

DISCOVERY OF KANGLEIPAK (5)

By Wangkhemcha Chingtamlen (+91-89745 77 213 (Daytime))

Pakhangba , a Snake as the progenitor of Kangleicha Meetei Race.
(It is an improper concept, created and born during Hindu Rule in Kangleipak).

Though most of the Meetei people, who are educated and cultured, do not agree with the idea and concept that the present Meetei Race are the descendants of a Lairel in the meaning of a big Snake, Python; but many uncultured, uneducated, uncritical and unsubtle minded people, even to day, are thinking that the Meetei Race are the sons and daughters of a Lairel in the meaning of a big snake or Python. Yes, the ancient Meetei Race are the descendants of a Lairel, in the original meaning of Lairel = Lailel = Lai + lel = Lai means God + Lel means the best, the highest, the ultimate as in the meaning of Phirel (best cloth), Ngarel (the best fish), Sharel (the best beast), Chaklen (the best meal) etc. This wrong and improper idea and concept prevails in some hill communities also in Kangleipak.

This injurious, wrong and improper idea or concept was created and born during the Hindu Rule since the advent of Hinduism in the 18th century A.D.

Before tracing the birth of the idea or concept historically on the soil of Kangleipak, let us look at the problem scientifically.

The geological age of the earth is estimated to be 4500 million years. On this Earth, about 3500 million years B.P. one cell-organism, unidentifiable plant or animal came into being, fish developed 400 million year B.P., from fish, amphibians developed 280 million years B.P., from amphibians, reptiles (snakes, pythons etc.) developed 250 million years B.P., from reptiles, mammals (monkeys, apes etc.) were developed 150 million years B.P. But Homo Sapien (man) developed from mammal 2 million years B.P.

In this evolutionary hierarchy, the time distance between man and snakes (reptiles) is $250,000,000 - 2,000,000 = 248,000,000$ years. In the evolutionary ladder, Snakes, Pythons etc. are below the Homo Sapien (man) by 248,000,000 years in evolution.

The indigenous Kangleicha knew that there is a mythology that when Sanamahi Lainingthou created man, the last living being created by Lainingthou Sanamahi was a 'yong' = a monkey. Lainingthou Sanamahi brought the 'yong' before His God Father, Salailel Sitapa and claimed to His Father that He was created a man. Salailel Sitapa disagreed and told His son, Sanamahi Lainingthou to create man in the likeness of His (Salailel Sitapa) image. Thus man was created as an image of God, highest in the evolutionary Hierarchy nearest to God. Upto this day indigenous Kangleichas think that 'yong' is their ancestor.

In such facts of evolutionary process of living beings, scientific facts, on this planet earth, can there be any ancestral relationship of the indigenous Meetei Race with Snake-Python-Reptiles in their genealogy. Senseless ! The indigenous Kangleichas Meetei are not 'Nag Bungsees' of India.

Now let us trace the word or concept 'Lairel', some times 'Lairen' historically in the Kanglei society - what it was and what it is now to some people in the Kanglei Society? The word 'Lairel' is a word very frequently used by the indigenous people. In the Meetei traditional dance 'Thabal Chongba', the dancers use it 'Ngasida Lairel Nongjada'; in the Cheithaba hymn 'Nayu tubi yoinongda, Nongda lairel Pakhangba'; in the Cheitharol Kumbaba 'Nongda Lairen Pakhangba'; 'Tubi Lairel Chagok'; Pakhangba gave birth to Seven Lairels'; 'There is a black Lairel in the Iroisemba zoo'; etc.

The use of 'Lairel' or 'Lail', in different backgrounds as in the above, may puzzle even the most inquisitive etymologist at present. No clearcut meaning or concept may be discerned from the words 'Lairel' or 'Lairen' at present circumstances to the general people. In the 'Ngasida Lairel Nongjada', the word 'Lairel' cannot be equated to a snake or python in its meaning and concept. In the hymn of Cheithaba 'Nayu Tubi yoinongda, Nongda Lairel Pakhangba', reading the two sentences together the word 'Lairel' meant a snake or python. In the hymn the meaning and concept is 'snakes or python Pakhangba' is certain; in the Cheitharol Kumbaba, 'Nongda Lairel Pakhangba', the two words 'Lairel Pakhangba, we do not know whether they meant 'Snake Pakhangba' or otherwise. But in the sentences 'Tubi Lairel chagok' and 'there is a black Lairel in the Iroisemba Zoo'. , the meaning or concept of 'Lairel' is definitely a snake or Python. In the sentence 'Pakhangba gave birth to seven Lairels', to us who know the cultural past of the Meetei Race, it is a Lairel = Highest God, but to common people, it is a horrible meaning of 'Snake or Python'.

These murky, vague concepts or meanings of 'Lairel' and 'Pakhangba' originated during the Hindu times since 18th century A.D. Machinations and indoctrinations with threat of physical injury to lead the indigenous Kangleichas to think in the way of 'Nag Bungsees' of India made these social maladies during the Hindu Rule of the last about 300 years.

The Meetei Race in Kangleipak had very sacred and solemn concepts of 'Lairel' and 'Pakhangba' before the advent of Hinduism in 18th century A.D.

The Meetei Race has the tradition and mythology that they are sons and daughters of the Universal Lord Creator.

In the scripture called Puya by the Meetei Race , it is written about the birth of Sanamahi and Pakhangba as under :

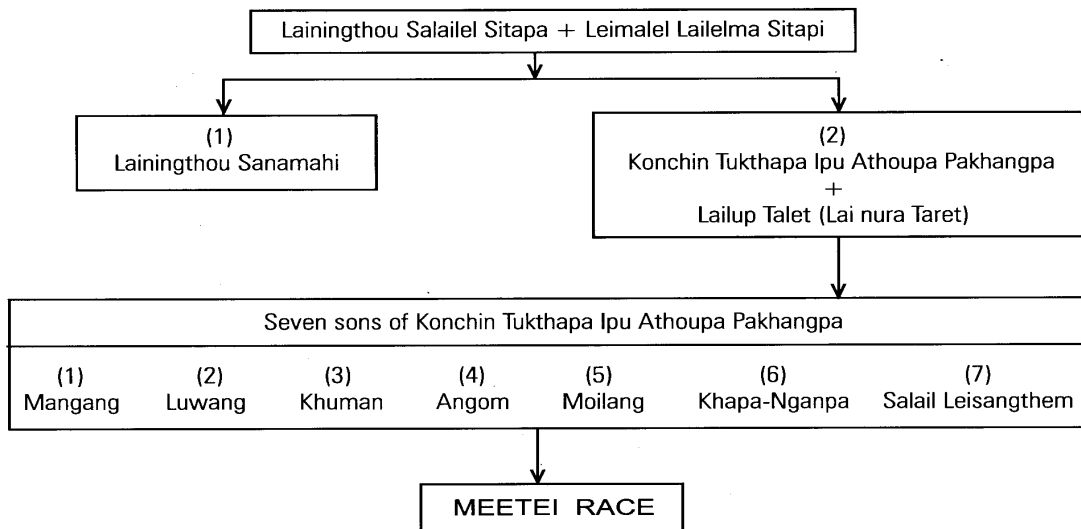
“ Asum Oipa Laipauki matung-inna Sitapaki eesaiphu eelon-nungta, numit humni supaki nouwaki mawong oina sanaki machu manpa nouwa ama leilamle; nouwa atupu yenglaka sanaki masak manpa angangpa machuna leitengpa mahi atupu upata Sanamhi haipa

mingthonpu peetuna machaki matamkumna loukhatle. Asum touna loukhatlapaka Lailelpi Sitapi Lailem mata Peesille.”

Before the birth of Sanamahi Lainingthou, a voice from the primordial space said that Ipung Loinapa Apakpa, the Universal Lord will come down on the Earth to create living beings. This was heard by Salailel Sitapa (Ipa Salailel, Ipa Sorarel) and Leimalel Sitapi (the Earth personified as deathless woman mother). The above quotation says in English roughly “ According to the Laipau (voice from the space), a child (nouwa) of three day was found in the eesaiphu eelon-nung of Salailel Sitapa (body of Salailel Sitapa). After seeing the child (Nouwa) decorated with red Sanaki machu manpa (having procreative power), Salailel Sitapa took up the nouwa and handed over to Leimalel Sitapi.” (The statement in the scripture cannot be translated in normal way, it should be explained. The writer has not done it).

This Laipau is the beginning of creation of the living beings according to the tradition and mythology of the Meetei Race and of the genealogy of the Meetei Race. Please examine the quotation from Puya and try to understand the words underlined. The “Laibou chongba’ tradition of the Meetei Lai Haraoba came from this ‘Laipau’ in the Puya. From the words and concepts of ‘Sitapaki eesaiphu eelon-nung’, the present tradition of having an ‘eesaiphu’ in every worship of God came’. The words and concept of ‘ Sanaki masak manpa’ meant ‘having procreative power’. The word ‘sanaki’ is not related with ‘Gold’ or Gold liquid’ in anyway. From the words and concepts of ‘Mahi’ and ‘Sanamahi’ in the Puya categorically prove that the Meetei Race is not idolatry in their religion.

The Kangleichas Meetei Race know very well that Sanamahi Lainingthou is the elder son and Pakhangba is the younger son of Lainingthou Salailel Sitapa (Ipa Salailel, Ipa Sorarel) and Leimalel Sitapi (Malem Earth as deathless woman-mother) according to the tradition and mythology of the Meetei Race. According to this tradition and mythology, the genealogy of the Meetei Race is as under :



According to this tradition, and mythology of the Meetei race in Kangleipak, as shown in the diagram above, the first Monarch of Kangleipak, Konchin Tukthapa Ipu Athoupa Pakhangpa is the direct son of Lainingthou Salailel Sitapa (Ipa Salailel, Ipa Sorarel at present) and Leimalel Lailelma Sitapi (Malem Leima, the Earth). Konchin Tukthapa is the real name of the Kanglei first Monarch; Ipu Athoupa means brave grandfather; Pakhangpa = Pa + Khangpa = pa means Ipa further means Father + khangpa means to Know. So Pakhangpa = Pakhangba means a man who knows Father, that is, the Universal Lord Creator. The present household word Ibudhou is a derivative of 'Ipu Athoupa' of the Puya. The Meetei Race called Panthou to the husband of the mother-woman, not as Ipa. Ipa (Father) is solemn name of the Universal Lord Creator (Universal Father) given by the Meetei Race in Kangleipak.

As the Seven- Salai Meetei Race is the direct descendents of the first Monarch, brave grandfather Konchin Pakhangpa, the Meetei Race gave the first Monarch of Kangleipak a very respectful name 'Lailel Pakhangba'. Lailel = at present Lairel = Lai + Lel = Lai means God + Lel means the best, the highest, ultimate God. So, Lailel Pakhangpa means highest God who knows the Universal Lord Creator on the Earth. The first Monarch of Kangleipak was idealised as God on the Earth and worshipped him as Lailel Pakhangpa by the Meetei race.

From this brief statement of the genealogy of the present Meetei Race and of their first monarch, Konchin Tukthapa Ipu Athoupa Pakhangpa, every man and woman may be very sure that Lailel = Lairel, Pakhangba are never related with any meaning or concept of Snake, Python etc.

The prosperous and disciplined society of Kangleipak became destabilised in all respects and was in the process of destruction of all Kanglei Social fabrics since the advent of Hinduism. To destroy the backbone of the Kanglei racial genealogy originating the Meetei Race from the Universal Lord in the deep rooted tradition and mythology, the murky and derogatory concept of Reptile-Snake-Python was imposed upon the originally clear and solemn concepts of Lailel Pakhangpa with Royal authority since the days of Pamheiba Garivaniwaz and Santi Das Gosai in the 18th century A.D.

Now please see how the murky, unholy, derogatory concepts of Lairel Pakhangba were pushed in since the beginning of Hindu Rules in Kangleipak historically.

“Tarukni yumsakeisada Pakhangba Nongthoudagi Khaorou oina fifou mangda tarakye” page 99 Cheitharol Kumbaba (1967) English translation : “On 6th Wednesday, Pakhangba came down from heaven as a Cobra before the fifou.” This was in 1745 A.D. during the reign of Pamheiba Garivaniwaz. “Tarani Ningthoukabada Sna Yan Lokchaoda Lairel Thokye” page 129, Cheitharol Kumbaba (1967). It was during reign of king Bhagyachandra in 1784 A.D. English translation : ‘On Monday at Sna Yan Lokchao Lairel Came out.’”

The unholy campaign to impose the unholy concept of Reptile-Snake-Python upon the solemn concepts of Lailai Pakhangba will be more clear from the records of the 'Diary of Manipur', 1904, the so called Chronicle of the Royal Family (of Manipur):

"Pakhangba the ancestral God of the Manipurians came down from heaven in the shape of a small serpent and appeared in the front of the Raja's house". Page 70, Diary of Manipur, 1904. It was during the reign of Pamheiba Garivaniwaz. Can any body imagine, Pakhangba, the ancestral God of the 'Manipuris' came down as a small snake from heaven, scientifically or otherwise ?

'A peculiar kind of serpent was found at Lokchao, the serpent was called, by the name of Lailai (God of serpents)" page 96, Diary of Manipur, 1904.

These are all recorded facts of history. Along with these, the facts of building of temples of Pakhangba are recorded at page 99 of Cheitharol Kumbaba (1967) and at page 70 of the Diary of Manipur, 1904.

The modus operandi of the campaign, to impose concepts and traditions of Reptile-Snake-Python upon the solemn concepts and traditions of Lailai Pakhangba, was tricky and cruel.

At the sight of a cobra, a snake or a python, or some times, the Palace people will keep a cobra or a Python at some particular place and the mass people will be ordered to assemble there, and the Royal dignitaries will identify the Cobra, or snake or the python as the Kanglei ancestral God Pakhangba, it is called Lailai = Lailai, they will say. The indigenous Kangleichas will be forced to worship as such. Pakhangba temples were constructed and idol of Pakhangba in the shape and form of a cobra, or a snake or a python will be kept in the temple. The indigenous Kangleichas will be forced to bow down before the cobra, or the snake, or the python idols regularly with some indoctrinations every time. Any people who shows some dissents will be punished severely.

Such machinations and indoctrinations with threat of physical injuries during the last about 300 years, about 6/7 generations, of Hindu rule imprinted the concepts of a cobra, or a snake, or a python in place of the solemn concepts of Lailai Pakhangba to the minds of indigenous Kanglei masses.

These machinations and indoctrinations with threat of physical injuries were at zenith during the reign of Pamheiba Garivaniwaz and Bhagyachandra.