

P. R. Baby
Foundation
Faithcity



Impacting Lives
Advancing Communities



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The Garos are a Tibeto-Burman ethnic group from the Indian subcontinent found in the Indian states of Meghalaya, Assam, Tripura, Nagaland, and some neighboring areas of Bangladesh mainly Madhupur, Mymensingh, Netrokona, Jamalpur, Sherpur Sylhet, and Rangamati.

They call themselves A·chik means "hill people". The name "Garo" is given to them and used by non-Garos. Historically, the Garo name was used for a wide range of people in the southern bank of Brahmaputra but today, Garo means Hill tribes who call themselves A'chik. They are the second-largest tribe in Meghalaya after the Khasi and comprise about a third of the local population. The Garos are one of the few remaining matrilineal (based on kinship with the mother or the female line) societies in the world.

Religion & belief

A large part of the Garo community follows Christianity, with some rural pockets practicing the traditional animist religion known as Songsarek. The book *The Garo Ancestors Religion and Beliefs* tries to interpret and expound on the origin and migration of the Garos consisting of Indigenous groups who settled in the Garo Hills and their ancient animistic religious beliefs and practices: deities who must be appeased with rituals, ceremonies, and animal sacrifices to ensure the welfare of the tribe. Rev Ramke W. Momin was the first devout Christian from among the Garos. Rev Ramke W. Momin was born in Goalpara, Assam, India, sometime in 1820.

Geographical Distribution

The Garos are mainly distributed over the Garo Hills, Khasi Hills, Ri-Bhoi Districts in Meghalaya, Kamrup, Goalpara, Sivasagar, Karbi Anglong districts of Assam, Khasi Hills in Meghalaya and Dimapur (Nagaland State), lesser numbers (about 200,000) are found in Mymensingh (Jamalpur, Sherpur, Netrokona, Mymensingh) and capital Dhaka, Sylhet, and Moulovi bazaar districts of Bangladesh. Garos form minorities in Cooch Behar, Jalpaiguri, Darjeeling, and West Dinajpur of West Bengal.

Historical accounts

Garos first immigrated to Garo Hills from Tibet (referred to as Tibotgre) around 400 BC under the leadership of Jappa Jalimpa, crossing the Brahmaputra River and tentatively settling in the river valley. The Garos finally settled down in Garo Hills (East-West Garo Hills), finding providence and security in this uncharted territory and claiming it as their own. Records of the tribe by invading Mughal armies and by East India Company officials in what is now Bangladesh wrote of the brutality of the people.

The earliest written records about the Garo date from around 1800, and were written by officials of the East India Company. They were looked upon as bloodthirsty savages, who inhabited a tract of hills covered with an almost impenetrable jungle. The climate was considered so deadly as to make it impossible for a white man to live there.

In December 1872, the British Raj dispatched a military expedition to Garo Hills to establish control over the region. The campaign was conducted from three sides – south, east, and west. The Garo warriors (matgriks) confronted them at the Battle of Rongrenggre equipped with spears, swords, and shields. They were defeated in the engagement, as the Garos did not have guns or mortars like the British Indian Army.

Culture

The Garos are one of the few remaining matrilineal societies in the world. The individuals take their clan titles from their mothers. Traditionally, the youngest daughter (nokmechik) inherits the property from her mother. Sons leave their parents' house at puberty and are trained in the village bachelor dormitory (nokpante). After getting married, the man lives in his wife's house.



MISSION UPDATES

February 2023

General Convention

Churches formed by Faithcity A.chik mission, Meghalaya is affiliated under Church of God (Full Gospel) North Eastern Region, Kolkata. All the Churches from Meghalaya had participated in the general convention held from 09/02/2023 to 12/02/2023 at Kolkata. It was a great blessing for the participants.



Dr. Giby Raphael Associate Pastor, Faithcity Church, Kochi was one of the speakers in the General Convention. This was his first mission trip to North India. He had delivered powerful messages in the convention.



Interaction with participants who came from Faithcity A.chik Revival Church Meghalaya. Discussed in detail about mission plans for 2023 in Garo hills.



Faithcity A.chik Revival Church, Garo Hills, Meghalaya



Faithcity A.chik Revival Church at Rongripal, Bagmara of South Garo Hill District of Meghalaya Visited by Pr. Benny John, Regional Overseer, Church of God (FG) North Eastern Region & Sis. Sherly

Started construction of the new Church in Moradam Village in Baghmara of South Garo Hill District of Meghalaya. Planning to complete the construction by March 2023.



Started construction of the new Church in Williamnagar of East Garo Hill District of Meghalaya. Planning to complete the construction by March 2023.





Faithcity A.chik Revival Church members singing a Garo song in the general Convention February 2023

Honored by Pr. Benny John, Regional Overseer, Church Of God (FG) North Eastern Region in the general convention February 2023

Upcoming Campaigns in Garo Hills

SAY NO TO DRUGS

Freedom through **JESUS CHRIST**

SAY YES TO JESUS

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Campaign against the use of drugs is planned in all Garo hill district of Meghalaya in February & March 2023.

Bro. Biju Pappachen & Bro. Stanly from Kerala has reached Garo hills for the campaign. Music, skits & messages are included in the campaign.



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