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## A Study On The Sangrai Festival Of The Mog Community In Tripura

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**Abstract:** Tripura, situated in Northeast India, is a beautiful state. The Sangrai festival is one of the most important cultural and religious events for the Mog community in Tripura. This study is about that festival. In April, the Mog people, followers of Buddhism and connected to the Arakan region, celebrate Sangrai as their New Year festival. The goal of the research is to learn about the festival's history, customs, and cultural significance. Interviews and other available literature have been used as both primary and secondary sources. The study shows that Sangrai is more than just a religious event; it also shows social values, beliefs, and traditions. Rituals like prayer, sharing food, sprinkling water, and dancing help people feel more connected to their culture and keep their rich history alive.

**Keywords:** Mog community, Sangrai festival, Water festival , Sangrai Dance, Mog Festival.

**1.Introduction:** The Mog community is one of the major tribal groups in Tripura and is considered the sixth largest among the scheduled tribes of the state. According to the 2011 Census, their population was 37,893, with most people living in areas like Sabroom and Belonia. The Mogs are believed to have originally come from the Arakan region and later migrated to Tripura through the Chittagong Hill Tracts. They mainly follow Buddhism, though many traditional customs are still part of their daily life. One of their most important cultural festivals is Sangrai, which reflects their traditions, beliefs, and sense of community. However, not much research has been done on this festival, so this study tries to understand its importance.

### 2.Objectives of the Study

- To study the origin and development of the Sangrai festival among the Mog community in Tripura.
- To understand the rituals and meanings associated with the Sangrai festival in relation to Buddhism and traditional practices.
- To examine the role of Sangrai in maintaining cultural identity and unity within the Mog community.
- To analyze the cultural significance of the Sangrai festival.

**3.Methodology:**In this research paper, I used primary and secondary data.

Primary sources included interviews and observations of the Sangrai festival. Interviews were conducted with Ramrachai Mog (75) from Salong Mog Para, Silachari; Cheongfru Mog (42) from Salong Mog Para, Silachari; Naidhika Bhikhu (32) from Santirbazar; Anthai Mog (69) from Kangjari Mog Para, Silachari; and Uchainda Mog (66) from Kangjari Mog Para, Silachari.

Secondary sources include research articles, census reports, and other documents on the Mog community and their cultural traditions. The collected data were analyzed to understand the social and cultural aspects of the Sangrai festival.

#### **4.Historical and Cultural Background of the Mog Community**

The Mog community is of Mongoloid origin and is known by different names across regions. In Tripura, they are referred to as “Mog,” while in neighboring Bangladesh, the same community is commonly known as “Marma.” Although they share a common origin, variations in language and cultural practices can be observed due to regional influences, particularly from Bengali-speaking areas. Many historians trace the origin of the Mog community to the Arakan region, indicating a long and complex migration history (Ranglong, 2025).

It is believed that the Mogs migrated to Tripura through the Chittagong Hill Tracts and began settling in the region from around the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD. Their long presence in the state is reflected in their oral traditions and cultural practices. Historical and archaeological evidence also suggests a connection between the Arakanese civilization and parts of present-day Tripura and Comilla from around the 7<sup>th</sup> century CE (Ranglong, 2025).

In Tripura, the Mog population is mainly concentrated in the southern region, particularly in subdivisions like Sabroom and Belonia, while smaller populations are found in other districts. According to the Tribal Research and Cultural Institute (TR&CI), Government of Tripura, the Mog population was 37,893 in the 2011 Census, making them the sixth largest Scheduled Tribe in the state (Ranglong, 2025).

#### **5.Sangrai Festival: Rituals and Practices**

The Mog community in Tripura celebrates Sangrai as the biggest festival of the year. This is also their New Year’s Day, and it is observed in April. The festival of Sangrai is associated with the start of a new calendar year and the agricultural season, so it has a strong relationship with both religious belief and way of life. The celebration of Sangrai allows people to express their happiness, gratitude, and hopes for a prosperous new year.

The Sangrai festival is one of the most important and traditional festivals of the Mog community, which has been celebrated for generations. It is observed every year in the month of April (Tengkhungla Mog calendar) and continues for three days. In addition to village-level celebrations, a state-level Sangrai festival is also organized, where various traditional dances, songs, and cultural performances take place.

The festival is celebrated over three days, each having its own name and significance.

**First Day (Sangrai):**On the first day of the Sangrai festival, people of the Mog community gather at the monastery (Kyang) to perform religious rituals and begin the New Year with spiritual devotion. They carry offerings such as food (Chhaweng), fruits (Ashie), flowers (Peng), and traditional sweets, which are prepared in households and shared among family members and neighbors. These offerings are presented to Gautama Buddha (Furaa) as a mark of respect and faith. The community participates in prayers (Fujang) and seeks blessings for peace, prosperity, and well-being. The sharing of sweets and food on this day also reflects the spirit of togetherness, generosity, and joy that marks the beginning of the festival.

**Second Day (Akye):** On the second day of the Sangrai festival, known as Akye, the main focus is on the water ritual, which holds deep cultural significance among the Mog community. On this day, younger members respectfully pour water over elders to bathe them as a mark of respect and to seek their blessings for the New Year. People also move around the village, pouring or sprinkling water on one another in a joyful manner. This practice symbolizes purification, the washing away of past misfortunes, and the beginning of a fresh and positive year.

**Third Day (Atada):** On the final day, a special dish is prepared by cooking a mixture of thirty different types of vegetables. According to Mog beliefs, eating this dish helps in preventing diseases and ensures good health. This day reflects the community's traditional knowledge and belief system related to health and well-being.

Sangrai rituals clearly center upon purification, renewal, and discipline. One of the main rituals is the ceremonial bathing of Buddha images. This act symbolizes both the washing away of sins and welcoming a fresh start to life. People gather at monasteries, pray, and follow proper religious practices. Another popular ritual is the sprinkling of water among members of the community. This ritual represents renewal and purification. Younger members pour water on the feet of their elder family members to show respect, and the elders bless them in return..

## 6. Sangrai Dance and Water Festival

The Sangrai dance is a traditional dance performed by the Mog tribal community on the occasion of the Sangrai festival during the month of Chaitra (April) in the Bengali calendar. It originated in Tripura, India. The Mogs follow Buddhism, and their beliefs are similar to those of Burmese Buddhists. On Republic Day in India, January 26, 2018, a traditional dance from the Mog tribe of Tripura was performed at Rajpath. In the ceremonial Republic Day parade, 150 tribal students from 25 schools in Tripura performed the traditional Sangrai dance.

Sangrai is also known as a Water Festival, where water plays an important symbolic role. During the celebration, people sprinkle water on each other, which represents the washing away of impurities and a fresh beginning. As part of this ritual, children pour water on the feet of their parents or grandparents to show respect and receive blessings in return. The use of water in these rituals reflects both spiritual and social values and helps strengthen social bonds and mutual respect among the Mog people.

## 7. Cultural Significance of Sangrai festival

The Sangrai festival holds great cultural significance for the Mog community in Tripura as it serves as an important expression of their cultural identity and traditional values. Through this festival, the community preserves its customs, rituals, music, and dance, passing them on to future generations. Sangrai also strengthens social unity, as people come together to celebrate, share food, and show respect to elders, which promotes harmony and mutual understanding. The festival reflects the teachings and values of Buddhism, including moral discipline and spiritual purification. Moreover, as it marks the beginning of the agricultural season, it shows the close connection between the people and nature, with prayers offered for prosperity and a good harvest. Thus, Sangrai acts as a symbol of cultural continuity, social cohesion, and the preservation of the traditional way of life.

## 8. Conclusion

In Conclusion, the Sangrai festival is a big part of the Mog community's religious and cultural life in Tripura. It is not just a celebration of the New Year; it is also a sign of unity, tradition, and faith. It shows both Buddhist and traditional values through rituals like going to monasteries, praying, sharing food, and dancing. Water rituals and honoring elders show how important it is to be clean, start over, and live in peace. The community still celebrates it with a lot of excitement. So, Sangrai keeps the cultural identity of the Mog community alive, strengthens social connection and shows off their rich history.

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## Appendix: List of Interviews

1. Ramrachai Mog (75), Salong Mog Para, Silachari — Interview conducted on February 3, 2026
2. Cheongfru Mog (42), Salong Mog Para, Silachari — Interview conducted on February 3, 2026
3. Naidhika Bhikhu (32), Santirbazar — Interview conducted on February 7, 2026
4. Anthai Mog (69), Kangjari Mog Para, Silachari — Interview conducted on February 8, 2026
5. Uchainda Mog (66), Kangjari Mog Para, Silachari — Interview conducted on February 8, 2026