

History and Development of Limboo Language



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J.R. Subba

Preface

“Sikkim Academi” had given me an assignment to contribute an article on “History and Development of Limboo Language” for “Sikkim Academi Journal”. While preparing this article I came across a number of references which I thought to be useful to the readers, but some of these aspects were beyond the scope of accomodating in this article. In the process, I thought this text to be published in the booklet form so as to benefit the vast non-limboo readers also.

In this text, I have also discussed about Limboo language morphology, Sentence and Grammar, and some suggestion for Limboo Language development activities.

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Chapter - I

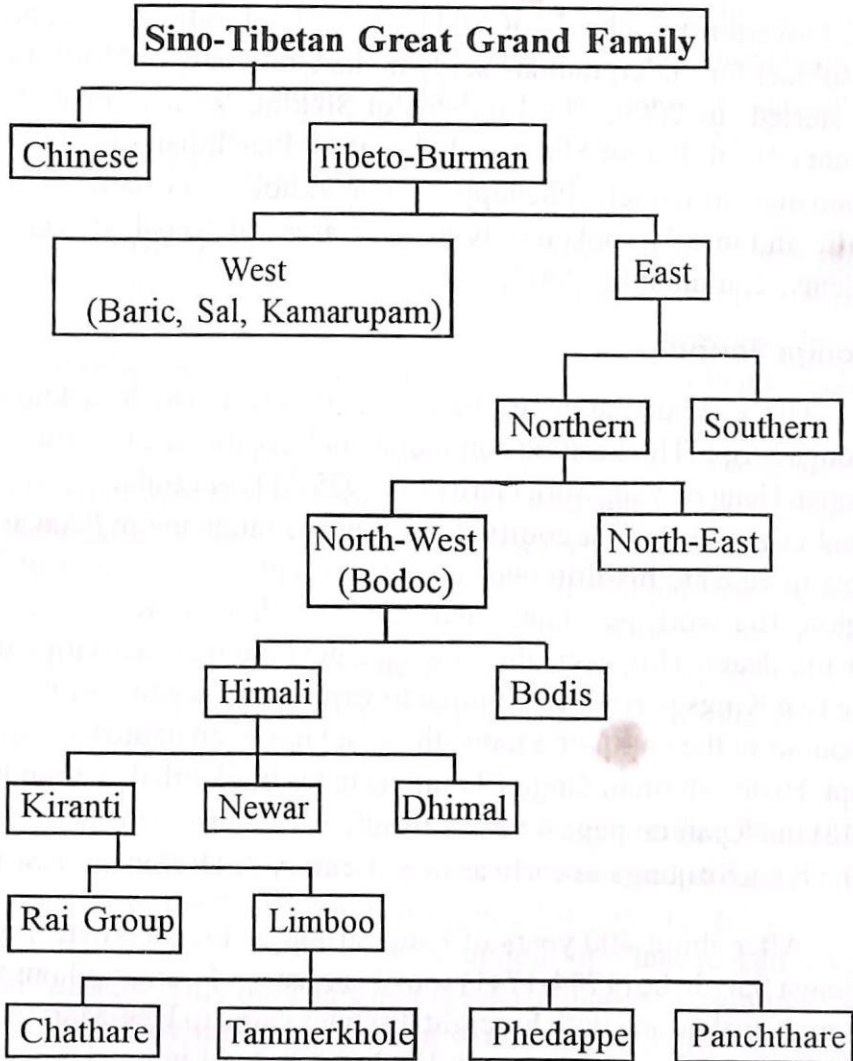
HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF LIMBOO LANGUAGE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SIKKIM AND OTHER STATES IN INDIA

Man is the most wonderful creation of God. He is a perfect creation with self-respect, love, knowledge, intelligence, kindness and consciousness qualities bestowed on him. Language has been discovered as a medium to express the feelings of human mind since time immemorial. To preserve his conscious feelings, he discovered alphabets and words. The intelligent and influential people can develop their language and literature to improve the quality of life of their community, society and the country as a whole. Development of economic prosperity and administrative aspects of a society depends on the development of language and literature. A strong political patronage is essential to provide a linkage between the language development activities with the economic activity of that particular community. The development of Limboo language and literature in Sikkim and other states of India today, is a result of a strong support of the State Government, and dedication of a number of intellectuals right from the Ninth Century to this date. The various dedicated intellectuals contributed and even sacrificed their lives for the development of this language in different times is described in brief in this chapter.

Limboo is one of the official language out of the eleven languages recognized by the Government of Sikkim on 31st March, 1981. It is widely spoken by about two lakh people of India mostly in the State of Sikkim, hill areas of West Bengal, Assam and other North-Eastern States. About six lakh Limboo people speak this language in the world scattered throughout India, Nepal, Bhutan, Honkong, Singapore, Mayamar, Brunoi, Canada, UK and other parts of the world.

Classification:

Limboo has been classified under Sino-Tibetan Great Grand Family. The linguists find very difficult to classify the languages of this family and feel that satisfactory classification of Tibeto-Burman languages of Sino-Tibetan Great Grand Family is not possible. From a very ancient time the dialects of this group of languages have been bifurcated in such a way that any classification of this group of languages will only be a workable solution. Dahal, G.P.(1998, Nirman, pp.19-20) is of the opinion that, lack of in-depth study of the Tibeto-Burman languages have been a stumbling block for proper classification of these languages. Grierson, G.A. (1909) has classified these languages on the basis of phonetics, words and grammar but a number of changes has been made later on by the other linguists . Shafar's (1966-73), Benedict (1972) and Hale (1982) also classified these languages. Matisoff (1978) is of the opinion that the correct classification of this language is possible only through circular arrangement. Dahal (1998, Nirman, pp. 25) following Matisoff's suggestion tried to classify on the basis of Ballv Mani (1980, pp.32) and Hale (1982 pp.14) in a circular arrangement (J.R.Subba 1999). In brief the following abstract has been adopted from "Limbu-Nepali-English Dictionary" edited by the learned Editors of the Dictionary, published by Royal Nepal Academy, Kathmandu (2002).



The Limboo language spoken in Sikkim and other states of India is Panchthare and has been recognized as standard dialect of the limboo community. Writing, publication, reading, media, non-formal and formal education in the schools and colleges and all the limboo language development activities are being done in this dialect. Limboo language as optional subject in the schools of Sikkim was started in 1968, which was upgraded to formal education as the first vernacular or mother tongue

in the Government schools of Sikkim in 1975. Limboo language as a core subject for undergraduate study in the University of North Bengal was started in 2000. The Limboos of Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam and other North Eastern States of India speak Panchthare dialect. Other Limboo dialects namely Phedappe, Tammarkhole and Chathare are area specific and mostly spoken only in some areas of Nepal (Royal Nepal Academy, Kathmandu, 2002).

Sirijonga Script:

The Limboo language has its own script which is known as Sirijonga script. The Limboo community believe that the historical King Sirijonga Hang of Yangwork Garh (882 –925 AD) of Limbuwana country (Nepal at present), first codified the Limboo language in “Aakaranta” scripts to educate his illiterate subjects through the teachings of Yuma religion. His work was continued by his brother the King Yongjonga after his death. However, the language development activities during these two Kings period was limited to writing and reading of the script. In honour of the codifyer’s name the script has been named as Sirijonga Script. Historian Iman Singh Chemjong in his book titled “Kirant Itihas” (1948) in Nepali on page 41 & 42 mentions that the script was invented by the King Sirijonga as early as in 9th Century A.D. (Subba, P.S. 1997).

After about 800 years of King Sirijonga, his incarnate Teyongsi Sirijonga Singthebe (1704-1741) son of Isirihang of Yangrupthum Sinam, present Nepal, along with his eight disciples came to Hee-Martam, West Sikkim, via Chewa-bhanjyang in 1740 and started Limboo language and Yuma Mundhum teaching in Sikkim (Chemjong, I.S. 1973, Subba, R.B. 1998).

In 1642, a Tripartite Agreement of “Lho-Men-Tsong-Sum” was signed between the Bhutia, Lepcha and Tsong (Limboo) and had pledge to have one destiny and one country, one King and one administration. Consequently, the Country (Greater Sikkim) came to existence in 1642 A.D. Then, Sir Phuntsog Namgyal (1604 – 1670) was consecrated as the first Chyogyal (Spiritual and Temporal King) of Sikkim. The King

Sir Tensung Namgyal (1644-1700) married a Limbuni Queen Thungwa Mukma daughter of Yonyang from Arun Kosi and strengthened his kingdom. On the wise advise of Lhatsun Chhempo, he constructed a Monastery at Sangachiling in 1697 and started Buddhist teaching school for Lepchas and Limboos (Subba, J.R. 1999).

Once, Sirijonga Teyongsi started teaching Limboo language and Yuma Mundhum at Hee-Martam, the Limboos stopped going to Sangacholing Monastery as they came to know that they had their own script and religion. This irritated the Thasang Lamas of Pemiongchi and they assassinated Teyongsi Sirijonga at the confluence of Kalej Khola at Martam in 1741. During this short period, Teyongsi Sirionga revived, modified the Limboo Scripts of King Sirijonga and taught the Limboos of West Sikkim to read and write Sirijonga script. He dedicated his life for the spread of the Limboo script in Sikkim and Nepal, and has become an inspiration to the entire Limboo community of the world for revival of Limboo language development and promotion work started by the Sirijonga Hang of 9th Century (Chemjong, I.S.1973, Subba, R.B.1998, J.R.Subba 1999).

Shri P.S.Subba's (APATAN) (1997) view is that "the original Limboo script codified by the King Sirijonga consisted of long sounding letters similar to the Tibetan alphabets like ka, k^ha, g^ha, ta etc. and in order to make letters short sounded, one had to add a vowel symbol 'amma'. This indicates that the script had its origin in Tibet or was influenced by the Tibetan script. Another peculiarity of the script was that it consisted of only 20 big letters and 10 small letters (half sounded letters) then, during the time of Sirijonga the King. In contrast, the Teyongsi Sirijonga alphabets have been modified to consist of 31 big and 11 small letters. In the original 9th Century alphabets, a few letters took two sounds as per the consistency in the sentence and therefore, probably there were less letters in the alphabets then. The basic reason why the two Sirijongas may have had to differ in the number of alphabets is probably due to the difference in their approach to solving the peculiar characteristics of the syllable when two words are joined

together to form one word. For instance the word 'kək' becomes 'gək' in the combined single independent word 'siŋ-gək'. Like-wise the word 't^hak' becomes 'd^hak' in the word 'luŋd^hak', and 'cama' becomes 'dzama' in the word 'cadzama'. King Sirijonga may have proposed to use the same letters for these sounds and was left to the reader to pronounce the syllable as per the situation in the word. Whereas, Teyongsi Sirijonga added more letters to represent the change of sounds. These additions are 'ga', 'g^ha', 'dza', 'd^ha', 'ba', and 'b^ha'. Here, it is noteworthy to mention that in the Limboo language vocabulary, not a single word begins with these letters and they have not found any place in Limboo dictionary to date. Therefore, it is logical to assume that Sirijonga the King may have thought them unnecessary. However, it is strange that no records both historical or archaeological, regarding this script of any kind has been found relating to the period between the two Sirijongas. Here the first question that strikes the mind is, how then did this script survived this long period of about eight hundred years. Further, it is not known when the 'aakaranta" scripts of Sirijonga Hang has been modified to 'akaranta" scripts".

At the time of assassination of Sirijonga Teyongsi, Sikkim administration was for sometime with Tamding Gyalpo who revolted against the King Gyurmed Namgyal (1717-1734) and later Rabden Sherpa sent by the Tibet Government. They took the entire administration of Sikkim for a period of about ten years (1735 to 1744)(Risley, H.H. 1894). The Bhutia administration of Rabden Sherpa prohibited reading and writing of limboo script and limboo literature (Chemjong, I.S. 1948). The administration spread a message among the Limboos as follows:

“wa rɛ k^humma wa k^hɔŋgi,
 p^hak? rɛ k^humma p^hak? toŋgi,
 sirijonga yakthuŋ sapla kɛdzokpa papmenloo,
 harj rɛ amset? loo”.

(Fowls are tamed with fowl-cages, pigs are tamed with pig-neck yoke, Sirijonga is a teacher of Limboo language and literature should not be discussed, otherwise the Administration will award capital punishment).

Thus, the Thasang Lamas and Sikkim Administration assassinated not only Teyongsi Sirijonga and his eight disciples in Sikkim but also completely prohibited Limboo language development activities after 1741 to 1914 (about 173 years) in Sikkim. This is perhaps the most unfortunate part in the history of Limboo language development in Sikkim.

By 1914-15, the Sirijonga script had almost disappeared and forgotten by the Limboo Community in Sikkim. In 1914-15, after about 173 years of Teyongsi Sirijonga (1704-41), late Lalshor Sendang s/o Hangbir at the age of 75-76 years came to Thambong and Daramdin, West Sikkim via Samandin village and met senior limboo citizens. He was born in 1840 at Athrai of Nepal. As a boy he was a religious minded and learnt to read and write from his father's hidden religious Yuma Mundhum books as Limboo language reading and writing was also prohibited by Nepal Administration during that period. He went around the villages at Daramdin, Thambong, Tikpur, Lungchok and Tharpu to taught Limboo language, Sirijonga script reading and writing, limboo proverbs and limboo Yuma Mundhums in Sirijonga Script for about ten years (1914-1924). Sikkim was under the protectorate of East India Company, and hence there was no restriction to learn Limboo language during that time. However, most of the Limboos of Sikkim were illiterate during that time and as such they could not learn much about what he taught. Some of his students were Ashraj Kerung Thegim, Dhanrup Kerung Thegim and Runshor Kerung Thegim of Siktam, Dal Bahadur Lingden, Bom Bahadur Kurumbang and Phawindra Ijaba of Daramdin, Indraman, Phejong Nembang and Dal Raj Muktiyar Kurumbang of Thambong and Indrabir Maden Khewa of Tharpu (Subba, P.S. 1982).

Lalshor Sendang is the man who again revived Limboo language development activities of Sirijonga Script reading and writing, Limboo

proverbs and Limboo Mundhum recitation started by Teyongsi Sirijonga in 1740-41 in Sikkim after about 173 years of Teyongsi Sirijonga's assassination. Thus, Sendang's contribution for reviving Limboo language development in Sikkim is of paramount importance.

Later at the age of 84 years in 1924, he went to Kalimpong, West Bengal on the request of the Limboos of Kalimpong to teach Sirijonga Script. Jas Bahadur Limboo of Kalimpong came to Sikkim and accompanied Lalshor Sendang for Kalimpong. At Kalimpong he was requested to write down the entire Limboo Scripts, Limboo Khahun, Limboo Yuma Mundhum etc. he knew. He spent about one year and three months at Kalimpong and taught Sirijonga Script to Late Iman Singh Chemjong and many others. On his initiative and encouragement in July 1925, Maita Singh Thegim of Dunga Busty, Kalimpong, organized a meeting of the Limboos and formed the first literary organization of Limboo Community in the history and named "Yakthung Hang Chumlung". The executive members of the Chumlung were Budhiman Singh Chemjong, Jas Bahadur Songbangbhe, Harkadal Bokhim, Jit Bahadur Thegim, Hangsraj Thegim, Dhanraj Phenduwa, Kulhang Chemjong, Nirmal Ogling and Iman Sing Chemjong. The organization actively participated in the development of limboo language by learning reading and writing of Sirijonga Script from Lalshor Sendang. The organization established correspondence with the Limboos of Nepal, Sikkim, Dehradun, Assam, Bhutan and Quita and collected information, manuscripts etc. In 1927 the Chumlung sent Nirmal Limboo to Athrai, Phedapthum and collected two old Limboo Scripts. They collected three from Sikkim and two from Kalimpong. Lalshor Sendang, 84 years old was the driving force behind the organization. The Chumlung used to have monthly meeting to review the progress of Language development activities (Chemjong, I.S. 1973, Subba, P.S. 1982).

In 1926, he left for Assam, where due to his old age he could not do much work over there. He passed away when he was at his second daughter's house Hang Moti at Jogikhop, Assam after a short period of his arrival due to heart ailment (Subba, P.S. 1982).

During 1938, Inspector Lalsing Subba established a Jambok Memorial School for the children and also to study limboo language in the sweet memory of his late son Jambok on the land donated to Chumlung by Sardar Maita Singh in 1931. This is the first Limboo School in the history of Limboo language development. However, the school could not do much progress in Limboo language education as there was no support of the West Bengal Government and the activity remained at low profile. Iman Singh Chemjong(1904-1976) son of Maghbir Singh met Late Subedar Bajbir Tholong of Sitapur Village, North Burma (Mayamar) in 1928 at Kolkata when he was studding I.A. and taught Sirijonga Script for three months. He is the first man to publish a Limboo Primary Book in the history of Limboo language development known as "Tum Yakthung Ningwaphu Sapla" from Kolkata. He printed out 2000 copies through Lithograph in Limboo and Nepali in 1928 and distributed to all the Gorkha platoons in India and Burma. After going to Mayamar he opened a Branch of Chumlung organization of Kalimpong and started Limboo language development activities there (Chemjong, I.S. 1956, '73).

In 1929, Nirmal Limboo and Jiwan Das Rai published the second edition of Tholong's book and distributed to the Limboos of all the areas of Sikkim, West Bengal, Assam, Burma and Nepal. In 1930, Ika Bahadur Sereng and C.B.Rai Sangwa of Darjeeling, published the third edition of this book and distributed in Nepal, Sikkim and Bhutan. Ser Bahadur Meyonhang and Mohan Lall Hangom published a book "Kirant Varnamala" and made effort to disseminate Limboo language reading and writing (Chemjong, I.S. 1956, '73).

Triggered by the presence of Lalshor Sendang, the establishment of "Yakthung Hang Chumlung" at Kalimpong in 1925 was a milestone in the organized movement for the development of Limboo language.

In 1930, a Clumlung Branch was established at Nor Basti, Karmi Estate where Kalu Sing Papo and Nar Bir Ijam opened a primary school and started spreading Limboo language. Kalu Singh Papo also published

district. During his Revenue Inspector tenure his jurisdiction covered most of the Limboo populated areas of Sikkim. Along with his duty he used to go to Limboo villages and used to teach Sirijonga Script to the people. During that period he also came across with late Run Bahadur Phago of Pechrek, West Sikkim. He was serving as a teacher at Hee School. After coming in contact with Chemjong, Run Bahadur Phago also actively took part in spread of Sirijonga Script (Subba, J.R. 2002).

The movement of India's independence got breakthrough in 1947. India became an Independent Country. This has influenced the people of Sikkim also. At the end of 1947 different political parties came into existence in Sikkim. Sikkim State Congress lead by late Tashi Tshering from Gangtok, Praja Sudharak Samaj lead by late Gobardhan Pradhan and Dhan Bahadur Tiwari of Temi, Praja Sammelan of Chakung lead by Shri Lhendup Dorjee of Chakung and National Party lead backed by the Maharaja of Sikkim. There was an agitation in December 1948-49 resulting a 29 days democratic Government headed by the Chief Minister Late Tashi Shering.

In 1948, Chemjong published his book "Kirant Itihas". The book was considered a threat to the Sikkim Maharaja Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963). As a result, both I.S.Chemjong and R.B.Phago had to leave Sikkim to escape their arrest for Nepal in 1952 leaving their job. The second edition of "Kirant Itihas" was published in 1952 and third edition in 1982 (Chemjong, I.S. 1956, '73).

During winter of 1951, Late I. S. Chemjong, late Man Bahadur Khamdhak and Padam Singh Subba from Gangtok, Sikkim, published Limboo Language Primary Book "Tum Yakthung Ninwabhu Sapla" and distributed to the Limboos of different places of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Assam and Nepal. This book is considered to be the first Limboo Language primary textbook published from Sikkim (Subba, J.R. 2002).

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In 1953 Iman Singh Chemjong has been elected president of the Limboo Literary Chumlung of Nepal.

In 1953, the first election of Sikkim was held but not a single limboo candidate was elected. Late Bharnadhoj Limboo of Tijyak, late Lallman Singh Subba of Lingchom, late Tilok Singh Limboo of Timburbong, late Damber Singh Limboo of Darap, late Thar Singh Limboo of Sakyong, and late Indra Prasad Limboo of Bandukey approached Chogyal Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963) of Sikkim for reservation of Limboo Seat in the Council of Ministers in Sikkim Darwar and starting formal education in the Schools of Sikkim (Subba, J.R. 2002).

In 1955 Prof. R.K.Sprigg of Oxford University, London, in-charge of Asian and African Studies, observed 14 numbers of the manuscripts collected by Hodgson in 1940s and safely preserved in the Indian Office Library, London and came to Nepal with some of its photocopies to find out a person who could read and explain the contents of this old manuscripts of this vanishing language. He met Col. B.B.Chemjong and Til Bahadur Luxom Limboo at Kathmandu, Nepal. They suggested him the name of Shri Kaziman Kandangwa of Gum Busty, Darjeeling. Kaziman Kandangwa could not read the photocopies of this old manuscript when approached by Dr. Sprigg and suggested to go to Iman Singh Chemjong, who was at Ilam, Nepal during that period. Dr. Sprigg, now came to Dungra Busty Jambok Memorial Chumlung School, met Captain Kaimbir Limboo, President of the Chumlung but none could read the old manuscript. Budhiman Singh Chemjong also suggested the name of I.S.Chemjong who was at Ilam. Dr. Sprigg came to Gangtok, Sikkim and met T.D.Densapa and show the manuscript. He told him that I.S.Chemjong was Revenue Inspector in Sikkim till 1952, but now he left, used to read and write such type of manuscripts. Dr Sprigg was now certain that only I.S.Chemjong may be able to read the manuscript that he has brought from London. Now, he came to Himalayan Hotel, Kalimpong, obtained a correct address of I.S.Chemjong and wrote a letter requesting him to come to Kalimpong urgently. On receipt of the letter, Chemjong came to Kalimpong, met Dr. Sprigg, read the

of Limboo Language with conjoint letters from Kathmandu and distributed to Sikkim, Nepal, Darjeeling, Kalimpong, Burma, Malaya, and Singapore. Man Bahadur Maden Sereng of Burma appreciated this work and he started teaching limboo language with conjoint letters in Burma (Chemjong, I.S. 1956, '73).

Meanwhile, the second general election of Sikkim took place in 1958. As in the general election of 1953, not a single Limboo candidate could represent the Council of Ministers in Sikkim Darbar. The Limboo representatives late Bharna Dhoj Limboo, late Lallman Limboo, late Indra Prasad Limboo, late Tilok Sing Nugo, late Harka Dhoj Limboo and others, once again requested the Chogyal of Sikkim to provide a Limboo Community representative in his council of Ministers. This time, the Chogyal Tashi Namgyal (1893-1963) agreed their request and nominated late Indra Prasad Limboo (Sawaden) of Bandukey in the Council of Ministers of Sikkim Darwar in 1958 (Subba, J.R. 2002).

I.S.Chemjong was appointed as Specialist in the Department of Kiranti Language and Culture in Tribhuvan University Kathmandu, Nepal in 1961. He continued to publish books from Kathmandu. He published "Kirant Sahitya Ko Itihas" in 1955. He visited various villages of Nepal, taught Limboo language, collected Limboo words which lead to the publication of "Limbu-Nepali-English Dictionary" from Kathmandu in 1961. He also published "Kirant Folklore", and "Kirant Mundhum" in 1961, "Kirant Mundhum Khahun" in 1965, "Kirant History and Culture" in 1967, "Kirant Darshan Ko Saransh" in 1969, "Lepcha-Nepali-English Dictionary" in 1969 and "Bijayapur Ko Itihas" in 1974. He worked there upto 1975. After his retirement, he came to Darjeeling and breath his last on 8th October 1976 due to heart ailment (Limboo, G.I. & Yonghang, N.B. 1994).

In 1963, an organization known as "Akhil Burma Kirant Sangh" was formed collectively by Harka Bahadur Rai, Harsha Bahadur Rai, Gyan Bahadur Limboo, Krishna Bahadur Rai, Rum Bahadur Limboo, Nardhoj Limboo and Man Bahadur Maden Sereng, and disseminated

Limboo language and literature. During this period Shri Phipraj Khewa, Padam Singh Sawaden of Uttarey, Lallman Nugo of Lingchom, Prithiviraj Khewa of Bandukey, Chandra Mangyung of Samdong, West Sikkim extensively propagated Limboo language and literature. Prithivi Raj Khewa also established a Limboo Library at Bondukey, West Sikkim (Chemjong, I.S. 1956, '73).

Third General Election of Sikkim was held in Sikkim in 1967. The Sikkim Government had reserved a Limboo seat out of 24 member seats in the council of Ministers. Late Harka Dhoj Subba of Samdong was elected as representative of the Limboo Community this time. Harka Dhoj Subba after he became Councilor in the Council of Ministers in Sikkim Darwar, requested the Chogyal Palden Thondup Namgyal (1923-1982) for providing formal Limboo Language Education in the Schools of Sikkim. The Chogyal approved Limboo language study as an optional subject in the schools of Sikkim for the first time in the history of Limboos in 1968, and gave protection allowing the Limboo students to take Limboo language up to Class II as an optional subject. Accordingly, the first Limboo language teacher late Itcha Purna Das Subba of Samdong, West Sikkim, was appointed at Samdong Primary School, West Sikkim vide Memo No.(32)62/990 Education dated 11.03.1968 (Kanchanjangha, Vol.8. No.16,18,19 June, 1968). This event was the red letter day for the Limboo Community of Sikkim. Late Harka Bahadur Subba's contribution to this effect provided a linkage of Limboo language development activities with economic activities, which is the most essential for any language development. Right from 1968 to 1974 (Chogyal's Time), there were eight number of Limboo language Teachers as follows:

1. Late Itcha Purna Das Subba;
2. Shri Tej Man Subba;
3. Harka Bir Nembang;
4. Jaharman Subba;
5. Mahabir Nembang;
6. Late Karna Singh Subba;
7. Lall Bahadur Subba and
8. Chandra Mangyung Subba.

However, the Development of Limboo language was not satisfactory till the end of 1975. The Primary Text Book I & II prepared by I.S.Chemjong, Man Bahadur Khamdhak and P.S.Subba were being used in the schools till then (Subba, M.P. 1997).

A five member committee was formed under the Chairmanship of Gyalmo Hope Cook to fulfill the deficiency of textbooks of Limboos in 1968. The members were Shri Padam Singh Subba of Timburbong, late Man Bahadur Subba of Namphok, Shri Prithivi Raj Subba of Uttarey, and Shri Garja Man Subba of Sardong. The Chairperson has directed the members to prepare the primary textbook using words and sentences method without giving any vowel signs as in the case of Nepali or English. This was very difficult task in Sirijonga script and although the members tried hard they were unable to prepare a single sentence. No member was able to comply for the obvious reason, arising from the very nature of the script of limboo language. Limboo words can not be written without vowel signs and conjoint letters. The very fact was later appraised to the Chairperson who had agreed then. Meanwhile, agitation was started in Sikkim and the textbook writing work could not be completed (Subba, J.R. 2002).

In 1967, Yeingsa Jashang Maden Khewa of Malbansey, extensively propagated Limboo language and literature in Darjeeling, Kalimpong and Sikkim. D.B.Setling of Bhutia Busty, Darjeeling, G.B. Ijom, D.B.Yonya, Sardar Bahadur, Col. J.B.Sereng, D.B.Khewa, R.B. Angbhang, H.B. Limboo, D.H.Khewa, T.B. Setling, Nar Dhoj palungwa, K.N.Sereng, B.B.Linkha Dewan, P.S.Khawepung, B.B.Sambha, Luxman Laoti and Narayan Nembang collectively forming "Akhil Bharatiya Kirant Chumlung Association" at Darjeeling. Col. Jas Bahadur Sereng was made President of the Chumlung. The association printed one thousand copies of first Limboo primary book of I.S.Chemjong and distributed at various places of West Bengal and Sikkim. They opened branches at Mirik, Bijanbari, Singla, Ladoma and Bansbote and from there they spread Limboo language. In 1968, Dhan Bahadur Sereng opened a Chumlung at Bijaypur, printed one thousand copies of the first

Limboo primary book of Chemjong and distributed through Pahal Singh Phendua, Harsha Prasad Nembang, Karna Bahadur Toppabung, Padam Bahadur Limboo and Prem Singh *Setling*. In 1969, Ganesh Bahadur *Thangsuhang son of Jaharman* established a Limboo Library at Yangnam Village of Panthar. Sher Bahadur Ingnam also established a Limboo Library at Attrai, Panchthar and disseminated Limboo language and literature (Chemjong, 1956, '73).

In 1969, Gandhi Centenary was observed throughout India. Sikkim also observed the Centenary at Gangtok with great enthusiasm as it was recently merged in the Indian Union. It was decided to organize an essay competition in English, Hindi, Nepali, Tibetan, Lepcha and Limboo. The work to conduct this competition for Limboo was assigned to Shri P.S.Subba, and late Santabir Subba. Four essays were received in Limboo for competition written by Shri Mahabir Nembang, later he was appointed as a limboo teacher, Shri Prithivi Raj Khewa of Bandukey, Shri Phip Raj Khewa of Tharpu, and Shri Garja Man Subba of Sardong, West Sikkim. This was the first literary competition organized in Limboo language in Sikkim (Subba, J.R. 2002).

In 1972, Puspa Subba Thangsuhang of Yangnam Lungchok, Thoba Village started the first Limboo Magazine known as "Sirijonga Sap Inghong" in Sirijonga script (Chemjong, I.S. 1956, '73).

The merger of Sikkim into Indian Union (May 16, 1975) marked the beginning of rapid Limboo language development activities in Sikkim. On the personal patronage of Shri K.B.Limboo, Minister Public Works Department in the Ministry of Kazi Lhendup Dorjee, not only revived the unfinished work of Limboo Textbook writing started during Chogyal's time in 1968 for optional Limboo language, but also made a compulsory subject for the Limboo students in the schools of Sikkim up to primary level (Class V), and thus started a formal education of *Limboo Language in Sikkim in 1975. At the end of 1975, Government of Sikkim appointed Shri B.B.Subba as a Limboo Text Book Writer. Shri Chandra Mangyung who was appointed as a teacher was also*

deputed to assist Shri B.B.Subba to prepare Limboo Language Textbooks. This was indeed a great landmark in the history of Limboo Language Development. This also marks the beginning of writing formal textbook of Limboo language in Sikkim (Subba, J.R. 1999).

In 1979, the second Assembly election of Sikkim as 22nd State of India was held. This assembly election was of paramount importance because of the fact that for the first time four Limboo candidates contested from one single political party and three of them had been elected. With the unconditional support of the Limboo Community of Sikkim, Shri Nar Bahadur Bhandari won 17 seat out of 32 and formed a popular democratic Government. By the end of 1979, the publication of Limboo Textbook up to Class V standard was completed (Sikkim Herald, November 24, 1979). By the end of 1980, Limboo Textbooks were published up to standard class VIII (Sikkim Herald, May 22, 1980).

Sikkim Legislative Assembly of 31st March, 1981, under the Chief Ministership of Shri Nar Bahadur Bhandari passed the Sikkim Official Language (Amendment) Bill, 1981 recognizing the Limboo as one of the Official Language of Sikkim State vide Notification No.6/LD/81 dated March 31, 1981. This was a red letter day for the entire Limboo Community not only of Sikkim but for the entire world. This has triggered the Limboo language and literature development activities in Sikkim. The credit for convincing Shri Nar Bahadur Bhandari and his MLAs goes to Shri Pahal Man Subba, then MP, Shri Sanchaman Limboo MLA, Shri Til Bahadur Limboo MLA and Shri I.B. Limboo MLA. In the year 1981, Central Board of Secondary Education introduced Limboo Language as core subject in the schools of Sikkim for IX & X. In 1983, Vide D.D.No.Acad. 11/F.1 (2)83/ 49983 dated December 17, 1983 the Central Board of Secondary Education, New Delhi, introduced limboo language as core subject for Class XI from the academic session 1984 and class XII in 1985. The first batch of Senior Secondary Certificate Pass holding students with Limboo core subject came out in the year 1986. The credit for convincing the authorities of Central Board of



Other Books of Shri J.R. Subba,
Director Horticulture, Government of Sikkim :

1. Agriculture in the Hills of Sikkim (1984);
2. Sikkim Ka Sag-Subji (1991);
3. Vegetable Crops of the Himalayan Region (1995);
4. My Journey to the New World (1997);
5. Indigenous Farming Systems of Sikkim Hills and Perspective Planning (2002);
6. Cries Unheard (1993);
7. The Philosophy and Teachings of Yuma Samyo (1998);
8. Yakthung Re Tendham Mekhim Mundhum (1998);
9. Yakthung Re Phungsook Timma Mundhum (1999);
10. The Limboos of the Eastern Himalayas with special reference to Sikkim (1999); and,
- 1 1. Sumsemba Yagrangsing Tongsing Tookma Mundhum (2001);