

REPORT ON REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON “ARCHAEOLOGY OF NORTH-EASTERN INDIA”

The Archaeological Survey of India as a part of its 150th Anniversary Celebrations organized a two days Regional Conference on “Archaeology of North-Eastern India” on 20th & 21st July, 2012 at Hotel Brahmaputra Ashok, Guwahati in which scholars from Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya and Nagaland have participated.



In the inaugural session Shri T.J. Baidya, Regional Director i/c (Eastern Region) welcomed the participants. In the conference, Dr. Gautam Sengupta, Director General, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi stressed that the Archaeological Survey of India should improve the coordination with the local communities and research scholars towards the better preservation of the historical monuments situated in various parts of the North-Eastern region. Addressing the participants as the Chief Guest, Prof. J.N. Phukan, Professor of History, Gauhati University suggested for the need of taking aggressive & affirmative action from the side of Archaeological Survey of India to stop encroachments near the centrally protected monuments. In the presidential address Shri A.K. Sinha, Director,





Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi emphasized the need of including more monuments/sites from the North-Eastern region in the centrally protected list. The inaugural session was concluded with the vote of thanks presented by Dr. S.S. Gupta, Superintending Archaeologist, Guwahati Circle.

On 20/7/2012 in the first day of the academic session ten papers were presented. The first paper was presented by Shri A.K. Sharma, Retired Superintending Archaeologist,

ASI & presently Archaeological Advisor in the Deptt. of Culture, Govt. of Chhatisgarh. His paper titled "Heritage of



North-East India" highlighted the rich archaeological heritage of North-East India as evident

from the excavations at Sekta in Manipur, Bhaitbari in West Garo Hills District of Meghalaya and explorations conducted in Nagaland. Dr. Paromita Das, Associate Professor, Deptt. of History, Gauhati University in her paper "Historical Archaeology of Kapili-Jamuna Valley of Assam" presented a stone &



terracotta sculptures of

an ancient flourishing kingdom in the Kapili-Jamuna Valley. Dr. Projit Kumar Palit, Associate Professor, Assam University, Silchar described the inscriptional evidences regarding the



patronage of Buddhism in early North-East India in his paper "Inscriptions of Tripura: A Root of Buddhism in Early North-East India". Dr. Watijungshi Jamir, Associate Professor, Kohima



Science College, Nagaland in his paper “Megalithic Monuments of the Angami Nagas” presented the living megalithic traditions among the Angami Nagas. Dr. M.Manibabu, Professor of Anthropology, Manipur University in his paper “Pottery Making, Ceramic Ecology and System Paradigm: an Example of Processual Archaeological Study from Manipur” attempted to identify a series of feedback mechanisms related with the culture as well as the environment that favours or limits to the origin, development and continuity of the craft of pot making among an indigenous Mongoloid population inhabited in the valley of Manipur, the Andro. A search for recurrent associated elements within the structured symbolic practice of erecting megaliths in Cherrapunjee in relation to their contextual meaning was presented by Dr. Sukanya Sharma, Associate Professor, Deptt. of HSS, IIT, Guwahati in her paper “Megaliths of Cherrapunjee”. In his paper “Some Collections of Terracotta Plaques, Panels & Art Motifs in the Archaeological Museum, Sri Suryapahar” Shri Bimal Sinha, Asstt. Superintending Archaeologist, Sri Suryapahar Archaeological Museum showed the terracotta plaques & art motifs preserved in the Archaeological Museum, Sri Suryapahar in Goalpara District of Assam which throw light on different cultural aspects of life as depicted in these plaques during the historical past in the region. Dr. Aokumla Walling, Associate Professor, Nagaland University highlighted the relationship between oral tradition and archaeology in Nagaland in identification of archaeological sites. Shri Arup Bordoloi of Srimanta Shankardev Kalakshetra presented a paper on “Buddhism in North East India and a few Significant Monuments from Assam”. Dr. Ceicil Mawlong, Associated Professor of History, NEHU, Shillong highlighted different types of Khasi Megaliths in her paper “Khasi Megaliths: Problems & Prospects”.

In the second day of academic session eleven papers were presented. Professor Alok Tripathi, Deptt. of History, Assam University Silchar presented a paper on “Archaeological Excavations in Northeast India in Twentieth Century”. Prof. L. Kunjeswori Devi, Deptt. of History, Manipur University presented the prehistoric archaeological remains in her paper “Recent Discoveries of Stone Age Culture of Kathong Hill Range, Chandel, Manipur”. Dr. Vinay Kumar of Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi presented his paper on “Megalithic Culture of North-East India”. Dr. H.N. Dutta, Director, Directorate of Archaeology, Assam gave a brief outline of the rock-cut caves excavated along the course of the river Brahmaputra in Assam in his paper “Rock-cut Caves along the River Brahmaputra”. Dr. Tiatoshi Jamir, Asstt. Professor, Deptt. of History & Archaeology highlighted the potential of a community based

archaeology in Nagaland from his recent work at Chungliyimit in Tuensang District of Nagaland in his paper “ancestral Sites, Local Communities and Archaeology in Nagaland: Towards a Collaborative Archaeology at Chungliyimit”. The other papers presented were “A Preliminary investigation at Tiyi Longchum, Wokha, Nagaland” by Dr. R.Chumbeno Nagullie, Japfu Christian college, Kohima; “ Stone Age Culture of Arunachal Pradesh” by Dr. Tage Tada, Director, Directorate of research & Nabajit Deori, Technical officer, Directorate of research, Govt. of Arunachal Pradesh; “Megalithic Tradition in Nagaland: A Study among the Lotha Nagas of Wokha district” by Dr. Jonali Devi, Department of Anthropology, Cotton College, Panbazar, Guwahati-1; “Ethno –Archaeology of Shell Fishing and Lime Production: Prospect for North-East” by Dr. Tilok Thakuria, Assistant Professor, NEHU, Shillong; ”

Archaeology of the sacred contextualizing Ganesha in early Assam” by Dr. Rena Laisram Professor of History, Guwahati University, Assam.



The two day conference was concluded with the valedictory function chaired by Dr. R.D. Chaudhury, former D.G., National Museum, New Delhi. A photo exhibition on “Archaeological discoveries of North-East India” was also organized during the conference.



SUPERINTENDING ARCHAEOLOGIST