



**TRIBAL NATURE OF LAW AND JUSTICE : THE KEBANG AS A LEGAL SYSTEM
OF THE ADI TRIBE IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH**

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ABSTRACT

Society cannot progress until and unless there is a system for the adjudication of Justice among them. Without it, anarchy would prevail and there would be absolute chaos in the society. In the context of Arunachal Pradesh, the Adi tribe had their own system of dispensing justice among themselves since time immemorial. Even before the coming of modern courts, the administration of justice was carried out by the village councils known as Kebang according to their Customary Law for generations. Therefore, the paper attempts to highlight the function of Kebang as a Legal System of the Adi tribe in Arunachal Pradesh. The paper is descriptive and analytical in nature. It is based on both primary and secondary sources.

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1. Introduction

Arunachal Pradesh known as the land of the rising sun is the eastern most state of the Union of India. It is predominantly inhabited by a number of tribes. The Adi tribe constitute as one of the major tribe among them and they inhabit mostly along both the banks of the mighty Siang River. Edward Gait in his book *The History of Assam* observed that “They are the most ruthless savages on the whole of the northern frontier, and the former sparseness of population of the north bank of the Brahmaputra, from opposite Dibrugarh to Sadiya, was due to dread of their raids” (Gait, 1906: 373). Further, he explains the meaning of Abor by which the Adi tribe was known earlier as “Their designation in Assamese means ‘independent’, as contrasted with bori, meaning ‘subject’ (Gait, 1906: 373-74). However, on the other hand the Adi’s are also known for their democratic nature because of their indigenous village council known as Kebang. Father N.M. Krick observed that “Each village is self-governing and independent. It has its own administration, both legislative and executive,” (Elwin, 1999: 157). Sachin Roy also notes that “the administrative structure of the Adi’s is essentially democratic; autocracy in any form has not been known to them and in the absence of a distinct class of nobility, oligarchy has remained equally unknown. Theirs is, in true sense, a government by the people and for the people,” (Roy, 1960:222). This indigenous self governing institution which follows the principles of democracy is called Kebang and it is the subject matter of this paper.

Objective of the study

The Kebang is known for performing so many activities but this paper deals with only the legal aspects of it. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to:

1. Explore the tribal nature of law and justice in contrast to modern jurisprudence.
2. How does Kebang acts as a legal system for the Adi tribe?
3. What are the various methods of crime detection?
4. What are the punishments prescribed for the violation of various customary laws?

Tribal Nature of Law and Justice: Conceptual Framework

Modern Law are Laws which comes into existence through the intervention of legislative, executive and judicial organs of the state. It is usually written and codified. On the other hand Tribal Law refers to the legal systems found within the tribes which are characterised by unwritten, orally transmitted and custom based regulations (See Table 1). As such, such laws are known as Customary Law. It is custom based but there is a clear distinction between Custom and Customary Law. In the words of Adino Vitso :

Custom is a usage or a practice which may or may not have social recognition and whose violations may or may not result in sanction. On the otherhand, Customary Law is a usage and a practice which is socially recognised and the breach of this will result in some penal action. When a custom is practiced over a period of time and found to be useful in maintaining harmony in a society, it becomes established as customary law (Vitso 2003:5).

For M.S. Vani, “Customary law is generally understood to be that body of law, which is predominantly oral rather than written, and which derives its authority from the sources other than the state” (Vani2003:409). It has been loosely defined as “non-legislated law in the context of a tribal society” (Pospisil 1971:195).

Therefore, Tribal Laws also known as Primitive laws are largely derived from societal customs and traditional practices. They were orally transmitted and formed an integral part of the society’s moral code. Its primary focus was in restoring balance which was often through compensation or restitution rather than punitive measures. The responsibility of offence often fell on the group rather than the individual and it reflected the importance of collective and kinship ties.

Reciprocity and reconciliation are the hallmark of Customary Law. In the words of Malinowski, Customary Law is “the positive law governing all phases of tribal life consists then of a body of binding obligations, regarded as a right by one party and acknowledge as a duty by the other, kept in force by a specific mechanism of reciprocity and publicity in the structure of their society (Malinowski, 1926:58). Its aim is not to condemn the guilty but finding a solution for both the parties in conflict which is amicable and to the satisfaction of both. However, this does not mean that those

found guilty are not punished under customary law. In the Administration of Justice among the Adi tribe, the Kebang is also based on customary law.

Table 1: Comparison between Tribal Law and Modern Law

Sl.No.	Theme	Tribal Law	Modern Law
1	Origin	Oral and Custom Based	Written and Codified
2	Punishment	Reparation/Restitution(Compensation)	Retributive(Punitive)
3	Responsibility of Offence	Collective (Family/Clan)	Individual
4	Power & Authority	Unified	Divided (Separation of Power)

Kebang as Legal System of the Adi Tribe

Traditionally, the Adi village rest on the authority of the Kebang. It was firmly rooted in custom and tradition and had wide authority over every aspect of Adi life. Verrier Elwin observed Kebang to be “the most highly developed and effective of all the tribal councils...,which may well become a model for the whole of NEFA” (Elwin, 1999: 156).

The term Kebang originally meant an intelligent, wiseman well versed in history, customs as well as traditional knowledge. As per this connotation, a Kebang is an acknowledge man in all spheres of knowledge and wisdom prevalent in the past Adi society. A council consisting of such wiseman and the common people is also known as Kebang. It is in this connotation Kebang is understood today (Nath, 1998:210).

The Kebang performs different functions such as executive functions, administrative functions , judicial functions, functions relating to village security, socio-cultural/religious functions. As the paper is limited to the judicial aspects, it will limit itself to understand the functions of Kebang in the administration of Justice.

Administration of Justice

The Kebang was the only Court in Adi society which tried both Civil and Criminal cases. All types of disputes which arose in the village were adjudicated by the Kebang. It settled cases like adultery, divorce, murder, theft and other criminal offences. It has been the tradition that the fine for the crime committed by a particular man is usually paid by the clan (Megu, 1999:211).

Membership

The Kebang is headed by the Kebang Abus. Any influential elder of the village, capable of arguing and judging can become the Kebang Abu. Criteria like old age, honesty as well as intelligence are considered the most suitable person for the Kebang Abu. George D.S.Dunbar notes that “the headman (Gam[During the British days, the Kebang was transformed to some extent. Official Gams were appointed from every clan in a village who were given red coats and recognised by the government. Their appointment caused the authority of the priest who largely dominated the Kebang to decline.]) is chosen by the voice of the community. In this election experience to guide such affairs as policy and the selection and division of fresh sites for ‘jhums,’ and wealth to entertain strangers when necessary in the name of the village, all weigh. Age is also a factor, for the Gam is the village Nestor” (Elwin, 2007: 106). However, in practice, every clan of the village have their representative, the Kebang Abu/ Gam in the Council. Every male, reaching the age of reason, is by right active member of the Kebang. Attainment of adulthood by a member was the criteria. Adulthood meant the boy who shows adult behaviour while performing his duties in the Dere /Mushup. A membership to the boy’s dormitory should not be confused with the membership of the Kebang (Nath, 2000:217).

The status of the Kebang members is the same. However, as observed by the explorer Wilcox “though not acknowledged by them it is evident that some few, either through superior wealth, hereditary esteem, or real ability exert a very strong influence on the rest and can sway them to any measure” (Elwin, 1999: 156-57). In addition, what is to be noted is that women can sit in the proceedings of the Kebang but they are not treated as members.

Sessions

The sessions of the Kebang are usually held in the Dere/Mushup which is the bachelor’s dormitory of the Adi’s. The explorer Wilcox who visited the Adi country in 1825 described the “hall of audience and debate” where Kebang met and emphasised that the fact that everyone had an equal vote in the sessions of the Kebang (Elwin, 1999: 156). The Kebang does not sit regularly. It sits only when there is a complaint, a dispute or any other activities to be performed by the villagers. The Gam arranges the sitting time and date for the Kebang whenever it is necessary. It is to be noted that Kebang sittings does not have time limit. It can sit for days till a decision is reached. Any member can speak for whatever length of time he chooses to speak. However, according to convention, the senior members present are generally given preference for speaking ahead. The decision of the Kebang is final and it is automatically carried out. However, the decision of the Kebang is not binding. There is no body to enforce its decisions. An appeal can be made by the aggrieved if he/she is not satisfied by the decision of the Kebang. The procedure of appeal is discussed below in the organisational structure of Kebang.

Organisational Structure of Kebang

The Kebang as a legal system is organised in a hierarchical structure (See Figure 1). The family and the clan are the smallest unit of the society. Any disputes that arises among them are settled by the Erang (family) or Opin (Clan) in Du:sum Kebang. If the Du:sum Kebang fails to settle the case than it is placed before the Do:lung (Village) Kebang. It is held under the chairman of Head Gam. All the disputes in a village were decided by a Do:lung Kebang. The inter-village disputes as well as cases which Do:lung Kebang could not settle were decided by Banggo Kebang or inter-village councils. According to the Adi Kebang Ayon, the Banggo Kebang is held under the chairman of Banggo Head Gam and around 10(ten) Gams are to be selected to perform as Judge(ABK, 2017: 26)

Again, the inter-banggo disputes as well as cases undecided by Banggo Kebang were brought to Bogum Bokang Kebang, the supreme court of the Adi’s. Anyone of President/Vice President or Secretary acts as the Chairman of Bogum Bokang Kebang. In their absence an elderly Head Gam acts as the Chairman and around 10(ten) Head Gam/Gams are to act as Judge (ABK, 2017:28).

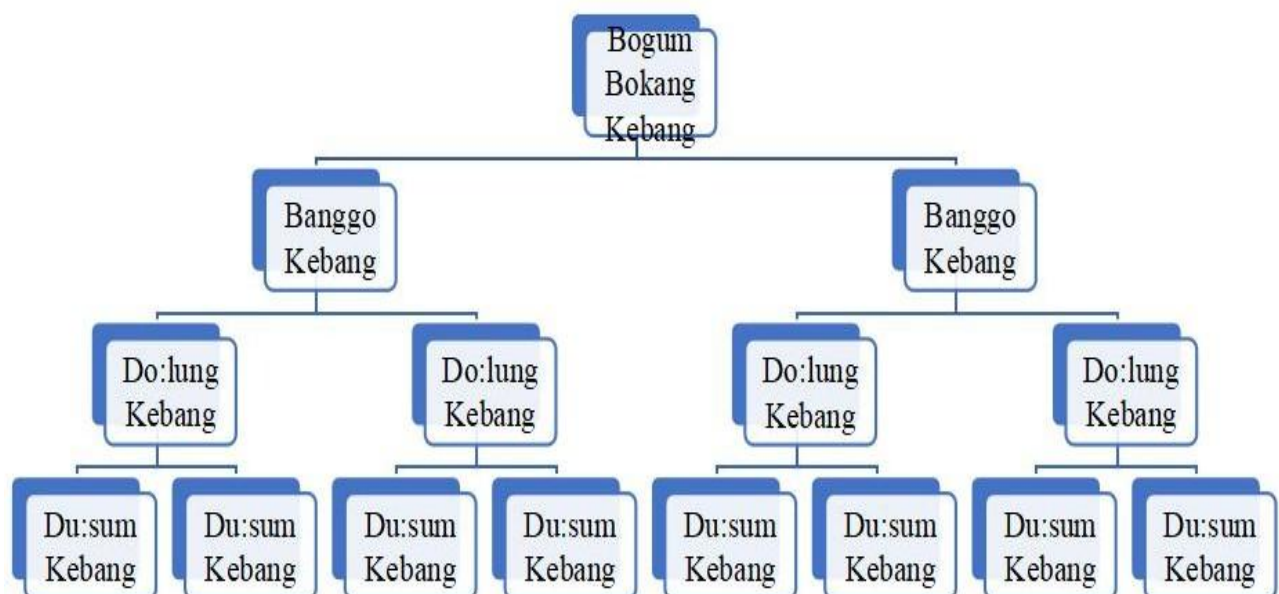


Figure 1: Organisational Structure of Kebang as a Legal System

Methods of Crime Detection

In Adi society, crimes are usually detected as a result of catching them red-handed. Another way of identification of crime is through arguments and inquiry in the Kebang through witness and evidence based. According to Adi Customary Law, when all methods of argument, inquiries and human intellect fail to detect a crime, the assistance from supernatural agency is sought. Therefore, it is through divination the crimes are detected by the Miri (Priest). The various methods of detecting crime by divination are by Aiyin (Liver)[According to Adi Mythology, the Liver is supposed to resemble the Ekkam (Leaf) in which Nibo(the father of all mankind) had wrapped up his wisdom before he went out on the swing and it was stolen by Robo(the father of evil spirits). So the liver is considered to possess the power of revealing the mysteries of the spirit land and that is why, the Miris consult livers of the sacrificed animals in divining the causes of diseases, detecting crimes etc. (Roy, Sachin ,1960 :233-34, 250).], Limeng (Grains/Pebbles), Peki (Oath) and Amki (Ordeals).

1. Divination through Aiyin and Limeng: When a theft takes place and there is no other way to find out the actual culprit, in such situation, the Miris are called for divination through Aiyin and Limeng. As per the lines of the Chicken liver and other indications, the Miris detect the real culprit. In this regard Verrier Elwin notes that:

“Priest and shamans are believed to have the power of tracking down thieves and recovering stolen property by divination,” (Elwin, 1965:33).

However, the Adis sometimes do not believe on the detection by the Miri. The reason as observed by Gindu Borang is that, there is a saying on such detection:

“Rokyine Yinme ko; Limeye Menggong ko.” It means “Divination from chicken livers is not always true, divination from pebbles always swings” (Borang, 2013:135).

Therefore, the Kebang generally do not accept the findings of the Miri and try to solve the case with some concrete evidences. If the accused do not accept his guilt and makes counter challenge, the Kebang permits him to do Peki (Oath) or perform Amki (Ordeal). The Miris decision backed by Oath and Ordeals is helpful for detection of the guilty because the wrong doer gets scared of the possible suffering to be inflicted by Donyipolo, the supreme being and the upholder of truth, justice and wisdom (Borang, 2013:135-36).

2. Peki (Oath) and Amki (Ordeals)

Peki (Oath): Peki is sworn in the name of Donyipolo[Talom Rukbo notes that the term Donyipolo has three meanings: Donyipolo (God)-Spiritual meaning; Donyi (Sun), Polo (Moon)-Physical meaning; Donyipolo Spirit(Yelam)-Faith-Philosophical meaning. Peki is done in the name of, Donyipolo, the Supreme being (Rukbo, Talom, 1998:58).]and it is known as Donyipolo pekisunam. The Adis swear in the name of Donyipolo in the Kebang. In the words of Oshong Ering, “Ngo Donyi-Polo pe pedung: Ngo aro agom luye: Menam lumaye: Donyi-Polo e ngom kaye.” It means “I swear in the name of truth, that I will not speak untruth; that truth will guide me” (Ering, 1998: 49).

The believers faithfully seek divine help from Donyipolo to stand as witness of truth and justice in respect of dispute and allegations. If a person is fully confident of non-guilty, he will utter immediately by pointing towards Sun and say, “Ane Donyie kaalangka” which means may Donyipolo punish the liar (Rukbo, 1998:60).

If any adverse happens to the accused or the aggrieved as per the conditional swearing, he is held guilty and his lifelong physical and mental suffering is considered to be the punishment of his wrong doing. Swearing in the name of Donyipolo is applied in the cases of allegation, counter allegation, cheating etc. which are of less importance. It is not enough for crimes of serious nature or disputes over valuable properties. For crimes of serious nature Amki needs to be conducted, (Borang, 2013:137).

Amki (Ordeals): When a case like dispute over land and water, ownership of animals, planted trees, paternity of an unborn child etc. is undecided due to lack of proper evidence and witness or non acceptance of Kebang decision, contending parties seek permission to perform certain Ordeals in the name of Donyipolo to get final verdict from him. Ordeals are conducted under the supervision and

direction of Kebang. Ordeals performed as per traditional and customary laws are known as Amki (Borang, 2013: 137).

There are different types of Amki meant for different cases like Kedeng doki (to swallow a lump of soil), Ambin yuki (to bury rice), Perok iyyi tingki (to drink fowls blood), Pakde dingki (to beat plantain tree), Rokpi yuki (taking out egg from boiling water in bamboo tube), Pakrang jitki (pouring molten lead on palm) and Eso amki (marking the ears of Mithun). Kedeng doki, Ambin yuki, Perok iyyi tingki, Pakde dingki are generally performed at the disputed site. Rokpi yuki, Pakrang jitki and Eso amki are held at permanent Amki venue of the village. Edung bangki (burning of bamboo tube), Yokmo tekki (to make an arrow tip from iron) and Toti-Bangko Bangki (to burn leaves of Toti and Bangko bushes) are held near the house of pregnant woman in question or Kebang place and rest are held at the places as decided by Kebang (Borang, 2013: 139).

In the trials by Amki the maternal uncle is the sole pillar of confidence of success and failure and the middle man conduct the performance as neutral body. After erecting the structure for placing the materials for Amki, the disputing party will stand face to face at 10 (ten) to 12 (twelve) feet distance. The maternal uncle will initiate the trial in presence of huge public gathering with the following words:

“Today, on this day, for truth and justice my nephew is challenging an opponent and I have been invited to stand behind him as pillar of hope. Be bold and courageous to face the challenge and do not tell a lie. You almighty Donyipolo the ever vigilant power show the truth and justice in favour of any party who is in the right path and punish the liar,” (Rukbo, 1998:60-61).

Some of the Amki performed by the Adi people are discussed as under:

A. Eso Amki: In this ordeal the disputants dedicate one she mithun each to their cause and mark the ears of each others mithun as their own. After invoking the evil spirits in the name of the Donyipolo the mithun is let loose in the jungle. The mithun belonging to the guilty is expected to die or lose their offspring at any time during the period three to five years. In case of denial of charges by the accused he may perform the ordeal one sided to prove his innocence. To get result out of Eso Amki the Kebang prescribes the period of two to five years depending upon the age of the Mithun dedicated for the purpose (Megu, 1990:122).

B. Kedeng Doki: This ordeal is prescribed only for land and water disputes, and is performed at the disputed site. In this ordeal the claimant select one man as Amki igena each to stand for their cause. Both Amki igena are required to take a lump of soil from the disputed site with ennok-take and perok iyyi (raw fermented millet, grated ginger and fowl blood). Calling Donyipolo by saying Donyi e Kalangka, to be a witness to the ordeal and to give justice, they swallow the mixed soil. It is believed that the wrong doer meets an early and tragic end within the prescribed period of one to five years (Borang, 2013: 141).

C. Rokpi Yuki: In case of a person charged with Theft he was made to pass through the ordeal of the egg in boiling water. In this ordeal, a large fire was kindled and a bamboo tube about a foot long, filled with water was placed on it. An egg was put into it when the water started boiling. The accused was directed to sit by the side of the fire with a fire screen to protect him from the heat. He was asked to approach the tube covering him from the heat of the fire with the fire screen when the water was boiling. He had to put his hand into the tube to bring out the egg. If he came out unhurt, he was believed to be innocent, and if found injured, he was declared guilty” (Mibang, 1994:49).

The description of an ordeal among the Adis has been given by J.F.Needham as follows:

A large fire having been kindled, it is fed until the flames reach the height of two or three feet. A bamboo chungu (tube), about one hat (cubit) long and not large enough to admit a man's fist easily, is then filled with water, and into it, an egg having been dropped, the chungu is placed on the fire. The culprit then sits down by the fire in the company of one of his uncles (mothers brothers) and carries a fire screen about two feet square, made (by his uncle) from the leaves of a creeper..., which contains a large quantity of watery sap and is consequently not inflammable. Just before the water in the chungu commences to boil, the culprit rises his feet, and repeats ‘Hear me ye heavens and ye sun! If I have really stolen this man's (whatever it may be) cause my hand to be burnt, and do not permit

the egg to leave chungu. If, however, on the other hand, I am not a thief, do not burn my hand, but permit me to take out the egg unscathed' He then proceeds to endeavour to take the egg out of the chungu, protecting his face and from being burnt by means of the fire-screen, and all Adi's assert and verily believe that if the experimenter is telling the truth, the egg will appear at the top of the chungu as soon as the water boils; but if it is lying, it will not, and he will consequently be unable to secure it (Elwin, 1959:288-89).

If the accused person succeeds in taking the egg out of the chungu, he was at once declared innocent and his accuser was ordered to give either one or two Eso (Mithun) for all he had gone through (Mibang, 1994: 50).

In one such ordeal of Rokpi Yuki, T.K Bhattacharjee had minutely examined the palm of both the men and found a faint burning sign on one hand and nothing abnormal was found on the other's hand. He writes,

"It remained a puzzle to me as to why a blister did not appear when hand dipped in boiling water...people even say that nothing even happen to the innocent person even in the severe test of ordeal where molten lead is put on the palm"(Bhattacharjee, 1987:236).

D. Pakrang Jitki: Here two lumps of lead are heated in an iron pan till it gets melted. The molten lead is put on the palms of accused and the aggrieved. It is believed that the palm of the guilty person would get burnt while innocent remains unhurt. The consequence of this ordeal is seen just after its performance. Sometimes the accused may perform it on self to prove his innocence (Borang, 2013: 141).

E. Ambin Yuki: It is an ordeal prescribed for land and water boundary disputes. In it, the Kebang asks both the claimants to bring handful of rice. The rice of each claimant is packed separately in Tan leaves, believed to have been originated from the land of Kine Nane. Members of Kebang and claimants go to the disputed site. Kebang asks each of the claimants to put up a stick to point out the place where he claims the boundary to exist. Kebang members bury the rice packet at the places indicated by respective claimants and invoke Tusin Rodong, the guardian deity of land and water to eat up the rice belonging to wrong claimant. Restrictions are imposed for a stipulated period in the area where rice packets are buried. After the prescribed time Kebang members and claimants revisit the spot, unearth the packets and examine the rice grains to find out loss or defacement. If any rice packet is found to have suffered loss or defacement, its owner is held guilty and the boundary is fixed on the other side where the packet did not suffer loss or damage (Borang, 2013: 141).

Ordeals are directed by and undergo under the supervision of the council. But the council must procure the consent of both the parties before prescribing it. This leaves an opportunity for either of the parties, especially if it has reason to fear divine judgement, to get out of the difficulty without any damage to its prestige and blemish to its character (Roy, 1960: 222).

Crime and Punishment

The notion of crime and punishment vary greatly in different societies. There are differences in the ideas of guilt and punishment according to tribal and modern law. For the Adi people, for any crime committed, the responsibility usually rests upon the family, clan or village just as much as on the individual. Dalton noted these long ago in 1885 as "The crime of an individual is treated as a public disgrace to be atoned for by all" (Elwin, 1959:263). Even today if a man, guilty of an offence, cannot pay the compensation demanded, his clansmen may club together to pay it, not so much out of kindness but because the other party may penalize them equally with the actual offender (Elwin, 2007:29). Among the Adi's, the object of awarding punishment is to check breach of their customs and practices, to check crime and reform the law breakers and to compensate the aggrieved of his loss or damage. Some examples of Punishment for certain crimes are explained below:

1. Theft

In case of Doppyong-Ti:si (theft), the person who have committed the crime has to return the stolen property plus one more of the same kind of property stolen. According to Adi Kebang Ayon, the accused has to pay an Adum dumke in addition to the fine (ABK, 2017: 63). If the accuse cannot pay the Adum Dumke, an amount of Rs 12500/- has to be paid as fine. It is the rate fixed by Adi Bane Kebang.

2. Adultery

In case of adultery leading to divorce, if it is the women's fault, she is not entitled to get any share of movable properties of her husband. If the husband is at fault, she is entitled to receive some part of movable properties of her husband. Immovable properties always remain with her husband.

3. Assault

In case of assault, compensation is usually commensurate with the injury inflicted. According to the Adi Ayon Kebang, for an assault a fine of an Adum is to be paid. If the accuse cannot pay the Adum, the Adi Bane Kebang has fixed an amount of Rs 25000/- which is to be paid in its place. If the assault is by a group, each of them has to pay a fine of an Adum and also has to pay all the medical expenses (ABK, 2017:57).

4. Murder

Murder is considered as the most heinous crime. In earlier time, the rule of eye for an eye was followed. Killing of a man to avenge murder was not considered a crime rather it was considered a fulfilment of the sacred and moral obligation of the deceased kinsmen or the tribe. Murder for revenge was declared illegal only after the British government started administering the Adi areas after the Anglo-Abor War of 1911-12. As a result, nowadays murder cases are brought before the Kebang for adjudication of justice. The savage punishment systems of earlier days have almost disappeared and the universal custom for the councils is to demand compensation for every type of offence. It is compensated with the heaviest amount possible.

In recent times, according to Adi Kebang Ayon, if a person is murdered intentionally, the accused has to pay a compensation of Dum-ying akngo or an amount of Rs 12, 50,000/- (twelve lakhs and fifty thousand) as fixed by Adi Bane Kebang. In addition, an Adum (for Taleng Dumten (eternal pillow for the deceased) and for Yenne-Ko:ten a fine of Adum has to be paid. If the death of a person happened unintentionally, Dum-ying annyí or an amount of Rs 500000/- (five lakhs) has to be given to the aggrieved person as compensation as fixed by Adi Bane Kebang. In such case, to receive or not to accept the compensation shall rest with the aggrieved family only (ABK, 2017:50). It is to be noted that if the guilty is unable to pay the Midum (compensation) as well as the penalty imposed by the Kebang, the whole clan members and allied groups contribute the required amount to be paid to the family of the victim.

It is to be observed that the most common way of settling disputes or punishing crime has always been by multiple restitution. If anyone stole a Mithun and was discovered, as he usually was, he was compelled to restore the original Mithun or its equivalent and give another Mithun as compensation. He had to also assist in providing food and beer for the members of the council who tried his case, and he often had to provide animals for sacrifice. This system applied to almost every kind of offence and in some cases the amount of restitution was worked out in considerable detail (Elwin, 2007: 33). The advantage of a system of compensation or restitution is that it does not involve sending anyone to jail, with the almost inevitable corruption which this involves; it inflicts a serious material and psychological penalty on the offender; and justice is speedy, on the spot and visible to all. Yet it does not make him an outcaste from society or deprive the village community of his service (Elwin, 2007:37).

Conclusion

The Kebang has been performing as a Judiciary among the Adi's, apart from other executive, administrative, socio-cultural and functions relating to village security since time immemorial.

Traditionally, it tried both Civil and Criminal cases. With the coming of modern administration its power and functions have been somewhat limited in certain spheres. Though the Assam Frontier (Administration of Justice) Regulation 1945 under Section 5 recognises the Village Councils but it has curtailed the powers of Kebang with regards to giving Capital and Corporal punishment. However, Kebang still tries Criminal cases like Murder and has settled many cases regarding it.

The Kebang still finds relevance among the Adi's because they find it simple and practical. It seeks to maintain and establish the traditional concepts of Justice without involving in lengthy legal procedures. There is speedy deliverance of Justice in the Kebang System. As a result, Sachin Roy notes that "Jurists may find it difficult to classify these laws in well defined legal categories but if the primary duty (of legal bodies) is to get rid of disputes before them, the laws evolved by this people must be acknowledge to fulfil that function" (Roy,1960:230). Therefore, understanding the importance of this village council in the administration of justice in Arunachal Pradesh, the Arunachal Pradesh Civil Courts Act 2021 under Section 2(d) and 3(e) has recognised it as a Customary Court among the different classes of Civil Courts in Arunachal Pradesh.

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