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**SAGRA KHAM (MISEWA): A RELIGIOUS AND SOCIAL FESTIVAL OF THE
TIWA COMMUNITY OF ASSAM**

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1. Introduction:

North East India is a diverse region. The various festival of the North -East India highlight region rich indigenous culture with folk song, folk dance, food and craft. Festival, dance, ritual are the major and important source of human civilization as well as social life. In order to make human world more active, enjoyable and vibrant the role and importance of Festival is indispensable. If we analyze species of human, its development and evolution, a unique way of forming sound societal depends on Festivals on which religious rules, regulations are centre round. So Festival and religious events are the two sides of the same coin. Religious events, schedule, programmes develops and grows from communities social, worshipping of God and various other events, schedules and in order to make them more attractive some other activities also added like prayer, dance, song, music, drama, theatre etc. But all such religious activities are not only the source of Festival, in order to performed such Festival religious, social or the cultural rules and regulation are added. For example we may point out the Bihu Festival of Assamese of Assam, scholars analyzed and opined that this Festival is basically related to the cultivation of Assamese people; considering its natural environment the Festival is celebrated in various ways, someone perform Guru Sewa, someone worship God or celebrates Puja. Basically this Festival is the process of recreation of cultivation, labor and as the part of recreational activities this Festival is celebrated. Assam which is regarded as the land of assimilation of diverse ethnic groups and out of such ethnic groups (twenty six tribes of Assam as mentioned by the Assam Sahitya Sabha) and out of them Jalong is one of the major ethnic group. These indigenous people of Assam has distinct and multifarious characteristic of its own which had contributed to form greater Assamese society, this indigenous people has their own culture, sociological background, own religion, own language and different colorful festival; and out of such colorful festival Sagra Festival is major one and this festival has a very deep rooted religious and sociological importance in their society. The traditional forms of such festivals of Tiwa community are hardly seen in these days yet they tried to preserve and transmitted their age old culture since ancient times by performing annual of various types of fairs and festivals. The festivals which is called in their language kham or Misawa, are unique in nature while at the time of performing. The traditions and customs followed in performing the festivals continued till today in accordance with their strict adherence of social traditions, culture and fixed yearly schedule. In short the whole calendar of such festivals shows their peculiar identity of tribal outlook, cultural background, unique folklore, verbal oral traditions which are transmitted from their ancestors. The main purpose of this paper is to focus the traditional festival and also to explain its sociological and religious importance.

2. Key Words: Tiwa, kham, Sagra, Samadi, pora haroi, Aja khel, Phura khel, panthai khel, Kham, Thurang

The word 'Tiwa' which is arises from the word 'Ti' means 'water' and a 'wa' which means superior and the Tiwa had landed down to the plains areas following the course of the river Brahmaputra who identified themselves as "Tiwa". Tibbet is considered to be their original home of the Tiwa., and their