

Use of Various musical instruments in the major agricultural festival of the tribals of Arunachal Pradesh

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Introduction

The present State, Arunachal Pradesh, was christened on February 20, 1987. It was known as the North East Frontier Agency (NEFA) and then on January 20, 1972, it became a Union Territory and later a full-fledged state in February 1987. It is also known as the “land of the rising sun” is located in the northeastern region of India. It is approximately **84,000 sq. kms** in size. It shares a long international border with Bhutan to the west (160 kms), China to the north and north-east (1,030 kms), and Burma (Myanmar) to the east (1440). Additionally, it extends from peaks covered in snow in the north to the plains of the Brahmaputra valley (Assam) in the south. In terms of land, Arunachal Pradesh is the largest state in India’s northeast, even bigger than Assam, the state with the highest population.

High mountains and deep forests cover a lot of Arunachal Pradesh, which has kept the tribes living in the various river basins of the state from mixing and communicating with one another. Geographic isolation has caused more than 26 significant tribes with a variety of dialects to co-exist and thrive with their unique identities and cultures, which are expressed via faith, belief, music, dance, and attire.

Arunachalese are speakers of the upper Assam group of Tibeto-Burman languages. In terms of race, they are members of the Mongoloid Tibeto-Chinese family. The upper courses of the Yangtze and Hoang-ho rivers in northwestern China are where the Tibeto-Chinese races originally originated. From there, successive waves of immigrants entered north-eastern India. Approximately 2000 B.C. saw the arrival of the first waves in Arunachal Pradesh or north-east India.

There are **26 major** tribes and a large number of sub-tribes in Arunachal Pradesh with multiple dialects living and thriving with their distinct identities and cultures expressed through beliefs, faiths, song, dance and attire. Some major tribes are Monpas, Nishi, Apatani, Adi, Tagins, Tangsa, Nocte, Singpho, Khamti, Wancho and Sherdukpens. The majority of these tribes share a same ancestor “Abo Tani” and mother “Pedong Nane”, making up one ethnic group.

Arunachal Pradesh's people's socio-cultural life revolves around the festivals. The festivals associated with agriculture that are observed with ceremonial merriment either to give thanks to god for his providence or to pray for a bountiful harvest. Important festivals include the Adi's Solung, the Monpa's and Sherdukpen's Losar, the Hill Miri's Boori-Boot, the Apatani's Dree, the Tagin's Si-Donyi, the Nishi's Nyokum, the Idu Mishmi's Reh, etc. most festivals involve ritualized animal sacrifice. (Osyka, N. 1996)

One of the largest tribes in Arunachal Pradesh, the Adi are dispersed over East Siang, Siang, Upper Siang, Si-Yomi, Lower Dibang Valley, and certain areas of Namsai district. They have been able to retain their long-standing cultural history. The area, which was historically known as Abor, is located roughly between 27.42 and 29.20 north latitude and 94.43 and 95.35 east longitude. The administrative history of the region and the accounts of the early explorers refer to the Adis as the Abor from a very long time ago. They now refer to themselves as "people of the highlands" or "Adi".

Arunachal Pradesh maps depicting Adi-inhabited districts in Arunachal Pradesh



The Adis participated in socio-religious rites and celebrations related to agricultural and human well-being, just like the other communities in Arunachal Pradesh. Since they have such a rich cultural background, their rituals and social celebrations reflect this. The main goal of social and ritualistic acts is to offer prayers to various Gods and Goddesses, deities, and spirits for the welfare of society as a whole and the economic prosperity of the family. Thus, social and religious events are a fundamental component of tribal society. Additionally, social rituals and ceremonies promote inter-personal connection between individuals via activities like singing, dancing, playing, eating, and drinking.

The Adis lack a documented past, but they do have a rich oral history that has been passed down from generation to generation in the form of myths, folklore, and folktales centred on the Aabangs. The legend claims that the Adis are descended from Pedong-Nane, a heavenly progenitor who took on a feminine form. All kinds of creatures, including birds, reptiles, and insects, are thought to have been born from her. A human being was her youngest child. His name was Nibo or Donyi. He then assumed the name Tani for the first ever person on the planet. They were referred to as Abo-tani by the Adi, Galo, Nishi, Tagin, and Apatani. (Mize, N. 2021)

OBJECTIVES

This study's main aim is to investigate the major agricultural Adis festivals and how Adis music are used throughout the festivals. Keeping this broad framework in view, the main objectives of the study are:

- To investigate the major agricultural festivals of Adis in order to understand the use of music in these festivals.
- To study Bari music of the Adi Tribes
- To explore the role of music in agricultural festivals of the Adi tribes.
- Discussion on various musical instruments of Arunachal Pradesh.

Musical Structure

It is commonly assumed that folk music is formed of restricted notes that occur concurrently in the psycho-physical condition of a man alone in pockets or living in community in rural places in the lap of nature. Clearly, geography has a large effect on the compositions. Topography may be defined as the terrain characteristics such as valleys, ravines, rivers, uplands, and hills. The natural environment influences one's imagination and even diction. Initially, the melodies that occurred to man included a limited number of notes, but throughout time, more notes were introduced as vehicles of textual expression. Once a few sounds were created spontaneously by a single individual or collectively, they were rhythmically structured and regularly repeated, learned, and connected together with ordinary local idioms. Eventually, these restricted forms became a characteristic of a certain class or group, and the musical contour so acquired was handed orally from man to man.

Major Agricultural Festival

Festivals are a reflection of people's culture and society, which develop as a result of the populace's inventive solutions to its issues. Festivals reveal a civilization or a community's genuine character as well as its values, traditions, aspirations, and imagination. Every festival has a special origin narrative, which is later preserved as folklore or folktales and forms the basis for the festivals. Festivals in basic societies are typically centered on the natural world. Every festival has its own unique set of rules, traditions,

attire, songs, and dances. In nature worship, certain aspects of nature are either personified or worshipped in their authentic state. Based on the yearly native calendars, every event is timed to coincide with the various seasons. (Tamta, P. 2014)

SOLUNG

The "SOLUNG" is the primary socio-religious celebration of the "Adi" community and is a manifestation of the "adis" festival cult. The "Solung" celebration is predominantly associated with the agricultural activities of the people since they were all members of the agricultural community. The three Assamese Bihus and the Adis' "Solung" can be compared since both have a strong socio-religious component that is closely related to agriculture. Numerous myths, tales, religions, and beliefs regarding the origin of the "Solung" celebration are common among the Adi people.

The Adi months of "Tauno" and "Yio" correlate to the months of August and September, respectively, which is when "Solung" is often celebrated. But depending on the locality, "Solung" is observed on different days of these months. However, the "Kebang" or village council often decides the date based on what is convenient for the villagers. When all the village elders agree, even the "Gam" (headman) can set the festival's date. The villagers begin making "rice-beer" or "Apong" as soon as the festival date is set. For the event, there are also lots of fresh veggies stocked.

Pigs and "Indian Bison," also known as "Mithun," are sacrificed to mark the start of the "Solung" celebration. Depending on their financial means, a household may sacrifice both mithun and pig or just pig. On the day of the sacrifice, no special supper is served, but plenty of "Apong" is prepared and made accessible.

The second day of the "Solung" is typically referred to as the "Yegling." On this specific day, a third of the preserved beef is divided among the kin. On this day, a lavish feast is planned especially for neighbours, ladies, and children.

On the fourth day of the celebration, one of the family's members travels to the field and sacrifices a bird specifically for "Kine Nane." Additionally, a lady or a girl typically contributes "Etting" and "Apong" in addition to the sacrifice for "Kine Nane." The name "Oinnyad" refers to this specific festival day.

Men gather at the village dormitory often referred to as "Mosup" on the last and seventh day of the Solung festival to craft bows and arrows that are nailed to every home's door in the community. This is done to prevent evil spirits from penetrating the homes. This day is called "Ekob." On the tenth day of the celebration, the villagers together remove the weak paddy plants that are being damaged by worms and insects and put them on a tiny platform that has been specifically built for the occasion, just next to the village's main roadway. This action is taken in the hopes that "Kine Nane" (the Goddess) would chase the worms and insects out of the fields after being informed that they are harming the rice crops. This action or method is referred to as "Irni."

The Solung festival is usually connected with and hosts the "Ponung" style of dance. It is also called as "Solung-Ponung," to put it another way. On the first day of the Solung festival, the Ponung dance gets under way. Ponung dance is performed by young females between the ages of 14 and 18. These women are commonly referred to as "Ponung Bona," or Ponung dancers. The location where this specific dance is organised and performed is called "Yingkiong." From a societal perspective, the "Solung" may be described as a "festival of refreshment."

The "legend" surrounding the growing of paddy is connected to the genesis of the "Solung" festival. According to tradition, the paddy plant was raised by "Kine-nane" and got its start from the life juice of "Yidum-Bote" (Son of the God of Knowledge) (the Goddess of the underworld). It was said that a squirrel acting as a human envoy went to "Kine-Nane" to request paddy. However, the Goddess consented to give a man rice in exchange for his annual sacrifice of pigs and mithuns.

According to the tradition, "Kine-Nane" once captured a wild pig that was being pursued by a man, and it eventually made its way to the area where "Kine-Nane" had placed some paddy in the pig's ears. The pig returned to the ground, and as a result, humanity began to produce paddy. There is a song sung at the time of Solung, in which the story of creation of creatures, stones, animals, humans and creation by Miri is sung in the form of a song. In the song presented, Miri describes the origin of Mithun and other animals and the process of creation of the earth. The Song is sung as follows:

“ Pedong Donang Dadi Didum Dankem Dadi Pasi Kori Melang Dadi Karkie Mili Me Pedong Dobie Bisi
Keping E Tabe Bulum Ke

Tumyi Rikbuem Bodum Sula

Dining Komsie Mir Bulu Masi Ling Ketbong Nadeem Mampong Kangkenem Kano Ramdo

Pedong Dodang E Dadi Karki Mite Lang

Dadi Pasi Kori Tabe Mambi Dongum Kalu Kaneleni Lisamem Kangor Lento

Keyum Dine Nane Ke Sedi Dunokue



UNYING-AARAN

The Aran festival, also known as the "rat-hunting" festival, is observed in the month of March (Ginmur-Kombong). It begins on March 1 and goes on for the entire month. This is observed to commemorate the start of the seasonal jhum cultivation and the changing of seasons following the completion of home building. The Aaran festival's main event lasts for four days. The seventh day of March is designated as Aran-pidum Day. Beginning on March 1st, the men go hunting for this celebration. They kill rodents, deer, wild boar, and other animals. On the seventh day, the hunters return home and bring all the captured animals to the gangging (temple), where rituals and prayers are performed before a feast. Gifts are exchanged amongst family on this special occasion. The hunters provide rodents and other hunted creatures to female relatives, who then provide apong (rice beer). The 10th day is when Aaran-lungak is observed. Lungak translates to "Rituals for Mithun Wealth." On this day, family members gather cows and mithuns, tie them to a pole in front of their house, and chop the animals' ears to identify them as their property. To tie the animals that would be sacrificed, some people bring sotkia (rope) from the bush. The 13th day is when Yakjong yume is observed. On this day, dancing units that are divided into several age groups walk from home to house performing the yakjong dance and the delong dance while carrying a stick made of wood known as yakjong (tree found in the wild). It is customary to provide these dancers with apong and meat since it is thought that any homes that do not do so would be cursed. Petpum Yume is observed on the sixteenth day. This day is set aside for the agam (fortune) of the pigs in order to enhance the number of their piglets. On this day, people sacrifice chicken and give it to their neighbours kids to eat outside the home. The mother of the family plays the role of a pig while the kids play the role of piglets throughout this ceremony. Although it is not required, some people undertake this rite because they believe it would benefit their pigs' wellbeing. So the collective rat-hunting truly kicks off the Aaran celebration, which is performed to conjure blessings and agam (fortune) for their houses and family.

This festival is celebrated during the spring season in the month of March. On the occasion of Aaran also Mithun or Pig is sacrificed like Solung festivals an important part of this festival. During the hunt, all the men of the village stay in the forest for six days or go hunting from home. During these six days everyone is busy in hunting and fishing. It is called 'Aaran Geta' in the local language. The song sung on the occasion of Aaran is as follows -

“Anung rebiyo bokung e anung rebiyo
Ge..... Aayi-Yaya buluk Delong rebiyo
Metung eme rebiyo

Anung

Ge.....gidi delong rebiyo, metung eme rebiyo AnungGe..... Siyo ke Delong e Yakjong Delong rebiyo
Anung

Ge.....ngolukke Delong rebiyo, Moman daklang rebiyoAnung

Ge.....Keyum ne siming rebiyo, nane bulum rebiyoAnung

Ge..... tungu eme surung e rebiyo, bungke tido sim rebiyoAnung

Ge..... Dokpe tandane rebiyo aayi ke kido sim



ETOR

Etor is also a major festival of Adi tribes. This festival is also an exclusively agricultural festival. The Adi word "Etor" means "fencing," and the Etor celebration is held to commemorate the building of large circular fences around the hamlet to keep domesticated animals from escaping and ruining their crops. People can enter and exit the fencing by using ladders that are erected across the fencing, and the fencing is created collectively. This celebration is held to protect the health, safety, and continued reproduction of the mithuns and cows maintained within the perimeter of the fence. The festival of Solung Etor is observed in the month of Kijir (May), and it is primarily attended by males. Dadi Bote (God of animals), the spouse of Kiinenaane (Goddess of paddy), is worshipped at this event. Pigs, cows, mithun, and other animals are sacrificed in order to Dadi Bote, who is revered as the keeper of the animals,

and then devoured by people during a following feast. This festivals starts on May 15th, when the entire hamlet slaughters ek (pigs). Thepig's ladig (thighs) and lakdik (shoulders) are separated and preserved in the kitchen, andthe duars (youth) of the village go house to house to collect the meat while recording their names, then bring it to the Moshup (community hall/morong). Yegul is the name of this day. A community feast is held at the Moshup on the second day, which is known as Gampu. On this day, a pator muching (elderly man) is chosen to inspect the meat. The smallest packet of meat is recognised and returned to the owner, and a larger one or money is required if it is not there. In the Moshup, the duars (youths) are ordered to grill some meat, which is consumed with apong (local rice beer). The leftover piece is handedto the patormuching (elders) to prepare at home and bring the following day to the Moshup.

The day after, on May 17, is referred to as Solung Nuti, and it is when people build fences. Those building the barrier, notably the duars, get the meat that the patormuching (elders) have cooked (youths). When the fencing is finished, they conduct a battle dance (mimak) from the beginning of the fencing to the opposite end of the hamlet. They carry on as usual the next day, on May 18, if the hamlet is large enough. Solung Nuyin refersto this day. The day of apong ceremonial preparation, or Lungak Apong Tondi, is observedon the twentieth day. On this day, the patormuching (elders) carries apong and the meatthat was provided to them for cooking on the day of gampu to the moshup, where thepeople continue to feast. (Marak, Q., and Kavita, J. 2013). He is the creator of this world.The stars are also shining in the sky.

“Keyum menying sedi-melo lenma dodemTaleng kitku si rokpi api kisa ituai
Kapa manam rutum tesi Mite dodung mirung lenkane

Keyum pedi em kero pedi em mipi len toDelo keyum yumkang e kamang mone koKamang takar e
dubar lenkai

Kamang mangore orbo bomong mone ko

Kamang mangore orbo bo mone ko

Bomong pabar e Bo pabar e tasar lenkai

Keyum jemyang e yokmo ko

Kero jemi e rempi ko

Mite pedung e mirung lento.”

BARI

Bari is a popular chorus song of Adi male folk played at pime (autumn) and unying aaran (New Year festivals and new house ceremony). A prominent performer leads the song, followed by a group of individuals. Bari has distinct lores that range in intensity from low to high. Adis believes that the bug formed in the fall season and hence appears in the autumn season. It travels the world singing in a

lovely voice, generating natural changes. Sedi Relong Lotin Tabe, a priest, discovered that it was the same piece of flesh that had been tossed into the cave and had turned into a live monster.

In Adi religion, Bari is not only in contact with nature, but also with spiritual qualities. The house or home is considered as the dwelling of family members' souls and is referred to as household god (gumin soyin). The old house is addressed as an old soul clad in an old clothing, and the new house as a well-dressed recently born baby. Ceremonies are viewed as a birth day feast, with ceremonial music serving as a blessing and lullaby for the new home.

Folk Instruments of Arunachal Pradesh:

In Arunachal Pradesh the most common traditional musical instruments include drums, cymbals, Ujuk Tapu, Ame Bali, Emul, Pui, Kiring, Guga etc. There are the Four categories of musical Instruments. Percussion instruments, Wind instruments, solid instruments, and string instruments.

Wind instruments: These wind instruments, known as Ujuk Tapu, are made of bottle gourd. They are comparable to the "Been" that snake charmers use.

Four cane flutes with holes punched through them are attached to a gourd hole. When the bride reaches her husband's house, it is typically played.

The 'Jingre Tapu' is a musical instrument made part of goat bone and part of bamboo. The player blows through the bamboo end, which is wide and opens up like a cone. Bamboo reed flutes are called "**pupe tapu**".



Solid instruments: The solid Instrument- Ponu Yoksi is a sword-like instrument with a sharp edge. The priest uses the clanging sounds made by the player when they move the sword in the centre by two iron plates with holes to keep the rhythm of the ceremonial dance.

CONCLUSION:

Arunachal Pradesh's Adi tribes have important agricultural celebrations that are the focus of this study, which is mostly focused on the music present. Arunachal Pradesh's Adi tribes celebrate Solung, Unying-Aaran, and Etor as three of their primary agricultural festivals. The study primarily examines the role and relevance of music in these celebrations. Arunachal Pradesh's Adi tribes play Bari music, which this study attempts to characterize. It draws attention to the changes that have occurred in their performances, dress, involvement, festival duration, schedule of activities, and musical style.

It should be clearly understood that the Adis always regarded and held that they were surrounded by a variety of spirits, deities, and other unseen entities that continuously expressed themselves, influencing the path of human events. The Adis truly think that maintaining ties with them is vital due to the powers given to these spirits. As a result, during the seasonal rituals and festivals that mark a crucial point in their annual agricultural cycle, the nature of their deeply ingrained close bond between the people and their spirits is concretely portrayed. Examples of such significant holiday celebrations by the Adis are the Unying-Aaran, Solung, and Etor. They are all conducted with seriousness and fervor.

The Adi tribes of Arunachal Pradesh's important agricultural festivals' music has been studied, and it shows that the Adis have a strong affection for their music and culture. It is this love that keeps them going; they take pleasure in the fact that despite numerous social and contemporary changes, they have managed to retain their culture and keep it free of outside influences. The Adis still take great interest in their music, rituals and in their customs. The Adi people still uphold ancient ceremonial rites and celebration processes for festivals like Unying-Aaran, Etor, and Solung.

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