



## A NOTE ON THE THEME OF THE FESTIVAL

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Idu Mishmis of Arunachal Pradesh are celebrating the Golden Jubilee Celebration of Central Reh festival to be held in Roing, Lower Dibang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh on 1st, 2nd and 3rd of February 2018.

The Central Reh Celebration has successfully completed the journey of fifty years from its inception in 1968 to 2018. On this occasion we remember our ancestors and the pioneers who have toiled hard to the founding of the festival. We also remember those who have made relentless efforts in the foundation of arts and culture. The occasion and the event is organised by the Golden Jubilee Central Reh Celebration Committee-2018(GJCRCC), under the aegis of Idu Mishmi Cultural and Literary Society (IMCLS). The emblem and logo of the festival comprises of the slogan 'abene khakuwe reh khakuwe' (Long Live Reh Celebration) and 'celebrating eco-spirituality' based on the community's age old living in harmony with nature through its faiths and beliefs.

The world today is concerned about the issues such as the Global Warming, Climate Change and equally the Sustainable Development. There is an urgent urge for ecological balance. The traditional societies have a reputation of maintaining the ecological balance or 'Harmony with nature', traditional way of living sustainably through indigenous practices and belief system.

The Idu Mishmis have precise knowledge of their environment and all the resources provided by it. Every aspect of their life is straight simulation of nature. They dress themselves to look like animals and birds around them and their social wisdom was influenced by it. They have every name for flora and fauna surrounding them.

The tough geographical terrain on which they settled shaped their personality. The influence of environment on the socio-cultural life of Idu Mishmis is immense. Nearly all the folktales reveal a close affinity with forest; animals and plants. They have evolved the effective traditional ways of using different plant species for curing different ailments.

For curing of diseases, apart from spiritual services of the Igu (shaman), the medicines were procured from nature. The nature provided them plants and animals which they learnt through trial and errors as antidote to various ailments. Different flowers, roots, leaves, creepers, seeds and bulbs were either taken directly or made as paste or juice for consumption. The coptis teeta (Mishmi teeta or also locally Aro) was an important day to day medicinal plant.

In their incessant endeavour to adjust with nature; they also invented a set of beliefs and faiths, which represented their religion, vis-à-vis, the environment. The natural objects like river, stream, hill, mountain, etc. were personified. They assigned all the mysteries of environment as spirits, to study them closer, to satisfy the reasoning and intellectual hunger and performing the experiments with their surroundings. The rites and rituals were created to appease them. All the objects for ritual performances such as plants, herbs, bamboo etc. were procured from forest.

The Idu Mishmi belief puts them as a part of ecology, each with sphere of influence. They do not seek to abuse it or exploit it. For them forest (Ambapa) is a home, a haven which has shaped his faith and beliefs. The fear of losing advantages has made him respect the environment, the source of his life. The existence derived from respecting the eco-system and not demanding from it. The limited hunting through taboos became a way of obtaining supplementary food. As a food gatherer and hunter, they have maintained a symbiotic relationship with nature. The myths, legends and chants were developed to fulfill their curiosity to know the creator and controller of their surroundings. Thus, they tried to adjust with nature in every way.



The forest was their supplier of food and subsistence. They didn't cut trees more than they need for cultivation and fuel. After the tree was felled down, a stone was placed on the thump as a mark of appeasing the spirits (eco-spirituality). They dreaded the complete destruction of forest; fearing offending of spirits (Gonlo) of woods and forests by cutting them indiscriminately. For them the forest was giver of food and shelter. If it was destroyed they could not survive. Forest products such as tubers, rhizome, succulent shoots, fruits, edible leaves (Na -leaf), bark and mushrooms were used in day to day life. During cultivation (shifting) when the debris was burnt, utmost care was made to prevent the spread of fire beyond the cultivation plot (fence).


They did not kill or slaughter animals more than they need. Hunting was considered a necessity and not meant for leisure or sports. It had socio-religious implications. The wild animals were believed to be owned by spirits. Hence, after killing of an animal taboos had to be observed. They have developed elaborate taboos (Aangi ena) to govern their relations with nature and manage conservation. The hunter sought pardon or atonement from the spirits and abandon further killing for days in the form of taboos. The person who shared the kill was also subjected to same taboos. This was in conformity with the belief that the wild animals and their killing should also be respected. The observance of taboos could stretch for a long time depending on the nature of the animal killed. Through these observances there was no indiscriminate killing of wild animals and balance with nature was maintained. This symbolism is implied in the belief that tiger and man are brothers. Hence, the tiger and hoolock gibbons are not to be killed. This relatedness has helped in the conservation of such species.


Hence, environment plays a vital role in man's development. The climate and geography have conditioned the various aspects of Idu world in political, economic, technological and cultural phenomena. Hence, for Idu Mishmis the nature is sacred and also the source of livelihood. More broadly, it can be summarized that the interplay has been reciprocal and hence the 'eco-spirituality' is adopted as the theme of the festival.


The formal function on **01.02.2018** will be attended by Shri Pema Khandu, Honourable Chief Minister, Government of Arunachal Pradesh as Chief Guest and Shri T.N Thongdok, Honourable Speaker, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Shri Tapir Gao, Former Member of Parliament, presently State President, Bharatiya Janata Party and Brigadier Robi Kapoor, Lohit Brigade as Guest of Honours and Special Invitees.

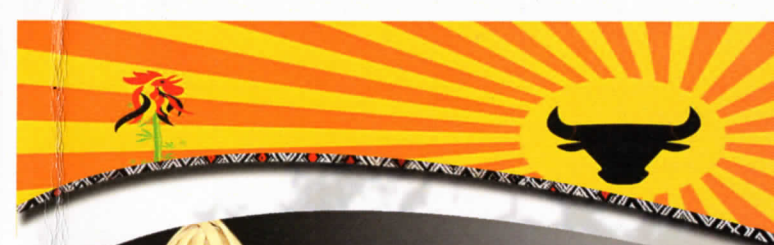
Hence, we would be pleased to have you here with us in the festival. You are cordially invited along with the family and friends on all days February, 1-3, 2018, Jubilee Ground, Roing, Lower Dibang Valley, Arunachal Pradesh.

*With Warm Regards,*

  
(Dr. Ista Pulu)  
General Secretary,  
Golden Jubilee Central Reh  
Celebration Committee-2018

  
(Shri Ginko Lingi)  
President,  
Idu Mishmi Cultural and Literary  
Society (IMCLS)

  
(Shri Bishen Mepo)  
President,  
Golden Jubilee Central Reh  
Celebration Committee-2018



**SHRI PEMA KHANDU,  
HONOURABLE CHIEF MINISTER,**

GOVERNMENT OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH  
HAS CONSENTED TO GRACE THE OCCASION  
AS CHIEF GUEST  
ON 01.02.2018, AT JUBILEE GROUND,  
ROING, LOWER DIBANG VALLEY,  
ARUNACHAL PRADESH.



**ROING-FEB 1, 2 & 3**

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