THE ASIATIC SOCIETY, KOLKATA

IN COLLABORATION WITH

CENTRE FOR NAGA TRIBAL LANGUAGE STUDIES (CNTLS),

NAGALAND UNIVERSITY, KOHIMA

"EMERGING ISSUES OF LANGUAGE ENDANGERMENT IN NORTH - EAST INDIA"

Dates: 2ⁿᵈ and 3ʳᵈ November, 2023 (THURSDAY & FRIDAY)

Concept Note

The North- East Indian states which are widely known as seven sisters and presently eight (Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Tripura and Sikkim) share international borders with the countries like Bhutan, China, Myanmar and Bangladesh. The region is the repository of a pulsating socio-cultural assortment which is both vivacious and promising. The region is advantageously important from the point of view of society, politics, economy, language and history. According to 2011 census there are 39 million people inhabiting in the states of North-East India. It constitutes about 3.1% of the total population of the country. The people of North-East India belong to various ethnic groups. Socio-culturally as well as linguistically the region exhibits a huge diversity having a distinct lifestyle, speaking different languages and aspiring for individual socio-linguistic/ socio-political identity. They are mainly the speakers of Tibeto-Burman, Siamese-Chinese, Austro-Asiatic and Indo-Aryan group of languages.

The communities (mostly tribal communities) of North-East India are still under represented and the region can be said to be developing in terms of health, education and economy even after seven decades of the formulation of the First Five-Year Plan (1951-56) where provisions have been made in the Indian constitution for the developmental programs of the communities especially the tribal communities of the region. But the proposed developmental program is yet to touch the fundamental /basic rung of the social hierarchy till date. It is a matter of serious concern for the country that until and unless the true development of the speech communities of the region can be attained, the country will continue to suffer from lack of peace and security. This will ultimately dampen the development of the nation. So, exploration of the possibilities of the region in respect to the languages especially those which are declared endangered and marginalized, is considered vital to the welfare program of the region. A sustained

developmental effort should aim at reviewing the existing situation adopted for the linguistic development, to address the voids therein along with a cohesive effort to adopt new methodologies in language pedagogy, to deal with the issues for language maintenance and shift.

In this connection it is pertinent to remember the history of the contributions of The Asiatic Society, Kolkata, regarding the linguistic enquiries of the speech communities of the North-East region, which started with Buchanan (1799), Brown (1837), Hodgson (1847) and continued throughout 19th and 20th centuries and first two decades of 21st century, along with discussions and deliberations in different seminars and conferences on the linguistic situations of North-East India-its history and politics.

Keeping this tradition of language research of North-East India at The Asiatic Society in view, the present two-day seminar will aim at discussing different emerging aspects of the development of the endangered/ marginalized languages of North-East India from the point of view of their language, history and politics. The observations that will be made in the seminar will also aim at realizing the suggestions/proposals for sustained developmental projects for the endangered/ marginalized speech communities of North-East India in the coming days.

Coordinator / Convenor of the Seminar: Dr. Satarupa Dattamajumdar (Saha)

Campus Coordinators: Dr Yanbeni Yanthan (Beni), Dr Laishram Bijenkumar Singh, Dr Imlienla Imchen

Email: ntls@nagalanduniversity.ac.in

Contact Nos: 8794523438, 700530571, 8730018035

Registration Form: Based on first come, first serve basis due to limited seats . https://docs.google.com/forms/u/2/d/1-uVOmVb2PKFCv79dFlBF7IzpoS9vprANoOzAq-x9pLs/edit