



# A Glimpse of Religious History of Nocte Tribe of Arunachal Pradesh

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## ABSTRACT

The study of this subject emphasizes to identify the religious life of the Nocte tribe. An effort is made to examine the various problems, decisions and developments with the application of empirical study and method. The study is on historical analysis. A valuable data is gathered through field studies and interaction with the people of the community. Secondary sources are also referred to further authenticate the research work. The Noctes are one of the ethnic groups of Tirap District of Arunachal Pradesh, inhabited in the eastern most part of India. They are the worshipper of animism. The institution of indigenous belief system of the tribe is not organized as such like a permanent place for worship, idol of god so on so forth. They personified all the natural forces as god or spirits. They believed in the existence of both malevolent and benevolent spirits. Rituals are an integral part of their belief system. The priest acted as intermediate between the gods and the people. They appease these spirits through performing rituals as recommended by the village priest.

Key words: Ethnic, Animism, Idol, Malevolent, Benevolent, Priest, Ritual

## Introduction

Religion is a universal belief system. However, it may vary in names, forms and manner; they seek for a well-being during their earthly life as well as afterlife. Carol (anthropologists) defines religion as – “any set of attitudes, beliefs, and practices pertaining to supernatural power, whether that power is forces, gods, spirits, ghosts or demons.”<sup>1</sup> In many cultures, religion is however, embedded in all aspects of everyday life. Interestingly, the Nocte did not have a word for religion since decades however they did have many concepts concerning the behaviour of their gods and their own expected duties to the gods.

The Nocte believe in the existence of god, called ‘*Rang Joban*’ (sky god). They believe that god is omnipresent although omniscient. Further, they believe that god has created human beings and the universe in which all activities are taken place according to his sweet will. Therefore, the Nocte are god fearing in nature. Thus, they believe that god is omnipotent. They appease the god through various rituals. *Wangpha* states that the

power of the *Rang-Jouban* is manifested in the form of good or bad that affects the man. Nothing can be hidden from him. The activities of a person are being watched constantly and a person remains perpetually at his mercy. Happiness, peace and prosperity could be achieved with the blessings of the *Rang-Jouban*, while misfortune may befall on us due to his curse. Therefore, one should always long for attaining the blessings of *Rang-Jouban* known as ‘*Rang-kap*’ by one’s good deeds and righteous living, and avoid the curse called ‘*Rang-dah*’. All the Nocte rituals are performed, based on this belief, known as *Rangsoam*.<sup>2</sup>

*Mibang & Chaudhuri* states that “religion is one set of dominant forms of human social formations. There is no dearth of literature, which deals the origin, and the functional implications of such a pervasive system in terms of cohesiveness, cognitive values and persistence social inequalities.”<sup>3</sup> Similarly, the Nocte also left all the belongings of the deceased near the graveyard in the early society. However, of late they have adopted burial method and thereby buried all the belongings. In fact, the details of Nocte religions practiced in the distant past cannot be recovered. Yet evidence of ritual treatment of the dead suggests that early people believed in the existence of supernatural spirits and tried to communicate with, and perhaps influence them. Carol, Melvin & peter further states that “many social scientists, particularly anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists have offered theories to account for the universality of religion. Most of them think that religions are created by humans in response to certain universal needs or condition. We considered for such needs or conditions here: a need for intellectual understanding, reversion to childhood feelings, anxiety and uncertainty, and a need for community.”<sup>4</sup>

“In *Tylor’s* view, religion originated in people’s speculation about dreams, trances, and death. The dead of distant is seen in real dreams and trance”.<sup>5</sup>

As *Malinowski Says*, “religion is born from the universal need to find comfort in inevitable times of stress. Through religious belief, people affirm their convictions that death is neither real nor final, that people are endowed with a personality that persists even after death in religious ceremony, human can commemorate and communicate with those who have died, and in their ways achieve some measure of comfort”.<sup>6</sup>

*Durkheins* suggests, “religion arise out of the experience of living in social groups; religious belief and practice affirm a person’s place in society, enhance feelings of community, and give people confidence. The proposed that society really the object of worship in religion”.<sup>7</sup>

The Nocte believe to some natural forces like the sun, moon, trees, water, fire, rainbow and storm in the form of god. The ancestral spirit is also one of the parts of their religion. Ghosts and ancestor spirits are among the supernatural being that were human.

The sacred beliefs, the faith on spirit is most common with the Nocte. The animistic belief is rather a universal feature of the religion of the Nocte. For them, some spots and places are holy as they are seats of spirit. Animals, places, trees, ponds, river, stones, hills or mountains are all abode of spirits. According to Nocte belief, the whole neighbourhood, a village or forest, in which they live, is full of spirit.

*Vidhyarthi & Rai* mentions, “In the Northeastern Himalaya among the *Mirkis* the location with Impression Mountains, waterfalls, deep pools and rivers, great boulders, etc., have each assigned to them goods which are supposed to be interested in the affairs of men and have to be placated by sun fire”.<sup>8</sup> *Vidhyarthi & Rai* further states that “in western India the *Bhils* believe in the survival of the dead and the soul continues to exist as a spirit. Again they have humorous nature spirits – spirit of hills, streams and forest and a bard of punitive and malevolent spirits”.<sup>9</sup> And in South India, “the *Malayarayane* in Kerela regard some stones as symbols of deities. The dead ancestor, nor in the form of deity, goes on protecting his family. The to-days *Nilgiri*, it is believed in ancestral worship”.<sup>10</sup>

Worship of nature is another forms of belief shied prevails among the tribal. Sun, moon and earth are considered the creator of supreme power. *Vidhyarthi & Rai* quote, “In the middle India, the *Santhals*, *Mundas*, *Hos*, *Malers*, and *Birhors* of tribal Bihar, identify the suns are sing Bonga, i.e. supreme god. The *Bhunijs* of West Bengal also bow down before their supreme being, the sun god, the earth, the sun, the fire and water regarded are deities, the great supernatural beings, and are believed is by the *Bondos* of *arina*”.<sup>11</sup> In the Himalayan region, *Vidhyarthi & Rai* mention, the *Garos* consider the sun, the moon and the stones are spirits placed in the heaven for ruling the region. The different tribes of Arunachal Pradesh also worship the sun and the moon as the supreme God”.<sup>12</sup>

*Choudhury* quotes, “No human society exists without the belief in supernatural entities. The consideration of such supernatural entities like gods, spirits in the context of rituals, ceremonies and crisis situation in a society essentially invoked the proper study of religion both from the sociological and psychological points of view. Religion, in a more specific way has been playing a vital role in the social life of the so-called ‘primitive’, ‘small scale’, ‘simple’ or ‘proliferate’ people. Religion in this manner can be regularly conceived as a system of belief as well as relationship and action in relation to supernaturalism”.<sup>13</sup>

Religious beliefs and practices have been a universal feature of the Nocte society. The Nocte consists of a mental attitude on the subject of the supernatural powers. It is the human retort to the apprehension of something a power, which is supernatural. The religions among the tribal of Arunachal Pradesh which are *Nocte*, *the Tangsas* *the Mishmis*, *the Adis*, *the Nyishis*, *the Tagins*, etc. are belief in many malevolent and benevolent spirits.

The Nocte believe in both malevolent and benevolent spirits. They believe that they are present everywhere in the shape of an animal, hill, stones, streams and mountain. These spirits bring in diseases, death, and failure of crops, incidents and calamities for the village or the family concerned. The occurrence of calamities is attributed to these spirits. Therefore, the Nocte falls or get hurt is written *Rangda* 'or god forbid'. They try to appease these powers by means of different types of propitiation and worship. The Nocte called the spirit as 'moan'. Most of the *Moan* have permanent house; some live in the underworld, live on the earth, some in the air and that in human dwelling. They get easily offended with human behaviour of omission and commission, and as always as they look out to do them harm.

#### Nocte indigenous faiths and belief

*Bhagabati* quotes that "one of the universal features of tribal faiths in India is that all beings are supposed to be endowed with a living spirit, and holds true for the indigenous faiths of Arunachal Pradesh. Animals and plants, river and mountains are no exception to this rule. The dead who have apparently left us are yet with us; and it is through remembrance and offerings that we have to renew our relationship with them on due occasions. The dead are again reborn in the shape of offspring in the present generation."<sup>14</sup>

The Nocte firmly believed in the existence of God who lives in the sky whereby he observes the deeds of human being. According to their belief, God is omnipresent, omniscient and omnipotent who punish the wrongdoers and reward good man. In fact, the Nocte are believer of supernatural being which guides in their social life. Further, the Nocte believe that man is created by God; so consequently they practice plenty of rites and rituals throughout their life in order to appease the God. The Nocte believed that all needs of their life are obtained with the pleasure of God's will. Thus, they take out a piece of rice from the plate in the name of God before meal. This practice is not only confined within their home or society rather it is done in other places too. Therefore, it becomes as a part and parcel of their custom. Besides, drops of wine are poured on the ground before it takes. It indicates that they are staunch believers of God who care and provided them perquisite of life.

*Pokarna* defines belief system that "as an organized body of ideas, attitudes and convictions centered on values or things regarded as important or precious by a group."<sup>15</sup> Furthermore, the Nocte believe in the existence of both benevolent and malevolent spirits. The former is believed as a good spirit which protects and leads them to the right path while the latter on the other hand as evil spirit that always attempts to do harm.

*Kalika Joban*: In some villages like *Kaimai*, *Borduria* and *Laptang* have worshiped the spirit called 'Kalika.' However, it has no concrete ideas how this word came into existence. They believe that this spirit lives in the village that protects them from evil spirits. Nevertheless, he also brought natural calamity or epidemic when the people provoke him by dishonour his authority. The feature of *Kalika* according to their belief is that he looks like a monkey having long tail, long hairs, bear-headed and of black complexion. Further, it is stated

that he flying around the village and observes the deed of the people whereby he accordingly rewarded or punished. They further believe that he lives on one of a tree called 'banbang'(banyan tree) in which the villagers used to observe ritual to appease him by offering betel nut and leaf, excreta of rat and ash in small basket from each household.

It's worthy to note that the Nocte usually pray before taking food or wine or beginning of speech in any occasion.

It says like- "*Rang oh kathak rang, kathung rang, Homtok hatok te, kalika joban ngale te awa hei minko*"

Translation:

*"Oh! Almighty God of sky and earth, who lives above the sky and earth, kalika God and in the name of the ancestors."*

And while performing rituals or ceremonies, it also prays among the Noctes. It goes like- "*Rang Oh! Kathak rang, Bangkang Nocte, lekhe-mitduak, apangba remin, rinroan-basa, khopo-pasa dangthukmin, tophoak-chhaphoak santhukmin.*"

Translation: "*Oh! Heavenly God, the Almighty, protect the ignorance, the Nocte, do inspire and bless forever happy, prosperous life.*"

#### Ancestral spirits

The Ancestral spirit is also a prominent feature of worship among the Nocte. It is known as 'Te-a-wahe Muan', which comprised of dead soul of forefathers, the so called the founder members of the village and the dead soul of recent past. Vidhyarthi quotes, "ancestor worships is an important aspect of the tribal religion. Since the tribal firmly believe in the idea that spirits of the dead ancestors have power to decide their destiny, they are very cautious in performing the rites and observe all the ceremonies carefully. The newly dead person is believed to have joined the earlier dead ancestor."<sup>16</sup>

It is praiseworthy that the Nocte pay homage to their ancestors by mentioning their names in the occasions like, meeting, before meals, or wines, in the observation of rituals or rites as well as the other social celebrations like festival, birthday, and opening of house, cultivation of new field, marriage and ceremony. They believe that these spirits act as guiding forces in all aspects of their life.

The ancestral spirit is categorized according to the belief of the Nocte into two groups. Firstly, the spirits of natural dead soul, which they consider as benevolent spirit through which they could yield good harvest, receives peace and prosperity in all walks of their life. It is worthy to note that the Nocte usually prefer the forefather's names for their children. They observe a ritual called 'Taandak sok'<sup>17</sup> for giving name. Secondly, the spirit of unnatural dead soul is believed to be malevolent spirit or evil force. They believe that such souls are unable to reach to an eternal home or 'Blum'<sup>18</sup> (heaven) rather they remain in the sky in the state of

arrogance. Therefore, the Nocte usually not prefer to rename of their names because it causes catastrophic to a person concern or the family.

### Benevolent spirits

*Vidhyarthi* asserts, “The tribal believe that the benevolent spirits are present everywhere in the shape of an animal or tree or stone or stream or mountain, etc. They are represented by stones, bamboo, wooden poles, wooden frames, stream, planets, trees, etc, and are worshiped regularly at the family and village level, failing which they change their role and bring in diseases, deaths, failure of crops, accidents, calamities, etc., for the village or the family concerned.”<sup>19</sup>

In Nocte term, benevolent spirit is called as ‘*Asen Muan*’. It is a protector of villagers and the society in general. In certain case, the people unknowingly provoke this spirit by disobeying his authority, which compel him to cause calamity, and disease. Therefore, to appease this spirit, the villagers observe various rituals, and are differed in the pattern of approaches. Some rituals are minor, which is performed with fewer requirements of articles like, ‘*Chhatraam*’.<sup>20</sup>

The benevolent spirits is classified into different groups, and are varied in forms, and functions or roles. However, their objects are the same i.e. to protect the human being from unseen happening. Some of the eminent benevolent spirits are ancestor’s spirit, *Hadan Joban*, *Hum Tang Te*, *Da-Joban*, and *Chhat Tang-Te*.

*Vidhyarthi* mentions, “The ancestor spirits are conceived by the tribal as essentially benevolent spirits. They may come in dreams or through sacred specialists of the community or the villager who communicate the desire of the dead ancestors.”<sup>21</sup>

*Hadan Joban* (village God): This spirit protects and guides the village activities, and is known as the owner of the village. Therefore, by virtue of his presence in the village, no any major incident has ever occurred. However, if the villager disobeys his authority then an incident is taken place against a person, family, or village as whole. When epidemic occurs in the village, they thought that something wrong has been committed which provoke the *Hadan spirit*. Therefore, accordingly they prepare a ritual called ‘*Joban Suam*’<sup>22</sup> in order to appease him.

*Hum Tang-te* (Home spirit): The spirit which owned the house is popularly known as ‘*Hum Tang-te*’. It protects house and its family members from any incidents like arson, earthquake and disease. It is believed that this spirit is always observed the activities of family members. In certain case, if necessary he guides and lead to the right track. A mother of family always warns the children if they quarrel- “*stop or our home- spirit may leave us forever.*”

Therefore, the family members have well regard to the home-spirit and always maintain well behaves to each other in the house. The belief system of the Nocte is deeply imbibed a discipline life within the surrounding of the village in particular and outside in general. In Nocte, theft case is very rare because a person is scared of home's spirit. They believe that home is guarded by this spirit in the absence of the family members.

*Chhat Tang-te* (Grain-spirit): Another notable benevolent spirit is the spirit of grains. In other words, it is called as the owner of grains. To yield good crops, the Nocte appease this spirit through various rituals individually as well as in common. A ritual like '*Chhat-raam*' is one of the prominent rituals related to this spirit. It is observed compulsorily by every individual family after the harvesting of paddy and millets.

*Song-ka-ko* (grain offering): On the first day of harvesting, another ritual is observed by the Nocte. This is called '*Song-ka-ko*'. When new grains brought at home, it is shared to all belongings of the family. It consists of house-ladder (*Hetho*), hearth (*Tab*), Grain-ponder (*Tham*), House-poles (*Thongs*), grain containers (*Chhat-Tam*) and the family members. Interestingly, this ritual is performed by neither priest nor elderly member but by youngest girl of the family. In certain case, if a particular family has no female child then they invites from neighbouring family.

*Da-Joban* (Moon-spirit): Another prominent benevolent spirit of the Nocte is the Moon-spirit. They believe that Moon is the protector of human being. It gives light during night means, to save the human being from darkness. The revolving of the Moon is the indigenous calendar of the Nocte. All the social, economic and cultural activities are fixed with the Moon's gyrates. For instance, a ritual is observed with reference to Moon by the priest. Further, celebration of festivals is also fixed with consultation to the position of the Moon's revolves.

#### Malevolent spirits

*Vidhyarthi* states, "Deities of diseases like smallpox, fever, abortion, etc. are considered evil spirits. The cause of death is considered to be the bad effect of the evil spirits. The spirits of the graveyard or the spirit residing in a lonely place in a deep forest is also considered to be malevolent."<sup>23</sup>

Malevolent spirits is also an eminent characteristic of the Nocte belief system. There are various evil spirits resides in the village, their chief activity is to do harm the village dwellers. Their perception is that this spirit is responsible for the cause of diseases, illness, and natural calamities in the village. The Nocte called this spirit as '*Joak or gopa*'. Therefore, to mollify this spirit, various rituals are observed in the village by individual or the community. The prerequisites for these rituals includes refined-juice of rice beer, (*juming*), betel nut and leaf (*khave-palu*), chicken (*wo*), piece of cloth (*khatchhup*) and coin (*ngunpha*).

The malevolent spirits is categorized into different groups, viz. *pong-a-pat Joban* (storm & cyclone spirit), *Phoam Joban* (cloud spirit), *Chhan-choan Joban* (rainbow spirit), *rangmok Joban* (thundering spirit),

*Rangphak Joban* (lightening spirit), *Rang-ning chha-thup Joban* (solar eclipse spirit), and *Laap Joban* (stone spirit).

When storm and cyclone occurs in the village, naturally it destroys house, granaries, plants and crops which posed a serious threat to the villagers. In such time, the villagers assume that some mistake has been committed against the will of this spirit, which provoke him to cause such a dreaded episode. Therefore, to beg apology for their guilt, the villager immediately arrange ritual in order to appease him. They observe 'Pean-tong' or a restricted day without doing their usual work at home. Anyone who is not followed this custom is confronted with adversity.

In Nocte, cloudy weather is more fearful phenomenon. They believe that evil spirit is hidden in the black-cloud. It causes multi-facets illness to the people like, fever, headache and stomach pain. Therefore, the parents restrict their children to go out in such weather. Rain-bow is also considered as evil spirit which harms the human beings. They believe that rain-bow appears in search of crabs in the streams or gorges. Further, according to Nocte custom, pointed at rainbow with finger is restricted because it provokes the spirit and cause swelling of fingers.

It is praiseworthy to note that the Nocte believe thundering is a sign of anger of evil spirit in the sky. It warns its reappears to cause harm on human being. In between the end of winter and in the onset of summer season, if thundering start after a long gap, people becomes cautious for their life. To calm down the anger of this evil spirit, they arrange ritual in advance, like 'Rang-mok pean'.<sup>24</sup>

Lightning strike is the most dreaded evil spirit so far the malevolent spirits of the Nocte is concerned. When it appears in the sky then the people instantly close their eyes and ears with fingers and pray like- "Rang Oh! Rangmok-Rangphak Joban, lian O, pak-kam nak-kam ha nang." Translations: Oh! Spirit of thundering, go beyond the universe. In Nocte, lightning strikes on tree, house or some belongings of a particular family, is believed to be bad omen indicates to the family. In such case, a victim family is observed a ritual, called 'Rangtoan'.<sup>25</sup> In certain case, family members have to abandon their house immediately when it strikes upon the house. According to the Nocte custom, victim family members are not permitted to take shelter neither in the relative's house nor neighbouring house. The only alternative left is to take shelter in the village dormitory. However, the household articles are not left out after the ritual because they thought that the spirit was targeted on articles.

Another important malevolent spirit of the Nocte is 'Rang-ningchha-thup Joban' or solar eclipse spirit. In the early society, the concept of solar eclipse is not aware among the Nocte. They developed such perception that it was a curse of God to end the life of human beings when sin engulfed the world. On the solar eclipse, the villagers stay at home with storing of all the necessities like water, food items, cloths, and fire woods. They stay on constants pray for normalcy. In the olden days, people beat the log-drum alarming the villagers



to be careful. Their concept was at any point of time, devastation may occur sooner or the later. However, today the people have learned about the actual concept of solar eclipse with scientific knowledge.

The most fatal malevolent spirit that the Nocte has developed since the time immemorial is 'Lap-joban'. It is a piece of stone, which has a spiritual power. It has been preserved by few families which have been inherited from their forefathers. These families are known as 'Lap-tang'. For instance, in Kaimai village, clans like Meima, Panka and Arang are the preservers of this spirit. However, it should not misconstrue that all the families of clan preserve this spirit. Only few select families are the master of it. It is believed that when a master is unable to maintain properly in accordance to its will then it may turns against them and may become a threat to their life.

In fact, a person usually avoids visiting Lap's family because this spirit may cause harm. However, certain formalities have to maintain when you enter Lap's house like good behaves with family members, being not suspicious, being not shown a sign of arrogance and overconfident. Nothing is happened if one has follows the custom. The chief cause of this spirit is joint-pain either in knee, elbow, wrist, waist, and ankle. When a person becomes victim of Lap's spirit then he should return to that Lap-house which he had visited. There he discloses the matter to the family members whereby they offer a piece of rice to eat in accordance to the custom. The logic of eating rice is that the spirit considers him ignorant of his acts and excuse. Thereafter, gradually a pain is dying out. This incident is happened usually with strangers who do not know the customs of the natives. It is worthy to mention that Lap-house is saved from enemy and thief. Nobody has courage to enter in Lap-house in the absence of family. Therefore, there is common saying of parents to their children, whenever you visits Lap-house, just look up to the entrance roof or 'Wokung' or touch the firewood in the hearth and do not show proud.

Case study: *"In 1990s, an incident has taken place with junior teacher, named late D.M. Choudhury who had joined at Kaimai primary school, now upgraded to middle school. When he had visited for census duty to one of the Lap-family house, he cut some jokes with that family member. He had no idea of the village customs as told by himself. All of sudden he got some feeling of exhaustions down to the evening and lying on bed without taking dinner. In mid-night when he got up to take water he felt an acute pain in his knee. Right from that day he could not attend in the classes for couples of days. He had very cordial relations with the villagers. One evening an old man of that village came to his quarter whereby he shared about his problem. The old man caught the cause of its suffering. Therefore, accordingly the old man went to the Lap-house that had visited by teacher and brought a handful of rice. He gave it to the teacher and asked him to eat instantly. It was my first and unique experienced I got cured with taking simple rice from the next morning, narrated by the teacher. He further cited that it was my fault that I did not learn the customs of that village. Essentially one should learn first the customs of the village or community wherever you may be. This is the primary moral duty of every individual"*<sup>26</sup>

In fact, the faiths and belief system which was once very prominent feature in the early Nocte society is gradually dying out. The modern elements like education, scientific development, improve means of communications, penetration of new faiths have brought about drastic change in the society. Further, a wider

social contact with the people of different cultures has directly or indirectly impact on the socio-cultural life of the Nocte. Today, most of the Nocte villages have stopped to observe rituals at the cost of modern medicines and more or less influence by preaching of new faiths.

With the advent of modern medicines and technology, people pay more attentions towards the new facilities provided by the government. In the past, the Nocte chiefly depends on local medicines for curing various diseases. In addition, rituals were observed on certain cases to appease the evil spirits when epidemic occurs in the village. However, with the influence of scientific outlook now they justify the actual cause of epidemic. This resulted decaying of ritual practices and application of local medicines in the present context. Pandey mentions, "In this age of scientific development and wider contacts in sphere of human society, every number, whether in group or individual, is affected by the new situation. Therefore, the identity of the culture of a particular society is threatened in respect of safety and preservation."<sup>27</sup> However, in Nocte society some parts of their traditional customs are still practiced which indicates that a tribal people cannot live without certain customs. These were inherited from their forefathers from generation to generation, which becomes a prominent cultural asset.

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15. K.L.Pokarna, *Social belief, cultural practices in health and disease* (New Delhi: Discovery, 1994), p. 56.
16. Vidhyarthi & Rai, Op. cit., p. 245-246.
17. It is a ritual observed for giving name to newly born baby. It is observed on the eve of birthday celebration with leaves of tiny plant by a priest called 'Taanwa'. This ritual proves whether name is suited to child or not. If it is shown a positive response then they believed that their forefather spirit has come back in their family. In Nocte, they called 'Mingta-Ngak kat' (return of the forefather spirit)."
18. This is a Nocte term, which referred to hell.
19. Vidhyarthi & Rai, Op. cit., p. 253.
20. The term 'Chhatraam' is a ritual for good yielding of crops. It is performed simply with sacrificing chicken. Chicken blood is smeared in all the containers of grains by chanting like- you the spirit of crops be kind to us and bless for good crops now and then. The custom permits to take chicken's blood if not available in the personal disposal from the neighbour house. This ritual is performed by the head of a family.
21. Vidhyarthi & Rai, Op. cit., p. 254.
22. It is a community ritual, which is performed to pursue the 'Hadan Joban' (village spirit) to save them from epidemic. In this ritual, the entire villagers stay at home without doing their usual work. Besides, all the entries point of the village is blocked by putting branches of tree. It is observed either for 12hrs or 24hrs. Meantime, no person can enter in the village; whosoever violates the ritual is faced a serious action
23. Vidhyarthi & Rai, Op. Cit. pp.253-54.

24. This is a community ritual, which is performed soon after the first occurrence of thundering in the beginning of summer or mid-winter. The villagers observe this ritual by staying at home without doing their usual work.
25. This is individual ritual but strictly observed by the entire villagers. The family arranges meat and wine to offer in the name of evil spirit to appease him. Member from the victim's clan performed this ritual to the spot it strikes. In case if it occurs on tree then a one metre surrounding is deserted forever.
26. Interviewed, D.M.Choudhury (junior teacher), Kaimai village in Tirap District, 12.08.1999.
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