

Siang Unying Festival

February 28, 2023

In news– The Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways attended the colourful Siang Unying Festival – which is an important festival of the Adi community at Boleng, Arunachal Pradesh.

About Siang Unying Festival-

- The festival of Unying is **celebrated to herald the season of cultivation, beginning of the Adi community's new year**, arrival of spring seasons as well as a great way to strengthen the bond among the community.
- **The Araan festival also marks the beginning of New Year and the arrival of spring season, the season of joyousness and youthfulness where male elders performs 'Bari' songs and 'Yakjong' dance in villages** by boys and girls through which stories of origin of the festival are narrated, besides praying for wellbeing of people both materially and spiritually.
- In this festival, it is **customary for all male members of a family to go on a hunting spree (open season) and stay in the jungles for one week.**
- When they return home they come back with various kills such as deers, birds, squirrels, fish etc.
- The children **perform "Yakjong" (house to house) wearing colorful** traditional attire and bless the house where they perform.
- **The hunted birds, rodents, squirrels are prepared as gift "Aaman" for children** and they carry and plays with it during the day.
- The festivity brings brotherhood among the villagers as hunted meats and rice beer **'Aapong' are shared among each other, especially 'Aapongs' are gifted to uncles** (maternal) and in return uncles gifts back hunted meat items like rodent, birds and other meats to children of

sisters and relatives during the festival.

The Adi people-

- The Adi people are one of the most populous groups of indigenous peoples in the Indian state of Arunachal Pradesh.
- A few thousand are also found in the Tibet Autonomous Region, where they are called the Lhoba together with some of the Nishi people, Na people, Mishmi people and Tagin people.
- The present habitat of the Adi people is heavily influenced by the historic location of the ancient Lhoyu.
- They are found in the temperate and sub-tropical regions within the districts of Siang, East Siang, Upper Siang, West Siang, Lower Dibang Valley, Lohit, Shi Yomi and Namsai within Arunachal Pradesh.
- **The term "Adi" however, is not to be confused with the Lhoba people,** since the Lhoba also includes the Mishmi along with the Adi people.
- All the ethnic groups recognizing themselves as "Adi" are believed to be descendants of the Abutani/Abotani.
- **The various languages and dialects of the Adi people fall into two groups:** Abor (Abor-Minyong, Bor-abor (Padam), Abor-Miri, etc.) and Lhoba (Lho-Pa, Luoba).
- **They celebrate a number of festivals, in particular, their prime festivals are Aran, Donggin, Solung, Podi Barbii and Etor.**
- Solung is observed in the first week of September for five days or more. It is a harvest festival performed after the sowing of seeds and transplantation, to seek for future bumper crops.
- **The majority of Adi traditionally follow the tribal Donyi-Polo religion.**
- Worship of gods and goddesses like Kine Nane, Doying Bote, Gumin Soyin and Pedong Nane, etc., and religious

observances are led by a shaman, called Miri (can be a female).