

## Core Skills In Teaching

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The process of teaching-learning is a unique process. In it at least two persons are involved, the teacher and the learner. The teacher communicates his ideas and the learner grasps these. In case the teacher is able to convey his ideas in the form and style which are easily understood by the learner the teaching is considered successful, otherwise it is a failure. The key concept in this process is that of communication.

Teaching is a complex phenomena comprising several skills. Through these skills, complexity of classroom teaching are simplified and reduced. Different skills had been identified by the educationist and mastery of each skill is important in the process of teaching-learning.

Teaching skills are the specific instructional activities and procedures that a teacher may use in his classroom. They are related to the various stages of teaching.

A number of research workers have tried to identify several sets of component along with skills. The NCERT has identified and prescribed such skills along with components. The teachers are required to master such skills with perfection in order to make his classroom interesting and meaningful. These skills are mainly for the teacher trainees.

Sl. No.	Skill	Component
1.	Writting instructional objectives	Clairty, relevant to the subject.
2.	Organising the content	Logical organising according to the content
3.	Creating set for introducing the lesson	Securing attention, giving attention, ensuring facilities like duster, chalk, and other equipments.
4.	Introducing the lesson	Linking with post experience, linked between introduction to main part
5.	Question delivery and distribution	Question delivered with appropriate speech and proper in well distribution.
6.	Response Management	Redirection and Rufusing.
7.	Explaing	Redirection and Refusing
8.	Illustrating with examples	Illustration should be interesting and simple
9.	Using teaching aids	Appropriate to the pupils need, level, relevant to the topic and proper display
10.	Stimulas variation	Body movement, gestures, change in interaction process
11.	Pacing of the lesson	Adjusting the speed of the lesson to the level of the pupils and difficulty level of the content.
12.	Use of Black board	legible, clear
13.	Giving assignment	Relevant to the topic.
14.	Evaluating pupils' progress	Relevant to the instructional objectives, use of the appropriate questions.

Some Important skills are summarised below :-

**1. Achieving closure :** A proper closure not only gives a clear idea about the content of the lesson but it also helps in preparing the students for the lesson of the next day.

**2. Explaining :** Explanation should neither be too lengthy nor too short. The teacher must be acquainted with the intellectual level of his students and explain the topic accordingly.

**3. Demonstration :** It helps in explanation of the study material, object or abstract ideas. To make the demonstration effective the use of different teaching aids such as black board, chalk, pencil, maps, charts, globe etc is a must.

**4. Stimulus Variation :** There (are) should be certain skills of stimulas variation. Some of them are-

(i) **Movement :** The teacher may change his position in the class, so that the class remains attentive. His movement should not be

mechanical.

(ii) **Gestures :** A gesture is a movement that you make with a part of your body, especially your hands to express emotion of information.

(iii) **Change in Speech Pattern :** Teacher must develop the habit of modulation. He should change his tone, speech and style in accordance with the need to express himself forcefully.

(iv) **Focussing :** The teacher may seek the attention of the class by asking the students to focus their attention to the Audio-Visuals aids on any example, illustration etc.

**5. Black Board Writting :** Black board should be kept clean so that the writing is easily visible by the students from all parts of the classroom. Writing should be started from the top left corner. Writting should be in a straight line. letter and drawings should be large enough so that it can be easily seen from any part of the classroom. ♦♦



# TEACHERS STRUGGLE IN 21ST CENTURY

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There is no doubt that the teacher plays a significant role in case of development in education sector. The world of education is going to change so rapidly today that we cannot become success without solving all the problems that related to education in present wituation of modern science and technology.

Now we are living an era of globalization. The youth of today are the "Citizens of a globalized century that is the 21st Century. Now the world is moving and growing last. In this regard the quality of teachers must be improved. To transform to achieve all the students of 21st century, a strong learning culture is more important for this teachers should be equipped with knowledge and skills of modern science and technologies.

According to Nelson Mandela "Education is one of the strongest arm by which this world can be changed very easily."

Karl Menninger also said, "What the teacher is, is more important than what he teaches."

Viktor Franki indicated that we are all responsible for our own lives as well as for the live of our communities and world.

Teachers are as like a burning candle by which all the darkness around the society can be removed.

There are same ways of struggle that based by a teacher in 21st Century in case of development of students and society as noted below.

Making every child to pass in a institution it is the starting point of the teaches. All the parent send their children for bright future. Every child comes to school for success not for failure. It is true that a student does not give interest to a special subject then the student not respected the teacher who taught the subject. It is necessary to

every teacher to know each child individually. By staring every moments with children with positive attitude then they will think this world as a good place.

The education system in the 21st century is a dramatic change, process of teacher-centred, chalk and talk of the past now driven away. By the concept of 'knowledge' a new way of derigning and delivering curriculum with a project-based curriculum. It is necessary to implement and to prepare all the teachers by giving proper training in order to meet the educational needs of the 21st century learners.

A nation, a society, a community that is remains a sleeping position. The situation can be changed only by the teachers. It is the first and formost duty of a teacher as to form the heart of the student. It can rebuild the society by the teacher. So, it is said that every child is a master piece of God.

We, the teacher is the only father and mother of the students, we must take care of every students. We all try to love all the children equally but don't destroyed them.

Without teamwork nothing is possible. So all the teachers as a team continued their plan and programme to develop all the students. As the Head master is the captain of the boat all the teaches are the same boat. It is impossible a good result, 100 percent sucess from a institution also impossible without team work. Individual+Groups+Attitudes+Group skills it is called a Team. Team work is very essential in to-



days global arena. In this regard Helen Keller a blind woman remarked as "Alone we can do so little, together we can do so much." "For all-round development of the students team spirit is very necessary. We can conduct all the staff as a team. As like only Sachin Tendulkar of Indian Cricket team only by his batting performance can not win a game. Only by all-round performance it will be won.

It is need to give sufficient inspiration to the students by a teacher. Thomas Alva Edison was not a good student in his reherit period. Then his Head master called upon his mother and said to her "Your son is so stupid, we can not teach him anymore and take away him from school." Then his mother replied to the Headmaster, "My son is not stupid, I teach him." After that one day he became a great scientist.

One key element for a teacher is the ability and desire to see a need for change in the society and the world. It should be given to the teachers freedom to think and able to express independent to implement their ideas properly.

The best teacher is one who possesses additional qualities. It is said that changes take place in the classroom. So, as a teacher class room management is more than discipline. When classes are poorly managed disorder and chaos will arise problems of discipline and problem of students misbehaviour will also arise. By advance work and class room management a teacher got the opportunity to know all the learners - their family background, their tastes and their specific needs.

Student - teacher relation in and out of classes is the most important factor to encourage the students. Only by sitting the class listening to teachers they cannot learn anymore. The learners must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences and try to apply it to their daily lives.

Time plus energy is equal learning. There is no substitute for time on task. Time bounding programme means effective learning for students and effective teaching for teachers. Timely arrival and timely departure is to be a commanding rule to a teacher.

It is need to take personal care of, improve one's surroundings, preserve natural environment and make life better for self and others.

A teacher can choose examples and illustrations for teaching of different subjects from daily life. When the learning is connected to his life a student is compelled to pay attention attentively.

It is said that the speed of any kind of vehicle is the engine. A Headmaster or a Principal is like the engine of a school. He or she is the captain of a team. Knows the way, goes the ways and shows the way to others is the only leading capacity of a leader.

Good character, or a role model, as a good planner, good motivator are same if the solving capacity of the teachers.

School, a palace where we can create some good people, peaceful thought, peaceful atmosphere, peaceful co-existence peaceful relation each other of the school community feel as a family in where harmonious environment, safety and securities will be maintained.

A strict discipline we can maintained here by active participation of all the students, teachers, guardians then the entire society will become corruptness and goodness behaviours amongst the citizens. We must give quality education to the students.

A teacher is the main book for a student. It is the reflection of the teachers with the syllabus. It is one of the most duty of a teacher what punish students physically and mentally. We know that all violent take place by a small things. So this need to educate our children's by talking proper care by the teachers. A teacher punishes two girls students because they are very naughty. As punishment the teacher ordered them to go out from the class. Then the two girls went to play from the class simply and they don't take us as "punishment".

All the teachers or a Headmaster should be taken a smart plan for the upliftment and benefits of all the students. From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. no any single class will remain as vacant for sake of teachers. Regularities of teachers will be strictly maintained daily. Every Headmasters must be try



to conduct the general Assembly to proper time and proper manner that every teachers and students must by presented there.

In some subjects such as in English, Mathematics and Science many students are very poor and weak. Parents are also not aware, they don't take care to their students at home. The lack of trained teachers also one of the main factor of weakness. It is another weak point of weakness in that subjects that the relation amongst the teachers, students and guardians are not good for which the problem of backwardness of students cannot be solved. We are courageous to go ahead. By a burning flames we can light another lamp. Then all the darkness we can removed.

Today's students are destructive in nature. They always want to remain busy with Mobile, friends, TV and some other evil deeds. They spend most of their valuable times with these. So, it is necessary to stop unlimited uses of Mobile by the students. Guardians also warned not to supply any kind of Mobile, Bike to their child in student life. We must b omitted animal way of behaviours of the students from the school. By taking collective responsibility we can removed all the ill behaviours, ugly incidents of the students.

We eat many things as food, but many of them is not good for our health, such as we teach many things to the students but all they cannot consume. To encourage teaching environments in a way that reflects equal treatment to the students.

The teachers must stay with current events, current affairs for advancement in the field of modern science and technology.

A teacher knows that teaching and learning is a lifelong process. It is a continuous process of providing students with feedback to enhance and to improve their performance.

It is said that by giving quality education the poor children became rich in future. It is also said that "teachers are born, not made". So, all the teachers must be alive, alert, awake and enthusiastic. He or she must be patient, kind, sympathetic, sincere and fair in his dealing with the students.

Unesco-Dollord committee suggested that 21st Century education has four aims. These are i) Learning to know, ii) Learning to do, iii) Learning to live together, iv) Learning to be.

It is the challenge of time by adapting some good qualities by the teachers we can transform this world to be better one for future generation. By giving attitudes towards the taught, since of Justice, study habits, liberal views, desirable social traits, strength of personality and character, cordial relations with colleagues, capacity to maintain discipline by the teachers in order to be successful in today's fast changing world.

**Conclusion :** Teaching as a profession, noblest of all. A positive teacher student relationship is not prime importance for the overall development of a child. It is the great influences of teachers to rebuild our society free from any kind of violent. A true education deals with life. By the elements of education we can developed our nation sowally and economically.

The attitude of teachers towards their student is one of the most important factor if their success as learner. The teacher plays a significant role in shaping their character, habits as learners. The teachers role needs to be shifted from a source of knowledge to a facilitator in transforming information and knowledge. The teacher must be provided variety of learning situations to the learner.

Lastly a great philosopher remarked as, "50 years from now it will not matter what kind of car you drove, what kind of house you lived in, how much you had in your bank account, or what your clothes looked like. But the world may be little better because your were important in the life of a child".

So, it is the proper time to think myself, that we are all responsible for the whole society, community and the world to be a better one. The teachers who have no interest in this profession have not dedicative mind only busy with politics not obey timely arrival and departure comes only for monthly salary they must go away from the field of education. They polluted the whole society and community and the environment of the institution from the beginning to the end. ♦♦



# Legal Provision For Woman And Its Awareness

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**Introduction :** The moral excellence of a society can be measured by the position given to the women of that society. Once woman was considered as divine and worshipped as the embodiment of all the virtues. But with the passing of time, in patriarchal society, she has been discriminated against and victimized by the norms created by the male dominated society.

After independence, due to the revolutionary changes brought by the constitution, and also by efforts made by the Indian women, they are now in a comparatively better position in the society. They are now stepping equally with man, the other sector of society. They are now everywhere- they are in politics, they are in entertainment, they are in defence and so on. Still it is seemed that there is lacking something. The Indian woman has been facing trouble to maintain their dignity and freedom. Mental and physical torture whether in their own home, working place or in school and colleges has become a common phenomenon arising the question of their safety.

**Legal Provisions:** The framers of the constitution were well conscious of the discrimination and unequal treatment meted out to the fairer sex, from time immemorial. They included lots of provisions for the women with the ultimate goal of giving them the opportunity of utilizing their potentials for better improvement of their socio-economic position and thereby to take part in the process of development of the country.

The provisions that enhance the value of woman can be divided into two parts:

1. Constitutional provision
2. Parliamentary or Statutory provision.



**Constitutional Provision:** Lots of provision have been incorporated through constitution to ensure dignity and self respect to the women. The following are some of the provisions made in favour of Indian women in the constitution of India.

**Article-14:** Article-14 of the constitution of India guarantees equality before law or the equal protection of law within the territory of India. This is a very important provision which provided equal legal protection to woman against any woman based crime. This provision also passes way for the introduction of various laws and acts to ensure protection and enforcement of legal rights of women in India.

**Article-15:** Article 15 of the constitution of India ensures that the state shall not discriminate against any citizen on grounds only of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth or any of them. At the time of independence there was lots of discrimination in India against woman which gradually abolished after introduction of Article 15. As per Article 15(3) of the constitution state has the power to make any special provision for women and children.

**Article-16:** Article 16 of the constitution of India ensures equal employment opportunity to every citizen of India. As per Article-16 there should not be any discrimination in respect of employment opportunity under the state only on grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, descent and place of birth, residence or any of them. Now we can see women are doing really good work in politics, and in corporate sector.

**Article-39:** Article 39 of the constitution of India ensures the benefits of the Directive principles of state policy to the women. Directive Principles of state policy are in fact some guiding principles for the framing of law by the government. Article 39(a) of Directive Principles of State policy ensures and directs a state to take policies for securing equal and adequate means of livelihood by both man and woman and Article 39(c) ensures equal pay for equal work for both man and woman.

**Article-42:** Article 42 of the constitution of India casts a duty on every employer to ensure just and human conditions of work and for maternity relief. This provision is very important and now it is the duty of employer to provide good working conditions to all employees.

**Article-243:** Article 243 of constitution of India ensures reservation of seats in Gram Panchayat for woman. It provides to the women the opportunity of taking part in local politics which ultimately has improved the socio-economic conditions of women in village areas.

**Parliamentary Provision:** In addition to the constitutional provision, there was need to introduce some statutory laws to ensure safety and protection of women. Keeping in view this requirement, the parliament of India has taken numerous steps in order to ensure dignified life to the Indian women. The following are some of the crimes which have been recognized as crime against women.

**Adultery:** Adultery is a very serious crime against women in India. The offence of Adultery is dealt with by section 497 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860 which defines adultery as sexual intercourse of a man with a married woman without the consent of her husband where such intercourse does not amount to rape. As per section 497, the offender shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which may extend to five years or with fine or with both. In such case the wife shall not be punishable as partner in crime.

**Child Marriage:** Child marriage is a very awful offence against child as it does not only harm the future of child but also damage social values.

According to Section 2(b) of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 'Child Marriage' means a marriage to which either of the contracting parties is a child. As per section 2(a) of the Act, 'Child' means a person who, if a male, has not completed twenty one years of age, and if female, has not completed eighteen years of age.

Under section 3 of the Act, whoever, being a male above eighteen years of age and below



twenty-one, contracts a child marriage shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to fifteen days or with a fine which may extend to one thousand rupees or with both.

As per section 4 of the Act, whoever being a male above twenty-one years of age, contracts a child marriage shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to time months and shall also be liable to fine.

Under section 6 of the Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929 where a minor contracts a child marriage, the parent or guardian shall be punishable with simple imprisonment which may extend to three months and shall be liable to fine.

**Female Foeticide:** Female foeticide means identifying and killing of female foetus before they take birth. Punishment of 3 years imprisonment and fine of Rs. 10,000 and on any subsequent conviction imprisonment of 5 years and fine upto Rs. 50,000/- has prescribed by section 22 of the Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Regulation and Prevention of Misuse) Act, 1994 for the offence of Female Foeticide.

**Immoral Traffic in woman and Prostitution:** Immoral traffic in women means import and export of human for sex business, i.e. prostitution. Prostitution is a problem which exists across the world. There are quite a few laws in India in order to prevent the crime of prostitution like (1) Suppression of Immoral Traffic in Women and Girl Act, 1956, (ii) Immoral Traffic (prevention) Act, 1956.

**Cruelty:** Cruelty is a punishable offence under Indian penal code, 1860. Under section 498(A) of the Indian Penal code cruelty means (a) any wilful conduct which is of such a nature as is likely to drive the woman to commit suicide or to cause grave injury or danger to life, limb or health (whether mental or physical) of the woman. (b) harassment of the woman where such harassment is with a view to coercing her or any person related to her to meet any unlawful demand for property or valuable security or is on account of failure by her or any person related to her to meet such demand.

Here the person committing the offence shall be punished with imprisonment for a term extending to 3 years and shall also be liable to fine.

**Dowry:** The system of dowry in another social evil. Cases related to dowry has been reported day by day. The Indian Penal Code, 1860 has introduced section 498(A) which allows woman to file complaint and seek resotration of her rights from serious harassment by the husband's family. Section 304(B) of the Indian Penal Code deals with the provision of Dowry Death. Under this section where the death of a woman is caused by any burns or bodily injury or occurs otherwise than under normal circumstances within 7 years of her marriage and it is shown that soon before the death she was subjected to cruelty or harassment by her husband or any relative of her husband for or in connection with any demand for dowry, such death shall be called Dowry death and such husband or relative shall be deemed to have caused her death and shall be punished with imprisonment for a term which shall not be less than 7 years but which may extend to imprisonment for life.

Keeping in view the increasing case of dowry death another Act Called-"Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act-2005" was introduced in order to reduce domestic violence cases and to protect womens rights.

**Rape:** Rape is another serious crime against women and this crime is increasing day by day. Reporting of rape cases has been very common in Print and electronic media which is indeed a very sad affair for all of us. In simple words rape means sexual intercourse or sexual penetration by another person without the consent of the other person or victim. Provision related to rape are given in Section 375 & 376 I.P.C. Section 375 explains the pre-condition which are necessary to prove the offence of rape where as Sec. 376 provides punishment for the offence of rape. As per section 376 whoever commits the offence of rape shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which shall not be less than 7 years but which may be for life or for a



term which may extend to 10 years and shall also be liable to fine.

**Some legislative acts for Women:** There are numbers of legislative acts available in India to protect women's rights against harassment. These acts are like a boon to women at large to protect their dignity in society. Some of them are:

- 1) Dowry Prohibition Act, 1961
- 2) The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005
- 3) The Commission of Sati (prevention) Act, 1987
- 4) The Immoral Traffic Prevention Act, 1956
- 5) Civil Procedure Code, 1973
- 6) Indian Penal Code 1860
- 7) Child Marriage Restraint Act, 1929
- 8) Medical Termination of Pregnancy Act, 1971,
- 9) National Commission for Women Act, 1990
- 10) Indian Divorce Act, 1969
- 11) The Indecent Representation of Women Prohibition Act, 1986
- 12) Equal Remuneration Act, 1976, etc.

The above list is not conclusive but inclusive. The presence of these Acts confirms the fact that our judiciary and legislature has taken various effective steps to ensure the dignity of women.

**Legal Awareness:** Legal Awareness, also known as legal consciousness is the empowerment of individuals regarding issues involving the law. Legal awareness helps to promote consciousness of legal culture, participation in the formation of laws and the rule of law. Distinct from the education of students in law school seeking a degree in law and the continuing professional education of lawyers and judges, public legal education is principally aimed at people who are not lawyers, judges or degree seeking law student.

**Needs of Basic Legal Knowledge:** It has been generally believed among different sections and groups of the society that legal education is only for the law students, lawyers etc. But this is not so. Basic legal education plays an important role in our daily life. It is very necessary for every person to have certain knowledge of law, otherwise it would become very difficult for him to

tackle several problems in their day to day life. When a person hears the word 'legal education' a picture which is framed in his mind of lawyer or law students or court or similar to all these. We keep ourselves away from all these things by convincing ourselves saying that all these things do not fall within the limit of our job. This ideology sometimes became the problem when someone takes away our rights and we would not be in a position to stop him from doing so. It is not because we do not know such person is taking away our rights, but because we do not know how to enforce and stop that person.

Our constitution has provided certain Fundamental Rights for every person. But it would not be wrong to say that there are several persons, who are not aware of their Fundamental Rights and due to which they do not even become aware when their Fundamental Rights get violated without any cause.

For example, if a woman is caught by a male police constable in her residence at 8pm without any reason and has been dragged by him to the police station, in such a case generally a normal woman would only plead not to arrest her because she has not done something which is wrong. This is due to her lack of certain legal knowledge. She is not aware of the fact that as per Section 46(4) of the Code of Criminal Procedure 1973, save in exceptional circumstances no woman shall be arrested after sunset and before sunrise, and where such exceptional circumstances exist, the woman police officer shall by making a written report, obtain the prior permission of the judicial magistrate first class within whose local jurisdiction the offence is committed or the arrest is to be made. Thus, lack of knowledge is the main reason that certain rights of person get violated so easily.

Our India is a welfare state. It has incorporated lots of provisions whenever in the constitution or statutory book for the protection of the dignity and respect of women. But merely making provision in the constitution or statutory book is not enough for reaching its divine goal. After mak-



ing the provision, it is equally necessary to make them aware about the existence of it.

**Important institutions promoting legal awareness and legal literacy:** Bar Councils, Lawyer federation and various NGO's take the lead in promoting legal awareness and legal literacy. In India as per the Legal Service Authorities Act, 1987, the National Legal Service Authority (NLSA) has been designed to take appropriate measures for spreading legal literacy and legal awareness among the people. A variety of tools are used in order to achieve this object like conducting seminars, lectures, distribution of pamphlets, participation in Doordarshan programmes, broadcasting jingles, live phone-in-programmes etc. Specific issues are taken up for legal literacy programmes varying from place to place depending upon the needs of a locality and its people.

**Conclusion:** India is a country which is always known to empower women to the maximum extent. Even our seas and oceans have been named after woman. But the present day Senario where rapes and murders and abductions are on an increase tells us a different story. It is true that there

are lots of laws protecting the rights of women but they are not effective as of now just because of the simple fact that there is no such awareness amongst people and the law is not intimidating enough to scare the wrong doers.

Awareness of legal aspects pertaining to issues faced by women and atrocitios against them should be created in school and colleges for the benifit of young women so that they can effectively tackle their problems in their day to day life. The National Legal Service Authority along with other legal service institutions undertakes various awareness activities in order to make people aware of their rights. But yet there is far away to reach the Goal and as such it is high time for all of us to take responsibility to some extent in this respect. The authority of educational institution may also take the responsibility of organizing Seminars on legal provision inviting some legal practitioners in regular basis. The Government may also engage some lawyers entrusting upon them the responsibility of taking classes in educational institutions in addition to their regular curriculam. ♦ ♦



Most of us in the present generation are familiar with the term “terrorism” since our childhood. The term has acquired more publicity in the present print or electronic media around the world due to the growing incidents of brutal activities in our society. Earlier, such activities were confined only in a few areas but now it has acquired a global scale and poses a threat to humanity as well. The Latin verb ‘terrere’ means to frighten. The English word ‘terror’ derived from that Latin word and means fear, alarm, anguish, fright, or panic. Terrorism means the use of power or fear to achieve a purpose. Different nations of the world are facing “terrorism” with its multi dimensional characteristics. The term terrorism is used in its broader sense to describe the use of intentionally indiscriminate violence as a means to create fear in order to achieve ideological, political and religious aim. It is used in this regard primarily to refer to violence against common citizens. The term has been in use since the 18<sup>th</sup> century but its popularity increased only when the media started using the term “Islamic terrorism” after the attack in the World Trade Centre (USA) in 2001.

#### **Background:**

The word “terrorism” was originally used to describe the actions of the Jacobin Club during the “Reign of Terror” in the French revolution.

Moreover, in 1858, one Italian named Felice Orsini threw bombs in an attempt to murder the French Emperor Napoleon III in which 8 people were killed and 142 injured. This event played a crucial role as a booster for the development of other terrorist groups. One of the earliest groups which had used terrorist techniques was the Irish Republican Brotherhood founded in 1858 as a revolutionary Irish nationalist group that carried out attacks in England. They changed their techniques from the traditional political

assassination to the modern explosives to create fear among the inhabitants of urban Britain to achieve political gains. Another early terrorist group of Europe was the Narodnaya Volya organised in Russia in 1878 as a revolutionary anarchist group. The invention of dynamite was fully exploited by them to create fear in the contemporary Russian society.

Terrorism had taken a modern shape by the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Terrorism consists of various criminal activities. There is no single definition of terrorism as it covers various activities which are designed to intimidate and instill fear. For instance the FBI (domestic intelligence and security service of USA) Counterterrorism Guidelines have defined terrorism as “a violent act or an act

## **TERRORISM: A THREAT TO HUMANITY**

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dangerous to human life in violation of the criminal laws of the United States or of any state to intimidate or coerce a government, the civilian population, or any segment thereof, in furtherance of political or social objectives." The definition covers all the activities within its purview which are violent and dangerous to human life. Such activities are aimed to generate pressure for fulfilling a set goal.

Different political organisations have been involved in terrorism in order to further their objectives, including the revolutionaries, nationalists, religious organisations and ruling authorities. The symbolism of terrorism has been said to exploit human fear to win the desired goals. Different Terrorism-related acts has been adopted in various western countries after 2001 by declaring "terrorism" as a crime, but there is no universal agreement as to whether or not terrorism can be regarded as a war crime.

Considering the sources of terrorism it can be categorised as domestic and international terrorism. The domestic terrorism includes acts of terror which are committed by those who are located in and operate within a country. In contrary the international terrorism includes the acts of terror committed by persons affiliated with foreign nations. The aims of international terrorism is typically to further a political or social goal. Simply throwing a bomb on a street aimed at civilians and a fighter plane dropping a bomb on a tank are both acts of violence that creates death and terror. Therefore it can be said that the military action is simply terrorism by a different name. This is the reasoning behind the famous phrase "One man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter".

The people who are trying to reorder the society or destroy the status quo have continuously testing new and creative ways to achieve their

objectives. Changes in the methods and techniques of terrorist groups have been significant, but even more significant are the growth in the number of causes and social contexts where terrorism is used.

Over the last two decades, the terrorists groups have resorted to extremely brutal acts for alleged political or religious reasons. The Political ideology ranges from the far left to the far right. For instance, the far left groups such as Marxists and Leninists who propose a revolution of workers led by revolutionary elite to bring the change. On the contrary in far right, we can see dictatorships that typically believe in a merging of state and commercial leadership. Nationalism is the devotion to the interests of a group of people or a nation. Typically, nationalists share a common ethnic background and wish to establish or regain a homeland. The religious extremists often reject the authority of secular governments and consider the legal systems which are not based on their religious beliefs as illegitimate. They consider the modernization initiatives as corrupting influences on their traditions.

#### **Terrorism in the global scenario:**

Terrorism is a global phenomenon affecting all the continents in different ways. In the global arena, terrorism has posed a number of challenges to democracy which include weak civilian institutions, corruption, incompetence, death and destruction. The common people are the easy victims as always. In the same time it is a matter of different perceptions. For example, in Middle East a Palestinian boy who took up arms against Israeli occupation is deemed a freedom fighter in the Palestinian circles but from the Israeli point of view he is a terrorist.

Some dreadful terrorist organisations are, ISIS, Al- Qaeda, Taliban, Boko Haram, Lashkar-e-Toiba, Hezbollah, Hamas, Al Shabab etc. The



Islamic State, which was led by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, has perpetrated acts of terrorism and barbarism that are so cruel that it was condemned by even Al-Qaeda. The organisation support all kind of attacks in Western nations. The group acquires money by selling slaves, drugs, and oil. Similarly, the Al-Qaeda is a Wahhabi organization whose objective is to unite the Muslims around the world in a global jihad. They played a major role in the US embassy bombings in 1998, the September 11 attacks in the World Trade Centre (2001), and the Bali bombings in 2002. Similarly the other organisations are also working to achieve their set goals by resorting to violent activities against the general masses.

A collective effort to counter international terrorism has become imperative in the present arena but there is a cost to it as well. After the attack of 9/11, the world has witnessed such a move in the form of American occupation at Afghanistan. Afghanistan, which has been a breeding ground for terrorism, has become a territory where a number of regional states are struggling for influence. But, a decade of unrest in the country has brought more death and destruction and has done little to improve the condition. The erstwhile US President Barak Obama declared to “finish the job” by bringing the war to a “just end” but the success is far from being achieved. In the same time they cannot explain the death of the innocent civilians by the armed forces. Even, he had to loss the domestic support for the war that he inherited from his predecessor. The prevailing situation of Afghanistan is an example of a region where democratic institutions couldn't be strengthened because of the active terrorist groups. Afghanistan has suffered a lot because of terrorism.

The democratic institutions are at the heart of democracy. They are strengthened over a span

of decades. These institutions flourish because of public support and cooperation. Sometimes this position of importance makes the military more susceptible to encroach the political domain by dictating terms. Democracy has indeed suffered a lot because of the challenges posed by international terrorism. For instance the Islamic terrorist groups like ISIS have an agenda to enforce their Shariah law and to establish an Islamic caliphate in letter and spirit. To obtain this mission they are resorting to barbaric and vicious acts to compel the respective governments to cede to their demands. The challenges ahead are indeed numerous. International terrorism largely depends on human trafficking, drug smuggling and oil for funding. That needs to be stopped as well. Therefore, to protect democratic values the world leadership needs to take some bold measures not only for the betterment of this generation but for the betterment of our progenies as well.

#### **Terrorism in Indian Context:**

India is also familiar with the dreadful activities of the terrorist organisations. The political views, ideological differences, border disputes and religious fanaticism have made it an intrinsic problem in our country. Terrorist groups, whether indigenous or sponsored by outside states are always in need of weapons and financial support to fight against the security forces. In north eastern part of the country some militant groups run a parallel government or have their areas of influence and are involved in demanding money directly from the people. Extortion, kidnap, contracts and black marketing still fall short of financing the nefarious activities of the militants. Terrorist organisations are quite active in the state of Jammu and Kashmir as well. They are getting external funds reach the militant organizations fighting in Kashmir thorough



various means. Besides, it is also believed that the intelligence agency of Pakistan ISI is providing financial and instrumental support to the militant's active in Kashmir. They are the main couriers of Indian counterfeit currency inside the state of Kashmir, which then spreads all over the country. Besides Kashmir and the northeast, incidents in other parts of India like the Bombay blasts, Pune blasts have exposed the connection between terrorism and organized crime in India. Besides, the Naxalite- Maoist activists have committed several fratricidal operations upon the security forces in support of their demands against the Government. Hence, Indian citizens are quite familiar with the negative impact of terrorism as well.

#### **Nexus between religion and terrorism:**

One of the most nefarious activities committed by some terrorist groups is that they are trying to establish a link with religion. They are working to give a religious colour to their ideologies to make it more popular and acceptable among the common masses. This connection is always a complex one. In the shadow of religion they are trying to legitimising violence. In the present world religious extremism is dominating the international community, and we have seen an accelerated pace of religious terrorism. Religion is the catalyst behind extreme fundamentalists. These fundamentalists are found all over the world but mostly from the Middle East. Providing a wrong interpretation of jihad, Islamic fundamentalists are trying to generate fear among the believers of other religions. This religious terrorism surfaced around 1980's whilst other decades had seen movements of secular motivation of ethno- nationalists. One significant turning point was the overthrow of the monarchy of Shah Muhammed Reza Pahlavi in 1979. The Revolution created a Theocratic Islamic Republic

of Iran. After 1980's, the new regime in Iran sponsored terrorist activities in many countries. A decent example of Iranian support can be seen in its ties with Hezbollah, an Islamic political organisation influencing in Lebanon. Hezbollah (Party of God) is a Shi'a movement in Lebanon that arose to champion the country's Shi'a population. It clearly indicates about the nexus between religion and terrorism as Hezbollah's actions stemming from extreme religious concepts. Hezbollah was a terrorist group with diverse social organisations to compliment its religious movement. It has provided schools and hospitals for its followers as well as other commercial interests.

Hamas is another Islamic movement which control both the organisation of its own social services combined with its armed conflict that promotes jihad. Iran has provided immense support and given direction towards the Hamas movement. This is a clear example of state sponsorship of external aid. The examples of Hezbollah and Hamas give us clues about the nexus between religion and terrorism. The terrorist activities are always evolving and it is not that surprising how religion has become the clear motivation for terrorism since the end of the Cold War. Extreme fundamentalism occurs when these groups with their vested interest uses religious faiths in order to suit their agenda.

#### **MEANS TO COUNTER TERRORISM:**

We have already faced the devastating effect of terrorism in several times. The deaths of innocent civilians due to terrorist attack at the cities like Bombay, Baghdad, London, Paris, New York has established that it is the high time for framing certain strategies to counter it. Terrorism can be mitigated through a cumulative process adopted by the leaders of the affected areas. Discussions in the disputed issues can bring



certain meaningful solutions. Support to the terrorist groups from the established governments should be prohibited. Global forums like UNO should pressurise the countries which are sponsoring the terrorist organisations in disguise. All kind of diplomatic or commercial relations should be prohibited with such nations. The technology giants in the developed countries can contribute their expertise to help other countries to enhance the security measures to prevent terrorist attacks. The technological equipments should be made easily accessible for all the countries to fight against terrorism irrespective of their economic status. People can pressurise their respective governments to held "security summit" to ensure the security of public venues, transport networks, educational institutions, workplaces, border areas and cyber security to frame certain norms to be followed by all other signatories. It will increase the mutual cooperation

among the states to counter terrorism from a common platform.

It is an established truth that terrorism has influenced the whole human race in different ways. Resorting to criminal activities in support of a particular view or demand cannot be accepted at all. Moreover, such violence will lead us nowhere except destruction. The challenge of terrorism can be wiped out only through mutual cooperation and it is the call of the hour to keep alive humanity among us. The political leaders should realise the ethos of the phrase "humanity first". Super powers like US, Britain, Russia must train themselves to give more importance to human values in comparison to their commercial interests. Selling of arms and ammunitions to the terrorist organisations can be checked by the countries which are involved in this trade. Our positive attitude and joint ventures can give a terror free world to our progenies. ♦ ♦



**Introduction:**

Karbis earlier known as Mikir is one of the prominent tribes of Assam settled mostly in the district of Karbi Anglong and other districts like Kamrup, Morigaon and Nagaon. Assam is a north eastern state well known for the meeting ground of many caste and communities. Being a part of Northeast India, people of Assam get linked with its other northeastern states. Earlier the present North Eastern part was under the undivided Assam territory. It is due the connectivity of the North Eastern states that they share some similarity in their culture and tradition.

Northeast India occupies a prominent place in the archaeological map of the world because of its rich megalithic remains. It is one of the few places in the world where this practice has survived as a living practice. Realising the significance of Northeast Indian megaliths in general and specifically the living tradition of megaliths among the Karbi people of Assam, the present study attempted to focus on the prevalence of living megalithic tradition among the Karbi people of Assam.

**Meaning of the term Megalith:**

'Megalith' is a Greek derivative of the words 'megas' which means great and 'lithos' meaning stone. It refers to the monuments built of large stones. But all big stone monuments are not megaliths. The term is restricted and applied to those monuments made of stone which are associated with the sepulchral, commemorative or ritualistic purpose. So, it is applicable to a class of monuments or structures which has connection to the deaths and the rituals associated with this. In the words of Gordon Childe –

“The term is derived front Greek words (megas = large, and iithos = stones) and is originally introduced by antiquaries to describe a fairly easily definable class of monu-

## Erection of Megalith - A Living Tradition among the Karbi People

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ments in western and northern Europe, consisting of huge, undressed stones and termed in Celtic, dolmens, cromlechs and menhirs. It subsequently been extended to cover a far more miscellaneous collection of erection and even excavation all over the old world and into the new' (Gordon Childe, 1947: 48 : 5).

The term megalith has been commonly known as 'rude stone monuments' and the many scholars defined it differently:

'The term megalithic is, conventionally applied to the culture of rude stone monuments, thus it is primarily applied to the structures of rudimentary character built wholly or partially of large rough stone. It also includes comparable structures of a more sophisticated kind in which the stone may be crudely or even, elaborately dressed. A secondary condition is that the monument fulfil a funerary or commemorative or religious function' (Wheeler, 1968 :150).

The megalith as a curious monument includes a variety of types, most of which have gained popular names according to their size and shape. They may be a single upright stone, a structure or even a geometric expression making the enclosed area engrossed in deep mystery. The widely known monuments of this type are mentioned below:

#### **Menhir:**

This is the simplest of the megalithic structure. They are upright stones of rough structure like a pillar. In Celtic language of Brittany, France, the meaning of the word is a long stone where 'men' means stone and 'hir' means long.

#### **Stonehenge:**

Stone circles are seen in the highland zones of England. Ring of standing stone, probably of the Bronze Age is sometimes surround a megalithic grave. They are presumed to have been used for ritual purposes. When such stone circles are surrounded by a bank of earth, they are called a 'henge'. Such circles often contain a stone quarry

at its centre with a pond-like water body.

#### **Dolmen:**

Structures made of slabs and upright stones are seen widely and they are called dolmen. But by using a roughly hewn stone slab, placed over three or more supports, they are erected in memory of a dead. In some places they were covered by an earthen mound, but are mostly denuded due to weathering action including rain and scouring by seasonal streams. This name is popular in France and British Isles for a chambered tomb.

#### **A Peep into the Megalithic Tradition Worldwide:**

Megalithic culture is an old culture prevalent most of the countries in the world. The megalithic monuments are among the most widespread remains of man both in time and space. The origin of the megalithic monuments is mostly place in the Mediterranean region in the Neolithic period. This culture said to have been carried by traders who were in search of metals along the Atlantic coast to Western Europe and from the Aegean coast into Southern Europe through Greece. In the context of India this culture arrived with the Dravidian speakers who came to South India from West Asia by sea.

The Indian archaeological research through excavations started with digging of a megalith in the beginning of the last century by the British scholars. Since then lot of data is available for the reconstruction of life ways of the societies, mostly in form of grave-goods from megaliths. The paucity of their settlement remains and subsequently lack of sufficient data posed a problem in the reconstruction of their life style. Megaliths have been found in Megalithic culture is an old culture prevalent most of the countries in the world. The megalithic monuments are among the most widespread remains of man both in time and space. The origin of the megalithic monuments is mostly place in the Mediterranean region in the Neolithic period. This culture said to have been carried by traders who were in search of metals



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The early part of the 19th century witnessed the studies on the megaliths of Kerala with the discovery and excavation of a few burials in the Kannur district. The main concentration of the megalithic cultures in India was the Deccan, especially south of the river Godavari. However, large-stone structures resembling some of the usual megalith types have also been reported from some places in North India, Central India and Western India. These include – Seraikala in Bihar; Deodhoora in Almora district and Khera near Fatehpur Sikri in Agra district of Uttar Pradesh; Nagpur; Chanda and Bhandra districts of Madhya Pradesh; Deosa, 32 miles east of Jaipur in Rajasthan. It is difficult to say if and how far they are connected with the megaliths of the Deccan. Similar monuments or structures are also found near Karachi in Pakistan, near Leh in the Himalayas and at Burzahom in Jammu and Kashmir. However, their wide distribution in the southern region of India suggests that it was essentially a South Indian feature which flourished at least for a thousand years, resulting in a variety within the underlying megalithic unity of common ori-

gin.

The megalithic culture in South India was a full fledged Iron Age culture when the great benefits of the use of this metal were fully realised by the people. Hence, normally the stone dropped out of use as a material for the weapons and tools to a large extent.

The megalithic people of South India, or for that matter, the Iron Age people of the subcontinent in general, found out new uses of stones in their daily life. Most of the information about the Iron Age in South India comes from the excavations of the megalithic burials. Iron objects have been found universally in all the megalithic sites right from Junapani near Nagpur in Vidharba region (Central India) down to Adichanallur in Tamilnadu in the far south.

Megaliths of India can be classified into different types. Though internally there lies difference between the types but it has the same external features.

Menhirs are monolithic pillars planted vertically into the ground. These may be small or gigantic in height. They are dressed or not dressed at all. These are essentially commemorative stone pillars set up at or near a burial spot. These menhirs are mentioned in ancient Tamil literature as nadukal and are often called Pandukkalor Pandil. In some cases, the menhirs are not planted in ground but rest on the original ground propped up with a mass of rubble as at Maski. These occur in a number of sites in close vicinity of other type of megalithic burials, mostly in different regions of Kerala and Bellary, Raichur and Gulbarga regions of Karnataka in large numbers, but less frequently at other places of South India.

Alignments are closely associated to the menhirs. These consist of a series of standing stones. These stones are sometimes dressed. The alignments are found at Komalaparathala in Kerala and at a number of sites in Gulbarga, Raichur, Nalgonda and Mahboobnagar districts of Karnataka.



Avenues consist of two or more parallel rows of the alignments and hence many of the sites in the Deccan, mentioned above under alignments, may be considered as examples of this category of monuments when they are in parallel lines.

Dolmenoid cists consists of square or rectangular box-like graves built of several orthostats (upright stone or slab forming part of a structure or set in the ground) one or more for each side, supporting the super incumbent capstone consisting of one or more stones, often with the floor also paved with the stone slabs. The dolmenoid cists occur at large number at Sanur near Chingleput (Tamil Nadu) and many other sites in this region.

The Cairn circles are one the most popular type of megalithic monuments occurring all over south India in association with other types. They consist of a heap of stone rubble enclosed within a circle of boulders.

These megalithic burial sites (cairn-circles), discovered near Veeranam in Tiruvannamalai district, can be dated to 1,000 BCE-300 CE. The granite slabs of the dolmenoid cists, broken by villagers, are strewn around.

Stone circles are the most commonly encountered megalithic monuments in India. They reflect the features of various forms of megalithic monuments such as the Kudaikallu, Topikkal, different types of pit burials, menhirs, dolmenoid cists of different types, cairns, etc.

These occur from the southern tip of the peninsula upto Nagpur region and in different parts of North India. But in this category under consideration, only stone circles without any considerable cairn filling within the circle, containing burial pits with or without puriform urns or sarcophagi, are included.

The monuments under this category are distinguished from the cairn circles only in that the cairn heaps occur or do not occur in these circles. *Otherwise*, all the three sub-types discussed above

under the cairn circles are found to occur in this category also. But at some sites like Sanur near Chingleput, both the kinds exist side by side.

Erection of Megaliths in North Eastern States:

North East India is populated mainly by different tribes. The tribal societies of Northeast India are reported to have elaborate practices of megalithic erection. The megalithic tradition of Northeast India were recorded and discussed at various periods of history by various scholars.

The Khasis and the Nagas are the notable tribes of Northeast India are known to be associated with megalithic erection. Various sections of the Naga tribe viz. the Ao, Angami, Serna, Maram, Rengma, Konyak and others are known to have this practice among them. The western Angamis erect menhirs both as monument to the dead and also as memorials of social accomplishments of the living. Rich men put up menhir-s in the course of great feast of merit by which they gain social prestige and rank. Even when a menhir is erected in the honour of the dead man; a feast of merit must be held by his son in the name of the deceased ones. On the other hand, the Eastern Angamis do not erect menhirs for deceased persons but erect solely to enhance the prestige of the living. Besides menhirs, stone sitting places sometimes consisting of several ascending rows of seats along with tanks or streams in certain cases are erected by the Nagas to contain the grave of clan ancestors. N.S.Sen (1981:42) writes that even among the Nagas, whose megaliths do not seem very closely linked with the cult of the dead, thought of the afterlife is not completely absent. The ceremonial feast of the Angami is of seven grades, according to their cost, size and duration. Erecting only wooden monuments commemorates feast of the sixth grade. On the other hand, monoliths are erected as memorials to those of the seventh. Heine-Geldem (1928:281) commented that according to the Angamis a man dies seven times each time falling to a deeper under-



world and he apparently thinks that these feasts are linked with this belief. Possibly one purpose of the feasts of merit is to help the soul of the donor in his successive after life.

T.C. Sharma (1984) opines that the greatest concentration of megaliths in Northeast India is observed in the Khasi and Jaintia hills districts of Meghalaya and that the region houses some of the largest pieces of menhirs as at Nartiang where lies a huge menhir measuring 8.1m high and 75 cm feet thick. Some of the large megaliths fields in Meghalaya occur at Cherapunji, Maollong, Lailong, Kote, Laitkor, Jowai and Nartiang (Godwin Austen 1872:

Gurdon 1914). The Khasi menhirs are erected in a linear pattern that generally consists of uneven number of stones. The tallest of the stones is generally placed at the middle and is occasionally ornamented with a small stone. These groups of Khasi megaliths may probably represent clan burial. In the front of the line of the menhirs, a large flat table stone resting on stone support is placed. The largest table stone are to be seen at Nartiang in the Jaintia hills and Lailongkoti in the Khasi hills of Northeast India. Sometimes two table stones are found parallel to one another. The table stones are always placed towards the middle of the group generally in front of the great central menhir. These groups of stones are usually situated alongside roads or close to well known lines routes where they readily attract the attention of passersby Gurdon (1914:146) classifies the megaliths of the Khasis into the following:

- i) Menhirs or Vertical Stones
- ii) Table Stones or Dolmen
- iii) Stone Cromlechs or Cairn.

According to S.N. Rao (1993:122-164), the second group of stones are strictly speaking not dolmen as they are not graves but are simply memorials. He classifies the megaliths of Khasi hills into two broad groups i) Funerary stones and ii) Memorial Stones. The funerary stones are those

stone tombs which was directly associated with the post-cremation ritual including the disposal of the remains of the deceased. Memorial stones include the menhirs and table stones.

The entire tract from Nagaland, Manipur through North Cachar, Karbi Anglong and Meghalaya upto Eastern and Central India is marked by megalithic traditions, which have certain typological and socio-ideological characteristics in common. Haimendorf, however, extends this megalithic belt upto South Asia as he comments, "No reader familiar with the literature on the megalithic cultures of Southern Asia can fail to be struck by the many close parallels which link the megalithic ritual of the Gond Tribes of Bastar with that of the Austroasiatic peoples of Assam, and even with the highly developed megalithic cultures of Indonesia and the South Seas." (1945: 73)

The Northeastern states are rich in this tradition and occupy a prominent place in the archaeological map of the world because of their rich megalithic remains. In this regard J.P. Mills (1933) writes-

"An ethnoarchaeological characteristic of Assam of worldwide fame is its wealth of megaliths. Indeed it is one of the few places in the world where monuments of this type are still erected."

The dominant megalithic types recorded from the North Cachar Hills, Karbi Anglong and plain districts of Assam are menhirs, dolmenoid menhir and alignments. Besides, monoliths with engravings of different shapes are reported from N. Cachar Hills. Heine-Geldern (1928) attributes the introduction of megaliths into Eastern India to the Austroasiatic element of the Munda people. According to him they must have entered India in waves some time before the Aryan occupied the valley of the Ganga, perhaps between 2500 and 1200 B.C. coming up against a pre-Aryan copper using culture which diverted them to their present habitat in the hills south of the Ganga plains. The migration is also suggested to be as-



sociated with the diffusion of the Neolithic shouldered Adze. Walter Ruben (1939) inclines to view that the custom of constructing megalithic reached India, by way of Palestine and Persia in the early Iron age and one of its branches moved eastwards as far as Chota Nagpur and the other moved into Southern India. He believed that the ancient Asian tombs and the megalithic culture of the Mundas had a western origin and spread from there during the Iron Age further eastward into Assam. Haimendorf (1945), however, is of the opinion that the megalithic complex found in Assam and many parts of south eastern Asia appeared not as an accidental aggregation of various cultural elements but as a well-coordinated system of custom and beliefs, a philosophy of life and nature.

Although none of the megalithic structures of Northeast India has yet been dated, it is agreed by scholars that the custom of erection of megaliths prevailed in Northeast India from the pre-historic period (Clarke 1874). In Northeast India, megaliths are distributed through a wide territory across the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, the hill districts of North Cachar and Karbi Anglong and the plain areas of Nagaon, Morigaon and Kamrup districts of Assam.

Considering the different shapes and sizes of megaliths found in North East, Megaliths are grouped into following types:

1. Flat stone or Capstone
2. Menhir
3. Avenues
4. Cairn
5. Dolmen
6. Stone seat
7. Others (religious stone, grave stone etc.)

#### 1) Flate stone or Capstone:

This is a stone slab, sometimes circular or rectangular in shape of varying sizes made of sandstone. These types of megalithic structures

are found largely in the villages inhabited by Maram tribe of Manipur. (Devi, 1933:316). This type of megalithic structure is also found in Nagaland but not available in Assam.

#### 2) Menhir:

The menhirs are monolithic pillars of rough stone structure vertically erected in the ground as memorials, commemorative or burial stone pillars. Its size varies from 3.57m to 3.35 m height and down to a mere 0.62 m. with a common height ranging from 1.80 m to 1.20 m. These are erected either clanwise or on individually near the village paths. However the name of this structure is differently known among different tribes of North East India. The Maram tribe of Manipur called it tasum, in Nagaland the Maos called it zhosotu, among the Khasis of Meghalaya it is popularly known as u-suid-nia and long-e among the Karbis of Assam. Sometimes instead of Menhir a mass of rubbles laid down on the ground which is found in the Senapati district of Manipur.

Menhirs are seemed to be erected for various purposes by the tribes of North East India. In some places of Manipur, Nagaland this type of structure is erected to attain highest position in the society. On the other hand Karbis of Assam erected for different purposes. They erect mainly for two purposes – for attaining social prestige and status either by an individual or by a clan, to commemorate an event of public interest, social, political etc.

#### 3) Avenues:

Avenues are the parallel rows of megalithic structures commonly known as alignments. These are found mostly in some of the villages of Manipur and also in Karbi Anglong area of Assam. In the Jaintia hills of Meghalaya also this type of structures are seen to have recorded.

#### 4) Cairn:

A cairn consists of a heap of stones or rubbles of smaller but somewhat rectangular slabs either enclosed within a circle of small or considerable



size boulders or freely raised on the ground by piling up the stones one above the other without any enclosure. These cairns are known by different names among the tribes of North East India. This type of megalithic structure is particularly found in Manipur and Nagaland (Devi, 1993). Such a structure is called kathi tokho among the Maos of Manipur and taokhon (Devi, 1993) among the Kabui Nagas in Manipur. Among the Khasis, megaliths are generally found either in the form of stone cairn or cinerarium, in which the bones and ashes of dead ancestors of the clan are kept. The cinerarium, often of considerable size, is built of solid blocks of stone on a stone platform placed on the ground. It could be opened by removing one of the heavy side stone slabs. The cinerarium has intimate connection with the memorial stones (Devi, 1993).

The Jaintias have the peculiar system of preserving the bones of the dead in the clan repository. When the cremation is over, charred bones are collected either by the kins or by the dan members of the deceased. These bones are taken to the family cairn first and then taken to the repository within one year of the death. This repository is called stupa. The cairns are not found among the Karbis of Assam. However, among the Rengma Nagas of Karbi Anglong, a number of stone slabs laid over the grave of the deceased are found.

#### 5) Dolmen:

A flat stone supported by three or four smaller vertical pillar stones are called dolmen. This type of megalithic monument are found sometimes singly or sometimes in a cluster. The size of the dolmen varies from 0.50 m. to 0.60 m. in height. Dolmens are made from sandstones and found in association of menhirs. Like the other megalithic structures, dolmen also known differently in various names among different tribes of North East. In Manipur, it is known as aturga, cheng-e among the Karbis, okimaki among the Maos of Manipur and so on. In some areas of Assam, Dolmens are

arranged in a row, while in some other areas these are constructed one above the other.

#### 6) Stone Seats:

This type of megalith consists of a number of flat boulders placed at regular intervals either in rectangular, roughly circular or oval form. These are also of varying sizes. Some structures have a centre table, while some have a larger slab within or around the roughly circular or rectangular structure. These are used for serving the head of the clan or the chief of the village. Such types of stone seats are found in Assam among the Karbis and also among the Jaintias.

#### 7) Others:

##### a) Religious stone:

Such types of structures have different names known among the different tribes of North East. These are considered sacred stone and of various structures and sizes. Among the maos of Manipur it is known as atachaga kamatei while Karbis called it cheng-e.

##### b) Grave stone:

These stones are associated to the graves. These stones may be an upright or horizontal flat stone but it covers the burial pit. Due to the conversion of many of the tribes into Christianity, it brought about many changes in the construction of the grave stones which are often replaced by wooden posts having cross-mark which a height of about 0.60 to 1.10 m. Moreover, the people who stuck to the animistic religion also nowadays replace the original grave stones by R.C.C. construction. They are differently known as kathi tokho among the Maos, arou atu among the Marams. Among the Karbis of Dimoria also grave stones are found.

#### Erection of Megaliths among the Karbis of Assam:

Karbis of Assam settled prominently in the present Karbi Anglong, Kamrup, Nagaon and Morigaon districts of Assam. They have treasured



a rich culture. They are settled in both the plains and hilly areas. They are mostly known as the hill tribe. Being their difference and habitation in plains and hills, difference can be noticed in some of their rituals.

Erection of stone in the form a menhir with a table stone in front is still prevalent among the Karbis living in the plain areas of undivided Kamrup, Nagaon and Morigaon districts of Assam as a post-cremation rite. Compared to their hill counterparts, the plain Karbis mainly inhabiting parts of Southern Kamrup, Nagaon and Morigaon districts of Assam have been acculturated and many elements of Assamese caste Hindu society have penetrated into their life ways. But stone erection as a post-cremation rite has still survived among them as a living example of a primitive tradition. Among the plain Karbis, elaborate rites and rituals can be observed during the erection of the stone structures. P.C. Phangso (2000:12) also mentions about the existence of the stone erection practice among the Karbis for commemorating the dead. He, however, has not recorded the details of the practice.

The history of Megalithic tradition among the Karbis of Assam is not clearly known. It is because of the fact that in Assam, dating system is not maintained by the people and there is no such material or pottery found near the megalithic site. Megalithic remains were recovered from different parts of western Karbi Anglong within the jurisdiction of Hamren subdivision. Majority of the remains are weathered and in dilapidated conditions indicating their primitiveness while only a few of them are of recent origin including the ones erected as a part of mortuary practice observed by a section of the Karbis. The dominant megalithic types recovered in Karbi-Anglong are menhir, dolmenoid-menhir, alignment and dolmen. The menhir with a stone platform resting on three or four stones can be termed as dolmenoid-menhir. Besides structures like stone circle and menhirs in alignment are also reported from westernmost part of Karbi Anglong along

the Karbi-Khasi border Menhirs are generally arranged in clusters and alignments often in great numbers as in the plains suggesting a common megalithic ground for the village or the clan.

#### A) Megaliths of Karbi Anglong:

Karbi Anglong district is presently an autonomous district where mostly Karbi people inhabited. Besides Karbi, Tiwa and other tribes are also settled in this district. The megalithic tradition is an age old tradition practiced by the Karbi's of Karbi Anglong district. Many megaliths have been found in this area. Some of which belonged to very early period, though dating system and chronology of megaliths is not done yet. The important megalithic sites of Karbi Anglong are following:

Kamarpha, Rongali, Umcherra, Nongjriong, Habang (Umang), Locrew, Umteli, Jorshala, Ophtheranala, Bhoksong, Bowlagong, Mukhrow

**Kamarpha:** This is a small hamlet about 40 km southeast of Hamren Subdivision of west Karbi Anglong. From this area more than 70 menhirs are recorded which varies in size from 1.71m to 0.7m in height (Many of the menhirs are found recorded from the backyard of the households of Kamarpha hamlet. However, at a place Bamuni than called by the local people many menhirs are found where the Karbi people of that hamlet worship the structures by offering and sacrificing fowls and rice beer. They have the belief that if anybody disturb this place and disturb the structures then something bad happen to them like suffering from fever or ailment to the person. This practice of offering and worship indicate the tradition of ancestor worship among the Karbi people. The structures of megaliths found in this place are weathered and dilapidated condition.

**Rongali:** Rongali is the prolific megalithic site located at the hill top of Tika hills which is surrounded by dense forest. Rongali is about 20 km distance from the Hamren town. From this site, more than hundred pieces of menhirs were recovered. Besides these, few pieces of stone



platforms were also recorded from this area. Structures are displaced and most of them are broken. A few metres up from the site a large menhir is located along with a stone platform and two such smaller structures.

**Umcherra:** This site is about 10km from the Hamren town. One of the largest Menhir along with two big dolmens are recorded from this area. The maximum height of the dolmen is 0.68 m above the ground. The menhir is of about 4.40 m in height, 1.85 m in breadth and 4.46 m in circumference as it is cylindrical shape menhir.

**Nongjrong:** It is from this place that the largest dolmen from Karbi Anglong and also in the entire North East India is recorded. The length of the slab of the dolmen is 2.2 m, 1.72 m in breadth.

Besides these, megalithic structures like dolmen, menhir are also found from Habang (Umang), Locrew, Umteli, Mauslai, Jorshala, Ophernala, Bhoksong, Bowlagog, Mukhrow of Karbi Anglong district.

#### B) Megaliths of Kamrup:

In Kamrup district, Karbi people are mostly settled in the Khetri, Dimoria, Sonapur area. There are more than 50 villages where Karbi people settled in this part of Kamrup district. The megalithic tradition has been practicing from distant past by the people of this area till today. Regarding the megaliths of Sonapur-Dimoria area, mention may be made of villages such as- Barkashrang, Barkuchi, Batakuchi, Bhogpur, Chenimur, Dakhinbam, Dakhin Topatali, Dharbam, Digaru, Dwarakakuchi, Kalangpur, Khamar, Latabori, Magursila, Marakdola, Nakuchi, Panbari, Pashamsur, Thegheria, Upper Killing, Gojaigaon etc.

Barkasrang is a village inhabited by Karbi people in the Dimoria area. Here it is seen that 25% people have adopted Christianity and others are following their own age old faith. From this village, erection of menhirs and table stones both have been recorded. The types of the Menhirs are

long-e type and the table stones are cheng-e type. The megaliths found in this village are mostly erected near the habitational area. The size of the menhir varies from 1.5 m to 3.5 m in height, breadth from 0.6 m to 0.9 m. Table stones are placed in front of each menhir called long-e. To erect long-e, people collect stones from nearby hills by following their traditional custom.

In the Barkuchi village near Sonapur also, megaliths are found. Type of megaliths found here are menhir and table stones. Here most of the menhirs are small in size. In front of each menhir, stone slab is placed.

Batakuchi village is a Karbi village, where more than 30 megaliths and 25 table stones are found. The height of the menhirs from this place varies from 1.3 m. to 1.7 m. And breadth varies from 0.6 m. to 0.8 m. like the above mentioned villages, people of this village also collect stones to erect megalith from the nearby hills.

It is worthy to mention that the Bhogpur village is inhabited by the Karbis, the Assamese caste Hindu, Bodos and the Rabhas. From this village both menhir and table stones are found. Menhirs are varying in size from 1.7 m to 1.6 m. in height, 0.60 m to 0.80 m breadth. In front of each menhir, a stone slab is present resting on three to four vertical pillars or over the piled up stones.

In Gojaigaon village of Sonapur also menhirs are found along with stone slabs. Two such sites are found where menhirs are in a dilapidated condition. Mainly the slab present in front of the menhir is not in its original position. Now a day people use to construct memorial stines using brick and cement which have been found from both the sites of this village. The size of the menhir varies from 1.3 m to 0.50 m in height. They called the site lungdang (place where long-e and cheng-e are erected in publicly). Local people informed that earlier they had seen big Menhirs which have been uprooted due to construction of a club. Near it, there is one L.P. School.



Besides these, there are many villages where Karbi people inhabited in the Sonapur and Dimoria area of Kamrup district. Besides the above mentioned villages, more than villages of this locality have the living tradition of erecting megaliths in some way. Villages such as Sonaigaon, Marakdola, Tamulikuchi, Aparikula, Moh pur, Sitalpur, Bhodai kuchi, Khaloi bari, Phulung gaon, Amguri, Dhemaigaon, Lahori, Markang, Dondorai, Pithagog, Samata, Moronga bori, Arabari, Lower Tepesia, Upper Tepesia, Goriya ghuli, Hatimura, Patarkuchi, Sagoli gaon, Nazirakhat, Jugdol, Ghogua, Thakur kuchi, Gumoria, Hahara, Chakaripara, Rewa maheswar, Tetelia, Xoru gaon, Gorai gaon are still practising the megalithic tradition.

### C) Megaliths of Morigaon:

Like the Kamrup and Karbi Anglong district, Karbi people of Morigaon district also have the megalithic as a living tradition. Karbi people of Mayong area especially at Burhamayong also megaliths are erected as a post burial structure in memory of the deceased one. Near Jagiroad area at Borbori village, few Karbi people settled with the Tiwas also practice this tradition. It is from there that five menhirs of forefathers have been found. Earlier they used to erect megaliths in clan system but now they erect near their residence mostly in the backside of their house. They offer food and other items on some festive occasions. It reflects their tradition of ancestor worship. Here menhirs and dolmen-menhirs type structures are found. These are not too much large in size. The differences noticed in the male and female menhir is that Menhir of male is covered the head of the stone with Assamese Japi (Conical hat) and the female menhir structure is covered with clothes. The Japi indicates the agriculture base of the society. In some places instead of Japi, head is wrapped with a cloth called Paguri (turban) also. This tradition is also prevalent among the Karbi of Kholagaon area of Morigaon district. It is village about 30 Km from Jagiroad town. It is informed by the local people that the Karbi people

of Borbori area migrated from Kholagaon and same tradition is followed by people of both areas as the former has carried with them the forefather's tradition.

In the Gobha village of Morigaon district also, along with Tiwa people Karbi people are resided. People of these two villages practice this as a living tradition. However some of the Karbi people have left this tradition. They do not erect any megalith for the deceased people. It is found that Karbi people of Morigaon district are mainly settled alongwith the Tiwa people. In the Borbori, Kholagaon, Gobha area along with the Karbi people Tiwa people inhabited and there might be influence and cultural assimilation that some Karbi people left this tradition. Kuthuri, Gorongkuchi are the villages near Gobha where this tradition is living among the Karbi people. At Silchang of present Morigaon district also megalithic structure is found.

### Conclusion

The discussion above highlights the rich megalithic culture among the Karbi people. The tradition of age old practice and its continuity among this particular tribe of Assam enhance the glory of the state. The abundance of Menhirs, dolmen structures are the testimony of its living tradition.

The shape and size of the megaliths erected by the Karbi people are based on sex and social status in deceased concern. Megaliths found at Karbi Anglong district and Dimoria area of Kamrup district is worth mentioning. However, Karbi people settled in other parts of Assam do not have any rigid rule about the size and shape of megaliths erected for the deceased. They follow the age old tradition of chanting mantras (sound) by Kathar (priest) who took the initiative to carry out all the rituals related to the deceased one from the selection of stone from the hills to the time of erecting megalith. The feast is the part of ceremonies observed by the Karbis related to



death.

The size of the menhir and dolmen structures found so far varies from place to place. But one noteworthy point is that villages near to hilly areas erect large structures of megaliths, while it seems that villages far away in distance from the hills erect megaliths of medium or small size. It is due to the difficulties of carrying the stones from the hills.

Another noteworthy point is that with the passage of time size of megalithic structures are gradually becoming smaller till now. Those who converted to Christianity have left this tradition of erecting megalith for the deceased. If it happens continuously, it is not too far to lost this age old tradition among the Karbis.

The living megalithic tradition among the Karbis of Assam throws enormous light on the connectivity of the people with that of age old pre historic tradition. The continuity of this practice among them is a great pride and pleasure for the country and the world. It provides scope for the researcher and curiosity for the in-depth study on the subject and will help to explore more about the unspoken history. Such living practice should not get interrupted by the influence of any religious and social-economic factor. Assam is a treasure house of megalithic splendour and if the megalithic structures could be dated chronologically with proper technique then it would become a place of rich lithic culture centering round the Karbi tribe. Thus, further exploration is needed to bring into light the unspoken past and bridge the existing gaps.

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