

*Extra Notes: Essays on
Literature, Society and Culture*



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Eastward ho!

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Editorial

Eastward ho...!!!

We are glad to publish the new issue of *Extra Notes: Essays on Literature, Culture and Society!*

The short essays collected here were submitted by the students of the Department of English as part of their project report after an educational tour to Shillong and other parts of the North-East in the month of April 2023.

North-East, traditionally called the seven sisters of India, is least known to the mainland India. The people from the North-East often face cultural slurs and prejudiced stereotypes when they visit the mainland India. Our ignorance- and apathy- is so complete that the people of North-East feel isolated and *otherised*. This often feed into a sense of disintegration. How to address this apathy? How to understand and heal the wounded psyche of the people of North-East? Literature and art is perhaps the best answer to this question. However, reading, if supplemented with practical experience, can work a magic.

The Department of English realized the urgency of this problem and took the decision to sensitise our students about North-East. As part of this mission we took our students to Shillong and other parts of North-East so that they can have an experience of the people, culture and geography of North-East. We believe

this will help in bridging the gap and foster cultural understanding, nurture empathy and fellow-feeling which is highly necessary for a cohesive and meaningful democratic polity.

The essays collected here testify to the efforts our students made in *unlearning* and learning from/ and with the people of North-East. As mentors, we were witness to their eagerness and enthusiasm about the landscape, the changing climate, religious diversity, ethnic conflict and a sense of isolation among the people of North-East. We sincerely hope this would guide their meaningful interaction with the North-East in future.

We thank Dr. Ashim Kumar Sarkar, principal, Gour Mahavidyalaya for financial assistance to cover the cost of Museum visit of the students in Shillong.

- Editorial Board

Traversing North-East India: Land, People and Poetry

Prasenjit Das

Introduction:

'North-East India', commonly known as "The Land of Seven Sisters", stands for the seven states of north-east – Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram, Nagaland and Arunachal Pradesh collectively. But recently Sikkim is also considered as a part of the north-east region. This area of land has a culture of its own. The north-eastern culture, languages, people and their lifestyle are very much different from the 'mainland' India. This report is an effort to look into their culture and try to find out how they have a uniqueness of their own. Experiences and observations from our journey to Shillong will help us to understand it better.

Geographical history of North-East:

The entire northeast region is connected to the mainland through a narrow strip of land known as the "Chicken Neck", which was created in 1947 during the partition of India. It shares borders with countries like – Nepal, Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh. The city of Guwahati in Assam is regarded as the 'gateway to the North-East'. Though it is a part of Himalayan region, there are traces of other hills like "Garo" and "Khasi" which are not part of the Himalayas. Northeast is still the native land for most of the tribes of India. Tribes like 'Chakma', 'Marma', 'Khasi', 'Garo', 'Manipuri', 'Bodo', 'Idu Mishmi' are very much well known. The northeast is never ruled by any ruler of mainland India neither by the Mughals nor by the British till 1820s. They had their own tribal chief in order to maintain discipline. The whole region came in focus when Burma invaded Assam and the Anglo-Burmese War started (1824-1826). After defeating the Burmese, the British rule was officially established in the northeast region. But the people of northeast never accepted the British rule and tried to protest against it in many occasion. After the independence of India in 1947, there were only three states in North-East – Assam, Manipur and Tripura. Meghalaya, Nagaland, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh were part of Assam. But in 1947, only Assam got its statehood with the rest of the country. Unlike the mainland India where states were made on a linguistic basis, in the North-East states were formed on the basis of ethnic and tribal identity.

North-East literature:

As a region with rich cultural and ethnolinguistic diversity, the literature of Northeast India is a representative of varied histories, languages, socio-cultural and religious practices. They have literary works both in their own languages and in English also. Writers from northeast who wrote in English are few. Among them - Mamang Dai, Anungla Zoe Longkumer, Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih, Temsula Ao, Sanjib Baruah, Robin S Ngangom are some well-known names. They have contributed a lot to bring out the difficulties and problems of northeast India. How they are getting marginalized within their country still this date, how their lands are being exploited by the people of mainland India, how they are getting victimized by the oppression; all reflect in the literature of Northeast.

Mamang Dai and her works:

Mamang Dai is one of the most popular poets from North-East India. By birth she is a native of Arunachal Pradesh. Her family belongs to the Adi tribe. She completed her schooling from Shillong, Meghalaya and her Bachelor in English literature from Gauhati University, Assam. She is the first woman from her state to be selected for IAS. But she left her post as an IAS and started working as a journalist. While working as a journalist, she contributed to The Telegraph, Hindustan Times and The Sentinel. When she began writing, she wrote romantic verse and stories. She then moved from the theme of the self to focus on a larger reality. She reflects upon the sense of a close knit community living in remoter towns and villages. Her major works are –

Non-fictional work: *'Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land'* (2003), *'Mountain Harvest: The Food of Arunachal'* (2004), *'Once upon a Moontime'* (2003).

Novel: *'The Legends of Pensam'* (2006), *'Stupid Cupid'* (2008), *'The Black Hill'* (2014), *'Escaping the Land'* (2021).

Poetry collection: *'River Poems'* (2004), *'The Balm of Time'* (2008), *'Hambreelmai's Loom'* (2014), *'Midsummer Survival Lyrics'* (2014).

Mamang Dai has been awarded with **'Padma Shri'** in 2011 and **'Sahitya Akademi Award'** in 2017.

Tour itinerary and my observations from the tour:

The Department of English of Gour Mahavidyalaya had made an excursion to Shillong recently. The tour started on 28th April midnight and ended on the dawn of 3rd May. Through this journey, on one hand we were able to enjoy the mesmerizing natural beauty of Assam and Meghalaya and on the other hand we were able to see the differences between the people of northeast and the people of mainland.

DAY – 1:

On the first day of the journey we visited the 'Elephant Falls', one of the famous tourist attractions of Shillong. But the first thing that I observed is how lifeless the falls were. The water flow was very poor and the effect of climate change was very much noticeable. It was not the only one, 'The Seven Sister Falls' have the same condition. We were at Mawsynram that too on the month of May but we did not see a drop of rain there. It is very painful to see how the nature and its beauty is being affected by climate change. Next we visited the Arwah-Lumshynna Cave, which has the fossils of some marine creatures that were alive 5.6-6.6 crore years ago. But unfortunately the fossils were not maintained well. There were writings on the walls of the cave everywhere and for those writings the fossils cannot be seen very clearly. The authorities should have taken needed steps to maintain those valuable assets.



Figure 1 - 'Elephant Falls', Shillong

DAY – 2:

Our first destination on the second day was Dawki River and Bangladesh border. As it is said "Dawki is the cleanest river in Asia", we actually experienced that. The water was so clean that the boats seemed to be floating in the air. The natural beauty was totally breathtaking. But more interesting was the concept of border. Though it was an international border we did not see any fencing there, in fact the border line was made with the stones from the river



Figure 2.1 - The Dawki River of

bank. There were guards of course but people from other side of the border were selling goods to the tourists. Basically, the idea of border was completely different there. I personally bought 'Aachar' (pickle) from a Bangladeshi person with Indian currency. It shows how we have a complete different idea of border and in reality there is actually no such things. People are trading through the border. Next we went to 'the cleanest village in Asia', Mawlynnong. Here I realized man can actually preserve nature if they want. The village was so clean and the air was refreshing there that we all felt the energy of nature within ourselves. It actually matches with the poems of Mamang Dai. How she has described the beauty and the energy of nature can be felt in the village. This village can be a lesson to the world how people can live comfortably without doing any harm to mother-nature.



Figure 2.2 - An Indian tourist (one of us) with a Bangladeshi pickle-seller on the India-Bangladesh border

DAY – 3: On day three, we visited the locality of Shillong, had conversation with the people and tried to understand how they feel about mainland India. Visiting the local market of Police Bazar was a different experience. There we talked to some of the natives and the first thing that I noticed was the language. Most of them don't speak Hindi or any other



Figure 3 - One of us trying to have conversation with the local children

mainland Indian language. They rather prefer to speak in their native tongue. It can be a way to protest against the marginalization that they face. They are proud of their own language and refuse to accept any other language in order to communicate. In this process



Figure 4 - Samples of North-Eastern culture from Don Bosco Museum

we learned many 'Khasi' words. In this case, our teachers were very helpful. They actively encouraged us to go and talk to the people and know more about their language. They even gave us task to learn 10-15 words from every place we visited. We also visited the Don Bosco Museum and the house of Rabindranath Tagore. At Tagore's house, Dr. Dhritiman Chakraborty, one of our teacher recited some verses from "*Shesher Kabita*" (*The Last Poem and Farewell*). In Don Bosco Museum we learned many things about the North-Eastern tribes and their culture. We learned about the history of how the Catholic Missionaries came to the Northeast and teaches the tribes the social norms of life through Christianity. The Christian influence was very much noticeable through out the museum. Though the museum is for the North-East tribals and their culture but there is a whole floor dedicated to highlight Christianity. At some point it can be felt that the artifacts were showing that the natives of northeast were uncultured, uncivilised and the Christian Missionaries came and made them cultured, civilised. At some extent the museum tells the story of the Christia Missionaries not the natives of Northeast.

DAY – 4:

We spent the fourth day at Guwahati, Assam. We visited the Bashishtha Ashram and The Balaji Temple. Enjoyed the view at the banks of Bramhaputra. One thing that caught my

eye was the difference between these two states. Though they both are part of North-East India but there is a vast difference between the culture, socio-political condition of Assam and Meghalaya.

My overall observation of North-East and what I learned from the tour:

There were so many things to observe, to learn and to understand. Most of them I probably missed out but a few things did catch my eye. These are some issues that I noticed throughout our journey of Meghalaya and Assam.

- 1. The socio-political condition:** The socio-political condition in Meghalaya was totally different from mainland India. In Meghalaya there was no such fascination about 'Nationalism'. They do not romanticise nationalism. Throughout the journey I did not notice a single Indian flag anywhere. But that does not mean they do not love the country. Actually they are trying to uphold their own identity as a part of India. There was a tone of protest, anger and disappointment in their voice. They do not want to be identified as others within their own country. People in the mainland India had never seen the north-east as a part of India. To them northeast is only a tourist spot to visit. They never thought of the problems that the people of northeast deal with. Northeast has always been an "other" to them. That's why they have a rage inside them and they do not hesitate to show it. At the streets of Police Bazar there were many walls where they had covered the faces of the politicians of national political parties with black ink. There were wall arts and graffiti over the walls everywhere as a sign of protest. They had the freedom of doing such things. Where this kind of acts can put someone behind the bars in mainland India.
- 2. Difference in language:** They do not speak any national language. They prefer their own native language over any other language. Which is again an act of upholding their own identity. They hardly speak Hindi some of them don't even understand Hindi. Bengali is probably the only mainland Indian language that is practiced in Meghalaya.
- 3. The condition of Women:** An other interesting fact about Meghalaya is the condition of women. Where in mainland India women are not allowed to go outside the house at some places; in Meghalaya women are actually running the market. Most of the shops in the market of Police Bazar are run by women. They are the breadwinner for their families. In that sense, Meghalaya is much more developed in terms of 'woman empowerment'.

These are so much relatable with the text of North-East literature. Mamang Dai has talked about the same problems in her texts. How the people of her region are being marginalised, how they are being otherised in their own country and how they are protesting against it by upholding their identity, their roots.

Conclusion:

To be honest, it was once in a lifetime experience for me. This tour taught me many things. I explored a totally new world that I was completely unaware of. I learned about the people, their tradition, their culture, their food, their sports and so many things. This tour gave me a new point of view to see things. The person I was before the trip and the person I am right now is not the same. This tour to Meghalaya has changed me, made a better version of myself. I am very much grateful to the Department of English, Gour Mahavidyalaya for arranging this tour and hope that this trend will continue for many more years ahead.

Listening to the Voice of the Mountain: Mamang Dai, North East and Our Collective Indifference

-Sonali Das

Introduction :

Northeast region in India is rich in culture and diversity that comprises eight states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. It is located in the easternmost part of India and shares borders with Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh. The region is known for its diverse culture and traditions, scenic beauty with hills and valleys, rich flora and fauna, and unique cuisine. Northeast literature refers to the literary works produced in the northeastern region of the United States. This region has a rich literary history and has produced many notable writers and poets such as Mamang Dai.

Northeast literature often reflects the unique culture and landscape of the region. Many works explore themes such as nature, rural life, and small-town communities. The harsh winters and rugged terrain of the Northeast are also common themes in literature from this region.

History and Geography of North-East :

- The history of Northeast India dates back to the prehistoric times when the region was inhabited by various tribes including the Iroquois, Algonquin, and Wampanoag. These tribes had complex societies with their own languages, customs, and traditions. The region was also under the influence of various kingdoms such as the Kachari Kingdom in Assam and the Manipuri Kingdom in Manipur. During the British colonial rule in India, Northeast India was known as 'Assam Province' which included present-day Arunachal Pradesh and Nagaland. After India gained independence in 1947, Northeast India became a part of the Indian Union.
- Northeast India is a mountainous region with several ranges such as the Himalayas, Patkai Hills and Naga Hills. The Brahmaputra River flows through most parts of the region and is an important source of water for irrigation and transportation. The climate of Northeast India varies from subtropical to alpine depending on altitude and location. The region receives heavy rainfall during monsoon season which lasts from June to September. The flora and fauna of Northeast India are diverse due to its varied topography. The region is home of several endangered species such as one-horned rhinoceros, clouded leopard and Hoolock Gibbon.

Northeast India has a rich history and unique geography that makes it an important part of Indian culture and heritage. Today, the Northeast remains an important economic center with thriving industries like finance, technology, healthcare, and education.

Mamang Dai : Life and Literature:

- Mamang Dai is an Indian writer, poet, and journalist from Arunachal Pradesh in India's Northeast. She was born on 17th May 1957 in the village of Bodak in the West

Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh. Her family belongs to the Adi tribe. She completed her schooling from Pine Mount School, Shillong, Meghalaya. She completed her Bachelor in English literature from Guwahati University, Assam. She completed her education from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Dai is the first woman of her state to have been selected to the IAS/IFS. However she gave up her career in the Civil Service to pursue a career in journalism. Dai was correspondent with the Hindustan Times, the Telegraph and the Sentinel newspapers and was President, Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists. She also worked with World Wide Fund for nature in the Eastern Himalaya Biodiversity Hotspots programme. She was the former secretary of Itanagar Press Club. She was the president of Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists (APUW). In 2011, she was appointed a member of Arunachal Pradesh state public service commission.

- Dai's literary works are mostly based on the culture and traditions of the people of Arunachal Pradesh. Her writing reflects her deep understanding of the region's history, folklore, and mythology. Her poetry is known for its lyrical quality and vivid imagery that captures the beauty of nature. Dai has published several books, including poetry collections like River Poems (1994), The Seasons of Life (1997), and Stammering Shadows (2010). She has also written novels such as The Legends of Pensam (2006) and The Black Hill (2013). Her works have been translated into several languages, including Hindi, Bengali, Assamese, and German.
- Apart from her literary pursuits, Dai has also worked as a journalist for various newspapers and magazines. She has been associated with The Hindu since 1992 and has written extensively on issues related to Northeast India. Dai's contributions to literature have been recognized with several awards and honors. She was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017 for her novel The Black Hill. She has also received the Padma Shri in 2011 for her contributions to literature and journalism.

In conclusion, Mamang Dai is a prominent writer from Arunachal Pradesh whose works reflect the rich cultural heritage of the region. Her poetry and prose capture the essence of life in Northeast India with great sensitivity and depth.

Tour Itinerary:

The place Northeast India has an untouchable natural beauty. There is abundance of national parks, forest, greenery, exotic flora and fauna lakes, rivers, and waterfalls and panoramic landscape of hills, mountains and fields.

The Itinerary of Northeast visit for five days is given below:

Name of the Tour : An Educational Tour to Northeast India

Time period : From Friday , 28th April,2023 to Tuesday , 2nd May,2023

Day 1 : Date - 28th May

- **Destination** : Shilong
- **Description** : we start our journey by train from Malda to Kamakhya junction . In the evening we reach Shillong from kamakhya. After dinner we stay night in the hotel of Shilong.

Day 2 : Date – 29th April

- **Destination** : Cherrapunji and Mawsynram.
- **Description**: In the morning our journey started by bus . At first we visit the Elephant falls at cherrapunji . we visit to see the Seven Sister falls and two mysterious caves Mawsmmai cave and Arwah cave. There is fossils and Stalactite in the Arwah cave . After the lunch, we see another falls Wah Kaba latara . At night we returned back our hotel.

Day 3 : Date – 30th April

- **Destination**: Single Root Bridge and Unmgot River
- **Description**: At first we go to the Dawki, the cleanest river in Asia then the Single Root Bridge. After seeing the Root Bridge, we go to a small village, Mawlynnong the cleanest village in Asia. we walk around the whole village and makes conversation with some people of this village . That's how our day's journey ends and we wait for the next day.

Day 4 : 1st May

- **Destination** : Shilong, Son Bosco Museum, Police Bazar, Rabindranath's rent house and Umiram lake.
- **Description** : In this day we see the local sights of Shilong. There is Rabindranath's rent house where he wrote his last poem. We go to the church then we introduce with the Don Bosco Museum. After lunch we go to Police Bazar. On the way returning back to hotel, we see the Umiram lake.

Day 5 : Date – 2nd May

- **Destination** : Guwahati , Balaji Temple, Basistha Muni's Ashram, Guwahati Station .
- **Description** : We come to Guwahati from Shilong. After visiting the Basistha Muni's ashram and Balaji Temple,we go to Guwahati station in the afternoon and return to Malda station by train early in the next morning. Thus our tour ends.

My Experience of the Tour :

- A Tour is a Journey for pleasure In which several different places are visited. Our five days tour is based on the Northeast literature that can help us to understand the Northeast culture, tradition and the communities. A lot of memories of the tour have been gathered in the leaf of my heart. There is a strange happiness in the together -ness. In the Elephant falls, I feel a Calmness of mind. I heard the sound of the falls. I meet with the people of Khashi tribe and make some conversation with the people. We learn some words of their Khasi language. There is one thing attracted me very much that is the dress up sense of the women of Meghalaya. The attire of the female is called **Jainsem** which flows loose to ankles. One of the main attractions is the Unmgot River where I go for a boat ride and experience what the world underwater looks like. The water is so clear that it Practically Shines Silver when the sun rays fall upon it. Mawlynnong, the village won the title of the cleanest village in Asia. It is the place blessed with nature's love. In the village, I can feel that if man wants, he can rescue the beauty of the nature forever. In the Don Bosco

museum, a mirror of Northeast India is placed. A picture of Don Dosco's life is placed neatly in the museum. Here I get to see the total reflection of the history, culture and traditions of the different kinds of tribes of Northeast India.

- The tour helps me to understand Mamang Dai and her poems. In every destination of Meghalaya, I can feel her. The mountains, rivers and sound of waterfalls create an image of Mamang Dai. During the five days of tour, we not only get a literary view but also get a familiar relationship with my friends and the professors. I am very thankful to get this kind of opportunity to go to the tour with both the professors and my classmates.

A Reflection of Mamang Dai and Northeast Literature by the Tour :

- Mamang Dai is a prominent writer from Arunachal Pradesh, a state in Northeast India . Her writings are deeply linked with the culture, traditions and landscapes of the Northeast region. She has written extensively on the themes of identity, displacement and cultural assimilation. In her writing she reflects on the unique identity of Northeast India and its complex relationship with the rest of the country .The main topic of our tour was how to get to know Mamang Dai in Northeast India. I read some of poems of Mamang Dai. Most of her poems contain the description of mountains and rivers , waterfalls. She grew up by seeing and experiencing the mountain from childhood that is why a familiar bonding with mountains emerges through all her poems. We see different communities in Meghalaya. In Meghalaya, most of the people belong to the Khasi tribe. Mamang Dai writes about how the issues of political unrest, economic underdevelopment have impacted the communities in Northeast India and calls for greater attention to be paid to their needs and concerns.
- I read a poem "**The Rainforest** " by Mamang Dai . In this poem she describes the lush green forests of Meghalaya and the sound of rain drops falling on the leaves. She also talks about the Khasi tribe and their connection with nature. I can relate the poem and the thought process of Mamang Dai during the tour. There is another poem called "**The Living Bridges**". We visit to see the Living Root Bridge and it is that bridge she talks about which is made by the Khasi tribes. The bridge is symbol of harmony between humans and nature. In the poem "**The Voice of Mountain**", Mamang Dai presents the worldview seen from the eyes of the ancient mountain. The tour helps to understand Mamang Dai and like her I was able to hear the sound of the mountain.

Conclusion:

And educational tour is a trip taken by a group of people in order to study something such as location , culture and tradition . This tour helps us in many ways. By the tour, we can easily know about the nature and culture and also tradition of Northeast India and can take the educational elements from nature. This tour helps us to recognize Mamang Dai in a different way. So far we have read about Mamang Dai and her works but with the help of this trip we have been able to feel her by the nature of Northeast India. We can say that the tour is refreshment for both teachers and students.

Literary Vlogosphere: A Journey to Shillong and North-East

-Tanmoy Mandal

Introduction: North-East Literature

It is hard to give a single definition of "North-East Literature" as the diversity of this region defies easy definitions. This phrase broadly refers to English writings but may also include *Assamese Literature*, *Traditional oral Khasi literature*, writings in *Meitei Language*, that have long tradition of writing and stand on their own with a glorious legacy. When we think of the North Eastern part of India, it remains a place less explored and distinct from the rest of Main land India. Likewise the literature from North-East is also less explored area in term of studies of Indian literature as the North-East region is geographically as well as culturally and linguistically different from the so-called mainland India. This literature has two distinct dimension- one is the "Literatures from North-East" belonging essentially to a polyglossic landscape, which include the lay of literatures in the vernacular languages of the region either in written or oral forms; and the other is a relatively young but a powerful literary terrain, which has primarily emerged in the English Language. Notably, the Anglophone Literature from Northeast has given a common identity to the ethnopolitan collectivism of this region. Unique presentation of nature, natural beauties are displayed in this literature. Protest activities against mainland and insurgency are also displayed through this literature or literary works.

Geography and History of North-East:

Sanjay Hazarika says, "India's North-East is a misshapen strip of land, linked to the rest of the country by a narrow corridor just twenty kms or its slimmest which is refer to as 'Chicken's neck'". Comprising the seven sisters of Meghalaya, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and the recently included Sikkim, North - East has ancient legacies, though the region has gained significant visibility in the recent time as a violence - ridden territory with robust political contentions. Surrounded by hills and beautiful rivers, these states are tall in the category of Eastern Himalayan



Chicken's neck of India

ranges and Palkai - Naga hills along with Brahmaputra-

Barak River system and valley plains. The hills and basins are a mixture of mountain ranges, plateaus, low hills and valleys. North - East India is the *geographical "Gateway"* for much of India's flora and fauna and as a consequence the region is one of the richest in the world in biological values with rugged terrain, dense forest and rich biodiversity.

This area is bordered by four countries - Bhutan, Bangladesh, China and Myanmar. The region has several national parks and wildlife reserves like *Kaziranga National Park*, *Manas National Park*, *Namdapha National Park*.

North - East India has been influenced by various empires and kingdoms including the Ahom Kingdom, Mahalaya Empires and British Empire. Kamarupa straddled most of the present days North- East India in the early historical period. This historical kingdom disappeared by the twelve century and got replaced by smaller political entities. However, the motion of Kamarupa persisted farther and the region is still called by the name Kamarupa. Assam was the first to gain statehood with the rest of the country in 1947. This was followed by Nagaland in 1963, Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur in 1972, Arunachal Pradesh in 1975 and Mizoram in 1987. Sikkim was added as a state of India in 1975 and finally integrated with other North eastern states in 2002. North- East is the gateway to South -East Asia and it is India's land - bridge to Myanmar. India 's Act Policy places the North Eastern states on the territorial frontier of India's Eastward engagement. Overall the Geography and history of North -East India have shapes it's unique identity and resources to its rich cultural and natural heritage.

Mamang Dai: Life and Literature:

One of the strongest voice from the North-East India, Mamang Dai, a poet and novelist was born on 23rd February, 1957 at Pasighat, East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. Her father was Martin Dai and Odi Dai was her mother. She is from a family of Adi Tribe. She completed her schooling from *Pine Mount School*, Shillong, Meghalaya and the bachelor in English literature from *Gauhati University*, Assam. She was the first female IAS candidate of her state but she left the job for journalism and writing. She worked for various newspapers, including "*The Telegraph*", "*Hindustan Times*" and "*The Sentinel*". She is also affiliated to *All India Radio and Door Darshan*, Itanagar. In 2003, Dai received the *State's Verrier Elwin Award* for her book, "*Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land*" which documented the culture and customs of the state.



In her book "*Arunachal Pradesh: the Insurgency Scene*", she talks about the insidious growth of armed groups. Her other some books are "*Legends of Pensam*", "*Stupid Cupid*", "*Mountain Harvest*", "*The Food of Arunachal*" and "*Once upon a Moon Time*" (illustrated folklore for young readers). Dai's voice is communal in nature memory and remembrance forms an important theme in Dai's

work. Her poetic voice is the unmistakable voice of the marginalized communities from India's periphery. She worked as a programme officer with *World Wide Fund for Nature*. She was awarded the *Padmashri* in 2011 for her contribution in the field of literature and education.

Tour Itinerary:

This year English Department of Gour Mahavidyalaya arranged an educational tour to North -East region of India with 27 students along with 2 professors. After a long discussion, the tour from 28th April to 2nd May was scheduled to Shillong, Cherrapunji and some places of Guwahati. Tour Itinerary of those five days are Here.



Day 1 (28th April): First day of our tour, 28th April, almost whole day was spending in train journey. As our train from Malda Town Railway station was around 5 and half hour late, we reached at Kamakhya station in afternoon and from the station we were welcomed by the tourist agency we booked. And by bus we went to *Red Pine Guest House* at Shillong. The magical night view of Shillong from our hotel's balcony kept me standing for a long time.
view from hotel balcony



Night

Day 2 (29th April): This day was started with a great excitement for our starting of side seeing of Cherrapunji. After breakfast we departed for our first location, *Elephant falls*. There I lost myself in the natural beauty. The sound of the water and the chirping of birds made that place celestial. Then we went to *Mawsmi Cave*. On the way we get off from the bus to enjoy the calm and pleasant beauty of 'V' valley before lunch. In the Mawsmi Cave we were witnessed the beauty of a cave along with the interior design on rock walls which were made by water. Before we entered before we entered the Mawsmi Cave our professors made us gathered at a place and discuss about the local. After that place we departed for another cave *Arwah Cave*. Before reaching there we enjoyed another scenic beauty at *Wah-Kaba - Latara falls*. We also enjoyed the scenic beauty of



Seven Sisters falls, one of the most beautiful falls of Cherrapunji. We tracked some path before entering the cave. Inside the cave we saw many fossils and structures of rock. After that we returned to our hotel in the evening.



Day 3 (30th April): The most beautiful day it was as we met us the witness of world - class scenic beauty of *Dawki, Living Root Bridge and Mawlynnong*.

Boating in *Umngot River*, Asia's cleanest river in Dawki was an unforgettable moment. There was the *India-Bangladesh Open boarder* which is made with some stones only. Then the scenario of *Single Decker Living Root Bridge* made us spellbound. At last of the day we decided to visit Asia's cleanest village Mawlynnong. There we enjoyed a beautiful evening and after that returned back.



Mawlynnong: Asia's cleanest Village river) river at Dawki



Umngot (Asia's Cleanest

Day 4 (1st May): On the fourth day we covered some of the local sights of Shillong which are Rabindranath Tagore's house of Shillong, Shillong Cathedral Catholic Church, Police Bazar, Don Bosco Museum and Umiam Lake. Rabindranath Tagore's "*Shesher Kabita*", a classic masterpiece romantic novel is set in the backdrop of Shillong. Hailed as Asia's Largest Museum of Indigenous Cultures, the Don Bosco Museum is the house of the beautiful culture and tradition of North-East India. The Museum showed us how the Christianity was spread at North-East India. After that we departed for Guwahati as we had to stay one night there.



R N Tagore's House of Shillong

Day 5 (2nd May): This day was the last day of our tour and visited some place of Guwahati - Brahmaputra Ropeway river-bank, Basistha Muni Temple and Purva Tirupati Sri Balaji Temple. These places of Guwahati are so much different than the scenic beauty of Meghalaya but these also keep scar in mind. After visiting we went to Guwahati station as we had to catch the train in the afternoon for returning home. And by the train journey at night, the tour came to an end in the next morning.



Basistha Muni Temple



Tirupati Temple

What I Learnt from the Tour:

For an educational tour of literature students, the selection of North-East Region of India as the visit place is unprecedented. We have so many things to know from this region as North-

East India is known for its rich cultural diversity and unique tradition. Each and every state in the region has its own distinct culture and tradition including music, dance, cuisine festivals etc. The region is also representing some ethnic groups and tribes. These tribes have their own cultures and languages. Khasi, Boro, Garo, Angami,



Chakma, Kuki, Mizo, Konyak, Hajong are some of the tribes of North-East. Among them Khasi is the major tribe who occupies almost half population of Meghalaya.

As there are many tribes, many languages are also seen in North-East. Specially the Khasi language is mostly used there. By using only this language and avoiding other language they are actually maintaining their own identity and cultures. Some of Khasi words which I have learnt are – Lum=Hill; Um= Water; Slap=Rain; Maw=Stone; Jinglong=Nature; Khubley= Thank You; Lyoh= Cloud ect.

I noticed that in every shops or most of the places the women are working. In North-East India a Khasi women is mentioned as the guardian and preserver of the family goods. An interesting matter is that not women, men leave their home after the marriage and goes to wife's house in Meghalayan village. These show the women's empowerment in North-East India.

When we were visiting in the Asia's cleanest village, Mawlynnong, I was just thinking that how do they keep so clean and noticed that there was not a single piece of paper or plastic in the road or outside of their house. This tells us how anxious they are about cleanliness, and if we try to keep our area clean then we can but we are not trying so. It indicates our own fault.

At Dawki, we saw the open border of India and Bangladesh which was made with some stones only. There many hawkers from Bangladesh were selling random things. And road is just passing beside the border, which is made of just normal fence. This shows the interconnection between two countries.



When we were travelling, on the path I saw some broken parts of the hills but that was not natural. Humans are breaking the hills to make roads and buildings there. They are also cutting trees. These effect the nature and causes the landslides. It shows that how humans are treating with the hills.

On the day of Cherrapunji visit, I became shocked when one of the local public told that there was no rain since around seven days. Being the most rainiest place, there is also lack of rain. These all are the effect of global warming as well as human's fault.



Local Public of North-East

How did the tour help me to understand Mamang dai & North-east Literature:

As a student of literature, this tour to North-East plays a significant role for me. It helps me to think and see everything very clearly and elaborately. While visiting in Meghalaya or Cherrapunji or Shillong I was trying to relate the writings of Mamang Dai with the nature. As lands, forests, mountains and rivers are a constant and living presence in Dai's poetry. In her poem, "The Voice of the Mountain" tribal traditions, cultural identity of her ethnic group and many other things are represented. In this poem the conflict between *The Old and The New*; life of the village versus that in the town, newly modern ways are depicted also and I was able to relate these when we came to Assam from Meghalaya. The village-town scenario, the modern ways and cultures, socio-political cultures; everything was too much different between Assam and Meghalaya. The connection between woman's body and the River reflecting the relationship between Gender, Nature and Female body; is presented in Dai's "The Voice of the Mountain". Dai says that the mountain is like an Old man sipping the breeze that is forever young and nature is an old man who has lived many lives which were wandering around my mind when I was enjoying the vast mountains, fresh air and natural beauties of Cherrapunji. Overallly the tour has helped me to understand the North-East as well as Mamang Dai's writings deeply.

Conclusion:

To conclude, Dai's poetic voice is the unmistakable voice of the marginalized communities from North-East India's periphery. Her voice is communal in nature also. Knowledge about North-East and deep understanding with Mamang Dai's writing are the main attainment from the tour. North-Eastern cultures, people's life, natural beauties, tribes and languages ; all these exciting subjects are known to me by this tour and it has changed my mind and my thoughts. Actually the tour has brought great changes in me. I am very thankful to our Principal sir and our Professors for allowing and gifting us this type of educational tour which makes us *Traveller not the Tourists*.

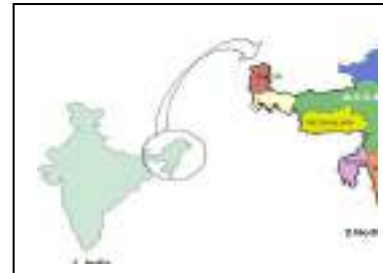
To Travel is to Know: A Travelogue of North-East

- Taslim Afroj

Introduction:

North-East India is a rendezvous of multiple communities, faiths and cultures. The region which is now popularly known as “North-East India” was primarily familiar as the land of seven sister viz. Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya,

Manipur, Tripura, Mizoram and Arunachal Pradesh. Much later Sikkim was also added to this regional agglomeration which has a long history of politico-economic and socio-cultural formation of the land and its people. Sikkim is also referred to as the “Brother” to the seven state.



Literature from North-East India refers to literature in the languages of North-East India and the body of work by English language writers from this region. The troubled political climate, the beautiful landscape and the confluence of various ethnic groups perhaps have give rise to a body of writing that is completely different from India English literature. Mitra phukan, Mamang Dai, Dhruva Hazarika, Temsula Ao, Uddipana Goswami, Nitoo Das, Prodyut Kumar Deba etc. are some English language writers from North-East India.

Literature of North east India

Assamese Literature is the entire corpus of poetry, novel, short stories, plays, documents and other writings in the Assamese language. It also includes the literary works in the older forms of the language during its evolution to the contemporary form and its cultural heritage and tradition. The literary heritage of the Assamese language can be traced back to the 9-10th century in the charyapada, where the earliest elements of the



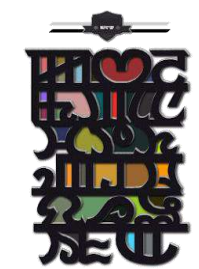
language can be discerned. Baikunthanatha Bhagavata Bhattacharya is acknowledged as the father of Assamese prose. Banikanta Kakati divides the history of Assamese literature into three prominent etas—Early Assamese, Middle Assamese and Modern Assamese—which is generally accepted. Ambikagiri Raichoudhury, Ananda Chandra Agrwala, Banikanta Kakati, Benudhar Sharma, Hem Barua etc are some Assamese poets. Kviratna Saravati's Jayadratha-vadha; Rudra Kandali's Satyaki-pravesa are prominent works of this era. Harivara

Vipra, a court poet of Kamata Kingdom, composed Vavruvahanar Yuddha (based on the Mahabharata), Lava-Kushar Yuddha (based on the Ramayana) and Tamradwajar Yudha.

Meitei literature, also known as Manipuri literature, is literature written in the Meitei language of Manipur. An ancient institution of learning, the Luwang Nonghumsang, later known as the Pandit Loishang, collected sources of indigenous Meitei knowledge and philosophy until the 18th century. Writing by Meiteis is assumed to go back to the Kingdom of Kangleipak in the early 12th century. The Meitei script is a Brahmic abugida. It is known only from the Puya manuscripts discovered in the first half of the 20th century. Manuscripts of the 18th and 19th centuries were written using the Bengali alphabet. The existence of the Meitei script in the 15th-century hinges on the authenticity of an inscription dated to the reign of Senbi Kiyamba. The first printed Manipuri book, Manipurer Itihas, appeared in 1890 from the Baptist Mission Press, Calcutta. Though the kings of Manipur had established contact with the British from the middle of the eighteenth century onward the real impact of the contact came much later. Johnstone Middle English School, based on the western system of education, was started in 1885 at Imphal, and in 1891 Manipur lost its independence to the British. British domination facilitated the introduction of new systems in the civil, political and educational spheres, which hastened the process of modernization in Manipur, exposed as it was to new ideas and influences.

Mizo literature is the literature written in Mizo ṭawng, the principal language of the Mizo peoples, which has both written and oral traditions. It has undergone a considerable change in the 20th century. The language developed mainly from the Lushai language, with significant influence from Pawi language, Paite language and Hmar language, especially at the literary level. All Mizo languages such as Pawi language, Paite language etc. remained unwritten until the beginning of the twentieth century. However, there was unwritten secular literature in the form of folktales, war chants etc. passed down from one generation to another. And there was rich religious literature in the form of sacerdotal chants. These are the chants used by the two types of priests, namely Bawlpu and Sadâwt. This article is about the written literature. Well-known writers during this period include Nuchhungi Renthlei (1914–2002), and Lalthangfala Sailo, who got Padma Shri award in Literature in 1986 and 2009 respectively. L. Biakliana (1918–1941), who wrote the first Mizo novel Hawilopari, Kaphleia (1910–1940).

Hawilopari is the first novel written in Mizo, and was the main attraction of a major academic conference held in Aizawl on November 9, 2011, which commemorated the platinum jubilee of the novel.



Here are some comprises a mixture of fiction and non-fiction books by Northeast Indian authors.....

1. ***The Legends Of Pensam*** by Mamang Dai

What it's about: The Legends of Pensam is a collection of interconnected stories spanning across generations that introduces the readers to the people, customs, traditions, and history of the Adi tribe of Siang valley by recounting their myths, legends, superstitions, and oral history. The book chronicles how the tribe's way of life changes when it comes in contact with the colonial regime in the late 19th and early 20th century, leaving them in a state of in-between or pensam as they come to terms with this change.

2. ***The Many That I Am: Writings From Nagaland*** by Anungla Zoe Longkumer

What it's about: This book is an incredible anthology of short stories, poems, personal accounts, and stunning artwork and visuals that attempts to showcase the literary potential of the Nagas, who did not have a tradition of written literature. Each piece illustrates different times and aspects of Nagaland through the voices of the Naga women and has a prominent feminist voice throughout the narratives. Each piece in this anthology speaks of these women's many journeys to reclaim their pasts and understand their complex present.

3. ***Around The Hearth: Khasi Legends*** by Kynpham Sing Nongkynrih

What it's about: In this book, Nongkynrih has collected Khasi folk tales that were handed down orally through generations, from village raconteurs to that of the community, and grandparents to parents to children. The stories include purinam (fairy tales), puriskam (fables), khana pharshi (parables), khana pateng (legends), and true have gradually slipped into the hearts of one and all.



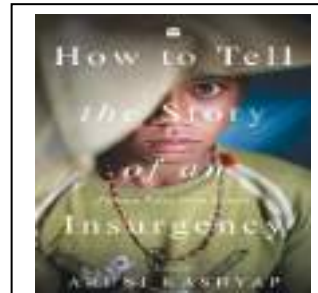
4. ***Bitter Wormwood*** by Easterine Kire

What it's about: Bitter Wormwood, as Easterine Kire states in the introduction, is about ordinary people whose lives were completely shaken by the freedom struggle. It portrays the violence and impact of the Naga freedom struggle from Indian dominance on the lives of common men and women in Nagaland. This is done through the protagonist's — Moselie's — experiences.



5. ***How To Tell The Story Of An Insurgency*** by Aruni Kashyap

What it's about: The stories in this collection give a gritty account of experiences of living in the shadow of insurgency. In this book, Aruni Kashyap has compiled stories that are originally written in English, Bodo, and Assamese. It highlights ethnic clashes between communities and includes the experiences of the tribal communities, minorities, and other settler communities — thus giving the subaltern a voice. Through the tales in the book, Kashyap attempts to foreground the human experiences of living in a region riddled with conflict.



Mamang Dai is a poet novelist and journalist based in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh. She received Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017 for her novel “The Black Hill.”She published her first novel, “The Legendsof Pensam” in 2006. She has one collection of poetry, River Poems, to her credit. Her next collection,Midsummer-Survival Lyrics is due for publication in 2011. Her famous poems are ‘NO DREAMS’, ‘SMALL TOWNS AND THE RIVER’, ‘FLOATING ISLAND’, ‘GONE’, ‘REMEMBRANCE’, ‘THE VPICE OF THE MOUNTAIN’. “Small Town and The River” by Mamang Dai contains some important theme such as mortality, life vs death, eternity, nature and supirituality. The theme of mortality haunts the poet most through the symbol of “Small towns”, the poet introduces this theme.



Mamang Dai

My experiences from the Shillong trip:

In a week’s time, we had experienced the most heartfelt hospitality in Shillong and surrounding areas. A week in Shillong was spent in mirth and joy exploring the nook and corner of this Northeast Indian state cradled amid the Khasi Jaintia hills. Shillong is beautiful with all her picturesque lakes, turquoise hue of cascading falls, dense lush forest, robust flavourful cuisine and mysterious blooms. Shillong is the state of poetic passage. Here are some places we visited there-

1. Elephant Falls

Named after an Elephant like stone at its foot, the Elephant Falls are amongst the most popular falls in the North-East. These Falls consist of three mesmerising falls in succession. It is a great stopover destination before one heads for further journeys into Meghalaya.



Elephant Falls

2. Police Bazar

Police Bazar is the major market of Shillong, and a popular destination. In addition to an array of restaurants, hotels and big brand stores, the Police Bazaar also has a flea market



Police Bazar

section selling traditional handicrafts stores, exquisite Meghalaya merchandise, regional apparels, junk jewellery and the like.

3. Don Bosco Museum

Hailed as Asia's largest Museum of Indigenous Cultures, the Don Bosco Museum is the house of the beautiful culture and tradition of North East India. It has 16 laid out galleries that showcase artefacts, paintings, figures significant to the Northeastern culture.



Don Bosco Museum

4. Mawlynnong

Mawlynnong is a small village situated around 90 km from Shillong in the East Khasi Hills. It was declared as the cleanest village in Asia in 2003 by Discovery India which certainly makes it one of the most popular tourist destinations. Mawlynnong is also famous for its living root bridges.



Mawlynnong

Conclusion:

The literature of the Northeast is mostly published in newspapers, journals and magazines, which have given them a strong platform. In the field of drama and other performative arts, the tone and tenor has changed. In contemporary literature of the Northeast there is a strong folk element. The combination of younger and older generation of writers has witnessed the birth of the balanced form of literature in the Northeast. The burning issues are poverty, unemployment, and a resurgence of strong regional sensibilities. However, sometimes, we witness the response of the writers of the Northeast towards its specific demography and topography. Modernity is still an unfinished project as Hebaromas said, and the literature of the Northeast is trying to be modern in the truest sense of the term. The response of the writers of the Northeast writing in regional languages should be seen in the context of globalisation.

Exploring the Essence of North-East Indian Literature through the Works of Mamang Dai

- Priti Mandal

▪ Introduction :

North-East literature is a vibrant and diverse literary tradition that encompasses the literature produced in the seven states of North-East India. Northeast India also known as the seven sister states, is a region of India that comprises the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. The region is located in the easternmost part of India, and is bordered by Bangladesh, Bhutan, Myanmar, and China.

North-East literature is characterized by its rich oral traditions, which are passed down through generations in the form of songs, stories, and myths. The region is also known for its rich cultural diversity, natural beauty, and unique history. The region is home to many indigenous ethnic groups, each with their own distinct language and literature. As a result, the literature of North-East India is incredibly diverse, with works produced in languages such as Assamese, Bengali, Manipuri, Mizo, Naga, and many others. This region is also known for its rich flora and fauna, with many species of plants and animals found only in this part of India.

North-East India is also home to many indigenous oral traditions, such as the story telling traditions of the Khasi and Jaintia people of Meghalaya, and the Bodo oral traditions of Assam. These traditions often involve the passing down of stories, legends, and myths through generations and are an important part of the region's cultural heritage.

Overall, Northeast India's literary tradition is a rich and diverse one that reflects the unique culture, history, and identity of the region.

▪ The Geography and History of North-East :

Northeast India is located in the easternmost part of India, bordering several countries. It is surrounded by Bhutan and Tibet to the north, Myanmar to the east, Bangladesh to the south and southwest, and the rest of India to the west. Geographically, the Northeast is characterized by rugged coastlines, dense forest, and rolling hills. The region is home to several mountain ranges, including the Appalachian Mountains, the White Mountains, and the Green Mountains. The Northeast also includes several major bodies of water, including the Atlantic Ocean, the Great Lakes, and the Hudson River. The climate in Northeast India varies from subtropical to alpine, with heavy rainfall throughout the year. The region is known for its rich biodiversity and considered one of the world's biodiversity hotspots.

The History of the Northeast is rich and varied. The region was originally home to Several Native American tribes, including the Wampanoag, the Mohegan, and the Iroquois. In the 17th century, who established several colonies, including Massachusetts Bay colony, Rhode Island colony and Connecticut colony. The history of Northeast Indian literature dates back centuries, with the earliest known works in Assam and Manipur dating to the medieval

period. These early literary works were predominantly in the form of religious texts, epic poetry, and historical chronicles.

▪ **Mamang Dai Life & Literature:**

Mamang Dai was born on November 17, 1957, in Pasighat, a small town in Arunachal Pradesh. She belongs to the Adi tribe, one of the major tribes of the state. Her upbringing in a tribal community deeply influenced her writing as she draws inspiration from the folklore, mythology, and traditions of her people. Mamang Dai has a deep attachment to life, particularly to the life and culture of the people of Arunachal Pradesh, her home state. Her writing reflects this attachment and showcases her love for the region and its people.

Through her works, Dai explores the intricate relationship between human and nature, emphasizing the importance of preserving and cherishing the natural world. She often portrays the beauty and serenity of the rivers, mountains, and forests of Arunachal Pradesh, highlighting their significance in the lives of the people who inhabit the region.

Mamang Dai is an Indian writer and poet from Arunachal Pradesh, a state in Northeast India. She is known for her contributions to literature especially in the form of poetry and fiction. Her works often explore the rich cultural heritage and diverse tradition of Northeast India.

Dai's writing reflects her deep connection with nature and landscapes of Arunachal Pradesh. She vividly describes the beauty of the mountains, rivers, and forests in her works, and often incorporates themes of ecological conservation and the relationship between humans & the environment.

Mamang Dai has published several acclaimed books in both English and her native language, Adi. Her notable works include "The Legends of Pensam", a novel that explores the life of a young Adi woman. She has also written essays and articles on various subjects, including culture, heritage, and the challenges faced by indigenous communities.

Overall, Mamang Dai's literary life is a testament to her deep connection with her commitment to preserving and celebrating the cultural heritage of Arunachal Pradesh. Through her writing she has left a lasting impact on Indian literature, showcasing the beauty, diversity, and complexities of life in the Northeast region.

- **Tour Itinerary:** certainly! Here's a sample itinerary for a North-East tour, covering some of the popular destinations in the region.

Day 1:- Guwahati

- Arrive in Guwahati, the gateway to North-East India.
- Visit Kamakhya Temple, one of the most holiest sites in Hinduism.
- Enjoy a sunset cruise on the Brahmaputra River.

Day 2 :- Shillong, Meghalaya

- Travel to Shillong, the capital city of Meghalaya.
- Explore the beautiful Ward's Lake and stroll through the vibrant Police Bazaar.
- Visit the Don Bosco Centre for Indigenous cultures to learn about the tribal heritage of the region.
- Enjoy the lively nightlife and music scene in Shillong.

Day 3 :- Cherrapunji and Mawlynnong, Meghalaya

- Take a day trip to Cherrapunji, known as one of the wettest places on Earth.
- Visit the Seven Sisters Falls, and Mawsmai Cave.
- Proceed to Mawlynnong, a picturesque village known as "Asia's Cleanest Village".
- Explore the living root bridges and enjoy the stunning panoramic views from the sky walk.

Day 4 :- Dawki, Meghalaya

- Travel to Dawki and experience the crystal-clear waters of the Umngot River.
- Enjoy a boat ride on the river and witness the natural beauty of the surrounding landscapes.

Day 5 :- Guwahati, Assam

- Begin the day with an early visit to the Balaji Temple & spend the morning exploring the temple complex and learning about the deity's significance.
- Travel to the Baishistae Mondir, explore the temple complex and admire its architectural beauty.

This Itinerary provides a glimpse of the North-East region's diverse culture, natural beauty and unique experiences.

What I learn from the tour :-

Natural Beauty- I had been feel Northeast natural beauty. Northeast India is renowned for its breathtaking natural landscapes. The region is home to lush green forests, waterfalls, majestic rivers and picturesque hills.

Cultural Diversity- Northeast India is known for its rich cultural diversity. Each state in the region has its distinct traditions, languages, and festivals. I had learn about the unique cultures of various indigenous communities, such as the Naga, Mizo, Assamese and many others.

Adventure and Outdoor Activities- Northeast India offers numerous opportunities for adventure enthusiasts. Trekking in the mountains, boating in the Dawki River, exploring caves in Meghalaya. Best experience I learnt from the tour.

- **How Did the tour Help Me Understand Mamang Dai and North-East Literature :-**
Exposure to Local Culture: Northeast India is a region known for its vibrant cultural diversity. By immersing ourselves in the local culture during our tour, we gained a deeper understanding of the social, historical, and anthropological aspects that influence the literature of the region. This exposure helps create a context for understanding and appreciating the works of authors like Mamang Dai, who often draw inspiration from their cultural backgrounds.

Engaging with Local Communities:

The tour might have facilitated interactions with local communities, including indigenous groups. Northeast Indian literature often reflects the voices and experiences of these communities. By engaging with the locals, listening to their stories, and understanding their struggles and aspirations, you would have gained insights into the socio-cultural fabric that influences the literature of the region.

Overall, a tour of Northeast India would have provided me with a multi-dimensional perspective on the region's literature, including the works of Mamang Dai. By immersing yourself in the local culture, engaging with communities, and exploring literary destinations, you would have gained valuable insights into the socio-cultural contexts that shape Northeast Indian literature and the contributions of authors like Mamang Dai.

- **Conclusion :-** In conclusion, Northeast India boasts a vibrant and diverse literary landscape that reflects the region's unique cultural heritage, socio-political context, and natural surroundings. The literature of Northeast India has gained recognition and appreciation for its rich storytelling, insightful narratives, and distinct voices. Nature and the environment play a significant role in Northeast Indian literature. Writers draw inspiration from the natural beauty and ecological diversity, highlighting the importance of conservation and sustainable living. It serves as a powerful medium for storytelling, reflection, and exploration of the human experience. The unique voices and narratives emerging from this region contribute to the larger literary landscape of India and the world, making it an important and valuable part of global literature.

To the Land of Seven Sisters: A Visit to North-East

- Arkaprava Mahato

Introduction:

Commonly known as the "Land of Seven Sisters", North-East India is the easternmost region of the country. North-East India is a rendezvous of multiple communities, faiths, and cultures. Today it comprises 8 states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram Nagaland, Tripura often called The Seven Sister's and Sikkim referred to as the "Brother" to the seven states, it is believed that these specific names were given to this region due to their interdependence on each other. The literature of Northeast India draws inspiration from its rich folk traditions, myths, legends, and the region's natural beauty. It often deals with themes such as identity, displacement, and conflict, reflecting the region's turbulent history of political and ethnic unrest. At the same time, it also celebrates the region's diverse cultural heritage and the resilience of its people. Some notable writers from the Northeast include Mamang Dai, Easterine Kire, Temecula Ao, Mitra Phukan, and Indira Goswami, among others. Their works have gained national and international acclaim and have helped to bring the region's literature to a broader audience. North-East India is officially part of the North Eastern Council (NEC), constituted in 1971 as the nodal agency for the development of the northeastern states. The entire region is connected to the mainland through a narrow strip of land known as the "Chicken Neck's", which was created in 1947. The city of Guwahati in Assam is regarded as the "Gateway to the North-East Bestowed with rich natural resources, history, culture, and traditions, Northeast India is a reservoir of bewitching diversity.

The Geography of North-East:

Northeast India the North Eastern Region(NER) is the easternmost region of India representing both a geographic and political administrative division of the country it comprises eight states as Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura commonly known as the "seven Sisters", and the "Brother" state Sikkim. The region shares an international border of 5,182 kilometers (about 99 percent of its total geographical boundary) with several neighboring countries- 1,395 kilometres with Tibet in the north, 1,640 kilometres with Myanmar in the east, 1,596 kilometres with Bangladesh in the south-west, 97 kilometres with Nepal in the west, and 455 kilometres with Bhutan in the northwest. It comprises an area of 262,184 square kilometres, almost 8 percent of that of India. The Siliguri Corridor connects the region to the rest of mainland India. The states of North Eastern Region are officially recognised under the North Eastern Council (NEC), constituted in 1971 as the acting agency for the development of the north eastern states. Long after induction of NEC, Sikkim formed part of the North Eastern Region as the eighth state. In 2002 India's Look East connectivity projects connect Northeast India to East Asia and ASEAN. Guwahati city in Assam is called the Gateway to the North East and is the largest metropolis in North East India. The Northeast region can be physiographically categorised into the Eastern Himalaya, the Patkai and the Brahmaputra and the Barak valley

plains Northeast India (at the confluence of Indo-Malayan, Indo-Chinese, and Indian biogeographical realms) has a predominantly humid subtropical climate with hot, humid summers, severe monsoons, and mild winters. Along with the west coast of India, this region has some of the Indian subcontinent's last remaining rainforests, which support diverse flora and fauna and several crop species. Reserves of petroleum and natural gas in the region are estimated to constitute a fifth of India's total potential. The region is covered by the mighty Brahmaputra-Barak river systems and their tributaries. Geographically, apart from the Brahmaputra, Barak and Imphal valleys and some flatlands in between the hills of Meghalaya and Tripura, the remaining two-thirds of the area is hilly terrain interspersed with valleys and plains, the altitude varies from almost sea-level to over 7,000 metres (23,000 ft) above MSL. The region's high rainfall, averaging around 10,000 millimetres and above creates problems of the ecosystem, high seismic activity, and floods. The states of Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim have a montane climate with cold, snowy winters and mild summers.

B. The History of Northeast India : Northeast India originated in the 19th century during British rule in India. Between 1839 and 1873, it was a part of the Bengal Province. After India became independent in the year 1947, the Northeastern region consisted of Assam, Manipur and Tripura. Eventually, the other states were formed from the larger region of Assam. Shillong was the capital of Assam during British Raj. Later in the year 1972, Meghalaya was formed and Shillong became the state capital. Finally, Assam's capital was shifted to Dispur.

History :- North-East India has witnessed many changes in society, economy, and polity throughout its history. The picture of North-East India we see today is very different from what it was in its antiquity. Unfortunately, it is very difficult to find any well-documented historiography of the social and cultural past of this region. Proper documentation of events in these states only occurs during the British era. However, only its fragments can be found today, in the form of monographs and census data. Hence to reconstruct the past of the North-East, historians have had to rely heavily on oral traditions like folk tales, folk songs, myths, and legends, as well as study the symbolic representation of rituals and traditions, in the form of festivals and fairs. It is believed that North East India finds a mention in the epics of the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, as well as the Puranas. Various tribes residing in these states, accept this lineage and continue to follow the prescribed traditions and rituals to date. The folklore associated with these regions further crystallises their heritage. For instance, the Idu Mishmi / tribe of Arunachal Pradesh traces its lineage to Rukmini, Lord Krishna's wife. Similarly the Bodo tribe of Assam believes that they are the descendants of Hidimba, the wife of Bhima.

The North-East Today : The 8 distinct states of North East India cover an area of 262,179 sq km. There are more than 200 different ethnic groups residing in these states. Each of these ethnic groups has its own dialect and script. Along with it, these groups also have their own extravagant fairs and festivals, traditional attires, delicious cuisines, unique handicrafts, exemplary literary works, and an enchanting trove of music and other art forms. Blessed with abundant cultures, the northeastern states of India stand as the epitome of grace and heritage. Natural resources as well as flamboyant

The way, the Tour help me Understand Mamang Dai and North-East Literature

Mamang Dai is an essential writer of Northeast India. She was born on 1957 , 23 February in Pasighat , east Siang district in Arunachal Pradesh. Her father's name was Martin Dai, and her mother was Odi Dai. Her family is from the Adi tribe. She graduated from college at Pine Mount School in Shillong in Meghalaya. She completed her bachelor's degree from the Gauhati University of Assam. She was the first female IAS candidate from her state in 1979. However, she left the IAS job and pursued journalism as her career. She worked at the Telegraph, Hindustan Times and the Sentinel and also worked in radio as an anchor. She was appointed programme officer at WWF. She was employed by the initiative for the eastern Himalayan biodiversity hotspots and was the former secretary of the Itanagar press club. She was the president of the Arunachal Pradesh Union of working journalists (APUW). In 2011 she was appointed a member of the Arunachal Pradesh state public service commission. Her poems and novels are representative of Northeast India. Truly you understood the northeast region then you first knew the history and the literature of the northeast. Mamang Dai presents the diversity of northeast India and regional culture, beauty, and nature in her poem. She also demonstrates how the people of northeast India are cut off from others. When she began writing, she wrote romantic verses and stories. Then she moved from the theme of the self to focus on a larger reality. She reflects on her community, culture, and the beauty of nature in her poem. She writes many poem, stories and novels like, - The Hidden Land (2003), The Food Of Arunachal(2004). The Sky Queen and Once Upon A Moontime are illustrated folklore texts by her. She published her first novel, "The Legends Of Pensan," in 2006, which was followed by Stupid Cupid (2008) and, The Black Hill (2014), Escaping The Land (2021). River Poems (2004), The Balm of Time (2008), and Midsummer Survival Lyrics (2014) are her poetry collections. The 'Small Town and The River, and' The Voice of the Mountain' are in our syllabus. Somewhere During the tour, these poems relate and merge us with the nature very well.

Tour Itinerary:

So, which must be told now, this year Our English department organized an educational outing as it does previous year also. The departmental authorities decided to organize a trip to Shillong in Meghalaya this year. So as usual, the administration collected 8000 rupees per student and hired a travel agency. Our esteemed instructors and six-semester students organized this tour in its entirety. Students from semesters six, four and two were given a tour by our two professors on April 27, 2023, and 27 students and two teachers visited the Meghalaya region. The journey lasted for five days. On May 27, after midnight, students meet on platform no 1 of Malda town station. The train was scheduled to arrive at midnight, but it needed to catch up. In total, we waited five hours for the train. On May 28, the train arrived at platform no three before the morning. Then we started our journey to Kamakhya station. At 3.45 pm, the train arrived at the Kamakhya station. The man from the travel agency named Santanu uncle met us outside of the station. A minibus had been reserved for us during the tour. We travelled by that bus towards our hotel, The Red Pine, on Lamang. After four hours passed, we reached the hotel at 9'o clock. The agency had reserved seven rooms in the hotel for us. Five students shared a room. Then after taking a bath, we all gathered at the hotel's ground floor for dinner. After completing our dinner, we went to our room to sleep. We finished breakfast at 8 am the following day and went to

Elephant Falls with our companions. At 9.20 am on 29 April, we reached Elephant Falls, got the tickets for all, and entered. This fall was light and gloomy. The Mawsmi cave next to Cherapunjee was our next stop after staying about 1 hour in this particular spot. Then we visited the Arwah-Lumshynna cave in the east Khasi hills at Cherapunjee. Here we noticed stalactites, fossilized gastropods, and gastropods clusters. Stalactite was most attractive because of its strength and pigment. Then we returned to our hotel at 10 pm. After that, at 10.40 pm, we completed our dinner and returned to our rooms. On the third day of our tour, we left with our backpacking as we had an overnight stay in Gauhati. So first, after breakfast, we went out to visit Rabindranath's Art Gallery, where Rabindranath Tagore wrote the poem "Shesher Kobita." On attaining there we spent some time, unluckily we cannot stay inside the gallery. So we moved to our cult after seeing the outside scenery. We set up quickly and went to church in Shillong. After enjoying the view in the church, we went to the police bazaar, where everyone shopped in the market. Then, due to a lack of time, we had to sit down for lunch and arrived at Don Bosco, the largest Museum in Asia. Don Bosco Museum, in Shillong, is a significant tourist spot providing a glimpse of the rich and multi-cultural lifestyle of the indigenous peoples of North-East India. The seven-storey hexagonal structure of the Don Bosco Centre has become the pride of Shillong's architecture. Don Bosco Museum showcases the culture and tradition of Mizoram, Nagaland, Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur and Tripura. Don Bosco Museum, Shillong, is believed to be Asia's largest Museum for indigenous cultures and contains 16 galleries filled with paintings, tools and artifacts, with each gallery depicting a different aspect. The galleries, art exhibition, basketry, ornaments, costume, jewellery, fishing, hunting, food, housing and culture of the natives- all made for an exciting and informative visit. Another highlight that makes Don Bosco Museum a favourite among tourists is the skywalk on the 7th floor, giving a beautiful landscape view of the region of Shillong. After visiting the whole Museum, we went out to the next spot. As time is short, we enjoy the beauty of Umiam Lake from a distance and leave for Gauhati. After reaching the hotel in Gauhati, we finished our dinner. Next, the morning of 2nd May is our last excursion day. this last day makes a different atmosphere for some of us. In the very morning this Tuesday six students , including me of the group went to Kamakhya temple. we left the hotel at 4.30 am saying 'by' some off our friends. we reached the Kamakhya temple at 5.00am. Then we buy Prasad for worship (Puja) to the "Maa KAMAKHYA SAKTIPITH". After taking Prasad we stands in a line which starts going at 7.00 am in the morning inside the temple. at last at 11.15 am we got chance to enter the temple. And then i felt the actual goosebumps when i finally entered near the SAKTIPITH OF MA KAMAKHAYA. The inner view of this place was undesirable, it's extremely heart touched. Then we completed our worshipping in the temple and came out from there after 30 minutes. Then we visited the Brahmaputra River and staying there for a while. After that, due to a lack of time, we went directly to the Guwahati station. We waited 25 minutes for the train, the Kaziranga Express. At 5.20, we with our entire group boarded for Malda. The next day on 3.05.2023, at 6 am, we reached Malda, and all returned to our homes after bidding farewell to our respected teachers. In this way, the tour was completed with the help of students, teachers and travel agencies. 5. Things I Learn From The Tour :- Before saying that, what kind of things i learn from the tour i want to say, i spend almost full of my childhood mostly at Bihar and the rural area of

Maldah in west bengal. So usually I don't live in the hills anyway. I got a chance from my clg , Gour Mahavidyalaya to fulfill one of my desires to go to the North-east. we can't imagine how beautiful the hills are ! Recently, I returned after visiting North East. I was in Meghalaya. The most important information is that the Northeast society is matrilineal. After marriage, men go to women's houses. Amazing! In Shillong there is the cleanest city. People are calm, easy-going and often complacent. There is a great museum called Don Bosco Museum. To know the North- Eastern state's culture, lifestyle, and tradition, you must visit The Don Bosco Museum. The museum was huge. I have never seen it in India and am motivated to explore North-Eastern India further. Cherrapunji is beautiful. The famous Mawlynnong village and Living Root bridge are touristic sites. It has a rich flora and fauna. The landscape is breathtaking, and you feel refreshed. Drinking water from natural streams will make you realize the water in the cities tastes terrible. Dawki is on the Indo- Bangladesh border, and I recommend boating in the river. North East India is peaceful and safe for solo female travellers. Of course, the food is very different from here. The Khasi language is exciting, so I learnt some Khasi words like; 'Boat - lang.', 'Dog- ksaw', 'Children- khyllung, 'women-kynthei' and 'Harud Dramdual' which means a house next to a river , also 'Maw' There we learnt some word of Khasi & Garo language . When we were returning to the hotel at Shillong, our respected Dr. Mursed Alam, our HOD sir made an interesting atmosphere with us. Sir discussed with us about the experience which we saw and felt there. I also shared my experience with my group. I told about to getting the lovely chance to recall the previous as well as the past memories on our studies, At Don Bosko Museum like history and geography and science came to me as the vast way. I'm feeling grateful for having these moments .we also discussed about the culture, lifestyle of the people who lived there. Although their financial situation is not very good, lack of economic support as well as the development they have the actual, natural happiness on their faces, I also discussed that with our HOD sir. We got much more things as our experience there.

Conclusion: - So , here the end of the precious tour, i want to share my experience and feelings while doing this project that I experienced during the tour. This tour helped me to understand the Northeast people's lifestyle, culture, work, and nature's beauty. All places that we visited gave us new adventure, new experiences. Also, this tour helped me how to preserve our history, culture and environment, like the Northeast people. It was an excellent, knowledgeable tour. This project increased my research, thinking skills and interest on various type of topics. A study tour is essential for students because an educational tour is a refreshment tour for teachers and students. Overall, It was wonderful learning experience for me while working on this project. Very special thanks to our honorable professors for setting such pure atmosphere for us. I enjoyed every bit for making this project.

“I am the woman lost in Translation”: Reading and Understanding Mamang Dai

-Debashis Roy

Introduction:

Northeast is a very beautiful land of India. A place renowned for its magical beauty. northeast quite different from other parts of the subcontinent. in winter mist carpets the valleys, rain covers the hills. it creating an enchanting and romantic atmosphere. The jungles are dense, the rivers are powerful, rain is tantalizing, the thunderstorms sweep across the hills, valleys are plains during the annual monsoons. Northeast attracts the travellers for its beauty. The Northeast is a true frontier region. It has over 2000 Km of the border with Bhutan, China, Myanmar, and Bangladesh. It is one of the most ethnically and linguistically diverse region in Asia. Each country has a different cultures and traditions. Northeast India is also known as the “Seven Sisters.” They are Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. There is huge amount of wildlife. Sanctuaries and national park, where rare animals birds and plants will surely provide fascinating insight to the visitors. There are some of the attraction of this place that can pull the tourist in. As Northeast cut off from mainland India for long time due to some ethnic problems. But it has taken another famous tourist places in India. The people of the Northeast zone are mixtures of different ethnicity, thoughts some special characteristics are spatially on each tribe, which gave them their special identity. Owing to geographical barrier, the tribes have lived for Centuries as well as the people of the Their traditional poetry and flock songs mostly wear round prayers to God, joys of victory and love songs. The musical sounds resemble those of raw nature and wild life. The motives of their clothes do something relate to them. ancestral past, tribes, God’s or simply imitations of the sun, the moon, mountains, revers, flowers, leaves, and branches of tree. The northeast region the above specialties are found.

The Geography and History of Northeast:

The Northeast is the most eastern region contained to the East India via narrow corridor squeezed between Nepal and Bangladesh. It Consists of Contiguous Seven Sisters states- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. And the Himalayas state of the beautiful Sikkim. These states are grouped under the Ministry of Development of Northeastern region of the Government of India. The Brahmaputra valley of Assam became a part of British India in 1824. The states are officially recognized under the northern council. The book History of Northeast India (1228 to 1947) has been divided into 5 units and deals with early Medieval and modern history of Northeast. The book also elaborates of British policy of Northern Frontier of Assam. And struggle of the Pupil of Northeast against the British imperialism. The book has disdained, keeping in mind the self-introspection mode for meat and followers. India is known for diverse geography, which includes the Himalayan ranges, fertile Plains, Evergreen forests and river valleys. The region is home to several major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, The Barak, and their tributaries, which play a crucial role in shaping the landscape. The northeast Indian valley is surrounded by hills and mountains, which made the view more intensify. These hills are inhabited by

various tribes, each with its distinct culture and traditions the lush rainforests of Meghalaya, known for their unique living root bridges and abundant biodiversity; add to the region's natural beauty. In conclusion, the literature of Northeast India provides valuable insights into the region's history and geography.

Mamang Dai Life and Literature:

Mamang Dai was born on 23 February 1957 at Pasighat, East Siang district. Her family belongs to the Adi tribe. She completed her schooling from Pine Mount School, Shillong, Meghalaya. She completed her Bachelor in English literature from Gauhati University, Assam. Mamang Dai is a prominent Indian writer raised in Arunachal Pradesh, Pradesh, a North-eastern state of India. She is known for her insightful literary work that beautifully captured the Northeast's natural beauty. Born in 1957 in pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh, and become a significant voice representing the rich tradition of the Northeast. Her writings reflect her deep connection with the land, people, and folklore of Arunachal Pradesh. Mamang Dai's literary works often explore themes of identity and the impact of modernity on the traditional way of life. Mamang Dai's poetry reflects her love for nature and landscape of the Northeast India. Her poetry collections, such as "River Poems" and "Stupid Cupid" reveal her keen observation of the natural world and her ability to Call emotions through vivid imagery. Beyond her novels and poetry, Mamang Dai is also known for her essays and columns. Her literary contribution has earned her numerous awards including the sahitya Akademie Award, one of India's most prestigious literary honors, for her novel "The Black Hill." Her works have been translated into several languages throughout the world. In the end, I would say her writings offer a glimpse into the religion's diverse culture, landscape, and traditions and she continues to be the influential voice and narrative of the Northeast in the larger literary landscape of India. Her first publication River Poems hailed her as one of the most intensely poetic voices from the North East region. In 2003 Dai was honoured with the state's Verrier Elwin Award for her book Arunachal Pradesh: the Hidden Land that documented the culture and customs of her land. She has featured in several national and international forums to promote the disappearing traditions of her state in the face of modernity and give voice to its people through the imaginative space of prose and poetry.

Tour Itinerary:

Day 1: start the journey: we star our journey on 27/04/23 at night. We all reached the station with a great excitement. Everyone was too energetic for this trip but our train was 5 hours late. We were going so much tired at a time. Our train entered 5 am in the morning. We entered again a great energy. After that we took some rest then have our breakfast. We all were again blooming like a flower. At noon we took lunch that was not so good. After a long journey we reached the Kamakya station. After that we took our booking bus. We reached Shillong at around 9:30 to 10 pm. That bus journey was too much enjoyable for everyone. We changed ourselves and took our dinner. There was too much cold weather. Some of our friends were suffering from problem but they adjust themselves.

Day 2: Elephant Falls, seven sister's waterfall, Mawsmai cave, Arwah cave: In. Day 2 we woke up at 7 am in the morning. Then we took our breakfast and started our journey. We were so much excited. First, we went for Elephant Falls, the first look made us mad. we all took down at about 100 steps. The view was made our mind. we could not want to go from this place. the beauty of the nature that made silent. It just feels nothing to say about this. To spend some time, we went for seven sister's waterfalls. It was another beauty of nature that could not be explain. It was panoramic views of the Bangladesh plains from the Seven Sisters Falls viewpoint. Then we went to the caves, we entered the cave, there was various kinds of natural structures. Towards the end of the cave, we found crustacean shells and fish bones fossilized in the limestone walls of the cave. After a great historical view, we returned to Shillong in the evening. Then took dinner and went for bed

Day 3: Mawlynnong Village, Dawki, and Root Bridge: After a tasty tasty breakfast head towards the Dawki and experience the crystal-clear waters of the Umngot River. Enjoy a boat ride with my love on the river and witness the beauty of the surrounding hills and the boat ride. There was a serious traffic jam so we finished our lunch on the bus it is true that we had a great lunch throughout the trip in nature. After lunch we start our journey to Visit the Living Root Bridge, a natural bridge formed by intermingling tree roots. At the end we close our journey by visiting Mawlynnong, known as the cleanest village in Asia. Explore the picturesque village and learn about its sustainable practices.

Day 4: Shillong Sightseeing: - After breakfast, embark on a full-day sightseeing tour of Shillong. First, we visit the rental house of Rabindranath Tagore in Shillong where he wrote his last poem "Sesser Kabita". After that we visit a Church and then a shopping place called Polish Bazar where we had time for us to shop and hang around for some time. Before concluding the day, we explore the Don Bosco Museum which shows the rich cultural heritage of the region. It was our last place to visit in Shillong, after completing the sightseeing we head out for Guwahati this is our last destination, from where we will conclude the trip.

Day 5: Departure Day: - We enjoyed the last day of this trip by spending the whole night gossiping with friends. That night will always be a golden phase in my memory. In the morning I and my other five friends decide to visit the Kamakhya temple. And our other member decides to visit other places. And we caught our other members at the Guwahati station. And we say goodbye to Guwahati decides to visit other places. And we caught our other members at the Guwahati station. And we say goodbye to Guwahati and Shillong pouring memories and happiness in our mind and heart

What I Learnt from tour: - A Northeast trip offers me many opportunities to learn and grow personally. As I have discussed previously, Northeast India is home to a remarkable tapestry of cultures, with each state having its own distinct tradition, language, and costumes, so this trip helped us deeply spiritually and mentally. Their Tradition and cultural ritual and their lifestyle help me think differently. Their love for nature and preserving nature as a mother this concept push me one step Nare to nature. I learned how to live friendly and peacefully with mother nature. Northeast's History and heritage are so rich what can I say? Visiting historical sites, museums, and heritage sites during this trip help me to delve into the

region's past. You can learn about pivotal events, explore architectural marvels, and understand the region's role in shaping the larger historical narrative of the country. The local peoples do much hard work and are active in nature. I learned from one local conversation effort, to understand the challenges faced by the region's ecosystems, and witness first-hand the impact of human activities on the environment. This trip helps to grow my adventure and outdoor skill. The Northeast offers a wide range of outdoor activities and adventure sports, whether it is trekking through challenging terrains and other activities. I learned about safety measures, communication skills, navigation techniques, environmental ethics, and so on. Adventure experiences also teach resilience, teamwork, and adaptability, as you navigate through unfamiliar landscapes. Overall, a Northeast trip offers a wealth of learning experiences that encompass culture, history, environment, adventure, art, and many other ways, I am sure that these experiences will come in handy in another situation or purpose. Rather, it provides an opportunity for personal growth, expanding your knowledge.

Understanding Mamang Dai throughout this tour: - Embarking on a trip to Northeast India has provided me with first-hand experience and knowledge depending on my understanding of Mamang Dai and Northeast literature. Here are some points that helped me to Understand northeast India.

Immersion in the Northeast Landscape: - Firstly, Immersion in the Northeast Landscape refers to the experience of fully exploring the Natural environment and cultural richness of the land for which Mamang Dai was very concerned. Secondly, it offers the opportunity for outdoor Activities and adventure. Furthermore, Northeast Landscape can Enhance environmental awareness and conservation efforts. By experiencing the beauty of the natural world. This awareness can lead to Sustainable practices and a greater understanding of the impact of human activities on ecosystems.

Encounter with Indigenous Cultures: - The Northeast is known for its rich cultural diversity; each state has its own cultural tradition. By exploring the region, one can encounter various indigenous communities and witness their way of life. This exploration can deepen our understanding of the cultural context Mamang Dai writes about.

Visiting the library and Cultural centers: - As this is an educational tour to understand the writer Mamang Dai as a Northeast writer, so library visiting and museum visiting can enlarge our knowledge. It helps us to understand the position of the Northeast from geographical and historical contexts.

Local interaction: - During this tour, one would have the opportunity to interact with locals, including artists, scholars, and community members. Engaging in conversations and discussions about the region, its history, and its cultural heritage can offer unique perspectives on Mamang Dai life.

Conclusion: - In conclusion, I would say the trip pour me with happiness and knowledge and peace made my mind calm and cool. This was really something to feel. To me, the trip was no doubt very awesome but the things that make me most happy about this journey is the traveling. I love traveling and it feels me from every brink. I love the tour. This trip offers a

diverse and captivating experience of this enchanting north-eastern state of India. From the bustling streets of Shillong to the breath-taking natural wonders of Cherrapunji and the serene village of Mawlynnong, each day of the itinerary unveils a new facet of Meghalaya's beauty and cultural richness. Meghalaya trip promises a very harmonious blend of nature's wonders, cultural heritage, and warm hospitality. It is an opportunity to create memories that will last a lifetime and leave visitors with a profound appreciation for the uniqueness of Meghalaya's landscapes and people.

“Chalo ...Let’s Go...”: Visiting the Land of Mamang Dai

- Dipika Roy

Introduction:

North-East Indian Literature is the literature which comes from the North-East region of India. Nature, life of indigenous people, protest for better life and fight for identity all these are parts of North-East literature. Whenever we read the writing of Mamang Dai or any other writer from northeast region we find these themes in their writing. Now the question comes to us why this kind of protests going on through their writing. North-East region contains 8 states, which are called Seven Sisters (Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Tripura, Nagaland & Arunachal Pradesh) & One Brother (Sikkim). This land is full of Indigenous people and they all have their own language and culture. Whenever we call them as North- Eastern they loss their identity. Writers from North-East India such as Hare Krishna Deka and Temsula Ao have expressed discomfort with the term North-East India and North-Eastern writer. The land is full of Tribal Communities such as Khasi, Garo, Chakma, Kuki, Mizo and Tripuri and they has their own culture and ritual. Whenever we called them North-East Indian, we are denying their individual identity. The region has been facing problems of insurgency for near five decades which caused death of many civilians. The literature also protests against these insurgencies. North-East India is full of nature, for the tribals of this region the nature is their god. They worship the Nature and this worship also get a place in their writing. The poet of North-east India celebrates the nature. Geography & History of North-East region: North-East India is mainly known for its natural beauty is surrounded by international borders with Bhutan, China (Tibet Autonomous Region), Myanmar, and Bangladesh. The region is characterized by its hilly terrain, dense forests, numerous rivers, and diverse flora and fauna. The mighty Brahmaputra River, one of the largest rivers in the world, flows through the region, shaping its geography and providing fertile plains for agriculture. The region is home to the easternmost point of India, called Kibithu in Arunachal Pradesh. The Himalayan Mountain range runs along the northern border of the region, while the Patkai and Naga Hills traverse the eastern part. The climate varies across the states, ranging from subtropical to alpine, influenced by the monsoon and the topography. The history of North East India is ancient and diverse, with various indigenous communities and tribes inhabiting the region. The region has witnessed migrations, invasions, and cultural exchanges over the centuries. Here are some key historical points: Ancient Period: The region has evidence of human habitation dating back to prehistoric times. The Ahom Kingdom, which originated in present-day Myanmar, migrated to Assam in the 13th century and ruled over the region for several centuries. The Ahoms had a significant impact on the culture, administration, and language of Assam. British Colonial Era: The British East India Company established its presence in the region during the early 19th century. They gradually annexed different territories and incorporated them into the British Raj. Assam became a province in 1874, and the other states of the

region were later organized under different administrative units. Independence and Formation of States: After India gained independence from British rule in 1947, efforts were made to reorganize the region. Mizoram and Nagaland emerged as separate entities in the 1960s, followed by Meghalaya in 1972, Arunachal Pradesh in 1987, and finally, Tripura and Manipur as separate states in 1972. Insurgency and Peace Process: The region has witnessed various insurgencies and conflicts since independence, driven by issues such as identity, autonomy, and resource control. Over the years, the Indian government has been engaged in peace talks with different insurgent groups to find lasting solutions and foster peace and development in the region. Cultural Diversity: North East India is known for its cultural diversity, with numerous indigenous tribes and communities each having its distinct customs, traditions, and languages. The region has a rich heritage of music, dance, handicrafts, and festivals, contributing to its vibrant cultural tapestry. The geography and history of North East India offer a unique and fascinating glimpse into the region's distinct identity, challenges, and potential. Mamang Dai: Life and Literature: Mamang Dai is one of the prominent figures of Northeast Indian writers. She is a poet and novelist from Arunachal Pradesh. Her mother tongue is Adi. Dai is first woman of her state to have been selected to the IAS/IFS. However, she gave up her career in the civil service to pursue a career in the journalism. Dai was correspondent with the "Hindustan Times", the "Telegraph" and the "Sentinel" newspaper and was president of Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalist. Dai's poetic world is one of river, forest and mountain, a limpid and lyrical reflection of the terrain of her home state. Nature here is mysterious, verdant with myth, dense sacred memory. There is magic to be found everywhere: in the way lilies "navigating on a heartbeat . . . are shooting up like swordfish", in the quiet equipoise of "cool bamboo, / restored in sunlight", in the "speechless ardour" of mountains. And there is no doubt whatsoever that "the river has a soul". She received Padma Shri in 2011 from the government of India. The government of Arunachal Pradesh conferred on her annual Verrier Elwin prize in 2013 for her book "Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land". She also received Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017 for her novel " Black Hills ". Tour Itinerary: Our tour started on 27th April at night. We were 27 students only with 2 professors, all excited and waiting for the experiences we will come to experience through this journey. We were mainly going to Meghalaya. The main purpose of our journey was to get a sense of Northeast India. This was my first visit outside West Bengal including many of my friends. Our train arrived at Malda Station at 5.30am and our journey officially began. We all were so keen to see the new places. It was an educational tour to understand the Northeast India. The train journey was also exciting for us. The more we were moving forward to our journey the landscape was changing respectively. We were slowly entering into the lands of North-East, the breath-taking view of this land amazed us with its beauty. Finally we arrived at Kamakhya station and then took a bus and reached at our hotel in Shillong. The first day our journey started at early morning, we woke up at 6.30am and get ready at 7.00am, after having our breakfast we depart from our hotel for our destination. When the tour was planned, we decided to visit some particular spots. Our tour guide Shantanu Chakraborty guided us to go those spots.

When our professors suggest us to go to Meghalaya they also told us that this place will make you wonder and did. The place was so beautiful and rich in natural beauty. First day we visited Elephant Falls, Arwah Cave, Mawsmai Cave and Seven Sisters Falls. The Elephant Falls is situated with a huge area. The beauty of it is indescribable in word, whenever I tried to do so I find myself unable to do. The Falls is full of crowd, tourist from many parts of the world gathered here to enjoy this view, this natural peace. The very sound of the Falls is making this place more astonishing. It is really God's creation which can make one to forget all her stress and feel relaxed. Then we move to the caves, one can't define its scenery in words. When we enter into the cave it was dark as we are in a place which is apart from the natural world. We had to use our flashlights to move forward into the cave. Our next spot was Seven Sisters Falls but unfortunately we can't enjoy the beauty of it because it was dried up that time when we visit Meghalaya. Then we went to the Arwah Cave, this cave is millions years old and in this cave we saw some fossils which is also as old as the cave. And after visiting the cave we returned to our hotel. On 30th April the next morning of our tour, the day started as the previous day, we already on the bus to explore the beauty, the cleanest river of Asia. We all together were moving forward to Dawki. Shillong to Dawki is a long way with a very curving road which makes most of us ill. We feel uncomfortable as the high altitude was affecting us. When we was a little far from the river we feel a huge change in temperature. Suddenly we all started to feel hot. At last we arrived at the bank of the river, the beauty of this river can make one wonder. The water of the river is extraordinarily clean which is really different from the river which flows in the mainland Indian. It is surrounded by the mountains and forest which make the river unnaturally beautiful. Here take boat rides on the river. And when I was on the boat the beauty of the river was sublime. Apart from the breathtaking beauty one most attractive thing about this place is the border of India and Bangladesh. And in both countries this place is a tourist spot and most interestingly the border is only made by some stones. After enjoying the beauty of Dawki we move to our next location, the Living Root Bridge. It is a natural miracle. I call it natural miracle because one can't define it with reason. The roots of one tree are woven together and create this beauty. We all stayed there for some time and enjoy the view of this root bridge. When we were returning to our bus, we met some children of this place. The children were so innocent and happy. Our next location was Asia's cleanest village Mawlynnong. When we enter into the village it was already evening. The evening was so calm in this village. We were enjoying the peace far from the hustle and bustle of city life. As I said before it is Asia's cleanest village, one can feel its cleanness at the very moment when she entered into the village. The villagers of this village organized everything so beautifully. They all come together and make their village the cleanest village of Asia. In this village there is so many trash bins which is also beautiful and it will give one the sense of art which is there in their life. And our day ended here and we get back to our hotel. It was 31st April morning 7.00 am, we all were at bed. It was the day when we were not in hurry and it was also our last day at Meghalaya. After visiting Shillong we all had to get back to Guwahati. Where our train journey to home will start in the next day. We'll at 9.00am we all

were ready with our baggage and then we went to visit the city Shillong. At the very first we went to visit the house of Rabindranath Tagore. This is the house where Tagore created his masterpiece " Shesher Kabita". At first we all gathered at the entrance of the house and our professor Dhritiman Chakraborty recited the poem Shesher Kabita for us. Then we move forward to see the house inside. After that we were at the Cathedral of Mary help of Christian, it is a church. we all went into the church. It was the first made church in the western style I visited and it left me with amazement. Then we visit the police bazar, Don Bosco Museum and the Umiam Lake. And it was end of our journey Meghalaya. Then we come to Guwahati which was our stay for that night and after the day we visited the city Guwahati. The city is all surrounded by mountains and old trees. In Guwahati we mainly visited the Balaji temple and Basistha Ashram. But in the way to Basistha Temple we stop at a place to see the beauty of the river Brahmaputra. The mighty Brahmaputra amazed us with its beauty. After visiting those places we came to Guwahati station at 3.00pm and our train arrived at 4.30m and we all got into train to come to home and our tour end here. What I learnt from the tour: We all were at Meghalaya, the Scotland of east. It is full of biodiversity and natural beauty. The land here is mostly hills, we had hardly seen any plain land. The beauty of Meghalaya mesmerized our heart. Our journey was mainly on bus so we observed the landscape here though the window of bus and we stop at some spots and looked at it with amazement. Like many Indian also I used to have some prejudice about Northeastern people but after visiting the place I finally have some idea about their life. The life here is very difficult, 80% of population of Meghalaya is depending entirely on agriculture for their livelihood which is only 10% land of Meghalaya. Although the economy of Meghalaya based on agriculture but the state imports their food from other states. The price of everything is very high. They sell things in high price than actual mrps. The society of Meghalaya is matrilineal society which means the property is gone to the possession of the daughter from the mother. Most of the shops in Meghalaya runs by women. This society shows us a way to empower our women at the mainland India. If we give our women, economic power then they can be free from the patriarchy of the society. The one thing which made me thing very deeply is the crisis of the world, the climate change. We were at the Cherrapunji the wettest place on the earth. We were there for days but we did not become a witness a huge rain there which signifies the climate change in the world. There are many things at Don Bosco Museum to learn but what is attracted me that the museum introduced to us almost all the tribal of the northeast India. Which again protest against the mainland India who make them North-eastern and make their identity lost. One more interesting thing about this museum is, this gives us a brief history of how there Christianity is spread.

How did the tour help to understand Mamang Dai:

Mamang Dai is one of the most powerful and sincere creative voices emerging from the northeast India. A major theme of her writing is tribal believe in animism. According to Dai animism is a believe that plants, objects, weather and other natural aspects have "a living

soul", and that there is a power that controls and organizes the universe. In "small towns and rivers " Dai writes "The river has a soul In the summer it cuts through the land Like a torrent of grief sometimes Sometimes I think it holds its breath Seeking a land of fish and stars". In many poetries of Mamang Dai we find nature a major element. She writes about the nature how the indigenous people worship the nature and how it is so important for their livelihood. We all learn about the nature which she constantly highlighted in her poems after visiting northeast India we get to know directly about that nature. We can feel the beauty of nature which she has portrayed in her poetry. But by portraying nature she not only wants to highlight the beauty of it but also its essence in the life of the tribal. After visiting the state of North-east we get to know there are many people whose living is dependent on this mountain, forest and rivers. It seems as the "mountain god "of Dai's poetry. Another major theme of Dai's poetry is the insurgencies and counter insurgencies which caused death. I feel this very closely when we were at Meghalaya there was military who is roaming around with guns. Conclusion: to conclude I have to say one thing northeast India is full of natural beauty. One who fine her or his life difficult or in much stress she should take a long holiday and should visit this region. It will help her to be relaxed. This place is not only about mountain, forest, and simplicity of life; it is about suffering, conflict and pain. We need to empathically understand the land and the people.

To the Land of Mountain and Pain: Visit to North-East

- Sreyan Das

Introduction:

Via a narrow strip of land North - East regions are connected to the mainland. Their traditions, rituals, customs are quite different from the rest of India. It is a diverse land of astounding mountains, rolling valleys and river plains. It is therefore expected that the literature being birthed here will be just as diverse and unique. With seven sister states and one brother state, the region's literature is a bewitching confluence of nature, identity and politics. North – East India is an under – represented region in many ways. The troubled political climate, the beautiful landscape and the confluence of various ethnic groups perhaps have given rise to a body of writing that is completely different from Indian English literature. North – East India was a colonial construct and continues to be one by virtue of having a historically difficult relationship with the Indian nation state. Some of the most renowned writers from North – East India are Bhabendranth Saikia, Harekrishna Deka, Jahnabi Barua, Mamang Dai, Surya Kumar Bhuyan and many more.

The Geography & History of North – East :

The North – East India , fondly called the land of seven sisters is a fascinating place with enchanted frontiers. Bounded by China on the North, Bangladesh on the West and Myanmar on the South and East. It is only the Siliguri corridor, a narrow strip of land, in West Bengal, popularly known as 'chicken's neck' connects this region to the rest of mainland India. The region comprises the states of- Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura. The ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity of this land is as much breathtaking as verdant hills, mesmerizing rivers and lush valleys. Two third of the region consists of hilly terrain and the rest is flat land and valleys including the Brahmaputra, Barak and Imphal valleys. Many races and cultures fuse together into the composite that is India. Nature has been its benign best in the region: the picturesque landscape and colorful sunrise and sunset and the verdant flora. It is also a gene pool of rich biodiversity. North – East is known for its scenic beauty and unspoiled environment. People live in harmony with nature. The harmony of men and nature comes out very well in their art works. The rich tapestry of cultures of Northeast ranges from the highly developed classical dance forms and visual arts of Assam and Manipur to the vibrant and rhythmic folk dances and songs to the hill people of the entire region.

North – East is a collective term which is used for the eight states of India. It has some very unique features such as dominance of Mongoloid race of people, tribal culture and immense potential for hydro electricity. Its proximity to countries like China, Bhutan, Myanmar and Bangladesh has made it special from strategic point of view. Modern period in the history of North – East begins with the foundation of British rule in Assam following the Anglo – Burmese war. After this most of the northeast region came under the British dominance and

the so called isolation of the North – East came to an end. The people of northeast, like the rest of the country, offered strong resistance to the British colonial force. The Islamic invading force led by Mir Jumla attacked Assam in 1662. Frans jansz van der Haiden of the Dutch East India company accompanied Mir Jumla. When ‘The First War of Independence’ started in 1857 against the British, Maniram Dewan led the revolt in Assam against the British. When swadeshi movement was launched, Ambikagiri Raychoudhury and Gobina Lahiri organized the students of Assam and called upon the people of Assam to boycott foreign goods. Kushal Konwar laid down his life in 1942. Kanaklata Barua, Mukunda Kakati, Kumoli Devi, Ratan Kachari, Hemoram Patar, Kolai Koch became martyrs. The muslim league conspiracy to make Assam part of Pakistan was thwarted by the great leadership of Gopinath Bordoloi with the blessings of Mahatma Gandhi. Prior to this Subhas Chandra Bose’s intervention in 1938 saved Assam from going into the hands of Muslim league.

Mamang Dai : Life & Literature :

Mamang Dai is a poet and novelist writing in English, from Arunachal Pradesh in India’s northeast. Her mother tongue is Adi. Dai is the first woman of her state to have been selected to the IAS/IFS. However she gave up her career in Civil Service to pursue a career in journalism. Dai was correspondent with the Hindustan Times, the Telegraph and the Sentinel newspapers and was the President of Arunachal Pradesh Union of Working Journalists. She also worked with World Wide Fund for nature in the Eastern Himalaya Biodiversity Hotspots programme.

Her first publication River Poems hailed her as one of the most intense poetic voices from the North – East region. In 2003 Dai was honoured with the state’s Verrier Elwin Award for her book ‘Arunachal Pradesh : the Hidden Land’ that documented the culture and customs of her land. She has featured in several national and international forums to promote the disappearing traditions of her state in the face of modernity and give voice to its people thorough the imaginative space of prose and poetry. A long time member of the North – East Writer’s Forum, she lives in Itanagar. Her books include : The legends of Pensam, Stupid Cupid, River Poems, Mid Summer – Survival Lyrics, El bálsamo del tiempo, Arunachal Pradesh – The Hidden Land, Mountain Harvest – The Food of Arunachal, The Sky Queen and Once Upon a Moon Time, Hambreelmai’s Loon, The Black Hill.

Tour Itinerary :

Destination: North – East India

Staying Period: 28/04/2023 to 02/05/2023

Budget: 7000/- (Excluding train tickets & personal expenses)

Day 01: We arrived at Kamakhya Junction around five in the evening. We had a mini bus to pick us up. Since we were running late we went straight to the hotel which took around 4 hours. Then we took our luggage to the designated room and freshened up. Then we went to bed since we had to wake up early in the next morning.

Day 02: Our plan was to go to Dawki that day but some of us weren't ready on time so we had to postpone Dawki to day 03. After the change of plans we had to change our clothes since we were going to Mawsynram. There were some caves and the famous Seven Sister Falls. One of us caught an injury while trekking so we didn't waste much time and came back to our hotel.

Day 03: Finally the wait was over. The first location of day 03 was Dawki. As we expected the Sun was pretty hot there. One of the main attractions there was boating so we couldn't miss that either. It was three people per boat so we divided into groups of three and went boating. After having a amazing photo session we went back to our bus, which took us to the famous Root Bridge. Certainly nature created a beauty. Our final location was Mawlynnong, also known as Asia's cleanest village. I don't know why but my mind was at ease when we were there. After all these we were running late so we had to hurry to go to our hotel. That night ten of us had to shift to another hotel because of booking problems. So we packed our bags and shifted to another hotel nearby.

Day 04: It was our last day in Shillong. We were already missing those streets. But we didn't have time for that, as we had some sightseeing to do. We saw Tagore's house in Rilbong, Umiam Lake was splendid to look at. We also visited a church and the Don Bosco Museum(Asia's largest museum). After all of that everyone went on a shopping spree at Police Bazar. But sadly that was our last spot in Shillong. Next stop was Guwahati. We went straight to our hotel in Guwahati since all of us were exhausted.

Day 05: Day 05 was pretty different because we were divided into two groups. One group went to Kamakkhya and the rest went sightseeing. Everyone gathered at Guwahati Junction since we had our train back home. Next morning we arrived at Malda Town railway station and it was finally time to say goodbye.

What I Learnt from the Tour :

The tour was basically about getting a taste of our northeast culture in person. The very first difference I noticed between us mainlanders and the northeast Indians is our relation with nature. It really saddens me but with all honesty we don't care about mother nature at all but it's not the same for northeast people. They love and care for their environment wholeheartedly. Not only trees, the streets there are as clean as it can be. No wonder we have both the cleanest river and the cleanest village of Asia in the northeast. The next thing I noticed was their anger towards politicians. One day me and my friend went out to ask a local about their lifestyle but she kept talking about how politics ruined their lives. Not only politicians, they also can't stand mainlanders. On many occasions when we tried to strike a conversation with the locals, most of the time the response wasn't all that great. Apart from that we learnt about northeastern Geography and History and Mawjymbuin cave was a great place for that. It is a 209 m high natural cave that is made up of calcareous sandstones. When we ventured deeper into the cave we found fossils of some small sea creatures. We got to learn about all of these in great detail when we visited the Don Bosco Museum. North – East is considered as one of the most culturally diverse regions of the world, is a land inhabited by more than 200 tribes. Garo, Khasi and Jaintia are the names of

the three major matrilineal communities. And I'm not talking about their past, even in the current times most of the shops/stalls were under women's commands. As for their religion I think it is pretty safe to say over 70% of the population practices Christianity, with Presbyterians, Baptists, Church of God and Catholics the more common denominations. The religion of the people in the northeast is closely related to their ethnicity.

How Did the Tour Help Me Understand Mamang Dai & North – East Literature :

As I previously discussed earlier northeast regions are blooming with rich cultures and experiencing it first hand is just on a whole another level. We read about tribal communities in the northeast in our books but communicating with them and learning their language was special. Even though I was a bit skeptical at first, the joy of learning something new engulfed that thought pretty quickly. I realized that some accessories are fetching quite a high price compared to the mainland. These little details, we won't find them in any books.

Mamang Dai in one of her poem 'Small Towns and River' talked about life and mortality. The town symbolizing death presents a weeping picture of those who have lost their dear ones. Moreover, the poet presents a contrast in the image of the river that lives eternally. Whereas, humans are prone to death and decay. However, the symbolism and the imagery used in them seemed to be provoking at first but after visiting the Don Bosco Museum and learning about their tribal history it has peaked my interest.

Most of her work contains some important theme such as mortality, life vs death, eternity, nature and spirituality. I always wondered if every northeastern thinks about these things and I couldn't figure out an answer until I visited Shillong. Though some places represent conflict, violation and migration, most of their thought lies in the representation of contemporary events and problems like ecological degradation, corruption, loss of identity and cultural values. Before visiting northeast these were just random topics and emotions for me but after this tour I can certainly relate to Mamang Dai's poetry a little more.

Conclusion :

Ever since I took admission in the English Honors course I read about northeast on various occasions. It peaked my interest and I always wanted to visit north-east ever since. I have visited Assam and Sikkim before so the thought of visiting Meghalaya was really intriguing to me. If we put study materials aside for a bit, visiting northeast with a group of friends was pure joy. Even though the schedule was a bit hectic, it was for everyone's best interest. And how can I forget about our teachers, they gave us enough freedom so we could enjoy properly, they also guided us in difficult times. Having them as guardians is a blessing and I think most of us share the same thought. The time I spent with everyone is irreplaceable and I do hope that we will get more opportunities like this in the future.

Literature and the Other: Understanding Literature from North-East through Educational Tour

Diya Ghosh

Introduction:

Literature from North East India refers to literature in the languages of northeast India and the body of work by English language writers from this region. North East India is an underrepresented region in many ways. The trouble political climate the beautiful landscape and the confluence of various ethnic groups perhaps have given rise to a body of writing that is completely different from Indian English literature. Northeast India was a colonial construct and continues to be on by virtue of having a historically difficult relationship with the Indian nation state. There is no single definition of the phrase literature from North East India as the diversity of this region defies easy definition. Broadly, this phrase refers mostly to English writing but may also include Assamese literature and writing in the Meitei language, that have long traditions of writing and stand on their own with a glorious legacy. Literature from the Northeast India is not a recent phenomenon rather its presence is significantly older. It has been identified. However, subject positionality of these writing mostly belongs to Northeast region i.e it's people and land which is till the date has been treated from the marginal angle by the centre due to its backward geographical location. Moreover, the people of this land are often stereotyped because of their physical feature. These problematic concerns give birth to various questions such as whether the writing that brings concerns of marginal people and land should be seen and received as Marginal literature in Indian context and do these bodies of writing characteristically fit in the ambit of Marginal literature. The Geography and History of the North East: The cultural loss and disruption to of the region back in the historical and other events. And those events or the impact in socio political life shaped the writing of Northeast. During Ahom, the Bhaki movement and after the fall of Ahom kingdom Christian Missionary and British colonialism has changed the region and it's dweller in various ways. Religious, social And linguistic tussle with the outsiders culture change various dimension of regions normal life which create a havoc in the society. British impositions of Bengali language in Assam for their administration benefit and the forced migration of workers from the Bengal are the most important event that heavily disrupted the religion setup. Even after independence emerge of state of the basic ethnicity and language result it in further separation of societies as variation other states like Meghalaya, Tripura Nagaland and Mizoram has gate separated from Assam. Even after the creation of various states demands for more sovereign state and district continues. This public demands have been utilized by the insurgency group across the state of northeast consequently the region has witnessed several separatist movements like ULFA, MNE, etc. Later in 70s century of Bangladesh and the refugee influx give rise to Assam movement which resulted in communal clashes and ethnic disruption even the

impact is still visible scenario. Again the counter insurgency development of armed forces and AFSPA especially in Assam Manipur brought more political disruption so if we closely look at the writing from the region, writers from Assam Nagaland Meghalaya or any other state were actively address the issue that emerged from these events. Northeast India and the term: Before Jumping into the literature of the region it is important to understand the term Northeast which can give us a glimpse of its geographical backwardness hence Its marginal character. The phrase "Northeast" is an umbrella term that refers to eight Indian states that are located in the country's northeastern region. All These are Assam, Arunachal Pradesh Meghalaya, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim There are several arguments against using the word "Northeast," which Seeks to homogenize a very diverse region. The phrase "Northeast" is used to refer to a specific geographical location, despite its directional character. Scholars believe that by lumping together a diverse group of people under one umbrella term, we risk overlooking the distinct identities of numerous ethnic clusters in the region. It is like in the far East or the Middle East where the defining happens not from the inside but from the outside perspective. Preeti Gill also points out in her anthology "it is a meaningless and inappropriate to label As the term reflects an external and not local point of view, it is bound to be limited in multiple ways. Apart from that the region is far from the mainland connected through narrow passage called chicken neck and far away from the political, cultural and geographical center. Moreover, the region is commonly associated with terror, insurgency and is seen as a violently explosive territory. In an outsider's imagination is either of a one of the explosive territory or of an exotic remote location. All these factors led to a misrepresentation of the region hence Characteristics of the Northeast Writing: it is an undeniable fact that oral tradition was more prominent in the region from ancient times. Practices of writing started from 19th century onwards. Many groups in the Northeast, particularly the hill tribes, have a thriving oral culture. Unlike in the Nest the spoken word was valued more than the written one. However, despite the land being infected with various issues disturbed the lives of the people yet the preservation of remarkable art and culture as well as the richness of literature. are still amazing aspects of this region Regional Literature here encompasses myths legends folklores, songs, music and dances of the area. They narrate the tales or legacies of trad1tions which are carried down from generation to generation, cherished and considered as immensely sacred These oral traditions form the basis of most of the modern literature produced from the Northeast Contemporary writings from the Northeast do not stop at ethnic representations, they move beyond ethnicity to reprocess the cultural memory of a shared history. Most of the texts have a dual gives birth to a stereotypical notion. However, on the contrary North-East India embodies within her fold a pluralistic, multilingual, and multiethnic society. There is the dimension, on the one hand, of freshness of Idea and theme and on the other rootedness in age-old tradition In terms of Northeastern literature. According to K.C Baral "the emerging history of literature of Northeast is variously critiqued as ethnic writing, lacking" tradition and often subjected to the virulence of tribal aspects that lacks in aesthetic virtuosity. These critical opinions are at best paternalistic and at worst smack of

ignorance." Tilottoma Mishra in her Introduction to the anthology of Northeast Writing mention Temsula Ao, whose own writings display a sensitive belonging to the oral and the written and states that the "new literature is rich with indigenous colour. Written by modern storytellers and poets from the North-East the writings do not appear to have a political goal, unlike the postcolonial literature that has recently emerged in Africa and among Native Americans. We can draw a dividing line between African and Native American literatures, and that of Northeast India. The developing literati of various north-east Indian regions have been greatly affected by a sense of being deprived and true representation in the great Indian civilizational discourse, or even in the nationalist discourse in the post-Independence era. As Ananya Guha express- "Violence is enmeshed in the literary culture of north-east India because of longstanding oppressive binaries of militarism and militancy it has been subjected to". By responding to violence, several writers have not just emphasized the syncretistic nature of the different literary cultures but also rejected straightjacketing of their expression as manifestations of their violence-prone existence alone.

Arunachal Pradesh and Mamang Dai:

Mamang Dai is a representative poet, novelist and journalist from Arunachal Pradesh and author to notable works such as, 'The Sky Queen', 'Stupid Cupid' and 'Mountain Harvest: The Flood of Arunachal Pradesh'. She won the Sahitya Akademi Award for her novel 'The Black Hill' but her literary journey started with the poetry collection called, 'River Poems', which was well received in literary circles. It is in 'The Legends of Pensum' that her talent and originality find best expression. Fiction, history, myth, and memory- these are the things that merge in a deceptively seamless manner in the stories. 'The Legend of Pensum' is like an anecdote connected through the string of incidents by common characters weaving tales of the unknown, shamans, and beautifully describing the remote bountiful nature cut off from the outside world. It also focuses on the community ties and how they cope up with death, murder and violence. The narrative evokes the Northeast past and present. The 'in-between space' is explained through the series of interconnected stories divided into four different sections entitled 'A diary of the world', 'Song of rhapsodist', 'Daughter of the village' and 'A matter of time'. As a representation of the Adi tribe, Mamang Dai presents stories to describe the struggles and sufferings of the people. Prior to the invasion of the colonizer, the people struggled and suffered because of the lack of civilization. After the arrival of the British, they suffered because of the unexpected development and progress. So, people residing in this state awfully faced struggles and sufferings during their period of existence. This is the central focus of the book where everything and anything is possible in the space of time. *The Legends of Pensum* by Mamang Dai is chiefly recounts on the myths, legends, beliefs, customs and rituals of the Adi tribe in Arunachal Pradesh and the author too hails from the 'Adi tribe'. So predominant factors via Besides the primal focus is on the myths and chronicles. She has also composed and published two volumes of poems and 'The Balm of Time'. In 'River Poems' she has extensively written about the land and rivers of Arunachal Pradesh. The river has been used as a metaphor throughout the volume. And the spirit of

the people of Arunachal Pradesh was compared with the exquisite flow of the rivers. Her strong attachment for her roots reflects in her writing. Her vocabulary is lucid and very touching. Her poetic appeal can be considered to some extent quite universal. The various imageries and poetic images in her work are related to nature. Along with nature, her works also depict the history of her race and the changes and transformation that continuously happen in the society. Her use of nature imageries helps us to reveal the strong traditional feature of her society. Her use of symbols and irony in the poems is usually emerged out of a situation. As a result, her poetry world revolves on a river, a forest, and a mountain, all of which lyrically represent the terrain of her native state. Thus, nature is used by Dai as mysterious, rich with myth and dense with sacred memory. Insurgency has occupied a well-defined place in Northeast poetry. Poets fail to ignore this truth. The search for root and cultural alienation are recurring themes in the North-Eastern poetry. Alienation has driven the North-Eastern people in search of violent assertion of their identity. Mamang Dai always stands by her people, wielding her pen and reaching out to them in person for help and support their cause. She tries to state their issues and bring hope for the people. The hills and the people of Arunachal Pradesh have witnessed the winds of war and bloodshed. This ruffled their peaceful lives. The fear and the quest for peace can be found in many of her poems.

Tour Itinerary:

This is an educational tour. It started on 27 April night. The train is at 12am. The train will reach Guwahati around 1 pm. We continue the journey by road from Guwahati to Shillong. We visited lots of places and got more knowledge from it. We returned to Guwahati on 1st May and spend the night there. On 2nd May we visited Kamakhya, Balaji temple and Guwahati city. The returned train is at 5:30 pm on 2nd May and we reached Malda station the next morning around 6:20 am. What I learnt from the tour: Basically this tour had based on northeast literature. After this tour we got more information from it. First of the culture of north-eastern states is characterized by the diverse ethnic groups settled in the region. Each tribe has its own distinct custom, cuisine, attire and dialect. One of the tribes is the Konyak, the last remaining head hunter clans of the region. This part of India is known to be the world's most culturally diverse region. The region is inhabited by more than 200 tribes who boast of their indigenous and authentic traditions. Some of the most popular tribes are the Bodo Tribe, Adi tribe, Rishi tribe, Bhutia tribe, Garo tribe, Kuki tribe. The beautiful North Eastern states of India have the highest biodiversity. The seven sisters states of north-east India is blessed with magnificent mountains and hills, spectacular rivers, stunning waterfalls and ample of natural attractions. North Indian food is a mix of vegetarian and non-vegetarian. A simple north Indian vegetarian meal consists of moong dal, 'subji' and phulka. The heritage sites in northeast India are Manas National Park and Kaziranga National Park, both of which were inscribed as natural sites in 1985. How did the tour help me understand Mamang Dai and North East literature? Mamang Dai is a poet and novelist writing in English. She was correspondent for the Hindustan Times, the

Telegraph and the sentinel newspapers and president, Arunachal Pradesh union of working journalists. She also worked with worldwide groups for nature in the eastern Himalaya biodiversity hotspots programme. Mamang Dai's writing is a seamless combination of familiarity and imagination. You can connect with her words almost immediately but at the same time, you feel like you are reading something, for example her poem, "the voice of the mountain". The words have the ability to help your mind paint a picture. The lines of the poem come to life as you read them. You connect with them- "The poem also talks of the indigenous people who belong to the land. The other day a young man arrived from the village / Because he could not speak / He brought a gift of fish From the land of rivers". The northeast is projected to experience increased precipitation, more frequent and intense storms, and higher average temperatures. These projected changes pose challenges to communities as they protect water and waste infrastructure, maintain water quality, and protect air quality and public health. Northeast India has a subtropical climate that influenced by its reality and influences from the south west and the Himalayas to the north, the main Meghalaya plateau to the Nagaland. Mizoram and Manipur to the earth influence the climate.

Conclusion: After discussion of this literature we see that it has become very useful for us to know the pictures of nature that the poet has talked about in her writing through this educational tour. The local people of Shillong are deeply connected with nature in their day to day life and every local people including child present their nature very beautifully. So at last we realized this thing very clearly through our educational tour.

Indigenous Literature from North-East India: Learning through Travel

Dibyajyoti Roy

Introduction: -

Northeast literature means the literature in the language of the northeast Indians. Northeast India is an under-represented region in many ways. The troubled political climate, the beautiful landscape, and the mixture of the various ethnic groups perhaps have given rise to a body of writing that is completely different from the Indian literature. In other ways, it also can be concluded that there is no single definition of the phrase "Literature of NE India" Broadly this phrase refers mostly to English writings but may also include Assamese literature. Many writers such as Harikrishna Deka and Temsula Ao have expressed their discomfort with the term NE India and NE poets respectively. Some poets like Mamang Dai show their love and obsession for their motherland. It is clear from the writing of Northeast literature that they are obsessed with their motherland. They fight for, they sing for, and they cherish their homeland. The Northeast region had to face many problems and many conflicts, they had to face ignorance, insurgency problem, and some Maoist movement. Somewhere the writers were affected by it. They express strong political awareness by addressing issues such as identity and ethnicity and violence that has ravaged their home state Assam due to the militant group UIFA (United Liberation Front of Assam) and the Indian government in complex ways through their writings. Having grown up in the shadow of guns, their desire to analyse the common people's reaction to the insurgency is as strong as ever. Nature and political issues made them this like and now they feel separated. History & Geography of the Northeast: - Northeast India is the easternmost region of India.. It comprises eight states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, and Tripura. Our educational tour was held in the state of Meghalaya. The history and geography of Northeast India are richly portrayed in literature, providing valuable insights into the region's past and its unique landscape. Here I will provide an overview of the history and geography of northeast India based on literary accounts. ⌘ Northeast India has a long history that spans thousands of years. The region has been inhabited by various indigenous tribes and ethnic groups, each with its distinct culture and traditions. The colonial era had a profound impact on Northeast India. The British East India Company gradually extended its influence over the region, establishing tea plantations, introducing Christianity, and consolidating political control. The literary works of this period, such as those by Northeast writers such as Mamang Dai, and Birendra Kumar Bhattacharya, shed light on the socio-cultural changes and the struggle for independence. ⌘ Northeast India is known for its diverse geography, which includes the Himalayan ranges, fertile plains, evergreen forests, and river valleys. The region is home to several major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, the Barak, and their tributaries, which play a crucial role in shaping the landscape. The northeast Indian valley is surrounded by hills and mountains, which made the view more intensify. These hills are inhabited by various tribes, each with its distinct culture and traditions. The lush rainforests of Meghalaya, known for their unique living root bridges and abundant biodiversity, add to the region's natural beauty. In

conclusion, the literature of Northeast India provides valuable insights into the region's history and geography.

Mamang Dai Life and Literature: -

Mamang Dai is a prominent Indian writer raised in Arunachal Pradesh, a north-eastern state of India. She is known for her insightful literary work that beautifully captured the Northeast's natural beauty. Born in 1957 in Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh, and become a significant voice representing the rich tradition of the Northeast. Her writings reflect her deep connection with the land, people, and folklore of Arunachal Pradesh. Mamang Dai's literary works often explore themes of identity and the impact of modernity on the traditional way of life. Mamang Dai's poetry reflects her love for nature and landscape of the Northeast India. Her poetry collections, such as "River Poems" and "Stupid Cupid" reveal her keen observation of the natural world and her ability to call emotions through vivid imagery. Beyond her novels and poetry, Mamang Dai is also known for her essays and columns. Her literary contribution has earned her numerous awards including the Sahitya Akademi Award, one of India's most prestigious literary honors, for her novel "The Black Hill". Her works have been translated into several languages throughout the world. In the end, I would say her writings offer a glimpse into the region's diverse culture, landscape, and traditions and she continues to be the influential voice and narrative of the Northeast in the larger literary landscape of India. Understanding Mamang Dai throughout this tour: - Embarking on a trip to Northeast India has provided me with first-hand experience and knowledge depending on my understanding of Mamang Dai and Northeast literature. Here are some points that helped me to understand northeast India. ∞ Immersion in the Northeast Landscape: - Firstly, Immersion in the Northeast Landscape refers to the experience of fully exploring the natural environment and cultural richness of the land for which Mamang Dai was very concerned. Secondly, it offers the opportunity for outdoor activities and adventure. Furthermore, Northeast Landscape can enhance environmental awareness and conservation efforts. We experienced the beauty of the natural world. This awareness can lead to sustainable practices and a greater understanding of the impact of human activities on ecosystems. ∞ Encounter with Indigenous Cultures: - The Northeast is known for its rich cultural diversity; each state has its own cultural tradition. By exploring the region, one can encounter various indigenous communities and witness their way of life. This exploration can deepen our understanding of the cultural context Mamang Dai writes about.

Visiting to the library and Cultural centers: -

As this is an educational tour to understand the writer Mamang Dai as a Northeast writer, so library visiting and museum visiting can enlarge our knowledge. It helps us to understand the position of the Northeast from geographical and historical contexts.

Local interaction:

During this tour, one would have the opportunity to interact with locals, including artists, scholars, and community members. Engaging in conversations and discussions about the region, its history, and its cultural heritage can offer unique perspectives on Mamang Dai's

work. This interaction can help to grasp the underlying themes, emotions, and experiences she conveys in her writings.

Tour Itinerary:

Our visiting place was Meghalaya located in northeast India, a state surrounded by hills, waterfalls, and unique cultures. This was a great trip for the first and the last time in my life. I went especially because this is my last year in college. So, this would be a great memory in my college chapter, after some days this chapter gonna close. I am sure in the future; all this memory will make me smile and be happy although sad. My trip was divided into several parts. It was three days and a two-night trip in the northeast region. I had to pack up a little trolley for this trip. As I knew the climate of the northeast so, I took precautions with me from home. All accessories like an umbrella, warm clothes, polythene, and others. My three-day trip is mentioned as follows.....

Day 1: heading towards Shillong: - 28th April 2023 we gather at the Malda rail station at 12:30 am for the Kamakya Express. The train was very late in time. It was to arrive at Malda between 2:30 am but it took 2 hours more to arrive in. And finally, we started our journey at 5:07 am from Malda. This train journey was also an enjoyment. With this enjoyment, our train slowly ran toward our destination.... On this night we check into our hotel in Labang on our tourist bus. The bus was ready outside the Guwahati station as we reach the station they picked up us and took us to the hotel in Shillong. And we spend our 1st day successfully through the journey. As our site visit started in the early morning and we were too tired so we decide to take a rest. The night view was awesome from the hotel; it felt like the hill was glittering.

Day 2: Cherrapunji exploration: - After breakfast, depart for Cherrapunji, one of Earth's wettest places. Visit Elephant Falls, but still I can't find out why the fall is named "Elephant Fall". Then we visit the Mawsmai Caves, known for their stalactites and stalagmites. After a long journey we reached our next destination which was Arwah Caves. It is famous for its fossils which you can observe in the lit-up interiors, especially toward the end of the cave. You will find crustacean shells and fish bones fossilized in the limestone walls of the cave. After a great historical view, we ran for the seven-sister fall. There we Enjoy panoramic views of the Bangladesh plains from the Seven Sisters Falls viewpoint. Return to Shillong in the evening. Overnight stay in Shillong.

Day 3: Mawlynnong Village, Dawki, and Root Bridge: After a tasty tasty breakfast head towards the Dawki and experience the crystal-clear waters of the Umngot River. Enjoy a boat ride with my love on the river and witness the beauty of the surrounding hills and the boat ride. There was a serious traffic jam so we finished our lunch on the bus. It is true that we had a great lunch throughout the trip in nature. After lunch we start our journey to Visit the Living Root Bridge, a natural bridge formed by intermingling tree roots. At the end we close our journey by visiting Mawlynnong, known as the cleanest village in Asia. Explore the picturesque village and learn about its sustainable practices.

Day 4: Shillong Sightseeing: - After breakfast, embark on a full-day sightseeing tour of Shillong. First, we visit the rental house of Rabindranath Tagore in Shillong where he wrote

his last poem "Seser Kobita" After that we visit a Church and then a shopping place called Polish Bazar where we had time for us to shop and hang around for some time. Before concluding the day, we explore the Don Bosco Museum which shows the rich cultural heritage of the region. It was our last place to visit in Shillong, after completing the sightseeing we head out for Guwahati this is our last destination, from where we will conclude the trip. Day 5: Departure Day: - We enjoyed the last day of this trip by spending the whole night gossiping with friends. That night will always be a golden phase in my memory. In the morning I and my other five friends decide to visit the Kamakhya Temple. And our other member decides to visit other places. And we caught our other members at the Guwahati station. And we say goodbye to Guwahati and Shillong pouring happiness and memories in our hearts.

What do I learn from the tour: - A Northeast trip offers me many opportunities to learn and grow personally. As I've discussed previously, Northeast India is home to a remarkable tapestry of cultures, with each state having its own distinct tradition, language, and costumes, so this trip helped us deeply spiritually and mentally. Their Tradition and cultural ritual and their lifestyle help me think differently. Their love for nature and preserving nature as a mother this concept push me one step nare to nature. I learned how to live friendly and peacefully with Mother Nature. Northeast's History and Heritage are so rich what can I say? Visiting historical sites, museums, and heritage sites during this trip help me to delve into the region's past. You can learn about pivotal events, explore architectural marvels, and understand the region's role in shaping the larger historical narrative of the country. The local peoples do much hard work and are active in nature I learned from one local conversation effort, to understand the challenges faced by the region's ecosystems, and witness first-hand the impact of human activities on the environment. This trip helps to grow my adventure and outdoor skill The Northeast offers a wide range of outdoor activities and adventure sports. Whether it's trekking through challenging terrains and other activities, I learned about safety measures, communication skills, navigation techniques, environmental ethics, and so on. Adventure experiences also teach resilience, teamwork, and adaptability, as you navigate through unfamiliar landscapes. Overall, a Northeast trip offers a wealth of learning experiences that encompass culture, history, environment, adventure, art, and many other ways, I'm sure that these experiences will come in handy in another situation or purpose. Rather, it provides an opportunity for personal growth, expanding your knowledge. Conclusion: - In conclusion, I would say the trip pour me with happiness and knowledge and peace made my mind calm and cool. This was really something to feel. To me, the trip was no doubt very awesome but the things that make me most happy about this journey is the traveling. I love traveling and it feels me from each and every brink. I love the tour. This trip offers a diverse and captivating experience of this enchanting northeastern state of India. From the bustling streets of Shillong to the breathtaking natural wonders of Cherrapunji and the serene village of Mawlynnong, each day of the itinerary unveils a new facet of Meghalaya's beauty and cultural richness. A 5-day Meghalaya trip promises a harmonious blend of nature's wonders, cultural heritage, and warm hospitality. It is an opportunity to create memories that will last a lifetime and leave visitors with a profound appreciation for the uniqueness of Meghalaya's landscapes and

A Study of North-East India (its culture, literature and people) through the Journey to Shillong

Riya Haldar

Introduction:

'North-East India', commonly known as the "Land of Seven Sisters", North-East India is the easternmost region of the country. North-East India is a rendezvous of multiple communities, faith, and cultures. Today it comprises 8 states namely Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura - often called "The Seven Sisters", and Sikkim - referred to as the "Brother" to the seven states. These areas have their own culture and language. Their culture, languages, lifestyle and clothes are very much different from the 'mainland' India. This report is an effort to look into their culture and try to find out how they have a uniqueness of their own. Experiences and observations from our journey to Shillong will help us to understand it better.

The Geography of North-East: North-East India occupies 7.9% of the total geographical area in India and constitutes the states of Nagaland, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh and Sikkim. In fact, North East India is the geographical 'gateway' to the country's fauna and flora since it is one of the richest biodiversity in the world. Among the geographical features in North-East India include the Himalayas, Garo Hills, Brahmaputra, Loktak Lake, and Naga hills among others. The North Eastern Region of India lies between 22°N and 29°5'N latitude and 88°E and 97°30'E longitude and shares international border with Bangladesh, Bhutan, China and Myanmar. The region is geographically 'gateway' for much of India's flora and fauna. As a result of this, North East India is one of the richest in biological values with vegetation types ranging from tropical rain forest in the foothills to Alpine meadows and cold deserts which amount to more than one-third of the country's total biodiversity. The region represents an important part of Indo Myanmar biodiversity hotspot, one of the 25 global biodiversity hotspots recognized.

The history of North East: North East India has witnessed many changes in society, economy, and polity throughout its history. The picture of North East India we see today is very different from what it was in its antiquity. The past of the North East, historians have had to rely heavily on oral tradition like folk tales, folk songs, myths and legends, as well as study the symbolic representation of rituals and tradition, in the form of festivals and fairs. The historical chronicles and manuscript associated with the Ahom Dynasty, Upper Assam, and the rule of the Koch Dynasty in the western and southern parts of Assam. At the time that India gained its independence in 1947, there were only 3 states - Assam and the princely states of Manipur and Tripura. Assam was the first to gain statehood with the rest of the country in 1947. This was followed by Nagaland in 1963, Meghalaya, Tripura and Manipur in 1972, Arunachal Pradesh in 1975 and Mizoram in 1987. Sikkim was added as a state of India in 1975 and finally integrated with other northeastern states in 2002.

NORTHEASTERN LITERATURE: The literary canon has greatly benefited from the works of women authors from North Eastern India. Their work sheds light on the region's complicated social and political landscape. Esterine Kire, an author, poet and children's book writer from Nagaland, is incidentally, the first Naga novelist to write in English. Her English novel was 'A Naga Village Remembered' a historical narrative woven around the factual story on the battle of Khonoma, the clash between the Naga people and the British colonizers. Her important book was 'A Terrible Matriarchy'. Malsawmi Jacob became the only Mizo writer to have written a novel in English. Her work Zorami: A Redemption Song traces the Mizo insurgency that broke out in 1966, and the counter insurgency operations by the Indian army. Uddipana Goswami is at the forefront when it comes to poetry, creative writing or literature in general. Currently based in Guwahati, she has published notable works which include, "We Called the River Red: Poetry from a Violent Homeland (2010)". Her main focus in her writing is the northeast India. The younger generation of English language writers from North-East India includes Jahnabi Barua, Nitoo Das, Arnab Jan Deka, and many more express strong political awareness by addressing issues such as identity and ethnicity

Mamang Dai life and literature: Mamang Dai was born on 23 February 1957 at Pasighat, East Siang district, Arunachal Pradesh. She was born into the Adi tribe, as the daughter of Matin Dai and Odi Dai. Her schooling was completed from Shillong and graduation in English literature from Gauhati University. She was selected for the IAS in 1979. But she wanted to follow her passion and chose journalism over administration. Interestingly she was the first woman from her state to be selected for IAS. Mamang Dai is an Indian author who writes in English and Adi. She is a journalist based in Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, best known as a poet and novelist. She authored both fiction and non-fiction works. She wrote romantic verse and stories in her early phase of writing and then moved from the theme of the self to focus on a larger reality. "The Sky Queen", "The Black Hill", "Stupid Cupid", "Mountain Harvest: The Food of Arunachal Pradesh and River Poems" are her acclaimed works. Government of India honoured her with 'Padma Shri' and 'Sathya Academy Award' for her novel 'The Black Hill'.

Tour itinerary: Twenty nine students of B.A 6th semester English Honours undertook a study tour to Shillong, Meghalaya from 28th April to 2nd May 2023. We left Malda on 28th April at 5am and reached Shillong at 8pm. On 1st day we visited the Mawsmai cave, Arwah cave, Elephant falls and we saw 'Seven Sisters Falls'. On 2nd day we visited Dawki River, Living root bridge. On 3rd day we visited Don Bosco museum, Rabindranath Tagore's house and Cathedral Catholic Church and 4th day we visited Balaji temple.

What I observed from the tour: Following are the observations I made while visiting Northeast India. 1. The northeast region of India, wedged between Bangladesh, Myanmar and China contains a mosaic of religious groups that is rapidly changing as a result of uncontrolled migration from the parts of the country and neighboring states. We visited Dawki River and saw that the local market vendors are from Bangladesh; basically they are

selling from the border and using Indian currency. The ensuing social and economic instability manifested in an upsurge of political extremism, and violence, which undermine the conditions of poor, especially migrants and illegal aliens and organized crime. 2. We saw Northeast Market Economy, and we found that the vendors in the local Market like Shillong Bazar, Arwah Cave, are mostly women and the majority of the sellers are between the ages of 50-70 years. While Meghalaya is a matrilineal society, Manipuri, Naga, and Mizo women also played a role in the market economy. 3. The local people are mostly using 'Khasi' and 'garo' language to communicate with each other. But many people also use English and Hindi to communicate with visitors. But the local market sellers using sing language to communicate with the visitors. 4. Northeast India is afflicted by heavy floods, earthquake, landslide, heat waves, droughts, which cause many problems to the people who lived there. People faced many troubles in their day to day live. 5. North east India has remained historically underdevelopment. They are basically depends on central Government aid. Deep rise of alienation due to human rights violation by the security forces. Hostile neighbors like China extending moral and material support to the insurgent groups. Also unemployment in this region is one of the most serious threats to - the economy of the country. What I learnt from the tour: I learnt lots of things from the tour like their language, culture, their historical and geographical and political background. I get to know about their literature from them which is very essential for me.

Conclusion: Our trip ended on 2nd May. It can be concluded that the trip was successful and we believed that our objective was achieved. We learned something new and beneficial for us. It was a well recommended trip especially for literature students.

NORTHEAST INDIA: THROUGH MY EYES

- Harapriya Biswas

INTRODUCTION:

I am Harapriya Biswas, studying in Gour Mahavidyalaya, (English department). Our department conducted a field survey in Northeast India on 28/04/2023 – 02/05/2023. The main purpose of this survey is to understand the socio-cultural diversity of this region, since Northeast India is isolated from other parts of India, it is important to be known about the way of life of the people there, to know their class, caste and ethnic diversity, also we are tried to know how Economic marginalization initiated a large number of migration problem in this region, moreover border dispute leads terrorism in this region. As we are students of literature, we have tried to understand whether we are getting any realistic picture of the way Mamang Dai portrays the Northeast region in her writings. We visited Elephant falls, Root Bridge, Dawki River, Arwah cave; 'Seven sister' falls, Shillong police bazar market, Rabindra Nath Tagore's house, Don Bosco museum in Shillong and many places to gather, to observe all the information. Altogether we introduced ourselves to a new place, a new feeling we got through this field survey.

TOUR ITINERARY:

Our English department conducted a study tour in to Shillong, Meghalaya from 28/04/2023 to 02/05/2023. We are 29 students of BA six semester students along with 2 professors. We left Malda on 28 April, at 5am from Malda station, and reached Shillong, at 8pm. On first day of our tour we visited the Mawasami Cave, Arwah Cave, Elephants Falls, and then we saw Seven sisters falls. On second day we visited Dawki River, Living root bridge, Mawlynnong village in Meghalaya. On day three we visited Don Bosco Museum, Rabindranath Tagore house, an Cathedral Catholic Church. Last day of our tour we visited Balaji Temple and Basistha ashram.

GEOGRAPHICAL AND POLITICAL HISTORY OF NORTHEAST INDIA:

Northeast India is known for its socio-cultural diversity from the rest of the country. Northeast India, also known as the 'Seven Sisters' The Northeast Indian region's geographic isolation from rest of the country progressed into its clear ethno cultural difference from mainland India, which is made up of over 200 different ethnic group, each with its own distinct culture and traditions. Some of the ethnic groups in the region include the Assamese, Bodos, Mizos, Khasis, Goros. Etc. The Northeast area can be divided into three geographical division- the Shillong Plateau, the North Eastern hill Basin and the Brahmaputra Valley, we are mainly visited the first area. The northeast region can be physiographically categorized into the Eastern Himalaya, the Patkai and the Brahmaputra and the Barak valley plains. Northeast India, Indo-chinese, and Indian biogeographically has a predominantly humid sub-tropical climate with hot, humid summers, severe monsoons, and mild winters. Along with the west coast of the India, this region has some of the Indian subcontinent's last remaining rainforests, which support diverse flora and fauna and several crop species. The region is covered by the mighty Brahmaputra Barak river systems

and their tributaries. Geographically, apart from this there are some flatlands in between the hills of Meghalaya and Tripura. Also Guahati city in Assam is called the 'gateway' to the northeast and is the largest metropolis in north east india.

NORTHEASTERN LITERATURE:

The literary canon has greatly benefited from the works of women authors from North Eastern India. Their work sheds light on the region's complicated social and political landscape. Esterine Kire, an author, poet and children's book writer from Nagaland, she incidentally, is the first Naga novelist to write in English. Her English novel was 'A Naga Village Remembered' a historical narrative woven around the factual story on the battle of Khonoma, the clash between the Naga people and the British colonizers. Her important book was 'A Terrible Matriarchy'. Malsawmi Jacob became the only Mizo writer to have written a novel in English. Her work *Zorami: A Redemption Song* traces the Mizo insurgency that broke out in 1966, and the counter insurgency operations by the Indian army. Uddipana Goswami is at the forefront when it comes to poetry, creative writing or literature in general. Currently based in Guwahati, she has published notable works which include, "We Called the River Red: Poetry from a Violent Homeland (2010)". Her main focus in her writing is the northeast India. The younger generation of English language writers from North-East India includes Jahnvi Barua, Nitoo Das, Arnab Jan Deka, and many more express strong political awareness by addressing issues such as identity and ethnicity.

MAMANG DAI LIFE AND LITERATURE:

Mamang Dai is an Indian poet, novelist and journalist based in Itanagar. She was born on 23 February 1957 at Pasighat, East Siang district, to Matin Dai and Odi Dai. Her family belongs to the Adi tribe. She completed her schooling from Pine Mount School, Shillong, Meghalaya. She completed her Bachelor in English literature from Gauhati University, Assam. She was selected for the IAS in 1979, but later she left the post to pursue her career in journalism. She is the first woman from her state to be selected for IAS. While working as a journalist, she contributed to *The Telegraph*, *Hindustan Times* and *The Sentinel*. She has also worked in radio, as well as TV-AIR and DDK, Itanagar where she worked as an anchor and conducted interviews. In 2011, she was appointed a member of Arunachal Pradesh state public service commission. Her non-fictional works include *Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land* (2003) and *Mountain Harvest: The Food of Arunachal* (2004). *The Sky Queen* and *Once upon a Moontime* (2003) are illustrated folklore texts by her. She published her first novel, *The Legends of Pensam* in 2006, which was followed by *Stupid Cupid* (2008) and *The Black Hill* (2014). *Escaping the Land* (2021). *River Poems* (2004), *The Balm of Time* (2008) *Hambreelmai's Loom* (2014), *Midsummer Survival Lyrics* (2014) are her poetry collections. When she began writing, she wrote romantic verse and stories. She then moved from the theme of the self to focus on a larger reality. She reflects upon the sense of a close knit community living in remoter towns and villages. Some of the positions that she has occupied include General Secretary of the Arunachal Pradesh Literary Society, member of the North East Writers' Forum and General Council member of the Sahitya and Sangeet Natak Akademi. She received Padma Shri in 2011 from the Government of India. The government of Arunachal Pradesh conferred on her annual Verrier Elwin Prize in 2013 for her book

Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land. She received Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017 for her novel *The Black Hill*.

CONCLUDING OBSERVATION:

Following are the observations I made while visiting Northeast India

1. The northeast region of India, wedged between Bangladesh, Myanmar and China contains a mosaic of religious groups that is rapidly changing as a result of uncontrolled migration from the parts of the country and neighboring states. We visited Dowki River and saw that the local market vendors are from Bangladesh; basically they are selling from the border and using Indian currency. The ensuing social and economic instability manifested in an upsurge of political extremism, and violence, which undermines the conditions of the poor, especially migrants and illegal aliens and organized crime.

2. We saw Northeast Market Economy, and we found that the vendors in the local Market like Shillong Bazar, Arwah Cave, are mostly women and the majority of the sellers are between the ages of 50-70 years. While Meghalaya is a matrilineal society, Manipuri, Naga, and Mizo women also played a role in the market economy.

3. The local people are mostly using 'Khasi' and 'Garo' language to communicate with each other. But many people also use English and Hindi to communicate with visitors. But the local market sellers use their own language to communicate with the visitors. 4. Northeast India is afflicted by heavy floods, earthquakes, landslides, heat waves, droughts, which cause many problems to the people who lived there. People faced many troubles in their day-to-day lives. 5. North-east India has remained historically underdeveloped. They are basically dependent on central Government aid. There is a deep sense of alienation due to human rights violations by the security forces. Hostile neighbors like China extending moral and material support to the insurgent groups. Also unemployment in this region is one of the most serious threats to the economy of the country.

Unlearning to Learn: Educational Tour to North East India

– Dipika Das

Introduction:

North East Indian literature refers to the literary works produced by writers from the seven states of North East India, namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. The region is known for its rich cultural diversity and unique in its literature. The literature of North East India is characterized by its oral tradition and folklore. The theme explored in North East Indian literature are diverse and range from social issues such as gender inequality and political conflict to personal experience of love and loss. Many writers also draw inspiration from the natural beauty of the region's landscape. In recent years, there has been a growing interest in writing literature from North East India. Many writers from the region have gained for their works. Some notable writers include Mamang Dai, Temsula Ao, Indira Goswami, Easterine Kire. Overall North East Indian literature is an important part of Indian's literary heritage that reflects the unique culture and tradition of fascinating region.

Geography & History of North East

The North East region of India is a unique and diverse area, consisting of seven states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. These states are command special importance in India, not only because of their location but also their cultural and historical uniqueness. The landscape, the range of communities and geographical and ecological diversity make these states quite different from other parts of the country. They are known as 'seven sisters'. These states cover an area of 2, 63,179 sq .Km, approximately eight percent of the country's total geographical area and house around 3.76 percent of the total population of the country. Around 98 percent of the boundary of these states has international borders. Surrounded by hills and beautiful rivers, these states fall in the category of eastern Himalayan ranges and Patkai- Naga hills along with Brahmaputra- Barak river system and valley plains. The hills and basins are mixture of mountains ranges, low hills and valleys. Rich in natural resources and flora and fauna, the region is a gateway to East and South-East Asia. The states have distinct cultures and multiple ethnic groups and are a fine example of unity in diversity. Agriculture, horticulture and handloom continue to be the main activities of these states. Meghalaya is a plateau at different levels of elevation, ranging from 150 metres to 1,961 metres. About 70 percent of the total geographical area in the state is covered with forests. Which contain various types of trees. The states has also two national parks, The Nokrek National Park and Balpakram National Park.

History

The North East Region has a rich history dating back to ancient times. The area was once ruled by various indigenous tribes such as the Ahoms in Assam and Khasi in Meghalaya. The ancient and mediaeval history of Arunachal Pradesh remains shrouded in the mist of legends and mythology. A significant aspect of the history of Arunachal is that many tribes have shed their old names and adopted new ones. The earnest name of Assam was 'Pragjyotisha' and its capital 'Pragjyotishapur' means Eastern Light. The region came to be known of Kamdeva, the God of Love. Historical records reveals that a rich cultural interaction and thriving trade existed between the people of the

hills of Meghalaya and Sylhet (Bangladesh). North East India has witnessed many changes in society, economy and polity throughout its history. The picture of North East India we see today is very different from what it was in its antiquity. The past of North East, historians have to rely heavily on oral tradition like folk tales, folk song, myths, and legends, as well as study the symbolic representation of rituals and traditions. It is believed that North East India finds a mention in the epic of the Mahabharata, the Ramayana, as well as the Puranas.

MAMANG DAI

Mamang Dai is a well known Indian writer, poet and journalist from Arunachal Pradesh. She was born on 23rd February 1957 in Pasighat, East Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh. She completed her schooling from Pine Mount School Shillong Meghalaya in Arunachal Pradesh and later went on to pursue her graduation in English literature from Indira Gandhi National Open University. Dai started her career as a journalist with The Sentinel newspaper in Guwahati. She has also worked with the All India Radio and Doordarshan Kendra in Itanagar. Her journalistic work has been widely appreciated for its focus on the issues of the North East region of India. Her mother tongue is Adi. Dai is the first woman of her state to have been selected to the IAS /IFS. However she gave up her career in the civil services to pursue a career in journalism. While working as a journalist she contributed to The Telegraph, Hindustan Times and The Sentinel. She has also worked in radio, as well as TV - AIR and DDK, Itanagar where she worked as an anchor and conducted interviews. She was appointed programme officer at Worldwide Fund for Nature, known as WWF, where she worked in the Eastern Himalayas Biodiversity Hotspots programme. She was appointed a member of Arunachal Pradesh state public service commission. She is founder of the Arunachal historical society. She has written extensively on the cultural history of Arunachal Pradesh and is also a member of the North East Writer's forum. Her published works include Arunachal Pradesh: The Hidden Land, The Black Hill, River Poems, Mountain Harvest: The Food of Arunachal Pradesh, and The Legends of Pensam. Dai is also known for her literary works. She has written several books including poetry collection of poems titled River Poems published in 1994. She has published several other books including Stupid Cupid (2001). Dai's literary works are known for their focus on the culture and traditions of the North East region of India. Her contribution to literature, Dai has been awarded several prestigious awards including the Sahitya Academy Award for her novel The Legends of Pensam. She was also awarded the Padma Shri by the government of India for her contribution to literature and journalism. Overall Mamang Dai's life and literature have been dedicated to showcasing the rich cultural heritage of the North East region of India and bringing it to the fore front of Indian literature.

TOUR ITINERARY:

Twenty eight students of BA Semester English Honours undertook a study tour to Shillong Meghalaya. The tour led by two professors of our Department. We started our journey from Malda Railway station to Guwahati Railway station via the Brahmaputra Express. The train was very late so that we were gathering at the station at 1:00 Am. The train arrived the station around 4:00 Am and we got into the compartment. Our journey was very pleasant. The train reached Guwahati very late then we continued the journey by road from

Guwahati to Shillong . We reached Shillong and headed to our respective hotels around 7:00 PM. Then we had our breakfast and rested. We stayed the night there. Day 1 DATE : 29-04-2023 We woke up at 6.00 Am and took bath, had breakfast and got ready for sighting. We were going for sighting by bus with our teachers. First sighting to Elephant Falls ELEPHANT FALLS: Elephant Falls is located at a distance of 12km from the Shillong city in upper Shillong , Meghalaya. It is one of the most scenic and famous waterfall in North East India. The Elephant Falls are a two-tier waterfall in Shillong, Meghalaya, India. The mountain stream descends through two successive falls set in dells of fern-covered rocks. Meghalaya waterfall exploration is not complete without a visit to the Elephant Falls, located on the outskirts of the state capital, Shillong. The waterfall is the result of mountain stream that drops over multiple levels scything through the forested slope. It's beauty touch my heart .

Second Sighting to WAH-KABA-LATARA FALLS WAH-KABA-LATARA FALLS: Wah- Kaba falls is a waterfall located near cherapunji in Meghalaya, the waterfall discends from a steep rock face and drops approximately 170-190 meters into a george . The falls can be seen on the way to cherapunji from Shillong .It is a seasonal and most beautiful waterfalls . It is a two tired waterfall .we saw these falls from the umstew view.

Third Sighting to MAUSMAI CAVE MAUSMAI CAVE: Mausmai Cave is a beautiful limestone cave located at cherapunji in North East Indian state of Meghalaya. It is one of the most popular historical cave in Meghalaya and among the best places to experience to us .The cave has a specious opening but it soon squeezed in to a narrow path .Mausmai Caves are formed out of limestone and enjoy the distinction of being the only caves in Meghalaya, that are lit enough so that we can enjoy it's natural formation. Though the caves are quite long .The cave is home to various flora and fauna and makes a good home for bats and insects. It's one of the best places for history buffs and experience seekers but not recommended for old age people and kids .it is such a memorable place for us. we enjoy this so much . We was totally amazed by the unique beauty of the rocks hanging like bee hives.

Fourth Sighting to ARWAH-LUMSHYNNA CAVE ARWAH-LUMSHYNNA CAVE : An important Tourist attraction at Cherapunji in East Khasi Hills District of Meghalaya,huge natural cavity formed underneath the earth's surface by sollution activity with in the limestone rock classified as " Shella" of Jaintia Group. Day 2 DATE : 30.04.2023 First sighting to DAWKI RIVER DAWKI RIVER : It is a very beautiful and unique. A beautiful river with crystal clear water. We can see the Bangladesh on the other side from here . We enjoyed the boating and river sight .Dawki is one of the most picture perfect spots in Meghalaya. We spent sometime there capturing pictures and had some fun with our friends . We fall in love for its natural beauty. There we met new people from various places.

Second Sighting to ROOT BRIDGE ROOT BRIDGE : A living Root bridge is a type of simple suspension bridge formed of living plant roots by tree shaping. The natural Marvel of Living Root Bridge in Meghalaya is mind-blowing. These wonderful structures have meticulously grown over a period of time and are biggest attraction in Meghalaya. This is a wonderful sighting place and we enjoyed it. These are very peaceful places. Third Sighting to MAWLYNNONG : It is a cleanest village in Asia .It is known for its cleanliness. Its beauty never ends. It is very peaceful and pleasant. There peoples were active to clean their village.

They take care of the village that why the village is very beautiful. We spent some time and it's beauty touch our heart. There we met some kids and they are very sweet . In here the children of the family get their mother's surname, and the wealth is passed down from the mother to the youngest daughter of the family. Mawlynnong proves that women empowerment. Cleanliness is a way of life in Mawlynnong village : There are bamboo dustbins all over the village, even dry leaves fallen from the trees go to dustbins. The rules are strictly followed and the defaulters are charged heavily. People not only clean their houses, they step out to sweep the roads and planting trees is a part of life style. It is a God Own Garden.

Day 3 DATE : 1.05.2023

First sighting to BROOKSIDE COTTAGE BROOKSIDE BUNGALOW: This place where Tagore, Netaji and Swami Vivekananda lived when they spent some weeks in Shillong. On Doljatra ,the residence of Shillong Celebrated Basanta Utsav at Brookside, the bungalow where Rabindranath Tagore had lived during his first visit to the abode of clouds in 1919. I had ventured into this stately Brookside Cottage during Meghalaya's last assembly elections in 2018. The Assembly building is behind a giant copper coloured statue of Tagore. The house is famous for being one of the haunts of Rabindranath Tagore, Nobel laureate and internationally acclaimed poet. The serenity of Shillong city and the picturesque setting of the bungalow inspired one of Tagore's most famous novel's Shesher kobita. The compound is very beautiful . This place is very peaceful. We spent some time there and felt the beauty of nature. We saw there the tomb of Rabindranath Tagore. It is a memorable place.

Second Sighting to CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL CHURCH CATHOLIC CATHEDRAL CHURCH: Catholic Church is a beautiful shrine located in the heart of Shillong city, Meghalaya. It is amongst the famous place to visit in Shillong city .The first few things I notice about the church is pretty blue color, Gothic style of architecture and how huge the place is. The atmosphere inside is very peaceful and we enjoyed it very much. A nice place to pray was there. Photography is not allowed inside the Cathedral. Dedicated to mother Mary, the Cathedral Church of Mary Help of Christian was built by the Germans in 1913. Inside the church we saw many kind of paintings like watercolor, glass painting etc. This artwork touches my heart.

Third Sighting to DON BOSCO MUSEUM DON BOSCO MUSEUM: One of the finest museum in Asia on the promotion of indigenous and tribal cultures, Don Bosco center for Indigenous culture or Don Bosco Museum as it is popularly known is a major tourists attraction that provides a glimpse of the rich and multi cultural lifestyle, history and traditions of indigenous peoples of North East India. The museum, showcasing many galleries, gives an insight. It is just like the museum of traditional crafting of Shillong and Assam really like the unique technique crafting there. It is very well maintained place, absolutely organized and well structured. In the roof of the Museum we saw Sky walk. The Sky walk is amazing and very safe . We witnessed the rich cultural lifestyle of the people of North East India displayed through their art and sculpture.

Fourth Sighting to POLICE BAZAR POLICE BAZAR: Police Bazar is the main market of Shillong which spreads in all directions from the center point. This is a shopping destination. This place is considered as the heart of the city. This is known for shops that sell smuggled winter clothing items from Thailand such as caps, jackets, sweater, boots etc. There was wonderful collection of bags and shoes. Then we left Police Bazar and started our journey towards Guwahati. We reached Guwahati around 9:00 pm and spent the night there in a hotel. Next Morning we wake up at 5:00 am and took bath, had breakfast and got ready to visit Guwahati city. We were going to sighting.

First sighting to BASISTHA ASHRAM TEMPLE BASISTHA ASHRAM TEMPLE: The temple, located in the south east corner of Guwahati city, Assam, India is a Shiva mandir. The history of Basistha Ashram where the temple is located dates back to the Vedic age. According to legends the Ashram was founded by the great Saint Basistha . This is one of the ancient temple in Guwahati. It is must visit for the spiritual devotees of Lord Shiva. Second

Sighting to TIRUPATI SRI BALAJI TEMPLE TIRUPATI SRI BALAJI TEMPLE : This is a beautiful South Indian temple of Tirupati Shri Balaji. Surrounded by lush greenery. On gets peace by entering and sitting inside the temple. We spent some quality time in there. It has many temple in the complex. The whole complex is very peaceful. We visited there many beautiful Temple. We truly loved and enjoyed the place. After Spending Sometime there we started our journey towards Guwahati station to return home. We reached Guwahati station around at 3:30 PM. The return train was 5:30 PM and it was reach Malda station the next morning around 7:00 AM. Finally I came back my home.

WHAT I LEARNT FROM THE TOUR

Educational tour was very pleasant and useful. I saw some places of interest. The tour enriched my knowledge. It enables me to learn much about the places I visited. I learnt some of the Khasi language likes Mei ,Slap, Poi Bonai, la etc. I learnt about the local peoples lifestyle and about some knowledge of Mawlynnong village .This village was very clean .There are bamboo dustbins all over the village. This village taught me how to clean our village. In the Don Basco Museum I saw many kind of things and some activities of work . Seeing this I realised that the local peoples are very hardworking and innocent. In Shillong city I saw the empowerment of women. Interacting with locals and learning about their history and struggles.

HOW DID THE TOUR HELP ME UNDERSTAND Mamang Dai And NORTH EAST LITERATURE

The Shillong tour could have helped me understand Mamang Dai and North East Literature in several ways. Firstly, visiting the North East region and experiencing it's culture, traditios and people way of life could have given me a better understanding of the context in which Mamang Dai works are set . Secondly, Visiting places that feature prominently in Mamang Dai writing or other North East Literature could help me visualize the settings and landscape described in these works. This could enhance my reading experience by allowing me to connect more deeply with the characters and their s Overall, The Shillong tour could have provided a rich cultural immersion experience that helps me better understand Mamang Dai's work and North East Literature.

CONCLUSION:

Every College should organize educational tour. Grateful thanks to all organizing this tour and giving us an opportunity to go an educational tour to Shillong. Also thankful to the teachers of our Department. The program was blessing as well as got to know each other better through the sharing experience.

Travelling Literature: Reading and Experiencing the North-east

- Vishal Sarkar

Introduction

Northeast literature refers to the literary works that originate from the seven northeastern states of India, namely Assam, Arunachal Pradesh, Meghalaya, Manipur, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. This literature is known for its unique style and themes, often reflecting the region's cultural diversity and political realities. The literature of Northeast India draws inspiration from its rich folk traditions, myths, legends, and the region's natural beauty. It often deals with themes such as identity, displacement, and conflict, reflecting the region's turbulent history of political and ethnic unrest. At the same time, it also celebrates the region's diverse cultural heritage and the resilience of its people. Some notable writers from the Northeast include Mamang Dai, Temecula Ao, Easterine Kire, Mitra Phukan, and Indira Goswami, among others. Their works have gained national and international acclaim and have helped to bring the region's literature to a broader audience. The Geography & History of North-East: Northeast India has seven states: Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, and Tripura. The region is located in the easternmost part of India, bordered by Bhutan, Bangladesh, Myanmar, and China. The region's geography is characterized by its rugged terrain, dense forests, and rich biodiversity. The region has many major rivers, including the Brahmaputra, Barak, and Chindwin. The history of Northeast India is marked by its unique cultural and ethnic diversity. The region has been inhabited by various indigenous communities for thousands of years, each with its distinct language, customs, and traditions. Over the centuries, Northeast India has been influenced by various empires and kingdoms, including the Ahom Kingdom, the Mughal Empire, and the British Empire. In the 19th and 20th centuries, Northeast India was a contested region, with various ethnic groups vying for control and autonomy. The region witnessed many uprisings and revolts against British colonial rule, and after India's independence in 1947, there were demands for separate states based on ethnic and linguistic identity. This led to the formation of the seven states that make up Northeast India today.

In addition to its rich cultural heritage and history, Northeast India is known for its natural beauty and ecological importance. The region has several national parks and wildlife reserves, including Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park, and Namdapha National Park. The region is also vulnerable to natural disasters like floods, landslides, and earthquakes. Overall, the geography and history of Northeast India have shaped its unique identity and contributed to its rich cultural and natural heritage. Mamang Dai: Life Literature: Mamang Dai is a prominent figure in Indian literature, mainly known for her contributions to the literature of Arunachal Pradesh, a northeastern state of India. Born on May 24, 1957, in Pasighat, Arunachal Pradesh, Mamang Dai has led a remarkable life and

made significant contributions to the world of literature. Dai's writing reflects her deep connection with her homeland and its indigenous culture. Her works often revolve around themes such as identity, nature, and the cultural heritage of the indigenous communities of Arunachal Pradesh. Through her writings, she aims to preserve and promote her region's rich oral traditions, folklore, and customs. Mamang Dai's literary journey began with the publishing of her first poetry collection, "River Poems," in 1994. Since then, she has written extensively in various genres, including poetry, short stories, novels, and essays. Her works have been widely acclaimed for their lyrical beauty, evocative imagery, and insightful exploration of human emotions. One of Dai's notable works is her debut novel, "The Legends of Pensam," published in 2006. Set in the Himalayan region of Arunachal Pradesh, the novel weaves together folklore, history, and personal narratives to depict the lives of the Adi community. It explores the people's struggles, aspirations, and resilience against the backdrop of social and political changes. Dai's writing not only celebrates the cultural diversity of her region but also addresses universal themes that resonate with readers across cultures. Her works often emphasize preserving the environment, promoting gender equality, and fostering harmony among diverse communities. In recognition of her literary contributions, Mamang Dai has received several prestigious awards, including the Sahitya Akademi Award in 2017 for her book "The Black Hill." Her writings have been translated into multiple languages, enabling a broader audience to appreciate and engage with her literary creations. Aside from her literary pursuits, Dai is also actively involved in various social and cultural initiatives. She has been instrumental in promoting literary and artistic exchange programs, organizing workshops, and advocating for the rights of indigenous communities. Mamang Dai's life and literature embody a deep-rooted love for her homeland and a commitment to preserving its cultural heritage. Her writings inspire and educate readers, inviting them to explore the rich tapestry of Arunachal Pradesh's history, people, and landscapes.

TOUR ITINERARY

Day 1: 28th April: Malda Town to Kamakhya Station. All 28 candidates reached the station at 12:30 am including our 2 professors. But the train was delayed 5 hours. We boarded the train at 5:30 am and we started our journey to Kamakhya station and reached it at 3:45 pm. Outside the station, we met the man in charge of the tour agency. He arranged a bus for us for a five-day tour. We began our journey on that bus towards the hotel. So at 10:30 pm, we reached our hotel at The Red Pine which is situated in Lamang.

Day 2: 29th April : Elephant Falls, Wah Kaba Falls, Seven Sister Falls, Mawsmai Cave, Arwah Cave. We had breakfast around eight o'clock. Then we all go to our rooms and freshen up and get ready. Then the travel bus arrived and we all checked into the hotel at 9 AM We boarded the bus. Around 10 AM we reached Elephant Falls and stayed after 30 minutes we are ready to go to Wah Kaba Falls and the Seven Sister Falls. I had an amazing experience visiting Elephant Falls, Wah Kaba Falls, Seven Sister Falls, Mawsmai Cave, and Arwah Cave. The waterfalls were all incredibly beautiful, and the caves were fascinating. I especially enjoyed the Mawsmai Cave, which was full of stalactites and stalagmites. The people I met in Shillong were also very friendly and welcoming. I would recommend visiting this part of

India if you're looking for a beautiful and unique travel experience. Day 3: 30th April : Dawki Valley, Root Bridge, Mawlynnong village.

As usual, we finished our breakfast by 8:30 am and get ready for the day. We boarded the bus again and reached Dawki Valley. Dawki Valley is a beautiful valley located in the East Khasi Hills district of Meghalaya, India. It is known for its crystal-clear waters and lush green hills. we rented a boat and went to the river. Then we leave that place and reached Root Bridge. The Root Bridge is a unique bridge made from the roots of living trees. It is located in the Mawlynnong village, known as the "cleanest village in Asia." After spending some time we return to the hotel and then after freshening up, we finished our dinner and go back to the room. I had an amazing experience visiting these places. The Dawki Valley was breathtakingly beautiful, and the Root Bridge was truly a marvel of nature. The Mawlynnong village was a peaceful and tranquil place, and the people were very friendly and welcoming. I would recommend visiting these places if you're looking for a unique and unforgettable travel experience.

Day 4: 1st May : Rabindranath Tagore (Brookside bungalow in Rilbong locality), Cathedral Catholic Church, Police Bazar Shillong, Don Bosco Museum, Umiam Lake. In the early morning, we woke up as we have to leave that hotel, so we pack our bags and get ready for the day. Again we finished our breakfast at 9 am. Then boarded the bus again. we went out to visit Rabindranath's Art Gallery, where Rabindranath Tagore wrote the poem "Shesher Kobita." On attaining there we spent some time, unluckily we cannot visit inside the gallery. Then we leave that place and went to Cathedral Catholic Church. This is the oldest church in Shillong. It was built in the 19th century and is a beautiful example of Gothic architecture. After spending some time there we arrived at Police Bazar Shillong. Here we all divided and shopped like ourselves. And then we had to have lunch on the bus. Then we arrived at the largest museum in Asia, Don Bosco Museum. This museum houses a collection of artefacts and exhibits related to the history and culture of Meghalaya. The museum is a great place to learn about the unique culture of this region. After visiting the entire museum, we went out to Umiam Lake. This is the largest man-made lake in Northeast India. It is a popular spot for boating, fishing, and picnicking. The lake is surrounded by lush hills and is a beautiful place to relax and enjoy the scenery. And after spending some beautiful moments we leave for Gauhati. After reaching the Guwahati Hotel and freshened up and then finished our dinner.

Day 5: 2nd May : Kamakhya Temple, Ashram of Vasistha Muni, Balaji Temple, Umananda Island. 2nd May is our last day of the tour, so as usual we all finished our breakfast that morning, then said goodbye to our travel agency and checked out from the hotel. First, we visited the Brahmaputra River. Then we saw the Basistha Ashram in Guwahati. After visiting the temple, we saw the Balaji Temple, which was very peaceful and beautiful, where we spent a lot of time.

I had a wonderful experience visiting Kamakhya Temple, the Ashram of Vasistha Muni, Balaji Temple, and Umananda Island. I learned a lot about the history and culture of Assam, and I was able to see some of the most beautiful natural scenery in India. Then we have the train at 5 pm so we leave from the Balaji Temple and went directly to the Guwahati station. We boarded the train at 5:20 pm and we reached Malda, the next day on 3.05.2023, at 6

am, On reaching Malda Town we bid farewell to our respected teachers and headed for home. What I learn From The Tour A tour of Shillong Meghalaya had a fascinating and educational experience. I had learn about the rich history and culture of Meghalaya, as well as the natural beauty of the region.

Here are some of the things I had learn from this tour:

The history of Meghalaya: Meghalaya is a state in northeastern India. The name Meghalaya means "abode of clouds" in Sanskrit. The state is home to several different ethnic groups, including the Khasis, Jaintias, and Garos. Meghalaya was formed in 1972 when it was carved out of the state of Assam.

The culture of Meghalaya: The culture of Meghalaya is a mix of Hindu, Buddhist, and tribal traditions. The majority of the people of Meghalaya are Christian, but there are also significant populations of Hindus and Muslims. Religion plays an important role in all aspects of life in Meghalaya, from the way that people celebrate festivals to the way that they make decisions about their lives.

The natural beauty of Meghalaya: Meghalaya is known for its lush forests, towering mountains, and beautiful waterfalls. The state is also home to several endangered species, including the clouded leopard and the Indian rhinoceros. In addition to learning about the history, culture, and natural beauty of Meghalaya, you would also have the opportunity to experience some of the best that the state has to offer. You could go for a hike in the forests, take a boat ride on a lake, or visit one of the many temples and monasteries. You could also sample the local cuisine, which is a mix of Indian, Chinese, and tribal influences. A tour of Elephant Falls, Wah Kaba Falls, Seven Sister Falls, Mawsmai Cave, Arwah Cave Dawki Valley, Root Bridge, Mawlynnong village Rabindranath Tagore (Brookside bungalow in Rilbong locality), Cathedral Catholic Church, Police Bazar Shillong, Don Bosco Museum, Umiam Lake Kamakhya Temple, Ashram of Vasistha Muni, Balaji Temple, Umananda Island would be a truly unforgettable experience. How Did the Tour Help Me Understand Mamang Dai and North-East Literature? First, it can give me a sense of the place that inspired Dai's writing.

Shillong is a beautiful city with a rich history and culture, and it is easy to see why Dai would be drawn to it. The city's natural beauty, its diverse population, and its strong sense of community all find their way into Dai's writing. Second, a tour of Shillong can help me learn about the history and culture of North East India. Dai's writing is often informed by her own experiences growing up in North East India, and a tour of the region can help me understand the context in which she writes. Finally, the tour of Shillong helped me to connect with other people who are interested in North East literature. Dai is a popular author, and many people are interested in learning more about her work and the region that inspired it. A tour of Shillong helps me connect with these people and learn more about North East literature from them. Here are some specific examples of how a tour of Shillong, Meghalaya can help me understand Mamang Dai and North East literature:

We visited the places that inspired Dai's writing. Dai's writing is often inspired by her own experiences growing up in Shillong, and a tour of the city helped me see the places that inspired her work.

We learned about the history and culture of the region. Dai's writing is often informed by her own experiences growing up in North East India, and a tour of the region can help me understand the context in which she writes. For example, we visited the Don Bosco Museum, which has exhibits on the history and culture of North East India. This can help me to better understand the themes and ideas that are explored in her work.

We meet other people who are interested in North East literature. Dai is a popular author, and many people are interested in learning more about her work and the region that inspired it. A tour of Shillong can help me connect with these people and learn more about North East literature from them. Dai is a writer who is known for her lyrical descriptions of the natural world. It is likely that she was inspired by the beauty of these waterfalls, and that she was moved to write about them. In her novel "Seasons of Flight," Dai writes about the Seven Sister Falls: "The Seven Sister Falls are a sight to behold. They are named after the seven sisters who are said to have lived in the area. The falls are said to be the tears of the sisters, who were weeping for their lost love." Dai's writing suggests that she was deeply moved by the beauty of the Seven Sisters Falls. She sees the falls as a symbol of love and loss, and her writing captures the power and beauty of these natural wonders. It is also likely that Dai felt a sense of connection to the people of Meghalaya after seeing these waterfalls. The waterfalls are an important part of the culture and the history of Meghalaya, and they are a source of pride for the people of the region. PAGE-9 Dai is a writer who is committed to telling the stories of the people of North East India, and she was likely inspired by the stories of the people of Meghalaya after seeing these waterfalls. In conclusion, it is difficult to say for sure what Mamang Dai felt after seeing the Seven Sister Falls, Wah Kaba Falls, and Elephant Falls. However, it is likely that she felt a sense of awe and wonder at the beauty of these natural wonders. She may have also felt a sense of connection to the people of Meghalaya, and she may have been inspired to write about the waterfalls and the people of the region.

CONCLUSION

Shillong is a beautiful city with a lot to offer, from its stunning natural beauty to its rich history and culture. A tour of Shillong would be a truly unforgettable experience. We would learn about the history and culture of the region, as well as the natural beauty of the city. You would also have the opportunity to experience some of the best that Shillong has to offer, such as its delicious food, its friendly people, and its vibrant culture.

