

MOPIN FESTIVAL IN KADU VILLAGE: ORIGIN, ASSOCIATED MYTHS AND PRACTICE.

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Abstract

The Mopin Festival is one of the most important traditional celebrations of the Galo tribe. This study focuses on Kadu village in Koyu Administrative Circle, Lower Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh, to understand the origin of the festival and its cultural meaning. The people believe that Mopin Ane (the goddess of prosperity and well-being) is the central figure of the celebration. Myths explain how she received divine powers, gave seeds of paddy and millet to humans, and promised blessings of health, wealth, and protection upon being worshipped through rituals. Alongside this, the stories of Abo-Tani, regarded as the first human ancestor of the Tani group, describe how he obtained knowledge of cultivation, faced trials in the heavenly land, and later honoured Mopin Ane through offerings and prayers. These narratives, along with oral fables, not only describe the beginnings of agriculture but also teach lessons about unity, hard work and the dangers of greed. The preparation of the festival includes divination by the village priest, selection of sacrificial animals, making rice cakes and rice wine, and collective rituals that bring everyone together. During the main celebration, people perform the Popir dance, chant hymns, and share food and drink as symbols of joy and harmony. The Mopin Festival, as practiced in Kadu village, is more than a prayer for good harvest. It is a way of preserving oral traditions, remembering ancestral stories, and strengthening social bonds. By continuing to celebrate it with devotion, the Galo people express gratitude to nature, safeguard their identity, and pass on cultural values to future generations.

Keywords: Kadu village, Mopin, Galo, Tani, Cultivation, Origin

INTRODUCTION

Arunachal Pradesh, the 24th state of India with its capital at Itanagar, is often called the 'Land of the Rising Sun' because it is the first part of the country to greet the morning light. The name Arunachal Pradesh, meaning 'Land of the Dawn-Lit Mountains' in Sanskrit, reflects its natural beauty and cultural depth. The state shares boundaries with Assam to the south, Nagaland to the southeast, Myanmar to the east, Bhutan to the west, and Tibet to the north, covering a total area of 83,743 square kilometres. The state is home to 26 major tribes and

over 100 sub-tribes, most of them belonging to the Tibeto-Burman language family and show Mongoloid features. Each group maintains distinct customs, traditions, and festivals. According to anthropologist D.N. Majumdar, the tribes in Arunachal Pradesh can broadly be divided into three categories; those influenced by Tibetan and Buddhist culture such as the Monpas and Sherdukpens; those shaped by contact with neighbouring Assam and Nagaland such as the Noctes and Wanchos; and the central tribes like the Adid, Nyishis, Tagins, and Galos, who share close cultural and linguistic bond. The state's flora and fauna are equally rich, with bamboo, cane, and orchids flourishing across the valleys, and wildlife thriving in its dense forests.

Lower Siang District, officially created in 2017 with headquarters at Likabali forms part of this diverse cultural landscape. According to the 2011 census, Scheduled Tribes constitute the majority of the population, with the Galo community being one of the most prominent groups. The Galos, belonging to the Tani group of tribes, regard Abo-Tani (first human form) as their first ancestor and preserve a way of life closely tied to nature, agriculture and oral traditions. They are skilled in bamboo and cane crafts, weaving, and traditional architecture. Religious practices continue to play an important role in their society, where the village priest, known as Nyibo, conducts rituals and acts as a spiritual guide.

Mopin is the central and most important festival of the Galo people, celebrated with great enthusiasm in every village, including Kadu. The festival is dedicated to Mopin Ane, the goddess of prosperity and fertility. Myths and legends about her, along with stories of Abo-Tani, explain the beginnings of agriculture and the reasons behind ritual offerings. The celebration is not only a prayer for a good harvest and protection from misfortune but also a way of preserving stories, songs, and values that have been passed down from one generation to the other. Thus, the origin of the Mopin Festival is deeply connected to the history, beliefs, and cultural identity of the Galo tribe.

This research focuses on the origin and cultural meaning of the Mopin Festival, taking Kadu village as a case study. The village has been selected because it continues to preserve traditional practices and oral narratives that explain the beginnings of the festival. By studying Kadu village, the research aims to understand how rituals, myths, and community participation sustain the festival in contemporary times and how it reflects the identity of the Galo people within the wider cultural landscape of Arunachal Pradesh.

Objectives:

The main objective of this research is to trace the origin of the Mopin Festival in Kadu village by exploring its myths, legends and oral traditions. The research also intends to show how the Mopin Festival helps preserve the cultural identity of the Galo tribe of Kadu village.

Area of the study:

The present study concentrates on Kadu village. Kadu village is a small village located in the Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh. Prior to the creation of Lower Siang, Kadu village was part of East Siang district. Lower Siang District was officially established on 22nd September 2017. The district was formed by carving out areas from the existing West Siang and East Siang district. The initial proposal for its creation was approved by the Arunachal Pradesh Government on 21st March 2013.

Description of Kadu Village:

Kadu Village is inhabited by the Galo tribe and is divided into four segments: Moku, Saku, Loglu, and Jate. Each segment has its own group of electoral voters. The people of Kadu village usually have joint type families.

Patriarchy exists and Kadu people take pride in tracing their ancestry through patrilineal male descent. The economy is subsistence agriculture and the major crops include rice, millets, maize, and oranges, alongside the practice of animal husbandry such as piggery, cattle rearing, and poultry farming. The staple food of people of Kadu village is rice. It is usually eaten with Oyik (Pouzolziahirta), bamboo shoot, meat, and other local vegetables. In terms of religion, people in Kadu village practice the indigenous faith Donyi-Poloism as well as Christianity.

According to the 2011 Census report, Kadu Village comprises 39 households with a total population of 343 individuals 182 males and 160 females. The villagers follow a traditional village council system known as Keba. Any disputes among villagers are resolved in the Dere (community hall) through the Dolu-Keba (village council).

Review of Literature:

Quite a few academic works have addressed the socio-cultural and political aspect of Galo tribe. Sir George Dunbar was perhaps the first to explore and present a compilation of the cultural tradition of Galo people under his work *Abors and Gallongs* that was published in the Royal Asiatic society of Bengal in 1916. After independence, the Galo tribe became a topic of interest amongst many anthropologists, government officers, activist, researchers and historians.

L.R.N. Srivastava's work 'The Gallongs' (1962) is one of the notable works on the tribe. This work presents an ethnographic study of the Galo tribe (formerly known as Gallongs) of Arunachal Pradesh. It provides detailed accounts of kinship structures, religious beliefs, social customs as well as domestic life of the tribe. Although it offers valuable insights of the Galo way of life, the author does not address the Mopin festival even once. Deepak Pandey in his work 'History of Arunachal Pradesh' (1972) provides one of the early historical overviews of Arunachal Pradesh, focusing on its geographical background, political developments, and cultural life. His description of tribal traditions and festivals, including those of the Galo, is relatively general. Like earlier works, the book too fails to specifically trace the origin of the Mopin festival. Perhaps, the credit to have worked on Mopin as a festival of Galo can be attributed to Parul Dutta. His work 'Mopin Festival of the Galos of Arunachal Pradesh' (1976), published in the form of a booklet provides insights into the Mopin festival, a socio-religious and agricultural celebration of the Galo community. The work primarily highlights the myths associated with the festival, along with its rituals, dances and cultural expressions, making it a useful reference for scholars and researchers. However, most of the information presented seems to be drawn from Aalo or other prominent Galo regions. This reflects regional variations within the Galo community, who are spread across different districts, resulting in differences the way Mopin is celebrated.

Tai Nyori's work 'History and Cultures of The Adi's' (1993) while providing a vivid description of the Tani tribes, gives the cultural dimension of Galo tribe in general. The book is based on oral traditions and ethnographic research, and caters to the social and religions aspects of Galo (along with Adi tribe), yet, it does not specifically address Mopin in the form of a festival.

TejumPadu in his work 'Moopin `Poopwr poonu Nwwtom and Mvmmen Gore of the Galo of Arunachal Pradesh' (2010) offers an in-depth exploration of the Mopin festival and traces the festival's roots in tradition and highlights its significance in agriculture, social harmony, and the warding off of evil spirits. However, just like Dutta's case, the work suffers from differences in regional variations. The myths of the origin of the Mopin

festival presented in the book differ slightly from those recorded in the study area.

Eli Doye (2018) 'Myths from Northeast India: Functional Perspective of Galo Myths in a Changing Context', this book provides a detailed study of Galo myths from a functional perspective. It emphasizes the importance of myths in shaping identity and in maintaining cultural continuity among the Galo people.

Morge Ete's 'The Folklore of Galo: An overview' (2021) also provides valuable documentation of Galo myths, folktales, oral traditions and understanding of how life, nature, and human beings (Tani) came into existence. But just like Doye and Padu, the work suffers from interpretation in terms of regional variation. Most of the documentation and interpretation reflect the perspectives and traditions of Aalo area in West Siang.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected by understanding field study in Kadu village of Lower Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh, India. During the field study scheduled and unstructured interviews were conducted. The researchers made interactions with different people from the village such as Gaon-Burah, and other village elders those who possess intensive knowledge on traditional knowledge system.

The Mopin festival

Mopin is an important and sacred ritual festival of the people of Kadu village. The festival is associated with many myths, religious chants, rhythmic and vigorous dances and also carries positive messages for a harmonious existence on earth. It is deeply rooted in the tribe's mythology, beliefs, and traditional practices. Mopin festival is performed and celebrated mainly in the month of Lumi (April). It is celebrated to honour and worship Mopin Ane, the Goddess of agriculture, prosperity and well-being. The celebration includes rituals, folksongs, dances, and community feasts. It also reflects the Kadu people's deep connection with nature, spiritual beliefs and their ancestral stories passed down through generations. This festival brings the entire village together and strengthens unity among the people.

The myth and the legend associated with the Mopin festival and the processes of celebration of Mopin festival are discussed below in this chapter.

Myth associated with the origin of Mopin:

The origin of Mopin Ane is associated with Jimi Ane (creator of universe). Genealogically, it is interpreted as Jimi Ge Mimo, Mimo Ge Mopin, Moji, meaning Jimi begets Mimo, Mimo begets Mopin and Moji. From Chibu-Dogu (last horizon of Earth and Sky) all living beings including goddess Mopin migrated to Loku-Lote (the first sojourn place of all creatures), where Mopin underwent training for ten years and nine months from Gute-Gamro (the trainer). Many trainees gave up the training and fail to complete the skills of Dogin Runam (migration), but Mopin faithfully accomplished the course, and therefore, Mopin was anointed as the Goddess of affluence and prosperity. After receiving the status of goddess, she migrated to Chiko or Digo Yaamo (which refers to the heavenly world of Mopin). In popular culture, she is reflected in the most elegant attire laden with Bume-Rare and Gare-Gapo (a traditional attire) and other essential garments and is attributed with having all types of material blessings, such as Milli-Amli (food grains), Nyigam-Nyigaa (spiritual blessing for hunting capabilities), etc.

According to traditional belief, in a pivotal meeting was conducted before Ane Mopin's migration (Nyilum-Bagnaam) to Chiko, which was attended by Ane Mopin herself, along with humans, animals, and both benevolent and malevolent spirits. In the meeting, it was acknowledged that Ane Mopin would be

honoured with all forms of blessings during her migration. Before her departure (Nyipen Hidak Ku Ogo), she assured all beings that she would continue to assist them in times of need, and promised to provide various Rilli Bongo (blessings), especially those associated with:

1. Milli-Amlii or Liji-Lipin (blessings of abundant food grains),
2. Nyigam-Nyiga (strength and good oratory)
3. Hone-Ene (success in animal rearing)
4. Menjik-Menkok (the gift of eloquence or effective speech).

Ane Mopin instructed that whenever her help need to be sought, she could be invoked by preparing a culturally sanctioned ritual feast. She said: -

Opo-Isi em Motu kula
 Ngom kechu shir go irtokukka
 Lablo shir go irtokukka Ode Resi go,
 Mago resi go goji tokuka.

She assured that, when she is appropriately invoked through the prescribed rituals and hymns, she would bestow all forms of Rilli-Bongo (blessings) upon them. This assurance forms the fundamental basis why Galo people continue to celebrate the Mopin Festival with enduring devotion and enthusiasm in contemporary times.

The Legend of Abo-Tani and his connections with Mopin

According to Galo mythology, there was a time when all living beings could speak and understand one another, and Abo-Tani was the only entity that lived in human form. The genesis of Mopin Festival is associated with a very important event linked to Abo-Tani's life. Abo-Tanii, regarded as the first human ancestor of the Tani group of tribes, at one point of time lived in complete solitude. He was known for his intelligence and wisdom. One day, while walking through a river valley, he encountered Todee-Rene (a small river bird). Todee-Rene informed him that Taji and Taro, (a type of terrestrial being living in another place) were planning to organize a Togu Paanam or Dorri Paanam (a grand wedding ceremony), during which they intended to sacrifice ten Mithuns. Todee-Rene was assigned the responsibility of Nyiken Hole Jugraa Ne, which means she was deputed by Taji and Taro to invite guests to the ceremony. He invited Tani, as follows:

Tanii Takiiruu `vm
 Tasa tala ruu `vm
 Imbo kenboruu `vm

Hearing this Abo-Tani ranted, 'As the first natural being on Earth, these Mithuns belong to me. How can Taji-Taro take my animals and sacrifice them?' So, in order to take back the Mithuns, Abo-Tani decided to go to the wedding ceremony pretending to be a guest. To put his plan into effect, he came up with an idea. He created an effigy of his mother, covered it with some cloth, and placed it on a Nyiro Koro Komar (middle of a deep and steep stream). Beside the effigy, he placed a Jirdi Bodi Kome-Kore (a long-dried bamboo tip used to get Abo Tani's Mother's attention). After setting this up, he went back to the wedding site where Taji and Taro were preparing for the ceremony. He quietly observed all the activities, especially how they were making the Papum-Pachak (a bamboo basket used for storing meat during rituals). At the ceremony, Abo-Tani noticed that there was no one who could craft a proper Papum-Pachak. He suggested that they should invite his mother,

who is a skilled basket weaver.

Being oblivious of Abo-Tani's plan, Taji and Taro agreed the proposal and sent Paako Tani (a shrew faced squirrel) to invite Abo-Tani's mother. Abo-Tani cautioned Paako Tani that his mother is deaf and dumb, and she would only respond if she was gently tapped with a Jirdi Bodi Kome-Kore (bamboo stick). Paako Taani followed Abo-Tani's instructions exactly as told. As a result, when tapped, the effigy of Abo-Tani's mother fell and got drowned into the deep waters. Paako Taani was terrified and returned in a panic to inform Abo-Tani about what had just happened.

Abo-Tani's mother had actually passed away many years ago, however he pretended to be extremely angry and acted to be heartbroken. He threatened to destroy the entire world out of rage, hearing which Taji and Taro became very frightened, as they were the ones who had sent Paako Taani to invite Abo-Tani's mother. In order to settle the matter with Abo-Tani, they decided to offer him nine Hobo (Mithuns) as compensation. Deep down inside Abo-Tani was happy as his plan was successful, however, he continued to show his anger. Having left with only one Mithun to sacrifice vis-à-vis a large number of guests invited to witness the wedding ceremony, Taji and Taro to go through the embarrassment of underfeeding their guest.

There are many other myths closely linked with the above belief. The prevalent side-stories of Paako-Taani and Kokek worth a mention here.

Myth of Paako-Taani (a shrew faced squirrel):

Having wrongly accused of killing Abo-Tani's mother, Paako Taani (shrew faced squirrel) had to endure the shame and blame. Everyone in the wedding ceremony insulted him of his wrong, pointed at his mouth and started pulling off his fur. According to Galo belief, it is the manhandling of Paako Taani's mouth and fur which led to the elongation of the squirrel's mouth and reduction of its bodily fur.

Myth of Kokek (a yellow warbler bird)

Relevant to this incident is the myth of Kokek as well. This bird was given the responsibility of cutting and distributing the Mithun's kidney (Hobo Aakek) among the guests (Banggo). However, due to the shortage of meat, Kokek had to cut and serve a part of his own kidney to compensate the undersupply of Mithun kidney. This accounts for why it is believed that Kokek has no kidney even to this day.

Myth of Taakom-Dumma (a Grasshopper)

Similar to the myth associated with 'Kokek' bird, Taakom-Dumma (a type of grasshopper) was also assigned the task of preparing Hobo Dumpo (head of the Mithun) among the guests. Since the meat in the head portion was not sufficient, he added and shared a part of his own head. As a result of which, it is believed Taakom-Dumma has an unusually long and misshaped head.

Myth of Dumpuu (the deer) and Kipuu (the dog)

Since a solo Mithun did not suffice for such a large gathering, Dumpuu (the deer) and Kipuu (the dog) were given Aagya Posum (a packet of fermented soya beans) to share. This was done as they were considered Nyinyi-Nyibi, (cousins) from the mother's side. However, in a quarrel over not wanting to be the distributor, Dumpuu kicked the Aagya Posum and ran away. Kipuu chased after Dumpuu. They have crossed Chiilo-Doolo Geko, far from Taani Momen (earth) and reached DiigoYaamo (the land of Mopin Ane). Meanwhile, Abo-Tani was chasing after Kipuu and Dumpuu. Their pursuit led them to Digo Yaamo Doolu, (the heavenly land of Mopin). Mopin was surprised to see them arrive there. In order to protect Dumpuu, who was closely associated with Mopin Ane (Mother Mopin), Mopin decided to take action against Tani and Kipu. She picked

up Dumpuu and imprisoned both Abo-Tani and Kipuu. This act of imprisonment is traditionally referred to as Lepaa-Lignaam.

Although Abo-Tani was held captive, his intelligence remained sharp. During the few days of his suffering in prison, he quietly signalled to Kipuu to search for a rodent known as Kirte-Paare. Kipuu followed the instruction and brought the rodent. Following Abo-Tani's plan, the rodent was pushed into Abo-Tani's armpit and pressed until it died, and left it to rot and foul smell. Abo-Tani then made an excuse Mopin Ane that the place had started to stink which might lead to his dead. He said:-

Tani Bedu si, Tani Oposi	This body and soul of Tani
Bedu Namseyibiyeke	Has started stinking
Opo Namba E Reya yeku	And, would decompose
Ngo Tani pumsi Gibolo	If I, Tani die
Ngo Tani Romo Be Hibolo	If I, Tani perish as such,
Ngom nyigo be Gosa Dedo Ye	Can you create me?
Ngom Hogo Be Gosa Dedo Ye"	Can you compensate me?

All the beings in Digo-Yaamo (the heavenly land) became frightened after hearing Abo-Tani's warning. They feared that if Abo-Tani died in the land of Mopin, then Digo-Momen (the earthly land where Abo-Tani belonged) would become furious. This could lead to great disorder and chaos across the universe. Therefore, out of sympathy and to prevent such chaos, Mopin release Abo-Tani and Kipuu. During his short stay in Digo Yaamo (the heavenly land of Mopin), Abo-Tani was mistreated and faced much hardship at the hands of Mopin Ane and the beings of Digo Yaamo Doolu. After his release, Mopin Ane gave Abo-Tani a gift called Daaji-Daane, (seeds of paddy and millet). These seeds of paddy were carried in pouches of Kipuu's ears (called Nyeruu-Rukup) and the millet seeds in his paw (called Lepuum). It is for this reasons that it is largely believed that sacrificing a dog during the agricultural and harvest seasons brings abundance of food grains. According to another myth, the shaped of dog's paw is equated with that of a millet flower, which is again largely contingent upon the myth millet seeds given by Digo Ane being carried in Kipuu's paw. Before sending him back to Earth (Tani Momen), Mopin Ane instructed Tani not to stop or take shelter at Pache-Rodo Doolu (the village of rats and mice), because the rodents would eat all the seeds. However, Abo-Tani forgot to obey the instruction of Mopin and halted at Pache-Rodo Doolu, and while he was asleep, all seeds were eaten up by them. Realizing his mistake, Abo-Tani returned to Mopin Ane in Digo Yaamo and explained what had happened. But this time, Mopin Ane refused to give him more seeds. Instead, she gave him an instruction:

Kojum Ninuu Eh Nilik Takuka
Lento Yenbuu Eh yellik Takuka
Aamde Kogaar Eh Gaarrep Rekuu Lapelaa
Meede Yaapa Kogar Eh Gaarrep Rekuu Laapela.
Oke Mili-Amlii Em Abo-Tanii No Laato Kulaaka

Mopin Ane said to Abo-Tani that he must go to the house of Pache-Rodo and set a fire using Liike-Meeke (a traditional stone used to start a fire in ancient times). She told him that after five days, the seeds would grow again. Abo-Tani followed Mopin Ane's advice. He went to Pache-Rodo's place, set a fire as instructed, and

waited for five days, after which new seeds sprouted. Abo-Tani collected the seeds and returned to Tani Momen (Earth). He then planted them in his Kokum-Komen (agricultural field), and this marked the beginning of agriculture on Earth.

Since that time, Abo-Tani began to honour and worship Mopin Ane through ritual celebrations, in gratitude for the gift of seeds and the knowledge of cultivation. To show his respect and devotion, he performed rituals and offered prayers to Mopin. With the help and guidance of, Anyi Pinku and Pinte (the daughters or divine assistants of Mopin Ane), Abo-Tani created a sacred image of Mopin, the goddess who had given him the seeds. Through this act, he preserved her memory and the knowledge she had shared. Using those seeds, Abo-Tani began regular cultivation on Earth. From then onward, the Mopin Festival became an important part of Galo tradition, celebrated with rituals, chants, and offerings to honour Mopin Ane, the goddess of agriculture and prosperity.

General Preparation of Mopin Festival in Kadu

Generally, Mopin festival is observed on 5th of April but commencement of the preparation of celebration starts from way before. Mopin can be celebrated anytime within the month of April, with varying dates from place to place. In the case of Kadu village, usually the date for celebration, selection of Pingi-Neri (head of the celebration) and the selection of Yiidum (sacrificial animal) is first decided upon. This is done by performing a ritual called Pipe-Chiinam (chicken egg divination) which is led by village priest in the presence of all village elders. If such divination indicates positive signs, then dates of celebration and the day for Yidum are identified. The selection of Mopin Nyibo (Priest) is also done through Pipe-Chinaam (Chicken egg divination) and Roo Koknaam (divination using chicks).

The role of women folk in Kadu village is very integral in the whole celebration process. They handle most of the preparation part, for example, collection of firewood, oko/ekkam, from jungle and preparing sacred items of the festivals, i.e., preparation of rice cake and rice paste, Opo (rice wine) etc. They also prepare two different food items from rice powder that is Iti (rice cake) contributed by each household, meant for refreshment of all participants another one is rice paste for smearing and sprinkling on the sacrificial animals, the images of Mopin Ane and on the faces of the participants as part of the ritual. At night Nyibo(priest) recites chants sometimes throughout the night to invoke the arrival of Mopin Ane on earth. The first day is Yidum Aalo (a day dedicated to sacrifice animal), the second day is Poggo-Aalo which means a day for Mopin Popir dance and all other participants to visit every individual house to bestowing Rili-bongo(blessings) for the well-being and prosperity of the concerned family. And the last and final day is Riga-Aalo which is the day to bid farewell to Mopin Ane. On this day, the Nyibo (priest), Bo (priest assistant) and Popir party go to a river in order to bid farewell and see-off Mopin by performing a Popir dance.

Celebration of Mopin Festival and its importance

Mopin celebration in Kadu Village has a long history. However, if we are to believe the recollections of one of the village elders, the earliest instance of physically witnessing a Mopin celebration dates back to 1953 at Moku . The Mopin festival is an important celebration of the Galo tribe residing at Kadu village. It is celebrated every year in the month of Lumi (April) to bring good harvest, peace and harmony to human kinds. The main goddess that they worship is Mopin Ane (mother Mopin). People believe that the goddess Mopin Ane blesses them with good health, wealth and crops. The celebration is generally postponed or avoided to the succeeding year when any untoward or unfortunate incident occurred in a village like accidental death or suicide etc.

Before the main day, people clean their houses and gathered their traditional clothes. The village becomes full of joy and excitement. Every individual from the village takes part in preparing for the festival.

On the main day of Mopin, people perform traditional dances like Popir and sing local songs. A special ritual called Mopin Yullo is done by a priest called Nyibo. They also sacrifice a Mithun as a part of the ritual. The blood is believed to wash away evil spirits. Traditional food and drinks called Amin-Taake and opo/poka are served among everyone. Through this festival, the Galo people show unity, thank their goddess Mopin and pray for a well-being of all human kinds.

Distribution of Yidum Adin (sacrificed meat) and Opo/Poka:

The meat from sacrificed animals (Yidum Adin) holds special ritual value during the Mopin festival in Kadu Village. After the sacrificial rituals are performed by the Nyibo (priest), the meat is carefully cooked and then distributed among the villagers. This distribution is done equally, ensuring that every household receives a portion, symbolizing unity, blessings, and community sharing. Along with the meat, Poka, a traditional local beverage prepared from fermented millet or rice is also shared. It is served in bamboo containers or cups during the feast and communal gatherings. Sharing Poka during Mopin is a sign of goodwill, joy, and social bonding. Apart from cooked meat, raw meat; known as Adin Dintek is distributed along with Poka, which served in Bamboo cups (Poka Pette/ Udu). They ensure that every household receives a fair share. This practice of distributing meat and Poka strengthens the spirit of togetherness, where everyone, regardless of status or age, takes part in the blessings and joy of the festival. The Mopin festival is important part of the people of Kadu village. It is celebrated to bring good luck, peace and a rich harvest. People believe that the goddess Mopin Ane protects them from future misfortune and bless them with good health and wealth. The festival also helps in keeping the Galo culture and tradition alive. It brings all the villagers together, where they sing, dance and share food. Mopin is not just a festival; it is a way of thanking nature and praying for a better life.

The celebration of Mopin Festival holds great cultural and spiritual meaning for the Galo tribe, especially the people of Kadu village. It is not only a prayer for good harvest and happiness but also a way of preserving their age-old traditions and stories. Through the myths of Abo-Tani, Mopin Ane, and other legendary beings, the festival teaches important lessons about respect, self-sufficiency, and living in harmony. Even today, Mopin continues to be celebrated with the same devotion, showing how the Galo people value their identity, unity, and gratitude towards nature.

Conclusion

The main aim of this research is to trace the origin of the Mopin festival in Kadu Village by exploring its myths, stories, legends, and oral traditions. Through the accounts of elders and other cultural sources, it was found that the roots of Mopin lie deeply in the oral traditions of the Galo people. The myths about Mopin Ane, the goddess of prosperity, and the stories connected to Abo-Tani explain not only the beginning of agricultural practices but also the need to perform rituals to invite blessings and avoid misfortune. These oral narratives continue to shape the way rituals are performed today. The study also shows that Mopin plays an important role in preserving the cultural identity of the Galo tribe in Kadu Village. The festival is more than a celebration of harvest; it is a collective practice that brings together myths, chants, dances, and rituals into one cultural expression. By doing so, it strengthens the feeling of unity among the villagers and reminds them of their ancestral roots. Even though modern changes are affecting lifestyles, the people of Kadu Village continue to celebrate Mopin with pride. This reflects their effort to keep alive the traditions that define who they are as a

community. The preservation of oral traditions and rituals through the Mopin festival shows how culture is passed from one generation to the next. Thus, the research meets its objective by showing both the origin of Mopin through oral traditions and its role in maintaining the cultural identity of the Galo tribe in Kadu Village.

Reference:

¹ Arunachal Pradesh (Reorganization of Districts) Amendment Act 2013, [2 OF 2014] Published in AP Gazette EO No. 32, VOL IV, 1 March 2014.

¹ Department of Economics and statistic, Likabali, Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh.

¹ Interview with Damrik Kadu (Head Gaoh Bura), aged 80-year-old Male, resident of Loglu, Kadu Village, under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on February 15, 2025 from 6:45 PM to 8:10 PM.

¹ Eli Doye, *Myths from Northeast India, (Functional perspective of Galo Myths in a Changing Context)*, pp.123-24.

¹ *Translation*: After you have prepared the rice-beer, apply me the ginger and rice powder paste. Offer me the rice-beer and the chants.

¹ Interview with Damrik Kadu (Head Gaoh Bura), aged 80-year-old Male, resident of Loglu, Kadu Village, under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on February 15, 2025 from 6:45PM to 8:10 PM.

¹ *Mithun* is the local term used in Arunachal Pradesh for the semi-domesticated bovine *Bos Frontalis*, and is used by Galos for ritualistic sacrifices, marriage, gifts, compensations, etc.

¹ Interview with Marka Kadu, (H.G.B), aged 60 years Male, resident of Saku Kadu, village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on March 23, 2025 from 7:00 AM to 8:05 AM.

¹ Tejum Padu, *Moopin 'Poopwr, Poonu Nwwtom and Mymmvn Gogrv of the Galos of Arunachal Pradesh*, (2010), p.31.

¹ Interview with Marka Kadu, (H.G.B), aged 60 years Male, resident of Saku Kadu, village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on March 23, 2025 from 7:00 AM to 8:05 AM.

¹ Interview with Jummar Kadu, aged 82-year-old Male, resident of Loglu, Kadu village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, held on February 16, 2025 from 12:45 PM to 02:00 PM.

¹ *Ibid.*

¹ Eli Doye, *Myths from Northeast India, (Functional perspective of Galo Myths in a Changing Context)*, p-126

¹ Interview with Pekrik Kadu, aged 55 years Female, resident of Kadu village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on April 1, 2025 from 7:30 PM to 9:10 PM.

¹ Interview with Jummar Kadu, aged 82-year-old Male, resident of Loglu, Kadu village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, held on February 16, 2025 from 12:45 PM to 02:00 PM.

¹ Interview with Pekrik Kadu, aged 55 years Female, resident of Kadu village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on April 1, 2025 from 7:30 PM to 9:10 PM.

¹ Oko/Ekkam is packing leaf (Scientific name *Phrynium Pubinerve*) and is a part of daily Galo life.

¹ Interview with Minya Kadu, (*Gaoh Burah*), aged 83-year-old Male, resident of Saku, Kadu village under Koyu Administrative Circle of Lower Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, on March 22, 2025 from 8:35AM to 10:14 AM.

¹ *Ibid.*