: 1993).

Powers and Functions of the Village Councils and the Role of Lungwang

According to tradition, before the proceedings of "Khaphung" (Settlement of case) the Phungwa and Lungwang offer prayers by pouring fine rice brew into the hearth of the Lungwang's house three times in the name of "Khothak Rang" (deities) for just and fair decision of a case.

The Tangsa Khapung (village council) is believed to be supreme even today except for a few disputes and minor incidents amongst the younger generation. The decision of the village councillors (Phungwas) in presence of the Lungwang is final and the punishment or fine imposed on the guilty/culprit cannot be challenged or appealed before the
court of other village councils or local administration (Rekhung, 1993).

The village councils of Tangsas commonly function and proceed on the following subjects, which are a regular occurrence in the society.

**Thanglam (Bride price of a woman)**

According to the tradition of the Tangsas, in a marriage the bride price is to be borne by the boy’s parents. When a boy and a girl fall in love and decide to get married, the parents of both the boy and the girl call on some members of the village council to fix the day for settlement of the bride price. The bride price of Tangsa woman is two buffaloes, one male and one female, two cows, one male and one female, five pigs and rupees three hundred in cash. On the day of the marriage ceremony, at least, one buffalo, one cow, two pigs (one for the maternal uncle of the girl) and rupees three hundred is to be paid to the parents of the girl. The remaining part, in kind or in cash, shall have to be paid in due course. But when there is a delay in the payment of bride price the parents of the girl inform the village council to look into the matter. The Phungwa then calls the bridegroom/or his near relatives to explain the cause of delay in making the payment and ask them to take steps for immediate payment of the remaining
part of the bride price. When a boy’s parents cannot afford to pay the remaining part of the bride price the Phungwas may ask some well-to-do person to make the payment on the condition that the boy’s parents will repay the amount along with interest in due course of time (Rekhung. 1993).

Jungnam (Divorce) System of the Tangsas and Its Price Thereof

Incidences of divorce in the Tangsa society are very few. Divorce by a boy or a girl is never appreciated in the society and it is looked down upon by the people. Hence, there are not too many divorce cases in the Tangsa society. When a girl is divorced a heavy fine is imposed on the husband which he has to pay either in cash or kind. Whenever, there is an incident of divorce the parents of either the girl or the boy immediately inform the village council members. The Phungwa on receiving the call or information request the Lungwang to settle the case which is done at the residence of the Lungwang. When the divorce is from the girl’s side one of the Phungwa members, makes enquiries from the girl to find out the reason for her decision to divorce her husband. The Phungwas then discuss the matter and during discussion the parents of both the girl and the boy and some villagers are allowed to interfere in the discussion to a certain extent. The decision of the
Phungwas is placed before the Lungwang and the Lungwang gives the final verdict which has to be accepted by all. The verdict of the Lungwang is in the following way:

1) Return of the two buffaloes given as bride price or the price of the buffaloes in cash.
2) Return of three pigs or the price of the pigs in cash.
3) Return of one cow or the price of the cow in cash, which may be excused if the statement of the girl is found satisfactory.
4) Return of rice used during the marriage ceremony.
5) Children will remain with the father. However, cases of divorce are usually not seen in the Tangsa society. In the case of a husband divorcing his wife the proceeding is the same. However, in this case the return of cash or kind does not arise as there is no system of groom price. But if a boy divorces his wife in order to marry another girl, then a fine is imposed on the boy (Rekhung, 1993).

Hah Kha/Land Dispute

The land dispute between villagers is very common in the Tangsa society. Generally, land disputes take place during the Jhum cultivation season as well as wet
cultivation season when a farmer is unable to locate boundary marks of his land and encroaches upon others' land. Often physical conflicts take place and in such disputes the Phungwas play an important role in bringing about a settlement. However, in land disputes the Phungwas approach the village people instead of the Lungwang to help them in settling the disputes. The villagers help the Phungwas in locating the demarcation lines and the disputes are settled by imposing a fine of one pig on the defaulting farmer. The Phungwas also erect stone pillars on the demarcation lines in order to avoid future land disputes (Rekhung 1993).

**Likananam Kha or Property Dispute within Family**

Property disputes are very common in the Tangsa society. Most of the property disputes relate to domestic animals, traditional gongs of their forefathers, guns and money left by the deceased father. The disputes take place because of the unequal distribution of property between the brothers. According to the tradition of the Tangsas the eldest son has the right to acquire more than the other sons. Sometimes the eldest son acquires everything and refuses to share the property with his younger brothers. The younger brothers would then approach the Phungwas to settle the dispute. The Phungwas settle the disputes according to the oral traditions of the Tangsas, where the
eldest son gets a larger share than the younger sons. The eldest son will also get a bigger share of the bride price of their sisters, but the bride price of the mother or grandmother if left unpaid by the father or forefathers, will have to be paid by the eldest son. Land disputes are also very common among the brothers of a family of the Tangsa society and these are also settled by the Phungwas in the same way (Rekhung 1993).

Method of Cultivation of the Tangsas

Each village comprises of a number of houses called Jum, Jin, Him and so on. Besides the dwelling houses there are other such houses such as the Sam-tap (granery), Pik or Pik-tap (farm house). Each village has its own field for cultivation either in the vicinity or in the far distance.

Shifting cultivation is the traditional method of sustenance. They are primarily agriculturists. The output of the fields is the chief means of their livelihood. Recently, some of the people have tried to adopt permanent cultivation in those areas where suitable land is available.

Paddy, millet, maize and arums are the major crops. They also grow winter and summer vegetables of several varieties. The indigenous vegetables are sweet potato,
brinjal, ginger, chilies, pumpkin, cucumber or local coupea. Other vegetables are also grown in their fields.

The Dress Habits of the Tangsas

The Tangsas have a fairly elaborate style of dressing. The dresses of the men are generally home made checked lungis with red, yellow and white yarns and ready made shirts. The original dress of a Tangsa man consisted of a loin cloth, sleeveless shirt open in front and a piece of cloth for the head. All these items were made by the Tangsa themselves. The Tangsa women also have their own dresses. The skirt is a single piece of cloth of about 37 inches in length and 12 inches in breadth, with beautiful geometric patterns, such as zigzag band with internal repetition, rectangular cross-hatching, checked skirt which are worn round the loins reaching down to the knee joint.

The researcher has carried out her field investigation among the Lungchanghs and Mokloms, who inhabit the valley of Tirap. Tirap is the name of the river that passes through the district, i.e., Changlang. Moreover, the Mokloms and the Lungchanghs live in the close vicinity of the district headquarters also named Changlang.
The Settlement and the People

The Lungchang who call themselves "Lomphak Jamrok", which means 'originating from stone or from the leg of an orphan lady', are one of the major sub-tribes of the Tangsa (Rekhung, 1988). They are mostly the inhabitants of the Changlang village, which is situated at a distance of one kilometre from the district headquarters.

The total population of the village is 451. The new Thomlom and Khemiyong regions which are 5 to 6 kms and 34 kms away respectively from Changlang are inhabited by the Moklom tribe. The total population is 126 and 140 respectively. They also inhabit the village like Yanman which is 18 kms away from the district headquarters. The Mokloms are one of the major sub-tribes of the Tangsas. They belong to Indo-Tibeto-Burmese race who migrated from Burma sometime in the sixth century A.D. and settled in the village, named Tutnu, now in Tirap district. It is not exactly known to them as to how the human races came into being prior to their existence, but there are many legendary tales regarding the origin of the human being with special reference to Moklom sub-tribe of the Tangsas of Changlang district.

According to the Moklom legend, at one time there was no difference between monkeys and human beings. Man also had tails in the past. Both men and monkeys lived in
dense forest and ate fruits, leaves, crops, etc. But as time passed, one group of monkeys separated themselves from the others. According to the legends this group of monkey, gradually started to lose their tails and started living on the ground instead of the trees. They also started to walk on their legs and moved from one place to another in search of food. It is also believed that fire and drums also originated from the time, monkeys came into existence which are now used as drums by the Moklom people during the Mol festival and fire fiction of cane rope on a piece of dry wood to perform "Chamrom", a ritual on the festival ground. During the festival folk singers narrate the origin of human being, fire and drums through their songs.

There is only one primary school in New Thomalom village. For further studies the students are required to come to their district headquarter, i.e., Changlang. The Changlang village is situated adjacent to the district headquarter. They have got the advantage of getting the benefit of the schools, hospitals and other activities which the district headquarter has. In the district there is one higher secondary school, 4 middle schools, 28 primary schools and 6 pre-primary schools. Hostel facilities are also available for students in some schools.

There is one public health centre. Most of the villagers have to travel to the district headquarter for
medical treatment. The district medical officer is the head of the medical organisation in the district. He is assisted by medical officers and other subordinate staff. He is also the inspecting officer of all Government hospitals and dispensaries in the district.

There is a co-operative society in the headquarter of Changlang which is subsidised by the Government of Arunachal Pradesh. It caters to requirement of various articles of the people living there. There is a Post Office, a Branch of State Bank of India, a district library with community club and a video parlour. In order to accommodate the village people to attend the various functions held in Changlang town, there are community halls. The Government has provided tube wells in the village for supply of drinking water to the people.

The craft centre run by the Industrial Department of the Government provide employment to the local tribals in various trades which have also helped in preserving their original crafts. In the Changlang village there is also a saw mill run by the local people. Most of the shops and markets of Changlang town are managed by local people themselves. One important feature is that the women folks have been engaged in various jobs in Government offices.

The district is administered by a Deputy Commissioner. At the headquarters, he is assisted by
A.D.C., E.A.C. and circle officers. Each circle is under the charge of the circle officers. At village level, there exist a district, a regular system of self-Government which is constituted by the tribal village councils. These councils consist of village elders and they traditionally enjoy a good deal of autonomy in judicial, administrative and developmental matters. The Gaonbura is the head of the village council and acts as a representative of the administration at the village level.

The Lungchang and Moklom social structure are based on patriarchal system. Their society is a male dominated world, following the laws of primogeniture in succession. People live in joint families and the common house is shared by a whole family consisting of parents, married sons and unmarried daughters. Even after the death of the father the family does not break-up but continues to live in the same house. A Lungchang family sometimes consist of more than 25 members in a single house. There is, however, a practice that some individual members cook their food separately. Similarly, the paddy lands are divided amongst the members of the family for cultivation. While surveying the Moklom villages some incidence of nuclear families were also noted.

The Lungchang and the Mokloms of Tangsas are divided into a number of exogamous clans. Marriage within the same clan is prohibited. The clan organisation regulates their
marriage but does not play a significant role in the political field. They reckon their relationship through the male line. Their kinship is established through birth and marriage. Age is recognised and honoured. Their kinship terminology may be called classificatory as they use certain common terms of address both for lineal relatives and

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moklom</th>
<th>Lungchang</th>
<th>English</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wa</td>
<td>wa</td>
<td>father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wau</td>
<td>nyu</td>
<td>mother</td>
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<td>tok</td>
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<td>aunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>no</td>
<td>phu</td>
<td>brother</td>
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<tr>
<td>hocu</td>
<td>nau</td>
<td>brother (younger)</td>
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<tr>
<td>te</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>father-in-law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wi</td>
<td>tai</td>
<td>grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ho</td>
<td>wi</td>
<td>grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tok</td>
<td>wung</td>
<td>mother’s brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nica</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>mother-in-law</td>
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<tr>
<td>ni</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>paternal uncle</td>
</tr>
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<td>neo</td>
<td>nya</td>
<td>elder</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>yung</td>
<td>sister (same mother and father)</td>
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</table>
certain collateral relatives. Some terms of the kinship relation are given above.

The Lungchang and Moklom societies of Tangsas believe in the Supreme Being who is invisible. They have many other spirits and deities. The Supreme Being is always believed to be benevolent, the spirits and deities are grouped under two classes—benevolent and malevolent. The traditional religion of the people can be more conveniently understood as a cultural system since it is one of the aspects of the cultural tradition in continuity which makes the people live their life with unquestionable belief and with a sense of absolute dedication to the supernatural being controlling their destiny. All good influences and benedictions are believed to be caused by the benevolent forces while all evils, tragedy and disaster are attributed to the malevolent influences. The influences of the malevolent forces are sought to be changed into benevolent through prayers, rituals and sacrifices. At the time of propitiation, a particular spirit is pronounced by the priest to ward off calamities and miseries.

In the continuation of the traditional religion of the people, myths play a very significant role. The story of the origin of the world, origin of Gods and origin of man are all transmitted through myths, like other cultural traditions, the religion of the people is carried from one
generation to generation through myths and performance, of the rituals. All ritualistic parts in religious practices are performed by priest and ritual experts. These officials have a special status. It is interesting to note that even without any written religious scriptures the village priest and ritual experts very smoothly play their role in the society.

The profession of a priest or a divine person is not hereditary, any one having acquired sufficient knowledge of the procedure and paraphernalia can perform these rituals.

When a person falls ill, the priest must first discover the particular spirit responsible for the disease and give directions about the ritual, and the ritual is then performed by the priest. Pigs and fowls as well as local beer in all rituals performed for the deities and spirits, are indispensable items of offering. The number of pigs and fowls necessary for each sacrifice is propitiated by the priest, for example in the ritual performed for Longsakting a small hen or a cock is kept inside a stone cave just below the root of a banyan tree in a jungle. In this, hen or cock is freed alive.

The House - Each village comprises of a number of houses called 'jim', 'him' and so on. Besides the dwelling houses, there are other houses such as samtap (granery), the tik or pik-tap (farm-house).
Plate II
Decoration of the front wall with the heads of the sacrificed animals which are regarded as household deities.
The houses are of the usual chang-type built on stilts, rectangular in shape with a double sloped roof of jangupat. The common room in front is open and has only side walls. The open pongrun (platform) characteristic of the tribal house is found in almost in every house.

The house is divided into three main parts. The front part is used as a common room. The middle one with a number of small compartments is called hammong and the back part where generally the paddy pounder is kept is called himkha.

The front room has a tap (fireplace) located almost at the middle of the room but slightly to one side. Besides being used as a common room, it is also used as a hamran (guest room). The chingtengkha/wangthak (walls) of the room are decorated with heads of buffaloes, skulls of pigs and other animals killed on various festive occasions.

The number of animal heads decorated on the wall is a symbol of their status and a proof of their heroic achievements. The more the number of skulls the higher is their status. They even offer prayers to these skulls. The middle room is divided longitudinally into two parts, one of which is used as a long corridor running along the whole length of the room and other is divided into a number of small compartments with a tap (fire-place) in each. The number of kha (compartments) varies from house to house.
according to the number of members in each family. Sons and their families, unmarried young girls and the old parents, if alive occupy separate compartments. The back part of the house has space for a toilet in case of emergency. Usually they go to the jungles. They take a bath near a stream or any other source of water. There is no separate cook shed but one of the compartments is utilised for this purpose. In this place food for the whole family is cooked. The hearth (kitchen) is made of wood or bamboo which is filled with soil and is called hamongtap or hamongthamthah. Female members, generally the mother cooks the food in this hearth. The spaces between the kitchen and the sleeping place is demarcated by a small half wall called chingkhubang.

**Hearth**

The wooden frame of the hearth is square in shape. In the middle are placed a number of wooden or bamboo sticks plastered with mud. Three stones are used (now-a-days iron frame has replaced the stones) to balance the utensil. Cooked food is kept by the side of the hearth within the wooden frame to keep the food warm. The uncooked food on the other hand, is kept nearby or kept in baskets. On the top of the hearth they have a bamboo rack on which is placed the raw food for preservation. Raw food is also kept inside the baskets which are hung from the rack. The personal
belongings are kept near the bed in one corner.

The long corridor serves many purposes. Running parallel to the corridor is a long rack on which utensils are kept. On one corner they keep their *bookhamrong/zungtophang* (bamboo water tubes), in the other side they clean their utensils. In some of the houses the paddy pounder is kept in the middle of the corridor. The rear side of the house which is called *himkha*, is used mainly for housing the paddy pounder. Garbage is usually kept in an old basket in the corridor. When the garbage basket is full they dispose it off in a proper place. There is an open varandah or chang called *pongran* where paddy and clothes are dried and is also used for sitting. The granery is a small square house with sloping roofs on two sides built on fairly high stilts. It not only serves for storage of paddy but is also utilised as a store house for other provisions. Each family has its own granery constructed either near the house or at the paddy fields.

The farm house is constructed in the pattern of the dwelling house. It is also used as temporary residence during the cultivation season. The cowshed lie adjacent to the farmhouse.

All the houses are constructed on a co-operative basis. The building materials are collected from the adjacent jungles by the owner of the house. Rice beer, rice
LUNGCHANG HOUSE

STRUCTURAL FRAMEWORK
and pork are served to the people who help in the construction of the house. They use kara, jatshap, lalak, sijak, leaves for thatching and wood, bamboo, and cane are the materials used in the construction of the houses. Bamboo sticks are also used to measure the house. The size of the house depends on the number of people.

### Diagram-A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lungchang</th>
<th>Moklom</th>
<th>English</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A - Pangsaak-sarin</td>
<td>Kamtang</td>
<td>Right side wooden supporter of the roof</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B - Lokung</td>
<td>Wakong</td>
<td>Middle side supporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C - Pangka-sarin</td>
<td>Kantang</td>
<td>Left side supporter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D - Kantang</td>
<td>Kanwang</td>
<td>Pieces of wood (approx. 5 ft. in length)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E - Pangka-sarimsong</td>
<td>Kentane-hung</td>
<td>Right side post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F - Lakung-song</td>
<td>Thong-hung</td>
<td>Middle post or main post which considered to be sacred and at the same time it is worshipped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G - Pongkhasarim song</td>
<td>Kantang-hung</td>
<td>Left side post</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H - Thamtha</td>
<td>Tap</td>
<td>Hearth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I - Pongran</td>
<td>Kal</td>
<td>For drying paddy, cloth etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J - Halichang</td>
<td>Khir</td>
<td>Step made of wood to climb up on the chang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K - Sangtu</td>
<td>Toja</td>
<td>Post below chang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L - Chang</td>
<td>Wangdan</td>
<td>Floor made of bamboo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Diagram-B

A - Chin-hai-kho  
R - Kharang

Wangthuk  
Kairang

Half wall between hearth and bed  
Chang on top of hearth

Longchang  
Moklom  
English

C - Kharang pak  
D - Wahching

Kaipak  
-

Cane ropes to tie the chang  
Bed room

E - Chingtong-kho  

Wangthuk

Wall compartment to divide the long corridor

Diagram-C

A - Rangkai  
B - Khamrong

Turom  
Zungtophang

Bamboo chang to keep empty vessel  
For keeping water

Diagram-D

A - Tapdop  
B - Tapfan

Taptang  
Sol-ting

Wooden boundary frame of the heart  
Small bamboo sticks placed in the wooden frame

C - Long song  
D - Hibot

Chickja  
Tapbot

Three stones  
Plastering of the hearth.

The diagrams above show the total description of the house structures of the Lungchangs.
The crops grown by the Moklom people in process of jhum cultivation are hemi (millet), hela (bajra), pungbang (maize), saro, sazong (paddy), minchi, shohtin, chinki (ginger), tung (arum), shingtom (french bean), thasim (sweet potato), kholik (a kind of potato), jungkhong (green leafy vegetable), dongrak, khupan (kind of garlic), singsa (corriander leaves), makat (chillies), bauti (papaya), kin chol (cucumber), etc.

The Lungchang village which has limited cultivable land has come in contact with the people of the plains and are being encouraged by the Government to take up wet rice cultivation and terrace cultivation.

Throughout the year, these tribes live on their paddy and sometimes substitute their diet with arum and other edible jungle products.

Having discussed the general crops grown and the social structure of the Mokloms and Lungchangs, it will be appropriate now, to discuss the daily food habits of these group of people in detail, which is the main emphasis of our study.