

# TIMES OF THE RISING SUN: ARUNACHAL PRADESH

## ARUNACHAL PRADESH – LIVING MUSEUM OF CULTURAL HERITAGE, AGE-OLD TRADITIONS : MINISTER – TABA TEDIR



Arunachal Pradesh's Minister of Education, Indigenous Faith & Culture - Taba Tedir referred the northeastern state as a living museum, which is known for its rich cultural heritage and age-old traditions.

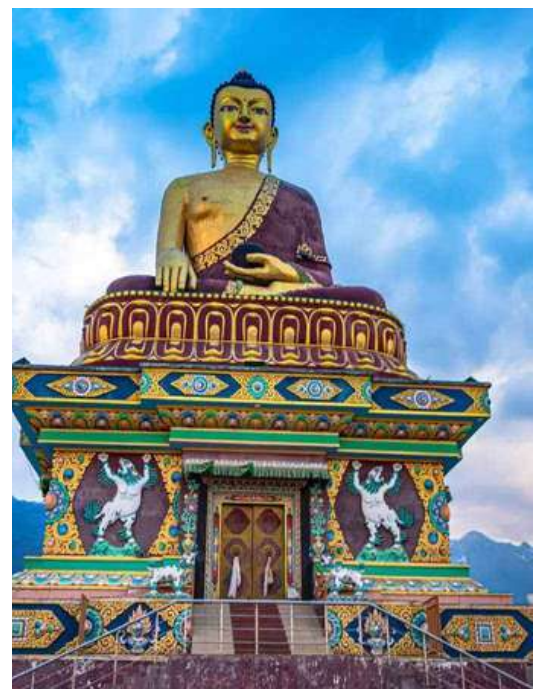
Addressing the Dree Festival of Apatani Community, Tedir noted "We do not need to search for culture and traditions unlike in advanced western countries where people visit museums to learn about their lost cultures."

"Despite diversity in food, dress, language, religion, and regions, we Arunachalees reflect 'Team Arunachal' spirit as reiterated by Chief Minister Pema Khandu-led government, which created Indigenous Faith department for documentation, preservation, and promotion of ethnic cultures of 26 major tribes and more than 100 minor tribes without any distinction," - Tedir stated.

The Indigenous Faith department has been allocating Rs 8.3 lakh annually for last two years to each 60 assembly constituency for celebration of respective festival, after the Centre withdrew funding under this subject, he said.

Tedir lauded the community for incorporating of best educational system and urged the leaders to teach youths about indigenous cultures and traditions, so that this tales can be passes through generations.

"The elders and parents being living treasure house of knowledge and that is why Dree celebrated first in 1967 is alive today. They should be respected lest we lose everything", he cautioned.



# HISTORY

## THE BIRTH OF ARUNACHAL PRADESH

Very little is known about the ancient history of present-day Arunachal Pradesh. Ruins like the Malinithan temple and Bhismanagar suggest an advanced culture during the Chutia reign. Pre independence, the region was under British rule as part of the North-East Frontier Tracts, later becoming Arunachal Pradesh in 1987. Its capital is Itanagar, and it borders Assam, Nagaland, Bhutan, Myanmar, and China's Tibet Autonomous Region.

### BHISMAKNAGAR

Bhismanagar, near Roing in Arunachal Pradesh, is an archaeological site from the 11th-16th century CE, associated with the Chutia rulers. It is believed to be the oldest recorded site in the region and was a significant political center. It has high walls and surrounded by the Mishmi hills. The site showcases cultural artefacts like pottery, terracotta figurines, and decorative tiles from medieval kingdoms.



## IMMERSE YOURSELF IN THE RICH HISTORY OF ARUNACHAL VISIT HISTORICAL SITES OF ARUNACHAL ALONGWITH A HANDS ON COURSE ON MUSEUM ARTEFACTS INTERPRETATION



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### ITANAGAR FORT

Itanagar, the capital of Arunachal Pradesh, gets its name from the historic site of Ita Fort. These ancient ruins are believed to have been constructed by the Chutia rulers. Meaning "the fort of bricks," Ita Fort features brick structures of irregular shapes dating back to the 14th-15th century. Today, these ruins are a renowned historical site and a must-visit destination in Arunachal Pradesh due to their beauty and historical significance.



# TOURISM

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Renowned as the "Land of the Dawn-lit Mountains," Arunachal Pradesh stands as India's most remote state and is the first part of Indian territory to greet the rising sun. It shares its borders China, Bhutan, and Myanmar (Burma). This captivating region boasts an astonishing array of flora and fauna, captivating the hearts of tourists. Within the dense jungles of Arunachal Pradesh, one can encounter over 500 rare species of orchids. The mist-clad hills, meandering rivers, and cascading waterfalls contribute to the allure of this magnificent terrain. Arunachal Pradesh is steeped in historical and mythological significance, finding mention in revered texts such as the Kalika Purana and the Mahabharata. It is believed to be the Prabhu Mountains of the Puranas.

Through epochs, Arunachal Pradesh has been governed by numerous potent dynasties and kingdoms, leaving behind a plethora of historical monuments and archaeological remnants. These enduring relics bear testament to the region's opulent cultural heritage.



## ART & CULTURE

Arunachal Pradesh boasts a vibrant array of art and craft forms, each reflecting the diverse cultural heritage of the region. From bamboo and cane craft to carpet-weaving, painting, wood carving, jewelry making, and ivory craft, these traditions showcase the skilled hands and rich cultural tapestry of the state's people. These artistic expressions not only preserve cultural narratives but also serve as economic lifelines for many communities, embodying the harmonious relationship between nature and human creativity.

The cane and bamboo products of Arunachal Pradesh are highly esteemed for their quality and craftsmanship. Local artisans create a diverse range of items, from practical household utilities like baskets and mats to decorative pieces such as smoking pipes and jewelry.

These products reflect the region's rich cultural identity and are crafted using traditional techniques like twill and hexagon weaving. They not only serve daily needs but also represent the ingenuity and creativity of the local communities.



In Arunachal Pradesh, wood carving and jewelry making are revered crafts that blend artistry with practicality. Skilled artisans intricately carve wooden panels and furniture, depicting tribal motifs like animals and mythological scenes. This craftsmanship reflects a deep bond with nature.

Similarly, jewelry crafted from silver and brass showcases the tribes' metalworking skills, featuring symbolic motifs representing identity and tradition. Both traditions exemplify the rich cultural heritage and meticulous craftsmanship of Arunachali communities.

In Arunachal Pradesh, carpet-weaving by the Monpa tribe and painting traditions of various tribes showcase rich cultural heritage. Monpa carpets depict intricate patterns and vibrant scenes, while Thangka paintings illustrate Buddhist themes.

Apatani murals exhibit a keen sense of color and design. Together, these art forms preserve cultural narratives and offer glimpses into the spiritual beliefs of the communities.



# FOOD AND FESTIVALS

Arunachali cuisine is influenced by its diverse ethnic groups. Rice stands as its staple, accompanied by an array of meat and vegetable curries. Locally-sourced ingredients like bamboo shoots, wild mushrooms, and an assortment of greens and herbs characterize its dishes. Popular dishes encompass Apong (rice beer), bamboo shoot fry, smoked meat, fish, and game, alongside traditional stews. Notable for its spicy and tangy profile, the cuisine generously incorporates ginger, garlic, and chili peppers. Additionally, fermented foods impart a distinct sourness to many dishes. Some must try dishes include: bamboo shoot curry, poora haah (smoked duck), khura (pancake made with buckwheat), zan (porridge like dish), chura sabji (made with fermented yak cheese), apong (local rice beer) and many more.



Arunachal Pradesh, home to twenty-six major tribes, twelve of which are recognized in the Scheduled Caste and Tribe list, has varied social, cultural, and religious practices unique to each tribe. Festivals, deeply intertwined with agriculture and nature, reflect this diversity, often featuring tribe-specific rituals and traditions, including animal sacrifices.

Among the prominent festivals are the Mopin Festival, the Losar Festival, the Dree Festival of the Apatani, Chalo-Loku of the Nocte, Solung of the Adis, Ziro Festival of Music, Pangsau Pass Winter Festival, and Siang River Festival, each offering a glimpse into the vibrant cultural mosaic of Arunachal Pradesh.

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## TRIBES

The Government of Arunachal Pradesh cites that it is home to 26 major tribes and 110 sub tribes. However, no government department has published the names of either the 26 major tribes, or the names of the 110 sub tribes. The state's population comprises predominantly Scheduled Tribes, denoting indigenous groups outside the mainstream Indian social framework. In the western part of Arunachal Pradesh, prominent tribes include the Nissi (Nishi or Dafla), Sherdukpen, Aka, Monpa, Apa Tani, and Hill Miri. The Adi, the largest tribal community in the state, predominantly reside in the central region. Moving towards the northeastern hills, one finds the Mishmi community, while the Wancho, Nocte, and Tangsa are predominantly settled in the southeastern district of Tirap.



## DANCES

Dancing holds a significant place in the lives of the tribal communities, serving as a means of expression and celebration. Whether it's weddings, festivals, or religious ceremonies, dancing and singing are integral parts of these occasions, offering prayers for well-being and expressing various emotions. Every tribe showcases its unique dance styles, often accompanied by specific costumes, instruments, and local songs sung exclusively by tribe members. These dances can range from religious and ritualistic to dramatic and recreational. They serve as a vibrant reflection of the community's joy, love, gratitude, and other sentiments. The folk dances of Arunachal Pradesh are steeped in tradition, often featuring elaborate traditional attire, adorned spears, and colorful beads and ornaments. Some popular folk dances are Aji Lamu, Chalo, Hiri Khaniing, Popir, Ponung, Pasi Kongki, Rekham Pada, Roppi, Lion and Peacock dance.



# BUDDHIST MONASTERY IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH INTRODUCES DANCES OF TWO DEITIES

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The dances of two deities were introduced in a major Buddhist monastery in Arunachal Pradesh's Tawang district on Thursday. Villagers of Jang and surrounding areas converged at the Jang Palpung Zangdok Palri Monastery to witness the dances of deities Palden Lhamo and Gonpo, or Mahakala. Jang is about 40 km short of Tawang town.

"These monastic dances would be an annual feature after 11-12 lunar months," the monastery's chief monk, Khenpo Ngima Tashi said.

Tawang's Deputy Commissioner, Kesang Ngurup Damo commended the monastery inmates and the Buddhist community beyond for the hard work put in to learn the monastic dance and manage the costumes. "We need to preserve our culture and tradition apart from promoting our mother tongue," he said, appealing specifically to the younger generation.



## FIND THE WORDS

S G N M I P A T Q I U D H E N  
 V A G O V O O V Z F N E U I W  
 Z P C N U P R P E Y R E S T A  
 F F G P S C A I I B M H I D A  
 L Y B A A Y O O Z R I X S F K  
 O Q V G H R L L G N U N O P K  
 I Q T P D B U A Y T C H F Q P  
 I N A T A P A H Y A P O N G G  
 S C U H O E G C K D E T M X B  
 L D W Y Y N O J A L N T L G T

There are 10 words in this puzzle.

They could be a dance form, food or tribe. try and find all 10 of them.

Hint: you will find the words in the newspaper

### REFERENCES

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