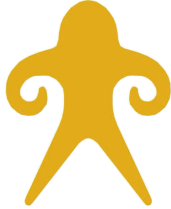


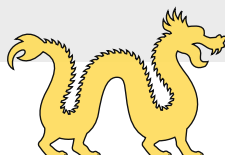
MEGHALAYAN HERALD

| ADOBE OF CLOUDS |



MYTH-IFY THIS!

The mythological understanding of the origin of Khasi & Jaintia tribes lies in a beautiful story. They believe that in the beginning God created heaven and earth. He also created sixteen families letting them stay with him in heaven. There was freedom of movement between heaven and earth by means of a golden ladder which touched the peak of sohpet Bneng (the navel of Heaven) until the day when seven of the sixteen families chose to remain on earth. With the removal of the ladder the nine families remained with Him in heaven. To this very day the Khasi-Pnars refer to themselves as the children of Ki Hynniewtrep (The Seven Families). In prayer to God they say "Ki Hynniew ha Tbien" (the seven below) have sinned.



Tucked away in the hills of eastern sub-Himalayas is Meghalaya, one of the most beautiful State in the country. Nature has blessed her with abundant rainfall, sun-shine, virgin forests, high plateaus, tumbling waterfalls, crystal clear rivers, meandering streamlets and above all with sturdy, intelligent and hospitable people. The name "Meghalaya" is derived from the Sanskrit words 'alaya,' meaning 'abode,' and 'megha,' meaning 'clouds,' signifying the state as the 'abode of clouds.

The State of Meghalaya is situated on the north east of India. It extends for about 300 kilometres in length and about 100 kilometres in breadth. It is bounded on the north by Goalpara, Kamrup and Nowgong districts, on the east by Karbi Anglong and North Cachar Hills districts, all of Assam, and on the south and west by Bangladesh. The people of Himalaya have a rich cultural heritage. The people, that is, Garo, Khasi and Jaintias are as old as the Aryans in mainland India. Emergence of Meghalaya as an Autonomous State on 2nd April 1970 and as a full-fledged State on 21st January 1972 marked the beginning of a new era of the geo-political history of North Eastern India. It also marked the triumph of peaceful democratic negotiations, mutual understanding and victory over violence and intrigue.

LIVING ROOT BRIDGE

A BRIDGE THAT ONLY GETS STRONGER WITH TIME AND USE!



The Living Root bridges seen throughout the East Khasi Hills of Meghalaya embody the self-sufficiency of the Khasi tribes and their relationship with forests. The structure of the bridge is entirely made from tree branches, trunks, and roots. The process begins with placing young aerial roots Ficus Elastica trees in hollowed-out trunks of the Areca Catechu tree (type of palm tree). These trunks provide essential nutrition and protection from the weather to the young roots and also serve as a root guidance system. This is supported by a bamboo framework along with the entire structure. Over time, as the aerial roots increase in strength and thickness, the Areca Catechu trunks are no longer required. Dead load in the form of stones, timber planks, leaves, and soil is added to plug gaps and to weight test the living root structure. Meghalaya’s humid climate and pedestrian movement along the bridge contribute to soil/dead load compaction.

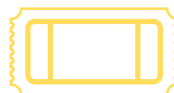
Meghalaya is known for its dense forests and living root bridges that are believed to be built by the tribes of Khasi (a tribe living in the eastern parts of Meghalaya). Khasi tribe is known for its self-sufficiency and its ability to nurture an ecosystem. Living Root Bridges are one of this tribe’s legacies. This is a pedestrian bridge made of the roots of living trees – mainly used for crossing rivers. These bridges connect to remote places and help in sourcing raw materials like wood and water for survival in the dense forests. Living root bridges are intricately planned and built to provide accessibility.

Over time (15 to 30 years), the root structure becomes strong enough to support substantial weight without the bamboo framework. Unlike the concrete bridges, Living Root bridges become stronger with each use. Living root bridges connect remote villages through steep and slippery terrain in deep gorge valleys where it is difficult to build concrete roads and steel bridges because heavy rainfall causes frequent landslides.

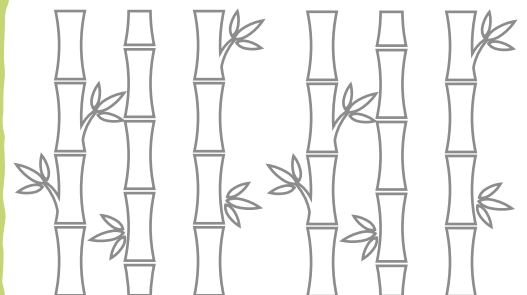
“As long as the trees are healthy, the roots naturally grow and strengthen, and older roots are replaced by new ones. If we maintain them properly, they can last forever. Most bridges in this region have been around for centuries.”
 - Morningstar Khongthaw

GRAB YOUR PASS NOW!

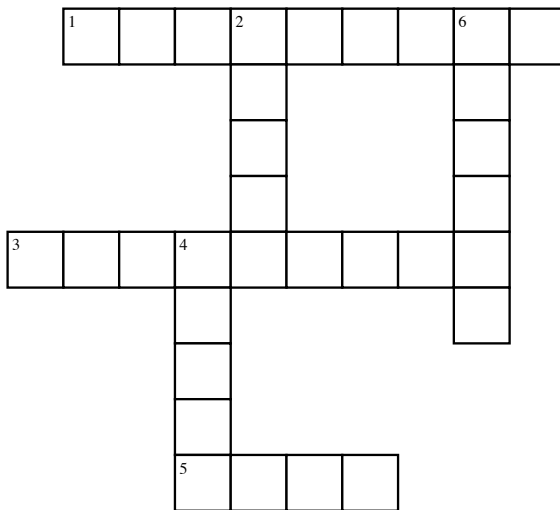
MEGHALAYA TOUR AND TRAVELS IS ARRANGING A GUIDED TOUR TO THE DOUBLE DECKER TREE LIVING BRIDGE IN CHERRAPUNJI THIS MONSOON!



GRAB YOUR ENTRY PASS @19,999/- per person.



CROSSWORD MAGIC



Across

- 1. The Indian state known as the "Abode of Clouds." (9)
- 3. The capital city of Meghalaya. (8)
- 5. Meghalaya receives a lot of this from the sky. (4)

Down

- 2. One of the major tribes of Meghalaya, known for its matrilineal culture. (5)
- 4. Another major tribe of Meghalaya, famous for celebrating the Wangala Festival. (4)
- 6. A strong plant used to make baskets, houses, furniture, and handicrafts. (6)

Answer Key:

Across	Down
1. MEGHALAYA	2. KHASI
3. SHILLONG	4. GARO
5. RAIN	6. BAMBOO



TAPESTRY OF MEGALITHIC HERITAGE

One of the striking features of the Khasi culture is the Megalithic culture where they erect the Megaliths, Monoliths or the cromlech, all of which are of pre-historic origin. Commemorative stones, such as these, are erected either by the people as a token of sweet remembrance of the departed 'Syiem' or heroes, while some others are constructed by the other members of the clan or family in loving memory of the relatives or dead members of the clan.

Megaliths with cavities are also found in the megalithic culture of the Khasis. This is unique in Khasi culture which bears a striking difference with any other megaliths of the world. The megaliths with cavities are associated with special ceremonies for those who were murdered or met with accidental death. The Khasis believe that any death which is not natural is a misfortune not only of the dead but also of the living relatives, They call it "Ka Lap Tyrut" meaning, Tincture, which should be cleaned.

FACT CHECK

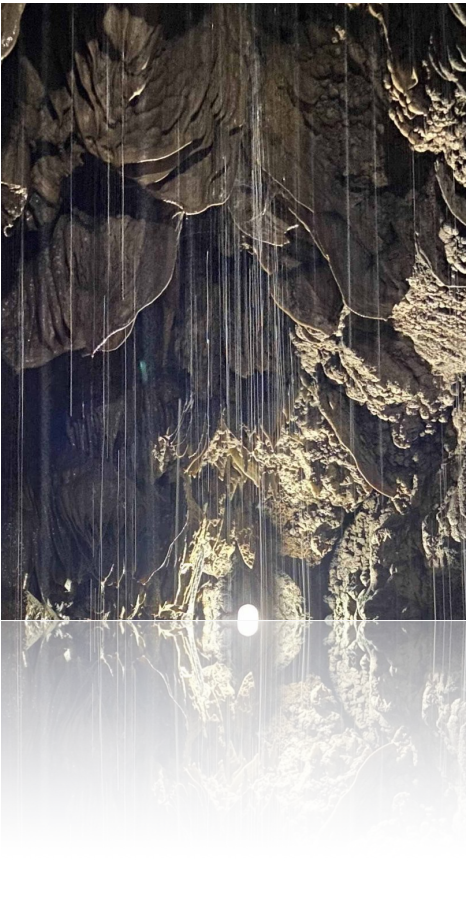


- 1. Meghalaya is the only state in the entire North-east region which is matrilineal through lineage and takes the identity solely from the mother.
- 2. The Mawlynnong village in Meghalaya is dubbed as "Asia's Cleanest Village".
- 3. The capital, Shillong, sits at an elevation of about 1,496 meters and is often referred to as the "Scotland of the East" due to its rolling hills and colonial-era heritage.

SECRETS BENEATH MEGHALAYA: THE AGE CAVES

It has been pointed out that the caves are one of the few places where on-going geologic processes are most apparent and stalactites and stalagmites continue to form, enabling scientists to study geological processes and time series in a virtually undisturbed environment.

The Meghalayan Age Caves are also home to some endemic species and rare variety of fauna and rare varieties of fish species have been discovered in the caves.



Meghalaya is now known to be home to some of the world's most complex cave systems; and has more caves than any other place in India. Meghalayan Age Caves are among the longest caves of their kind in the world. A number of remarkable caves are scattered on the Shillong plateau which is part of Meghalaya state of Northeastern India. These caves have unique signature of the Holocene time period. There are at least 12 such caves located in the limestone rich belt of the Garo, Khasi and Jaintia Hills which are known for their unique and rare formation of stalactites and stalagmites.

ACTIVITY TIME!

In India, caves are used for a number of purposes such as tourism, archaeological or religious and devotional activities. Write in your words about the importance of caves in our country.



CELEBRATING FESTIVALS LIKE NO OTHER!



1. WANGALA FESTIVAL (GARO TRIBE)

Wangala ,also known as Hundred Drums, is a harvest festival celebrated by the Garo tribe residing in the Western part of Meghalaya. During the festival the Garo people thank Misi Saljong, their Sun God, and seek blessings for a bountiful harvest. Celebrated in the middle of November, the celebrations go on for 2 to 3 days. On the first day rituals with offerings are performed in the house of the village headman. The second day is a major highlight when the vibrant 100 drum players descend on the field. The men gather with their drums, creating a harmonious rhythm that is followed by the dance moves.

2. SHAD NONGKREM (KHASI TRIBE)

Shad Nongkrem is a five day festival held in beginning November to offer thanksgiving for a good harvest. The festival is held in Smit, a small village 15 kilometers from Shillong. The festival commences with sacrifice of a goat , followed by dances by young men and women. The unique dance is performed by the members of Hima Khyrim, a subset of the Khasi tribe. A major feature of the dance is that only virgin women dressed in traditional attire can dance during this festival. During the festival prayers are offered to the guardian deities of Ka Pah Syntiew and U Suid Nia Tong Syiem for a good harvest and prosperity of the tribe.

COME & JOIN THE
CELEBRATION OF 100
DRUMS!



For Details:

Contact +91 7654399856, Mr. Toshi.

Date: 13-16 November

Place: Asanang, Meghalaya

3. BEHDEINKHLAM (JAINTIA TRIBE)

Celebrated in the rainy month of July, Behdeinkhlam is the main festival of the Jaintia tribe. The literal meaning of Behdeinkhlam is 'Chasing away the Plague', so the festival is celebrated to ward off evils against the community, as also for a bountiful harvest. The festival goes on for a period of 4 days, during when many elaborate rituals and sacrifices are performed. On the last day people carry colourful 30-40 ft tall structures made of bamboo and wood called Raths.

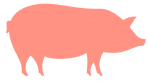




THE LEGACY OF FOOD



Jadoh: A traditional dish made of rice and pork



Doh-neiiong: Smoked pork with bamboo shoots



Sohtung: Fermented bamboo shoot pickle



Tungtap: Bamboo shoot chutney with smoked fish



Nakham Bitchi: A Garo tribal soup made from dried, fermented river fish.



NAM LA KITCHEN



NOW SERVING AUTHENTIC MEGHALAYAN FOOD!

SPECIALITY: SOHTUNG & NAKHAM BITCHI

ORDER YOURS NOW!

Contact: +91 908XXXXX,

Location: Central Square, Shillong

Items starting @99/- only.





EDITORIAL

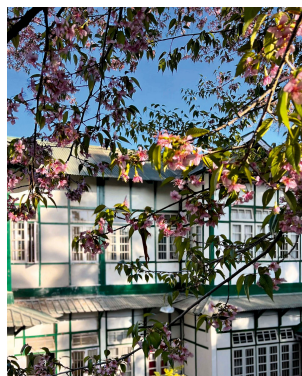
THE VANISHING LEGACY OF ASSAM TYPE HOUSES

Shillong, once a picturesque colonial retreat and now an expanding urban hub, stands at a crossroads between history and modernity. At the heart of this transformation lies the steady erosion of the Assam-type house—an architectural relic shaped by necessity, resilience, and cultural adaptation. The Assam-type house emerged as a response to the seismic and climatic challenges of North East India, evolving from the late 19th century under British colonial influence. The British administration, recognising the region's frequent earthquakes and heavy monsoons, sought an alternative to traditional masonry buildings. Borrowing from indigenous building techniques,

winters. This unique architectural form not only blended European and local influences but also became emblematic of Shillong's identity, standing as a testament to the city's colonial past and its indigenous craftsmanship. Despite their resilience, Assam-type houses are fast disappearing, casualties of a rapidly urbanising Shillong. Economic pressures, policy constraints, and shifting cultural preferences are hastening their demise. A primary factor behind their decline is the growing emphasis on reinforced concrete construction,

these houses were constructed primarily from locally sourced pinewood, with stone or timber plinths providing a flexible base that could withstand tremors. Their lightweight wooden frames ensured structural integrity during earthquakes, reducing the risk of collapse. The hallmark of these homes lay in their functionality: expansive sloping thick wooden walls providing insulation against Shillong's cold

encouraged by the National Building Code of India (NBC), 2016, which outlines stringent structural safety measures that traditional wooden homes often fail to meet. Furthermore, urban planning regulations favor high-density vertical growth, making multi-storied apartments more viable than single-story wooden structures. Economic considerations further accelerate their erasure. Maintaining Assam-type houses is costly, requiring frequent treatment against termites, moisture damage, and wood rot which is a significant burden in Shillong's damp climate. e. Rising land values have also made horizontal expansion impractical, pushing homeowners towards more space-efficient concrete apartments.



ARTISANAL CRAFTS



KHIEW - RANEI POTTERY

The Khiew-Ranei or Black pottery, is known for its unique aesthetic, long-lasting, and cultural significance. Khiew-Ranei, or black pottery, is a traditional craft practice using a blend of black clay and serpentine stone. This unique form of pottery is distinguished not only by its raw materials but also by the intricate techniques used—methods that have been carefully preserved and passed down through generations.

WOOD CARVING

Wood carving is an ancient art form that is mainly practiced around the Garo hills. Temples and shrines are the most common places where one can find this artwork in the form of intricate designs and delicate detailing. Toys, human figurines and replicas of gods are also made from this art of wood carving.



GI TAGGED MEGHALAYA GARO TEXTILE

The Dakmanda is a traditional attire native to Garo tribe. The textile is handwoven by Garo women using indigenous techniques that have been passed down through generations. It is worn around as a wraparound skirt which is traditionally woven from the long- staple cotton known as “Khidig” & reflects the rich cultural heritage of the Garo community.

SILK WEAVING

Silk weaving in the state of Meghalaya is practiced as a household activity that has its roots in its traditional past. It is home to three types of silk: Eri silk, Muga silk, and Mulberry silk. Eri silk is the major source of what constitutes the silk industry within the state. In this process, the rearing of the silk is mainly carried out by women within households. The process has been popularized by the terminology of “peace silk” as it does not entail any harm to the silkworm during the process of silk extraction.

BLACK SMITHING

The art of blacksmithing and weaving are traditional occupations in the village of Khongtong which is situated approximately 53 kms away from Meghalaya’s capital Shillong. Blacksmiths are well known for the art of metal forging, producing tools for agricultural implements, and decorative metalwork. Another tribe that follows iron smelting and the production of iron based agricultural tools for carrying out agricultural work is the Khasi tribe. The two most important tools produced are the Mohkiew and the Waitbnoh (also popularly known as Waitkhmut) that are often used for sustainable farming.



Here is a picture of one of the traditional dresses of Meghalaya. Do you know about the traditional dress of your culture? Draw here.



ACTIVITY TIME!



Centuries-old community-owned "sacred groves" in Meghalaya face threats from unregulated mining and logging. The most significant threats come from jhum cultivation, also called the slash and burn agriculture. Do you know what Jhum farming is? What do you think is an alternative to this form of agriculture?

MATCH THE FOLLOWING:

Column A (Food Item)	Column B (Description)
1. Jadoh	A. Fermented soybean delicacy
2. Tungrymbai	B. Sticky rice cooked in bamboo
3. Pumaloi	C. Rice and meat dish popular among the Khasi people
4. Dohneiong	D. Steamed powdered rice
5. Sakin Gata	E. Pork cooked with black sesame seeds

References:

<https://www.incredibleindia.gov.in/en/meghalaya/cherrapunjee/double-decker-living-root-bridge>

<https://whc.unesco.org/en/tentativelists/6892/>

<https://theshillongtimes.com/author/public/>

Content, Research and Development: Heritage, Education and
Communication Service, INTACH, 71, Lodhi Estate, New Delhi, 110003