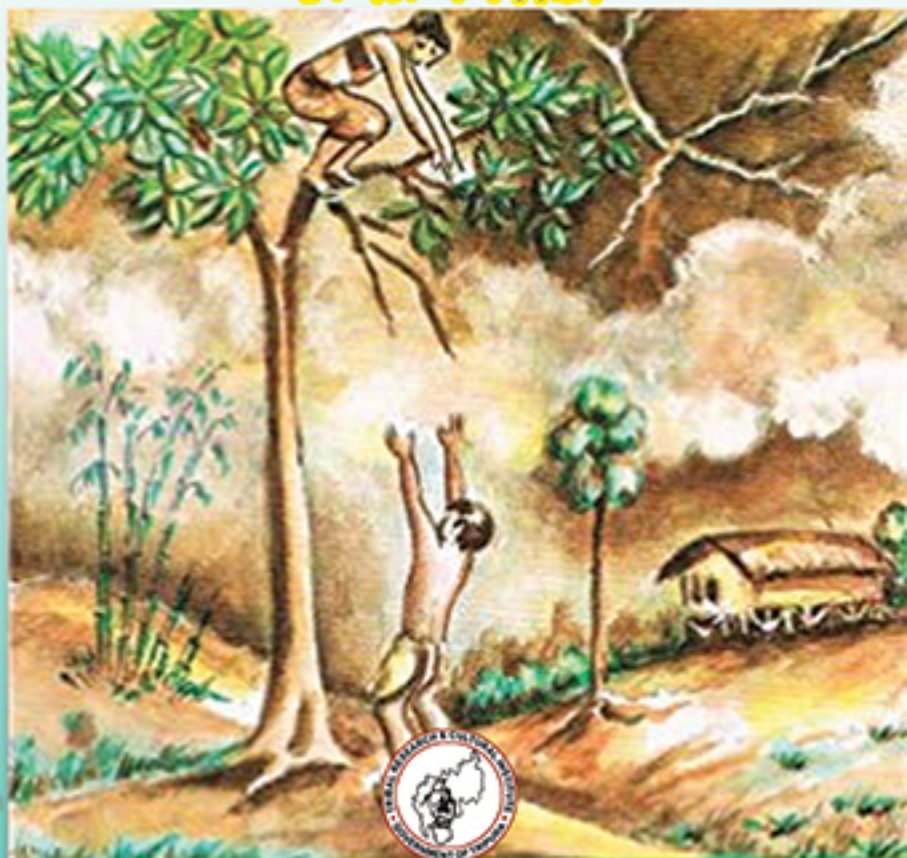


# TRIBAL FOLK TALES OF TRIPURA

D. K. TYAGI



**Tribal Research and Cultural Institute**  
Govt. of Tripura, Agartala

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**Tribal Research & Cultural Institute**  
Government of Tripura

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By D. K. Tyagi

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# *Preface*

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Tripura is a tiny, beautiful hilly State in the North Eastern Region of the country. It was a princely State rich in its own ancient cultural heritage and merged with Indian Union on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 1949. Till the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Tripura has a majority of tribal population. The tribal people of the State are very proud of their traditions, culture and social values. They have been striving hard to maintain their identity.

Tripura is one of the most ancient states in the country. It is believed that this Tripura State existed since 3000 BC. It was ruled by Tripura Maharaja who are descendents of the Lunar Dynasty. Despite being a State of such rich ancient cultural heritage, Tripura is still unknown to people living in other parts of the country. Though studies on Tripura and its people were published by Britishers namely J. M. Lewin (1869), W. W. Hunter (1876), Alexander Machenzie (1884) and many other, however, they remained confined to mainly scholars and academicians. There was no literature available which can be acceptable to common man and thereby popularize the cultural heritage of this place. Subsequently, Indian scholars who wrote about Tripura published their works mainly in Bengali which restricted the scope of acceptability and its spread. Few Indian authors who wrote in English namely J. B. Ganguly, Gan Choudhury, Omesh Saigal and others confined their writing to historical, sociological and anthropological aspects if the tribals.

One of the rich sources of knowing culture of the tribals are the folk tales. Folk tales are the most important medium of creating mass awareness about the cultural heritage, traditions and social values. Fully aware of the fact that there is need to publish and produce popular literary works for creating awareness, sensitizing

people and signifying the salient aspects of tribal culture, I decided to publish the folk tales of tribals in English.

The folk tales of Tripura tribals depict the intimate relationship between tribals and forest. They also reflect the socio-economic system and social values of the society. Most of the folk tales are related to wild animals and plants which reflect the symbiotic relationship that exist between tribals and animals. The worship of God and Goddess, human relationship and a largely egalitarian society are also appropriately reflected in the tribal folk tales of Tripura. I am sure the book would sensitive especially the younger generations (Children) to the tribal culture and heritage thereby leading to greater understanding and appreciation of Tripura.

I must acknowledge my sincere thanks to Sh. Ram Gopal Singh and Sh. Arun Deb Barma of the Tribal Research & Culture Institute who has helped in collection of necessary materials. Without their active cooperation and hard work. It would have been difficult to publish the book in such a short time.

I am also thankful to my wife, Pushpa and daughters Geetika and Richika who encouraged me and assisted me in writing this book. It is because of their moral support and active cooperation that I could complete this work.

In the end I would also like to thank Shri Ashim Roy, who helped me to get the entire manuscript typed.

Sd/- Illigible  
Dinesh Tyagi

# ***FOREWORD***

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Tribal Folk Tales of Tripura was written by D.K. Tyagi in the year 1997. This book contains thirteen famous folk tales of the tribes of Tripura. About 1000 copies of its first edition sold out within this period.

Tribal Research & Cultural Institute, Government of Tripura once again has taken decision for re-printing of this book to present it in front of the folk tale lovers.

I do hope this book will meet the demand of the readers.

A handwritten signature in black ink, followed by the date '28.02/2020' written in a similar style.

(D. Debbarma)

*Director,*

Dated, Agartala  
28th February, 2020

Tribal Research & Cultural Institute,  
Government of Tripura





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## CHETHUANG

In a small village on the hill top there lived a jhumia family. The family has a son a daughter. The son was elder to the daughter.

One day the brother and the sister were going together to work in the jhum field. While going to the jhum field. They were to cross a stream. There was no bridge on the stream. So they were to walk through the water. The sister was in the front and the brother was behind. While crossing the stream, in order to avoid the clothes being wet, the girl lifted her Rignai (wearing cloth). The brother saw the beautiful legs of his sister. He did not cross the river. He kept on standing on the bank of the stream. After crossing the stream, the girl saw her brother standing on the other bank of the stream. She said, "Why are you standing there? Will you not go for work? Come fast, it is going to be late." The brother didn't reply and he returned home. That day the brother didn't go for work.

After that day the brother was always thinking about the beautiful legs of his sister which he has seen while she was crossing the stream. He could not attend to any work. He was always in a very gloomy mood. He spent most of his time moving from one place to another.

The parents saw the behavioural change in their son. They were very anxious to know what has happened. Despite repeated inquiries from the parents, the son didn't tell them the reason for such change in his behavior. One day the grand mother said to the son, "What's wrong with you. You are not taking food properly and not doing any work also. Will you like to get married? The son said, "Yes I will like to marry." The grand mother said, "whom will you like to marry?" She then told him the names of all unmarried young girls of the village but he didn't agree to marry any of them. The grandmother became very angry and said, "I have given the option to you for marrying any of the girls in the village but you have not accepted any of them." "The only girl who is left is your sister. Will you like to marry her?" said the grandmother. The grand son said. "Yes I will like to marry my sister".

The old lady was very surprised to hear the desire of her grandson. She said, "It will be a sin and unsocial. It will not be accepted by the society. This has never happened in our last generations. "But the boy insisted to marry to her sister. He said, "I will commit suicide in case I can't marry my sister".

The parents made attempts to convince the boy for changing his decision. All the elderly person of the family discussed the issue and having failed to convince the son decided to marry the boy with his sister. However, the incident was not told to anyone in the village. It was kept a secret. Family secretly began to arrange for the marriage ceremony. A new house was

constructed for the couple. Large quantity of rice was arranged for organizing feast on the occasion of the marriage. His sister was not aware about the decision. She suspected that a marriage ceremony is likely to take place in the family. But she was not told about the details. When her friends in the village asked her. She could not say anything about the marriage.

One day the sister asked her grandmother regarding the preparations being made in the family. But the old lady pretended as if she knew nothing. One day there was no one in the house except the grandmother. Paddy was kept in the courtyard for drying. The girl also was sitting near the paddy in the courtyard and was making sound by hitting her hair clip on the ground. The grandmother after hearing the sound thought that some birds are pecking the paddy in the courtyard. She tried to drive away the birds by making the sound " Chhui-i-i....." Then the grand mother said to herself, "Paddy is being dried for the marriage of her grand son and daughter. You naughty birds why you are eating them? Go away." The girl who was sitting in the courtyard heard this and she was very surprised. She said to the grandmother. "What did you say regarding the marriage? Why I am not being informed about my marriage". The old lady realized the mistake of disclosing the secret. She was ashamed and therefore, could not say anything to the girl.

The girl was very annoyed. She thought that it was a shameful act and highly unsocial. In the night, the girl had a dream. She

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saw an old person who said, “You poor girl, find out the seedling of Chethuang tree and plant it. Workshop it and you will be free from all the agonies”.

Next day the girl went with the other villagers to work in the jhum field. The girl could not concentrate on the work because of the anxieties. She searched for the seeding of chethuang in the nearby old jhum field. She took the seeding and planed it in one corner of the field. Poured water on it and started to worship the seeding. The friends started going. She then sat on the growing tree and began to sing a song.

“Dada bai ano kainani hinwo,  
Log Chethuang log.”

(Oh Chethuang tree, they want to get me married to my brother. You grow more and more.)

The tree began to grow more and more as she sang the song. The other girls who were working in the field were surprised to see this. They immediately went home and informed the villagers. The parents of the girl came to the jhum field with axe and chopper so that they can cut the tree. The parents asked the girl to come down, but she didn’t agree. They then decided to cut the roots of the tree. But the girl was still singing the song.

“Phungchha tang khani phungba baridi,  
Log chhethuang log.  
Dada-bai ano kainani hinwo  
Log chethuang log.”

CHETHUANG

(Oh chethuang tree, you grow five times more than they cut in one stroke. You keep on growing more and more. They want to get me married with my brother. You grow more and more.)

The villagers were very surprised since the tree kept on growing higher and higher. The cutting of the roots didn't help in preventing the growth of the tree. Having failed to cut the tree, the father said, "My beloved daughters please come down. I will not marry you with your brother. I shall kill him." The girl sitting on the top of the tree said,

"Angba chhiyade angba chhug yade;  
Chhwila kochhom tan."

(I see and know, you brought blood by cutting a black dog.)

Dakhin gwlani nobar chhib faidi,  
Babuno khulum nani;  
Utur gwlani nobar chhib faidi,  
Ma-no khulum nani."

(You south wind, continue to blow on. I salute my father.  
You north wind, continue to blow on. I salute my mother.)

Suddenly the wind started blowing. The top of the tree where the girl was sitting almost reached as high as the sky. The girl bid good bye to her parents and then disappeared in the clouds of the sky. Since then the story of chethuang tree is remembered by the villagers whenever the sky is overcast and there is lightning and thunder. It is believed that the lightning reflects the bare beautiful legs of the girl and thunder is the sound due



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to the felling down of the chethuang tree. The top of Chethuang tree is never pointed and it always looks flat.

## FRIENDSHIP

There lived a frog and a bat in a village. They were very close friends. One day the frog invited the bat to his house. While talking to each other, the frog and the bat differed in their opinions on a particular issue. They started quarreling among themselves. They turned into enemies. The frog said,

“If you enter into bamboo, I shall eat by tearing;  
If you enter into hole, I shall eat by digging,  
If you fly away, I shall eat by bringing down  
by bamboo pole,  
Where will you go? I must eat you.”

Hearing this the bat got frightened. She made attempts to locate a secure place but could not succeed. There was a banayan tree standing near the hole. A hornbill was sitting on the banayan tree in her nest. The bat decided to hide herself in the nostril of the hornbill. As the bat entered the nostril of the hornbill, the hornbill felt uneasy and it sneezed. A monkey was sitting in the banayan tree. He was playing and singing a song:

“I will eat or my son will do,  
The fruit is fine and round.”

The sneezing sound made by the hornbill shocked the monkey. He slipped the fruit which he was holding in his hands.

The fruit fell on a deer which was pregnant. Having been hurt by the fruit, the deer started running for safety. On the way, the wild hen was sitting on her eggs. The deer was so frightened that he didn't notice the eggs of the wild hen and crampled them. The hen, however, narrowly escaped. The hen having lost the eggs became very angry and she ate all the eggs of the red ants. The red ants were annoyed and they decided to destroy everything. They began swarming here and there. A pig was sleeping nearby. Large number of red ants started biting the pig. The pig could not bear the pain. The pig was very excited and began to run. When the pig was running, it found a jhum field of a widow. Due to excitement and anger, the pig destroyed and ate the jhum crop.

The widow, whose jhum crop was destroyed, went to the king. She said, "I am a poor widow and a crazy pig has destroyed all my jhum crop." She requested the king to do justice to her.

The king asked his soldiers to go and arrest the pig.

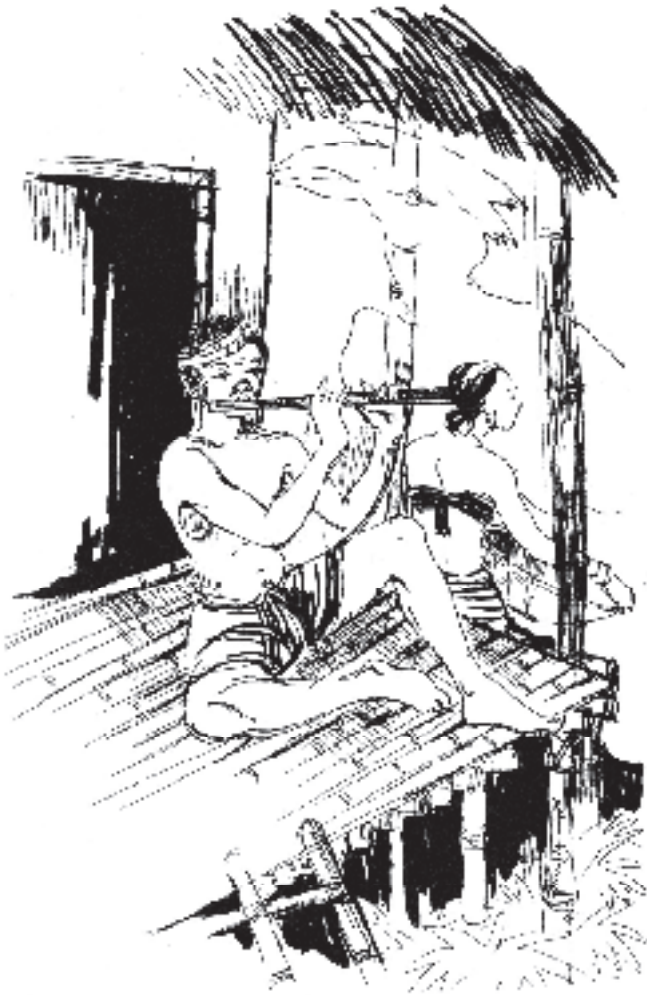
They were also asked to inquire the extent of damage caused to the jhum field. The soldiers arrested the pig and brought it before the king. The king said, "There is a complaint against you for destroying the jhum field of the widow. Please tell what punishment will be given to you?" The pig said, "Oh king that day was very hot. I was talking rest near a tree. The red ants came and bit me. I was pained so much that I ran very fast. While I was running I came across the jhum field and in my anger against the red ants, I destroyed the jhum crop of the

widow." The king was satisfied with the reply given by the pig and the asked his soldiers to arrest the red ants and bring them to the court. Accordingly as per the order of the king the red ants were arrested. They were put in a bamboo pipe and brought before the king. The king then asked the red ants, "Why did you bite the wild pig? If you do not give a satisfactory reply you will be punished." The ants replied, "Oh king we were living in our hole with eggs and foods. The hen destroyed our hole and ate all our eggs. We could do nothing. We were very angry. We found the pig and we started biting him." The reply of the ants satisfied the king and he asked his men to arrest the hen.

Next day the hen was arrested and brought before the king. When asked to give reasons by the king the hen said, I was sitting on my eggs. The deer suddenly came and crampled my eggs. I also narrowly escaped. I was so angry at that time that I ate the eggs of the ants and destroyed them." The king was satisfied with the reply given by the hen and asked his men to arrest the deer. The king said to the deer, "Why did you destroy the eggs of the hen?" The deer replied, "I was taking rest under a tree. A monkey dropped a fruit on me. I was so disturbed that I started running. The eggs of the hen were destroyed accidentally while I was running."

The king was also satisfied by the reply given by the deer. He then asked his soldiers to arrest the monkey and bring him. When the monkey was brought to the king, he asked, "Why did you drop the fruit on the deer?"





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The king asked his soldiers to detain the frog as the frog could not give any satisfactory reply. The king pronounced that the frog was guilty and a suffering to so many animals was caused due to the fact of the frog. The king then ordered his soldiers to beat the frog by the handle of the gun. While beating the frog, the soldiers broke the breast of the frog. Since then, the frog can't stand erect and it only crawls.

## THE HORN BILL

In a small village, a jhumia named Kachak Roy lived with his family. His wife Sampari was very active and beautiful. They had no children.

Sampari used to work throughout the day in the jhum field and also did all the household works while Kachak was very lazy and he drank the local brew all through the day. Kachak was also a short tempered man. Despite that his wife Sampari was doing the work in the field as well as other household work, he used to rebuke his wife on small pretext. Sampari still loved his husband very much.

After some years, Sampari gave birth to a male child. The child was having fair complexion. Sampari has to spent lot of time in taking care of their child. During that year when the season came for jhum cultivation, Sampari requested her husband to take care of the child in the house whenever she went out to work in the field. One day Sampari was going to the jhum field early in the morning. A black cat passed through her way. This was a bad omen. She felt restless. While going to the field. She said to her husband. "Please look after the baby carefully. I am worried about him." After sampari has gone, Kachak took out his flute and started playing it. He was totally



engrossed in playing the flute and for some time forgot about the child. The house was surrounded by thick forest. Large number of wild animals used to roam around the place. In front of the house, in a bush a bear was sitting. After seeing the lovely boy playing alone, the bear quietly entered the house and carried the baby away with him. Kachak was so engaged in playing flute, that he didn't notice the bear carrying the baby.

At sunset, Sampari returned home after working in the jhum field. She went to the cradle to look for the baby. She didn't find the baby there and asked her husband. Kachak could not say anything about the baby. Sampari started crying and she also rebuked her husband for neglecting the son. She was so upset about the missing of her son that she cursed her husband and said, "You careless husband in next birth you will be a bird and your beak will be as long as your flute. Your voice will be coarse and harsh. Your wife will watch her eggs without moving till the young birds can fly. You will have to feed the mother bird all throughout the day. You alone will have to do all the work and there will be no one to help you." After saying this Sampari left the house and went to the forest. She never returned back.

Since then the female hornbill lays eggs, and sit on them till they hatch. The male birds remain all throughout the day busy in collection of food for the female bird till the young birds can fly.

## TIGER AND A TORTOISE

One day a tiger was moving in the jungle in search of food. He roamed in the jungle throughout the day but could not hunt an animal. The tiger was very disappointed and sad. The tiger in the evening returned to his den. While returning to the den, the tiger met a tortoise. The tiger has never seen a tortoise before. The tiger stood there for some time and watched this peculiar animal. The tortoise also took out his neck and limbs from the shell to see the tiger.

After seeing the neck and the limbs of the tortoise, the tiger was tempted to eat the tortoise. He thought that today, "I shall eat the small creature as I have not been able to hunt any other animal." Thinking this the tiger caught the tortoise and started biting. The shell of the tortoise was so hard that the sharp teeth of the tiger could not pierce through it. The tiger tried again and again but could not succeed. Seeing the condition of the tiger, the tortoise pulled out its neck and said,

"You cannot eat me like this,  
If you soak me into water,  
I may be suitable to eat,  
Wait for a little, you will get the result."

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The tiger also realized that if the tortoise is soaked in water, it should become soft and then he would be in a position to eat it. Accordingly, the tiger carried the tortoise to the nearby lake, threw it into the water. As soon as the tortoise was thrown into the lake, it pulled out all its limbs and heads out of the shell and started swimming. Suddenly, the tortoise swam beyond the reach of the tiger. The tortoise also laughed at the tiger who was standing on the bank of the lake.

Seeing the tortoise laughing and swimming in the lake, the tiger realized that he has been befooled. He could not do anything and being ashamed returned to his den.

## THE RING THAT SPEAKS

An old man and a woman lived in a village along with their two grandsons. They loved the grand sons very much. The grand sons have lost their parents at very young age and have been brought up by the old man and women.

One day the two brothers have gone to the jhum field for work. In the afternoon they felt very hungry. They searched for food here and there in the jungle. At last they found the nest of dove (bird). They found four eggs in the nest and the dove was not there. The two brothers took the eggs from the nest and ate them.

In the evening, when they returned home they said to the grandmother, " Today we found four eggs in the nest of dove and ate them. The taste of the eggs was very nice." The old lady said, "If the eggs were so tasty you should have brought at least one egg for me as I have not eaten eggs for long time." The grandmother was also angry on the behavior of their grandsons. She told the entire incident to the old man. Next day when the two brothers have gone to work in the jhum field, the old man and women killed their domestic pig and cooked it. When the domestic pig was being cooked, the two brothers returned after doing their days work in the jhum field. They were surprised to

find that the domestic pig has been killed. They asked the reason from the old man and women for killing the domestic pig. The old women said, "It is none of your business. Go and take bath in the river." As asked by the grandmother, the two sons went to the river to take bath. When they came back, they found that the cooked pig has been eaten by their grandparents. Not a piece of pork was left for them. When they asked the grandfather why the pork was not kept for them, they were abused and asked to get out of the house.

The two brothers decided not to live in the village any longer as they were thrown out of the house. They went in search of a place where they can live. They started walking through the forest but could not reach nearby village before the sunset. They decided to stay in the forest and spend the night. They were feeling very hungry as they have not eaten anything since morning. They saw a very big tree in the forest. Immediately they climbed the tree in search of a nest.

At last one of the sons found a nest of a vulture on the tree. He also found eggs in the nest. He ate all the eggs and kept one for his young brother. He brought the egg for the younger brother who was standing below the tree. The egg fell on the ground and broke into pieces and the younger brother could not eat it.

The elder brother who ate the eggs of the vulture, started turning into a vulture gradually. The younger brother was very surprised but could not do anything. The younger brother cried

and said, "I can't live without you alone in this forest. It is very dense jungle and I am scared." The elder brother said, "I have now become a vulture and, therefore, I can't live with you in the human society. I will have to live in the jungle along with other animals." He also said that he would help him to find out a village where he can settle and live. The vulture started flying in the sky to look for a village and the younger brother started following the vulture.

After some time, they reached a jhum field of a widow. The vulture said. "You stay here and the owner of the jhum field will come very soon. You can go with her." After this the vulture flew away in the jungle. The younger brother was left alone.

The younger brother searched for some food in the jhum field as he was feeling very hungry. He found some gourd and ate it. Then he spread some grasses under a tree and slept on it. At mid night he had a dream. He saw an old man telling him to dig the soil under the bamboo bush standing near the jhum field. The old man said, "You will get precious article from there. Take the article and keep with you. This will help you all the life.

In the morning the boy went to the place where the bamboo bush was standing. He dug the soil and found a gold ring there. It was not an ordinary ring as it could speak like a man. The ring said. "There is nothing in this world which I can't do for you. Please order me and I will get you anything in the world." The boy was very happy. He wore the ring in his finger and waited for the jhum field owner to come.

After some time, the widow came to the jhum field. She found a gourd missing from the jhum field and thought that someone has eaten it. At the same time, the boy came near to the widow and said, "Mother I have eaten the gourd as I was very hungry for the last two days. Please do not abuse me," The widow said, "You have called me mother so don't worry I will not do anything to you. You are like my son from today. Come with me to my house." The boy also said, "I will protect your jhum field and do all other works as required." The boy then started living with the old women. The widow did not have "tong ghar"(hut) in the jhum field. Next day, when the boy came to protect the field it was very hot and he found it different to stay in the field without a tong ghar. The boy said to the ring, "Please make a "gairing" (tong ghar) for me in the jhum field and also provide necessary domestic articles." As desired by the boy, the gairing was made and the boy sat in the "gairing". Next day, when the widow came to the jhum field she was surprised to see a "gairing" there. The widow was very happy. As the time of harvest of the jhum crop was approaching, the widow said to the boy, "Please perform the puja of Bala Kamadi so that I can get a good harvest from the jhum field." The widow also told the boy that the village priest was not willing to perform the "puja" as she was not in a position to offer him drink and food. The boy said, "Do not worry I will ask the priest to perform the puja." Suddenly the boy with the help of the ring arranged the puja in the field. Seeing the arrangements of the puja, the priest

was astonished. He went to the village and told everyone that the widow was the richest women of the village. She has got lot of money from somewhere.

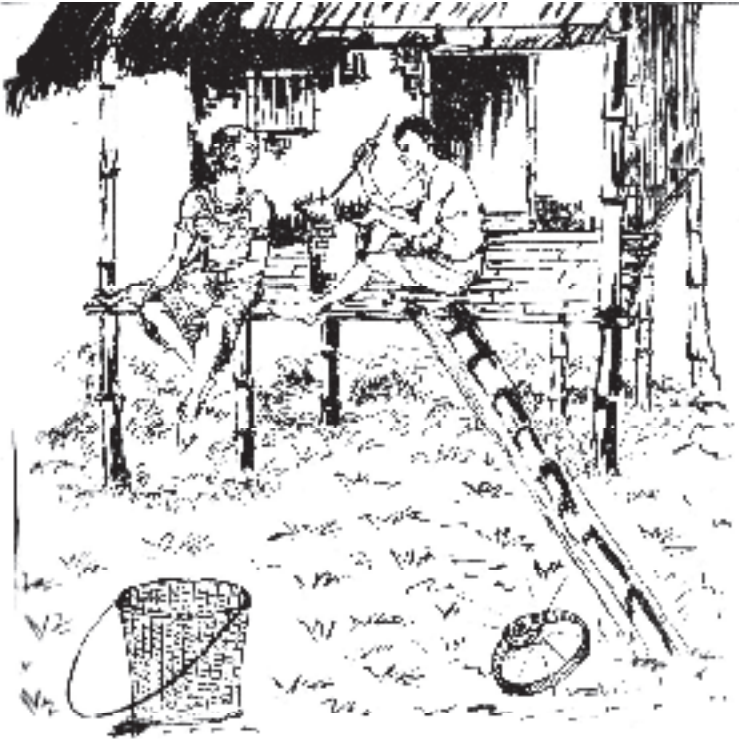
When the time of harvesting came, the widow said to the boy, "Please arrange for harvesting the crop in time." The boy harvested the crop with the help of the ring. The entire crop was collected and kept in a place. The boy also made a "langa" (basket) for the widow. When the old women was going in the village with the langa. The beautiful daughter of the village chief was attracted towards the langa. She wanted to get the similar langa for herself. She asked the 'Widow, "who has made this langa for you?" She also then asked her to get one langa made for her. She also invited the widow to come to their house with her son. The widow came back to the house and told the boy regarding the desire of the beautiful daughter of the village chief. The boy didn't go to meet her. One day the daughter of the village chief went to the jhum field along with the widow. She met the young boy and was attracted towards him. After she came back, she told her father that she wanted to get married to the boy who was living with the widow.

The village chief sent for the widow and asked her to come with the young boy. That day all the young persons of the village assembled in a courtyard. The village chief announced, "Any one who can kill a pig with one stroke, cook it and feed to all with the help of one hand will be declared suitable to marry my daughter." The village chief collected the strongest pig and tied



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on the courtyard where all villagers have assembled. Then he asked the boys one by one to kill the pig in one stroke with one hand only. None of the young boys could overcome the pig and come near it. The village chief said, "If there is no strong man in this village, I may have to call the young boys of other village for marrying my beautiful daughter." At last the adopted son of the widow came forward. He entered the farm and stood at an appropriate place. He then suddenly jumped upon the pig and got hold of it with one hand. Thereafter he killed the pig with



## THE RING THAT SPEAKS

one stroke by one hand only. He removed the skins, dressed the pig and with the help of one hand cooked and fed the pork to all. All the villagers were very happy including the village chief. Immediately the Ochai (Priest) was called to perform the worship of gods. The sanctified water was poured on the boy and the girl and the marriage ceremony was performed with great pomp and show.

After then the widow lived with his adopted son and the daughter-in-law happily in the village.

## SAKHI DARLONG - THE DEER MOTHER

There lived a jhumia named Shyamacharan in a (17) village. He was alone in the house. He had no children and his wife had died few years before.

One day, Shyamacharan went to the jungle in search of a wild animal. He killed a deer and brought it to his house. He cooked the deer, ate half of it and kept the rest half for the next day. He then went for his work in the jhum field.

In the evening when Shyamacharan came back to his house, he found that somebody had cooked his meal. He inquired from his neighbours but nobody could tell him that who had cooked his food. Shyamacharan ate his food and liked it very much.

Next day, Shyamacharan again found that that his food had been prepared by someone. He was surprised and was eager to find out about the person who was cooking his meal in his absence. Next day early in the morning on the pretext of going to the jhum field, Shyamacharan hid himself in one of the corners of the house. During noon time, Shyamacharan was surprised to find that the piece of deer which he had kept turned into a lady and she prepared his meal. On seeing this Shyamacharan jumped upon the girl and caught her. Shyamacharan said, "I want to marry you." "Don't tough me." said the lady.

## SAKHI DARLONG - THE DEER MOTHER

The girl said, "I can become your wife only if you promise that you will never call me "Sakhi (deer) Darlong." Shyamacharan agreed and finally married her.

They had two children. One day Shyamacharan was invited to a party to drink wine. As he did not come home, the mother said to the children. "Go and call your father." The children went to the house where Shyamacharan was invited and called him. "Father, come home. It is very late. Mother is calling you."

Shyamacharan said, "You go home, I shall come after some time." When Shyamacharan did not come after a long time, the mother again sent the children to call their father Shyamacharan who was enjoying the drinks with his friends got annoyed at the repeated request of his children. In his anger, he said, "Your mother is Sakhi Darlong!"

The children went home and told the mother that father had called you "Sakhi Darlong." As soon as the mother was told about this, she became a deer and went to the forest.

Shyamacharan after some time married another girl from the village. Meanwhile, the deer kept on feeding the children as she used to bring food for them every day. Shyamacharan new wife was surprised that how the children were being fed. After some time she came to know that the deer was feeding the children. The new wife then requested Shyamacharan to kill the deer.

Shyamacharan then went to the forest, searched for the deer and told the deer about the desire of his new wife. The deer

mother was worried about her children. She said to Shyamacharan, "You can kill me and fulfill the desire of your wife. However, before you kill me, you take my breast and place it somewhere so that it becomes a simul tree. This tree will then feed my children." Shyamacharan did exactly the same thing as told by the deer mother.

Shyamacharan went to his house and told his new wife about the death of the deer mother. Shyamacharan also told her that he had placed the breast of the deer in the backyard of the house which would become a simul tree. He said, "The simul tree will feed the children."

The new wife then requested Shyamacharan to cut the tree. As desired by his wife Shyamacharan went to the tree to cut it. The tree said to Shyamacharan, "When you cut me please put my dust in the river and then I shall become a fish." Shyamacharan cut the tree, put the dust into the river. The dust turned into a big fish. The fish then took the children with herself into the sea. The fish and the children then lived safely in the sea.

## CHACHURAT - THE RAIN

Once upon a time there lived a widow in a village. She was very old. She could not work in the jhum field. She had nothing to eat and no place to live. She was living in a very pitiable condition.

One day it was raining very heavily. The king was passing through the village where the widow lived. As it became very dark and there was no other suitable place, the king was forced to take shelter in the widow's "tong ghar" (hut). The king tied his horse in the lower part of the house.

In the night, a tiger came to the house of the widow with the intention to eat her. However, when the tiger found the horse, it devoured the horse and after eating slept at the same place where the horse was tied.

In the house the widow was narrating her tale to the king's man. She was unaware about the tiger eating the horse. The widow said, "I am not afraid of wild animals including the tiger but I get upset with such Chachurat (incessant rains) as my hut leaks and with the cold wind I quivers."

The tiger who was sleeping below the hut heard the conversation and thought, "This old widow is not afraid of me, the king of forest but she is scared of Chachurat. What kind of

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an animal Chachurat is! It is likely that Chachurat may be more powerful than me.”

The King’s men got up early in the morning before the dawn. It was very dark and they could not see anything. They went



down the hut and put the saddle and the bridle on the tiger thinking it to be their horse. The king sat on the tiger and rode away. As the bridle had been put into the mouth of the tiger, it could not roar or bite. The tiger thought, "Probably it is the chachhurat who is riding on me. Though I am the king of the forest, chachhurat is definitely more powerful than me."

Thinking this, the tiger who was afraid started walking towards the forest. However, the king wanted him to go towards the town. The king then started whipping him. The tiger was in great pain and he suddenly ran towards a narrow cave. The king who was riding was thrown away. The cave was so narrow that the tiger got stuck inside; only his tail remained outside. The king was very annoyed. He started pulling the tail very hard. At last, the tail came off. The disappointed king took the tail and went to his house.

After some time, with great difficulty the tiger managed to come out of the cave. The tiger was very scared of chachhurat. He was in great pain and ran towards the nearest chera (rivulet) and sat in the water to get relief from the pain.

There one kekra (Crab) came out and bit the tiger in the wound after getting the scent of his blood. As the fangs of the crab cut into the skin of the tiger, he screamed and ran away. The fangs however, remained stuck into the tiger's wound. After a few days, the tiger died from the pain.

Thus the widow was saved from the tiger who wanted to kill her.



## THE REVENGEFUL CHICK

Once upon a time, there lived a cat and a hen in a village. They were very friendly to each other. One day the cat went to the house of the hen and said, "Where will you sleep tonight? I want to bring some vegetables for you in the night." The hen was little surprised, however, she replied, "I shall sleep in my basket."

That day the hen went and slept in the khacha (a place under the slopping roof of bamboo). In the night, the cat came and attacked the basket thinking that the hen was sleeping there. But the cat had to return disappointed as it could not find the hen in the basket.

Next day the cat went to the hen and said, "Where were you last night? I brought some vegetables for you. As I could not find you in the basket, I had to take the vegetables back with me. Where will you sleep tonight?" "I shall sleep in the "Katcha" tonight", said the hen. In fact, the hen slept in the basket that night. When cat came in the night, attacked the khacha, she was again disappointed not to find the hen there.

Like this the hen kept on deceiving the cat for many days. At last, one day, the cat understood the gameplan of the hen and ultimately caught it one night and devoured it. The hen before

being killed laid an egg. The chick inside this egg vowed to take revenge on the cat who has deceived her mother and devoured her.

After twenty one days, the chick came out of the egg and strode out to kill the cat. The chick met a dog who said, "You young lad. Where are you going?" The chick replied, "I am going in search of the cat who killed my mother. I have vowed to kill the cat and unless I fulfill my vow. I will not take rest."

The dog said, "You are quite small and will not be able to kill the cat alone. Wait, I will come with you."

So, both of them went together in search of the cat. On way, they had to cross a cherra (rivulet). As they were crossing the cherra. "Singhi" (a cat fish) came out and inquired "Where are you going?" The chick replied, "We are looking for the cat that deceived and devoured my mother." Singhi said, "I will also come with you to help you."

Then three of them started going together. On way they met a boroi (fishing rod with a hook) who asked, "Where are all of you going?" The chick said, "We are looking for the cat that killed my mother by deceit." The boroi said, "I will also come with you."

On the way, four of them met wanther (a type of blade made of bamboo) who after inquiring agreed to accompany them.

At last, five of them reached the cat's house. The chick knocked at the door and the cat came out and inquired, "Why have you come here? What do you want?"

“You are my mother’s friend, so I have come to stay with you along with my friends”, said the chick.” It’s my pleasure! Please come inside. You can stay as long as you want”, said the cat.

After taking food, the chick said, “Thank you cat aunty! We will like to sleep now. Please show us our beds.” They then went to sleep.

After some time when the cat had retired, they all got up from the bed and discussed the strategy for trapping the cat. As discussed, each one of them hid himself. The chick laid an egg and hid it in the fire place. The dog went out and stood outside the door. The Singhi entered a utensil full of water, the boroi hung himself on the door and the wanther hide himself in the bamboo wall.

In the night, the cat came to see whether the entire guest were comfortable. It went to the fireplace to lit the lamp. As the cat blew, the egg burst and contents of it fell on the face of the cat. The cat wiped her face with hands which become very sticky. As she tried to wipe her hands against the bamboo wall, the wanther (blade) cut her hands. She cried in pain and rushed towards the utensil of water. As she dipped her hands in the water Singhi bit into them. She cried in pain and rushed out of the room.

As the cat was crossing the door, her eyelids were stuck by the tackle of the boroi. With great difficulty she managed to remove it. As the cat rushed out of house, she was attacked by the dog who tore her into two pieces.

## THE REVENGEFULL CHICK

The five friends happily went back after taking revenge from the cat who had killed chick's mother.

## THE STORK GIRL

There lived a jhumia named Manik with his family in a small village on a hill top. Manik's wife died after a prolonged illness. He had two daughters and there was no one to look after them. Manik kept himself busy in jhum and other related household works and could not give time to the girls. He was worried about his daughters. He decided to move into the house of his younger brother. His daughters were now left under the care of their aunt. As time passed, the two girls, Arti (elder) and Tripti (younger) grew up to adolescence.

Arti was a self confident and egoist girl. Due to her independent nature, she was not liked by the aunt. She was frequently scolded by the aunt even on small pretext. On one occasion when Arti asked for food to eat, her aunt gave her the droppings of birds and refuse of pigs. Similarly, on another occasion when Arti asked for water to drink, the aunt angrily spit into her mouth and said, "Drink this, you bitch!"

Arti was very sad, annoyed and disturbed at the behaviour of her aunt. She could not tolerate it any further. One day when her father returned home in the evening. She complained about aunt's behavior. Manik was very tired and he also rebuked her daughter Arti and said, "In future, you shall be more obedient

## THE STORK GIRL

to your aunt. I am sure you must be creating problems for your aunt and that's why she is angry with you." Arti then started crying and said, "I will not live here any longer and if you don't let me go, you will have to kill me." After this Manik gave a good beating to Arti, left her crying in the house and went away.



When Arti was crying, a flock of stork was flying overhead. Having heard Arti crying, the storks came to Arti and said, "Why are you crying? Can we help you?" Arti told the entire incident to the storks. She then asked them, "Please give me one feather each." The stork's obliged Arti and each one of them gave one feather to Arti.

After collecting all the feathers, Arti asked her aunt for a needle and thread. She was chided by the aunt. Arti then went to the neighbor and borrowed the needle and thread. She then stitched the feathers to make two wings for herself. She glued the two wings on her arms and after many attempts succeeded in flying away.

When Arti was flying, Tripti said, "Where are you going?" she replied, "I am going to the Nowi (Stork) birds." Saying this Arti flew away and joined the flock of storks that were fluttering overhead.

By then Manik also returned home. On hearing from Tripti about Ari flying away he cried, "Where are you going my sweet daughter?" "I have become a Nowi", replied Arti. "I will fly away with them and never return home", she said.

On hearing this, the father wept bitterly and cursed himself. His daughter never returned home.

## CHAKBAIMAYA

A jhumia family lived in a village. The wife of the jhumia was pregnant. One day the wife was weaving a cloth for her baby which was to be born. While weaving the cloth, the shuttle fell on the ground under the house (gairing). Under the house, the jhumia has kept his animals. A cow was living under the house. The lady requested the cow to lift the shuttle and give it to her. The cow lifted the shuttle from the ground and gave to the lady. After some time the shuttle again fell and she requested the cow to lift it and give it to the lady. When the shuttle again fell and the lady asked the cow to lift it, the cow said, "I am also pregnant like you. I am also going to give birth to a calf very soon. I can't lift the shuttle every time." When the lady further requested the cow, the cow said, "I can give you the shuttle only on one condition, if both of us give birth to a male, my calf and your child will be friends. However, in case I gave birth to a male cow and you give birth to a daughter then you will marry your daughter with my cow." The lady agreed to the condition of the cow.

After some days, the wife gave birth to a daughter and the cow gave birth to a calf. The daughter of the lady and the male calf started playing together as they grew up. The calf never left the girl and was always seen moving alone with the girl. As



the girl become young, since the calf always followed the girl wherever she went, the neighbours started passing comments on the relationship between the calf and the girl. One day the girl cried and she asked her mother, "Why the or always follow me?" The mother narrated the entire incident and told her about the promise she gave to the mother cow. The daughter was very embarrassed and she wanted to get rid of the ox.

One day the girl went to a jhum field. She was so upset about the relationship with the ox that she finally hung herself on the branch of a tree and died. The ox also came near the tree, after seeing the girl dead, he hit his head on the tree and died.

In their next birth, the girl became the princess in a royal family and the ox became a white elephant. The elephant also lived in the palace. He could recollect the incident of his earlier birth and was, therefore, very friendly to the young princess. The white elephant took the princess on its back and played with her. One day the white elephant while giving a ride to the princess ran away from the palace. As the princess did not return, the king got worried. He sent his men all over the palace in search of the princess. But they could not find her. At last the king declared that anyone who rescue the princess would be given half of the kingdom and also marry to the princess.

Bhutia and Rangia were two brothers living in a village. They heard about the declaration of the king and decided to rescue the princess. Both of them went to the jungle after following the footprints of the white elephant. After few months the two

brothers reached another kingdom after following the footprints of the elephant. One of the brothers wanted to return back. However, he was persuaded and both of them decided to proceed further. At last they reached a dense forest. They saw the white elephant standing on the hillock. Rangia proceeded to fight with the elephant white Bhutia hid himself under a bush. In the fight, Rangia finally killed the elephant. Both the brother then rescued the princess.

Bhutia, Rangia and princess were returning home. It became dark on the way. They wanted to take some rest. They found a big house in the midst of the jungle. The three of them decided to rest in the house for the night. As they entered the house, they found a heap of bones lying in one corner. The entire house was empty and there was nobody inside it. The three of them selected suitable places in the house for sleeping.

At dusk, some persons accompanied by a girl came to the house where Rangia with others were taking rest. All the persons were crying. Rangia came out of the house, asked the people, "Why are you crying?" The people said, "This is a place where one "rakshas" (demon) lives. We are all his subjects. As per his order, we have to offer him one human being everyday for his dinner. Today is the turn of my family and I have brought this girl with me for the 'rakshas.'" The people also said to Rangia, "You may also leave the place immediately as the rakshas is going to come here any time. If he sees you he will also kill and eat all of you." Rangia was not scared. He along with his brother

decided to stay in the house in the night. The villagers who came also left the girl with them and went back.

Late in the night, Rangia heard some sounds. The “rakshas” has come and he was producing a peculiar sound in the area. The “rakshas” said, “Who is keeping watch of this house?” Rangia replied, “This house is being watched by Rangia.” The “rakshas” has heard the strength and power of Rangia. He knew that Rangia has killed the white elephant. So the rakshas got frightened and went away. After few hours the ‘rakshas’ again came and asked the same question. On hearing that the house was being watched by Rangia, the rakshas went back. It was going to be dawn, Rangia was feeling very sleepy. He asked his brother Bhutia to be awake and keep watch on the house. He also warned him that if rakshas came, he should say that the house is under watch of Rangia.

After some time the rakshas came producing a fierce sound. Bhutia became very frightened and also puzzled. When rakshas asked, “Who was keeping watch of this house?” Bhutia replied that the house was being watched by Bhutia. The rakshas then became desperate, broke into the house and fought with Bhutia. He almost killed Bhutia and then ran away with the princess and the Brahmin girl into the forest.

When Rangia woke up, he did not find the two girls in the house. He searched everywhere and then located Bhutia who was lying half dead in the jungle. After some time Bhutia regained consciousness and told the entire story to Rangia.

The two brothers now went in search of the rakshas in the jungle. On one place they found the dead bush of bailingching (a kind of shrub). They got suspicious as all the other bushes



near it were green. Rangia uprooted the bush and to his utter surprise found a very big hole. Rangia then brought a long swkwī (a kind of creeper) tied it to one of the trees and with the help of this creeper entered into the tunnel in the ground through the hole.

In the tunnel, they walked for some time and reached a place where they found the rakshas. The princess and the brahmin girl were also there. Rangia fought with the “rakshas” and killed him. He rescued the princess.

On return, Bhutia, princess and the brahmin girl came out through the hole in the ground with the help of the creeper. But before Rangia could come to the top, Bhutia cut the creeper with the intention that he would be in a position to marry the princess and take the entire kingdom. Rangia remained confined in the tunnel as he could not come out. Bhutia then came to the house of the brahmin, returned his daughter. He then went to the king, told him, “I have killed the white elephant and rescued the princess.” He asked the king to immediately arrange for the marriage of the princess with him. The princess knew that Rangia was still alive and he would come back one day. She said to her father, “I have taken vow of not marrying for one year. It will not be possible for me to marry immediately. Please ask Bhutia to wait for one year.

In the tunnel Rangia had no other way to come out of the hole. Fortunately, he brought some swkwī seeds with him. He chanted some mantra on the seed and then planed them in the

tunnel. The seeds instantly germinated and began to grow rapidly. After some time the creeper grew very fast and came out of the hole and then climbed to a nearby tree. After this Rangia came out of the hole with the help of the creeper. Then he went to the house of the brahmin. He told the entire story to the brahmin. The brahmin gave him shelter and organised his meeting with the king.

When Rangia went to meet the king, the princess recognized him and said to her father, "He is the person who killed the white elephant and the rakshas. It is he who actually rescued me." The king then married his daughter with Rangia and gave him half of the kingdom. Rangia excused his brother Bhutia and got him married to the brahmin girl. They lived happily together.

## DARLAISEM (RED BELL)

Long ago there was a small tribal village in the hills of Mizoram. Ralleka was the headman of the village. He had a very brave and courageous son named Seneiroiya. From his early childhood, Seneiroiya preferred to go for hunting in the jungle rather than doing agricultural work in the jhum field. He was an ace shooter and was so perfect that he could shoot his targets very comfortably.

It was winter season, Seneiroiya one day went to the forest with his chem (chopper) and sailei (bow and arrow). He laid trap for wild animals. He hunted a very big wild animal. When he brought the animal to the village, all the villagers were very happy. They all shared the meat of the animal. Whenever Seneiroiya went out for shooting, he never came empty handed and always brought the big animal which the entire village could share. All the villagers were very proud of his bravery. His fame has also spread to the neighbouring village.

Parents of Seneiroiya wanted him to get married. Initially he was reluctant; however, due to persistence of his old parents and friends, he at last agreed to marry a girl which he would select himself. In a neighbouring village Jolkheipuri was the daughter of the headman Jiyalunga of Pachuai. She was very

beautiful and was expert in weaving, dancing and singing. Seneiroiya once saw this girl on a social occasion and then decided to marry her. He told his parents that he would marry jolkheipui. The parents were very happy and they immediately send palai (middle man) to Jiyalunga. Jiyalunga did not agree to the proposal because of his old rivalry between the clans. When Seneiroiya came to know about this, he felt very disheartened. He himself went to Jiyalunga who agreed to get his daughter married on the condition that he would bring Darlaisem (Darbell, lai-middle, sem-red) to him. He also informed Seneiroiya that an old widow named Theichhui living beside the river Tuiruan owns that bell which had red mark in the centre.

Next day, Seneiroiya set out in search of the old women to bring the bell. After few days of walking he reached a village and located the old widow. He requested her to give the bell. The pleasant manner and behaviour of Seneiroiya impressed the old women and she agreed to give the bell on the condition. She said, "The boar has been destroying my field every day. If you can catch the boar either alive or dead I will have no objection in giving the bell to you." Seneiroiya came to the jhum field of the widow and laid a trap for the animal. He spent the entire night in the jungle on an abundant kaireng (house to watch jhum field). At mid night, he heard the sound of the animal from the trap. He went and found a big boar was trapped. After seeing Seneiroiya, the animal rushed towards him but due to the trap



it could not come out. Seneiroiya immediately cut one ear of the boar with the help of the chopper. He then went to the widow to inform.

The boar tried very hard to break the trap but it failed. At last, it began to cry. The cry of the boar was heard by the sakal (leader of the boar group). The Sakal came and found that strongest of the boar of their herd has been caught in the trap. He becomes very worried. He realized the danger of losing the boar and also the rule by which an animal can't be made free from others trap. So Sakal placed a small boar in the trap and got the other boar free.

Next day morning when Seneiroiya came with the old women, to his surprise he found the small boar in the trap instead of the big one. The old women become very angry. She scolded him and then went away. Seneiroiya was bewildered and did not know what to do. For some time he thought and then worked out a plan. He set the small boar free from the trap. He then started chasing the small boar thinking that it would lead him to the den. As expected the small boar after running for some time through the jungle went in to the cave. The other boars came out to see the return of the small boar. Sakal stood in front of Seneiroiya. Seneiroiya said, "I have come here to take the boar that was caught in my trap." Sakal pretended as if he knew nothing about it. In the mean time the strong boar whose ear was cut by Seneiroiya also came there. After seeing this, the Sakal could not deny the incident and was, therefore, forced to hand

over the strong boar to Seneiroiya. Seneiroiya then returned with the boar to Theichhui and handed over to her. She was very pleased and then gave the bell to Seneiroiya.

Seneiroiya immediately after getting the bell started for his village. As soon as he reached near the village he rang the bell. Hearing the sound of the bell, all the villagers came to receive him. Seneiroiya wanted to immediately go to Jiyalunga and hand over the bell to him. So he hurriedly started running. At one place he slipped and the bell from his hand fell down the hillock into a water pool. Seneiroiya jumped into the water and started searching for the bell. As he was searching for the bell, he found a very big snake who then took him to Jiyalunga the head snake. The head snake was the originator of the Pachuai Clan, Jiyalunga the father of Jalkheepui, became very happy to get the Darleisem. He thanked Seneiroiya very much. He then married his daughter with Seneiroiya.

Marriage of Seneiroiya and Jalkheepui was organized on suspicious day with great pomp and show. People of both the villages celebrated. The hillock where the bell fell down was later on named as Darlon Thlang. The inhabitants who lived there were also called Darlon. The present tribe of Darlon is the corrupt form of Darlon.

## KHERENGBAR - A FLOWER OF HEAVEN

Dhanonjoy was a young man who lived in a village of Tripura. He completed the period of service (chamaki kamani) in his father-in-law's house. It was the month of chaitra-the last month of Bengali calendar. Dhanonjoy was very happy as he could celebrate Garia Puja (a festival celebrated by tribals) in his village with old friends.

Dhanonjoy started for his village early in the morning with his newlywed wife. He thought that he would reach the village before the sun set. The entire path to the village was passing amidst forest. Both of them were walking fast so that they can cross the forest before it sets dark. On way, they felt

the sweet smell of an unknown flower. "What a sweet smell!" Said the wife. "Which is this flower?" she inquired. Dhanonjoy said, "It is Kherengbar Bubar( a kind of orchid)" "I never heard of this flower. I have also never felt such a sweet smell in my life." said the wife. "Will you please bring me one of these flowers as I am anxious to insert it in my hair?" asked the wife. Dhanonjoy said, "It is not possible for you to decorate your hair with this flower. It is a flower of the heaven. It blooms only for the God and it is harmful for human beings."

## KHERENGBAR -A FLOWER OF HEAVEN

The wife became very anxious and asked Dhanionjay, "How the flowers of heaven came to the earth?" Dhanionjay replied, "Due to a curse, one Apsara was sent to earth from the heaven. She brought a seedling of her most favourite flower." As the atmosphere of the earth was not conducive, a special arrangement was made for growing this plant. Dhanonjoy then showed his wife how the plant was growing on a tree trunk without any contact with soil.

He said, "The roots are clamped to a tree with which it takes its food". See, these are the flowers of Kherengbar, Dhannonjoy pointed to his wife.

The wife said, "What harm these flowers can cause to anyone?" Dhanonjoy replied, "I heard from a sooth sayer (Diary) in my village (Kami) that if anyone insert the flower of Kherengbar in hair, he or she would at once turn into a gibbon." The wife could not believe it. She kept on looking at the flowers for a long time and did not say anything. Dhanonjoy felt that his wife had become sad. He said, "Please don't feel sad, if you want I shall pluck Kherengbar flower for you but don't insert them in your hair and if you do so I shall turn into a gibbon."

He said, "You can take the flowers with you, consult the Diary in the village and thereon use them as per his advice." Dhanonjoy then climbed on the tree, plucked some flowers of Kherengbar and gave to his wife. The wife was very happy. Seeing the beautiful flowers, the wife could not resist the temptation and

immediately inserted one of the flowers into her hair. As soon as she did this, the hands of her husband got clamped to the tree.

Dhanonjoy said, "Have you inserted the flowers in the hair because I am feeling as if my body is changing?" The wife realized the mistake and immediately took out the flower from her hair and threw it. She looked upon the tree and found that her husband was really changing. She got frightened. Soon she found that her husband has completely turned into a gibbon. She cried, apologized and asked Dhanonjoy. "Please tell me how can you turn into a human being?" Dhannajoy said, "I shall never turn into human shape. I have to now live in the jungle with other gibbon. You start walking fast so that you can reach the village before dusk. Stay with my parents and we may reunite in our next birth."

He wife was shocked, she said, "I wanted to lead a happy life with you. Got has not favoured me. For whom shall I now return home! I would like to die." She then began to strike her head against the tree. It was profusely bleeding and at last she died under the tree. Her husband saw but could not do anything except groaning, "Hu, Hu ..... Hulok .....Huta."

In the next birth, the wife became a pangolin as she did not get the life of a gibbon due to her temptation for Kherengbar flowers.

In the month of March and April Kherengbar flowers bloom, the gibbon chatters, "Hu, Hu.....Hulok.....Huta." remained

## KHERENGBAR -A FLOWER OF HEAVEN

of his earlier life and the pangolin express her unfilled desire of earlier life by beating the tail on the ground.

Seeing the pathetic condition of the couple, God decided to take away the sweet smell of Kherengbar flower. That's why now the beautiful flowers of Kherengbar has no smell.



## **THE LAZY PRIST (DENGA-OCHAI)**

There was an old woman who lived in a village. She was very poor. She lived in a village with her only son. She had no jhum land and earned her livelihood mainly by working as a labourer in the jhum field of other villagers. As she had no land of her own and there was no other earning member in her family, she was leading a very difficulty life.

The widow's only son named Abhiram was young but was very lazy. He did not go to the school. Throughout the day, Abhiram would play with friends, go for shooting birds or sit in the village tea shop. In the evening Abhiram would come home, eat the food prepared by his mother and then sleep. He never helped his mother in household work or in the field where his mother would toil for earning livelihood. The mother loved the son very much but she was not able to meet all his requirements.

One day, the widow said to her son, "All the young boys in the village work in the jhum field at least for cutting and burning. Why don't you start working in the jhum field? Unless you work and earn thereby, it would be difficult for me to fulfill all your needs". Hearing his mother's sermon, the son got annoyed. He immediately took a small bamboo basket (chempai) and chopper

and set out for working in the jhum field. The old woman was very happy that her lazy son would now onwards start earning his livelihood. She was feeling greatly relieved of a responsibility which has caused her anxiety, strain and sense of insecurity. The widow was not able to hide her happiness and she started singing an old melodious chorus song (which the tribal women sing while working in the jhum field). That day even the neighbours were surprised to find the widow so happy.

Abhiram on reaching the jhum field found a thick growth and spread of a creeper (ghila). With the help of the chopper, Abhiram cut the creeper from its roots realizing that the rest of the creeper would wither away of its own. After some time, he went back to his house. The old woman was astonished on the early return of her son. She knew that cutting jungle in the jhum field normally takes 2-3 days. She thought that Abhiram may not have cut jungle properly. She said to her son, "Did you finish the jungle cutting work?" "Yes mother", replied Abhiram. He also asked his mother not to worry and wait for the crop.

After some days, the time for burning of jhum field began. "Go and burn the field properly if you want to reap a good harvest", said the widow to Abhiram. On that day, the widow gave her son the soil collected from seven other jhum fields, water from seven homes and seven torches. She said to Abhiram, "Recite the hymns of God and Goddesses before you set the field to fire. Pray that you shall not be cursed if young ones of any species are burnt in the process as you are being compelled



to set the fire to the field and following the traditions of your forefathers. You have no intention to hurt or harm any living-beings.”

Abhiram went to the jhum field and set fire to the dried “ghila”, creeper which he had cut few days ago. He did not pray as was advised by his mother. The flame of the fire bursted into a blaze. The widow kept an earthen pitcher of water in the house. She covered this with a sieve and placed a bamboo fan on it till the burning of the field was completed.

The “Nagraj” (king of snakes) lived with the children in the same jhum field which was cut and burnt by Abhiram. At the time of burning “Nagraj” was not there in the field. However, when he returned, he found that all his children had been burnt and killed

“Nagraj” became very angry and decided to take revenge. He went to the house of the widow, encircled it seven times and then stood in front of the door. He also started making hissing sound. The old widow realized that her son has made some mistake while burning the field. She could not come out of the house.

In the evening, when Abhiram come back he could not enter the house after seeing “Nagraj” standing in the door. He shouted and asked his mother why the “Nagraj” was so angry and what he should do to cool “Nagraj” temper. The old widow said, “You didn’t pray to God and Goddesses as advised by me and that’s why “Nagraj” is now bent on taking revenge from the family.”

She also told Abhiram to go to his maternal uncle in the jungle with a black hen, some fried paddy, a bottle of wine, turmeric, chopper and a banana leaf. As advised by his mother, Abhiram took all the things and went to the jungle in search of his maternal uncle. He began to call his uncle loudly on reaching the jungle. For quite some time, no one responded to his calls. As he was deciding to return home, Abhiram heard a feeble response to his call from a nearby “lunga” (low land between two hills). Abhiram went towards the direction from which the response came. He found a tall and stout man with dark complexion who on inquiry responded positively to Abhiram queries. Abhiram said to the old man. “My mother has sent me as she has been confined in the house by “Nagraj”. Please help me.”

The old man listened to Abhiram and asked him not to worry. He asked Abhiram to open the plantain leaf and lay chopper on it. He said, “You become the Ochai (Priest) and perform the puja (worship). Abhiram said, “I know nothing about the puja and how can become an Ochai. The old man asked Abhiram to follow his instructions and recite the following-

“I will kill and save him  
says to eat and drink,  
Who gnashes teeth and blame behind.”

The old man then asked Abhiram to cut the plantain leaf into seven pieces while reciting certain mantras. He asked the boy to go home. Abhiram saw that the man has disappeared.

Abhiram came to his house and saw that the “Nagraj” body has been cut into seven pieces. His mother came out of the house. He narrated how he met the maternal uncle. The old women told him that the old man he met in the jungle was actually “Bura Devata” (old spirit) and Abhiram was his son. Abhiram said to his mother, “In future I shall always follow your advice.”

Since then the puja of “Burachha” is in force in the tribal society. The puja is performed for getting rid of any ensuing danger or for getting relief from illness. The people who perform the puja is called “Denga Ochai” (lazy priest).

## A JUSTICE IN THE JUNGLE

In the forest, there lived a wild pig with her family members. She used to go to the jungle everyday in search of food for her children. One day the wild pig was moving in the jungle in search of food when she notices a little tiger cub crying near a bush. The wild pig looked all round but could not find the mother tigress. She thought that the mother tigress has been killed by the hunter. The wild pig thought if she leave the cub in the jungle, it would die. The pig took pity on the cub and decided to bring her home.

The tiger cub was growing up under the care of the wild pig. It mixed very well with the other little pigs of the family. They played together. The tiger cubs after some time become one of the members of the pig family.

One day the mother pig died. By now the tiger cub and the little pigs have grown young and they were strong enough to look after themselves. They could live independently. But due to their upbringing, they were all living together as a joint family.

The young tiger was very much attracted to the oily fat of the young pig. The tiger has temptation to devour the flesh and eat it. One day the tiger said to one of the pigs, "Brother, last night I had a dream. In my dream, I saw that I was eating you. Now I

can't disobey my dream and therefore, I have decided to eat you.

"The pig said, "It was just a dream and you need not take cognizance of it. A dream has nothing to do with reality." They argued this for some time but the tiger did not agree. He decided to kill the pig and asked the pig whether he had any last desire. The tiger said, "I would fulfill your last desire before I kill and eat you."

By now the pig realized that it would difficult to escape from the tiger. The pig said, "if you kill me the other pigs could blame you. So it would be desirable if three animals confirm to your argument before you kill me." The tiger agreed to the proposal.

The pig and the tiger went to a monkey. They told him the entire story. After hearing, the monkey said, "The tiger shall eat the pig as he has seen this in his dream." The tiger was very delighted.

After this both of them went to a hen. After hearing the story, the hen also opined in favour of the tiger. At last they went to a bat. Hearing the story, the bat said, "It is a very complicated case and they shall go to the king for proper justice."

The bat said, "I shall also appear in the king's court at the time of hearing of your case.

As per the advice of the bat, the tiger and the pig came to the king and narrated the entire story. The pig also told the king, "I have a witness who will be appearing very soon." The king was sitting on the throne and the court was full of nobles. The king

said, "We shall wait for your witness to appear." After some time, the bat fell on the ground in front of the king and began to jump with joy. The king warned the bat to behave in an appropriate manner in the court. The bat apologized to the king for his behaviour. He said, "My Lord, I was sleeping on the ceiling of the palace. At that time, I had a dream. In the dream, I saw that I was marrying the princess. When I woke up I was so happy that I could not control myself." The bat then said, "To fulfill my dream, you shall give me the princess for marrying." The king become very angry and said, "It is not proper for someone to believe on the dream because the dream is not a reality." After hearing the king the bat said, "If it is so then how the tiger is demanding that he will eat the pig since he saw this in his dream."

The king after hearing the bat's arguments dismissed the case. The pig ran away from the tiger and then they began to live separately.

## **KOK-TA-SADI (DO NOT TALK)**

A jhumia was living in a small village with his wife and two daughters. The daughters were very beautiful. They were also very active in the domestic works such as weaving etc. The neighbours compared his daughters as Mailuma (Goddess of paddy) and Khuluma (Goddess of cotton). All people in the village liked these two girls very much because of their good behavior. The girls have grown young. The jhumia started getting worried about their marriage.

Jhumia was not a wealthy man. He had a small piece of jhum field. Due to the failure of the crop for last few years there was not sufficient production in the jhum field. The jhumia was passing his days in the great difficulty.

The two daughters also loved their parents very much. They also loved their house, the village, the hills and the forest.

During those times, the royal policemen would go from village to village. They would collect young beautiful ladies. These ladies were then brought to the palace and made to work as maids. Once a lady was chosen by the policemen, whether she was wife, mother or a girl, she was compelled to enter the royal palace as attendant or maid servant. These ladies from the villages were taken forcibly or willingly

whenever they were caught by the royal policemen in the village.

It was the agricultural season and the jhumia and his wife has to go to the field for work. Since they were to stay in the field for many days, before leaving the house jhumia said to his daughters, "Remain inside the house in our absence. Do not go before any royal servant if they happen to pass through the village." After the jhumia has left for doing work in his field, one day the royal policemen came to the village. The two sisters





went into the corner of the house and stayed there quietly in fear. When the policemen were passing by their house, the elder sister said, "See the policemen are going. Keep silent because if they see us they may catch us." The younger sister asked the elder not to speak, as they may be noticed by the policemen. The policemen heard the whispering sound from the house. They went into the house. They saw the two sisters. They were attracted by the beauty of the two sisters. Immediately after that the policemen decided to take the two sisters to the Royal Palace.

After the jhumia returned from work, he could not find his daughters. The neighbours informed him that the royal policeman has taken his daughters to the palace. Jhumia could not do anything as he was helpless. He cried and remembered his daughters.

The two sisters were not happy in the palace. The luxury of the palace could not attract them. They always remembered their simple life in the village. They cried throughout the day. They did not like the food in the Royal Palace. After some time the two sisters died.

In the next birth, the two sisters become birds. They remembered the incidence of their earlier birth when they were caught by the royal policemen as they could not keep silent in their house. They remembered that if they had not whispered, they would not have gone to the palace. So whenever these birds now fly in the sky they always say to each other, "Kok-ta-sadi" (do not talk) while flying in the sky.

## **JHUM CULTIVATION OF FOUR FRIENDS**

In a thick forest of Tripura, there lived four friends, a tiger, a pig, a fox and a hen. They loved each other very much and used to spend most of their time together. One day, the four friends decided to do jhum cultivation so that they can earn some money and then construct a house. They also decided that the jhuming would be done by each one of them turn by turn.

They started from their village in search of a suitable location for doing jhuming on an auspicious day. After great effort, they identified a field which they found to be highly suitable for taking up jhum cultivation. The field has a fair growth of bushes and other wild plants.

On the first day, it was decided that pig, fox and hen would do the work in the jhum field. For the tiger, it was the rest day. They started the work early in the morning. Seeing his friends working in the field, the tiger said, "Friends since you are going to work in the field throughout the day, it is my duty to make arrangement for your food. I will go back to my house and prepare lunch for you. All of you shall come in time for having lunch in my house. I shall keep the lunch ready for you." The other friends agreed and asked the tiger to go home

immediately. They also said that they would go in time to his house for taking lunch.

After coming home, the tiger started cooking. He placed the cooking vessel on the oven and poured some water into it and then went on for hunting. The tiger hunted a deer, brought it home and cooked it very carefully for his friends.

When the three friends completed the work in the jhum field, they went to the house of the tiger for taking lunch. The tiger offered them food. All the friends ate together. They enjoyed the lunch very much and thanked the tiger for making such a delicious food.

Next day, it was the rest day for the pig. The tiger fox and hen started working in the field. The pig offered to make food for his friends and asked them to come to his house after finishing the work. The pig came back to his house, started cooking the food. The pig kept the vessel of rice on the oven for cooking and then went out for collection of wild potatoes. After the pig came back, the rice has already been cooked. She then cooked the wild potato for his friends. After finishing the work in the jhum field, all the friends' came to the house of the pig for taking food. They ate together and praised the food prepared by the wild pig. They also thanked her very much.

Next day, it was the rest day for the fox but the fox had some objection due to some problems in the house. He proposed to work in the field and asked the hen to take rest. After consultation, the friends agreed that hen will take rest on that

## JHUM CULTIVATION OF FOUR FRIENDS

day. Accordingly the hen offered to go to the house and cook food for her friends. After reaching home she laid eggs, prepared rice and made some vegetables for his friends. After finishing work, the friends came to the house of the hen, ate food together and thanked hen very much for a delicious food.

Next day it was the rest day for the fox as was decided earlier. The fox was asked to go home for preparing food for the other three friends who were to work in the jhum field on that day. Very reluctantly, the fox came back to the house. The fox did not find anything which can be cooked for the friends. The fox decided to make meat for the friends. So he went out for hunting. He wanted to hunt a deer like the tiger. But seeing the horn of the deer he was so frightened that he came back. Then he thought of collecting wild potatoes like the pig. But the soil was so hard that he could not take out the potatoes and therefore, he again came back home. At last the fox decided to cook eggs like the hen. So he sat on the vessel for laying eggs. Instead of eggs, excreta came out and it was poured into the vessel. It gave a very bad smell. The fox did not know what to do. He at once covered the vessel containing excreta with a plantain leaf and kept the vessel in one corner of the house. As the fox could not prepare any food he pretended as if he was suffering from fever. He lied down on the bed and covered himself with a piece of cloth.

After finishing the work in the field the tiger, the pig and the hen came to the house of the fox to take the food. They did not

find the fox in the house. They shouted, "Friend, where are you? And why are you silent?" They also got bad smell from the house. After some time they thought that fox might have cooked a new item for them. As they entered the room, they found that the fox was lying on the bed. Seeing the friends, the fox said with difficulty, "Friends I am here and suffering from fever and I could not make any food for you. I will be very happy in case you cook the food." The friends also realized that since the fox is suffering from fever it was not possible for the fox to cook the food and thereby decided to do the cooking themselves. The tiger first found the vessel covered by the plantain leaf which was lying in the corner of the house. He thought that the fox might have arranged curd for them. The tiger tried to remove the lid of the vessel. The fox then realized the danger in case his friends would come to know about the excreta in the vessel. He at once jumped from the bed and ran away into jungle. In the mean time the vessel fell on the ground and broke. The excreta from the vessel spread all over the ground and it also fell at the face of the tiger. After feeling the bad smell, the tiger become very angry. He immediately roared. The roaring of the tiger frightened his friends and they all ran away to the jungle to save their life.

The entire programme of jhum cultivation planned by the four friends came to a halt.

## A WILD PIG AND A MOUSE

There lived a boar in a dense forest. During summer days, there was scarcity of water in the forest. The boar has to spent lot of time in search of water. One day, the boar was searching for food in the forest. At one particular place, the boar started digging the soil with his teeth. The boar was sure to get enough water. After some time, the water appeared at the bottom of the bit which has been dug by the boar. The boar was disappointed however, he thought appropriate to preserve the water so that he can use it during the days of scarcity.

The boar did not know how to look after this water spot since he has to move around in the jungle from place to place in search of food. The boar thought, in case, it is left unattended some other animal may come to the place and drink the water. So the boar decided to engage someone to keep a watch of the water spot. After thinking for a long time, the boar thought it appropriate to engage a small animal so that he himself would not be in a position to drink the entire water.

A small bird was living on a nearby tree. The boar thought that if he engaged the bird, it being a small creature would not be able to consume the entire quantity of water in his absence. So he went and requested the bird to keep a watch on the water

spot. He also said to the bird. "Do not allow any other animal to come near the water spot." The bird agreed to the request of the boar and started to keep a water on this spot.

After some time, a hare came to the place. He wanted to drink the water. The bird prevented the hare from doing so. He said, "If you drink the water, the boar will kill me." The hare said, "How strong the boar is?"

The bird said, "The boar has eyes as big as an egg, his teeth are as sharp as an axe and he has a tail which is three meters long." After hearing the description of the boar, the hare got frightened and he ran away.

After some time a deer came to the place. He was feeling very thirsty. Seeing the water spot, he wanted to drink the water. But the bird who was keeping a watch on the spot immediately asked the deer not drink the water. The deer asked the reason for not doing so. The bird replied that this spot has been made by the boar and I had been asked to keep a watch on it. If you drink the water the boar would kill me." The deer said to the bird, "How big is the boar?" The bird said, "It has eyes as big as an egg, teeth as big as an axe and a tail which is three metres long." After hearing the description of the boar, the deer was also frightened and he ran away from the place.

In the last, a tiger came to the place. The tiger also wanted to drink the water. The bird prevented the tiger from drinking the water. The bird also gave the description of the boar as she has given to the other animals. The tiger said, "Does the boar has

any sharp claws like me?" The bird replied in negative. The tiger then asked whether the boar had moustache like me. The bird said, "no". The tiger then said to the bird, "If the boar does not have the claws and the moustache than I am mightier than the boar and I can drink the water." After this the tiger began to drink water from the spot.

The bird immediately flew away, searched for the boar in the jungle and informed him that a tiger has drunk his water from the spot. The boar was very angry and he immediately came to the spot to challenge the tiger. As soon as the boar reached the spot the tiger had finished drinking water. The boar jumped on the tiger and tore his stomach. The tiger also tore the skin of the boar with his sharp claws. Both the animals fought and were injured very badly. At last, both of them died at the same spot.

The bird was also very angry after seeing the death of his beloved boar. She thought that the tiger has unnecessarily killed the boar. If the tiger would not have come to the place to drink water, there would have been no fight and the boar would not have been killed. Out of rage, the bird ate the flesh of the tiger. The bird after that suffered from indigestion, as it was not used to eating animal flesh. The bird became very dull and sluggish. The bird was resting on a bamboo bush. Suddenly the wind started blowing very fast. A branch of bamboo struck hard on the bird. The fell down on the ground and died.



Under the bamboo bush where the bird died, there lived a mouse. At the time when the fight between boar and tiger was going on, the mouse was inside the hole. It heard the fight but did not come out of the hole due to fear. After some time, the mouse did not hear any sound. Mouse was very curious to know what was happening. It came out of the hole. The mouse found the tiger, boar and the bird lying on the ground. The mouse thought that the legs of the bird would make a good flute. The mouse immediately cut the legs of the bird and made a flute out of them. The mouse started playing the flute. The sweet note of the flute attracted the attention of a monkey who was living nearby. The monkey decided to snatch the flute from the mouse forcibly. The monkey came to the place where the mouse was playing the flute. He also brought some gum in his hands. Initially he praised the flute and the sound. Suddenly, he smeared the gum on the eyes of the mouse. The mouse could not open his eyes. The monkey then snatched the flute from the bewildered mouse and ran away.

The mouse after having lost his favourite flute and failing to open his eyes began to cry. The mouse started saying, "My flute, my flute." A kite who was flying in the sky heard the cry of the mouse and came down. The kite asked the mouse the reasons for crying. The mouse said, "The monkey pasted gum on my eyes and took away my favourite flute." Seeing the condition of the mouse, the kite took pity on him. The kite removed the gum

from the eyes of the mouse by his beak. The kite said, "Do not cry, I shall bring your flute back from the monkey."

The kite then went to the house of the monkey. The kite saw that the monkey was playing the flute. The kite asked the monkey to show him the flute. However, the monkey refused. He said, "You will run away in case I gave the flute to you." The kite said to the monkey, "You may like to hold my tail so that I will not run away." The monkey agreed to the suggestion given by the kite. He held the tail of the kite firmly in his hands and gave the flute to the kite for playing. The kite played the flute for some time and the monkey was completely lost in the sweet sound of the flute. Suddenly, the kite pulled its tail from monkey's hand with a jerk and flew away with the flute. The kite came to the house of the mouse and gave the flute back to him. The two animals then started living together happily and playing the flute from time to time.



## KANCHANMALA

Kanchanmala was a young house wife who was married only three months ago. She lived in a small village on a hill top with her husband. Both husband and wife loved each other very much.

Suddenly the news of a battle between the king of Tripura and the Moghal forces was received. The king sent a “Furai” (royal sermon asking all able bodied men to join the royal force) to all parts of the State. It was obligatory for all male subjects to join the royal force so as to defeat the invaders. The king sent his royal police (birindias) to all parts of the state so that all male subjects can be collected and brought for joining the royal force. The sermon of the king was received in the village where Kanchanmala lived with her husband. Kanchanmala never wanted her husband to go and join the royal force. Her husband also never wanted to go away from her. Kanchanmala was so beautiful that one of the cousin brothers of Kanchanmala’s husband who was serving in the royal force and was attracted to her beauty thought it as an opportunity to entice Kanchanmala. He sent the royal police to the village for arresting Kanchanmala’s husband. The “birindias” came to the village,

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arrested Kanchanmala's husband and took him away for joining in the royal force.

Kanchanmala was very annoyed. She was also very sad. She could not bear the separation of her husband and then she started singing a song:

“Nwngbai kaijagma haya Bayakho  
Hayale Baya-Haplok Ongba;  
Nwngbai kaijagma Bedi Bayakho  
Bedi Mauibera Ongba.

Kolija-

Tomchha Gotwi Chajcggau Faikha  
Doktori Birindia.

Kolija-

Dida Kaichhala Chakuri Tongo  
Dida Kaichhano Chhungdi.  
Hachwk Chhakao Punchhikam Tongo  
Punchhikam pawl Thangdi

Kolija-

Kang ui Khulumdi Dorgwi Nadi  
Didano Bidai Nadi.  
Yakchhi Khokba, Yagra Khokba  
Dorgwi Nadi, Khulumwi Nadi  
Didano Bidai Nadi.”

(Our marriage “Bedi” (Platform) has not yet broken. It is still rising. Its fencing is still intact. Oh my darling: The royal Birindias (Soldiers) are coming like a flock of red cock and white

herons. Your brother is serving in the royal force. Take his advise. Purchase a goat and offer worship. Oh darling; Give rupees five in his right hand and another rupees five in left hand. Then salute your brother. Pray to him for your release).

In the mean time, the Birindias reached at the Gairing (piled house). As they were coming up the stairs, the husband also became worried and said:

“Yaki Khupang Bichhikai Faikha  
Tongwichhe Man Gwlak.  
O Kolija-  
Muktwi Hujadi Umano Khibdi  
Chujadi Mairwng Chuchha.

(The “Birindias” have come to the stair of the house. O darling; I cannot stay any more with you. Remove your tears and abstain from worrying. Come and arrange a bag of rice (for cooking on the way to Capital).

The royal policemen coming on the stair said,

“Chhimlik Bofor Lamthai Bechhokdi  
Fawi Chwng Achhukmani.”

(Put a fine mat for our sitting. We will sit on it).

Kanchanmala again sang to her husband;

“O Kolija  
Nwngbai Kaijagma Methi Kagyakho  
Hachikhung Raibar Chhongba  
Nwsngbai Kaijagma Hanta Kagyakho  
Chaikhung Raibar Chhongba.

O Kolija-  
Nwngbai Kaijagma  
Ritrak Thanchha Thule Thukhamun.  
Taka Kebengo Nwngbai.  
Yakung Jangla Chyhurwi Thukhamun  
Yakung Kebengo Nwngbai  
Duma Baichhani Seba Chhiyakhho  
(Kolija) Hachikhung Raibar Chhongba  
Nwng Thhangtini Angbo Fayanu  
Yakung Chhhunani Jora Chhwg Nade  
Ajb Twidi Log  
Nun Kotogni Thwi Kwlaikhini  
Arnebo Kwlainani, O Kolija-  
Anobo Twidi Logi.”

(O my darling; the fragrance of the perfumes used in our marriage day has not faded away. The remains of banana leaves for the feast have not yet dried. The trace of canopy still remains. I had a desire to sletgether on a single sheet of “Ridrak” (bed sheet). The thread of the edges makes obstacles to us. Oh darling; I could not yet serve you with a “Chillum” of tobacco. In the mean-time the calls for the battle have reached here. O darling, I want to go with you. I shall wash your feet, serve you and stay with you. I want to accompany you.

The husband replied and sang;

“O Kolija-  
Poschim Jatra Chwng Khlwinani

Muktwi Ta Phanuk Jadi.

O Kolija-

Chaichhor Wa Romwi Nwng Toma Ma Mok,

Ri Bognokheiba Bogdi

Baka Wa Romowi Nwng Toma Ma Mok

Maitwk Bongno Kheiba Bogdi.”

(O darling; We shall go to the west. On our departure do not shed your tears. What are you thinking with gloomy face by holding the bamboo of “Chaichhor” (cloth stand). If you want to hang the cloth, please do it. What are you thinking with gloomy face by holding the bamboo of “Baka” (Machan for placing cooking vessel)? If you want to pup the cooking vessel on it, please do it.

The hausband also further sang

“Mochho Thaichhani Biyal Ongkhei

Thangdi Didani Nogo,

Chhom Kichhani Biyal Ongkhakhei

Thangdi Didani Nogo

Romo Kangchhani Biyal Ongkhakhei

Thangdi Didani Nogo.”

(If you require pepper, go to my brother’s house. If you require some salt, go to my brother’s house. If you require the pole of mortar, go to my brother’s house.)

After consoling his wife, Kanchanmala’s husband went with the royal policemen.



After three months, the brother of Kanchanmala's husband returned home. Her husband did not come with him. Kanchanmala's asked the brother-in-law about her husband. She sang-

“Lamthei Chhok Phaikha Kobong Chhok Phaikha,  
Nwphayung Boro Tongbu?  
Yakung dchhuphaidi Nogo Kaphaidi  
Nwphayungni Khopor Chhadi.  
Nwphayungni Bagwi Bati Bogmani  
Khusichha Buya - Khusi Kanwi Buya  
Khusi Katham Nwngwi Chhadi.”

(The mat has returned, the pillow has returned. Where have you left your brother? Come and sit in the house after washing hands and feet. Tell me about your brother. I kept wine for your brother. Please drink one or two or three glasses of wine and then tell me how your brother is?)

After drinking three glasses of wine, the brother-in-law said,  
Maiyung Bokhorok Holongni Dolan,  
Archhe Tongwi Phai

(My brother is staying at the building having a dome like the head of elephant).

Thereafter, no news of the husband of Kanchanmala was received. Kanchanmala always remembered her husband and could not forget him.

“Tini Phaikhana, Lama Thukhana  
Khanale Chhok Phaiyanu.”

## KANCHANMALA

(He may come to day. He might have slept somewhere on the way. He must be coming tomorrow.)

Kanchanmala kept on waiting for her husband who never returned home. Kanchanmala stopped eating food and became very weak. At last, she died at a very young age as she could not bear the separation from her husband any longer.

Kanchanmala's love, attachment and sincerity to her husband is still remembered in the tribal villages in Tripura.

## THE ROYAL SWAN

There lived a widow with her only son in a small village. The widow was very poor. One day she saw a fisherman who was selling fishes. The fisherman came to her house and said, "Will you buy fish?" The widow said, "My son has gone to the market for selling firewood. I have no money with me. If you agree to take the price of the fish after my son return home, I can buy fish." The fisherman agreed and gave some fishes to the widow. The widow then cooked the fish and waited for his son to return home.

After some time the fisherman came back to her house and asked for the price of the fish. He said, "I have sold all the fishes and now I am going home. Please pay my price for the fish which I sold you." The widow said, "My son has not returned home. Please wait for some time till my son returns." The fisherman did not agree to wait any more and demanded for immediate payment off the price. At last, the widow gave the fish to the fisherman as she could not pay the price. The widow was very sad.

In the afternoon, the son returned home. He said to his mother, "Today I had great difficulty in selling the firewood. There was not many people ready to purchase firewood. At last

I have to sell the firewood at a very low price. With the amount collected after selling firewood, I could only buy rice. I am feeling very hungry." After this the son went to take bath in the river and the widow started cooking the rice.

When the son was given food, he found that only rice has been given to him without any vegetable or curry. In the vessel in which the widow has cooked the fish, some curry remained even after the fish has been returned to the fisherman. The widow gave this curry to his son. Though it was very little, however, the son liked the taste very much. When he asked for more curry, the widow told the entire story to him. She also told him that she returned the cooked fish to the fisherman. The son said, "Tomorrow I will not go to collect firewood from the jungle. The firewood existing in the house can be sold and I will purchase rice from the money collected thereon. I shall then go to catch fish from the royal pond and then you can cook fish which both of us will eat."

The mother said, "If you do angling in the royal pond, you may be caught by the king's soldiers and punished." The son replied, "Many others are angling in the pond and nobody prevents them. Why shall I be scolded. If someone scolds me, I will come back and you do not have to get worried."

Next day in the morning, the son went to the market and after selling the firewood came early with rice. He then went to the royal tank to catch fish. All the day he sat on the royal pond but could not catch any fish. All the other people who were

angling in the royal pond have gone home. The son was not ready to return home empty handed. Suddenly he found that a swan has been caught in his fishing hook. The son caught the swan and brought it home.

Seeing the swan, the widow got worried. She said, "It is a domesticated swan. You have stolen it. Please go and keep it at the same place otherwise we will be in trouble." The son replied, "Mother you don't have to be worried because no one has seen me when I was bringing the swan. I have never eaten the swan. This must be very tasty. Please cook it for me."

Seeing the condition of her son, the widow agreed to cook the swan. She cooked the swan and both of them ate it. After many days both the mother and the son ate such a good food.

In the evening, the royal guards searched for all the swans in the royal pond and found one missing. They looked for it everywhere but could not locate. They asked all the persons about the swan. The royal guards came to know that the widow's son was also angling in the royal pond on that day. They got the suspicion that the swan might have been stolen by the widow's son. So they came to the house of the widow.

It was late night. The widow and her son was sleeping. The royal guards knocked at the door and asked the widow to open the door. They said to the widow, "The royal swan has been stolen and we have come to search for it." While searching the house of the widow, they found the feathers of the swan lying in one corner. They also found some cooked

flesh of the royal swan. His son was arrested and sent to the jail.

The widow cried very much as her only son was arrested. She fainted. During the faint, she had a dream. An old woman came to her and said, "You poor widow don't cry. Chant the name of Goddess "Chha Kol Ok" and promise to worship her. It will be good for you." The widow replied, "Mother I am very poor. I am also very old and can't earn anything. My only son who was earning has been sent to jail on the charges of stealing royal swan. How shall I arrange all the materials required for the worship? How can I perform the puja?"

The unknown lady said, "Don't worry. Your son will return home. Take a feather of the swan and throw it in the royal tank chanting the name of "Chha Lol Ok". Don't look back while returning home from the royal pond." The widow then asked, "How do I worship the goddess? What are the things required for worshipping her? I do not know anything about them."

The unknown lady said, "Collect some rice, bananas and molasses. Grind the rice and prepare three kinds of cakes. Put some milk also. After this arrange all these things on a plantain leaf. That day when the puja is to be performed, you shall keep fast. All those people who keep fast on that day shall assemble and recite the name of the goddess. Thereafter everyone shall be given the food offered to the goddess.

The widow was very happy and said, "Mother I do not know who you are? Please give me your identity." The unknown lady

smiled and said. "You will know my identity in due course." After this the unknown lady disappeared.

When the widow woke up, she initially could not believe what she saw in the dream. However, she decided to do what was told to her by the unknown lady. It was not yet dawn. She took a feather of the swan and went to the royal tank. Then after chanting the name of Goddess "Chha Kol Ok" she threw it into the pond and then returned home.

Same night, the king also had a dream. He saw an old lady who said, you have arrested the son of the widow accusing him for stealing the swan but the swan is swimming in the pond." When the king woke up early in the morning, he asked his man to go and find out whether there was swan in the royal tank. The man returned and informed the king that the royal swan was swimming in the royal pond. The king then summoned his guards and abused them. He said, "You can't perform the duties properly. You have arrested the son of a widow falsely. Go and immediately release him. You shall also pay five rupees to the son of the widow for getting him arrested." The guards were very surprised; however, they released the son of the widow and gave him five rupees also.

The son of the widow returned home and after seeing the son the widow was very happy. The widow said, "Everything has happened by the blessings of Goddess "Chha Kol Ok". Go to the market and immediately bring materials for performing the puja of Goddess "Chha Kol Ok".

## THE ROYAL SWAN

From next day the puja of “Chha Kol Ok” was performed. All the women of the village remained on fast. The widow performed the puja as she was told in her dream. After the puja, the food offered to the goddess was distributed to all the ladies of the village. After this the widow and the son lived happily in the village.



## A WITTY PORCUPINE

There lived an elephant in a jungle. One day the elephant has gone to drink water in a stream. When the elephant reached near the stream, he found the water to be dirty so he could not drink the water. He thought that on the upstream some other animal has been taking bath and had made the water dirty. The elephant became very angry and decided to teach a lesson to that animal. The elephant then went along the river in search of the animal who was making the water dirty. After travelling for a long distance, the elephant came to a place where he found a porcupine who has taken bath was entering into the hole. The elephant could not see the porcupine properly from a distance. However, he cried, "How dare you make my drinking water dirty?" By this time the porcupine has entered into the hole. After hearing the cry of the elephant the porcupine took out his mouth from the hole and said, "What do you say?"

Hearing the reply of the porcupine, the elephant became very angry and said, "I am the king of the forest. All the animals obey my orders and they talk to me very respectfully. How dare you talk to me like this?"

Porcupine was not scared of the elephant. He said, "You may be the king of the forest, but I am the emperor of the forest. The

place where you drink water is under my jurisdiction. How dare you come and threaten me? Leave the place immediately otherwise I shall burry you in the ground.” Hearing this, the elephant became very annoyed. He wanted to show his strength and scare the Porcupine. He made a loud sound by raising his trunk. It was like a thunder. The Porcupine said, “Do you think I am afraid of your trumpet and trunk. Every day I take my breakfast consisting of three big animals like you. Go away, otherwise I will kill you.”

The elephant was very puzzled. He had never seen any porcupine. It was the first time he has came across the porcupine. As the porcupine was in the hole and only its mouth was visible, the elephant did not understand about the size of the porcupine. He started doubting whether porcupine is a big and stronger animal. Even then the elephant challenged the porcupine and asked him to come out of the hole. But the porcupine

did not come out. Instead the porcupine threw a body hair thorn and said, “Compare this with the thorn you have in your body.” The elephant examined the thorn of the porcupine and thought if the thorn of an animal is so hard and pointed then how strong and big the body might be. Thinking this, the elephant got worried. He ran away to save his life from the monstrous animal. After the elephant has gone, the porcupine laughed and felt greatly relieved.

## HEN AND THE CAKE OF RICE

There lived a hen with chicken in a small village. One day the chicken said to her that they had not eaten the cake of pounded rice for a long time. They wanted to eat the cake. The hen agreed to feed the chicken with the cake.

Next day, the hen went to the market and purchased a mortar and pole. She brought the mortar and pole to the house. These were kept in a courtyard. The hen started grinding rice by the mortar for preparing rice cake. While grinding the rice, the hen was singing a song. At the same time a cat who was her neighbor came to the courtyard. Seeing the hen singing the song the cat said, "You seem to be very happy today. What is the matter?" The hen said, "I am grinding rice for preparing cake for my chicken." Both of them started talking to each other.

The hen finished the grinding of the rice and then prepared some cakes. She gave some cake to her neighbour and friend the cat. The cake was also given to all the chickens. When the cat was leaving, she said, "My kittens have never eaten cakes. If you don't mind can I send them to your place? Will you give them some cake to eat?" The hen agreed and asked the cat to send the kittens. After this the hen went out for some time.

## HEN AND THE CAKE OF RICE

When the hen came back, she found there was nothing left in the vessel and the chickens have eaten everything. She remembered to her promise given to the cat for feeding her kittens. She got worried and in order to fulfill her assurance given to her friend, she went and collected some excreta of the pigs, goats and kept them in the pot for feeding the kittens. When the kittens came, the hen fed them with the excreta of the pig and the goat. The kittens have never eaten the cake before and then did not know the taste of it. They did not like the taste and it was very bitter and pungent. They returned home. The mother cat asked the kittens. How was the taste of the cake and whether aunt hen properly fed them." The kittens replied that they had eaten the cake but didn't like the taste. They said it was very bitter and pungent. It was something blackish and round. They felt very uneasy while eating the cake given by aunt hen.

The mother cat got suspicious and thought that her kittens have not been given the real cake. She thought that her kittens have been fed with some dirty things. She became very angry. She immediately wanted to kill the hen. It was late night the cat went to the house of the hen. She pretended as if nothing has happened. She said, "Where do you sleep at night?"

The hen also suspected that the cat must be angry with her as she fed her kittens with the dirty things. She replied, "We are poor people, we have no comfortable place to sleep. We spend the night by sleeping on the ceiling." At night the hen called her chickens and said, "The cat may come today to eat all of us

as she is very angry, Go and hide yourselves in the big drum lying in the corner of the house.” She also warned then to remain silent throughout the night.

At late night, the cat came to the house of the hen. She searched for the hen and the chickens on the ceiling of the house. She looked everywhere but could not find them. She became very angry. At last the cat found a big drum lying in the corner of the house. She decided to look into the drum. She also heard some whispering sound. The cat realized that the hen had hidden herself in the drum. On realizing that there was no way for the hen and the chickens to survive, the hen said, “You can eat all of us but first please roast us and then only eat because the roasted chickens are very tasteful.” The cat agreed to the proposal and went to lit fire in the oven. As the cat blew air to lit fire, the ashes of the oven scattered all over. The ashes also covered the eyes and face of the cat. The cat could not open her eyes. The cat wanted to wash her face and remove the ashes. The cat went near the water jar and put her face into it. In the water jar there were cat fish which have been kept by the hen. The cat fish picked their thorn in the face of the cat. The cat was bewildered and suffering from pain. Hoping to get some relief from the pain, the cats begin to rub her face on the bamboo wall of the house. The bamboo wall was newly constructed. The sharp edges of the bamboo pieces cut the face and the body of the cat. The cat was seriously injured and she died within few hours.

## HEN AND THE CAKE OF RICE

The hen and her chickens came out of the drum. After seeing the cat dead, they were very happy and lived happily in the village without the fear of the cat.

## THE MONKEY GROOM

One day a group of your girls went to the jhum field for collecting crops. When they reached the field, they found that a monkey was eating the brinjals in the field. The youngest girl in the group incited her dog to chase the monkey away. The dog ran behind the monkey. The monkey ran away but become very angry. He decided to take revenge from the girls.

It was noon time and all the girls were fully engaged in their work. Some of them were collecting brinjals, some collecting cotton flowers and some extracting roots of other vegetables. In addition, they were also singing songs. In the afternoon they became tired and decided to take bath in the nearby river. They were also feeling very hungry. The dog was also sleeping at that time under the shade of the tree. The girls went to a nearby river, put off their clothes, placed them under the tree. Covering themselves with a piece of cloth, they jumped into the river and started taking bath. The monkey saw the girls taking bath in the river and decided to take the revenge. He came to the tree where the girls have kept their clothes. He picked up the clothes and climbed on the top of the tree.

After some time the girls came out of the river. When they went to change their breast cloth, they were astonished to find

that their clothes were missing. They searched here and there but could not find them. Suddenly they noticed some sound on the top of the tree. They looked upon and found that the monkey was sitting with their clothes on the tree.

The girls were very worried. They could not climb the high tree and didn't know to get their clothes back from the monkey. They discussed among themselves and the oldest girl in the group was asked to offer some brinjals to the monkey for getting the clothes back. She said to the monkey, "Yu-yu-dadayui-ano rignai kangchha." (O monkey brother, give my cloth). The monkey replied, "Yakhli engchha kafai-gradi, phantok halichherwfai gradi hoh chhenali hok." (Come up one step of the ladder with one "hali" (four) brinjal, you wicked girl). The oldest girl offered one "Hali" (four) brinjal as desired by the monkey. The monkey gave her clothes back. Then the second girl requested the monkey to return her clothes. The monkey asked to her to climb one more step on the ladder and offer him one "hali" of brinjal. After the girl has fulfilled the request of the monkey, her clothes were returned. Likewise all the girls got their clothes back except the youngest one. Each one of them has to offer one "hali" of brinjal and climb one step more on the ladder. When the turn of the youngest girl came, the monkey said, "Yakhi engchhini kachhagradi, phantok halikchhini rwfaigradi; hok chhenali hok." (You wicked girl, come up seven steps of the ladder and give me seven "hali" brinjals).



As desired by the monkey the youngest girl climbed seven steps on the ladder and then offered seven “hali” of brinjal. Despite this monkey didn’t give her clothes to her. When she offered the monkey caught hold of her hands dragged her upon the tree. After seeing this, the other girls who were standing below the tree cried and they all ran away. They went to the village and informed them about the incident. When they reached the village it was very dark. After hearing the incident, the villagers ran to the field. They looked here and there but could not locate them. The monkey has taken the girl into dense forest.

The poor girl who was caught by the monkey tried to escape but she failed. She did not take any food for few days. Being helpless she was compelled to live with the monkey in the dense forest. After a year, a child was born and he was named “Tote”. The girl was thereafter called Totema (mother of Tote). When the child was born, the monkey thought that his wife would not try to run away now. However, the girl was still looking for a chance to escape.

One day Totema pretended that she has conceived and she wanted the “Thastui” (a kind of sour fruit). There was no “thastui” in the nearby place. To fulfil the request of his wife, the monkey went to the jungle to collect “thastui” tree and left her alone in the house.

As soon as the monkey went out of the house. Totema immediately decided to run away. She bid farewell to the

domestic cat and other animals who lived with her in the jungle. She took her son "Tote" and started for her village along the hilly path. In the evening, the monkey returned home but he didn't find his wife and the son in the house. He found that water in the pot was boiling and the cat was sitting nearby. He thought that his wife and son must have gone nearby. It was getting dark. When his son and Totema didn't return, the monkey started calling Totema loudly. He didn't get any reply from anywhere. He started crying. The domestic cat was mewling beside him. The monkey was very sad and annoyed and in his anger he threw the cat on the ground. The cat died.

Now the monkey was left alone in the house. He became very indifferent to life. He prepared a musical instrument with the help of the skin of the cat "Dong Dorong". Taking the instrument, he moved from place to place in search of his son and wife. He sang on the musical instrument.

"O doni dong dorong, donidong;

Ani Totema biyang thangjlang?

Doni dong dorong doni dong;

(Doni dong dorong doni- dong. Where has my Totema gone?")

One day the monkey was passing through a jhum field where some farmers were working. On seeing the monkey with the peculiar instrument, the farmers asked him what he was singing. The monkey sang the song and narrated the story to the farmers. The farmers informed him that few days before, one woman

with a baby in her lap passed through this field. She might be your wife. They showed him the way in which the women went.

At last the monkey could locate the village where Totema was living. Seeing the monkey from a distance, Tote said to his mother, "My father has come." Totema said, "He is a monkey, how can he be your father." But Tote immediately ran to his farther monkey and sat on his lap.

The parents of the girl came out and received their monkey son-in-law. They said that please come in and stay with us.

The parents organized a feast for their monkey son-in-law. All the villagers were invited on the occasion. They were given liquor and food. The monkey groom also consumes large quantity of liquor. He was so intoxicated that he could not stand. Finally he was brought to the bed and made to sleep. The beds arranged in the house consisted of bamboo floor. The girl has removed some bamboos from the platform near the bed. In the night the girl asked her monkey husband to move little for giving space to the son who was sleeping nearby. As soon as the monkey moved, he fell down from the hole which was made in the bed by removing the bamboos. The monkey fell down on the ground where pigs and mud was there. The monkey could not move in the mud. The pigs killed the monkey and ate. At last, Totema escaped from the hands of the monkey.

## WHY THE GHOST ARE FRIGHTENED OF A DOG

Once a jhumia went to an Ochai (village priest) and wanted to learn the “mantras”. The Ochai was initially reluctant but in view of the jhumia’s persistence, he agreed to tell him one “mantra”. He said to the jhumia, “You can get all your work done if you recite this mantra a thousand times.” A Ghost would appear and do everything for you “. The jhumia became very happy, learnt the mantra very well and went to his house after tanking the Ochai.

As time passed, one day the jhumia thought of testing the magic power of the mantra. He chanted the mantra thousand times. Immediately after that, a monstrous, fierce looking Ghost appeared before him. The Ghost said, “Master, I am your servant. Please order me what shall I do for you?” The Ghost also said, “I shall obey all your orders without delay, but there is one condition, if you fail to engage me in any work, I shall break your neck”. Jhumia thought that he need not worry for the condition put forward by the Ghost since he could give him so many works which would keep the Ghost always engaged. Jhumia said to the Ghost, “Your condition is acceptable to me. Now go and first clear my field.” Jhumia thought it would take many days for the Ghost to clear the vast jhum field. After some

time, the Ghost appeared before the jhumia and informed him that the work has been completed. Jhumia was very surprised. "Give me other work". said the Ghost. Jhumia said "Go and uproot the trees and bamboos from the field."

The Ghost disappeared and after some time again reappeared to inform the jhumia that the work has been completed. He ask for other work to be assigned to him. The jhumia said, "Go and construct a road which would connect my jhum field with the main road." The Ghost even completed this work within a short time and asked the jhumia to give him more work.

Jhumia kept on assigning the toughest jobs to the Ghost but to his utter surprise, all these works were completed by the Ghost in no time. He started getting worried to find a work which could keep the Ghost engaged. He said to the Ghost, "Now I shall give you a very simple work." Please tell me the work, Master, "said the Ghost. "Listen, said the jhumia, "I have a domestic dog, I don't like its tail which is always curved. You make the curved tail straight."

This is a very simple work", said the Ghost, "I shall do it immediately." The Jhumia said, "However there is one condition, if you fail to make the tail of the dog straight, my dog would bite you and tear you into pieces.

"Don't worry Master", said the Ghost, "such a situation would never arise."

The Ghost then disappeared, he looked for the dog. After finding it, he caught the tail of the dog in both hands, pulled it

## WHY THE GHOSTS ARE FRIGHTENED OF A DOG

and made it straight. As soon as he released the tail, it again became curved as before. Then the Ghost tied the tail to a tree with the help of a rope. He kept the tail straight for few days. When the tail was untied, it was again curved. The Ghost then brought a bamboo pipe, inserted the tail into it and left it for a long time. When the Ghost took out the tail from the pipe, it again got into its original form. Now the Ghost got frightened. He remembered the condition imposed by the jhumia. He thought that dog would bite him as he had failed to fulfill his commitment. So being frightened of the dog, the Ghost ran away from the place and thereafter never returned.

The Chakmas (a tribe) believes that the Ghost are always frightened of a dog.

## THE BLOOD SUCKING GOD

Long ago, there was a king named Trilochan who ruled Tripura State. He was the only son of his mother Hirabati. Hirabati, the queen Mother was an extraordinary woman. Although a queen, she liked to do her domestic duties all by herself.

One afternoon, the queen went to fetch water from the river. It was rainy season. The river bank was lonely. The queen took bath in the river. She then tried to fill the pot with the water for carrying into the Palace. While she was filling the pot with the water, she hears a cry, "Mother save us". She looked around but could not see any one. After some time she again hear the same cry. She could not see anybody. She asked, "Who are you?"

"We are Fourteen Gods", she hear a reply. "A fierce looking buffalo is after us. We have taken shelter in this Cotton (simul) tree. We cannot come down. The buffalo is standing below the tree. She would kill us. We have been on the tree for the last seven days. We have not taken food or anything during this time. Please save us. You are pious women and you can save us from this buffalo."

“But you say that you are gods. Why can’t you then take care of yourselves”, said the mother queen. “What can a widow like me do for you?”

“We are gods but at present we are under the spell of a curse. So we are powerless”, said the God.

The queen said, “Please tell me how I can help you?” You show your “rishā” (the breast cloth) to the buffalo and then throw it on its back. It will be tamed and then you can tie it down”, said the God to the queen.

The queen went to the palace and came back with large number of servants who were carrying sticks with them. None of the servants after seeing the buffalo, dared to go near it to show the rishā. After much hesitation, an old servant of the queen agreed to perform the task.

“O! Fourteen gods, let your wish prevail, let the glory of the queen’s rishā live forever on the earth, I shall take the risk”, said the old servant. Then he approached the animal and stood in front of it. The buffalo charged but before it could do any harm to the man, he showed him the rishā and threw on it. At once, the buffalo became calm. Immediately, after that the servant tied the animal with a rope and with the help of the “dao” which he was carrying with him, he beheaded the buffalo. The Gods came down from the tree, drink the blood of the buffalo to their full satisfaction. The deities were thereafter, carried by the servants to the palace. In the palace, the deities were given very warm welcome. It was the month of Ashada and the day



## **Tribal Folk Tales of Tripura**

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of Krishna Asthami. After performing all the rituals, the deities were installed inside the palace. After this the fourteen gods were worshiped every day.

Suddenly after some time a strange thing happens. Trilochan who was very young, spent most of his time in the room where gods were playing. The queen noticed that her child was becoming thin every day and he almost looked pale. "What has happened to him!" she wondered. One day she has gone into the room of the deities. There she saw, that the gods were drinking blood of a beheaded goat which was lying on the floor of the room. After the gods have finished drinking the blood, the head and trunk of the goat was joined and the goat slowly turned and became Trilochan. The queen was very astonished and she could understand why her son was getting thinner every day.

"You ungrateful gods, this is what you are doing in return for all my devotion and care for you", shouted the queen. The deities were very ashamed. One of them said, "We are undoubtedly grateful to you but what you offer to us is not sufficient, we feel hungry all the time without drinking blood."

From then onwards, it has become a custom to sacrifice goats to "Choudda Devata" (fourteen gods), the family deities of the Kings of Tripura when the annual puja festival is held. The "Choudda Devata" festival is held for seven days beginning on the Shukla Asthami, day of Ashad (June)/July).

## THE TWO GIRLS

A jhumia family lived in a village in Tripura. The jhumia has two wives. He had three children. One female child named Chhipingtwi was born to the elder wife. One male child named Aguroy and one female child named Mairungtwi was born to the younger wife. The jhumia was a rich man.

After some time, his elder wife expired leaving the young Chhipingtwi. Since then Chhipingtwi was looked after by her step mother. Though she had a blackish complexion, yet she had sharp feature and impressive personality. She was very skilled in weaving, domestic work etc. However, her sister Mairungtwi was not good in domestic work. She was also always zealous of Chhipingtwi. She would herself use the best clothes. "Rignai" (wearing cloth) and "Risha" (breast covering), while Chhipingtwi was given old and torned clothes. Despite the treatment meted to her, Chhipingtwi never complained.

One day the two sisters were working in the jhum field. Suddenly they heard the sound of a bird from the nearby tree. The bird said, "The girl wearing old and dirty clothes will be the queen ", After this Mairungtwi changed her clothes with her sister . She took old clothes from chhipingtwi and wore them. After some time the bird again came and said, "The girl wearing

new and clean clothes will be the queen.” Mairungtwi become very angry. She abused the bird & also scolded her sister.

After few days have passed, the two sisters were working in the jhum field. Some Royal Policed (Birindias) were passing by their jhum field. They were feeling very thirsty. They asked Mairungtwi to give them water. Mairungtwi refused and said, “I have no water with me.” After this, the Royal Police asked Chhipingtwi to give them some water. Though Chhipingtwi to give them some water. Though Chhipingtwi did not have enough water with her the day, however, she agreed to provide water to the thirty birindias. After drinking water the birindias were very happy and they thanked Chhipingtwi.

The birindias came back to the capital. They praised Chhipingtwi for her sweet manner and told the story to all the people in the palace. The king also heard the story. The king was looking for a girl who can become the queen. After hearing praise for Chhipingtwi from his police, the king decided to go to the village of Chhipingtwi and meet her. The king accompanied by the birindias went to the village where Chhipingtwi lived. The birindias took the king to the jhum field where the two girls were working and they pointed out Chhipingtwi to the king. The king liked the sweet face of the girl and was at once attracted to her. He decided to make her the queen. The king went to Chhipingtwi and told her that he wanted to make her the queen. Seeing the Royal Police and the king, Mairungtwi ran away from the field. Chhipingtwi did not

say anything to the king. The king asked her to come with him. She followed the king and went to the palace. The king then married Chhipingtwi and she became the queen.

Mairungtwi came running from the field and went to her house. She told her mother that the king and the Royal Police have taken Chhipingtwi with them and the king has decided to make Chhipingtwi the queen. Mairungtwi mother was very sad as her daughter could not become the queen and so she decided to find out an alternative arrangement for her daughter.

After some years, Chhipingtwi gave birth to a son. She was living very happily in the palace. The happy life being led by Chhipingtwi made her step mother zealous of her. Chhipingtwi had not gone home after she became the queen. The step mother has sent messages to the palace requesting her to come to the village. The king never wanted her to go to the village as he knew that the step mother was not a good woman. Once the step mother sent a message to Chhipingtwi that her father was seriously ill and he wanted to see his daughter. After receiving such a message, the king permitted Chhipingtwi to go home and meet her father. He said, "Come back as soon as possible.

After reaching home, Chhipingtwi found that her father had died. She cried and then decided to return to the capital. Her step mother and the sister repeatedly requested her to stay for few days in the village. Chhipingtwi agreed to stay in the village and sent her attendants back to the capital asking them to come back after few days.

In the afternoon Chhipingtwi and Mairungtwi was talking to each other. Mairungtwi said, "I have not combed your hair for a long time. So want to comb your hair." Chhipingtwi was not interested in getting the hairs combed. However, Mairungtwi almost forcibly started combing her hair. While combing hair, one flower fell down from the hair knot of Chhipingtwi. Chhipingtwi became very sad. She said to her sister. "This flower is given to me by the king. This is very important for me. Please bring the flower." When Chhipingtwi was coming to the village, the king has given her the flower and said. "As long as this flower will remain with you, no danger will accrue to you." Mairungtwi did not go to bring the flower and gave some excuse. Chhipingtwi then herself went down to collect the flower under the piled house. As soon as she went down, the step mother and the sister poured boiling water on her. She screamed under the pain and cried a lot. Her step mother though that she had died. So the step mother put her body in a gunny bag, carried to the forest and then left it there. The king had a pet deer. This deer has been left in the jungle for few days. The deer came to the place where Chhipingtwi was left. He opened the bag and applied some herbal medicine on the burnt portion of Chhipingtwi. The deer saved the life of Chhipingtwi. Chhipingtwi then started living with the deer in the forest.

In the village Mairungtwi wore the dress of her sister and pretended as if she was the queen. When the royal attendants came to receive the queen, Mairungtwi went with them. The

king was very happy on the return of the queen. But he noticed a change in the behavior of the queen. The king suspected but could not do anything. He was very upset and one day he decided to go to for hunting.

Early in the morning the king with his guards went for hunting in the jungle. Throughout the day they tried, but could not hunt any animal. In the evening, the king went to the place where his pet deer has been left in the forest. He told his attendants that he will spend the night in the house of his pet deer. The pet deer did not agree to the proposal of the king. The king was very surprised and got suspicious on the denial of the deer. When the king asked, the deer did not give any reasons. On repeated persuasion and insistence by the king for stay in the house of the deer, the deer narrated the whole story about the queen to the king. He also told that the queen was still living with him. At last, the queen came out from the house of the deer and met the king. The king promised that he would give the queen a bath with the blood of her sister who has pretended to be the queen. The king returned from hunting to the palace. He did not say anything to Mairungtwi.

Next day the king said to Mairungtwi, "You go to the river and take bath." Mairungtwi happily agreed. On the river bank, the king cut her into two pieces and brought the blood to the palace. Chhipingtwi then took bath with the blood of Mairungtwi. The king became very happy with his original queen.



## THE TWO GIRLS

The king then decided to take revenge from her step mother-in-law. The step mother-in-law and the brother-in-law were invited to the capital by the king. They were fed with cooked flesh of Mairungtwi. At time of their departure, the king gave them two pots which were covered with leaves. They were told to open and drink one pot when they get tired of walking. Half way to the village, the mother and son became very tired. They decided to drink water from the pot which they were carrying. As soon as they opened the lid of one of the pot, bees came out and started biting them. With great difficulty they reached home. After reaching home, the mother opened the other pot. She found the cut head of Mairungtwi in the pot. Seeing the head of Mairungtwi the mother fainted and died.



## THE MONKEY BRIDE

Long ago there lived a jhumia family in a remote village. The headman of the village was given the title of Naran. Naran has seven sons. None of his son was married. He was getting old, so he decided to get all his sons married.

One day he called all his sons and said, " I wan't to select brides for all of you. I am quite old and I will not be able to go from village to village in search of your brides, so I have decided to organize a test for selection of brides." The day was fixed for the selection test for the brides. That day all his sons came with bow and arrow. Naran asked his eldest son to throw his arrow. The arrow fell on a house. The girl belonging to the family was selected as the bride for the eldest son. Likewise, the six sons selected their brides. In the last, the arrow of the youngest son fell on a dried tree. All people were astonished. The roots of the tree were dug out and it was found that a female monkey was sitting there. According to the decision of Naran, the youngest son was married to the monkey bride.

Naran was very unhappy with his youngest son. He asked his son to go and stay outside the village with his monkey bride. Naren's wife was very attached to the youngest son. As she saw that the youngest son is being sent out of the house, she decided

to go with them and stay there. Now the youngest son of Naran, the monkey bride and Naran's wife all stayed together on the outskirts of the village.

Naran was getting very old. One day he called all his sons and said, "I have become very old, I might die any day. I have a desire will to eat food cooked by my daughter-in-law." The youngest son returned home. He informed his mother about the desire of his father. The monkey bride heard the conversation between the youngest son and his mother. The youngest son said, "I am very unlucky as I shall not be able to feed my father and thereby fulfill his desire"

At night, the monkey bride turned herself into a beautiful lady. When her husband and mother-in-law were sleeping, she cooked food. She placed the food in two pots and covered them with lids. She kept pots beside her sleeping husband. In the morning when the youngest son woke up he was surprised to see two pots full of cooked food and covered with lids. He took the pots and went to his father's house.

Naran began to eat the food one by one brought by his sons. In the last, he asked the youngest son to give him the food. He gave two pots which were brought by him. When the lid was opened, a sweet smell came out of the pots. The sweet smell filled the room as smell as the entire house. Everyone was very surprised. Some of the neighbours also came because of the sweet smell of the food. Naran started eating the food. He liked it very much. He said, "The food which was brought from my youngest

daughter-in-law is the best food." After eating food Naran asked his sons, "I want to wear the best clothes, woven by the daughter-in-law.

The youngest son went back home, told the entire story to his mother and said, "Father now desires to wear clothes, How will I get clothes for the father?" The mother said "Don't worry, God will help you." The monkey bride heard the conversation between the son and the mother. At night when her husband was sleeping, she went to heaven to meet her mother (wife of Lord Indra). She asked her to give the clothes which she wore during her early days. The mother gave the clothes to her. She kept the clothes in a box and returned to her husband. She placed the box with the clothes near his sleeping husband.

Next day in the morning, when the youngest son woke up, he was surprised to find a box lying near him. He found beautiful clothes in the box. He went to his father with the box. Naran took clothes from his sons one by one. The clothes which were given by the six daughters-in-law, were not liked very much by Naran. They were also small in size. He then asked his youngest son to give him the clothes. The youngest son opened the box and handed over the clothes to his father. Naran was astonished to see such beautiful clothes which has pictures of animals and various shades of colours. These clothes were very long. Naran realized that his monkey daughter-in-law is not really a monkey that may be a goddess in disguise. He wanted to see the monkey bride and thank her.

He called his sons and said, "I have not seen my daughter-in-laws since long. On next Monday, please ask them to come so that I can see them before I die."

On the night, before the appointed Monday, the youngest son and his mother were sleeping at night. The monkey bride went to her mother in the heaven. She asked her to give the magic ring, "Seer". The mother gave magic ring to her. The monkey bride asked the magic ring to make a big palace, attendants, guards etc. Immediately her small house was converted into a palace full of attendants, guards, elephants and horses. She placed her sleeping husband on a golden cot. She removed her monkey skin and became a beautiful lady. She herself slept on a silver cot beside her husband.

At night the youngest son woke up suddenly. He was very surprised to see the golden cot. He found a beautiful lady sleeping beside him. He also saw that the monkey skin was lying nearby. He understood that the lady was his wife. He got up, took the monkey skin and put it on fire so that his beautiful wife could never become monkey again.

Next day in the morning all the six daughter-in-laws went to see Naran. The youngest daughter-in-laws could not reach. Naran sent some persons to find out and bring the youngest daughter-in-laws. After some time the persons came back and said, "Your daughter-in-laws is not an ordinary monkey, she is a princess and is living in a palace with guards, attendants etc.



Naran went to see his youngest daughter-in-laws. He came to the palace. The son and the wife came outside and received him. Naran was very happy to see the daughter-in-law. He was very pleased to know that the youngest daughter-in-law was the daughter of Lord Indra. She was in disguise of a monkey. She told Naran, "One day my father Indra was very angry with me. In the anger he cursed me to become a monkey. After I became a monkey my mother requested Lord Indra to pardon me". Lord Indra after great persuasion said, "You will remain monkey but if you marry a human being you will again regain your original shape." She said as Naran's youngest son married her, the curse has been removed.

Naran was feeling guilty and he apologized to the daughter-in-law for giving an ill treatment. He then started staying with the youngest son in the palace. After some time the youngest son and his wife were again married and all friends and relatives were invited. All of them lived happily together.

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