

CPF for UGC-SAP-DRS III NATIONAL SEMINAR

ON

BORDER COMMUNITIES OF WESTERN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

REVISED DATES

5th- 6th MARCH, 2020

Arunachal Pradesh is geographically a vast area straddling across the borders of India, Bhutan, Tibet, China and Myanmar. It also constitutes the north eastern most portion of India. A vast mountainous and jagged terrain, yet a substantially small section are habitable. According to the current state of knowledge the state is inhabited by 26 major tribes and 110 sub-tribes as identities continue to coalesce as well as segregate due to political reasons.

Spread over an area approximately of 83.000 sq.kms, this multi-tribe conglomerate in common parlance finds reference in terms of their geographically divide vertically where the landscape and culturescape converges into Eastern, Central and Western Arunachal Pradesh. Culturally the zones are viewed in a horizontal manner too. In this schema the Central zone is associated with the Shamanic pristine culture of the state, while its Northern Zone is associated with the Buddhistic culture akin to Tibet and Bhutan. The Southern Zone is represented by cultural contacts with the India Civilizational framework of the Brahmaputra valley and the east with South Asian form of Buddhism.

A jurisdictional demarcation in the form of the Inner Line achieved through the Regulation I of 1873 segregated it from the plains and a vaguely defined Outer Line. For the internal administration of this northern frontier of Assam, administrative units were created in 1882 known as Dibrugarh Frontier Tract, which in due course was bifurcated as time went on till independence. It was in the 20th century the colonial state in the context of the Great Game which played out in the context of the relationship with Tibet, China and Russia and the internal turmoil in the Adi Rebellion is demarcated as the Outer Line. Consequent to the area came to be designated as the North East Frontier Tracts (NEFT) in 1912. It was then that the vertical administrations of Eastern, Central and Western North East Frontier Tracts were designated. Intersecting with these horizontal cultural divisions, it is these divisions that have been used to outline the topic of the Seminar.

The colonial state does not annex the area till 1912 when a small section of Central NEFT, particularly areas inhabited by the Adis and Mishmis. The pre-colonial Ahom state used instruments of *posa* and *kotokies* to conduct relationship with the tribes inhabiting Arunachal Pradesh was retained by the British state. The colonial state also intervened by undertaking expeditions against tribal raids into Assam. Since 1882, the Assistant Political Officer who looked after the administration of the Frontier Tracts undertook seasonal tours into the interiors to cultivate friendship with the tribes and



collate data on their culture and topography for cartographic purposes. The contact with tribes yielded limited knowledge of the people and landscape to those inhabiting the proximity of Assam. Further, the preoccupation of the British with the two World Wars within a few years of introduction of direct administration led to a truncated knowledge about the tribes of the region. Though after the demarcation of the Mc Mahon Line in 1914, Tawang became a part of the colonial state, yet effective control over it happened in 1954. As limited written data was generated of only a few tribes, there remains an immense gap in the knowledge of the area. Data can be generated through extensive fieldwork among the communities to which the Seminar seeks to contribute.

The proposed Seminar on the Border Communities of Western Arunachal Pradesh shall broadly refer to communities which have been a part of undivided Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh. The communities which straddle both sides of the borders are broadly represented by Akas, Sajolang, Buguns, Sherdupens, Monpas, Nyishis, Puroiks and other smaller communities living within that geographical area.

The Seminar would broadly focus on the traditional aspects of the communities under the following sub-themes and much beyond:

- Society
- Economy
- Religion
- Polity
- Environment
- Traditional Knowledge Systems
- Trade and Trade Routes
- Inter-Community Socio-Cultural and Trade Linkages
- Linkages with the states of Tibet and Assam: Pre-Colonial and Colonial
- The Colonial and Post-Colonial State: Administrative Developments
- Border-Making and its Impact on Border Communities.

THINGS TO REMEMBER

Conference Days: **March 5th-6th, 2020**

Abstract Submission deadline: **February 15th, 2020**

Intimation of acceptance/ non-acceptance of abstract(s): **February 20th, 2020**

Full paper submission deadline: **February 28th, 2020**

TA: We cannot commit TA reimbursement

For sending in abstracts:

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