

The dawn of the twentieth century and beginning of the twenty first century saw the formation of few Tai Khamyang socio-cultural organizations as well. Among them, the *Phung Lai Khamyang* (2012), *Pub Bharat Tai Khamyang Jatiya Parishad* (2003) and All Assam Man (Tai speaking) Students Union (1986) are mention worthy. The 'Phung Lai Khamyang' is organizing traditional language, dance and music workshops in different Tai Khamyang villages of Assam at regular intervals. Individual efforts are being made by some Tai Khamyang youths to revive their traditional music. Mention needs to be made of individuals like Pyoseng Chowlu of Chalapather Shyam Gaon and Shamet Wailoung of Rohon Shyam Gaon in this regard. They have recorded traditional Khamyang songs and uploaded them in social media platforms like You Tube and Facebook to create awareness about the music and language among the masses. Some of the informants are of the opinion that education has played a major role in creating awareness about preservation and propagation of traditional customs and practices as the literacy rate is pretty high among the Tai Khamyangs of Assam. The field data also suggests the same. The literacy rate in Chalapather Shyam Gaon and Rohon Shyam Gaon is 93 percent and 91.3 percent respectively. There has been a new trend with regards to the housing pattern as well and few semi traditional houses are being constructed in the studied villages.

Though the Tai Khamyang people are devout Buddhists yet attempts are being made to keep the essence of their indigenous religion intact. They believe that the natural phenomena like earth, hills, rivers, forests as well as cities, villages, house, paddy fields etcetera also have spirits and they used to worship them. This respect for nature led them to establish a forest reserve of their own. The Chala village sanctuary came into being on 13/01/2019. The researcher was also present on that occasion. The above mentioned efforts made by the community are mainly due to the growth of ethnic consciousness among them and it may be considered as an effort to assert their identity.

8.1 SUGGESTIONS

From the above discussion, it becomes evident that the Tai Khamyangs of Assam are trying to the best of their ability to revive their culture. However, they still have a long way to go. On the basis of the research work done by the researcher, the suggestions given

below can help in addressing the issue of revivalism and bring such a microscopic minority into highlight -

- i. The government should adopt adequate measures for the preservation of the Tai Khamyang language and script. Qualified linguists should be given the responsibility for the preservation of the language in collaboration with the few remaining Khamyang language speakers. Regular language workshops should be organized in all the Khamyang villages of Assam.
- ii. There is also a need of a modern museum to preserve the objects and materials of cultural, religious and historical importance related to the Tai Khamyangs.
- iii. Traditional skills and practices like cane, bamboo work, weaving, pottery and ethno medicine should be promoted and encouraged. Youths should be provided with proper training in the above mentioned ethnic skills and practices. These items should be marketed and sold commercially as it can create employment opportunities.
- iv. Tourism can help in a great way to preserve and promote the Tai Khamyang culture. The architecture of the Buddhist Vihars, unique life style of the villagers, traditional food and dresses can easily attract national and international tourists. They have already started celebrating the *Poi Pee Mau* (Tai New Year) and *Sangken* as community festivals. If these festivals are showcased like the Hornbill Festival of Nagaland and *Songkran* festival of Thailand then there is a great chance that it will attract tourists in ample numbers.
- v. There is ample scope of research on the Tai Khamyang population. Very less research work has been done on the community. Along with the social scientists and researchers from outside the community, it would be better if the members from within their community look to do research on them. This will help them to address the real issues faced by them as nobody can understand their issues better than themselves. Research on such microscopic community will

encourage research and studies on other smaller communities of Assam and North East India.

- vi. For a community to develop and prosper, it should be recognized as a separate community first. The Tai Khamyangs of Assam are not enumerated as a separate community in the Census of India. They are included in the Man Tai speaking population and are enumerated along with other microscopic Tai Buddhist communities like, Tai Aiton, Tai Phake, and Tai Turung etcetera. In the Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Orders (Amendment) Act 1956 too they are accorded Scheduled tribe status and included in the Man Tai speaking population of Assam. A list prepared by UNESCO has mentioned about forty two languages and dialects in India that are endangered and that are heading towards extinction. Tai Khamyang language is also mentioned in that list (The Hindu, Feb 18, 2018). However it is listed as *Tai Nora* language as the Tai Khamyangs were also known as *Nora* in the past. It is high time that they are recognized as a separate community by the government and their problems should be addressed separately.

From the above discussion it could thus be concluded that this research work would prove beneficial if the authorities concerned take due consideration of the suggestions and implement them accordingly for the greater interest of the Tai Khamyang community in particular and society at large. The collective effort of the community is also needed in this regard.