IMPACT OF CROSS BORDER TRADE ON SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG MONPAS AND MISHMIS TRIBES OF THE ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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ABSTRACTS

Arunachal Pradesh has been known for maintaining Cross border trade relationship with her neighboring countries namely- Bhutan, Tibet, China, and Burma since great past. It is noteworthy to mention that, the economic, social, and psychological structure of the Arunachal Pradesh and its people have been continuously modifying by the trade relation maintained by her with other countries. In addition, pace of social change in Arunachal Pradesh is on high speed on the ground that, she has the maximum numbers of foreign countries sharing her boundary. In fact, trade relation with other countries has been
significantly changing, modifying, and replacing the customs, traditions, socio-economic institutions, religion, educational system, general aspiration, belief, outlook, composition, and size of family of the Monpas and Mishmi tribes in one hand and of the state in other hand.

In this paper, an attempt has been made to observe impact of cross border trade on social change among Monpas and Mishmis tribes of the Arunachal Pradesh. Moreover, the present study also highlights current cross border trading items of Monpas and Mishmis community and major cross border centres of the Arunachal Pradesh.

**Keywords:** Arunachal Pradesh; Cross Border Trade; Mishmi; Monpas & Social Change

**INTRODUCTION**

“Old order changeth yielding place to new,” said Tennyson. Signifying that Man is inherited with love for change and progress and do not want to be static since the dawn of human evolutionary process and strives to gulp down what has stayed too long for the cause of something new. Man’s passion for change is seen from his perennial adjustments to the physical and social environments, which they are confronted with. If not man do it, nature itself will take it own course in the form of earthquake, flood, epidemic, drought, tsunami etc, and change is introduced violently. *Social Change* implies a change in social structure and its characteristics in the form of the size of the society, its composition, the type of the socio-economic institutions, form of family, marriage practices, religious practices, culture, custom and tradition, educational system etc. Social change can be verified by glancing at the history of any society. In short, social change implies a replacement of what has stayed too long, even though it may be of good things. However, certain human values as holiness, respect, beauty, goodness, and truth are everlasting and perpetuate with every human generations are exceptions to social change. Arunachal Pradesh has been known for
maintaining Cross border trade relationship with her neighboring countries namely- Bhutan, Tibet, China, and Burma since great past. It is noteworthy to mention that, the economic, social, and psychological structure of the Monpas and Mishmis in particular and the Arunachal Pradesh in general have been continuously modified by the trade relation maintained by her with these countries. It addition, pace of social change in Arunachal Pradesh is on high speed on the ground that she has got the maximum numbers of foreign countries sharing her boundary. In fact, trade relation with other countries has been significantly changing, modifying, and replacing the customs, traditions, socio-economic institutions, religion, educational system, general aspiration, belief, outlook, composition, and size of family of the Monpas and Mishmi tribes in one hand and of the state in other hand.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the paper are:

1. To identify main Cross Border Trade Centres of Arunachal Pradesh.
2. To review items under the purview of cross border trade among Monpas and Mishmis tribes of Arunachal Pradesh.
3. To study impact of cross border trade on social change among Monpas and Mishmis communities of Arunachal Pradesh.

METHODOLOGY

During the present study, an effort has been made to make the study empirical. However, present study in its entirety is based on both primary and secondary data. For the collection of primary data, 25 respondents have been selected at random basis and interviewed
personally with the help of well-designed questionnaires to ascertain present position of social change triggered by cross border trade in Tawang, West Kameng, Dibang Valley, Lohit and Anjaw districts of the Arunachal Pradesh.

As for secondary data, various articles, Govt. reports, and official websites have been referred to for better understanding of the problem. However, internet has been one of the most used sources of secondary data for the present study.

**KEY BORDER TRADE CENTRES OF THE ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

Following picture, demonstrate some of the significant major cross border trading routes or centres of the Arunachal Pradesh.

![Map of Arunachal Pradesh showing border trading centres](Source: The Directorate of Information and Public Relations & Printing, Government of Arunachal Pradesh, Naharlagun, India.

As per observation made in above picture, there are nearly eight major trading centres in the Arunachal Pradesh namely- Bumla, Bletting, and Lumla in Tawang district;
Dongsengmang in West Kameng district; Takseng in Upper Subansiri district; Mechuka and Monigong in West Siang district; Gelling in Upper Siang district; Kibithoo in Lohit (Anjaw) district; Pangsu Pass in Changlang District respectively. It is also evident from the above picture that, Tawang district has largest number of trading centres because it does share its border with two countries namely- Tibet and Bhutan followed by West Siang. However, East Kameng, Kurung Kumey, Tirap and Dibang Valley do not have major trading centres along their borderlines with other countries. The study area has share of about four cross border trade centres out of eight major cross border-trading centres of the Arunachal Pradesh.

NOTABLE ITEMS UNDER THE PURVIEW OF CROSS BORDER TRADE AMONG MONPAS AND MISHMIS OF THE ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Currently, Monpas and Mishmis tribes are found to be engaged in cross border trade relation on following items that are categorically specified as follow:

A. Items of export from Monpa and Mishmi community to China, Burma, Tibet, and Bhutan.

1. Edible oil (Sie)  
2. Potatoes (Joktang)  
3. Ginger (Saga)  
4. Kasturi  
5. Agricultural implements  
6. Over coat(Chuppa) jacket (Aliphutung)  
7. Cycles  
8. Local papers(Mon Shuk)  
9. Traditional necklace(Zhur)  
10. Traditional wooden mask (Sheng Bha)  
11. Local colour (Naktsi)  
12. Mishmi Teta  
13. Tala seed  
14. Sword(Syabrey)  
15. Coffee  
16. Tea
17. Rice 18. Flour
19. Dry Fruit 20. Gur and Misri
21. Tobacco 22. Snuff
23. Cigarettes 24. Canned food
25. Agro Chemical 26. Local herbs
27. Dyes 28. Spices
29. Watches 30. Kerosene oil
31. Chitranala oil, Pulse(Sakpu); 32. Seasonal green vegetables
33. Garlic 34. Onion
35. Mushroom (both moist and dry)
36. Green chilies (Solu) (in fact whole of Tibet province fully dependent for chilies imported from Tawang).
37. Fodder for cattle 38. Medicinal plants (Herbs and shrub)
39. Raw materials for making incense sticks
40. Handicrafts items 41. Barbets
42. Wooden furniture 43. Bamboo and bamboo products
44. Woolen carpet 45. Fruits like Apple, kiwi, orange
46. Thanka painting 47. Mineral salt etc.

B. Items of import from China, Burma, Tibet, and Bhutan to Monpa and Mishmi community of the Arunachal Pradesh

1. Ornaments like Ziroo and Nayu 2. Pots(Kho)
3. Shoes 4. Dresses(Shinka, Chola)
5. Blankets 6. Milk and milk products
7. Yak and sheep wool  
8. Silk  
9. Walnut  
10. Gold, silver, precious stones & gems  
11. Articles of religious importance  
12. Utensil (Hayang) and Bangla Thal  
13. Rock salt (Tamin)  
14. Beads (Krunung)  
15. Wine (Chang)  
16. Fish  
17. Blanket (Thanga)  
18. Thermo plastic  
19. Electric goods  
20. Electronic products  
21. China clay bowl  
22. Dry meat etc.  
23. Tibetan sword (Sabre)  
24. Computer parts and software etc.

**CROSS BORDER TRADE AND SOCIAL CHANGE AMONG MONPAS AND MISHMIS TRIBES OF THE ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

Remarkable changes have been noticed in marriage system of Mishmi community. It interesting to note that, Mishmi import items like Tebetan sword (Sabre), beads (Krunung and Mandong), ornaments like silver bangles, necklace, brass ring and utensils from neibouring countries that form major items of exchange during proposal of bridegroom and marriage ceremony. Cross border trade relationship has influenced or changed marriage system among Monpas of Dirrang and Tawang areas as traditional marriage systeem is eclipsing and traders are getting married to local beauties and settling down because of lasting trading relationship of local people with the Bhutanese and Tibetan. This kind of recent phenomenal development has been gradually changing the demographic features of the area. Moreover, silk ornament (Ziroo and Nayu), pottery (Kho), dresses and clothes (shinka, chola and Khamung), blanket (Thanga) utensils (Bangla thal, Hayang), and wine (Chang) mostly imported from Bhutan, Tibet and Bangladesh have become inevitable
aspects of any social observance, cultural and traditional life of the Monpas. It is to one surprise that, cross border trade has not brought about significant social changes among Monpas of Kalaktang area on the ground that the local people are sharing common culture, tradition and religion with eastern part of Bhutan to whom they maintain most of trading relationship. Moreover, major changes have not been observed among Idu Mishmi of Dibang Valley District in the field of marriage despite having being maintaining perennial business relationship with other countries.

Cross border trading relationship has made the Monpas and Mishmi people to make use of imported items like sword, bangles, beads, electronics gadgets, pots to decorate their houses. They have also started to make extensive use of silk dresses known as Shinka, chola, and ornaments as Ziroo, Nayu, and sword imported from Bhutan and Tibet during special occasions like weeding and festival that form a new addition to their traditional possessions. It is worth mentioning that, Monpas and Mishmi families having cross border relation with other countries are wealthier and lead more prosperous life than other normal families. Infact, they are also found to be more active in terms of decision-making and participation at social occasions at community level. In the Khibito area, a new development has been identified in the form of indigenous moneylender meeting financial needs of traders to promote business across borderline giving birth to new economic institution in the area. However, the originality of Monpas language has also been constantly threaten because of invasion of Tibetan and Bhutanese language as it is evident that, most of the Monpas are using Tibetan and Bhutanese words and phrase while making normal conversation within their community.
CONCLUSION

Arunachal Pradesh has been known for keeping Cross border trade relationship with her neighboring countries viz- Butan, Tibet, China, and Burma since time immemorial. Trading relation with these countries has been significantly changing, modifying and, replacing the socio-economic institutions, religion, educational system, general aspiration, belief and outlook, composition and size of family, marriage practices, religious practices, culture, custom and tradition, educational system of the indigenous people of the state. Cross border trading has been proven device to uplift the socio-economic status of the Monpas and Mishmis tribes in particular and state in general. However, while keeping cross border trade by Monpas and Mishmis with neighboring countries, they have not to lose their old aged culture and rich traditions etc. Therefore, episode of cross border trade has been reshaping the socio-economic structure of Monpas and Mishmis in particular and the state in general and hold a great promises to go a long way with perennial Government promotional assistances. Thus, instrumentality of cross border trade has been felt in bringing rapid social change among Monpas and Mishmi community in particular and the Arunachal Pradesh in general.

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