



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435(Online) Volume 15, Issue 02, February 2026)

Ethno- Historical Study of the Beliefs, Myths, Legends, Taboos and Festival of the NYISHI People of Arunachal Pradesh.

Dr. Yami Mite

Assistant Professor, Department of History, Binni Yanga Govt. Women's College, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

Abstract—Similar to the origin of other people's religion worldwide, the religion of the *Nyishi* too is shrouded in numerous myths and tradition of the tribe which are as old as the tribe itself. However, from the rational point of view, it appears that the origin of the beliefs and practices of the *Nyishi* lie in their constant attempts to adjust themselves with the environments which surrounded them and in which they lived because their place of origin, the routes of migration and their present land lie in the most difficult regions of the world. Like the intricate system of beliefs among other tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, the *Nyishis* also simultaneously believed in both the spiritual aspects of nature and the conception of a Supreme Being.

Keywords—Beliefs, Myths, Legends, Taboos, Festival, Nyishi people of Arunachal Pradesh.

I. INTRODUCTION

The body of thoughts, feelings and convictions about how humans relate to God make up the internal part of religion, while the systems of prayers, rituals, and ceremonies that make up the exterior part of religion are how the religious feeling is expressed. The religious organization, which is typically referred to as a church, temple, etc. in modern times, is the one in charge of regulating these external practices. Because of the extensive research conducted today on human religious consciousness at all phases of human development, we can propose a definition of religion that will be sufficient to distinguish it from other phenomena. While defining religion, *Theodore* said, "If I were personally to define religion, I would say that it is a bondage that man has invented to protect a soul made bloody by circumstances" The religious belief and practices of the people of Arunachal Pradesh, which has a significant impact on both their individual and communal lives, are essentially cohesive and revolve around an ethereal order of being, forces, locations or other beings. *Dr Verrier Elwin*, in his book, 'A Philosophy for NEFA' has vividly described the religious system of the people of Arunachal Pradesh "as belief in Supreme God, mythology, spiritual realities, social ethics and means to overcome eternal emergencies of life". Unlike the other religion of the country, the religion of these people is not a separate institution in itself controlled by a particular section of society.

Rather their religion is a part of their everyday life and not confined to the shrines or temples only. Further their religion had simple social ethical codes that united the people and fostered the tribal qualities of simplicity, honesty and integrity.

II. MYTHS AND LEGENDS

The English word myth is derived from the Greek word 'Mythos' which means word or story concerning gods and super human beings. It is typically associated with the unreal world and frequently understood as a tale or invented story which is nothing to do with the reality. It is solely perceived as figment of human imagination. But from a historical and religious point of view myths have never been treated as tale but something significant and real. They are seen as fundamental moment of encounter with the supernatural world and with aspects that transcends human nature. Thus, myths are conceived as an attempt to understand man and the world and are crucial ingredient of all historical religions of the world. Whereas legends are traditional story or group of stories told about people or places. They may include supernatural beings, elements of mythology or explanations of natural phenomena but they are associated with a particular locality or person and are told as a matter of history.

Similarly, like other tribes of Arunachal Pradesh, the *Nyishis* of Kamle also have their myths and legends about the creation of its world, fauna and flora, the emergence of mankind on earth, religion, festival etc. They settled in the most rugged territories of Arunachal Pradesh. As a result, constant effort was undertaken by them to adapt themselves with nature so as to live peacefully and to be free from all diseases, sufferings and misfortunes. However, the natural phenomena remained mysterious to them. Thus, the emergence of numerous legends and myths concerning the world's flora and fauna, the arrival of man on earth, religion, festivals, and other topics stemmed from their insatiable curiosity about the genesis of the world.

II (a) Various mythical versions of the Nyishi about the creation of the world.

1. According to *Nyishi* mythology, the entire cosmos was once silent and empty, which is known as *Kurum Jiimi Kool Jaama*.

The exact time period of origin, creation and evolution of the universe is unknown, which dates back to several millions of centuries. It was several millions of centuries ago which is termed as *Kurum Kool*, the first object called *Himb*, a semi-fluid like structure was formed in that empty space (*KurumJiimi Kool Jaama*). From *Himb*, slowly and gradually all heavenly bodies were created which included stars and planets whom the *Nyishi* popularly called *Takar* (stars), *Ejii* or *Donyi* (sun), *Hingo Phol* (moon), *Siichi* (earth) and other heavenly bodies. Of those heavenly bodies, the *Siichi* also called *Chiit* (Earth) and *Doot* (Sky, Space and celestial bodies) were in close contact which were essential for procreation and proliferation of life on earth. The earth, sky and celestial bodies were separated and held apart with the help of an unseen forces known as *Siichi-Nyido Giil-Daal*, viz., the gravitational forces that held together Earth and the celestial objects of our cosmos. After the separation of Earth and Sky including the celestial bodies such as Moon and Stars, the space between the Earth and Sky was filled up with *Duri* (Air), *Ejii* or *YiyuDonyi* (The ancient Sun, primeval fire source), *Hei* (The Water Bodies) and *Hingo* or *Mama-Phol* (The Moon). Thus, the configuration of the celestial objects of the universe was completed.

- Another myth on creation of the Universe states, "Everything was water, water as far as the eye could see. Eventually, above the water raised the tree called *Teri-Ramula*. As time passed a worm was born in the tree and it began to eat the wood. The dust fell into the water, year after year, until slowly the world was formed. And then at last the tree fell to the ground. The bark on the lower side of the trunk became the skin of the world; the bark of the upper side became the skin of the sky. The trunk itself turned into rock. The branches became the hills.

II (b) Myths and Legends of the Nyishi about the creation of man.

After the creation of the sun, moon, earth and configuration of all the celestial bodies, the first living creature born on earth was *Biir-Biima*. The *Biir-Biima* gave birth to *Yiikum-Temii* and *Yiikum-Temii* gave birth to *Opo-Ane*, and *Opo-Ane* gave birth to numbers of supernatural spirits in two phases. In first phase, she (*Opo-Ane*) gave birth to all benevolent Gods and spirits and in second phase, she gave birth to all malevolent spirits. As per the traditional spiritual classification made by the *Nyishi*, there are two types of divine spiritual forces that exists in the Cosmos.

First are the conglomerates of the Benevolent Gods, Goddesses and Spirits which are called as *Lagbek Wui*, that means, the Right-Hand Side Gods, Goddesses and Spirit and the second is the conglomerates of Malevolent Gods, Goddesses and Spirits which are called as *Lakchi Wui*, that means, the Left-Hand Side Gods, Goddesses and Spirit

After *Biir-Biima*, the next living creature who came into existence on earth was the *ChiituAane* who gave birth to *Tuni* (also known as *Chiituge Tuni* or *Kurum Teen*), the first *Aab-Tani*. As per *Nyishi* legends, there were several forms of *Aab-Tani* who evolved at successive evolutionary period one after another. The first semi-human form of *Tani* was *Kurum Tani* or *Nyima Tani*. The second last form of *Aab-Tani* was called *Nyiyii Tani*. From *Nyiyii Tani* two sons were born. The first son was *Poi (Wui) Tani* who love darkness and as a result remain active during night time. Some supernatural spirits were born from *Poi Tani* for maintaining the balance of nature which are under strict command and control of fountain head God and Goddess (*Yullo Wui*). The second son was *Nyai Tani* who loves day light. It is the *Nyai Tani* who represents the humankind and remains active during day time. So, the *Nyishis* believes that the present day *Nyishi* tribe of Arunachal Pradesh have evolved from *Nyai Tani*.

Besides these, there are various myths and legends among the *Nyishi* regarding the creations of natural phenomenon such as thunder, lightning, earthquake etc., creation of birds, animals, reptiles etc., discovery of fire, evolution of religion and others.

III. RITUALS AND SACRIFICES

Rituals and sacrifices are the vital components of the tribal society. As ritual cannot exist without sacrifice and vice versa, both are complementary. Simply stated, ritual is the act of recognizing and mediating with the offended deity and spirit, while sacrifice is the ultimate agreement between the two. Every ritual includes components of invocation, argumentation, and contemplation, which are followed by the offering of sacrifices. Using divination, the priest performs them in many ways. Depending on the requirements and preferences of the relevant deity or spirit, sacrifices of all kinds are offered in the form of domesticated animals, such as Mithun (*Bos Frontalis*), cows, pigs, goats, poultry, dogs, eggs, etc. (*See Plate-1*)



Plate 1: Sacrifice of Animals during Boori- Boot Yullo Festival.

Source: Photo taken by researcher while witnessing Boori-Boot Yullo Festival Celebration.

The *Nyishis* have a strong sense of the unseen world, which they believe to be filled with an immense variety of gods, spirits and demons, and into which they themselves expect to enter after death. They strongly believe in their powers to harm or help humanity. To mediate between the powers of the unseen world and the mankind, the priests are born. It is through sacrifices and rituals conducted by the priest; all the unseen powers can be appeased. All these sacrifices and rituals are performed as par the need of a person. The foremost purpose for offering sacrifice is to cure the disease of a person which is thought to be brought on by the malevolent *Wuis*.

After identifying the malevolent *Wui* responsible for the disease, the next step is to propitiate the *Wui* which is ascertained by means of divination. The sacrifices are to be done exactly in the same manners as revealed in the divination. Divinations are done by the priests either through examination of chicken's liver or yolk of an egg to figure out the type of sacrifices that are necessary. Animal sacrifice plays a pivotal role in all ritualistic ceremonies. The *Nyib* invokes the *Wuis* to accept the sacrificed animals and fowls in lieu of patient's *Yal* (soul) that was in their captivity. If a patient starts improving, it is presumed that the *Wui* has accepted the offering.

Sacrifice of animals and fowls are also done to appease the benevolent *Wuion* different occasions, such as, at the time of peace and prosperity sacrifices are offered to the *Donyi Phol* and the benevolent *Wuis* to achieve material prosperity and good health for a person, his family and clan members as a whole. Sometimes offerings are also made to the *Donyi Phol* and the Benevolent *Wuis*, so that the *Yal* of a dead person may reach them and live in their safe custody. According to their beliefs, after death a person's *Yal* travels to another world (*Wui Mok*).

They also perform sacrificial rituals to avenge the enemy in retaliation and to get the help and blessings of the supernatural power for this purpose. Such kind of sacrificial ritual is called as *Sotung Erapt*. The *Wuis* are invoked to punish the enemy. Further, other sacrifices are done to prevent any sort of natural calamities. The sacrifices are performed to drive off the evils *Wuis* from harming the village dwellers. Such sacrificial rituals are called as *Potor*, *MokoYulu* etc. In such rituals Mithun and other animals are sacrificed to appease the evil spirits. Presence of unusual things or occurrence of any unusual events also calls for performance of sacrifices for the *Nyishi* people. As such, when they come across any abnormal shaped trees or wild creepers while clearing jungle for cultivation sacrifices are conducted because they believe that these unusual things are the work of the *Yapom* (*Wui* of the jungle). Similarly, the appearance of any unusual or abnormal crops in the field is also considered to symbolize displeasure of the spirits. Even killing of deformed or mutilated animals like boar, tiger, leopard, bear etc., is considered as bad omen. As a result, people undertake sacrifices to ensure that the soul of that animal does not harm the perpetrator or his family members.

The *Wui Riigi* is constructed with bamboo and leaves of particular wild trees and plants as instructed by the *Nyib*. They are abundantly decorated with fine bamboo shavings. The sacrificial alter is constructed in such a way that it represents different spirits.



All the animals and fowls which are to be sacrificed are tied to it and chanting is done by the *Nyib* before they are killed. Some parts of the sacrificed animals especially of mithun and pig are considered sacred such as blood, mouth, tongue and heart. These sacrificed items are shared only among the clan members because of its sacredness which on the other hand promotes the feeling of oneness and unity among the clan members. Different methods are adopted to kill the sacrificial animal or fowl for the rituals such as *Porok* (chicken) is killed by cutting from the lower part of the neck by *Habo Rikchik* (small knife); *Iik* (Dog) is killed by striking on head by stick; *Siben* (goat) is killed by striking on the upper part of neck with *Orok* (Dao); *Erek* (pig) is killed by piercing through the chest by *tombh* (Sharp bamboo stick) and lastly *Sob* (Mithun) is killed by striking on the lower part of the head with *Hiigi* (Axe).

Thus, the *Nyishi* people propitiate and pacify both benevolent and malignant spirits in order to have a happy, fruitful, and meaningful existence. The *Nyib* directs the purpose and procedure of the entire sacrificial process based on omens and all necessary preparations are made accordingly. It is very fascinating to comprehend that it is the *Wui* which communicates to the *Nyib* regarding what items should be sacrificed in the rituals such as the colour, sex, age or quantity of animals and fowls. They have little choice but to make arrangements in line with the spirit's demands; otherwise, the *Wui* may become enraged and cause adversities to them. In *Wui Riigi*, the spiritual deities are accurately represented in different symbols to which sacrifices are offered. A generous amount of the blood of a sacrificial animal or bird is applied against the symbol of each spiritual deity, supposedly as an indication of sacrifice. Finally, the *Nyib* concludes every ritual and sacrifice by outlining the rules of conduct for each individual, family and the community at large. Maintaining of restrictions are not only must but also necessary because of coming into agreement between the mankind and the spirit through *Nyib* as a mediator. Any deviation from the terms of the agreement will be regarded as a breach, leading to the recurrence of all problems and hardships.

IV. TABOOS

The word "Taboo" implies prohibition, which may refer to a forbidden act that is against the societal norms and the religious beliefs, or both. Taboo may refer to limitations set up to protect against harmful and supernaturally malicious things, such as floras, faunas, artifacts, as well as people particularly those considered to be under the impact of evil spirits. Hence, items that are forbidden from being viewed, contacted, heard, smelled, or tasted are known as taboo items.

Whichever is violated will instantly trigger the fury and the displeasure of the supernatural power and the demonic spirits. The taboo permeates every area of human existence and serves as a constant restraint on both mental and physical impulses.

The *Nyishis* have number of taboos which are called as *Err-Donam*. Observing the taboos constitutes an important element in their religious life. It is observed to avoid bad luck, sickness, epidemic or fury of the spirits. It is to be sincerely followed by the family, clan and sub clan members and sometime also by the whole village people as per the order and advice of the *Nyib*. However, *Err* is more rigid on the family concerned and especially upon the patient. What type of taboos to be observed depends on the exact nature of problem faced by a person and the sort of sacrifices offered thereby. According to the mythical narration of the *Nyishi*, *Aab-Tani* (mythical ancestor) and *Wuis* (spirits) were the contemporaries. *Aab-Tani* was bestowed with extra power to deal with other earthly living things. The *Wuis* were envious of his surplus power and control. As a result, they were always searching for ways to undermine *Aab-Tani* and to rob off his power. As a result, there were continuous plotting and quarrel among the two. Ultimately, the entire terrain including the streams and the rivers were chosen to be delimited separately for *Aab-Tani* and *Wuis* in order to resolve their disagreements. The areas designated for the *Wuis* were the arid, unusable lands unfit for human habitation, whereas the lands appropriate for human settlement were allocated to the *Aab-Tani*.

Three basic types of taboos are observed by the *Nyishi* after every ritualistic ceremony. First kind of taboo is restriction on movement, when they keep themselves confined within the house. The period of such confinement varies in each sacrificial ritual. In big sacrifices taboo on movement may vary from 10 days to one month. The second kind of taboo is related to restriction on carrying out certain works. Immediately after sacrificial ritual is over, restrictions are imposed on cutting of big trees, digging holes, no hunting and fishing etc. The third kind of taboo is on eating. The ailing person and the family members who performed the ritual have to refrain from eating the flesh of certain animals, vegetables and fruits. However, every restriction depends upon the nature of sacrifice. The non-observance of the required taboos is believed to bring about misfortunes to either the patient or the family members.

Besides sacrificial rituals, there are also certain occasions in *Nyishi* life when some taboo is observed by them. The husband must adhere to certain taboos when his wife is in the advanced stages of her pregnancy. He has to refrain from killing animals, birds, insects, snake and cutting *Takek siin* (cane tree).

He is also prohibited from felling *Kopo Kol* (wild banana tree) otherwise his wife will have miscarriage. He also must not join any funeral ceremony. If he is found to violate any of the restriction, it is believed it will have an adverse effect on the baby who is in wife's womb. It is also forbidden for women and minors to participate in the burial of deceased people, particularly in cases of unnatural death. Each person taking part in the burial procedure must undergo a purification ritual, which is locally known as *Pai Hekak* before entering into their home otherwise they might bring misfortune and suffering. Conduction of ritual and maintenance of taboos are required for people who have been bitten by snakes, because snake bite is considered as a sign of bad omen. The ritual performed after snake bite is called *PotorDignam* during which consumption of all itching foods and *Peyak* (fermented soya bean) are prohibited. Menstruation and childbirth are also considered taboo times for women. It is forbidden for a woman to engage in sexual relations with her husband while she is menstruating. It is feared that violating this restriction may cause contamination and ill fortune for the husband.

All the rites and sacrifices conducted by the *Nyishi* was considered incomplete without any taboo attached to it. After solemnization of the ritual, the *Nyib* pronounces restrictions that must be rigorously followed by those concerned. Neglecting these restrictions will lead to the reoccurrence of all problems. Depending on the type of ritual involved, patient's mobility may be restricted for a certain number of days. His food intake is severely restricted because he can only have a small number of specific foods. Some commonly restricted food items consisted of *Taph* (pumpkin), *Muku* (cucumber), *Yuluk* (green chilli), itchy edibles etc.

One of the fundamental phenomena connected with taboo was the observation of *Err Donam* (prohibited days). The type and gravity of the incident or problem dictated these prohibited days. For instance, when there was a normal death of an elderly and renowned person in a village, the prohibited days was for 5 to 7 days. Whereas in case of demise of minor and grow up children it was 3 days. Similarly, in large sacrificial rituals communities or tribes must maintain restriction for five to seven days; but, in lesser rituals this period may just be one or two days. Death by murder or suicide is considered bad. Severe restrictions are followed especially by daughters-in-law and sisters-in-law in such death. They do not visit or eat food in their paternal home until a purification ritual called *Tijir Henam* is performed by the *Nyib*. *Err Donam* (the restriction time) must be observed by all individuals, families, clans, and tribes since it will affect them in some way.

During such prohibited period, individuals must avoid doing regular chores and refrain from going out and contacting other people. One of the fundamental reasons for observing *Err Donam* is for the tranquility and wellness of the individual or tribe as a whole.

The *Nyishi's* traditionally believe in the sacredness of some trees, plants, animals and birds. The sacred trees and plants are, *Pukbe Siin*, *Sego Siin*, *Kora Siin*, *Kokam Kampu Siin*, *Tago Gilo Siin*, *Omle Siin* etc. The leaves and branches of these sacred trees and plants are used in decorating the *WuiRiigi* (sacrificial altar). However, some tree like *Sirek Siin* with multiple leg roots which are found in dense jungle are considered as unholy. Because such trees are considered to be the dwelling place of *Yapom* (Bad spirit of jungle). So, they perform rituals and sacrifices before or after falling down such huge trees. The sacred animals for them are *Sob (mithun)*, *Iibi-Apa (tiger)*, and *takh(squirrel)* etc. Some sacred birds are *Peem (eagle)* which is a symbolic and spiritual representation of the *Nyib* in the earthly world, *Patta Tell Geli*, *Patta Loi (sparrow)*, *Diri Tiik* (small birds found in jhum field) etc.

V. FESTIVAL

A variety of festivals are celebrated by the people on different occasions. It is described as a day of celebration, feasting, entertainment and performance of certain kind of rituals. Some festivals are observed by individuals or families and some by the community as a whole. As a result, every festival is exceptional in its own sense. Regional variations exist in the custom and celebration of such festival. Furthermore, every festival has a rich past or noteworthy narrative behind it. The primary driving force behind all the rituals and festivities is their historical past. Most of the festivals of the tribal people of Arunachal Pradesh are connected with agriculture. Every tribe have their own festival, through which their religious beliefs and practices, tradition and culture, hopes and aspirations, joys and excitements of life finds light and expressions. Beside these, festivals for them are also an expressive strategy to glorify culture, heritage and traditions. It is crucial for establishing connections with family and friends and thereby establishing social relations. It also provides diversion to them from their everyday exhausting routines of life and thereby give them time to relax and rejuvenate. Festivals also strive to pass on knowledge, heritage, and traditions to forthcoming generations.

The main festival of the *Nyishi* of Kamle is *Boori-Boot Yullo* which is a socio-religious festival celebrated by the whole community since time immemorial.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435(Online) Volume 15, Issue 02, February 2026)

Initially *Boori-Boot Yullo* was performed as *Boori Wui* or *Boot Wui* at village level in the earlier days without any fixed dates in order to seek the divine blessings and protection from the almighty during outbreak of epidemics and to express gratitude to benevolent Mother Nature and almighty Gods and Goddess for bestowing different forms of divine blessings to the mankind. It was in 1967, under the initiative of NEFA administration, the terms *Boori- Wui* or *Boot Wui* was written as *Boori Boot* and got recognition as socio-religious festival of the *Nyishi* people of Kamle. With its changed identity, the *Boori-Boot Yullo* was celebrated with mass participation of the community members at a central place located in Raga from 25th to 27th February, 1968, wherein late Shri Dying Ering, the then Deputy Union Minister of food and agriculture, Govt. of India attended the festival as the Chief Guest.

Hence, from the year 1968 onwards, this festival has been popularly celebrated annually in mass scale among the Kamle *Nyishi* of Arunachal Pradesh with traditional fervor and gaiety. Again in 1974, the date of celebration of *Boori-Boot* was rescheduled which commenced from 4th to 7th February. This date of celebration of *Boori-Boot* was done because it coincides with the *Nyishi* New Year month called *Rajo Phol*. It is believed that during these winter months, the gods and spirits of heaven have the warmest disposition towards earth and mankind; and are ready to fulfill the good wishes of their wonderful creations. These age-old traditional faiths and beliefs, which have been orally passed down from generation to generation since time immemorial, have a direct or indirect influence on the social and economic condition of the *Nyishi*. This traditional faith and belief system though shrouded in the mysteries of rites and ceremonies, finds constant expression in the daily lives of the *Nyishis* living in different bio-cultural landscape of Arunachal Pradesh, thereby consolidating its relevance to the truth of the metaphysics of the universe.

As per the spiritual concept of the *Nyishi*, the etymology of terms '*Boori*' and '*Boot*' refers to the community whereas '*Yullo*' refers to all forms of spiritual and divine forces which are believed to control the universal activities of mankind and the entire forces of the cosmos. Therefore, the terms *Boori-Boot* refers to community deities. Whereas the term '*Yullo Wui*' refers to a highest order of the community deities, which is the fountain head of God and Goddess, the master of all spirits who have the ultimate divine power and have direct control over its subordinate ranked of spirits which are further classified into several categories.

The malevolent and benevolent spirits (*Wui*) exist, operate and sustain under the guidance, command and control of '*Yullo Wui*' which is essential to fulfill the cycle of the nature.

Mythological origin of performing Boori-Boot Yullo.

The time *Aab-Tani* was born; the ground works of the Almighty for creation of the universe was already completed. Now, the universe was left to develop itself by the actions of its constituents. Accordingly, it went on smoothly on the earth for a long time. However, in due course of time, the earthly thoughts and feelings, desires and contempt gradually overpowered the consciousness and wisdom of both supernatural spirits and the mankind. With the emergence of these gross confusions and conflicts over ownerships and ascendancy over limited earthly resources, *Aab-Tani* being lonely human beings and having been gifted with the intelligence to reason and foresee the future event was the target of evil plots of jealous supernatural spirits, who were large in number. Legends says that *Aab-Tani* had one extra eye on the back side of his head to foresee the present and future events of the whole world and the universe which he had lost in one such wicked plots of the evil spirits. With no divine forecasting power left with him, life of *Aab-Tani* grew harder and harder due to the villainous conducts of the supernatural evil spirits who were large in number. Ultimately, *Aab-Tani* decided to destroy the *Siichi- NyidoGiil Daal* which is believed to be the unseen gravitational forces in order to create chaos and havoc in the whole world. So, one day he set out with the decision to destroy the *Siichi- NyidoGiil Daal*, the unseen gravitational forces that held together Earth, Planets and Sun in this cosmos and regulates their movement on a fixed path around the sun. Because by destruction of the *Siichi-Nyido Giil Daal*, the *Chiwt and Doot* would collapse and everything including life in between them would vanish due to accidents of the planetary system in the space.

This drastic decision of *Aab-Tani* sent a shockwave across the kingdoms of both supernatural spirits and Gods in the heaven. Everyone, including the evil spirits who were responsible for the miseries of *Aab-Tani*, wished that the *Aab-Tani* be immediately pacified and the living creatures of the world be saved from impending chaos and destruction. Out of panic, the Gods and supernatural *Wui* invoked the divine intervention of the Almighty, the fountain head of Gods and Goddesses (*Yullo Wui*) to pacify *Aab-Tani* to save the whole world.

Then the *Sii-Bo* (*Sii-Abo*), the authority of whole world and chief negotiator of the conflict, along with *Durii-Chiiiji* with *Moro Chin*, *Pumin Pote Chin*, *Giida Giit Chin* and *Chiitum Aei Niwt Bote Chin* as representative of *Yullo Wui* ultimately came together and pacified the anger of the *Aab-Tani* by offering the divine power and alternative survival strategies for mankind. The *Aab-Tani* acknowledged the gravity of the *Sii-Bo*'s advice and was ready to follow his divine instructions. To resolve the conflict and to deliver justice to *Aab-Tani* and all the supernatural spirits, *Sii-Bo* summoned a mega convention. All the benevolent and malevolent Gods, Goddesses, supernatural spirits of different orders, *Aab-Tani* and every creation of Almighty were party to that convention. In that historic convention of Gods and Spirits, which is popularly known as *Boorii-Duyii*, the *Sii-Bo* preached a sermon on the unity and he ultimately propounded the universal law of existence. He brought out in detail the destinations and limitations of every creation of nature, the ways and means of existence, law of survival and continuance of all the creations. After the convention was concluded, *Sii-Bo* advised *Aab-Tani* to recall the *Boorii-Duyii* wherever confusions and conflicts between the supernatural spirits and mankind arise or when in need of the Almighty's divine interventions and blessings.

So, in accordance to the sermon of the *Sii-Bo*, the great grandfather of knowledge and wisdom who control the activity of the whole world, *Aab-Tani* and his descendants till now commemorate that great occasion of *Boorii-Duyii* in the form of *Boori Wui* or *Boot Wui* which is popularly solemnized in the name of *Boori-Boot Yullo*.

As such *Boori-Boot Yullo* is a mega socio-religious and cultural event which is celebrated in the form of a community festival accompanied by few days of customary rites and ritualistic ceremonies. *Boori-Boot Yullo Wui* is also performed to acknowledge the contributions of divine forces of *Donyi Phol*, the Almighty for maintaining peaceful co-existence between human community and supernatural spiritual world, protection of human lives from epidemic diseases, promotion of social harmony, protection of agricultural crops from pests and diseases, for bumper harvest of agricultural crops, proliferation of livestock population and successful completion of nature's cycle.

The traditional ritualistic ceremonies are performed by continuous chanting of ritual hymns for 3 to 4 days by the spiritually ordained *Nyib/Nyub* (priest), who is assisted by *Boh* (Assistant priest). Reared animals like *Sob* (*mithun*), *Sibin* (*goat*), *Erek* (*pig*), *Soa* (*cow*), *Porok* (*fowl*) and *Pip* (*chicken egg*) etc., are sacrificed in the *Wui Riigi* (sacrificial altar) in order to offer them to the divine spirit, *Boori Boot Yullo Wui*.

Along with reared animals, other items such as, *Etti* (rice powder), *Tek* (paste of ginger) and matured and highly concentrated form of millet wine called *Opo Ponya* are also offered to the *Boori Boot Yullo Wui* and different orders of spirits as a token of gifts so as to seek their divine blessings for the mankind. *Riigi Enam* is a grand ritual procession which happens right after the animals are sacrificed. During this grand procession, *Etti* (rice powder) mixed with *Tek* and soaked with water and few drops of *Opo Ponya* which are considered as sacred are abundantly sprinkled around *Riigi* by women folks, because rice represents the divine wills and happiness of the Almighty God to sustain the human race on earth and the use of rice powder indicates the abundance of that divine will. Hence, the evil spirits who are conscious of this divine implication of the Almighty keep themselves away from the *Etti* and *Tek*. *Etti* and *Tek* are also sprinkled on each other's face by the people and also sprinkled on the *Riigi* and on the sacrificed animals to ward off the evil spirits and to purify the souls of human and animals. It is also believed by them that those souls who listen to the chanting of *Boori-Boot Yullo* hymns from the utterance of spiritually ordained *Nyib* (priest) and those who part take in *Durum* and *Riigi Enam* ceremony during final day of *Boori-Boot Yullo* celebration, with clean heart and mind, with cleansed body and dresses are the fortunate ones who undoubtedly would receive the divine blessings of the *Boori-Boot Wui*, the spiritual and divine manifestation of the *Ejji*, the sun God and all the wishes of the participants are bound to fulfill soon anytime.

In final day of *Boori-Boot Yullo* celebration, the ritualistic ceremonies are followed by colourful display of traditional dances, melodious folksongs, community feasting and merry making among the community members. Several traditional dances such as *Boori-Jajen*, *Boori-Moj*, *Boori-Durum*, *Ponu*, etc are performed by them. These dances are believed to be performed by the ancestors to express their emotions such as happiness and appreciation to the Almighty *Sii-Bo* who preached the sermon on unity and propounded the universal law of existence for all in the mega convention of *Boorii-Duyii*.

VI. CONCLUSION

Thus, the celebration of *Boori-Boot Yullo* festival is an aged old traditional cultural practice of the *Nyishi* community of the Kamle District. It is a precious knowledge system gifted by almighty Gods to the great ancestors of the olden days, which acts as a great unifying force for the entire community. This festival is celebrated as cultural co-existence, peace and harmony in the contemporary *Nyishi* society.



International Journal of Recent Development in Engineering and Technology
Website: www.ijrdet.com (ISSN 2347-6435(Online) Volume 15, Issue 02, February 2026)

It is the remnant of the most ancient human traditional and cultural expressions surviving through several generations. It is this socio-religious festival of the *Nyishi's* which is celebrated annually, aims to bring about unity and social cohesion among the members of their community and to teach the younger generation the ethical and moral principles and philosophy as enshrined in the aged old traditional faith and belief systems of the *Aab-Tani*.

REFERENCES

- [1] Bose, M.L. 1997. History of Arunachal Pradesh, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.
- [2] Chutia, R.C. 2001. Arunachal Pradesh: Land of the rising sun, Spectrum, Guwahati.
- [3] Chowdhury, J.N. 1983. Arunachal Pradesh from Frontier Tract to Union Territory, Daya Publishing House, Delhi.
- [4] Chowdhury, J.N. 1973. The Hillmiris of Subansiri, Shillong.
- [5] Christoph Von Furer Haimendorf. 1984. The Sherpas Transformed, Sterling Publications Private Limited, New Delhi.
- [6] Durkheim, Emile. 1926. The Elementary forms of Religion, New York.
- [7] Elwin, Verrier. 1988. A Philosophy for NEFA, Directorate of Research, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.
- [8] Elwin, Verrier. 1968. Myths of the North-East Frontier of India, Directorate of Research, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar.
- [9] Longchar, A.W. 1991. The Tribal Religious Tradition in North East India, Assam Printing Work (P) Ltd, Jorhat, Assam.
- [10] Pamphlet on The Mythology of Boori-Boot Yullo, Version-2,4 (Brief), Edited by Prof. Hui Tag, Published by Central Boori-Boot Yullo Committee, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh.
- [11] Pandey, B.B. 1974. The Hillmiris, Directorate of Information and Public Relation, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Shillong.
- [12] Pandey, D. and Tripathy, B. 1997. A Comprehensive history of Arunachal Pradesh, Rani Mandir Publication: Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh.
- [13] Riddi, Ashan. 2006. The Tagins of Arunachal Pradesh: A Case study of Continuity and change, Abhijeet Publication, New Delhi.
- [14] Rikam, N.T. 2005. Emerging Religious Identities of Arunachal Pradesh: A Case Study of Nyishi Tribe, Mittal Publication, New Delhi.
- [15] Meyer-Rochow, Victor Benno. "Food taboos: their origins and purposes." Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine Vol-5 (2009), pp- 1-10. <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1186/1746-4269-5-18>. Accessed on 15-05-2023.
- [16] U.H, Roy, Tour Diary of U.H, Roy, Assistant Political Officer, Subansiri Frontier Division, NEFA, for the month of January 1955 (State Archive of Arunachal Pradesh, Itanagar).