

AN ETHNOGRAPHIC FIELD INVESTIGATION REPORT ON THE  
MISINGS OF AYENGIA BALI GAON IN DHEMAJI DISTRICT OF  
ASSAM WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BAMBOO CRAFT.

Field Report Submitted to the Department of Anthropology,  
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## **PREFACE**

**Anthropology is the science which deals with the comparative study of man as a physical and cultural being.**

**It has main two branches:**

**I) Physical Anthropology and II) cultural Anthropology.**

**I) Physical anthropology is concerned with a man as a physical organism in time and space. Here time means the stages of development of man in process of evolution during period of time, space refers to the differentiation of the physical types in modern man living in different parts of the world.**

**II) Cultural anthropology is concerned with the study of man as a cultural being, his work, behavioral pattern, the knowledge of life pattern and his society.**

**We are provided with theoretical background in classroom lecture. As such the students of Anthropology are required to verify their anthropological knowledge by undergoing some training i.e. a trip to field which is an essential part of Anthropology. Anthropology is a field science. So field is the actual laboratory of it. To have a proper practical experience we are to stay in the midst of people, observing them and their activities in their natural settings, which is supplemented by interview and other anthropological method. We have undertaken the field study among the Mising tribe of Ayengia Bali Mising Village, Silapathar in Dhemaji district of Assam.**

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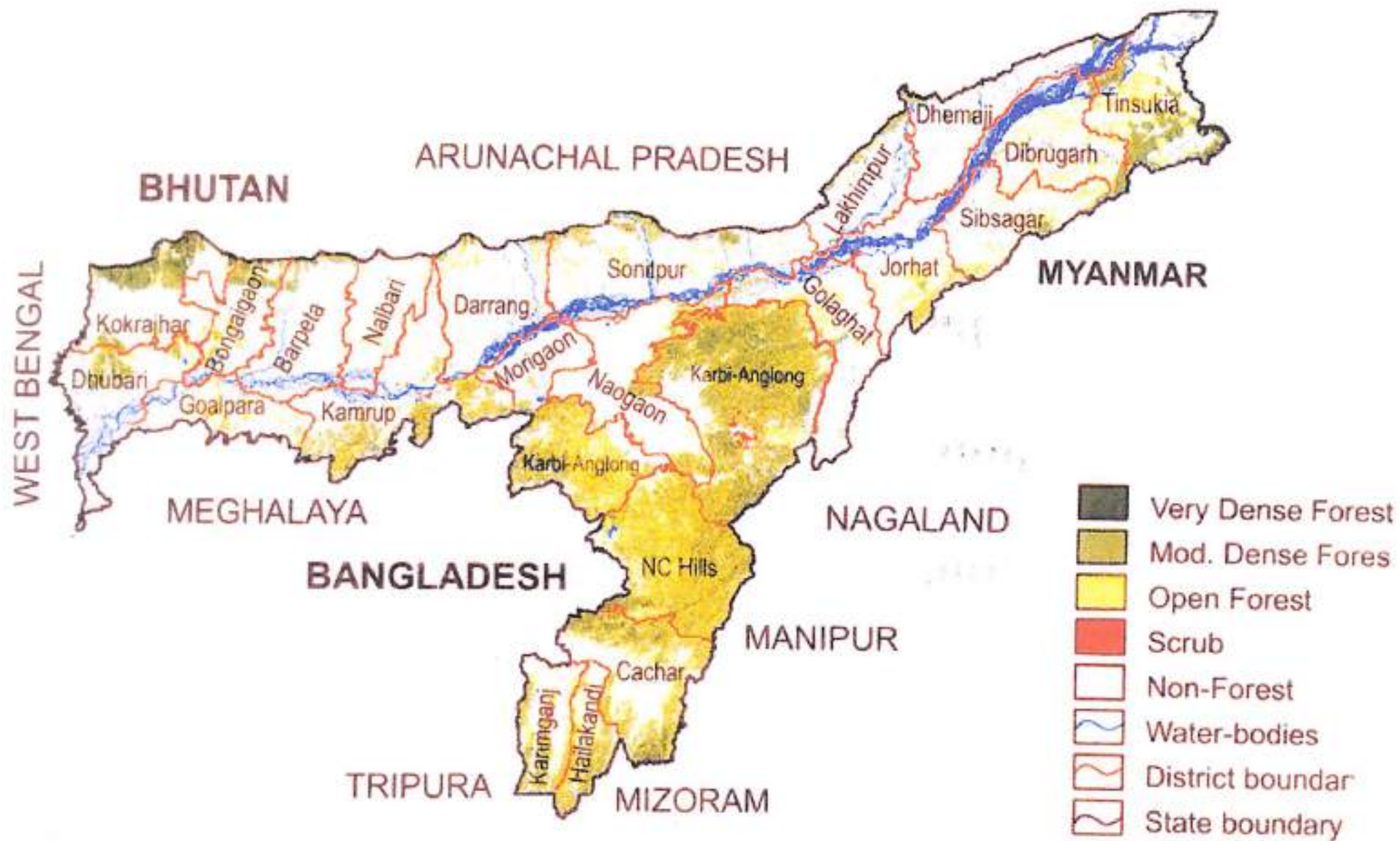
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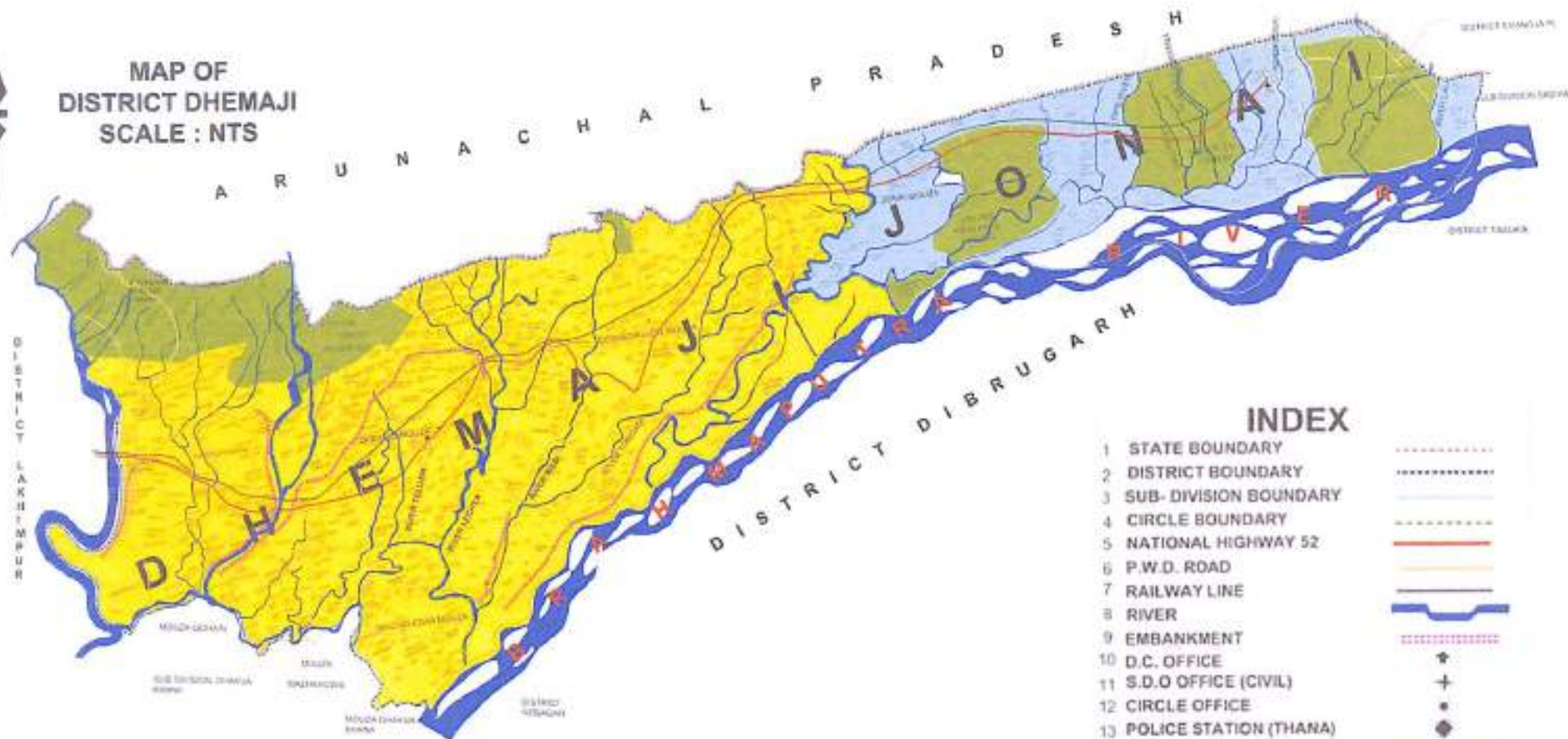
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**MAP OF  
DISTRICT DHEMAJI  
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# PLAN OF THE CITY OF ALBANY BUT NOTING MAON



# **Chapter-1**

## **INTRODUCTION**

## INTRODUCTION

Anthropology is the science of man. But this meaning is too broad and general. To be more precise, it is the science of man and his work and behavior. The term "anthropology" has been derived from two terms "anthropos" meaning - man and "logos" means study. Thus anthropology is the study of man. According to Radcliff Brown, "if we define anthropology as the science of man and human life in all its aspects, then it is obvious that psychology as the study of human mind and behavior, must be included in anthropology between human biology, which deals with man's physical aspects, and social or cultural anthropology which deals with his own social life."

Anthropology studies man and his varied manifestation in time and space over a period of little more than one hundred years of its life, the discipline is distinguished itself reasonably well, both in term of systematic attainment of knowledge as well as in application to the service of the mankind.

An Anthropologist collects data by direct observation and interview as well as other procedures involving field investigations. Anthropologists not only study the people but also they share with them their life experiences, eating, laughing and crying, etc.

The origin of modern anthropological thoughts is usually attributed to major British, American, german and French scholars of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The horizon of the subjects experience and impressive expansion and diversification in the second World War under the leadership of ruth Benedict, Margaret mead (1946), Alexander Leighton (1945) and many others.

The conceptual underpinning of the study of the complex societies developed under the guidance of Robert Redfield (1930). At present anthropology practically studies all types of human cultures, communities as well as their problems.

Anthropology studies in the classroom as well as in the laboratory. But the study of this science cannot be complete only by theoretical knowledge written in the books and lectures imparted by teachers during class. The experimental observation of practical support is always

needed in the study of science Moreover, Anthropology, which deals with the study of man and everything that concerned with him, can never be completed without field work. Anthropologists studies and compares the widest possible range of human population and human societies of past and present, primitive and civilized, in all parts of the world to determine the common and unique social and cultural features of man's behavior. The practical works of anthropologists need intensive study of particular population or society, its interpretation and compare it with other population or societies to obtain the common and unique scientific theories. By knowing man we can more effectively understand man's problem and to cope with them.

### **AIM AND OBJECTIVE:**

Scientific studies are never perfect until they are practically verified. In every aspect of science practical knowledge is more valuable than theoretical. Theoretical knowledge without practical is rootless and practical knowledge without practical is fruitless. Therefore social science like Anthropology which deals with different aspects of man comprises two man's divisions theoretical and practical. More precisely Anthropology is not a laboratory science, its laboratory is field. Hence, fieldwork in Anthropology is considered as practical aspects where student are acquainted with a vast theoretical background by classroom lectures.

In Anthropological fieldwork we choose one community for our study, which is very much necessary. Through this we can understand the social and cultural aspect of a particular community. The principal aim of fieldwork is to acquire practical idea of the work and to become expert and eminent fieldworker of the subject. Experience of fieldwork is the basic thing to make him or her best social scientists.

The primary objective of the field training is to acquaint the students with the specific method of collecting data regarding the various aspects of life of the people concerned.

Another objective of the field training is to conduct ethnographic spot investigation on a group where correct information of particular topics like literacy, material condition etc. are taken. Thus field training gives proper understanding of the subject of anthropological fact, which is absolutely essential. Therefore, fieldwork becomes of very important.

The fieldwork is included in the B.Sc. sixth semester syllabus as a compulsory study. We are to submit a report on a particular community, which requires a student to undertake a trip for at least 15 days preferably in a tribal village.

### **SELECTION OF FIELD:**

Fieldwork is an anthropological tradition which provides empirical experience of "other culture". The study of culture requires a systematic and scientific approach which can only be verified by undertaking an intensive fieldwork. Keeping this point in mind one academic curriculum is so designed to provide us with firsthand experience in the field. Thus, in order to partially fulfill the requirement assigned in the sixth semester syllabus we are to undertake a field study in a tribe or a peasant village but due to time constraint we could not go to distant place to do our field work. Therefore, keeping in mind the time and convenience we identified the Ayengia Bali Gaon at Silapathar. Hence, as suggested by the faculties of the department a pilot survey was conducted and found to be ideal field for the student of sixth semester.

### **JOURNEY TO THE FIELD:**

On 14<sup>th</sup> of June, 2022 morning we made all arrangement for the field work. The Journey to the Ayengia Bali village was an enjoyable and exciting one. Our team of 14 students along with our teacher-in-charge Mr. Naba Kr. Pegu sir, gathered at the Department of anthropology at 9:00am. We started our journey at 9:00am and about 9:30am we arrived at our camp.

### **SELECTION OF INFORMANT:**

For collection of household information I interviewed mostly the head of the family as my informant. If the head was not available I took the help of the elders of the family to fill the schedules. On special topic, I selected the knowledgeable persons of the village as my informant.

## **FIRST DAY IMPRESSION:**

Today, the 14<sup>th</sup> June, 2022, we started our first day field work with our teacher Mr. Naba Kr. Pegu sir at Ayengia Bali Gaon, Silapathar in the district of Dhemaji Assam. the village is predominantly inhabited by the Mising tribe. The village is adjacent to the Silapathar town and is connected to the town through various lanes. We met many people who could tell us about the history of the village as well as gave us information about the growth of the village. After surveying the entire village, our teacher in- charge divided us into two groups. With our group I filled up my survey schedules in two hours. The villagers were very hard working and co-operative. They were of various occupations. We got very good response from each and every household. It was at 2.00 P.M when we return to our base camp.

In short my first day impression about the field was good and satisfactory.

## **METHODS AND TECHNIQUES:**

Since the objective of field work was to acquaint us with the use of methods and techniques in the field, these two aspects were given primary importance in the field. Methods and techniques are arbitrarily used as synonymous though we might use the term to refer to the overall systematic approach to the problem of field work and to broad scientific principles in the right of which ethnographic approaches this task. Techniques might be used to refer rather the ways of dealing the minor day to day problems which confront a field worker in carrying out his work on the spot ( Peddington, 1957).

For collection of data, I used the following methods:

- i. Schedule method/ Census Method
- ii. Case Study method
- iii. Interview method
- iv. Observation method and
- v. Genealogical method.

### **Schedule Method:**

In order to get the general idea of social and demographic status of the village we used census method and as such household census were used to record door to door information of family size, clan, marital status, and distance, level of education, occupation, land holding, livestock and the knowledge of secondary language, etc.

I used this method as the first method in the field for collection of socio-economic information of the villagers. I filled the survey schedules at the very beginning of my field study.

### **Case Study Method:**

The case study research has been one of the important methods of social research. It has been traditionally a method of qualitative analysis. Mr. Herbert Spencer, Mr. Fredrick Le Play and Dr. William Healy were the pioneers of the case study method. Dr. William Healy used case study method to study juvenile delinquents as the population of the study.

According to P.V. Young, "Case study is a method of exploring and analyzing the life of a social unit - be that a person, a family, institution, cultural group or even an entire community" (Young, 1962: 229).

### **Interview Method:**

Interview is one of the important tool of social research. Interview must be combined with schedules. In other words interview is a technique used to administer the schedule. The person giving interview is called an interviewee, varied types of data can be gathered intensively and extensively. Besides, interview is a means for assessing the personality of the respondent.

Young defines interview as, "an effective informal verbal and non-verbal conversation initiated for a specific purpose and focused on certain planned contain areas."

I employed this method at the time of generating census and during my collection of information on my special topic. Following this method I put the questions face to face at the same time I noted all the required information.

## **Observation Method:**

Observation mean to see things with a purpose. It consisted of facts which are in the direct knowledge of the investigators. Observation is perception with purpose, observation is regulated perception. in observation, only the relevant things are taken into account.

In participant observation the observer takes the part in the social events. When the observer does not actually participate in the activities of the group, but simply observes them from distance it is known as non-participant observation (Bajpai:184).

During our field study I used non participant observation method. At that time no social events were performed by the villagers. Therefore, I was not able to employ myself participating in any events of the community.

Interview and observation methods were simultaneously used to gather information on our specially assigned topics. Case study methods were used to collect information on assigned cases. Genealogical method was used extensively to collect data on kinship and family.

## **Genealogical method:**

Genealogical method which is known as G.T method was discovered by U.H.R Rivers in the study of Melanesian society. This method is very useful in the study of kinship, family and marriage. Thus, in the study of social structure this method has a great relevance.

There are some specific symbols which are used this method and these are given below:




- For Male



- For Female



- For Affinal or Marital Tie

- For Consanguine Tie
- | For the Line of Descent
-  Used for Dead

The abbreviation used in the mapping of kinship are as follows:

Father	= Fa
Mother	= Mo
Husband	= Hu
Wife	= Wi
Brother	= Bo
Sister	= Si
Son	= So
Daughter	= Da

Ego is an important male or female informant through which the relation is traced in the genealogical table method ( Jha Makhan, 1924).

### **SELECTION OF THE INFORMANTS:**

I have selected my informers while collecting my census survey schedules. I have selected the genuine persons who know their cultural pattern and tradition and their social institution.

# **Chapter-2**

## **SHORT DISCRIPTION OF THE FIELD**

**A SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE LAND:**  
**ORIGIN OF THE NAME OF THE VILLAGE:**  
**HISTORY OF THE VILLAGE:**

So far as the history of the village is concerned, it is in obscurity whatever data we could unearth with regard to this is only through oral tradition of the people which is the only available source. How far authentic this one is cannot put a guarantee.

The story goes in the following manners.

The village Ayengin Bali Gaon derived its name from the inhabitants of the village as majority of them are Misings. The present location of the village was once an open agricultural field. Gradually from the last two decades people from the flood affected areas came in to settle while many others built their homes to educate their children while some others due to their services. Since then the village have turned into a densely populated village now called the Ayengin Bali Gaon.

## **LOCATION AND BOUNDARY:**

## **TOPOGRAPHY:**

The topography of the village is flat. The area is characterized by agricultural land, usable land, and homestead and bamboo grooves. The soil types sandy- and alluvial. The nature of the soil is sticky when wet but hard when dried. The ground water is generally found at shallow depth and mostly less than 10 meters.

## **HYDROGRAPHY:**

The main source of water for domestic consumption in the village is tube wells which are installed by the villagers themselves at their own costs. Other than these, no any other source supplied by government is conspicuous. Many families, who are affordable, have electrical driven pumps so as to avail running water facility in their household.

For agricultural purposes on the other hand, people derived necessary water from summer rains which is unpredictable in nature. There is a drain running through the Silapathar town and passes by the southern border of the Ayengin Bali Gaon.

## **CLIMATE:**

The climate of the village can be divided into two seasons, hot and moist summer and dry cold winter. The village and the surrounding area varies from moderate to cold with medium to heavy rainfall. The winter seasons starts from the month of October to March. The Monsoon usually starts from the month of April to July. The autumn and spring seasons are usually marked by favorable moderate weather. The climate of this village is suitable for the cultivation of varieties of crops. The village is rich in its natural resources.

## **FLORA:**

The village is rich in floral resources, one can find vegetation luxuriantly both natural and planted. Some of the names of the domesticated plants with local names have been recorded as follows:-

<b>English Name</b>	<b>Local Name</b>
Jackfruit	Belang
Betel Nut	Guye
Mango	Kedi
Maize	Tepang
Chilly	Mirci
Banana	Kopak
Pumpkin	Tapa
Brinjal	Begena

## **FAUNA:**

A rich variety of birds and domestic fauna are found in the village.

The common domestic fauna seen in the village are cow, goat, cat, dog, pig, hen, duck, pigeon, etc.

Some of the fauna available in the village have been collected which are given below with local names:

<b>English Name</b>	<b>Local Name</b>
Goat	Soben
Cattle	Sobo
Fowl	Porok
Buffalo	Menjek
Pig	Aeg
Fish	Ongo
Duck	Pejab
Pigeon	Parong

## **TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION:**

The means of transport and communication in the village not very much well develop. The Link roads from the National Highway to the Akajan Tiniali run just along the Ayengia Ball Gaon on the Southern border. Many of the families own motorbikes and cars.

Mobile phones are used by almost every grown person of the area. Television are found in almost every household. The post office is situated at the heart of the Akajan which is just a kilometer from the village.

## **ELECTRICITY:**

The electricity is supplied from the Silapathar power station which is just at a distance of 12 kilometer. There is a regular electricity supply to the village though there are interruptions in between for few hours a day.

## **SANIATATION:**

Sanitary system of the village is well developed. The toilets are usually built at the back sides of the main houses. Most of them are built on concrete sanitary toilets while only a very few are made of bamboo huts. The families who are economically sound have sanitary latrine attached to their bathrooms.

## **A. IMPORTANT PUBLIC PLACES:**

### **RELIGIOUS INSTITUTION:**

There are two worshipping place in the village; a Naamghar. The occasions like Kirton, Ali ai: Ligang etc.



**Figure 1:- Naamghar**

### **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:**

There are two school one Ayengia Bali L.P. School. Other one is Ayengia Bali High school.



**Figure 2:- Ayengia Bali L.P. School**



**Figure 3:- Ayengia Bali High school**

### **VILLAGE SHOPS AND MARKET:**

There are few shops within the villages. They are also access to the daily and weekly market at Akajan Tiniali which is only at distance of half kilometer.

### **MEDICAL FACILITY:**

There is a 200 bedded model Hospital at Silapathar which is at a distance of 12 kilometer from the village.

### **POLICE STATION:**

The villagers of the Ayengia Bali Gaon comes under the Silapathar Police station. The Silapathar Police station is just at the vicinity of the village; in distance it is 12 kilometer.

### **PLAY GROUND:**

There is no any common playground of the village as such. The children and youth play games in the paddy field during the winter and in some open space of people's courtyard.

## **C. PEOPLE OR SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE VILLAGE:**

### **ETHNIC COMPOSITION:**

The ethnic composition of Ayengia Bali Village is homogeneous. Almost all the inhabitants of the village are mishings, a tribal community of Assam. Only a few families of Bengali and Bodo communities are seen in the village.

### **PHYSICAL FEATURES OF THE PEOPLE:**

The Ayengia Bali Village people belong to the mongoloid race. The skin colors of these people are yellow pale. Epicantic fold in their eyes are visible. Their structures are usually short to medium and few tall. They have mesorrhine nose, coarse wavy and straight hair. They possess brown to black eye colour.

### **LANGUAGE:**

The people of Ayengia Bali Village speak Mishing dialogue which belongs to the Tibeto Burman linguistic group. Mising is the mother tongue of the Mising people. They also speak Assamese fluently. Hindi and English are also known to many of them as majority of them are literate.

### **DRESS AND ORNAMENTS:**

The Mising tribe has its own traditional dress woven by the women folk. Women usually wear their traditional Chadar - Mekhela, but the male folk usually wear traditional dress only on certain festive occasions and during ritual ceremonies. The Mosang Egge, Perre, Potali, etc are important traditional dress of the Mising women. The male members wear Mibu galuk, Gonro Ugon, and Ribi Gasor during festivals and other special occasions.

The ornaments of the women folk consists of Ear ring, Necklaces, Bangles, Doksiri, Thuriya, Madoli, etc.

### **FOOD AND DRINK:**

Rice is the staple food of the Misings of the village. The villagers usually eat vegetables, pulses, wild roots and wild vegetables and leaves. Meat like chicken and pork are very much liked by the people besides fish and mutton. Namsing is a very common food item of the Mising people.

Nogin Apong and Poro apong are the traditional beverages of the Mising people. every family prepare their own rice beer to be taken during performance of festivals and rituals. It is also a regular drink for most of the Mising families. On special occasions they prepare dishes like Peret Oying, Pittang oying, etc. pork is the favorite meat which cooked with wild edible plants

### **MISING DWELLING:**

From the study of material culture in respect of the house type the Misings are well known for their Chang Ghar, the house on pile. The people of the village generally have Assam type or Concrete RCC buildings houses. But have constructed their kitchen on pile (Chang Ghar). The traditional Mising Pile House (Chang Ghar) is a long single hall; the fire place in the middle of the hall. There is an open space in front of the house locally called as the Tunggeng. The granaries are also built on pile. Almost all of the families have at least one Chang Ghar behind the main house. Only few families have house made of bamboo built on pile as main house.

## **MISING FAMILY:**

Traditionally the Misings are known for their joint families. A common house is shared by a whole family consisting of parents, married sons and daughters. Even after the death of the father, the family does not break up as a general rule but continues to live in the same house as previously including the widow with her children.

In the present study I have found that the majority of the people of the Ayengia Ball Mising village live in a small nuclear families consisting of a married couple and their unmarried children. Regarding the family pattern of the village, it is found that the families are of nuclear, joint and extended types.

## **MARRIAGE SYSTEM OF THE MISINGS:**

As marriage is concerned, monogamy is the general rule, but polygamy is also allowed among the Mising community. There are four types of marriages found among the Mising. They are namely, Dugla Lanam(marriage by elopement), Tadla Lanam(marriage by negotiation), Sola Lanam(force marriage), Mago Dugnam(probationary marriage). The Misings are divided into number of clans and sub clans. Marriages are strictly prohibited among the closely related clan and sub-clans. It is patrilocal in nature. The bride price or dowry system is not practiced.

## **KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY:**

Kinship terms are the terms used in designating kin of various types. The study of kinship terms is as old as anthropology as a modern science is the first significant contribution not the study of kinship term are made by Morgan who published his conclusions as regards the kinship terms. He made two broad categories of kinship viz. the classificatory and the descriptive system of kinship term.

Under a classificatory system several people, lineal as well as collateral and often even affinal, are all similar. Such term refer more to relationship rather than to kin. Against this, a descriptive term of designation describes the speaker's exact relation towards him/her whom he/she is referring to address. Thus, 'uncle' is the classificatory term but 'father' is a descriptive term. Rivers also refer to their family system of kinship terms. Such term refers to the members of a single biological family individuals such as nephews, cousins, and the person related in-law are some examples of classificatory terms used by modern western society.

Following are some of the kinship terms which I have found in Kalyan Kendra Mising village of Silapathar at the time of field study.

<b>Kinship Terms</b>	<b>Local Term</b>
Father	Babu
Mother	Au/ Nane
Father's father	Tato
Father's Mother	Yayo
Mother's Father	Tato
Mother's Mother	Yayo
Son	Aao
Daughter	Ome
Brother (edler)	Kai
Brother (younger)	Biro
Sister (elder)	Bai
Sister (younger)	Biro
Husband	Milo
Wife	Miyeng

### **PROPERTY INHERITANCE:**

The system of property inheritance is patriarchal. The descent is always traced through the male. So they are patrilineal. Generally the eldest male or the father is the head of the family and regarded as the highest authority. The property of the Mising family includes the cultivated land, the residence, the domesticated animals, ornaments, utensils, money and dress etc.

### **DEATH:**

The Mising people believe that death is not only the result of diseases caused by the evil spirit but also an outcome of the natural phenomenon. Death due to old age is regarded as a natural and action of God. Hence, when the head of the family is bedridden and the death is certain his last wishes and advices are sought by the family members. As a matter of role, the relatives are informed and they are expected to arrive for a condolence before the dead body is disposed off. The dead are buried according to their will while alive.

## **Chapter-3**

# **DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

## **CHAPTER - III**

Demography is indispensable part in Anthropological field study, because with the help of demography many important information of particular population are collected.

With the help of census form provided by our department of anthropology, we collected much information like population pattern, population by age and sex, family type, family composition, clan composition, occupational pattern and livestock population, etc. are represented in tabular form. Quantitative data are presented and analyzed in different tables.

Table No:- 1

**Distribution of Population by Age, Sex & education**

Age group	Illiterate			Primary(IV-VII)			Secondary(VIII-X)			Higher Secondary(XI-XII)			Graduate			Post Graduate		
	Male	Female	Total (%)	Male	Female	Total (%)	Male	Female	Total (%)	Male	Female	Total (%)	Male	Female	Total (%)	Male	Female	Total (%)
0-4	11	15	26(11.40)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
5-9	9	6	15(6.57)	4	2	6(2.63)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
10-14	2	—	2(0.87)	5	4	9(3.94)	4	5	9(3.94)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
15-19	—	—	—	—	—	—	4	5	9(3.94)	5	3	8(3.50)	—	1	1(0.43)	—	—	—
20-24	—	2	2(0.87)	—	—	—	4	6	10(4.38)	6	6	12(5.26)	—	—	—	—	1	1(0.43)
25-29	3	5	8(3.50)	—	—	—	4	2	6(2.63)	3	5	8(3.50)	4	1	5(2.19)	—	—	—
30-34	1	1	2(0.87)	—	—	—	2	1	3(1.31)	4	4	8(3.50)	1	1	2(0.87)	3	—	3(1.31)
35-39	2	6	8(3.50)	—	—	—	2	2	4(1.75)	2	—	2(0.87)	—	2	2(0.87)	1	—	1(0.43)
40-44	3	2	5(2.19)	—	—	—	1	2	3(1.31)	—	1	1(0.43)	3	—	3(1.31)	—	—	—
45-49	—	3	3(1.31)	—	1	1(0.43)	3	3	6(2.63)	1	2	3(1.31)	1	1	2(0.87)	1	—	1(0.43)
50-54	2	1	3(1.31)	—	—	—	1	—	1(0.43)	4	—	4(1.75)	2	—	2(0.87)	—	—	—
55-59	—	2	2(0.87)	—	—	—	—	1	1(0.43)	2	—	2(0.87)	—	—	—	—	—	—
60-64	4	—	4(1.75)	1	—	1(0.43)	2	1	3(1.31)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
65-69	—	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	1(0.43)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
70-74	1	—	1(0.43)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
75-79	—	1	1(0.43)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
80-84	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	2	—	2(0.87)
<b>Total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>82(35.96)</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>17(7.45)</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>56(24.56)</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>48(21.05)</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>17(7.45)</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8(3.50)</b>

### **Analysis:-**

Distribution of population by age, sex and education are shown in this table. The above table reveals that out of the total population of 228 the number of illiterates are 82(35.96). the number of illiteracy is higher among the female which is 44 while it is only 38 in case of the males. Of the total population 17(7.45) have studied upto Primary level, 56(24.56) have studied upto Secondary and 48(21.05) upto Higher Secondary. There are 17(7.45) Graduates and 8(3.5) Post Graduates in the Ayengia Bali Mising Village.

Table No: 2

## Distribution of population by marital status

Age group	Unmarried				Married				Widow			Total
	Male	Female	Total	%	Male	Female	Total	%	Male	Female		
0-4	11	12	23	23.23	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
5-9	13	8	21	21.21	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
10-14	12	11	23	23.23	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
15-19	9	7	16	16.16	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
20-24	8	2	10	10.10	3	13	16	12.9	--	--	--	--
25-29	4	--	04	4.04	10	12	22	17.74	--	--	--	--
30-34	1	1	02	2.02	12	7	19	15.32	--	--	--	--
35-39	--	--	--	--	7	9	16	12.9	--	--	--	--
40-44	--	--	--	--	6	5	11	8.87	1	--	1	20%
45-49	--	--	--	--	6	10	16	12.9	--	--	--	--
50-54	--	--	--	--	8	1	09	7.25	--	1	1	20%
55-59	--	--	--	--	2	3	05	4.03	--	--	--	--
60-64	--	--	--	--	6	1	07	5.64	--	1	1	20%
65-69	--	--	--	--	1	--	01	0.08	--	--	--	--
70-74	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	1	20%
75-79	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
80-84	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	1	--	1	20%
Total	58	41	99	99.99	62	62	124	99.35	3	2	5	100%

### Analysis:-

This table shows the distribution of population of Ayengia Ball village. Out of the total population of 228, number of unmarried male is 58 and female is 41, in which total 99 are unmarried and 62 males and females in which total 124 are married. Percentage being 99.99% and 99.99% respectively. Besides this only 5 are found to be widow, percentage being 100. the highest number of unmarried male is 13 which is found in the age group of (5-29) years and unmarried female is 12, found in the age group of (0-24) years. And the highest number of married male is 12 which is found in the age group of (30-34) years and the highest number of married female is 13, found in the age group of (22-24) years.

Table No: 3

**Distribution of population by Sex and Clan Affiliation**

Sl No.	Name of Clan	Male		Female		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1	Taw	27	22.68	22	20.18	49	20.49
2	Taid	28	23.52	32	29.35	60	25.30
3	Morang	16	13.44	13	11.92	29	11.70
4	Daw	5	4.2	4	3.66	9	3.94
5	Kuli	4	3.36	4	3.66	8	3.50
6	Pait	11	9.24	11	10.09	22	8.64
7	Pegu	6	5.04	4	3.66	10	4.38
8	Doley	9	7.56	9	8.25	18	7.88
9	Bori	1	0.84	2	1.83	3	3.30
10	Padi	1	0.84	4	3.66	5	2.19
11	Taye	3	2.52	2	1.83	5	2.19
12	Medok	6	5.04	1	0.91	7	3.16
13	Mishong	2	1.68	1	0.91	3	3.30
<b>Total</b>		<b>119</b>	<b>99.96</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>99.91</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>99.97</b>

**Analysis:-**

Distribution of population by sex and clan has been presented in this table. The table reveals that there are 13 clans in the village. The number of Taid and the Taw population stands highest with 60 and 49 numbers. In case of the Taid clan the percentage is 25.30% and that of the Taw clan 20.49%. The clans namely Morang and Pait show considerable percentage of the population which are respectively 11.70% and 8.64%. The Mishong, Taye, Bori and Bori clan constitute the least number of population in the village.

Table No: 4

**Distribution of Population by Sex & Occupation**

Sl. No	Category	Occupation					
		Male		Female		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Govt. Service	6	4.03	2	1.92	8	3.50
2	Pvt. Service	--	--	--	--	--	--
3	Agriculture	42	34.67	1	0.96	43	18.85
4	Student	42	34.67	30	28.84	72	31.57
5	House wife	--	--	56	53.84	56	24.56
6	Business	18	14.51	3	2.88	21	9.21
7	Dependent	11	8.87	12	11.53	23	10.8
8	Politician	1	0.80	--	--	1	0.43
9	Wage Labourer	4	3.22	--	--	4	1.75
10	Tailor	--	--	--	--	--	--
	<b>Total</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>104</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>99.95</b>

**Analysis:-**

This table shows the distribution of population by age, sex and category of primary occupation of the people of Ayengia Bali Gaon. Out of the total population 228, 8(3.50%) are under Government Service as primary occupation, 43(18.85%) are Agriculturist, 0 are Private Service holders, 72(31.57%) are Students, 4(1.75%) are Dally wage labour by primary occupation, 21(9.21%) are Businessman, and 56(24.56%) are House wife among females.

**Table No: 5****Distribution of Population by Sex & Knowledge of secondary language**

Sl. No	Secondary language	Male		Female		Total	
		No	%	No	%	No	%
1	Assamese	113	62.08	102	77.27	215	68.47
2	English	19	10.43	7	5.30	26	8.28
3	Hindi	49	26.92	22	16.66	71	22.61
4	Bengali	1	0.54	1	0.75	2	0.63
5	Other	—	—	—	—	—	—
	<b>Total</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>99.97</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>99.98</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>99.99</b>

**Analysis:-**

The above table shows that there are 5 secondary languages that people of Ayengia Bali Gaon can speak. The number of languages spoken along with their percentages are Assamese - 215(62.08%), English - 26(8.28%), Hindi - 71(22.61%), Bengali - 2(0.63%) and no other languages are spoken.

**Table No: 6****Distribution of Household according to size**

Sl No.	No. of individual	Size of household	No. of families	Percentage
01	1-4	Small	29	58
02	5-6	Medium	15	30
03	7-8	Large	6	12
04	7-8	Very large	0	
	<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>100</b>

**Analysis:-**

This table shows the distributions of household according to size. It is found that small families consisting (1-4) individuals is common among the people of Ayengia Bali Village, number of 29 and percentage 29% respectively. On the other hand medium age family is 15 in number and percentage being 15% respectively. Only 6 families are found to be large and 0 family to be very large.

**Table No: 7**

**Distribution of Families according to possession of domestic animals and birds.**

Sl No.	Domestic animals & birds.	No. of families in possession	Total no. of domesticated animals & birds
1	Cattle	29	72(24.32%)
2	Dog	15	16(5.40%)
3	Pig	19	26(8.78%)
4	Duck	3	11(3.71%)
5	Fowls	19	107(36.14%)
6	Goat	14	49(16.55%)
7	Pigeon	1	3(1.01%)
8	Cat	9	12(4.05%)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>109</b>	<b>296(99.96%)</b>

**Analysis:-**

This table shows that there are 8 animals viz, cattle(72), dog(16), pig(26), duck(11), fowls(107), goat(49), pigeon(3) and cat(12) that have been recorded in the village.

**Table No: 8**

Sl No.	Type	Composition	No. Of family	%Age
01	Nuclear	Husband, wife and unmarried children.	33	66%
02	Joint	Husband, wife with married and unmarried child and grandchildren.	1	2%
		Husband, wife and married children.	5	10%
03	Extended	Husband, wife and their married child and grandchildren.	9	18%
		Widow with married and unmarried children.	2	4%
	<b>Total</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Analysis:-**

This table shows the distribution of the family according to type composition. In this table there are 33(66%) nuclear, 6(12%) joint and 11(22%) extended families are found in the Ayengia Bali Village.

**Table No: 9****Distribution of martial alliances according to spouse distance**

Sl No.	Spouse distance(km)	No. of marriage	Percentage
1	0	-	-
2	1-10	5	8.06
3	11-20	4	6.45
4	21-30	10	16.12
5	31-40	2	3.22
6	41-50	4	6.45
7	51-60	10	16.12
8	61-70	10	16.12
9	71-80	0	0
10	81-90	2	3.22
11	91-100	15	24.19
12	100 and above	0	0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>99.95</b>

**Analysis:-**

The table shows the distribution of families of marital alliances according to spouse distance. From the table it is clear that the marital according to spouse distance within 91-100 km are highest with a total number of 15(24.19%) followed by spouse distance of 21-30 km with a number of 10(16.12%). None has been found to have married within the village. Martial alliances of spouse distance above 100km is also seems to be nil.

# Chapter-4

## SPECIAL TOPIC

## **Bamboo Crafts**

### **Introduction:**

Assam is rich in sylvan resources and most of its forests are richly stocked with bamboos and canes of various species. Bamboo is a raw material of great versatility and forms an integral part of life-style and economy of Assam. Special mention may however be made of the forests of Mizo hills, Naogaon and North Lakhimpur districts of Assam. While touring in the hill districts, one sometimes wonders at the vast expanses of bamboo and canes. The important species of bamboos of economic value are the Muli (*Melocanna bambusaides*), Dalu (*Dainostachyum dalloa*), Khang (*Dendrocalamus longispatus*), Kaligoda (*Oxytenanthera nigrocalata*), Pecha (*Dendrocalamus hamilton*). The Muli and the Dalu have great commercial importance, the former for pulping, constructional and fencing purposes, and the later for the mat and basket industry.

The making of bamboo and cane products is perhaps the most universal of all the crafts practiced by a large number of artisans scattered throughout the state. It is practiced as a house hold industry and no mechanical device is used. Cane and bamboo products are used for a wide range of purposes and extensively used in every household.

Case Study-I  
Fig: Me and My Informant



### Case Study - I

For my first case study I went to the house of Mr. Uttpal Taw, who is married and according to custom stays with his wife and his family members. He has three sons. I explained to the purpose of my visit and the importance of bamboo craft among the Mising people of Ayengia Bali Gaon. I also requested him for his kind favour to help me write my special topic on bamboo and cane craft among the Misings. He was a very kind and cooperative person. He agreed to give information and help me document the importance of bamboo craft in day to day life of the community. To him I put some questions regarding my special topic.

Mr. Uttpal Taw said that bamboo and cane craft is one of the most important aspect in the life of the Mising people. From the birth till the death ceremony the use of bamboo and bamboo product is an indispensable material. In the Mising culture the bamboo may be regarded as one of the most important element of the Mising material culture. Starting from every ritual ceremony to agricultural and fishing implements and construction of houses the bamboo is used in all aspects of life. Hence bamboo and canes and their products are very important in the life of Mising people.

Mr. Uttpal Taw said that many articles used in day to day life of the Mising people prepared from some bamboo species for specific purposes. He also named some of the bamboo names locally available and frequently used by the community. Some of them are:

1. *Jati bah*-thin and tall
2. *Mukal bah*-tall with close internodes
3. *Bhaluka bah*-thick and hard with close internodes
4. *Bhaluki bah*

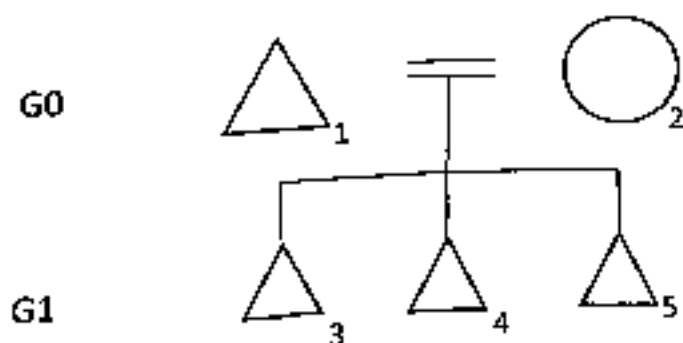
Some of the bamboo craft articles which are commonly visible in the houses of the Mising people are the korai, chalanl, passi, meyap, megap, dola, gempu, jurki, epo, guri, pettir, etc.





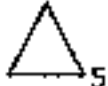
Besides the above mentioned articles most important of all is the traditional houses and their granaries which are completely built of bamboo and canes. The traditional Mising house has ten layers in all from the roof to the lowest level of the floor. Every layer is made of bamboo pieces and splits in different sizes. Some of the different elements of a Mishing traditional house are lakjun, kobang, bener, sotem, jopong, tarte, piso, perap, rapte, bangkung, kopkang, saal, etc. Even, bamboo wall, bamboo door, bamboo rag, etc. are some of the common articles seen in a Mising house. He also defined some of the above mentioned bamboo articles commonly used by the Mising people of Ayengia Baligaon while constructing a traditional house are as follows:

1. *Kobang* - Step of the house
2. *Lagjun* - a long bamboo stick as a support while climbing a traditional House
2. *Jopong* the horizontal lower support of the floor
3. *Piso* - the floor made of bamboo splits
4. *Bangkung* - long bamboo pole across the upper case of the roof.
5. *Perap* - a platform over the fireplace

Informant:	Mr. Uttpal Taw
Education:	H.S passed
Occupation:	Cultivator
Age:	43
Sex:	Male
Marital Status:	Married
Religion:	Hinduism
Clan:	Taw
Date:	16/06/2022
Place:	Ayengia Bali Gaon, Silapathar

A short geneaology of informant:-



-  = The Ego
-  = The Ego's Wife
-  = Ego's Elder Son
-  = Ego's Middle Son
-  = Ego's Younger Son



Case Study - II  
Fig: Me and My informant

## Case Study - II

For my second case study I went to the house of Mr. Rabika Taw. He is head of the family. I explained to her the purpose of my visit and the importance of bamboo craft among the Mising people of Ayengia Bali Gaon. I also requested him for his kind guidance to write my special topic on bamboo and cane craft among the Misings. He was a very kind and cooperative person. He agreed to give information and guide me in documenting the importance of bamboo craft in day to day life of the community.

Mr. Rabika Taw said that bamboo and cane craft is one of the most important aspects in the life of the Mising people. From the birth till the death ceremony the use of bamboo and bamboo product is an indispensable material. In the Mising culture the bamboo may be regarded as one of the most important element of the Mising material culture. Starting from every ritual ceremony to agricultural and fishing implements and construction of houses the bamboo is used in all aspects of life. Hence bamboo and canes and their products are very important in the life of Mising people.

Mr. Rabika Taw said that many articles used in day to day life of the Mising people prepared from some bamboo species for specific purposes. He also named some of the bamboo names locally available and frequently used by the community. Some of them are:

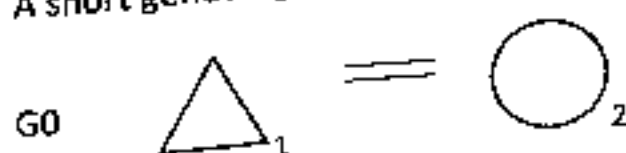
1. *Jati bah* - thin and tall
2. *Mukol bah* - tall with close internodes
3. *Bhaluka bah* - thick and hard with close internodes
4. *Bhaluki bah*


Some articles which are made from bamboos for agricultural implements are *Dilla, moi, esari,, laroli, birya, pettum, tangal, bari, dolo, chalani, guri, gempu, pasi*, etc. and some other articles like *tuli, chalani, porang, turji, dirdang, tutak* etc. some of the fishing implements of the Mising people. She also defined some of the above mentioned bamboo articles commonly used by the Mising people of Kalya Kendra Mising village.


1. *Tuli* Basket for holding fishes while fishing
2. *Chalani* a type of sieve for catching fish
3. *Porang-basket* (medium size) for trapping fish
4. *Turji* - basket (medium size) for trapping fish
5. *Dirdang* - basket (large size) for trapping fish

Name of the Informant:	Rabika Taw
Education:	Illiterate
Occupation:	Cultivator
Age:	60
Sex:	Male
Marital Status:	Married
Religion:	Hinduism
Clan:	Taw
Date:	17/06/2022
Place:	Ayengia Baligaon, Silapathar

A short geneology of informant:-



  $_1$  = The Ego

  $_2$  = Ego's Wife



Case Study - III  
Fig: Me and My informant

### Case Study - III

For my first case study I went to the house of Mrs. Juli Taw, who is married and according to custom stays with her husband and her family members. She has a son. I explained to the purpose of my visit and the importance of bamboo craft among the Mising people of Ayengia Baligaon. I also requested her for his kind favour to help me write my special topic on bamboo and cane craft among the Misings. She was a very kind and cooperative person. She agreed to give information and help me document the importance of bamboo craft in day to day life of the community. To she I put some questions regarding my special topic.

Mrs. Juli Taw said that bamboo and cane craft is one of the most important aspects in the life of the Mising people. From the birth till the death ceremony the use of bamboo and bamboo product is an indispensable material. In the Mising culture the bamboo may be regarded as one of the most important element of the Mising material culture. Starting from every ritual ceremony to agricultural and fishing implements and construction of houses the bamboo is used in all aspects of life. Hence bamboo and canes and their products are very important in the life of Mising people.

Mrs. Taw said that many articles used in day to day life of the Mising people prepared from some bamboo species for specific purposes. She also named some of the bamboo names locally available and frequently used by the community. Some of them are:

1. *Joti bah*-thin and tall
2. *Mukai bah*-tall with close internodes
3. *Bhaluka bah*-thick and hard with close internodes
4. *Bhaluki bah*

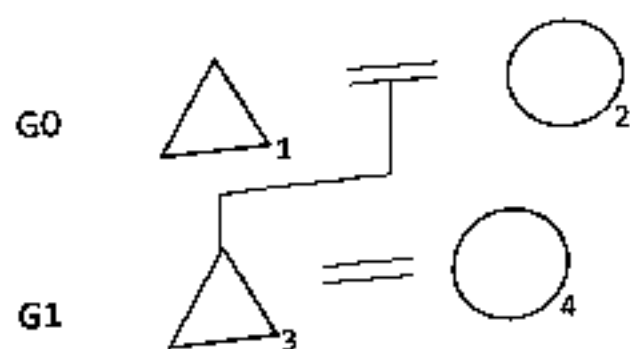
Some articles which are made from bamboos for day to day house hold uses are koral, chalani, passi, meyap, megap, dola, gempap, jurki, epo, guri, pettir, etc. And some other articles like bamboo wall, bamboo door, perap, rapte which are some parts of the Mising house.

She also defined some of the bamboo articles commonly used by the Mising people of Ayengia Baligaon.

1. *Gempa* - bamboo basket
2. *Jurki* - basket used for trapping fish
3. *Tasuk* - basket for filtering the traditional beverage, the *Poro apang*.
4. *Passi* - basket for holding any types of materials
5. *Pettir* - It's a cheek house
6. *Pera* - it's a hen hut

Name of the Informant:	Mrs. Juli Taw
Education:	Illiterate
Occupation:	Housewife
Age:	60
Sex:	Female
Marital Status:	Married
Religion:	Hinduism
Clan:	Taw
Date:	17/06/2022
Place:	Ayengia Ballgaon, Silapathar

### A short geneology of informant



= The Ego's Husband



= The Ego



= Ego's Son



= Ego's Daughter in Law

# **Chapter-5**

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

## CHAPTER - V

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Anthropology is the thorough and systematic study of human beings from all sorts of aspects. It is very essential in understanding the perfect perspective for the students of anthropology. This year, 2022, the department of anthropology, Silapathar Science College, Silapathar has arranged a field work for the students of sixth semester students at Ayengia Bali Gaon, Silapathar in Dhemaji district, Assam. An extensive field study was carried out continuously of seven days, which started from 14th June 2022 and continued upto 20th June, 2022. In the present report, a discussion is proposed to focuss some aspect of the socio-cultural life of the Mising tribe of Ayengia Bali Gaon.

In the preceding chapters I have made a detailed study about the socio-cultural aspects of the Ayengia Bali Gaon. In relation to other topics more investigations were made on "Musical Instruments of the Misings". In addition to data collection made through observation and interview, a few concrete cases for the above mentioned topic was also collected from the people of the village.

First chapter deals with the introduction of the field methodology. In the next chapter, I have discussed the village features including the size and settlement pattern of the village. It also includes the general socio-historical background of the people, physical features, etc. and contains some socio-religious aspects of the people. The third chapter is the demographic part. The fourth chapter includes the special topic. The last chapter i.e. this chapter deals with the summary and conclusion, field diary and bibliography.

The summary and conclusion part of this chapter highlights some of the salient features in the field work.

One main community of that is the Mising population mainly inhabits the Ayengia Bali Gaon. Many of them have moved into the village at different times from various other areas and districts. Most of them are from villages on the north bank of river Brahmaputra in the district of Dhemaji. They have migrated to the village due to flood and other reasons like service and business and for the better education of their children.

The mother tongue of the Misings is Mising language which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman linguistic group. They also speak Assamese, Hindi, Bengali and some of them can also speak English. The climatic condition of the Ayengia Ball Gaon is also same with the other parts of Dhemaji district. Most of the people have their agricultural land away from the village. The village is densely populated and hence only kitchen garden are practiced among them. The supply of electricity covers the whole village. Majority of the families have modern electronic amenities like television, radio, sound system, freeze and telephones, etc. Motorbikes and cars are also common among the villagers. School buses, autorickshaws, electronic rickshaws also ply in the village as a means of transportation. The Silapathar town is adjacent to the village to the west and the National Highway to the east at a distance of half a kilometer.

Traditionally the women of the village wear their traditional dress and ornaments but the impact modernization is observable in their dress pattern. Males usually wear the traditional dress during festivals and ritual occasions. Regarding occupations most of the people are either Government servants or businessmen. Very few are agriculturists by occupations.

The economic condition of the village is quite good. As per analysis it is seen that the number of earning members in the population is quite high.

The village is educationally well developed. Almost all male and female members of the village are literate. The rate of illiteracy is very little. Many graduates and Post graduates are also seen in the village. Nowadays people have young children become conscious about quality education and are educating their in the best schools of the area. Many have sent their children for higher education

Regarding the family pattern of the village, it is found that the families are of nuclear, joint and extended types.

The system of property inheritance is patriarchal. The descent is always traced through the male. So they are patrilineal. Generally the eldest male or the father is the head of the family and regarded as the highest authority.

As marriage is concerned, monogamy is the general rule, but polygamy is also allowed among the Mising community. There are four types of marriages found among the Mising. They are namely, marriage by elopement, marriage by negotiation, force marriage, probationary marriage. It is patrilocal in nature. The bride price or dowry system is not practiced.

From the study of material culture in respect of the house type the Mising are well known for their Chang Ghar, the house on pile. The people of the village generally have Assam type or Concrete RCC buildings houses. But have constructed their kitchen on pile (Chang Ghar). The granaries are also built on pile. Almost all of the families have at least one Chang Ghar behind the main house. Only few families have house made of bamboo built on pile as main house.

It is seen that the Mising people of this village live a middle class life. They are much better in living standard than the other Mising populations in other backward areas. Their special traditional customs and other such characteristics are noticeable in the religious and social practices.

The present study is very preliminary in nature. However, it is very interesting and educative study through which I was able to notice the development and changes regarding their education, economic status and socio-cultural aspects of the people of this village in particular and the Misings as a whole in general. An extensive study is necessary to know thoroughly about them.

## FIELD DIARY

**Date: 14-06-2022**

As it had been earlier scheduled, we accordingly arrived at our department at around 8.00 A.M. in the morning for our field study at Ayengia Ballgaon, Silapathar. At 9.00 A.M. we set out for the field and reached our destination at 10.00 A.M. On our first day of Field study we made ourselves familiar with the village and the villagers. We started our house hold survey. Having done our field survey till 2.00 P.M. We came to our camp from where we dispersed at 3:00 P. M.

**Date: 15- 06- 2022**

Like the previous day and as it had been earlier scheduled, we accordingly arrived at our department at around 8.00 A.M. in the morning for our field study at Ayengia Baligaon, Silapathar. At 9.00 A.M. we set out for the field and reached our destination at 10.00 A. M. On our second day of Field study we went to fill the house hold survey schedule forms for the rest of the village. We started our house hold survey. Having done our field survey till 2.00 P.M. We came to our camp from where we dispersed at 3.00 P. M.

**16-06- 2022**

At 9.00 A.M. we set out for the field and reached our destination at 10.00 A. M. On our third day of Field study we went to fill the house hold survey schedule forms for the rest of the village. We started our house hold survey. We also collected various information on the day to day lives of the Mising people. Having done our field survey up to 2:00 P.M, we came to our camp from where we dispersed at 3:00 P. M.

**Date: 17-06-2022**

The other days and as it had been earlier scheduled, we arrived at Ayengla Baligaon, Silapathar at 9.00 A.M. We started our house hold survey. We concentrated our study the material culture of the Mising people of the village. We gathered information on agriculture, dress and ornaments, festivals, house types, food and drink etc. Having done our field survey till 2.00 P.M, We came to our camp from where we dispersed at 3.00 P. M.

**Date: 18 -06-2022**

Today I woke up at 6.00 A.M. in the morning and finished my washing before 8.00 A. M. After breakfast, I started for the field and reached there at 9.00 A. M. As instructed and accompanied by Sir Naba kumar Pegu, the teacher in charge we started to sketch the village map. We tried to capture some important photographs of the Mising material cultural elements like the dress and ornaments, house types and granaries, etc. At 2.00 P. M. we reunited at the camp and left for our respective homes at 3.00 P. M.

**Date: 19-06-2022**

As it had been earlier scheduled, we accordingly arrived at our department at around 8.00 A.M. in the morning for our field study at Ayengla Baligaon, Silapathar. At 9.00 A.M. For my first case study I went to the house of Mr. Utpal Taw's, who is married and according to custom stays with his wife and his family members. He has three sons. He was a very kind and cooperative person. To him I put some questions regarding my special topic to which he answered in this way. I had an interaction with Mr. Utpal Taw for almost 2 hours after which I left for our camp.

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