



# The Naga's Saturnalia: Festivities and Celebrations of Nagaland

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## ABSTRACT

If India is a country that boasts of 'unity in diversity', then the North-East is its most visible embodiment. As its 16 major tribes hold their festivals each calendar month of the year, Nagaland is often referred to as the 'land of festivals'. The festivals are mostly related to agricultural operations. The main objective of the study was to explore this rich culture of celebrating festivals among the various tribes, the way they preserve, promote their traditions and culture. Methodology was completely based on the interaction with the local people and community. The different set of questions that were asked was based on - the history and origin of the festival, significance of these festivals as part of their culture, Details of the celebration- special dance and music performances, special food, preparation and arrangements etc. Through our study we found that the festivals specific to each tribe are not popular among the young generation and mainly the people residing in cities are unaware of the details of festivals of their tribe than the villagers. The major conclusion that can be drawn out is that after the introduction of Christianity in Nagaland people have moved with the modernization and adopted the change due to which they don't celebrate their tribe specific festivals. Christmas is now their major festival which they enjoy with lots of enthusiasm in the whole state. Hornbill is the major link to preserve and promote the rich culture of Nagaland because people from various tribes showcase their art forms.

Keywords: Cultural Diversity, Christianity, Festivals, History and Origin, Hornbill, Modernization, Tourism, Traditional art forms.

## INTRODUCTION

“The richness of Naga heritage and tradition is revealed through majestic dances, songs and games in the festival. It transmits vibrant message to the world on the uniqueness of the Naga people and their culture and the need to revive and protect the same as to gain due recognition in the world.”<sup>(1)</sup>

Northeast is enriched with culture and tradition. Each state is unique and culturally rich in its own way. The people of these states are always on a celebration spree. Nagaland is one such state where we can see an extravaganza of festivals celebrated through dance and songs. Nagaland stands out as a land of diverse tribes, systems of governance, cultures, sheer color and variety. Nagaland’s ethnicity is a medley of many tribes and sub tribes and the rituals, festivals and beliefs of each of the Naga tribes differentiate it from another tribe. The Folk songs, dances and music is an essential accompaniment to any NAGA festival with the themes of wide range of variety. The important thing about the Naga festival is their corporate character. The community as a whole participates in the celebrations. The oral tradition is kept alive through media of folk tales and songs. In northeastern India, there is a saying that goes - "There is always something happening in Nagaland. “No wonder!”<sup>(2)</sup>

The objective of our research was to explore the “rich culture” by covering their history and origin of festivals, their way of celebration, folk music and dance forms which is still unexplored in other parts of India. We also covered their way of preservation and promotion of culture and art forms. This research is an effort to increase respect and harmony towards north eastern communities.

### Literature Review:

The Naga people are a conglomeration of several tribes inhabiting the North Eastern part of India and north-western Burma. As of 2012, the state of Nagaland state officially recognizes 17 Naga tribes. Prominent Nagatribes include Angami, Ao, Chakhesang, Chang, Khamniungan, Konyak, Liangmai, Lotha, Pochury, Rongmei, Zeme. They have a strong warrior tradition. Major Naga festivals in the Indian state of Nagaland include:<sup>(3)</sup>

Table 1 <sup>(7)</sup> : Major festivals of NAGA’S

Festival	Tribe	Time	Major center
Amongm ong	Sangtam	September (first week)	Tuensang
Aoleang	Konyak	April (first week)	Mon
Chiithuni	Memei	December/Ja nuary	Mao Naga
Gaan Ngai	Rongmei	December/Ja nuary	Tamenglon g-Cachar

Festival	Tribe	Time	Major center
Kanghi	Maramei	December/January	Maram
Metemno	Yimchunger	August (second week)	Tuensang
Mimkut	Kuki	3 January week	Kohima
Miu	Khiamngan	May (second week)	Tuensang
Moatsü	Ao	May (first week)	Mokokchung
Monyu	Phom	April (first week)	Longleng
Naknyu Lem	Chang	July (second week)	Tuensang
Nga-Ngai	Zeliangrong	December (last week)	Kohima
Ngada	Rengma	November (last week)	Kohima
Sekrenyi	Angami	February	Kohima
Tokhu Emong	Lotha	November (first week)	Wokha
Tsukhenyi	Chakhesang	March/April	Phek
Tuluni	Sumi	July	Zunheboto
Yemshi	Pochury	September/October	Phek

Folk dances of the tribes are mostly performed in groups in synchronized fashion, by both men and women, depending on the type of dance. Dances are usually performed at festivals and religious occasions. War dances are performed mostly by men and are athletic and martial in style. All dances are accompanied by songs and war cries by the dancers. Indigenous musical instruments made and used by the people are bamboo mouth organs, cup violins, bamboo flutes, trumpets, drums made of cattle skin, and log drums. <sup>(4)</sup>

Folk songs and dances are essential ingredients of the traditional Naga culture. The oral tradition is kept alive through the media of folk tales and songs. Naga folk songs are both romantic and historical, with songs narrating entire stories of famous ancestors and incidents. Seasonal songs describe activities done in a particular agricultural cycle. The early Western missionaries opposed the use of folk songs by Naga Christians as they were perceived to be associated with spirit worship, war and immorality. As a result, translated versions of

Western hymns were introduced, leading to the slow disappearance of indigenous music from the Naga Hills. <sup>(5)</sup>

## METHODOLOGY

Preparation of Questionnaire: An extensive questionnaire covering various aspects was framed in consultation with the mentor like-

(a) Festivals: its history, significance, rituals performed during the festival, days for celebrations, special food and preparations.

(b) Folk music and dances: its origin, musical instruments and vocals used theme based dance forms and music, renowned personalities in these fields

Data collection based on the questionnaire prepared: Collected videos of their celebrations, folk songs and the various forms of dances. Covered the extent of threat to their culture, dance forms and music and their initiative to preserve and promote it.

As a check for originality we also studied the evolution of these art forms with the changing scenario. We had also explored the representation of their dance forms and folk music at the national and international level.

## RESULTS

### Festivals And Celebrations:

Table 2 : List of festivals celebrated in Nagaland

FESTIVAL	MONTH	DURATION
Sekrenyi	February	10 days
Ngonyi	March-April	10+4 days
Thekrenyi	June	2 to 3days
Siinyi	August	
Liekhwenyi	September	
Terhiinyi	December	
Terhiitiedi	November	

The saying "There is always something happening in Nagaland. "No wonder!"<sup>(2)</sup> Was truly realized when we came in touch with their culture. Festivals are integral part of their culture and hold a significant position in their lives. Festivals celebrated vary from tribe to tribe and village to village. Christmas is a major festival that is celebrated widely across Nagaland. People of Nagaland sees festival as an occasion where they can spend some quality time with their family, friends and neighbors, it is an occasion of reunion and get together.

The results obtained on their festivals are as follows:

### Tribes specific festivals:

### Angami tribe

Sekrenyi is the major festival of this tribe and it signifies purification and sanctification before going to war. It is a 10 day celebration. Two days prior to the main festival the firewood is collected. On the next day animals are hunted for the meal. The main celebration starts the next day. It is mainly for males- they clean the wells outside the village at night and the day is called Zukhophe. Only young and pure bachelor boys are allowed to do this work. The next morning, the man goes to the well and washes all their physical parts and then sprinkles that water on their dresses and the weapons. They fetch water from the same well for the women of the household since no one else is allowed to fetch water on that day. The males after coming back slaughters one chicken each, not a full grown cock. Young boys are allowed to be a part of Sekrenyi celebrations only after they turn 6/7 years of age. Their first slaughter is the Cock and not a chicken. Only after their first offering they can slaughter chicken which is followed by a myth i.e. cock must die in hands, and is then dropped on the ground, if the right leg of the cock comes above the left leg, then it is considered to be a good omen. After that bottom part of the chicken is cut and the intestine is pulled out, and on the top of the appendix the feathers are inserted and are hanged on the entry of their house. They cook it in a separate temporary oven made of wood away from the household's main kitchen. Before eating the meal, they offer the liver of the chicken along with some wine and pray "If any enemy comes, give me the strength that I kill the enemy before he kills me." Female members are not allowed to eat from that place. After that men put some water in their mouth and spit it out to mark the day's end. People make local beer soup and offer it to the spirit of the well and pray that the well never dries and continues providing pure water to them and let the natural calamities not destroy the well.

The next day people collect jungle fruits for the decoration of their houses and especially that of the common ancestor. On the third day they cut bamboos and fry it.

The 4<sup>th</sup> day is important for the young couples. They go to the jungle and collect corks, stones, wood pieces etc. to make necklaces and bracelets and various other ornaments. There is an exchange of gifts as well as between closely related friends. If someone wants a favor or a gift then he or she can ask for the same from their friends but have to do something in return. By doing so, they are considered to be very close friends.

On the 5<sup>th</sup> day peer group go to the parental house and make things like Ornaments, spears, Dao and other things and keep them together for future use.

6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> day are complete holidays. On these days people just stay at home and enjoy with friends and family.

On the last day they cook special meat and distribute it among peers. (Mr. Thape Koza, personal communication, December 24, 2014)

### Ao tribe

This tribe celebrates Tsumong festival between 1st to 3rd August. This festival is celebrated by serving meat and beer among friends and relatives. On the first day, men bring Shethu from the forest and are used on the second day for playing games by boys. The main festival celebrated is Chutuni.

(Shillu and Athiko, Personal Communication, December 23, 2014)

### Konyak tribe

This tribe celebrates Aoling festival.

(Aman, Personal Communication, December 24, 2014)

#### Sumi tribe

There are two major festivals celebrated in the Sumi tribe namely, Tuluni and Ahuna. Tuluni is a thanks giving festival which is celebrated in the second week of July after a fruitful harvesting. Ahuna festival is celebrated before harvesting on 14<sup>th</sup> November. Minor festivals celebrated by their tribe are Moatsii & Tsungrem Mong during May, June or July. (Ms. Lenia Achuni and Mr. Enok Achuni, Personal Communication, December 22, 2014)

#### Kuki tribe

This tribe celebrates Mimkut festival.  
(Ngangam, Personal Communication, December 24, 2014)

#### Lotha tribe

Tukho Emong is celebrated by this tribe on 7<sup>th</sup> of November. They gather in a crowd and perform their traditional dance. (Rinkey. Personal Communication, December 22, 2014)

#### Mao tribe

This tribe celebrate Chutuni festival on 7<sup>th</sup> January for cultivation. Besides that he also mentioned various festivals like Selunyi, which is plantation and harvest festival celebrated by the tribe.  
(Kaisa, Personal Communication, December 23, 2014)

#### Zeliang tribe

This tribe celebrate Lamsingie festival on 30<sup>th</sup> October. (Sutei, Personal Communication, December 24, 2014)

#### Festivals celebrated in Khonoma Village

There are six major and one minor festival that they celebrate in Khonoma. Some are 10 days long and some are exclusively for women where they have a special feast. Festivals and religion are two faces of a coin.

Ngonyi and Terhiinyi are the two most important festivals according to the oral history. Ngonyi and Terhiinyi are personified as two individuals who keep on fighting for their supremacy. Ngonyi is claimed to be more important than Tehernyii since it comes in the sowing season, so in the race for gathering importance Tehernyii- personified as an arrogant and stubborn man- tries to push Ngonyii to a coarse land that is why in every celebration of Tehernyii raining occurs.

There are certain rituals done during the festivals like- Wine is mixed with some secret powder and then sprinkled on a leaf and is put on the wall- this signifies an offering to the god. This is performed on the first day of each festival before the sunrise. He also informed us that the original religion of the Nagamese people was Animism which is somewhat similar to the Jewish. They always practice thanks giving to natural spirits for anything and everything. Whenever something inauspicious like a death or Lunar/Solar eclipse occurs people shout from colony to colony so that no one steps out of their villages and all other rules common to them are followed strictly. Ghena is the term given to days when people are not allowed to work. During these days if anyone works or moves out of the village, it is believed that they will be bitten by a snake.

Ngonyie is celebrated during March-April (end of March or beginning of April). They have a specific date for sowing of seeds. The eldest male of the family goes to the field with seedlings and pray to god, "Let the seed come out and let it bear more fruits, let not the calamities destroy the land and village." After 30 days of seed sowing Ngonyie begins. On the first day, people go to the forest for firewood collection. It is followed by two days gap during which wash themselves, cut their hair and moustache and collect firewood. Hunting and fish catching are the two most remarkable activities done during the festivals. After the fish catching, they come home, cook it and eat it together around the bonfire.

This is a special feast and is a special treatment to young people called Keciica.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day people of all age group go for hunting even if they kill a small animal they distribute the meat equally and bring it home for cooking and enjoy the meal together around the bonfire. There are restricted days during the festival in which people are not allowed to work or go out of their village. Some superstitions are also associated with it like if people go to work the snake will bite them.

Thekranyi is a colourful and vibrant festival in which peer group go to their common father place and kill pig and cow together and distribute it among masses. They spend their whole day at that place and decorate it, and at night, they wear portal dress and sing together around the bonfire. On second and third day, people will come to common morung in their traditional dresses. After Thekranyi they collect the seedlings from the place of sowing and then they are planted to Jhum fields.

Difference between Ngonyii and Thekranyi

In every festival different types of cultural performances are done. In Ngonyie they use head gears, decorations and sing while roaming in the village. They go for hunting, fishing and have different activities.

And Thekranyi is a festival to celebrate the start of seedlings. They go to jungle to collect jungle puttocks and decorate their common father place. Apart from celebrations, people practice rat chasing every year in which non-Christians are very few. People go to the field and bring one rat each and in night they hold the rat with a stick and then release the rat while shouting, this is practiced every year with a myth that this prevents the destruction of their field from rat.

Common festivals of Nagaland –

**Hornbill**

Hornbill, which is considered to be the festival of festivals for all Naga tribes. It is a 10 day festival. It is a festival based on unity. Usually, all tribes participate and display their culture. Many competitions based on folk songs, dances, fire making, traditional games (spinning of top called Zetshii) are conducted. hosts competitions like chili competition, poke fats eating competition, bamboo pole climbing, rock contest, night carnival, fashion show, moto relay, and sports competition and cycling competition. And on the last day, they have a grand bonfire in which people of all tribes of all North-eastern states dance together. (Mr April and Vilie Dzenvichiu, Personal Communication, December 24, 2014)

## Christmas

Christmas is basically celebrated to await the birth of Jesus Christ. They start their preparation one month prior to the festival. The preparation for Christmas involves buying new clothes, decoration of houses with lights and every single house is decorated with a beautiful star. This star is a sign of the birth of Christ and to welcome him into their houses. Children are gifted with new clothes. On 24<sup>th</sup> December midnight they welcome Christmas with a bonfire. Bonfire is celebrated with great zeal and enthusiasm along with goodies and things to eat. Before Christmas, homes and churches are decorated with lights. They decorate Christmas trees with lights, burn crackers and celebrate it similar to the way Hindus celebrate Diwali. They sing carols, visit friends and relatives, singing and collecting money offerings and that money is either used for New Year celebration or donated at the church to aid the poor and needy. Special food like cakes (banana), meat and pork is common. People celebrate Christmas by visiting places like church with family. Christmas is celebrated by singing carols and through dances. Through this they showcase their excitement and happiness. Kemenyii Muti is a special sweet dish prepared on the occasion of Christmas. It is sticky rice bread made by mixing rice flour and cream, just like flat bread is made. Alcohol is usually not advised to be consumed during Christmas but some people use it and it isn't considered to be respectful. Tea parties are also held in churches along with drama performances. Apart from cakes and donuts, there are some homemade namkeen items prepared by people which are usually their own recipes. Christmas feast is served and enjoyed. Besides Christmas, they also celebrate Good Friday which occurs during the month of March.

There is no incorporation of any other culture and the Christmas celebration in Nagaland is not very different when compared to other countries but each tribe has its unique way of celebration. Everyone wears their own traditional clothes. (Vikosolie, Avi, Kaisa and Ahopsiititsii Keneinuo, Personal communication, December 23, 2014)

## Evolution Of Festivals And Their Celebration:

Due to the onset of Christianity and modernization many people do not know much regarding their traditions and its origin. The people don't know much concerning their festivals due to the fact that they shifted to the city. Tradition has somewhere faded out because of the advent of Christianity and only little rituals are practiced now. Sekrenyi is a kind of native festival and as Christianity has taken over, it discards many rituals practiced during Sekrenyi. Hence, people don't celebrate this festival like it was celebrated earlier and if someone is found practicing they are boycotted from the village. Names of such people are removed from the church and their survival becomes questionable. There is a particular place in the village where everybody used to gather in the evening and sing, but due to modernization, lack of time, hectic schedules and migration to cities people don't practice this anymore. We got to know that the rituals that were performed earlier are not practiced with that authenticity in present days. They left their rituals and only perform when they are asked to do so on some special occasion. They have some specific days to showcase their culture.

## Dance & Music:

Dances and Songs are different for different tribes of Nagaland thus, giving a wide variety to cover for an enthusiastic researcher. The differences lie in name and the costumes and the language used to sing, however, much similarity can be observed in the themes, the property/instrument used and the technique in every dance and Music form.

Also, most of the Dances and songs revolve around the laws and traditions of the tribe to which they belong.

Dance Forms: Dance form of Angami tribe:

Traditional dance forms of the Angami tribe have small movements and do not involve lively movements. One such dance form is Udoho, which is a war dance (a practice of warriors). Udoho literally means holding a spear and shouting and is performed to depict the importance of warriors. Warriors hold an important position in the village and their presence ensures the safety of villagers from the attack by the neighboring village. This dance form can be performed solo or in group. Other dance forms are Seecha & Kukui Kucho.<sup>[6]</sup> They use beer while dancing.

Dance form of Ao tribe

The traditional dance of Ao tribe is Modse<sup>(6)</sup> which is performed in their cultural dresses.

Dance costumes:

Men wear Lantham and head gears called Thunku which are decorated with hornbill feathers and bamboo. They also wear Shupu and Pampa made up of elephant tusks in their arm. They also wear Tatka on their neck. Sheth is worn by women which are made up of Cowry teeth.

Dance form of Chakesang tribe:

The Chekesangs have both couple as well as group dance performances. They perform war dances also.

a) Dance costumes:

People wear shawls (ra) which are called Khoza-Ra for men and Ma-Ra for women.

For war dances, Ra is worn on the upper part of the body by men in a criss-cross manner and Ramini is a kind of skirt which is worn by men. For dances involving both men and women, men wear Dahii and Thathi and women wear Chitonyi and Gigii. Head gears contain the feathers of birds which are hunted by the person who wears it. This signifies bravery. Dao is a bracelet which is made up of wood. Bangles are called Batho and Bakhe. Ornaments are usually made up of pearl and wood. There are mekhalas, shawls, blouses and Shah (made up of bird feathers and is worn all over the body) worn during dance performances.

Dance form of Sumi tribe:

Dance are of different kinds for both male and females and are commonly known as Apfii Laho. The theme revolves around the stories told by their ancestors. According to the natives, forefathers are believed to be very strong and are called as Head dancers. So through folk dance they show bravery. Saw-li-yidance is performed during the Tuluni and Ahuna festivals.

Dance costumes:

Women wear Mekhla and men wear apron-like clothing known as Ashriida. The costumes are decorated with sea shells along with head gears made up of sheep wool. The ornaments are made up of sea shells, wood, metal etc. Men wear head gears which are made up of artificial hair, nowadays used for beautification.

Dance form in Zeliang tribe:

Butterfly dance is performed during Lamsingie festival of Zeliang tribe as mentioned by Sutei.

#### Folk Music:

Naga music is centered on war, strength and power whereas the music of other North-eastern states are more focused on enjoyment and merry making. We were surprised to know that people of different tribes recognize each other with the help of their songs. Also, songs may also originate from customary laws according to tradition hence traditional songs as well as their tone and meanings vary from tribe to tribe.

Folk Music of Angami tribe:

The Angami have many kinds of songs like- Lithei- When they sing together at their common father place sitting around the bonfire. Sukrii- This is a song when one sings with his/her lover when they go to jungle. This is an indirect way of communication as they cannot converse in public. Sheli- Restricted to be sung in village only and it is sung in the remembrance of their lover There is also another category of music called Leivo. Earlier, they practiced their songs together without any occasion, if one starts the other Follows him, but now, considering the urbanization of villages, and the gradual shift of village youth towards the cities, this has become a rare practice.

Folk music of Ao tribe:

In Ao tribe, the most folk songs sung during the festivals seek blessings from god. The Thishole is sung by the Sumi tribe.

Folk music in Chakesang tribe:

The majority of Nagas are Christians and Christianity is the main religion of Nagaland apart from Hinduism and Islam. Each religion has its own folk song in its respective language and is self-composed by the forefathers. It revolves around the theme of youth. People sing songs for every occasion like when they go to field they sing in order to let other people know that they are going for work. The same happens while return. Christmas celebration is incomplete without songs. Carols are based on the birth of Jesus Christ, good news and tidings.

Musical Instruments:

One common instrument used in the Musical performances of nearly all tribes of Nagaland as observed by us is Taati- a uni-stringed instrument made using bamboo, coconut shell or hollowed pumpkin cover, any metal wire and pig's bladder. The drum used long ago is now replaced by Chamoni which is made up of bamboo and is generally played by youngsters.

(Kothaii, Kevin and Ahopsiitsii, Personal conversation, December 24, 2014)

#### PRESERVATION:

Folk music is losing popularity as modernization is increasing in the society. Today's youth are more inclined towards modern views as a whole, so the adoption of modern art forms has led to the loss of many rituals and traditional practices. Though modernization does not mean

they have left their tradition altogether but their focus has shifted to modern art forms. Even though the practices of traditional art forms have decreased but people still respect them irrespective of the fact that they practice them or not. Youngsters are more inclined towards western music and are unable to learn their traditional art forms due to few specific reasons like, lack of time, lack of resources, and migration to cities etc. no special training for learning their folk songs; youngsters learn their culture through their elders only. The youngsters are not aware of the importance of their culture but after graduation or higher studies they realize that they must know our culture and regret it.

To preserve their deteriorating art forms:

- They usually record the performances and store them carefully so that they may come to aid for future reference. With modernization, modes of preservation have also changed i.e. from word of mouth to recordings.
- Additionally, old men and women help in preserving their art forms by teaching it to the young generation (but this is very rarely practiced nowadays).
- Young people of today are not very keen on learning traditional art forms hence festivals and their celebration create an opportunity to build up enthusiasm in youth so that they learn these art forms.
- Some of the tribes still have *Morungs* where these art forms are naturally preserved.
- Role of technology in preservation-

People who are old enough are not aware of preserving their culture therefore, for the people of young generation documentation is necessary so that oral tradition continues.

Village elders are the backbone of culture preservation-

Traditional art forms are more important to preserve their culture. She mentioned that traditional art forms like games, dances and music are taught to young girls and boys by the village leaders. Though it is not compulsory for everyone but those who are interested may learn it and take it as a profession rather than just a hobby.

Festivals as a hope of keeping their culture alive-

Hornbill festival, which started in 2000 as a Government initiative <sup>[7]</sup>, has a central role in the preservation of culture of each tribe of Nagaland. It's celebrated at Kisama heritage village every year in the first week of December. During celebration of festivals people fetch the instruments from the museum, where they are preserved for future use. Hornbill rock contest is upgraded to National and International level, the disadvantage being that traditional Music goes on back foot.

The specialty of *Morungs*-

*Morungs* is the best place to learn and preserve their culture. During the time of the War, young boys used to stay in the *Morung* so if one village attacks the other one, they can face their enemies in crucial times. But these *Morungs* do not exist anymore.

(Vima Tha, Janpeni, Aba, Niesa, Kijole, Aphrulie, Koza, Akhra and Thapya Koza, Personal conversation, December 23. 2014)

## PROMOTION:

The elders of the tribe are the real cultural bearers who pass on the art forms to the next generation by teaching the young ones.

Nagaland and Manipur represented their dance forms at the Thai fest on January 14th. This is the second time for Manipur and first time for Nagaland to be participating.

To promote their festivals the Nagaland State Government invites special guests to their celebrations. Like this year's Hornbill festival was resided by our honorable Prime Minister Mr. Narendra Modi..

There is a JawaharLal Academy Dance Institution in Imphal, Manipur which provides training to people and also gives stage performances. Mr. R.K Dhoku works at this dance institute and has performed at various platforms.

Tseteo Sisters are international representative faces of traditional dance form of Nagaland.

(Vima Tha, Athieko, Rinpey Lotha and Koza,, Personal conversation, December 22, 2014)

## DISCUSSION

The land of festivals, the land of traditions, Nagaland is well identified to be the hub of rich indigenous culture and People are meant to live together, celebrate and share every moment of happiness and sorrow together. With our research we realized that the young generation has little or no information about their traditional festivals and art forms, due to the introduction of Christianity and modernization. Because of the migration of people to the metropolitan cities for better earning and improved standard of living their traditional art forms are somewhere in danger. As a first step towards the preservation and promotion of their culture and traditional art forms on national as well international level, the state government initiated Hornbill festival in the year 2001 which is celebrated every year in the first week of December, which is an inter-tribal festival where Naga's represent their tribe in many ways. The various dance forms and folk songs of different tribes could be experienced on Hornbill festival. And hence it is conclusive that their culture will live as long as the culture bearers.

## CONCLUSION

Since, festivals and traditions are an integral part of any culture and hold a significant position in our lives it becomes important for us to study, know and promote our indigenous culture. After detailed research on Naga's culture we analyzed that festivals holds a very important role in their life. The cultural heritage is very different in Nagaland than the other states of India. In spite of the introduction of Christianity people still respect the sense of belonging to their tribe. They sing songs in their own language and even wear traditional dresses during celebrations. The misconception that the Naga's are rebellious in nature was cleared as they were so benevolent and cordial towards us. We also got to know how the Nagas treasure their culture inspite of the invasion of Christianity and modernization. The lesson we should learn from them is 'Our culture is not an obligation but our responsibility' and the most inspiring thing which they teach us is the respect they have for their culture and festivals. But with the changing times there is huge cultural loss and thus now-a-days very less people are aware with Naga's rich culture, their festivals and rituals, dance forms and music.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The preparation of this paper 'THE NAGA's SATURNALIA: Festivities & Celebrations of Nagaland' would not have been possible without the valuable contribution of State Government of Delhi and Nagaland, University of Delhi University of Delhi, IRCTC and tourism dept. of Nagaland.

We would like to thank Vice Chancellor of University of Delhi, Dr. Dinesh Singh, Gyanodaya Express Coordinator Mr. Chandrashekhar, University of Delhi media coordinator Mr. Malay Neerav, Deputy Dean of students welfare and coordinator for North East students Mr. Santacruz, Union Minister of state for Home Affairs of India Mr. Kiren Rijju and Ms. Sarbanda Sonowal, Union Minister of state for youth affairs and sports for organizing Gyanodaya-V educational trip of University of Delhi with a theme 'Dharohar: The Glory Of North East' with a name to enrich the students about the rich culture and heritage of North East India and for the unique idea of 'College On Wheels' which signifies that real education means the ground exposure to the students.

In addition we would like to thank Dr. Lakshmi Devi, principal of Shaheed Rajguru College Of Applied Sciences For Women, University of Delhi and Assistant professor Ms. Ritu Jain, Shaheed Rajguru College Of Applied Sciences For Women, University Of Delhi under whose guidance the project could not be accomplished and Ms. Via who introduced us with the linguistic and the vibrant culture of Nagaland and tourism dept. whose ceaseless efforts and enthusiasm helped us to achieve the valuable information regarding the project.

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