

TOPIC: A brief study about Ahom-Miri relation and the mutiny of Miri's (Mising) during medieval period

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ABSTRACT

The Misings are an ethnic group of North –East India and is also a second largest group in Assam. The relation between the Ahom rulers and the Mising community of North East India can trace back to 17th century connection with trade, politico-economic etc. The earlier relations between the Mising and the Ahoms were decent. The Mising were appointed in various administrative services. Records have been found about the Mising accessions into the Ahom administration. Later, for the some reasons Mising raided the Ahom village

KEY WORDS:Mising, North-East, India, Ahom

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Mising are one of the aboriginal ethnic groups of North Eastern states of India. They were formerly known as “MIRI”and they are the second largest Tribal ethnic group in Assam. The Misings belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family of the great Mongoloid race, who identify themselves as Tani or Ami meaning man. They inhabit in large parts of Dhemaji, Lakhimpur, Dibrugarh, Sivsagar, Jorhat, Sonitpur and Tinsukia district of Assam. Originally they were hill dwellers and inhabited in the northern hills of the upper Brahmaputra valley in Siang and Lohit districts of Arunachal Pradesh.

The Ahom rulers beginning from the 17th century came into contact with the Misings of north-eastern regions in connection with trade politico-economic relations. The relationships between the ruling Swargadeos and Miris were pretty excellent, albeit, there were military deployments of the former to deal with the mutinied tactics often resorted to by the latter, time and again. In Ahom court, the Miris were appoints in all sorts of job from the lowest to high for example Miri Hati Gahiya who appointed as boat maker, general and archery forces and top rank like Miri Sadia Khuwa Gohain, the Governor of Sadia. A numbers of records are available about the Miris accessions into the Ahom administration at different point of times, particularly during the reigns of the following kings:-

Subinpha

During the Subinpha, the third Ahom ruler established matrimonial relations with the Miri tribe. He was married one of the Miri girl name Hinguli daughter of TaokangBanduk,a village name Baltapur. It also said that the son of Hinguli, an admixture of bloods of Ahom and Miri,appointed as the Bargohain which later known as Miri Bargohain.

Suhungmung

During the Ahom king Suhungmung a large numbers of Miris were include his army to fight against the Chutia's. It is said that the war between the Ahom and Chutia's the Miris figured as latter's

ordinary soldiers. When the Chutia King Dhirnarayan in 1513AD attacked on the Ahom under the commandship of Kasitara. Despite strong military columns, the Chutias were badly defeated. It is believed that some of the Miri prisoners of war were afterwards rehabilitated by the Ahom king giving them farming lands on the Dikhow basin.

Pratap Singha

During the reign of Pratap Singha, he appointed large numbers of non-Ahom communities' peoples to his army. Such as – Muslims, Garo, Miri, Koch, Moran etc. Miri were thus brought to the Ahom families and regarded them with the Ahom surnames as Sandikoi, Chamua, Baruah etc. Amongst Misings exist till these days as a curious evidence of the liberated society initiated by king Pratap Singha. He had, for the first time, granted some amount of political autonomy of the Miris of the highland as well as to the plains.

Miri Mutiny

The 17th century “Miri History” turned out to an era of protests and revolts triggered by the Miris against the ruling authority. The history of Miris has recorded four such revolts, based on major issues, during the referred periods, twice in the Lakhimpur sector in 1646 AD & 1665AD and another two in the Sadia sector in 1665AD & 1683 AD (Pegu, 175).

First Miri Mutiny (1646 AD)

During the reign of Sutyinpha who was also known as Naria Raja, the Miri openly against the Ahom kingdom. There are various reasons which made Miris against the Ahom. Some of them were- (i) Non-implementation or halting of ‘posa’ payments to the Miris of the hills and the plains, the policy which was initiated by Pratap Singha. (ii) Naria Raja’s discrimination act against the Miris who were habitually fierce, against the sober and peaceable plain-Miris in many beneficial economic concerns. For that reason, the Miri first revolted against the king, which may be termed as ‘First Miri Mutiny’ in historical perspective.

During the reign of Jayadhwaj Singha, the war between Ahom and Miris took place where Ahom authority was challenged by the Miri or Sadia Miri. About three hundred Miris from surrounding villages gathered together against the Ahoms. However the Ahom soldiers could not dismiss these three hundreds and fought further the Diku. The Miri were utterly defeated in the pitched battle. However at the end both of the parties agreed for peace where Miris had to acknowledge supremacy of the Ahom king and the Ahom government agreed to take up suitable measure for the development of the community. Miris were placed under the Sadia Khowa Gohain and a new post called Miri Barua was created.

Second Miri Mutiny 1655 AD

The second Miri Mutiny broke out in 1655 AD from the Sadiyal Miri. The Miri raided and set fire on many government establishments and killed two subjects in their senior grades. During that time the Ahom king was Jayadhwaj Singha where he decided to suppress the Miri revolt. Sir Edward Gait recorded ‘the force sent against them defeated with considerable loss of lives, a body of 300 Miris and burned 12 of their villages, the tribe then gave way and agreed to pay the additional demand of annual tributes, consisting of bison, horses, tortoises, swords and yellow beads and gave up 12 men to the Ahoms, in the place of the two whom they had killed’

Third Miri Mutiny (1665)

In 1665, the Panibotia-Miris of Lakhimpur sector started the violent protest against the Ahom kingdom due to several reasons. The king Chakradhwaj Singha sent six Hazarika and directed them to go to the north bank of the Brahmaputra and directed them to construct a fort and also gave instruction to the Muluk, grandson of Angkorihilaidari, to keep vigilant eyes over the movements of the Miris. Miri openly came out with arms in hands of encounter with the royal columns of Ahom force commanded by the son of Maupia Barua but he was not successful. King Chakradhwaj became very livid with the defeat, where he retorted 'In the ancient time the forefathers of the Miris were well established with the help of my forefather Chaopha Susengpha (Pratap Singha). My brother Sutamla (Jayadhwaj Singha) had also favored them. I now see the Deori's have also joined with the Miris'.

Fourth Miri Mutiny

The fourth Miri Mutiny was taken place in 1685 during the reign of Gadadhar Singha. There were numbers of issue which made Miri to revolt against the Ahoms. One of them were the pathetic indifference attitude of Gadadhar Singha whom, the Sadiyal Miri gave him shelter during his days of asylums, was deplored for being suffered from premeditative short memories. The Sadiyal Miri took aggressive action against the Rup Sandikai who was the then governor of Sadia called Miri Sadia Khowa Gohain, a Miri by origin. In 1683, the Miri killed some civilians indiscriminately whosoever met on the spot, then the residence of Sadia Khowa Gohain, Rup Sandikoi was targeted but fortunately he was able to escape. The Ahom king sent strong troops against Miri under the commandship of Maupia Naobaicha Phukan. The Miris had boldly confronted but they lost the battle. Both parties made the negotiated settlement, where the river Dihing was fixed as the regional boundary of the Miri country and given official reorganization as autonomous status within the Ahom sovereignty. In return Miris had to part with valuable materials, animal and human resources for rendering services in war times (Pegu, 201).

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