



Understanding the Meitei-Pangal Community in Northeast India: A Study on Historical and Geographical Settlement in Imphal-West District, Manipur

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ABSTRACT

Manipur has historically served as a hub for cultural interactions, located along the Indo-Burma border of Southeast Asia, and has been home to numerous tribes and communities, flourishing as a kingdom in the past. The kingdom's ascent from valley-based principalities to the surrounding hills, including present-day Kabaw Valley in Burma, peaked during the reigns of the distinguished kings Kiyamba, Khagemba, and Garibaniwaz, lasting until the mid-1750s. It was during King Khagemba's rule that two invasions occurred from the west by the Mayangs, specifically the Cachari/Kachari kingdom, in 1604 and 1606. These invasions were not spontaneous; they stemmed from the turmoil within King Khagemba's royal family, particularly between his brother Sanongba and Chingsomba, regarding a damaged boat from a race in 1603, which led to the initial invasion in 1604, supported by the Cachari, but they were ultimately defeated. In 1605, a joint campaign involving the forces from the Sylhet Nawab and the Cachari kingdom reinforced their military efforts, reaching Manipur by early 1606.

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Under the command of Prince Muhamad Sani, a contingent of 1,007 Muslim soldiers from Sylhet participated in the battle. They were defeated and rather than treating them as prisoners of war, King Khagemba welcomed them graciously to his palace and accepted them as part of his subjects/community, allowing them to settle in the kingdom by providing them with wives, land, clans, and a distinct institution, which later adopted the Meiteilon language and incorporated the socio-cultural practices of the Meitei community. This led to the emergence of a unique community composed of offspring from the unions between Muslim fathers and Meitei mothers, now recognized as the Meitei-Pangal. Following the Burmese invasion of 1819, this community expanded beyond the kingdom into Myanmar (where many were captured), Bangladesh, and the Indian states of Assam and Tripura (where they fled) thereby forming the Meitei-Pangal Diaspora. Nowadays, Meitei-Pangal individuals are predominantly found throughout Manipur, especially in the valley districts of Imphal East, Imphal West, and Thoubal. In Imphal west district, they are concentrated in the southern areas of Hiyangthang to Mayang Imphal via Mayai Lambi and to Laphupat Tera via Sekmaiying. Many of these villages were established prior to the colonial era, with some dating back to Khagemba's reign. Among the 13 Assembly constituencies in the district, they are present in 3 constituencies, dominated in Mayang Imphal and many villages were established by the king to settle in the northern portion in 17th century. Today, the Meitei-Pangal community exceeds a population of three lakhs across India (and Bangladesh), enjoying OBC status and recognition as an indigenous community in Northeast India, thereby constituting a minority within a minority in terms of religious, cultural, and linguistic classifications.

Introduction: A Brief History of the Meitei-Pangal

The Meitei-Pangal, often called Manipuri Muslims, trace their ancestry to Muslim troops who entered Manipur in 1606 to aid Prince Sanongba in claiming the throne from his elder half-brother, King Khagemba,



on behalf of the Kachari kingdom. Following an incident involving boat racing in 1603, Sanongba and his mother fled the palace. Although some historical accounts suggest the presence of Muslims prior to this time, notable migration appears to have begun in the mid-16th century during King Mungyamba's reign, Khagemba's father. T.C. Hodson observed that Muslims started arriving in Manipur around this period, and it was during Khagemba's reign (1588-1652) that important organizational and developmental advancements occurred, including the introduction of polo and boat racing.ⁱ

The invasion by the Cachari Muslims in 1606 initiated the most significant Muslim settlement in Manipur, following an unsuccessful invasion attempt in 1604. According to royal records, Sanongba and his troops moved toward Yangkoi after receiving alerts about an impending threat from the Mayangsⁱⁱ, whom Khagemba later defeated. They captured 30 elephants, 1,000 firearms, and a group of 1,000 Pangansⁱⁱⁱ, which included swordsmiths, brass smiths, and various skilled artisans, as well as workers for other trades such as trumpet and long drum making, brackets fabrication, washermen, and horse caretakers, all of whom were taken captive. These live captives were permitted to form their own community. In total, 1,000 individuals were captured during the conflict.^{iv} This account is also recounted in the Khagemba Lanpha and Nongchup Haram. These captives were granted the opportunity to create their community and were the first within the kingdom to enjoy legal rights and welfare under Khagemba's governance, marking a significant departure from how previous captives and laborers had been treated. However, following the conflict of 1606, these people from the west were transported to the capital and were warmly received in the Kangla with dignified treatment akin to what was offered to envoys and delegation teams from other kingdoms.^v

King Khagemba established an independent administration termed Mangkanshang/Pangalshang, directed by Muhammad Sani as the Kazi and Shanglakpa (the administrative head), to oversee this group, acknowledging their capabilities and contributions. The term 'Mangkan' appears in royal documents, supporting the formation of this distinct department. Eventually, they were provided with wives and clans based on their trades and services rendered to the king, along with allocated lands for initial settlement on the eastern side of Kangla, crossing the Imphal River.^{vi} New arrivals were assigned land for settlement on Kangla's eastern side, and their settlement extended from Khurai Heikrumakhong in the north to the Kongba River in the east and down to the current location of BOAT in the south, bordered by the Imphal River to the west, according to B. Kullachandra Sharma.^{vii} Over time, many settled in different areas of the valley at Khagemba's direction. All Muslims were provided at least one wife and land for their settlement as a reward known as Mana Ingkhol. Initially, the Muslims under Shani received land along with his family in



the present Yaiskul/Moirangkhom area, south of Kangla^{viii}. The establishment of a Masjid in the area was also documented. Shani was allotted two wives, Ningthonbam Naoibi Saktek and Chakpram Mellei, along with 5 acres/hectares of land for agricultural purposes. This information has been cited by many Meitei historians and authors. However, according to RK Sanahal, Lilong and Mayangkhang (in Chandel District) were the initial locations designated by the king for permanent Muslim settlement.^{ix} It is accurate that they initially settled predominantly around or close to the palace.

The Muslim captives were classified as soldiers within the Lalmi Loishang (military department) and engaged in various production and industrial tasks. Many were eventually relocated across the kingdom, especially in the southeastern valley, to guard against animal and tribal raids. After the Maring War (1624-1627) and the subsequent peace, the Pangal community split into two factions—Khunja, who served in governmental roles and military defense, and Khutheibas, involved in production and industry, all partaking in the Lallup system.^x During this period, Muhammad Sani's duties evolved, and he transferred the Kazi title to his brother Chunet/Junet, assuming responsibilities for social welfare and judicial matters. In 1609, the arrival of three Syeds enhanced the religious domain, contributing to the kingdom's various ceremonies, rituals, and festivals.^{xi}

The original settlers were subsequently joined by new migrants from the west, especially during the latter part of the 17th century, highlighted by a significant migration from Makak in 1679, which is seen as the second major influx of Muslims into Manipur. This wave of migration further boosted the population, resulting in the group being referred to as Mangkan/Mughal. The department of the Pangals was officially renamed Mangkanshang after the arrival of certain Pathans from Gujarat and the protection of King Pamheiba from a trap set by the Tripura king in 1680, which involved a conversation on a place known as Mangan Khutsamshang^{xii}. In this situation, the chronicle mentioned that the Mayangs were defeated by those connected with Mangkan.^{xiii} The migration continued until the reign of Chandrakirti, during which the term Pangal began to come into use in the reign of Bhagyachandra in the late 18th century. However, the structure of early settlements faced major disruption during the Seven Years Devastation from 1819 to 1826, resulting in a significant number of Pangal individuals being expelled from the valley, with many killed or taken to Burma, while others were pushed out of the kingdom to what is now Assam, Tripura, and Bangladesh, thus leading to the Meitei-Pangal Diaspora. After this era, the role of Kazi became the most crucial position in Pangal society, and Pangal Shanglen garnered significant recognition, continuing to exist until 1891. There are more than 80 Meitei-Pangal villages in Manipur, with nearly an equal number established in Assam, Tripura, and Bangladesh. There are around 60 to 70 clans of Meitei-Pangals in



Manipur, mainly referred to by their names in the Manipuri language, and these clans remain acknowledged outside of Manipur as well. Currently, the Meitei-Pangal population in Manipur is around 2.50 lakh, while approximately 90000 live outside of Manipur.

Brief History of the District formation:

The Imphal West district is one of Manipur's 16 districts, encompassing 10 Assembly Constituencies within the Inner Parliamentary Lok Sabha Constituency. Manipur became part of the Indian Union in 1949 as a single district 'C' State, managed by the Central Government through a Chief Commissioner and organized into 10 administrative sub-divisions, comprising 6 in the hills and 4 in the valley: Imphal West, Imphal East, Bishenpur, Thoubal, Ukhrul, Mao and Sadar Hills, Tamenglong, Jiribam, Churachandpur, and Tengnoupal. In 1969, the state was split into 5 districts, which included 23 sub-divisions: Manipur Central (covering Imphal West, Imphal East, Thoubal, Bishenpur, Jiribam, and Tengnoupal), Manipur North with Mao and Sadar Hills (3 sub-divisions), Manipur South (5 sub-divisions in Churachandpur), Manipur East (5 sub-divisions in Ukhrul), and Manipur West (4 sub-divisions in Tamenglong).

The Manipur Central District underwent further reorganization in May 1974 with the establishment of Tengnoupal District. In May 1983, it was additionally divided into three districts—Imphal, Thoubal, and Bishenpur—all derived from the same sub-divisions. Subsequently, in January 1988, the Imphal district was further divided into Imphal East -I and -II and Imphal West-I and -II, with each including Jiribam sub-division and one Community Development Block (C.D. Block). In June 1997, the government of Manipur separated the Imphal district into Imphal West District and Imphal East District, while Jiribam sub-division remained part of Imphal East until 2016, which then included 9 districts. In 2016, the government of Manipur finally divided all the districts (excluding Imphal West and Bishnupur) into two each, leading to a total of 16 districts.

Year	T.P. of Manipur	Population of Meitei-Pangal/MP	% of M.P.	Imphal West Population	Population of Meitei-Pangal
1901 ^{xiv}	284465	10383	4		
1911	346222				
1922	384016				
1931	445606	22684 ^{xv} /22859 ^{xvi}	5.09		
1941	512069	29548 ^{xvii}			
1951	577635	37197	6.44		
1961	780037	48588	6.23	178235	5460
1971	1072753	70969	6.62	241155	9.22% of 763260 C.D.

1981	1420953	99327	6.99	300781	10.47% of 929077 C.D.
1991	1837149	133535	7.27	380801	62152 E+W
2001	2293896	190939	8.32	444382	19124
2011	2855794	239836	7.6	517992	24298

Table 1: The state population and the Meitei-Pangal in the district

District Profile of the Meitei-Pangal:

In 1951, Manipur had a population of 577635 persons where 131470 and 263256 persons were dispersed in Imphal area and rest of the Sadar sub-division in which there was a single district in the state under Part C state in the Indian Union. In the same year, the Meitei-Pangal population in the state was 11179 in the Imphal area while 24482 in the rest of the Sadar sub-division excluding hill regions. In 1961, the population of the state was increased to 7.8 lakhs while the population of the Meitei-Pangal to 48588 persons but its share was only 5460 persons out of 178235 in Imphal West sub-division and only 234 persons were lived in the urban area. Manipur had a population of 67717 in urban in 6.75 square miles with sex-ratio of 1015 and literacy rate of 36.04% (increased from 12.58%). In 2011, Imphal West district has a population of 517992 (Male-255054, Female-262938, Urban-156420) out of total 28.56 lakh where the Meitei-Pangal's population is just 24298 (4.69%) mostly settled in the south of the district. The state has a literacy rate of 79.85% and sex ratio of 987 while in Imphal West district respectively as 86.08% and 1031 but the literacy rate for the Pangal in the district is 55.99 and the sex-ratio is more or less 1000 females. Regarding the distribution of category of workers by religious communities, Manipur's Meitei-Pangal (Muslims) had 40.2% cultivation, 12% agricultural labourers, 10.3% households industry workers and 37.6% others against India's respectively 31.7%, 26.5%, 4.2% and 37.6% while the Meitei-Pangal had 28.6%, 22.3%, 7.6% and 41.5% in 2001.^{xviii}

The district is dominated by the Meitei group of Hinduism and traditional Sanamahism about 90% followed by Muslim (4.69%) and Christian (4.51%). There are four sub-divisions in the district in which Wangoi is represented by the Pangal of 15.96 % stretched in two constituencies of Wangoi and Mayang Imphal. The district has more urban population of the Pangal than the rural which account for 16075 out of 24298 persons spread in Samurou, Wangoi, Thongkhongluxmi and Mayang Imphal town/N.P. (now Municipal Council/M.C.). In Imphal Municipal, the present of Muslim is just 1099 in the district portion out of 9959 persons in 2011. The highest concentration is in Mayang Imphal M.C. where it represents 37.77% of 24239 population of the whole Bengoon areas but got only 3 wards out of 13 seats. Thongkhongluxmi M.C. has 21.24% of its population of 14878 belonging to Pangal community in just 2 wards out of 11 seats which followed by Wangoi (15.89%/1447 of 9106) and Samurou (1132 out of 16582 which include 5834

(mostly Pangals) in Lilong, Thoubal). Besides, the concentrated areas of the Pangals in the district are Uchiwa, Wangbal, Phoubakchao, Komlakhong, Konuma Hiyangkhong of Mayang Imphal segment and Hiyangthang Tarrahei-Pallak of Naoria Pakhanglakpa assembly segment. The Muslim population in Lamshang and Patsoi sub-divisions are mostly Indian migrants/Marwalis while in Lamphelpat sub-division is side by side of the Meitei-Pangal who are in govt services and business families from mainland India mostly in Paona Bazar having a Masjid of the community.

The following table is listed the population in the sub-divisions of the district by religion:

Sl. no.	Name of the Subdivision	2011	2011	2001	2011
					% of MP
1.	Lamshang S.D.	329	84856	68	0.39
2.	Patsoi S.D.	332	70665	259	0.47
3.	Lamphelpat S.D.	1126	221422	824	0.51
4	Wangoi S.D.	22511	141049	17973	15.96
	Name of the Town				
1.	Imphal West MCI+OG	1099	193459	729	
2.	Langjing C.T.	271	5451		
3.	Samurou N.P.	852	10721	740	
4.	Wangoi N.P.	1447	9106	1289	15.89 %
5.	Thongkhong Luxmi N.P.	3168	14878	2584	21.29 %
6.	Mayng Imphal M.C.I	9155	24239	7326	37.77 %
	Urban population	16075	322879	12679	4.98 %

Table 2: The population in sub-division and the Meitei-Pangal's urban (MP)

Historical Settlements of Meitei-Pangal in the district:

The Muslim/Pangal soldiers were first kept in a place called Pangal Siphai (presently having a primary school in Paobitek as Paobitek Pangal Siphai P/M) in south valley.^{xix} The population of the Meitei-Pangal was increasing by migrating from the west and by the end of 17th century, was further expanded all over the valley. In the western and northwestern side of the state, there is no present of Pangal's settlement/villages but earlier records, there were many evidences of settlement being taken up in the areas by the king before the Burmese invasion of 1819. There was evidence of settlement sites initially given by the king Khagemba around the capital Kangla mostly south of it like Singjamei to Kiyamgei/Langthabal and many migrant Muslims from the west were allowed to stay for temporarily by building a house just adjacent



to the west of Kangla complex of Salangmei, the present Governor compound-Johnstone Higher Secondary School and sometime, it was used also for the office of the Mangkanshang/Pangal Shanglen, a separate dept for the Muslim/Pangal society. Further, the far flung area of the west were also reached by the Pangals and were stayed there temporary from the order of the king Khagemba and others like in Patsoi, Maklang, Makeng, Lamshang and besides the capital market area of Paona-Thangal Bazar areas of Imphal.

For instance, the office of Mangalshang/Pangal Shanglen was located within the complex of the Kangla Palace till 1765 as it was known from the chronicle that in 1680 when king Paikhomba was left the royal great palace for the invitee's house of Khunlakpa of Leimanai to drink, there was set alight after midnight and the fire was spread up to the Mangkan Institute building.^{xx} Again it was mentioned that the eight travelers including five Muslims from Gujarat were coming to Manipur and were allowed to settle down by giving wives in the Kangla complex of Sanglangmei, south of Kuchu Tholangmei by making the Mangalshang.^{xxi} Later, these people and other Pangal soldiers were rescued the king from the pre-planned of Tripura king to capture king in Gwai river bank of western border and defeated them.^{xxii} After the war, the king met them in the Mangalshang and came to be known as Mangal Mugol Khutsam.^{xxiii}

The Muslim soldiers were sent to Tekcham at the side of Khongjom to subdue the hill tribes and they decided to settle down there itself.^{xxiv} This was related to the raid of Tarao Maring in the south east where the Muslim soldiers under Shani defended the attacked and caught many Maring as captive prisoners and many Muslim soldiers were rewarded in land (known by Pangal lou^{xxv}, a form of Mana lou) and giving wives and some were settled down. The Muslim leaders who fought the battle were led by Mohamad Sani and other 15 warriors/commanders as follows: Lalmiyamba (Kamram), Kulsum, Akhong Athouba, Munan, Munawar Lanjingba, Arup Akanba, Chuleiya/Suleiya Athouba, Aman Lanjingba, Nampha Akanba, Kaitong Athouba, Tumya Akanba, Kamyia Athouba, Khemtao Akanba, Akong Athouba, etc. They were permitted to settle down in Singjamei and the rewarded land was given in Phubala field.^{xxvi} Again there was mentioned of Sahakusum, the brother of Muhamad Sani and the progenitor of Sajabam clan was returned back (1623) after caught by Kabui as slave for long time and through his brother Shani after sending team to find him and his son, he was allowed to settled down in Singjamei by giving a wife named Meitei woman, Melei.^{xxvii} Kusum lou rewarded by king Khagemba after Maring war was named after him. Again during Khagemba, one of the Muslim soldiers, Alkyatullah was settled down in Langthabal Leishangkhong Khongten Maril and his clan came to know as Leishangkhong.^{xxviii} In Charairongba's reign (1697-1709), two Muslims-Khoiju and Tonba were settled down in Leishangkhong^{xxix}



Another Muslim migrant name Jalalluddin was settled down in 1613 by guarded one of the Khagemba's pond in Kyangkhong (possibly either in southernmost nearby Laphupat Tera similar word Hiyangkhong is there or eastern part of the valley which today) and his descendants are known as Pukhrimayum (the settlement near the pond).^{xxx} The pond/canal was dug during Khagemba for fishing in Kyangkhong and he even went there to check it in 1613.^{xxxi}

Najara, the son of Muhamad Sani, after long time as the captives under of Kabuis when they travelled to Manipur after the battle of 1606 was brought by Nongsamei (after 2 years from arriving Kusum in 1623) as mentioned above and later adopted by him, was kept in the Apong Ingkhol along Shikhjali (later coming in 1679) by giving wives. Later they discovered or found a Kabrangchak plant in the area and were reared the kabrang worm and produced the beautiful thread from it that they were sent to Kameng land to settle first by sowing the Kabrangchak and produce its thread. They were returned during king Chararongba's reign.^{xxxii} Later Najara was settled at a place called Taothong, in present Lamshang and his descendants came to be known as Taothongmayum in Pamheiba's reign.^{xxxiii}

The progenitor of the Baseimayum clan was Musakalimullah. In 1653, seven people were migrated from the land of Pramiyo, west of the Tarf of Sylhet where four of them were Hindu Brahmin. On the western route through Takhel, they were attacked by Masubon Kabui and caught four of them including him and his brother's wife Fatima. Later his sister-in-law was sold as servant to other and he was runaway from their custody after three months and reached the Kangla. After joining and staying for some time with his family members-brother Isakrumulla and sister-in-law in Apong Ingkhol, king Khunjaoba received him as a good servant and handed over to a prince Ningthem Maibihanzabi to look after and later was given the Patsoi land. Ningthem again gave the land to Musakalimullah to look after by given his younger sister Kiyambi to him. As he was travelled daily to palace from Patsoi, the people started called him Patsoichaba, one who look after the land and then later to Patsoichabamayum, Pasoimayum, Paseimayum and finally Baseimayum. But according to Palace Pandits, the clan was called Bashimayum, one who played flute given by king Khagemba. The king was no more when he reached Manipur so the claim over flute was not taken. He also got another wife named Tellichanu Hongbi and got four children and also same number for first wife too.^{xxxiv} In Nongsamei Puya, he was also got married to Sampra Muhammad's Chinandi.^{xxxv}

After the liberation of Manipur from the Burmese invasion of 1819-1826, Barkootoolah/Tolen Ipham, the accompany of Gambhir Singh during his campaign, was appointed as the Qazi and was entitled to 'Mana Lou' and allowed to use one lake during his lifetime and named after him as Kazipat lying between present day Eastern Thongju Bashikhong-Kiyamgei Takhok. He was initially given the land in Maklang but due to

distance from Langthabal palace, later he was given the land near to it. Here in present, Kachikhul/Kazikhul village is located in Maklang Karong in Lamshang sub-division. He and other Pangals in the Manipur Levy were participated in defeating the Khasi rebellion and Ukhrul war which got the title Ukhrul Ngamba.^{xxxvi} Over the time and need of land and water, they moved further in the south-western valley through Thoubal side on the western branche/basin of the Loktak lake which provided the livelihood through cultivation and fishing in the areas. In this context, it is recorded to Nongshamei Puya, the royal chronicle about the establishment of new habitation area of village to the low lying area by king Khagemba by allowing the Cachari Muslim war captives. Such trend of extension of settlement area is also a device to reclaim more fresh land and makes to strengthen the kings power as well as state apparatus. The king's plan of the setting up Pangal (Muslim) village to the southern valley brought to tighten the kingdom's security and make an advancement in the sphere of agriculture.^{xxxvii}

Thus, the present settlement sites/villages in the district are remain intact after the invasion and made it a permanent settlement before the colonial period. All these villages are side by side settled with the neighbors Meitei villages from Hiyangthang to Konuma Hiyangkhong in the Mayai Lambi Road via Mayang Imphal and to Laphupat Tera Road via Sekmaijing which is surrounded by the Loktak lake basin o the west.

Sl	Name of the	2025	2011	200	199	198	197	196
1	Wangoi*				-	720	242	180
	Wangoi Muslim	86	144	128				
2	Oinam	325	852	740		460	719	528
3	Laku Huidrom					229	236	183
	Paobitek	540	316					
4	M.I. Bengul	1327		915		210	216	240
5	Uchiwa*		378	290		289	186	148
	Uchiwa Wangbal	195						
6	Phaogakchao*		358	253		149	139	738
		418						
7	Komlakhong*		238	353		115	100	604
		166						
8	Laphupat Tera*	4129	831	200		233	130	132
	Konuma	151						
9	Langthabal		941	851		560	413	303
	Tarahei Konjin	122						
10	Takhellambam		337	261		767	216	136
	Hiyangthang	32+33						
	Total Population		242	191	-			

Table 3: The Population of the villages settled by Meitei-Pangal in the district and * marked indicate the joint population of Meitei and Meitei-Pangal communities

**Hiyangthang:**

There are two separate hamlet in the area known by HiYangthang Pallak and HiYangthang Tarahei Konjil separated by the HiYangthang market. The settlement was began before the Anglo-Manipur War, 1891.^{xxxviii} The villages are divided into different census villages of Langthabal Phuramakhong (Tarahei Konjil+ Part of Pallak Konjin) under Naoria Pakhanglakpa assembly segment and Takhellambam Konjin (Pallak) under Wangoi assembly segment which shows the population in 1961 and 201 are respectively 303, 941 and 136, 337. Presently, there are 122 households in Tarahei Konjil and about 65 in undivided Pallak village. The villages are under the Wangoi sub-division and the HiYangthang Gram Panchayat having more than 1000 voters. HiYangthang Tarahei Konjin is the only full fledged villages in the northern portion of the district on the Mayai Lambi road surrounded by the Kabui villages of Langthabal on the north and east by the Heibok hill and on the same tract in south by Takhellambam Konjil and HiYangthang-Langthabal Phuramakhong on the west by the Meitei villages. In the HiYangthang GP 2 wards out of 10 wards are represented the two villages but only one represented the community in Tarahei Konjin as single Pangal village.

Oinam Sawombung:

The village is located about 13 km soouth of Imphal under the Wangoi sub-division on the Mayai Lambi Road solely inhabited by the Pangal community surrounded by the Meitei villages in the north and west by Samurou, on the east by Oinam Sawombung (Meitei under Thoubal district) separated by the Imphal river and on the south by Wangoi/Oinam Wangoi (Pangal village). In 1961 as one of the census village (might joined with Oinam Wangoi), it had a population of 528 persons with 99 households in 169.38 area of sq.mile/acre. But the village now, is under two town/Municipal Councils (earlier as Nagar Panchayat) of Samurou and Wangoi where each part of two are under them as each in ward no. 4. In 2011, there were 852 persons under part of Samurou NP and 1447 persons including Wangoi Muslim under part of Wangoi NP. But from the available data shows that there are about 325 households and more than 1500 voters (2/3rd households are belonged to Oinam Sawombung part of Wangoi Municipal Council) in the village forming a sizeable Pangal village. Coming to the settlement, the people of the village are claimed to lived there for many generations^{xxxix} but before 1891 is no doubt as the neighbouring Pangal villages of Lilong were expanded in search of or around water bodies and land for reclamation for agricultural practices. For instance, a Meitei from Oinam clan was converted into Muslim and he was also retained the same clan and the clan is today available in the Pangal society. It was during the reign of King Chandrakirti calling him as Oinam Mayum.^{xl}



Name of the GP	Name of the	Ward	Remark
Hiyangthang	Tarahei Konjil and	2/10	Ward
Uchiwa	Uchiwa Wangbal	1/6	Ward
Phoubakchao-	Phoubakchao-	3/7	Pradhan
Laphupat	Komlakhong-	3/8	Members
Komlakhong	Hvangkhong		

Table 4: The Pangal settlement in the Panchayat areas in southern portion of the district

Wangoi:

Just below or connected with Oinam Sawombung village on the Mayai Lambi Road and Imphal river, Oinam Wangoi/Wangoi Muslim is located in the Meitei dominated town of Wangoi which is currently under Wangoi Municipal Council (formerly Nagar Panchayat). It is under the Wangoi sub-division and Wangoi Asssembly segment. It has no separate census villager but either in Oinam Sawombung or Wangoi Top. Wangoi NP (now MC) has a population of 1289 in 2001 but increased to 1447 (15.89%) out of 9106 persons in 2011 which include a portion of Oinam Sawombung village under ward no. 4 only out of 8 wards. Presently, there are about 85 households in the Oinam Wangoi as only the urban population but the livelihood of the villagers are mainly cultivation, fishing and animal husbandry/livestocks.

Paobitek:

The village is also under the urban population of the district in Thongkhongluxmi Municipal Council (earlier NP) in ward no. 3 and 4 out of 11 wards. It is also under Wangoi sub-division and Wangoi Assembly constituency. The town has the Pangal population of 3168 persons (21.29%) out of total 14878 persons in 2011. Paobitek Mamang and Mayai Leikai are under ward no. 4 which has 1711 persons and Maning Leikai under ward no. 3 which has 1424 persons. Presently, there are 193 households in Paobitek Mamang Leikai, 182 in Mayai Leikai and 165 in Maning Leikai where the livelihood mostly depend on cultivation, fishing and animal husbandry/livestocks provided by the basin/branch of Loktak lake. There is no census village with the village name and so it might joined with the neighboring Meitei village Laku Huidrom/Yumnam Huidrom. Regarding the historical settlement of the village, earlier Muslim soldiers after the war of 1606 (invasion of Mayang land by Khuman principalities as mentioned earlier) were first kept in a place called Pangal Siphai in south valley which today existed in Paobitek village.^{xli}

Mayang Imphal:

Regarding the legacy of the name given to the area, the Bishnupriyas (locally known as Mayang Kalisa), were first settled at Mayang Yumpham (now known as Mayang Imphal). Later on, they spread to various areas in the valley, such as Khangabok, Ningthoukhong, Heirok^{xlii}, etc.^{xliii} According to Bormani Sarangthem, the Khuman king Thingohanba^{xliv} (1290-1310) along with his forces after thought of fighting with the Pangals (Muslims) invaded the mayangland Cachar by following and crossing the Khuga river and defeated Kalaraja, king of Mayang Kalisa. Many prisoners were brought to Manipur and kept at Khuman Kangla (the capital near today Mayang Imphal) and later instead of deport, they were allowed to settled by giving plots of land to construct their houses. The place was called Mayang Yumpham and finally diviated to Mayang Imphal.^{xlv} But, the royal chronicle was also mentioned about the Mayang Yumpham in 1636^{xlvi} and this means that the Mayang Thongnang/Cacharis were settled permanently in the valley after the battle of 1606 taken away from the mayang settlement areas of the hill ranges of the southwestern Ningthoukhong-Bishnupur areas following with the Muslim captives in the war. Again, the prisoners were kept in a place what we called Pangal Siphai located in the Mayai Lambi Road.^{xlvii} So around the same time by 1630, the settlement sites of Pangal were also spread on every part of the valley mostly in the south facilitated by availability of land and lakes for water, fishing and cultivation for survival due to the coming of peace in the valley and recognized as permanent subject of the kingdom for their worthiness services. Coming to the Pangal settlement in the area, an clarinet singer/Bengon player was allowed to settle in the Mayang Imphal for the services like Kshetri Bengoon which was popular till the reign of Nar Singh (1833-44 as regent, 1844-50 as king) and the area was came to known as Mayang Imphal Bengul.

In 1961, Bengul was an census village solely settled by the Meitei-Pangal with an area of 777.65 sq. mile of 441 households and 2403 (Male 1202, Female-1201) persons. In 2011, the village as part of M.I. Township, has a population of 9155 persons out of total 24239 under the urban population which made 37.77%. In the current Municipal Council, out of 13 wards, only three wards are allocated to the area. The village is currently under Wangoi sub-division and Mayang Imphal constituency. Except few in shopping/business, the villagers mostly depend on cultivation, fishing and animal husbandry for livelihood. The village has different hamlets as Bengoon Mamang Leikai, Loukok Leikai, Yangbi Leikai, Awang Leikai, Makha Leikai and Mayai Leikai of about 1327 households.

Uchiwa Wangbal:

After Mayang Imphal, the rural area under Wangoi sub-division started from Uchiwa which was dominated by the Meitei community. Uchiwa Wangbal is settled by the Pangal community connected to Mayang Imphal Bengoon via Imphal river route. In 1961, Uchiwa had an area of 531.61 sq.mile with a



population of 1487 persons in 270 households. In 2011, the village is having the population of 3783 persons of 740 households but in present, there are 195 households of 775 voters under the Uchiwa Wangbal solely settled by the Pangals. The village is under the Mayang-Imphal assembly segment and Uchiwa gram panchayat of the district having a ward member representing it.

Phoubakchao:

It is also located under the Wangoi sub-division and Phoubakchao Sekmaijin GP of Mayang Imphal constituency. In 1961, the village had an area of 425.50 sq.mile of 132 households with 738 persons but increased to 3588 with 670 households. One has to divert to Sekmaijin-Laphupat Tera Road via Sekmaijin on the Mayai Lambi Road to reach the village. Presently, there are 259 households in Phoubakchao Makha Leikai and 272 households in Awang leikai/hamlet where 113 households of the latter are belonged only the Meitei community. The village is dominated by the Pangal community with shared 3/4th of the total population. The cultivation, fishing and animal husbandry are dominating the livelihood of the population provided by the branch of the Loktak lake and fertile lands in multi-cropping system. The Pradhan/head of the Phoubakchao GP is represented by the Pangal where 3 of the 7 ward members are represented.

Komlakhong:

The village is located on the Sekmaijing-Laphupat Tera Road via Sekmaijing route on the Mayai Lambi Road from Imphal. Presently, there are 36 families/households in Komlakhong Awang Leikai, 9 families in Leirak manung, 121 households in Makha Leikai and no family in Mayai Leikai belonged to Meitei-Pangal's population. In 1961, there were 106 households with a population of 604 persons in 270.98 sq.mile while increased to 2385 persons of 452 households in 2011. The population of Pangal is dominated in Komlakhong Makha Leikai. The village is under Mayang Imphal constituency and Wangoi sub-division and Laphupat Komlakhong GP. Regarding the settlement of Komlakhong, it was commenced by the beginning of the 20th century about a hundred years ago.^{xlviii} The village is spread in two panchayats-Phoubakchao Komlakhong under Phoubakchao GP and Komlakhong Makha Leikai under Laphupat Komlakhong GP having representation in ward members (altogether three wards of 8 wards in Laphupat-Komlakhong GP belonged to Pangal;s village).

Hiyangkhong Konuma:

The village is located on the same route and the last village settled by the Pangals on the route or of the district. As the village is enrolled under Laphupat Tera Khunou, it might also include in the census village



of Laphupat Tera which lies in the south of Konuma and Komlakhong on the north while the Loktak Lake on the west and Imphal river on the east. In 1961, Laphupat had an area of 419.09 sq.mile with a population of 1323 persons of 199 households while in 2011, the population of the village is 4129 persons of 831 households. Presently, there are 151 households of 921 voters in the village. The village is under Mayang Imphal constituency and Laphupat Komlakhong GP having two representation as ward members as Laphupat Muslim Awang Leikai and Hyangkhong.

Conclusion:

The Pangals were settled earlier in around the Capital Kangla by the kings in 1600-1700 A.D. knowing their skills in warfare, agricultural and industrious activities which greatly helped during the time of peace and war. They were the defenders of the borders in all directions accompanying the kings during offensive and defensive against the kingdom of Tripua, Cachar and Burmese. They were also played an important role in the spread/formation of Manipuri diaspora in Northeastern India, Burma and Bangladesh and also in the formation of Manipur levy in Cachar to liberated from Burmese and fought against the British invasion of Manipur in 1891. On this, they were seen and touched the whole valley which later established their villages initially led by the king to protect the far flung areas from the raid of the hill tribes, diseases and wild animals, as well as for medics, witch/paranormal activities, royal grain keepers, guards in forts and villagers. So, earlier they were send out and rewarded the land in north-west region of Imphal-West district like Patsoi, Kameng, Kazikhul, Lamshang, Maklang by giving wives specially in 1600s and later moved south due to far away from Kangla making difficulty in administrative works, loneliness in the plain and hilly areas and difficulty in agricultural practices due to lack in manpower and water sources. They were also permitted to settled on the western side of Kangla for settlement in present market areas of Khwairamband Bazar and Singjamei areas on the south. After 17th century as the population of the Pangal increased, they were moved out of the capital and with the permission of the kings, they were moved to the places specially extreme south of the district along the Imphal rivers which has abundant land for agricultural and animal husbandry with easy access to water through canals which find today the villages of Oinam Sawombung, Wangoi, Mayang Imphal on the east. On the west, there were abundant of land which suitable for double cultivation and cropping, pisciculture, fishing, animal husbandry provided by the extension of the Eastern Loktak Lake thereby increasing the economic activities and livelihood which find today the villages of Paobitek, Uchiwa, Phoubakchao, Komlakhong and Laphupat Tera. Unlike the past, the villages are far away from the capital though they are connected by the nearby markets, they are lack behind in all the aspects of life thereby making an marginalized group in the district with lack in infrastructure development in



education, road connectivity, medical, banking facilities including loans, drinking water, etc. The areas are facing frequently the floods from Imphal river due to lack of river bank failure and rise of water level of the lake in rainy season which affected the agricultural, farming, fishing, animal husbandry and houses. It gives the major blow to the farmers who often loss their business and fail to meet the demands of fish and vegetables in the district where they are invested their saving and often borrowing from moneylenders and loans from banks. The majority of the Meitei-Pangal, in conclusion, in the district have alternative only to farming in agriculture, cropping, fishing and animal husbandry as the lack of jobs looming around the clock.

Endnotes and References:

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- ⁱ T.C. Hodson, *The Meiteis*, Akansha Publishing House, 2020 Reprint, New Delhi, 1908 p.53
- ⁱⁱ The term Mayangs was given to all the foreigners of the west of Manipur and later synonymous with the Bangal/Basa
- ⁱⁱⁱ The term Pangan is said to be derived from the Bangal in which Manipuri called to the people of Bengal and later assimilated as Pangal
- ^{iv} S.N.A. Parratt, *The Court Chronicle of the Kings of Manipur*, The Cheitharon Kumpapa, Volume I Routledge, London, 2005, p70
- ^v O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, *Nongsamei Puya*. Writers Union, Imphal, 1973, p.25
- ^{vi} Ibid p25-30
- ^{vii} B. Kullachandra Sharma, 1891 gi Mamangda Leiramba Meitei-Pangal (Manipuri Muslim) gi Phibam, Writer's Union, Imphal, 2010, p.17
- ^{viii} I.S. Akoijam, *Manipurby Kangleipakpu Manipur Kouragumsi*, Manipur Sahitya Samiti, 2009, p.92 ; S. Irene, *The Muslims of Manipur*. Kakpaz publication, 2010, p.40; O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.56. 26
- ^{ix} S. Irene, op.cit., p.40
- ^x Kullachandra Sharma and Badarruddin, *Meitei-Pangal Hourakpham*, Lainingthou Research Centre, Imphal, 1991, p.2-3: Lallup is a system that a compulsory service by individual to the king and kingdom between the age of 14 to 60



^{xi} Ibid.

^{xii} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p76-79

^{xiii} S.N.A. Parratt, op.cit., p.97

^{xiv} B.C. Allen, Gazetteer of Naga Hills and Manipur, Mittal Publications, New Delhi, 2015, p.135, 46

^{xv} M. Irabot Singh and S, Ibemhal Devi, Thainage Manipur Amasung Mayang Thokrakpa, Imphal, 1995, p.145

^{xvi} Census of 1961: Out of 10000 persons in Manipur, Muslims represented 513 proportion and total population was 445606 in 1931

^{xvii} Census of 1961: Out of 10000 persons in Manipur, Muslims represented 577 proportion and total population was 512069 in 1941

^{xviii} Census of India 2001, The First Report on Religion Data Abstract, Registrar General and Census Commissioner, India.

^{xix} S. Bormani, Meitei Ningthourol, BORASA Publication, Imphal, 1975 (8 Edition, 2018), p.71

^{xx} S.N.A. Parratt, op.cit., p.97

^{xxi} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.76; R.K. Sanahal, Pangal Thorakpa, Liberty Publishing Association, Imphal , 1985, p.47

^{xxii} S.N.A. Parratt, op.cit., p.97 mentioned as it was reported that the Mayangs were defeated by the people associated with Mangkan.

^{xxiii} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit. 79; R.K. Sanahal, op.cit., p.49

^{xxiv} S. Irene, op.cit., p.34, 35, 41; O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.57-62

^{xxv} The rewarded land was holding by many Pangals more than 200 numbers in 1891-S. Irene, op.cit., p.115

^{xxvi} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.54, 62; Kh Kheiruddin, Tarko-Afghange Chada Naoda, Imphal, 1997op.cit., p.35-36



- ^{xxviii} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.51-54; Kullachandra Sharma and Badarruddin, op.cit., p.83-84; M. Salim and S.M. Sheikh, *Meitei Pangalsinggi Yumnak Sagei amasung Chatnaramba Wayel Pathap*, Writer's Union, Imphal, 2021, op.cit., p.11
- ^{xxviii} Kullachandra Sharma and Badarruddin, op.cit., p.86; M. Salim and S.M. Sheikh, op.cit., p.28
- ^{xxix} The place is in the western side of present between Kiyamgei-Thongju/Kiyamgei Canchipur and Imphal river according to Kh Kheiruddin, op.cit., p.49
- ^{xxx} Kullachandra Sharma and Badarruddin, op.cit., p.81; M. Salim and S.M. Sheikh, op.cit., p.25
- ^{xxxi} S.N.A. Parratt, op.cit., p.103
- ^{xxxii} Ibid.; O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.55-57, 73; M. Irabot Singh and S. Ibemhal Devi, op.cit., p.144
- ^{xxxiii} Kullachandra Sharma and Badarruddin, op.cit., p.138-139; M. Salim and S.M. Sheikh, op.cit., p.11
- ^{xxxiv} Singh and Epham, p.64-67; Sharma and Badaruddin, p.77-78; Salim and Sheikh, op.cit., p.15; Kh Kheiruddin, op.cit., p.154; Nazir Ahamad, 'The Muslims in Manipur: A Study in their history and Culture', Unpublished Thesis, Manipur University, 2013: <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/39985>, p.101
- ^{xxxv} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.35
- ^{xxxvi} O. Bhogeshore Singh and M.A. Janab Epham, op.cit., p.127-28; Kullachandra Sharma and Badarruddin, op.cit., p.9-11; Kh Kheiruddin, op.cit., p.48-49; Abu Nasar S.A., *Islamic Heritage in India's Northeast: Assam and Manipur*, New Delhi, 2018, p.186
- ^{xxxvii} H. Nilakant Singh, Village Community in Manipur, JETIR, Vo. I, Issue 7, 2014.
- ^{xxxviii} Meitei-Pangal celebrates 140 years of settlement at Hiyangthang Tarahei Konjin- e-pao.net date Oct 12, 2024
- ^{xxxix} Census of India, 1971, Series 12 , Vol XXII of 1961, Manipur, Part VI-C Socio-Economic Survey (No. 9 of 1961 Series) Oinam Sawombung (A Muslim Village), Office of the Superintendent of Census Operations, Manipur.
- ^{xl} Kullachandra Sharma and Badaruudin, op.cit., p.117; Salim and Sheikh, op.cit., p.30; Nazir Ahamad, op.cit., p.101; Kheiruddin, op.cit., p.142- Also it is derived from Yanglem Khubam Mayum to Yangkhubam;

T. Subhas Singh, 'Socio-Economic Condition of the Manipuri Muslims in Pre-Colonial Manipur, Doctoral Thesis, Manipur University, 2007p.57; The same was mentioned by Palace Pandits and the Muhammedan Panchayat.

^{xli} S. Bormani, op.cit., p.71

^{xlii} S.N.A. Parratt, op.cit., p.173

^{xliii} Wangkhemcha Chingtamlen, The Meetei and The Bishnupriya, 2nd Edition, KHCRC, Sagolband, 1999 (2009), p.9; J.B. Bhattacharjee, (ed.), State and Economy in Pre-Colonial Manipur, Akansha Publishing House, New Delhi, 2010, p.111

^{xliv} Cited from Ningthourol Lambuba, W. Ibohal Singh's The History of Manipur (p.153) mentioned he was raided the Pasha/Basha village belonged to Mayang tribes o the southern hills of Laimatol range which had been present by settlement by the beginning of of the 13th century.

^{xlv} Dr. Kh. Kunjo Singh (translated), Lammtlon (Toponymy), Borasa Publication, Imphal, 2020, p.81

^{xlvi} S.N.A. Parratt, op.cit., p.81

^{xlvii} Dr. Kh. Kunjo Singh, op.cit., p.73

^{xlviii} S. Irene, op.cit., p.41-42