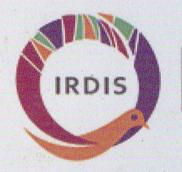
Project On

'Tiwa Culture and Traditions- Documentation and Data Collection'

Submitted by:



Institute Of Research & Documentation Of Indigenous Studies

5th Byelane West, House No. 2 Pub Sarania, Guwahati-781003 www.irdis.org

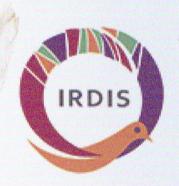
Sponsored by:
Sangeet Natak Akademi
The National Academy of Music, Dance and Drama,
New Delhi, India
Under the Scheme:

"Safe guarding the intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Tradition of India" 2014-15

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Cultural Tradition of India" 2014-15

Preface

The project titled: "Tiwa Culture and Traditions- Documentation and Data Collection" has been implemented by the Institute of Research & Documentation of Indigenous Studies, IRDIS, Guwahati, Assam, with the financial assistance of Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, under the scheme 'Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India, ICH Scheme For the Cycle Year 2014-2015 The project was carried out in the Morigaon, Nowgong, Kamrup, and Karbi Anglong (west) districts of Assam and Ri Bhoi district of the State of Meghalaya, these regions being inhabited by Tiwa community people.

The project on "Tiwa Culture and Traditions- Documentation and Data Collection" is an endeavour to document and archive traditions, beliefs, customs, oral traditions and traditional knowledge of the Tiwa community in order to bring to focus, acknowledge and bring awareness to the rich, diverse and value laden intangible Cultural heritage of the Tiwa Community in Assam and Meghalaya.

The field study, surveys and discourses for the project has been conducted by IRDIS in partnership with the members of the Tiwa community within the community premises in the districts mentioned above of Assam and Meghalaya. The women and the menfolk of the Tiwa community, the youth and the community elders, all extended full support to the implementation of the project on the documentation of culture and traditions of the Tiwa people..

The project was carried out by the IRDIS team lead by the undersigned as the Project Director in partnership and collaboration with the senior members and the womenfolk of the Tiwa community as also the members of the community who have been associated with the cultural and social activities of the community for their preservation and promotion.

The Project Director with the assistance of Shri Jursing Bordoloi and Smti Ramuthi Amsi, both teachers and associated with cultural and social forums of the Tiwa community, sought the support of the senior members of the Tiwa community for their support and guidance.

Meetings and discourses were held at the premises of the Tiwa habitations for the IRDIS team and with the members of the Tiwa community to discuss the various aspects of Intangible Culture documentation. Notings of the conversations with the Tiwa members in villages as well as photographs of traditional and cultural aspects of the community were documented.

The "Tiwas", earlier known as the Lalungs, constitute one of the prominent Scheduled Tribes of Assam. While their ancestry has not yet been conclusively determined it is generally believed that the Tiwas have Mongoloid roots and are a constituent of the Bodo tribe of Assam. Legend has it that the Tiwas originally migrated from the Tibet region but their migration to the plains is somewhat shrouded in mystery. Another version more credible and attested to by several elders of the community is that the Tiwas were pushed out by the Aryans from their original habitat near the city of Allahabad and migrated eastwards in considerable numbers across the Himalayas and finally settled in the hilly terrain of what is now Karbi Anglong and also Kamrup, where they established a principality and ruled for several years. Another legend indicates that the Tiwas originally inhabited the present Jaintia Hills in Meghalaya but thereafter migrated to the plains of the present Nowgong sometime in the middle of the 17th century AD as they found it difficult to come to terms with the matriarchal and matrilineal systems of the Jaintias including the custom widely prevalent then of human sacrifice.

The Tiwas are a proud and vibrant community and take pains to maintain their traditional and cultural distinctiveness. There is close interaction between the Tiwas belonging to both the hills and plains regions inspite of differences in food habits, dress, agricultural practices and religious beliefs. Religious practices of the Tiwas centre round a belief in some deities of the Hindu pantheon and they perform various pujas both individually and community wise throughout the year, songs and dance being intrinsic components of their vibrant life-style.

The Tiwas today are located in the plains districts of Morigaon, Nowgong, Kamrup, Dhemaji and in the hill district of Karbi Anglong of Assam, and in the Ri Bhoi district of the State of Meghalaya.

It is imperative to document the cultural aspects and traditions of the Tiwa community in order to archive and document them for posterity as they seem to be threatened and dying out with the passage of time.

The information, data and the audio recordings on the Tiwas collected through field work and through oral communication with the very senior and respected members and knowledgeable members of the Tiwa community, have been compiled, edited and documented by the undersigned in consultation with the Tiwa community in the written form presented in this document along with photographs. The documented text has also been presented in tabular

forms for the convenience of the readers. The undersigned would welcome readers to point out any errors that may have inadvertently crept into the content of the project report for rectification. On behalf of the Institute of Research and Documentation of Indigenous Studies, I sincerely hope that the efforts that have gone into this research and study and its documentation will be of help to researchers and social scientists and inspire them to delve deeper into the details of the culture and traditions of one of the greatest communities of the North-eastern region of Assam--the 'Tiwa Community'.

Dr. Deepa Dutt Executive Director

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Dated: 04/10/2019 Guwahati

Acknowledgement

On behalf of the Institute of Research & Documentation of Indigenous Studies, IRDIS, I convey my sincere gratitude to the Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi, for extending support and financial assistance to implement the project entitled 'Tiwa Culture and Traditions-Documentation and Data Collection'.

I convey my sincere thanks to Shri Jursing Bordoloi, teacher and cultural researcher of the Tiwa community at Jagiroad, for his valuable suggestions and guidance for the successful conduct of the project. My thanks also go out to Srimati Ramuthi Amsi a teacher and linguist of the Tiwa community for being with IRDIS throughout the duration of the project and extending her unstinted support.

My heartfelt gratitude to all the members of the Tiwa community of the Morigaon, Nowgong, Karbi Anglong (West) of Assam and the Ri-Bhoi district of Meghalaya for their support, encouragement, advice and guidance in conducting this study and research for the completion of the project Without their wholehearted co-operation such an endeavour would not have been possible.

To Shri Moheswar Pator, retired teacher and socio-cultural expert of the Tiwa Community based in Nowgong district, I extend my gratitude for his contribution towards the implementation of the project

I convey my thanks to Shri Tulsi Manta for taking a personal interest in capturing the photographs of the cultural and social events of the community. I also extend my thanks to him for being available on all occasions when we needed help in taking the project forward.

A special word of thanks to Shri Ratneswar Bordoloi, writer and cultural expert of the Tiwa community for his valuable contributions to the Project.

I express my gratitude to Shri Pirlu Amsi, Gao Bura (Head man) of Tharakunji village in West Karbi Anglong district of Assam for his unstinted help, assistance and hospitality extended to us during our visit to the village in connection with this project.

My thanks also go out to Shri Sasanka Kumar Dutta and Smti Sanchita Rongpipi for their assistance in translating and typing out respectively substantial segments of the report.

Dr. Deepa Dutt

D. Dutt.

Project Director

Tiwa Culture and Traditions—Documentation and Data Collection Guwahati-781003

DECLARATION

This is to certify that the present work 'Tiwa Culture and Traditions-Documentation and Data Collection' is an original undertaking by the Institute of Research & Documentation of Indigenous Studies, IRDIS, under the aegis of Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi.

The report in part or in full has not been published or submitted to any other forum.

Sd/Dr. Deepa Dutt
Executive Director
Institute of Research & Documentation
of Indigenous Studies (IRDIS)
Guwahati-781003

Dated:04/10/2019 Guwahati

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter I	Introductory Note on the Tiwas of Assam8-11
Chapter II	Tiwa Kingship Principalities and their locations 12-14
Chapter III	Tiwa Festivals15-26
Chapter IV	Tiwa ethnic Costumes27-31
Chapter V	Tiwa Traditional Jewellery32-37
Chapter VI	Housing and Traditional Architecture of the Tiwas38-50
Chapter VII	Art and Handicrafts51-63
Chapter VIII	Agriculture of the Tiwas64-66
Chapter IX	Tiwa Cuisine67-77
Chapter X	Music and Musical Instruments78-82
Chapter XI	Livelihood of the Tiwas83-85
Chapter XII	Birth, Marriage and Death86-87

Chapter I Introductory Note on the Tiwas of Assam

The Tiwas are recognized as a Scheduled tribe within the State of Assam. They were known as Lalungs in the Assamese Buranjis, Colonial literature and in the Constitution of India, though members of the group prefer to call themselves **Tiwa**

In the ancient history of Assam, there are elaborate descriptions of Ahom Kingdoms and Ahom rulers in Assam but the history of the Tiwa tribes, their kingdoms and the adminstrations run by Tiwa Kings in their kingdoms were not precisely described in the history of Assam. The heritage, culture and life style of Tiwas living in the middle part of Assam viz Morigaon district, parts of Nagaon district and Sonapur, Khetri areas of Kamrup Metro district, also some families living on the foothills of the Karbi Anglong district are not reflected in the history of Assam.

In the 12th century, some small Tiwa states like Datiyolia State, Gaso State, Sato State etc were established in central Assam. Within the Datiyolia state, there were Gobha kingdom, Nellie, Khola Sahari, Domal etc. Among the Tiwa Kings, the Gobha king was the senior and most powerful. There were many holy shrines, temples, ponds, beels etc in the Gobha Kingdom. Being unable to manage the large number of shrines, temples, thans, beels etc. the Gobha king later on created some smaller states and allowed them self rule, although the Gobha king collected revenue from those smaller states.

Pha Mahadeo was the spiritual God of the Tiwas and they worshipped Pha Mahadeo for the welfare of the people. Tiwa kings were also named as Deorajas. The Tiwa Deorajas observed festivals like Chaitra Sankranti, Bohag Bihu or Betikosa festival on 20th Bohag (April -May) during the full moon or Purnima day every year. Bohagi Mela was observed at 'Ma Kali thaan'. Also every year in the month of Kati (Oct – Nov) the Tiwas offer Soni puja (Saturn God Puja) at Pancha Devalaya. The Tiwas also observe some other Pujas in Puja thans within the Tiwa Kingdom which are mainly agriculture- based expecting a good crops every year.

From the ancient times, the Kholadeos observed fishing festival in the beels (water bodies) by gathering people of all the communities living in his kingdom particularly in the month of Magha (January) and distributed the fish collected among his people. The king also took a meal on a suitable day during the fishing festival with the people of his kingdom. "Uruka" is observed throughout the state.

There is a legend that senior Gobha King as per direction of a Jaintia king established the Khola kingdom. The boundaries of the Khola Kingdom were the Borgola Borbori in the east, Nellie in the West, North Kollong River in the North and the Karbi Anglong district in the South.

The Kholadeo king constructed 16 nos of stone plate benches (Silsang) at a place called Silsang near Nellie in Morigaon district, which falls on the national highway no.37. The Tiwa King with his 15 executives would meet at their scheduled meeting venue at Silsang and discuss the problems of his kingdom. In the month of Bohag (April May), the Tiwa king with his executives met at Silsang and discussed about observance of Bohagi Gosai Mela festival at Silsang field. The stone plate benches still exist by the side of N.H. 37 at Silsang. During the Burmese aggression of Assam, the Burmese army destroyed all the stone benches at Silsang and these were scattered all over the place. In 1970, the archaeological department of Assam reconstructed those stone benches and these are now preserved at Silsang. Some movable properties were maintained and preserved in the Kholadeo kingdom such as Deolangkhui (The Divine Sword) one pair, armour shield one pair and many other items but many were stolen by miscreants.

In the historically large Khola state, people of different castes, creeds, languages ad religions lived together. Since the year 2010, Kholadeo State Administrative Committee has been formed to look after the Tiwas King's Darbar house. The committee thus formed has to look after the beels spread over the Tiwa kingdom. The Udpur beel preservation committee organised by Udpur Mela (festival) where the heritage of Tiwa people were discussed and appropriate steps were taken to preserve the tradition and culture of the Tiwa Community.

The seniormost Tiwa king, the Gabhadeo Raja organized "Jonbeel Mela" in the month of Magh (January) near Jagiroad where cock fights were staged and other cultural folk dances were also performed. In the Jonbeel Mela, Tiwas, Karbis living in the foothills of Jagoroad area exchanged their agri-products like oranges, pineapples, pumpkins, yam (kath alu), kochus, potatoes etc with the Tiwas and others living in the plains for their prepared homemade traditional items like laru, pitha, sandoh, muri, dried fish etc through a barter system, without any monetary transactions.

Similar to the Ahom kingdom, Tiwa kingdoms too had their unique laws and rules to administer the Tiwa kingdom but their population was much less than the Ahom population and could not receive due attention from the government to preserve their heritage and culture.

After independence, Assam government constituted the Tiwa Autonomous Council for their development in the Tiwa- inhabited region and provided funds accordingly to the council to execute their social and welfare schemes. There are 36 contituencies of the Tiwa Autonomous Council: 19 in Morigaon district, 11 in Nagaon and 6 in the Sonapur, Digaru and Khetri areas of Kamrup (Metro) district.

Tiwa clans: The villagers of a Tiwa village are divided into clans and each clan has their respective unit made up of clan people and are assigned certain village jobs according to their clan way of practices and the positions they occupy in the village organizations. The major clans found in the villages are Amshi, Amsong, Kholar, Khorai, Pumah, Amphi, Muni, Madar and Sagra. Marriages within the same clan are strictly prohibited for the Tiwas. The clan and kinship system regulates social behavior to a large extent. Clan exogamy is strictly followed and till today clans are chief principle unit for the social traditions and functions, funerals, for mutual support and defence. So the principal links of the whole society are based on clan or family kinship.

Aim of this project

The project on the "Tiwa Culture and Traditions—Documentation and data collection" is an initiative of the Institute of Research & Documentation of Indigenous Studies, IRDIS, to bring to focus the rich and diverse cultural traditions of the Tiwa community by way of documentation and data collection in collaboration and in partnership with the elderly, youth and womenfolk of the Tiwa community residing in Assam and Meghalaya . The goal of the project is to document their culture, beliefs, customs, oral traditions and traditional knowledge which have been communicated from generation to generation and which have been threatened and on the verge of dying out with the passing of time.

Inspite of their contact with and conflict of the Tiwa community with various ethnic communities during the course of their various migrational routes, and the pressures in recent times due to globalisation and modernisation, the Tiwas have to a great extent held on to and preserved their Culture, Traditions, beliefs and customs. Any effort in documenting their cultural heritage would be beneficial not only to the Tiwa community but also to the researchers, scholars and the social scientists of the world outside of the community. Such

endeavours would also spiritually and emotionally uplift the community and engender a sense of pride and unity at having their culture being recognised by the world outside.

In this project IRDIS' endeavour is to create a holistic culture documentation to raise awareness and to preserve the various aspects of Tiwa culture. The initiative to document the intangible Cultural heritage of the Tiwa community will include the documentation and data collection on the various aspects of the Tiwa life and culture as depicted in the twelve chapters of this documentation project.

Chapter II

Tiwa Kingship principalities and their locations

The royal lineage of the Tiwa community is inherent to this day. The Tiwa population is under various royal principalities each under a "Tiwa Roja" or King. The 'Gobha Roja' was their main king in ancient times who had royal jurisdiction over a wide domain in central Assam. However the Gobha Roja divided his territory and allotted them to various kings to manage their territories.

In present times too there are many kingship domains whose territories are spread over the following regions of Assam and Meghalaya: In Assam they are in the districts of Morigaon, Kamrup, Nowgong and Karbi Anglong and in the Ri-bhoi district of the State of Meghalaya.

The names of the different kingship principalities and their locations are given below:

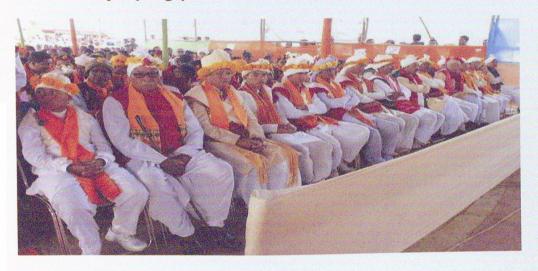
- Gobha Rajyo (Rajyo means kingdom): parts of Morigaon and Karbi Anglong districts of Assam and in parts of the Ribhoi district of Meghalaya.
- Domoria Rajyo: In the Kamrup district of Assam.
- Nellie Rajyo: Morigaon district
- Khula Rajyo: Morigaon district
- Poschim Nowgaon Rajyo: Morigaon district
- Sohori Rajyo: Morigaon district
- Xatu Ragyo (Xatu means the number seven) consists of seven kingship principalities namely: Tetelia, Kumai, Kumai Kochari Goya, Xoxonagug, Bohora, Torani and Ghaguwa Rajyos all situated in the Morigaon district and Nowgong district.
- Pasu Rajyo (Five Kingdoms): Tupa kuchi, Khaogorh, Khora, Baro pugiya and Mikir Goya Rajyos situated in Morigaon district
- Domal Rajyo : Morigaon district
- Pub Uttor Khula Rajyo : Morigaon district

The names of the Different Principalities and their locations

AJYOS (KINGDOMS)	SMALLER PRINCIPALITIES UNDER THE KINGDOMS	LOCATION		
	THE KINGDOWS	DISTRICTS	STATES	
GOBHA RAJYO		PARTS OF MORIGAON AND KARBI ANGLONG PARTS OF RIBHOI	ASSAM	
DIMORIA RAJYO		KAMRUP	ASSAM	
NELLIE RAJYO		MORIGAON	ASSAM	
KHULA RAJYO		MORIGAON	ASSAM	
POSCHIM NAGAON RAJYO		MORIGAON	ASSAM	
SOHORIA RAJYO		MORIGAON	ASSAM	

The second secon		
TETELIA, KUMAI, KUMAI KOCHARI GOYA, XOXONAGUG, BOHORA, TORANI AND GHAGUWA	MORIGAON AND NOWGONG	ASSAM
TUPA KUCHI, KHAOGORH, KHORA, BARO PUGIYA AND MIKIR RAJYO	MORIGAON	ASSAM
	MORIGAON	ASSAM
	MORIGAON	ASSAM
	KUMAI KOCHARI GOYA, XOXONAGUG, BOHORA, TORANI AND GHAGUWA TUPA KUCHI, KHAOGORH, KHORA, BARO PUGIYA AND	KUMAI KOCHARI GOYA, XOXONAGUG, BOHORA, TORANI AND GHAGUWA TUPA KUCHI, KHAOGORH, KHORA, BARO PUGIYA AND MIKIR RAJYO MORIGAON

The Tiwa Rojas (Kings)



Chapter III

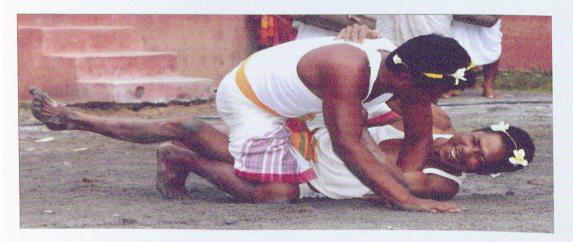
Tiwa Festivals

Tiwa festivals are a part of the Tiwa culture and they depict the seasons of the year, their life and lifestyle and the different chores of the tribe. Although the menfolk take the lead role during the different festivals, participating in the songs and dances associated with it, the festivals are incomplete without the assistance of the womenfolk. The womenfolk are indispensible and render support to the organization of the festivals.

TIWA PISU (BIHU)

Pisu or Bihu is a festival related to agriculture and observed in the month of January after the harvest season is over. Tiwas of different areas observe Bihu in different days of the week. Although most ethnic communities in the State celebrate the harvest festival, the Tiwa Bihu is distinctive in its dance forms, rituals and traditions associated with this agricultural festival. Some of the distinctive Bihu features of Tiwas are 'Boka Nach', 'Jora Tola ceremony', 'Bheti Karha' ceremony', 'Gosai Utiowa Utsav'.

PISU (Bheti Karha Utsav)



JONBEEL MELA

Jonbeel Mela is one of the most attractive festivals of Assam and it portrays very important traditions and culture of the Tiwa community including an old tradition of 'barter trade system' between the people of the hills and the plains that forges great camaraderie between them. Jonbeel Mela is held every year during the winter season at a historic place known as Dayang Belguri at Jonbeel. Jonbeel is a water body shaped like the crescent moon and hence it is named 'Jonbeel'. 'Jon' and 'Beel' are Assamese terms for the moon and a wetland respectively. Jonbeel Mela is a three day long community fair held at the weekend of Magh Bihu (Magh Bihu is the harvest festival of the Assamese communities living in the plains and is held in mid January). The Jonbeel Mela is a market or bazaar where the people of different tribes living in the hills and the plains of the region exchange their agricultural products, village products, merchandise amongst themselves preserving the traditional Tiwa Barter System. During the Mela, the King of the Tiwa tribes popularly known as Gobha Roja along with his courtiers visit the Mela and collects taxes from his subjects. During this festival, people from various tribes perform their traditional dance and music and create a joyful atmosphere. Other religious rituals and community traditions such as community fishing, as well as traditions of bull fight and cock fight are held. At present times however traditions such as bull fight and cock fight have died down due to prohibitive laws.

JONBEEL BARTER



JONBEEL FISHING



Gobha Roja at Jonbeel



SAGRA/SOGRA MISAWA

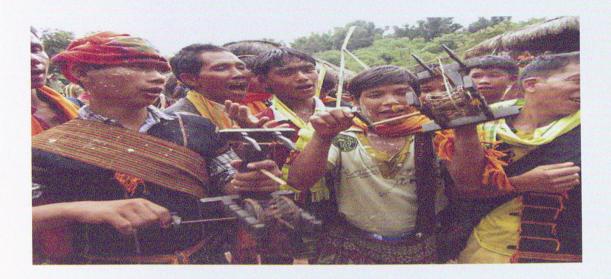
Sagra Misawa is a spring festival of the Tiwa tribe. This festival is observed in the month of Fagun (mid February to mid March). Bachelors mainly participate in this festival. This festival is one of music and dance.

Sogra festival is related to the spring season. Dance is an important part of this festival, therefore it is known as a Sogra Misawa, here 'Misawa' means dance in the Tiwa native language. Because this festival is an important ethnic festival of the Tiwa community and dance is an essential part of the festival, Sogra dance is considered a unique dance performance of this community. Before the dance the young people participate and follow some rituals and traditions related to the festival. The local Tiwa members select a group of nine main dancers who are generally young bachelor boys. The selected young boys adorn their special traditional attire along with the various beautiful and uncommon head gears that are called 'Khumkhati, Pura and Moss'.

SAGRA/SOGRA MISAWA Festival



Wanshua Misawa



Wanshua is a rice grinding festival of the Hill Tiwas of Karbi Hills (west) of Assam. It is a four day long festival and the main day of Wanshua festival falls on the third day. Mainly Marjongwali and Amkhawali clans of the hill Tiwas celebrate Wanshua festival separately in their villages every five to six years. This festival is celebrated during the month of May and first part of July. It generally starts on a Monday and completed on the following Thursday. The main function is held on Wednesday at the residence of 'Shangdoloi' where the 'Sham' (wooden mortar, Ural in Assamese) is half buried in the ground and the participants go round it in circles. On the main day of Wanshua festival of the Marjongwali clan panthaies (young boys) of Bormarjong village grind their rice grains to a powder in mortars with pestles. In the process of rice grinding they perform Wanshua Misawa (dance) and Rojawa (song) to the rhythm of Khram, Pangsi and Thurang (traditional Tiwa instruments). Then the 'Pisai' (office bearer) of the villages distributes the 'Wankuri' (the rice powder) to every household. Each household cooks it in a traditional manner in which the rice powder is steamed. Next morning they bring the 'Wan rusa' (cooked rice cakes) to the house of 'Shangdoloi' and they perform the ritual of offering the 'Wan rusa' to 'Sodonga Raja' and 'Maldeo'. After that they mix all the 'Wan rusa' and again distribute it amongst the households of the village. By late evening of Thursday the 'Wanshua Misawa' festival comes to an end. Next morning the villagers pay respect and farewell to the youths from different villages who had participated in this 'Wanshua Misawa'. It is to be noted that this festival is performed under strict

supervision of the 'Shangdoloi, Shangmaji, Huruma, Khuramul' (officials of the villages holding responsible positions) and other officials of the village.

MOINARI KANTHI MISAWA



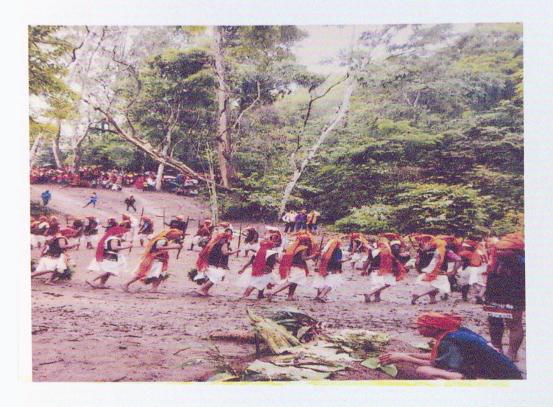
One of the major clan or group of Tiwas the 'Makrowali' believed 'Kabla' as their main deity. Amongst all deities of Tiwas only Kabla do not accept any phuja and sacrifices that are performed facing the east. Kabla gifted the 'Moinari Kanthi Misawa' to the people of Makro and asked them to perform 'Kabla Phuja' at the interval of every five years. "Moinari Kanthi Misawa' is a beautiful and unique dance amongst the other dances of the Tiwas. In general participation of girls in the dances are rare, but in the dance of 'Moinari Kanthi Misawa' participation of girls is of foremost importance. In the place of Khram (drum), Pangsi (flute), Thurang (long flute having only two holes) the Makro people use Muhuri (wooden trumpet/ like kaliya in assamese), Tumding (small drum made of soil) and Togor (small drum worn around the waist, with two small sticks to beat the drum). As the Tiwa community does not allow marriages amongst boys and girls of the same clan, in this Misawa too boys and girls of the same clan are not allowed to participate. The Makrowali Tiwas from Meghalaya Ri-bhoi district as well as those from the subordinate villages of Karbi Anglong West district participate in Moinari Kanthi Misawa.

YANGLI MISAWA

Yangli is a dance performing art performed at the time of Yangli festival which is held every three years and celebrated by the Tiwas residing in the hills. This festival is also known as 'Lakhimi Adora Utsav' (Festival of welcoming Goddess Lakhimi). Lakhimi is a deity of Hindu mythology. This festival is related to the origin of agriculture of the Tiwas. It is noteworthy that the dance is a most notable part of every fair and festival of the hill Tiwas. At the time of celebration of the Yangli festival, the Yangli dance is a part of worship of Goddess Yangli. The month from middle of April to May is the time of celebration of this festival and it is held every three years. Similar to the Sogra Misawa, Yangli Misawa too is unique in its dance performance and as worship to Goddess Lakhimi, ('Lukhumi' as pronounced by the Tiwas).

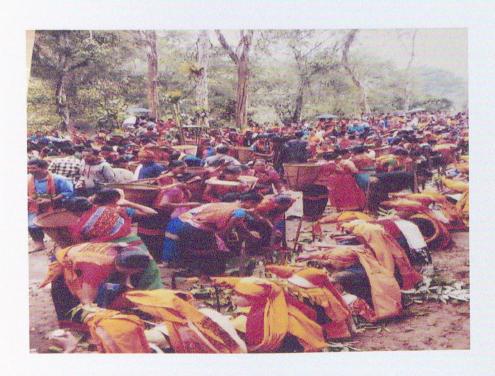
They worship the Goddess Yangli or Lakhimi through their dance performance. The local young boys wearing their traditional attire dance in a circle in a sacred place known as the 'Yangli chali', close to their village, to the rhythm of the flute and drums carrying shields and swords in their hands like warriors. Before the dance the local folks follow some important customs according to their traditions and rituals. While they perform the dance, they sing the song about the Goddess Yangli and relate a story in the form of a folksong about how she came to earth with crops and seed and scattered it on the earth specially their village. That is the significance of this Yangli dance and festival.

Yangli Misawa



Rituals performed during Yangli Misawa (Below)





Langkhun Phuja Misawa



In the Langkhun Phuja Misawa, Tiwa people dance with decorated bamboo sticks in their hands to worship the God Bamboo. This is also a folk festival celebrated every year during the month of September to November in different villages of west Karbi Anglong's Tiwa inhabited area especially in Bormarjong village. This is a folk festival and has its own significance with two kinds of dances. One is Langkhun 'Kheep' Misawa, and the other is Langkhun Misawa. The Langkhon Kheep Misawa is a dance where the performers dance with 'Kheep' in their hands. Kheep is a handmade fan (Bisoni in Assamese), and is specially made for the dance performers by the local folks. For the Langkhon Misawa the Tiwa young boys prepare for the dance by making the tools and accessories such as Langkhun (decorated bamboo stick) and Kheep (a beautiful, unique and handmade fan) which are the required for the performance. All the young people who are the members of the Samadi (Cultural Center of the villages) participate as a performer of Langkhun Misawa under the direction of the administrative head of the Samadi.

BARAT/BOROT UTSAV



The word 'Borat' originated from Sanskrit word Brata. The meaning of the word 'Brata' is penance observed to satisfy the God. Barat Utsav is a community utsav (festival) of the Tiwa tribe, which bears a traditional religious-cultural character. Brata festival is celebrated on the full moon day called 'Purnima' of the month of Puha (mid Dec – mid Jan). The festival is observed to make the society free from pestilence, epidemics or aggression of wild animals. There are two types of borot puja – Usha Borat and Bhodiya Borot puja.

Both the Usha Borat and the Bhodiya Borot Puja are celebrated in the Teteliya Rajyo (Kingdom) under the Teteliya Roja or King. While young girls participate in Usha Borat, Bhodiya Borat is agriculture based and both menfolk and womenfolk participate in it to propitiate the God for the welfare of the society and for a successful harvest.

NAME OF THE FESTIVALS	SIGNIFICANCE/ RELIGIOUS ASPECTS OF THE FESTIVAL	LOCATION OF CELEBRATI ON	MONTH OF THE YEAR WHEN THE FESTIVAL IS HELD	DURATION/F REQUENCY OF THE FESTIVAL	PARTICIPA NTS MALE/FEM ALE	WHETHER IN USE/EXTINCT
TIWA PISU (BIHU)	Tiwas of the hills and the plains observe pisu in different days of a week in the month of January. Though there is similarity with other communities as the main agricultural festival, in certain dance forms and rituals, the Tiwa Bihu or Pisu has it own distinctive features. Some of which are Boka nach, Jora tola ceremony, Bheti karha ceremony, Gosai utuwa	Villages of all clans living in the hills and dales of Assam	Mid January	1 week	Both men and womenfolk participate	Is celebrated every year even at present times
Jonbeel mela	utsav, etc. The Tiwa rituals, festivities and the barter trade is carried out during this event	At a historic place known as Dayang Belaguri at	Middle of the month of January (at the weekend of Magh bihu)	Duration of 3 (three) days. Thursday through Saturday.	Both menfolk and womenfolk actively participate	The event is held annually till present times.
Sagra/ Sogra misawa	Sogra festival is mainly related to the Spring season. Dance is an important part of this festival and hence it is known as Sogra Misawa. Misawa means dance.	Jonbeel In the Tiwa villages of all clans	In the month of Fagun (mid February to March)	Three to Four days	Male Bachelors participate in the event	Held annually
Wansuwa Misawa	it is a rice grinding festival of hill Tiwas of the west Karbi hills of	Celebrated within the hill Tiwas of Karbi	Celebrated every five to six years. This festival	4 days celebrations. The main day of Wansuwa	Youths of the villages participate in the	In olden times this festival was celebrated

Main	Assam.	Hills (west) of Assam, specially amongst the Marjongwa li and Amkhawali clans of the hill Tiwas Wanshua festival is celebrated.	is celebrated during the month of May and first part of July. It starts on a Monday and completed on the following Thursday.	festival falls on the third day.	dance.	every year. However in present times it is held every five to six years mainly due to economic reasons Celebrated
Moinari Kanthi Misawa	Moinari Kanthi Misawa is a beautiful and typical dance amongst the various dances of the Tiwas	This festival is celebrated mainly by the Makrowali clan inhabiting the hil lregions of the State of	Held during the month of May to April.	the interval of every five to six years	girls both participate. The participatio n of girls is of foremost importance	annually
Yangli Misawa	Yangli is a dance, performed during the Yangli festival. This festival is also known as 'Lakhimi adora utsav'. Lakhimi is a deity of Hindu mythology. This festival is related to origin of agriculture of this tribe.	Meghalaya. In the hilly regions inhabited by the Tiwa community	Celebrated during the mid April to mid May	Celebrated every three years	Young boys participate	In olden times this festival was celebrated every year. At present times due to economic and other reasons it is celebrated every three years.

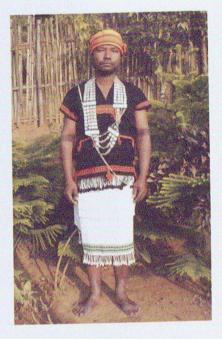
Chapter IV

TIWA ETHNIC COSTUMES

As in the case of other tribes of the region, Tiwa tribe too has its own traditional attire which they adorn on festivals and special occasions and ceremonies. Both boys and girls have their own traditional costumes.



Tiwa Lady in traditional attire



Tiwa boy in traditional attire

For the Tiwa girl/lady the traditional costumes comprises -

- Kasong-- it is the major part of the attire that is wrapped around like a long skirt. This
 is similar to a 'mekhela' of the Assamese attire. A Kasong can be of different colours.
 Generally it is a plain coloured woven cloth which has a border of a contrast colour.
- Faskai is worn by a Tiwa lady around the chest and is woven of thread called 'pokua huta' and wool. It has varieties of colour.
- Joskai, is a kind of short wrap around worn over the Kasong.
- Naara, is worn around the waist of women and is of different colours



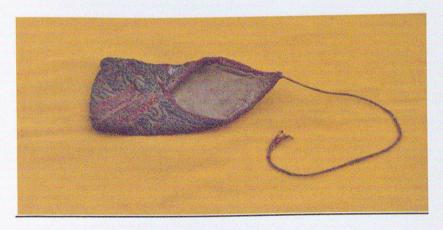
FASKAI

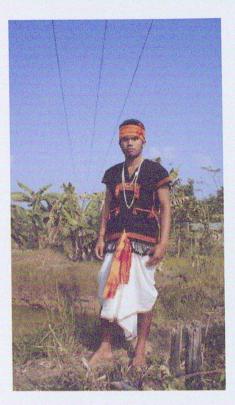


Naara (Below)



A TIWA PURSE USED BY LADIES OF ANCIENT TIMES





The Tiwa boy/menfolk traditional costume comprises:

- Tagla, worn by menfolk, it is a traditional sleeveless/short sleeved jacket.
- Thana, is a long piece of cloth worn around the waist in the form of a short 'dhoti'
 worn by men
- Khumkhati, is a head gear worn by men and they carve flowers out of the pulp of the 'khaidongphang' shrub to decorate the cloth that is wrapped around their heads.
- Pura, also a head gear worn by men, the flowers of the 'thoba' plant are used to decorate the cloth wrapped around their heads.
- Moss, head gears worn by males, it is the 'Thena' cloth or the cloth that they use for
 wearing on their heads is wrapped around a bamboo cross to depict the head of a deer
 with horns. This is worn on the head.

As in other ethnic tribes of Assam, Tiwa tribe too has its own traditional attire which they basically wear during festivals and traditional ceremonies. Both boys and girls have their own costumes. The Tiwa traditional costumes and their descriptions have been mentioned in the chart below.

NAME OF THE COSTUMES	WORN BY MALE/FEMALE	DESCRIPTION OF THE COSTUME	COLOURS/DESIGNS ASSOCIATED WITH THE COSTUME	
KASONG	Womenfolk	It is the major part of the attire that is wrapped around like a long skirt Kasongs are of different colours.	It is of a plain colour that has a border of a contrast colour	
FASKAI	Womenfolk	Worn around the chest and is woven with a thread which is called 'pokua huta' and wool	Different bright colours and intricate designs are woven into it.	
NAARA	Womenfolk	Worn around the waist of a women	Of different bright colours	
JOSKAI	Womenfolk	Is a kind of short wrap around worn over the Kasong	Woven with bright colours	
TAGLA	Worn by menfolk	A traditional sleeveless jacket	Traditional colours are black and red, although green colour is also sometimes used.	
THANA	Worn by menfolk	A long piece of cloth worn around the waist in the form of a short 'dhoti'.	Generally white in colour with a thin contrast border	
KHUMKHATI	Worn by menfolk	Head gear	They carve flowers out of the pulp of the 'khaidongphang' shrub to decorate the cloth that is wrapped around their heads	
PURA	Worn by menfolk	Head gear	The flowers of the 'thoba' plant are used to decorate the cloth wrapped around their heads	

MOSS	Worn by menfolk	Head gear	The 'thena' cloth or the cloth that they use for wearing on their heads is wrapped around a bamboo cross to depict the head of a deer with horns. This is worn on the head.

Chapter V

TIWA TRADITIONAL JEWELLERY

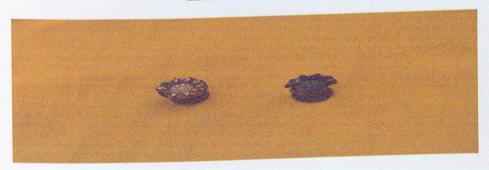
There are many traditional jewellery of the Tiwa community of which some are in use and some are on the path of extinction. In recent times old traditional jewellery are rare to find. IRDIS members along with the members of the Tiwa community were able to trace down a number of pieces of ancient Tiwa jewellery in the remote village of Tharakunji in West Karbi Anglong district of Assam. The following are the names and description of some important traditional pieces of jewellery of the Tiwa tribe –

TIWA LADY WEARING THE ETHNIC JEWELLERIES



"Sonane khaidong" a typical gold ear piece which is also known as 'hunor thuriya' in Assamese, is in its path to extinction.

Sonane Khaidong



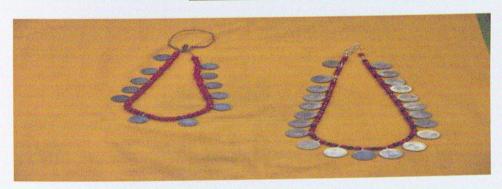
'Ruphane Khaidong' is a traditional ear piece made of silver and is on the path of extinction

Ruphane Khaidong (silver ear pieces)



'Siki Ne Lo' is a neck piece made of beads and coins and the hill Tiwa womenfolk wear it

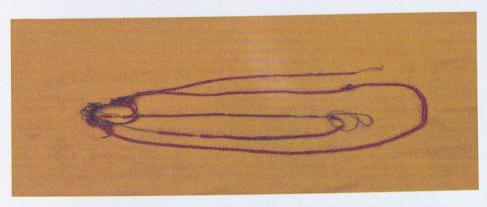
Siki Ne Lo



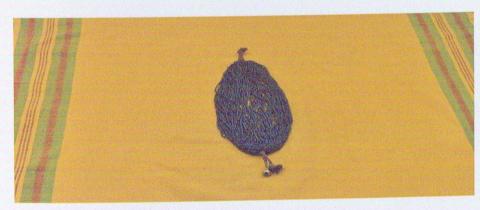
'Lo Goja', 'Lo Phab' and 'Lo Pleau' are traditional Tiwa necklaces made of traditional beads and are still in use. (below)



The traditional 'Lo Phalia' shown below is however on the path of extinction

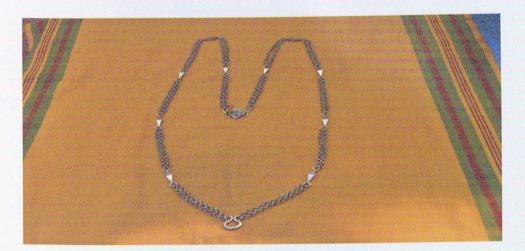


'Lo Thar' is a neckpiece of beads and the hill Tiwa womenfolk still wear it (below)





'Singi Lo' is a long piece of jewellery made of silver worn in the neck and across the waist. This piece of jewellery is worn both by men and women on special occasions and festivals and is on its path of extinction (below)



There are many beautiful ornaments of the Tiwa tribe of which some are still in use and some are in the path of extinction. The names and descriptions of the traditional Tiwa jewellery are given below:

NAME OF THE JEWELLERY IN TIWA LANGUAGE	DESCRIPTION OF THE JEWELLERY	OCCASION OF WEARING THE JEWELLERY	MATERIAL USED FOR MAKING THE JEWELLERY	WHETHER IN USE/EXTINCT
"SONANE KHAIDONG"	A typical gold ear piece which is also known as 'hunor thuriya' in Assamese	Worn on special occasions	GOLD	On the path of extinction
RUPHANE KHAIDONG	Another traditional ear piece made of silver	Worn during festivals and special occasions	SILVER	On the path of extinction
SIKI NE LO	Neck piece made of traditional beads and coins	Worn on special occasions	Beads and coins	Womenfolk wear it even in present times and are found more in the hilly regions
LO GOJA	Necklace	Elderly ladies wear it everyday	Made of traditional beads	In use
LO РНАВ	Necklace	Worn daily by both young girls and elderly ladies	Made of traditional beads	In use
LO PLEAU	Necklace	Worn daily by young girls	Made of traditional beads	In use mainly amongst the hill Tiwa womenfolk
LO PHALIA	A traditional necklace	Worn by elderly ladies on special	Made of very fine traditional beads	On the path of extinction
LO THAR	A traditional necklace	occasions Worn on festivals and special occasions	Made of beads	Hill tiwa womenfolk wear it even at present times
SINGI LO	Long piece of jewellery worn in the neck and across the waist	Worn both by men and women on special occasions and festivals	Made of silver	On the path of extinction
KHOREYA	Ear rings	Worn everyday mainly by elderly ladies	Made of silver	On the path of extinction

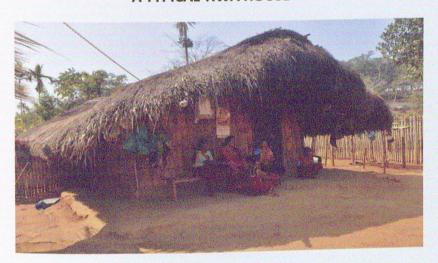
SAB LO	Necklace	Worn by ladies during festivals	Made of silver	On the path of extinction
KHALIA	Earrings	Used for daily use by the ladies	Made of silver as well as gold	Mainly in use amongst the Hill Tiwas
KAL PANDHA	Necklace	Worn by ladies on special occasions and during festivals	Made of black beads	On the path of extinction
MADULI	A traditional locket	For daily use	Made of beads or silver or even gold	in use
THAKANE LO	A necklace	Worn by elderly ladies daily and by young girls on special occasions	Made of one rupee coins	On the path of extinction
JONAI MADULI	A necklace with a half moon shaped pendant	Worn on special occasions	Made of both gold and silver	On the path of extinction
YASTAM	Finger ring	Worn on a daily basis by ladies	Made of silver as well as gold	In use
KHAIDONG	Ear piece	Worn by elderly ladies	Made of silver	On the path of extinction
RIDU KHORIYA	Hanging earrings	Worn by elderly ladies as well as young girls	Worn by elderly ladies on a daily basis and by young girls on special occasions	On the path of extinction
LO SIBRU	Neck piece	Worn by elderly ladies	Made of white beads	On the path of extinction

Chapter VI

Housing and Traditional Architecture of the Tiwas

A typical Tiwa house is called a 'Nau' and is made of thatch, bamboo, and wood. The entrance that leads to the house is a traditional gate which is made of bamboo in the traditional Tiwa style. The gate leads to the compound which is known as the 'Satali' in the Tiwa language, where the people sit and pass their leisure time. Then comes the verandah of the 'Nau' which is known as the 'Kombhor'. The Kombhor wall is decorated with objects which are unique and rare to find. The household people sit there and also entertain guests. The first room of the Nau (house) is called 'Nomaji' which is the sitting cum bed room where all the essential household goods are kept. The second room is the 'Nukhti' which is the kitchen of the house but at night people sleep there and the Granary too stands at one corner of the Nukhti . The 'Nau Pisa' is the next room where the local wine 'Zue' is prepared and stored. The last room is the 'Tingkhi Saal' where Tiwa people grind rice. This is a brief description of a typical Tiwa household and its lay out.

PICTURES OF TIWA TRADITIONAL ARCHITECHTURE AND HOUSING A TYPICAL TIWA HOUSE



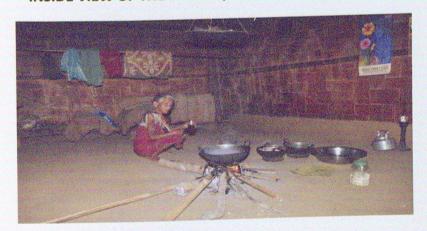
THE ENTRANCE THAT LEADS TO THE HOUSE



TIWA HOUSE WITH A THATCHED ROOF



INSIDE VIEW OF THE NOMAJI, the first room (below)



VIEW OF NOMAJI



NUKHTI THE SECOND ROOM



THE GRANARY INSIDE THE NUKHTI



TARONS (WHERE TIWA PEOPLE STORE ZUE, traditional wine) ON THE NUKHTI WALL



VIEW OF THE KOMBHOR WALL



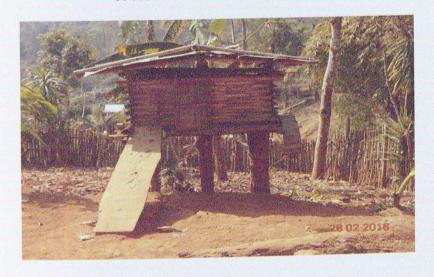
ANOTHER VIEWOF THE KOMBHOR WALL



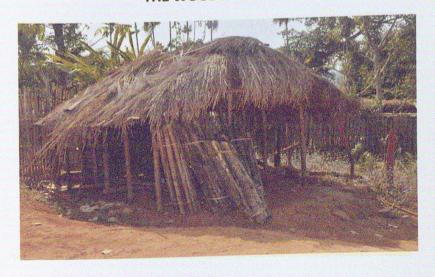
BIRD'S FEATHERS AT THE KOMBHOR WALL



A TYPICAL TIWA HENHOUSE



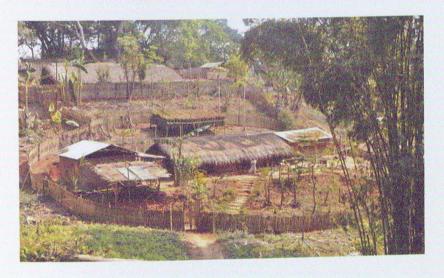
THE WOODSHED



THE NUKHTI WALL



VIEW OF THE VILLAGE



THE DEKACHANG

Dekachang is a place where the male youths of Tiwa community are being taught how to get prepared for a married life and also impart them knowledge about the responsibilities that they have to shoulder in their future life. Dekachang is also a place where the musical instruments are made and kept. Thus, it plays a vital role in Tiwa social formation and this is also to be found in many other tribal societies in North East India. It is not only a meeting place for all the male members of a Tiwa village but also an institution of informal education. It is a center of learning for the younger generations. They learn music, dance, handicraft and other essential facts of life at this 'Samadi' or Cultural Center of the Tribe. The youths join the Samadi when they are ten to twelve years old and remain as members until sixteen to nineteen years, that is, till they get married. The Dekachang is a huge hall of around 40/50 feet long and 20/25 feet wide. Entry of women to a Samadi is restricted. A managing committee is formed to look after the affairs of the Samadi which is known as "Panthai Khel". The three main posts of the Samadi are named after the three main officials of the Panthai Khel. They are Changdoloi, Changmaji and Suruma. These three posts are called 'Thamkhunda'. The entire Samadi is divided into four beautiful parts, each with a specific purpose. Thus, for the hill Tiwas the Samadi is an institution by itself. It can be taken as the integrating symbol in which lies the inherent strength and individuality of the village life.

THE DEKACHANG (below)



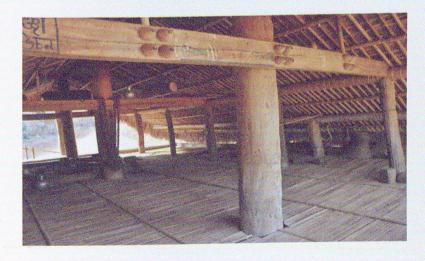
BOYS COMING OUT OF THE DEKACHANG (below)

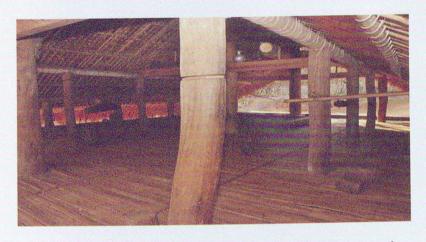


CHANGLA (WOODEN STAIRCASE OF THE DEKACHANG)

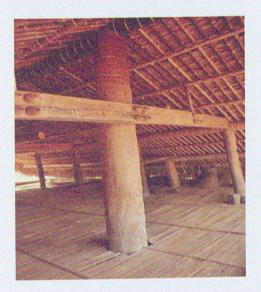


THE INSIDE VIEW OF THE DEKACHANG

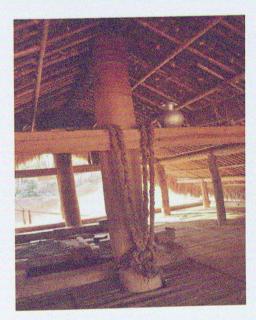




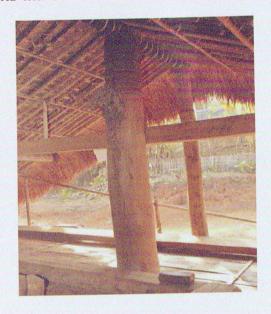
CHANGDOLOI THAMKHUNDA -THE FIRST POST (above)



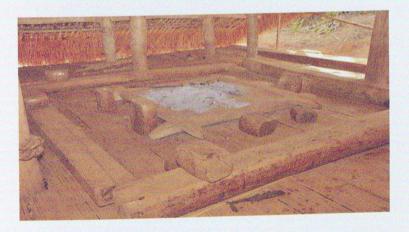
CHANGMAJI THAMKHUNDA (SECOND POST)



THE THIRD IMPORTANT POST OF THE DEKACHANG (below)



SIKAMPARI -THE FIRE PLACE (below)



KHRAMS KEPT IN THE DEKACHANG





MAI POTHALA KHRAMIN IN THE DEKACHANG



THOKARI IN THE DEKACHANG



MAI POTHALA BARI IN THE DEKACHANG



FORMS OF LIVING	DESCRIPTION OF THE HOUSEHOLD	MATERIAL USED FOR CONSTRUCTION	DESCRIPTION OF THE ARCHITECHTURE	WHETHER IN USE/EXTINCT
JOINT FAMILY	The compound of a Tiwa house or 'Nau' is called a Satali. Kombhor is the verandah where guests are entertained. The first room is the Nomaji, a room where everyone sits and sleeps and have their meals. On the ceiling of the Nomaji they keep the utensils hanging them with ropes and bamboo. The next room is the Nukthi, which has a kitchen where generally the womenfolk cook. Nukthi also holds the granary. Nukthi is the room for the preparation of their traditional wine 'Zue" and it holds the 'nau pisa', where they prepare it. The last room is the'Tingkhi Saal' where they grind rice.	The 'Nau' or a Tiwa house is made with bamboo, wood and special hay for the thatched roof.	One distinctive feature of a typical Tiwa house is the absence of windows and ventilators to let in light or air and therefore the inside of the houses are very dark. The houses are built lengthwise, one room leading to the other and with a single door in each room connecting to the next.	The practice of a 'joint family' is almost disappearing even in remote Tiwa villages.
SINGLE UNIT FAMILY	Description is the same	Construction materials are same as above. However in semi rural Tiwa villages as well as in remote villages 48e thatch roof is being replaced by CI sheets.	Is of same architecture as given above	'Single unit family' living is practiced by most Tiwa families in recent times.

DEKACHANG Dekachang also known as the Samadi is the Cultural Center of the village and is situated at the centre of the village. Dekachang is a place where the male youths of Tiwa community are being trained for their future, prepared for a married life and educated about the responsibilities that they have to shoulder in their lives ahead. Dekachang is also a place where the musical instruments are made and kept. The three main officials of the Panthai Khel or the managing committee. They are Changdoloi, Changmaji and Suruma. On the ceiling of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept. 'Changla' is the wooden staircase of the dekachang traditional musical instruments are being kept.
Wooden stancase

Chapter VII

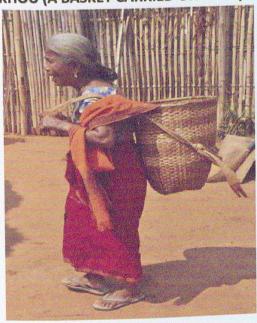
Art and Handicrafts

Household goods

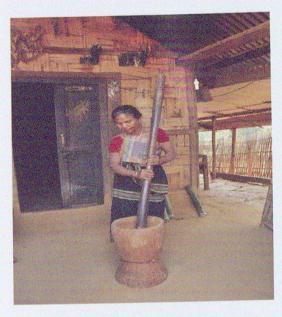
There are varieties of household goods in a traditional Tiwa home. All the names and description and their purpose of use are mentioned in the chart below. Some of the pictures of household items are given below in the chart. The household goods are a depiction of their culture, traditions, rituals, the natural resources around them, as also of the traditional cuisine, life style and mode of leading the lives of the traditional Tiwa people. They make household items from wood, bamboo, cane and reeds, as well as dried shells of certain vegetables The IRDIS team had to travel on field visits to remote villages to familiarize itself with the household goods and functioning of a typical Tiwa household. Tiwa households in the vicinity of urban and semi-urban regions have been influenced to a great degree by the lifestyle and the grind of the world outside due to demographic, environmental, cultural and social changes which have taken place over the years.

HOUSEHOLD ITEMS





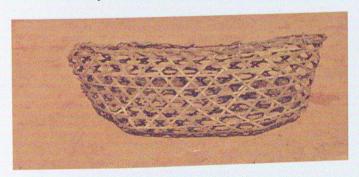
A WOODEN MORTAR AND PESTLE FOR GRINDING RICE



HAANGRA (A BIG KNIFE)



TU KHUJI (WHERE HENS ARE BEING KEPT)



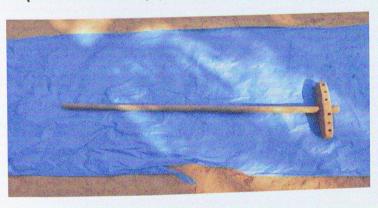
KHAAMLI (IS USED FOR SITTING PURPOSE)



Agriculture

The economy of the Tiwa people is mainly agriculture based. Like most of the tribal economy, the Tiwa people, specially, the people living in the hill regions are self-sufficient through their own methods of agriculture as well as through the natural resources in their natural environment some of which provide livelihood as cash crops, and provide their traditional diet and necessary food items. They are less dependent on supplies from outside. The tools and other items required for agriculture are crafted to suit their traditional mode of agriculture and harvest. The hills Tiwa community people carry out Jhum (Cut/slash/burn) cultivation while in the plains it is mainly wet cultivation. The important cash crops of the hill Tiwas are bamboo, broom sticks, beetlenut leaves, turmeric, ginger and some traditional vegetables. The agriculture tools are thus related to their traditional agriculture techniques necessary for their cultivation. Craft items are related to their ancient traditions and ethnic culture which the people cherish with pride. In other words, the crafts of hill areas is a rare combination of aesthetic and technical intimacy. Agriculture is the main occupation of both the plains and hills Tiwas. Names and pictures of their agricultural goods and weaving items have been given below.

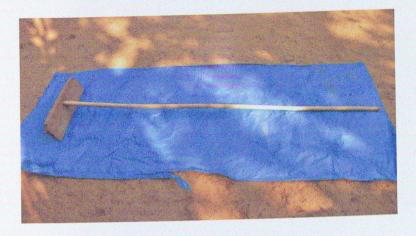
Jengphaku (is used to clean up garbage and can be of both wooden and iron)



Changla (is used for digging the soil)



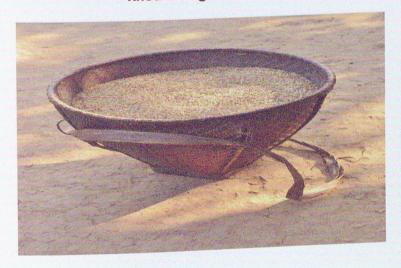
MAIKHONJEWANEPARI



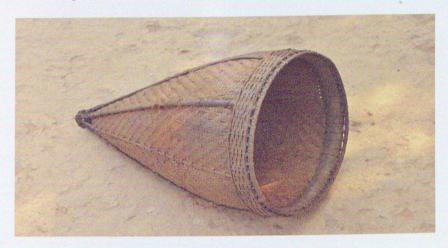
Khou



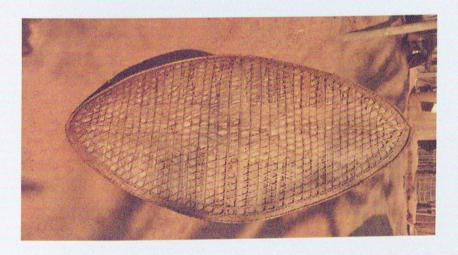
Khou with grain



Another variety of khou for carrying paddy seeds and sowing in the fields



Saldeng --a typical Tiwa umbrella made of bamboo specially worn at the time of cultivation



A Traditional Tiwa granary

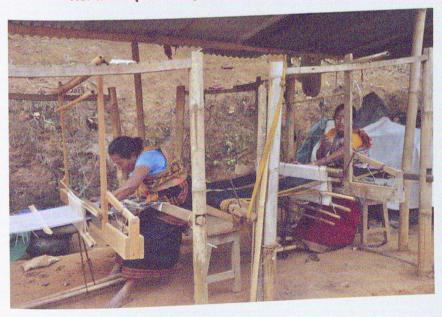


Weaving

Weaving in the Tiwa community, as in all tribal communities, is exclusively a female occupation, just as bamboo craft was and still is a male bastion. The techniques of weaving are handed down across generations. The girls, at an early age, start weaving with their mothers and grandmothers who assist and guiding them throughout till they reach a considerable level of expertise in weaving.

Indigenous weaving, unlike other handicrafts which in other parts of the country are confined to professional castes, is practiced as a household industry among the ethnic communities and tribes of Assam, irrespective of caste. The hand crafted tools necessary for their weaving which include those for the looms, for weaving intricate designs and motif in their woven textiles, for rearing of the silk worms and growing of the cotton plants, for spinning the cotton and the silk threads, for dying the thread and for preparation of their own natural dyes all require their indigenously crafted items and tools. However field visits showed that some traditional looms such as the waist loom that is set up in the ground is rarely found. Also due to the loss of land and environment cotton plantations are no longer found in Tiwa terrain and the cotton that they use are bought from the market or the Government provides them for their weaving. Silk rearing which was also common amongst the Tiwas, specially, the eri variety of silk, has also been affected due to environment and land loss. The Tiwa ladies till present times persevere to rear silk worms in their homes feeding them with mulberry leaves in specially woven bamboo trays.

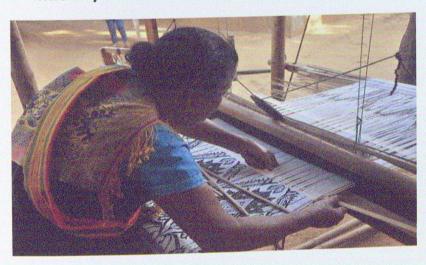
Rei thaat (the complete Tiwa loom)



Sirki (used for cleaning cotton before spinning)



Tiwa lady at her loom weaving an intricate design



Tiwa lady at her loom at the backyard of her home



Rearing of silk worms in a Tiwa home

The silk worms are fed with mulberry leaves



Tiwa lady feeding the silk worms with mulberry leaves

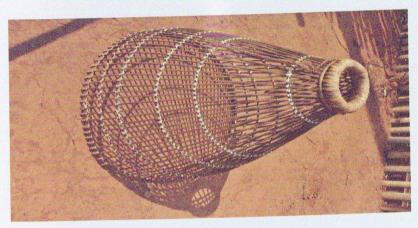


Fishing items

Khuji



Cylindrical Fish Trap 'Kaita'



'Jakhoi' & 'Khaloi'



Fishing

Fishing is a regular feature in the life of the Tiwas. Community. Fishing is a part of their cultural traditions, customs and rituals. During the annual Jonbeel Mela, the mela begins with an Agni Puja or fire worship for the well-being of the mankind. During the mela community fishing is carried out in the Jonbeel wetland. People from the Tiwa community catch fish during the "Community Fishing". The theme of the mela is harmony and goodwill among the various tribes and communities spread over Northeast India. Community fishing are also carried out in other wetlands within the Tiwa territory. Fishing tools and nets that are used in their fishing process are mentioned in the chart below.

Hunting

Hunting was an essential feature of the Tiwa community. When the land was free and belonged to them hunting was an indispensable part of their lives and living. However with the changes in the land laws, and since lands no longer belong to the communities, and also with stringent laws on killing wild life the tradition of hunting of the Tiwas is fading out. Hence the tools used for hunting crafted by them are also going extinct. Although they can be found in museum in the Gobha Rajyo and sometimes in some old households.

War tools of Gobha Roja (King) of ancient times



War Tools

The Tiwa community is a valiant community and have a history of having faced many fierce combats against other marauding tribes and groups and territorial displacements from ancient times. As such the Tiwa community have their indigenous war tools which however are preserved in their own museums as the Tiwa people at present times are peace loving and culturally and socially regarded in high esteem in the State.

HANDICRAFTS RELATED TO:	HANDICRAFT ITEMS IN TIWA LANGUAGE	DESCRIPTION OF THE ITEMS AND THE PURPOSE OF USE	WHETHER IN USE/EXTINCT
HOUSEHOLD ITEMS	midu	For cooking food;	Household items are in use specially, in the
	khangsi	Dish or a plate where they have foods;	Tiwa households of the villages.
	guthi	Traditional utensil to drink water from;	
	hamidu	Utensil for cooking food;	
	haadapari	Spoon;	
	kholos	A pot where they store or carry water;	
	kholao (kind of wok)	A traditional wok for preparing food;	
	faji	A round basket made out of bamboo;	
	sani	A round sieve made out of bamboo for cleaning	
	10.450.000	rice, wheat, etc;	
	siyongra	A round woven bamboo tray	
	ton	Hollow bamboo woven basket for holding vegetable, rice etc.	
	khou	Basket for carrying goods on the back;	
	khaangra	a big knife;	
	wasi	broom stick	
	dhingkhi	is used to grind rice;	
	sala	A bag;	

	posta	A traditional Tiwa bag	
	khamli	A low stool made of wood.	
	sagi	(diya)a small lamp;	
	saldeng	Traditional Tiwa umbrella;used in the fields during cultivation	
	taron	where they serve wine and also store it	
		Sieve	
AGRICULTURE	sakuni Paku (kur in assamese)	A tool used for digging,	All the agricultural
MICOLITORE	or spade	with a flat metal blade	tools are in use
		and a long handle	
	jengphaku	Tool for cleaning garbage and is made of	
		wood or iron	
	maikhonjewanepari	For clearing out the	
	maiknonjewanepan	fields	
	changla	For digging the soil	Weaving is a daily
WEAVING	Rei That	The complete loom.	chore of the Tiwa
			women specially in
	Parts associated with		the hills and the loom
	the loom are given		is an essential part of
	below		their lives.
	Khumkhati	•	and the second of the second o
	Poho		
	Peu		
	Thaat		
	Thuri		
	Thisli Rei Thaat Churi		
	Gendhor (jotor in		
	assamese)		
	Rearing of of silk		
	worms in mulberry		eropolita della
	leaves so that they		1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1
	could get their own silk from it		
	SIIK HOIII IL		
	Sirki	Used for cleaning	
		cotton before spinning into thread	
		into tili eau	

	Maati taat	This is the traditional Tiwa loom that is set up in the ground. Three or four short poles are set up with the support of which the loom is set up in the ground. The women sit in 'Khamli' or low stools and weave. This procedure of weaving is laborious and a time consuming task.	Maati taat is rarely used these days. On our field visits we did not come across the maati tat although we were told that that is the original loom of the Tiwas.
FISHING	Jakhoi Khaloi Polo Luni Khuka Thuha Rangi jaal Hel Borokhi Juluki Haatjali	They are the Traditional fishing tools used by the Tiwas for fishing. They also include tools used during community fishing.	Are in use as fishing is still an indispensable part of the Tiwa culture. Fish also forms a part of their traditional cuisine
HUNTING	Jathi Dhenu-kaar Jaal	Spears Bow and arrows Hunting nets	Although restrictive laws have been formulated for hunting wild animals, the Tiwas carry out hunting in the remote regions of their dwellings. They hunt for wild fowl, birds, wild boar, deer.

Chapter VIII

AGRICULTURE OF THE TIWAS

Agriculture is the main occupation of both the plain and hill Tiwas. The plains people mainly cultivate paddy, jute, mustard, potato, sugarcane and vegetables. However, the hill Tiwas practice Jhum or shifting cultivation. Their main products are sesame, ginger, turmeric, potato, chilies, cotton, pepper, pumpkin, ash gourd, bamboo shoot, medicinal herbs, etc. Although agriculture is the main activity, a small fraction of the population is engaged in cottage industries. They mainly produce cane and bamboo products. Women are also engaged in weaving. However, with the passage of time and ban on shifting cultivation and land laws which do not allow community land ownership, the number of people depending on business and service is increasing as agriculture alone is not able to provide subsistence to all families. The youth are forced to come out of their villages and look for alternative occupations. Some of the crops grown in both plain and hilly terrain are mentioned in the chart for agriculture.

NAME OF THE CROPS GROWN	METHODS OF GROWING (IN THE HILLY TERRAIN AND	TIME OF THE YEAR WHEN IT IS GROWN	REGION OF GROWING THE CROPS	WHETHER CASH CROP OR GROWN FOR PERSONAL CONSUMPTION
RICE (DIFFERENT TYPES OF RICE)	THE PLAINS) Jhum cultivation in the hilly terrain and wet cultivation in the plains	Cultivation is carried out between March to June	In both the hilly terrain and in the plains but they vary in their species and qaulities depending on the variation of the terrain	Personal consumption
JORLANG (A TYPICAL KIND OF	Mainly grown in the hilly terrain	From March to June	In the hilly terrain	For both personal consumption and as cash crops
	Mainly grown in the hilly terrain	From March to June	In the hilly terrain	For both personal consumption and cash crops
WASI (BROOM)	mainly grown in the hilly terrain	Sown in the month of April and harvested in February	In the hilly terrain	Mainly as cash crops. The Tiwas of the Hills have the special knowledge of cultivating Wasi.
CUCUMBER	grown in both the hilly terrain and the plains	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains	For both personal consumption and cash crops

KUMURA (THE GREEN GOURD FAMILY)	Grown in both in the hills and the plains	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains	For both personal consumption and cash crops
TURMERIC	mainly grown in the hilly terrain	From March to June	In the hilly terrain	For both personal consumption and cash crops
BAMBOO	mainly grown in the hilly terrain	perennial	In both the hilly terrain and plains	For both personal consumption and cash crops
BLACK PEPPER	Grown both in the hills and the plains	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains	For both personal consumption and cash crops
EGGPLANT	Grown both in the hills and the plains	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains	For both personal consumption and cash crops
TIL (SESAME)	Grown both in the hills and the plains	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains	For both personal consumption and cash crops
PAAN (BEETLE LEAVES)	Mainly grown in the hilly terrain	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains but they vary in their species and qualities	For both personal consumption and cash crops
KOSU	Mainly grown in the hilly terrain	From March to June	In both the hilly terrain and plains but they vary in their species and qualities	For both personal consumption and cash crops

PICTURES OF SOME OF THE CROPS GROWN BY THE TIWA PEOPLE

Paddy



WASI (BROOM)



BEETLE LEAVES (Paan)

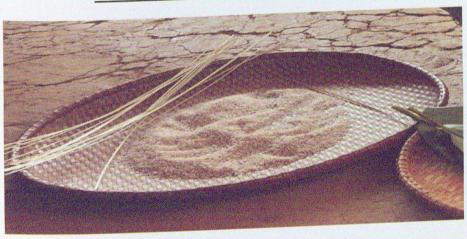


Chapter IX

Tiwa Cuisine

Rice is the staple food of the Tiwa tribe. They consume meat, fish and eggs. Fowl and pork are considered delicacies. The Tiwas enjoy drinking locally brewed traditional rice beer called 'Zue' in Tiwa, on a daily basis. Tribal food quest have five distinct characteristics. These are food gathering, plant cultivation, domestication of animals, hunting and fishing. There are a good number of ethnic herbs and vegetables which have been mentioned in the chart below. The mode of preparation of food of the Tiwas are – steaming, boiling, and cooking by filling hollow bamboo cylinders with the raw material that need to be cooked and heating and charring the bamboo cylinders in an open fire. The Tiwas also consume raw forms of herbs and vegetables prepared in their traditional methods.

TRADITIONAL TIWA RICE



VARIOUS TIWA HERBS

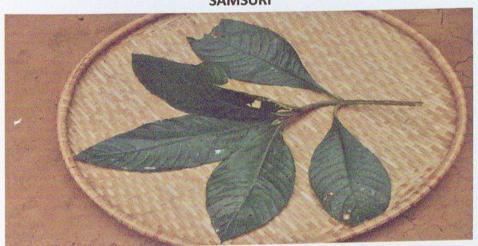
KANGTIPAKHOR (A KIND OF CORIANDER leaf)



SAMSOKOL (MOSUNDORI IN ASSAMESE)



SAMSURI



FAMJARI



TENGKHAPHOLO



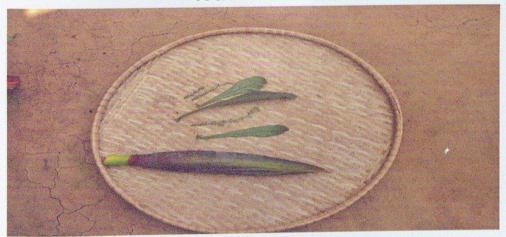
LAICHA TAP (TAP IS THE BANANA FLOWER)



TENGKHAPARO (A KIND OF EDIBLE FERN)



JOGARI TAP



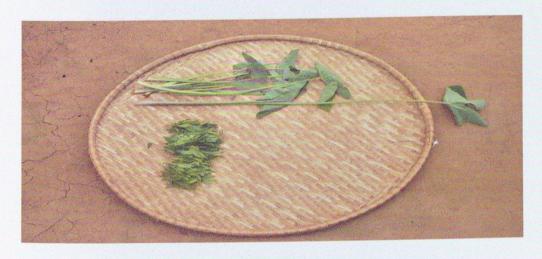
SHANGJOLA (SPECIALLY COOKED WITH RICE POWDER, DRIED FISH, ETC AND ALSO PUT WITH ALKALI)



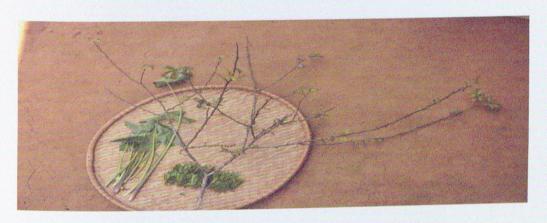
SOLOMPHE



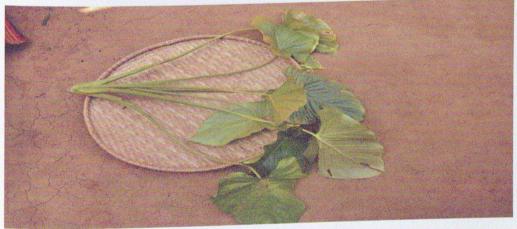
JARAIBISI, THAKONG (YAM LEAVES) JARAIBISI



MONGAMARI (IT IS COOKED ALONG WITH ALKALI AND CAN ALSO BE COOKED IN A HOLLOW BAMBOO STRIP)



SOKLAOBAR (IT IS A MEDICINAL HERB TAKEN DURING HEADACHE, STOMACH ACHE AND CAN BE COOKED IN A HOLLOE BAMBOO STRIP AND SERVED WITH RICE)



MODE OF PREPARATION

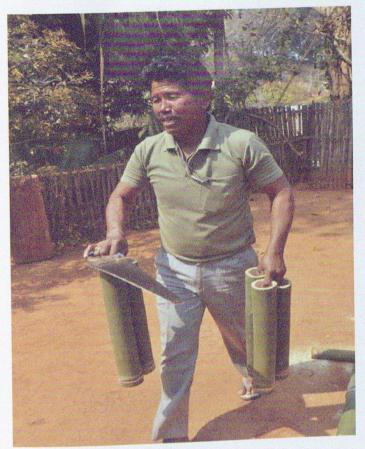
Grinding herbs and traditional spices in the hollow bamboo cylinders. Inserting raw food material in the bamboo cylinders for cooking in an open fire



Inserting the raw food into the hollow bamboo cylinder



Preparing the hollow bamboo cylinders for the purpose of cooking in a traditional way



Packing the rice in traditional leaf for cooking in the bamboo cylinders



TYING UP THE LEAVES



PUTTING THE PACKETS OF RICE INSIDE THE BAMBOO CYLINDER PLACING THE BAMBOO CYLINDER ON FIRE TO BE COOKED

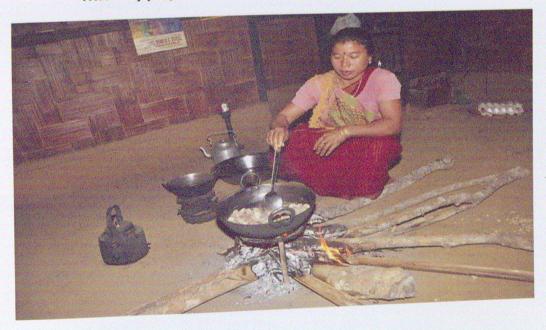




TIWA ETHNIC CUISINES



Tiwa lady preparing food in a traditional home



FOOD ITEMS	TRADITIONAL TIWA DISHES	MODE OF PREPARATION	OCCASION OF SERVING THE FOOD	ANY TABOOS REGARDING FOOD HABITS
RICE (is the staple food of the Tiwa people)	Traditional food	Steamed , cooked in hollow bamboos using Liakran (in tiwa language, a kind of palm leaf) leaves for wrapping the moist rice and packing it into the bamboo cylinders	Rice being the staple food they have it for their meals on a daily basis. Tiwa people are generally nonvegetarian and they serve fish, meat and eggs dish with rice during festivals and for guests.	None
"ZUE'	Zue is the traditional drink of the Tiwas	Zue is brewed from the traditional rice of the Tiwas. It is made from boiled broken rice mixed with pounded herbs. Water is added and the mixture is allowed to ferment for two days in earthenware pots called 'koloh'.	It is a drink that is served to show honour and respect to guests and also during festivals and traditional occasions. Zue is served in households in a regular manner.	None, served as a daily drink after a hard day's work to both men and women. Served to guests and visitors to show respect and hospitality.
Tiwa traditional vegetables and herbs	Some of the herbs and vegetables are (In Tiwa language): Kangtipakhor, Samsokol, Samsuri, Famjari, Tengkhapholo, Laicha tap, Tengkhaparo, Jagori tap, Shanjola, Solomphe, Jaraibisi, Mongamari, Soklaobar	Most vegetables and herbs are served in the raw form or in the boiled form	Vegetables and herbs form an integral part of their daily diet	None

FISH	Fish is preserved with alkali and salt and kept in hollow bamboo cylinders	Generally in the boiled form. Dried fish is cooked with herbs or served as chutneys with herbs	It is an important item when meals are served to the guests .Served to the family as a dish in their daily meals.	None
EGGS	Eggs are generally boiled and served	Served boiled	Is included in their daily meals and also served to guests	None
FOWL AND PORK ARE CONSIDERED DELICACIES	Boiled in iron woks or cooked in hollow bamboo cylinders with herbs	Meat is cooked in hollow bamboo cylinders that are charred in an open fire or served in the boiled form.	Boiled chicken or pork is served for family members often. However the special dish cooked in bamboo cylinders is made specially for guests.	None

Chapter X

Music and Musical Instruments

Tiwa community is known to be rich in their folk songs and dances. Songs and dances are an inseperable part of their culture and traditions and they are performed during religious occasions, during their festivals and marriage celebrations. Tiwa people's musical instruments are of various types. These are – Khram (drum), Pangsi (flute), Thurang (special long flute of two holes only), Akao. They have three or four types of royal drums (Khram). Muhuri is a traditional flute type of and Thurlu is a short flute made in a traditional manner.

Names of the instruments in Tiwa language	Names in English	Description of the instruments/purpose of use	Whether in use/extinct	
KHRAM	A Tiwa drum	Made of wood and sheep skin. In ancient times deer skin was used	In use during traditional festivals and dances	
PANGSI	A traditional Tiwa flute used along with the Khram.	Made of bamboo.	In use in the hill regions of Assam	
THURANG	A Tiwa flute	A Special long flute which has two openings. Made from a special bamboo called 'Dolou bahn' in Tiwa language.	In use in the hill regions and specially during Langkhun Phuja in the hills of west Karbi Anglong district	
MUHURI	A Tiwa flute	Another traditional flute made of wood.	Rarely found in the plains. It is to be found at present times amongst the 'Makrowali' clan and the Muhuri is played along with Khram, Pangsiand Thurang for the 'Moinari Kanthi Misawa'	
TUMDING	Small drum	Small drum made of soil	Popular amongst the hill tribes, and played during the Moinari Kanthi Misawa.	
TOGOR	Small drum played with a couple of sticks	Small drum carried on the waist of a person and played with two small sticks. It is made of wood.	In use	
KHRAM LUDANG	A drum	A traditional Tiwa drum made of wood and sheep skin	Used by different clans during festivals such as Wangshua Misawa, Yangli Misawa	
KHRAM PANTHAI	A drum	A traditional Tiwa drum	Used during festivals such as Wangshua Misawa. This drum is related to agriculture. The Mai Pothala is played and acoording to the beat provided by it, the rice is pounded to separate the hus from the rice grain	
MAI POTHALA KHRAM	A traditional Tiwa drum	A pair of drum which is played during grain pounding		
MAI POTHALA BARI	Percussions	It is made of bamboo and mostly played in the	It is associated with agriculture. The rice grains are separated from the hay by beating the hay stack with the Mai Pothala Baris in a rhythmic manner.	
THOKARI	A Tiwa musical instrument	Made of wood and the dried shell of 'teeta lau'-bitter gourd. DANG (A TRADITIONAL D	In use	

KHRAM LUDANG (A TRADITIONAL DRUM)



KHRAM PANTHAI (ANOTHER TRADITIONAL DRUM)



MAI POTHALA KHRAM (A PAIR OF DRUM PLAYED DURING GRAIN POUNDING)



THOKARI



MAI POTHALA BARI (PLAYED IN THE YANGLI FESTIVAL)



A Few Tiwa Folk Songs

NAME OF FOLK SONGS	OCCASION OF PERFORMING THE FOLK SONG	BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE FOLK SONG
NEMA MAYLINE HABA HAGRA KOITHAKA	Related to agriculture mainly sung during cultivation.	This song depicts the hard life of the women folk associated with their agricultural life
KUNG GAIGAI THAGRA TAIMA DAI	A lullaby	This is a lullaby to comfort and put the young ones to sleep.
LENGO THENGO TAARI TAILA THAKONG LENGO	It is a sad love song	It is a love ballad that describes how a lover boy was taken away by a strong wind while coming to the jungle to meet his beloved.

Chapter XI

Livelihood of the Tiwas

	-	T ====================================
MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD (TRADITIONAL AND NEW MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD)	DETAILS OF THE LIVELIHOOD	CHANGES IN LIVELIHOOD AND THE REASONS THERE OF
AGRICULTURE	Tiwa people grow crops mainly for their own consumption but they grow some cash crops too. Sometimes they also sell rice and local vegetables in the nearby local markets	Due to the loss of land and environment the agricultural means of livelihood is dying out to some extent and that is why people are coming out of their villages to find employment in cities and towns in present times
WEAVING	The Tiwas wear clothes that are woven in their owm looms. The. womenfolk are entrusted with the task of weaving for their families and themselves .	In present times however the womenfolk weave for their families as well as to sell them in the market . Their woven material and their ethnic designs are of much demand in the market outside theirs.
GOVERNMENT SERVICE, BUSINESS AND SERVICE IN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTOR AND OTHERS	In the remote villages people still follow the traditional mode of livelihood but in some semi-rural villages which are close to towns and cities, the young people come out to work in govt, public, private and other sectors	In recent times Government encourages the people in the villages to take up work in remote regions based on daily wages. This applies to both men and womenfolk.

AGRICULTURE A MEANS OF LIVELIHOOD

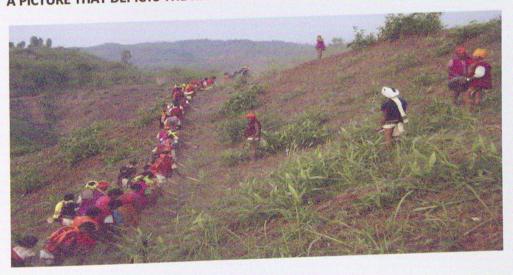
VIEW OF TIWA MEN ENGAGED IN THE FIELD TO CULTIVATE CROPS



TIWA WOMEN COMING OUT TO THE FIELD FOR CULTIVATION



A PICTURE THAT DEPICTS THE HARD LABOUR OF TIWA PEOPLE IN THE FIELD OF CULTIVATION



WEAVING

WOMEN ENGAGED IN THEIR HANDLOOMS





Chapter XII

Birth, Marriage and Death

EVENT(BIRTH, MARRIAGE, DEATH)	RITUALS
MARRIAGE	The Borkhela (clan's eldest person), Borkabi (eldest son-in-law, Borhari (eldest women of the clan), Pisai (headman) and Raiz (the local people) play an important role in the marriage rituals of a Tiwa community. They are the important people who should be present in a marriage. In olden times marriage rituals followed the elopement of the couple. Marriage of a boy and a girl from the same clan is forbidden.
BIRTH	As in the marriage rituals in the birth rituals too the above mentioned people have a significant role to play. Different clans have their own special deities whom they worship on the birth ceremony of a child. Mantras are chanted during the rituals after child birth where the senior members of the family, clan and the village have important roles to play.
	The gaonburha or the Headman of the village selects two male persons and two ladies to give them responsibilities for the funeral purpose. These two selected male persons along with some people of the clan carry wood and bamboos to the 'mangkor saal' (cemetry or the place where they

cremate the dead person).
and make arrangemets for
the pyre(sita). The two
selected ladies along with the
other women folk of the
village start cooking to feed
the guests. They also carry
some food to the 'mangkor
saal' to offer the dead.
In the case of a person
committing suicide or death
following a serious ailment
the dead is buried.

