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## **The Journal of Northeast Indian Cultures**

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## Contents

Foreword	6
Editorial	8
Marks of Distinction? The Schwartz Value Scale and Traditional Communities <i>Michael R. Kolb</i>	11
Madrasa and Girls' Education: Reflections from a Muslim Village of Assam <i>Sofica Ahmed and Rabin Deka</i>	29
Changes in the Dynamic of Politics in Manipur <i>Khrienuo</i>	43
The Implementation of Koha Web-OPAC: A Study of Assam Don Bosco University Library <i>Chanlang Ki Bareh and Anupam Chanda</i>	55
Drug and Alcohol Abuse among Women and its Effect on Social and Health Issues <i>Velhou Koza</i>	83
India's Encounter with Consumer Culture: Role of Internet and Communication Technologies <i>Sarita Chetri</i>	96
An Anthropological Peep into the Ali-Aye-Lrigang Festival of the Misings of Assam <i>Tara Nath Dowarah and Arindita Goswami</i>	106
Book Review <i>Michael R. Kolb</i>	123

## Foreword

The affinity of North-East Cultures and languages to our South-East Asian neighbours (China, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, Indonesia, Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia and Myanmar) is unmistakable. It is eminently visible in the region's legends, myths, folklore, customary laws and varied cultural expressions.

No wonder, then, that this region, with its wide variety of cultures, religions and languages, continues to be a fertile ground for researchers across a wide spectrum of academic interests; in particular, it is an anthropologist's dreamland.

Trade and cultural links between these neighbours go way back in history, long before the advent of an independent India and the emergence of several distinct nation states in the region. In recent decades, our country enunciated a 'Look East Policy' that has in recent years metamorphosed into an 'Act East Policy' – both underline the importance that political pundits and developments have assigned to the region.

Converting the natural advantages that our country has, due to geographical proximity and cultural affinity as well as shared and inter-woven threads of history, there is an indisputable case for making North-East India one, vast and vibrant cultural and commercial hub, which, in turn, will result in finding effective and novel solutions to the region's perennial problems of deep-rooted poverty, insurgency, uncontrolled migration, drug trafficking and militancy.

Regional cooperation and the shared benefits of the resultant development will be the keys to ensuring the permanence of these advantages.

The present Volume of the Journal, as always, provides a platform for everyone in understanding the dynamics at play here. It looks also at the underlying factors, especially the cultural and political genealogy of the people of this region, in arriving at a better understanding of their current hopes,

challenges and prospects. The papers also delve into the ethics and rationality interwoven into issues confronting the progress and development of the region as well as our nation at large.

**Fr. (Dr.) Stephen Mavelly**  
**Vice-Chancellor**  
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