

An important Resolution of Mising Agom Kébang

The Mising Agom Kébang adopted the following important resolution in a meeting of its Executive Committee held on 01-08-2010 at Murong Okum, Japorigog, Guwahati.

“This meeting of the Executive Committee of Mising Agom Kébang (the Mising Language Society, popularly called Mising Sahitya Sabha in Assamese), the apex organization established by the Mising people in 1972 for the preservation and development of Mising language and literature, discusses in detail the confusion arising out of the use of the spellings MISING and MISHING by different writers in different circles to refer to the Mising people and their language. Another spelling, viz. MICHING, appears in the latest amendment to the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes list for Assam made by the Lok Sabha (the lower house of the Indian Parliament) in 2002, creating further confusion.

It is stated in this connection that the Mising language has no consonant sound resembling the English sound represented, usually, by the digraph SH (sh), as in *shirt, short, ship, cushion, cash*, etc., which is described phonetically as ‘voiceless palato-alveolar fricative’. The sibilant sound of the kind that occurs in the Mising language is usually represented by the letter S (s), as in *sing, single, simple, case, base*, etc., which is described phonetically as ‘voiceless alveolar fricative’. Considering this obvious feature of the sibilant sound occurring in the name **Mising**, the Mising Agom Kébang has been using consistently the spelling MISING (Mising) to refer to the Mising people and the language they speak. In doing so, the Mising Agom Kébang has taken into consideration the phonetic characteristic of the sound in Mising, and its common representation in the roman alphabet, as also the conventions of the International Phonetic Association in the representation of this sound. This is also duly reflected in the roman alphabet, as drastically modified and adopted for the Mising language by the Mising Agom Kébang, which does not include a digraph written as SH (sh) for the reasons already explained.

The use of CH (ch) in the spelling MICHING (Miching) appears to have been a mistake made by officials involved in the initiation of the Constitutional amendment referred to above. The letters CH (ch), as used in English, usually represent the English sound described phonetically as ‘voiceless palato-alveolar affricate’, which is nowhere near the Mising sibilant sound already described. The person making the mistake followed a convention of transliteration of an Assamese letter into English, disregarding altogether the usual pronunciation of the digraph CH (ch) in English as well as the nature of the sibilant sound in the name ‘Mising’ in the process.

This Executive Committee meeting of the Mising Agom Kébang resolves, therefore, to request writers and organizations all over the world to use the spelling MISING (Mising), and not any other variant form, in their writings/publications, if any, on the Mising people or on any aspect of their language, culture, etc. It is hoped that they would respect the decision of the highest body of the Mising people devoted to the cause of preservation and development of Mising language and literature.”

This is for information and compliance of all concerned.

General Secretary
Mising Agom Kébang
Dhemaji, Assam