



## MEITEIS' NAMING PRACTICE

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### Abstract

This paper mainly attempts to describe the naming practice of Meiteis. Such study is an important linguistic aspect in Meitei society. It also studies the different periods of giving Meiteis' personal names, the order of names and the categories of given names. The study of Meitei naming practice will give a deep knowledge insight into language of Meitei, culture, philosophy, belief, religion, thought and social changes.

**Keywords:** language of Meitei; culture; philosophy; belief; religion; thought and social changes.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Meiteiron/Meeteiron is one of the Tibeto-Burman languages spoken mainly by the people of Manipur which is in north-eastern part of India. From the ancient time, Meiteis had been using their own unique style of naming practice as well. It is very natural for any community to take pride in having their literature, script, language, culture, custom etc.

There are three periods in History and for each period the structures of Meiteis' given name are different. Those periods are:

**1.1. Early period** (before 18<sup>th</sup> century's structure of Meiteis' order of name)

**1.2. Medieval period** (from 18<sup>th</sup> century i.e., the reign of king Garibaniwaz, (1709-1748 A.D.)-King Kulachandra, (1890-1891 A.D.) and,

**1.3. Modern period** (after king Kulachandra, 1890-1891 onwards)

Before discussing vividly about the Meiteis' naming practice it is highly needed to know before and after 18<sup>th</sup> century social structures of Meitei society.

**1.1. Early period** (before 18<sup>th</sup> century's structure of Meiteis' order of name)

It is considered that the early period was started from the reign of King Nongda Lairen Pakhangba (33-154 A.D.) up to 17<sup>th</sup> century. During that period, there was no change in Meitei naming practice. Furthermore, Meitei used to call their names with the name of their particular *Səlai*<sup>1</sup> 'clan' as under.

Examples:

1a) Moirang Thoibi

*moiray + t<sup>h</sup>oibi*

clan name + given name

'The best female person of Moirang clan'

1b) Khuman Kwakpa

*k<sup>h</sup>umən + kwakpə*

clan name + given name

'A male person of Khuman clan'

1c) Angom Nongban

*əŋom + noŋban*

clan name + given name

'A male person of Angom clan'

Another point is that, not far from that time, Meitei used to call their names with their particular surname, as below.

1d) Ningombam Mangal

*niŋombəm + məŋal*

family name/surname + given name

'A male person of Ningombam family'

In Meitei community there are seven *Salais* 'clans'. The word *Salai* is the combination of two independent compound words i.e. Sa + Lai. Here, the meaning of *Sa* is 'body/animal' and *Lai* is 'God'. Therefore, *Salai* means 'his God father (Thokchom, 2004).' Those seven *salais* are as under:

i. *məŋay*

ii. *luway*

iii. *k<sup>h</sup>umən*

iv. *əŋom*

v. *moiray*



- vi. *k<sup>h</sup>abə-ŋanbə*
- vii. *səraŋ-ləisaŋt<sup>h</sup>em (ceŋləi)*

Meiteis are proud of their indigenous language, culture, custom and tradition. Although it has been strictly prohibited to marry inside one salai, inter-marriage among the seven salais are allowed. The custom of prohibiting inside one salai is known as *Yek-Thokpa* i.e., marriage which is happened between the same surname/lineage/clan. Hence, *Yek* means 'same clan' and *Thokpa* means 'to have (relation or bloodline)'. Therefore, *Yek-Thokpa* means 'to have a clanship relation between them'.

If a mother has different husbands their sons and daughters are not allowed to marry. It is called *Sairuk-Tinnaba*. If anybody doesn't follow this rule they will be out cast. In Meiteiron, there is another term which is known as *Sagei*. The meaning of sagei is the lineage or sub-clan. There may have a lot of Sageis (lineages) in a clan, for example, in the clan of Mangang, there may have Huidrom Sagei, Yumnam sagei, Naorem sagei etc. The meaning of sa is '(his own) body' and the meaning of gei/kei is 'granary or godown'.

During the reign of king Loyumba (1074-1122 A.D.), the distribution of Yumnak or occupation (division of labour) was started (Khulem, 1975). At that time, Meiteis started to call their names along with their specific occupation. For example, Khumancha Potshangbam (store keeper) Tomba, Angomcha Thangjam (black-smith) Manglem. Later on, such convention is slightly changed and the names of Salais which are used before the personal names have been omitted and used only occupational names as follow.

- A. Nongmaithem Yaima
- B. Yensemam Ibobi
- C. Thangjam Angamba etc.

## 1.2. Medieval period

The Medieval period which was started from 18<sup>th</sup> century i.e., during the reign of King Garibaniwaz, (1709-1748 A.D.) to King Kulachandra, (1890-1891 A.D.) took place a lot of changes in the Meitei society especially in the source and structure of Meitei given names and social structure of Meitei society. Indic name started to adopt in Meitei society from the late seventeenth century i.e., during the reign of king Charairongba (1697-1709 A.D.). It was developed in the reign of king Pamheiba (1709-1748 A.D.), the son of king Charairongba. During his regime, Shanti Das, the wise Bramin Scholar who came from Bengal, radically transformed the culture, social network and even the racial identity of Meiteis into Sanskritization (during that time the country, Manipur (former name *Kangleipak*) was an independent country). As Shanti Das proposed to rename the country's name into Manipur, the king and the court accepted his proposal. The name of king Pamheiba himself changed into a non-Meitei name 'Garibaniwaz' and Kangleipak into 'Manipur' i.e., changes into the Hindu State and society.

Manipur was known by different names at various periods in its history, such as Namthak Saronpung in the book *Sakok Lamlen*, Tillikok Tom Ahanba in *Hayicak*, Meera Pongthoklam in *Khunungcak*, Tillikok Leikoiren in *Langbacak*, Muwapalli in *Konnacak* etc. In the Modern Period also Manipur was known as diferent names as Sana-Leipak, Meitrabak, Kangleipak, Manipur (present day).

From that time the place was a country. With the permission of King Pamheiba, Guru Shanti Das started to substitute Meitei's script by Bengali script and change the indigenous names into Hindu's names. In 1724 the title *Maharaja* was given to the king instead of indigenous title *Ningthem or Meidingu*. Then the title *Shri* or *Shree* for men and *Shrimati* or *Shreemati* for married women, *Kumari* for unmarried female are used in front of full names as in **Table 5**.

It is learnt that changing of Meiteis' indigenous personal names is one of the major factors which are influenced by the adoption of Hinduism in Meitei society.

With the advent of Hinduism in Kangleipak, Meiteis started adopting *Singh* (m) and *Devi* (f), willingly or unwillingly. Later the Meiteis started to use it after the personal names as an imitating process of indic names instead of using Meiteis' indigenous names.

### 1.2.1. Singh and Devi

The last name *Singh* 'lion' which is used by the Meitei - Hindu is neither a surname nor a middle name in Meitei society. Because, the people have their own indigenous surnames that ends with /m/ phoneme. It is used by the Meitei people as a gender identifier/cast name/name of race. The word Singh represents for male person that is used after their names and *Devi* 'goddess' for woman. In addition to this, Meiteis who are residing out side Manipur are still using the word Singha to call their names for both genders. This is because of the fact that they fled Manipur when the kingdom got its First Devastation (Khuntak Ahanba-1755 A.D.) and Seven Years Devastations (Chahi Taret Khuntakpa-1819-1825 A.D.) were happened (Thokchom, 2004). Another thing is those persons who came from outside Manipur as Braman used *Sharma* as their cast name.

### 1.2.2. Origin of Singh

Singh may be a title, a middle name, or a surname (for non-Manipuris). It is used in sought Asia, particularly in India. Originally it is used by the Hindu Kshatriyas. The word "Singh is derived from the Sanskrit word *Simha* meaning Lion



(Wikipedia, 2013).” Generally this surname seems to be found in males except some community. The title Singh is given to the Meitei–Hindu in connection with power and authority.

### 1.2.3. Singh as a Surname

In indic tradition, Singh is used as a last name, for example, Manmohan Singh, Rajnath Singh, Yuvraj Singh etc. In the above example, Singh is a Surname. The Marathi Bramins also use Sinh or Singh as a suffix to their first names, e.g. Udaysinh Peshwa, the scion of the Peshwa Dynasty.

### 1.2.4. Singh as a Middle name

Singh is often used as the middle name after the first name and followed by the clan/family name by many communities, groups and people. For example, Yogendra Singh Yadav, Mahendra Singh Dhoni.

Then Meiteis start to neglect their own original naming system. It is due to the imposition of indic culture in Meitei community. Even the Meiteis’ kings, the title *Singh* has been started to use, as in **Table 1**.

**Table 1. The Changes of Meitei King’s Naming practice**

Sl. No.	Given Name	Caste Name
a)	Marjit	Singh
b)	Gambhir	Singh
c)	Joy	Singh
d)	Nara	Singh
e)	Debendra	Singh
f)	Churchand	Singh
g)	Bhudachandra	Singh

These historical events take place a drastically change in the nomenclature of the structures and contents of Meitei indigenous names into non-Manipuri custom.

There is a convention for writing Meitei personal names. In the name order of the words *Thounaojam Tomba Singh Thounaojam* is family name or surname, *Tomba* is the given name of a male person and the last *Singh* is the title of race/caste name/gender identifier, as in **Table 2**.

**Table 2. Structure of Meitei-Hindu given names**

First	Second	Third
<i>Thounaojam</i>	<i>Tomba</i>	<i>Singh</i>
‘family name/surname’	‘given name’	‘title of race/caste name/gender identifier’

## 1.3. Modern period (after king Kulachandra, 1890-1891 onwards)

The modern period which is known as post-colonial started from the reign of king Churachand (189-1941A.D.) till now. During this period, English name was also subsequently developed in Meitei society. Actually the inherited family name in the European tradition arose first during Middle Ages with royal and noble families. “The New Encyclopaedia Britannica, IX-Volume. Encyclopaedia Britannica, Inc. William Benton, Publisher, 1943-1973, Helen Hemingway Benton, Publisher, 1973.”

James Johnstone set up a formal system of education in 1885 with establishing an English Medium school at Imphal. Apart from that, English name had been developed in Meitei society.

### 1.3.1. Revivalist Movement of Meiteism

The influenced given by the Hinduism in the 18<sup>th</sup> century became a very important era in Manipur history. During this time, socio-cultural structures of the Meitei society were drastically changed. But, during the colonization, there were two socio-religious movements leading to the one was *reformist* and another was *revivalist*. Those forces which were working behind these two were the “Nikhil Hindu Manipuri Mahasabha” and the Meitei Marup. The Meitei Marup was formed on 14th of May, 1945, and it led to the revival of Meetei traditional cultures, belief system, original scripts (Meetei Mayek), customary practices, and traditional religious ceremonies relating to the Meetei society. After the formation of Meetei Marup there were lots of conflicts between the followers of Sanamahi religion and those who followed Hinduism.



From 1947, the followers of Sanamahi religion were not allowed to mix with Hinduism in any festivals or ceremonies. While the followers of Hindu religion, were also against them. The Brahma Saba excommunicated those followers who were in touch with Sanamahi religion.

At the end of the 20th century, the impact of Sanamahism became more and more embedded in the hearts and mind of the people at large. As a result it gave a new hope and dimension in the process of the revivalist's movement of Sanamahism. Old beliefs and religious bindings were untied and the beliefs of emerging movement began to take their place

Some people were de-baptized on Wednesday, the 16th February, 1974. The then Maharaja of Meitei, Okendrajit Sana declared: "The Royal Customary Law revives the Lainingthouism as the state religion on April 23, 1992."

Recent revivalism over the **script** also becomes a very critical situation in the state. So far many organizations like MEELAL, Linguistic Society of Manipur, and others have been demanding Bengali script to replace by Meitei script. As a result of it, in 2005 the Government of Manipur gradually substitutes the Bengali scripts by the Meitei Mayek from Primari Level.

The **Festival** of Sanamahi religion has become more popular and is being observed by more and more people in the recent times. Sajibu Cheiraouba is one of the important festivals of Meitei and is being observed to welcome the New Year (Sajibu Nongma Panba). And the number of people observing Imoinu is also increasing day by day. These are the advancement of the growth and development of Sanamahi religion.

From that time the revivalists started the convention for writing Meitei personal names and it turned to revive gradually. The imitation of using race name or caste name i.e., *Singh* is substituted by the word *Meitei*. Sometimes, the cast name has not been used by someone because they do not like to modify Hindu's formula. Instead of using that they would like to revert to the indigenous style, as in **Table 3**.

**Table 3. Examples of Meiteis' Order of Name**

First	Second
Thounaojam	Tomba
family name/surname	given name

## 2. MEITEIS' ORDER OF NAMES

There are three types of naming order.

- 2.1. Western order (eg. given name + surname)
- 2.2. Eastern order (eg. surname + given name) and,
- 2.3. Others.

Traditionally, Meiteis' order of name is included in the Eastern order. But now-a-day, no one strictly follows in writing that order. Most of them are writing independently. For example, in the words of *niyombəm caubə*, someone may write different styles like:

Examples:

- 2.3.1a) Ningombam            Chaoba  
*niyombəm*    +    *caubə*  
 surname            given name
- 2.3.1b) Ningombam            Cha    Chaoba  
*niyombəm*    +    *ca* + *caubə*  
 surname            gender identifier given name
- 2.3.1c) Angom Cha    Ningombam    Chaoba  
*əjom*    +    *ca*    +    *niyombəm* + *caubə*  
 clan name    gender identifier    surname    given name
- 2.3.1d) Ningombam            Chaoba    Meitei/Singh  
*niyombəm*    +    *caubə* + *məitəi/siy*  
 surname    given name    caste name/race name/gender identifier



2.3.1e) Chaoba Ningombam

*caubə* + *niyombəm*

given name surname

2.3.1f) Chaoba Ningombam Cha

*caubə* + *niyombəm* + *ca*

given name surname gender identifier

2.3.1g) Chaoba Angom

*caubə* + *əjom*

given name clan name

2.3.1h) Chaoba Angom Cha

*caubə* + *əjom* + *ca*

given name clan name gender identifier

2.3.1i) Chaoba Singh Ningombam

*caubə* + *sij* + *niyombəm*

given name gender identifier surname

2.3.1j) Chaoba Ningomba (m)

*caubə* + *niyombə (m)*

given name surname

In the above examples of 2.3.1a) and 2.3.1b), the given name are written only after the surname/gender identifier as a last name. Therefore, it is a nature of Meitei convention of writing order of names. Then, the examples of 2.3.1c)-2.3.1j) are not Meiteis' conventions. Meiteis, traditionally do not have the custom for using clan names or gender identifiers after the personal names or given names. Therefore, these examples 2.3.1c)-2.3.1h) are against the original naming order of Meiteis. It is highly needed that to preserve Meiteis' traditional naming order everyone should discard the additional name after the personal names.

From the above illustration it is clearly mentioned that the naming system of Meitei community should be the following order.

- i). Surame/family name + Given name/Personal name
- ii). Surname + Gender identifier + Given name

### 3. NAMING

Meiteis' naming practice is based on the indigenous system. Such system is widely prevalent in today's Meitei social context. Meitei, as a result of wider contact with Indian culture, makes use of indic names. Later the Britishers came to Manipur. During the British regime, Meitei used to call English names.

Like other advanced country, Meitei had been used their naming practice scientifically from early days. The nature and naming order have also a high philosophical value. The concept of name is that, the name and the person are inseparable. Meiteis' names are based broadly on the following categories.

#### 3.1. The names related to *lai* 'flowers'

Examples:

Most of the flowers names are female names.

Name	Gloss
<i>laipaklai</i>	a flower
<i>numitlai</i>	sunflower
<i>kombirai</i>	an irish



<i>kusum</i>	a kind of flower (f)
<i>sənarəi</i>	marigold
<i>tək<sup>h</sup>elləi</i>	a sweet smelling flower
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əmbal</i>	lotus
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əro</i>	water lily
<i>t<sup>h</sup>abəlləi</i>	lady of the night, <i>Cestrumnocturnum</i>

### 3.2. The names related to *məhəusagi potləm* 'natural objects'

Examples:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>ləicil</i>	cloud (m)
<i>maləja</i>	wind (f)
<i>maləjbə</i>	wind (m)
<i>malem</i>	earth (m)
<i>punima</i>	full moon (f)
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əba</i>	morning star (f)
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əjə</i>	moon (f)
<i>t<sup>h</sup>ənil</i>	full moon (m)

### 3.3. The names related to *ucek* 'birds'

Examples:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>cekla</i>	bird
<i>kokil</i>	cuckoo
<i>nojın</i>	<i>Syrnaticus humiae</i>
<i>tamna</i>	a kind of bird
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əmbi</i>	name of a cute bird
<i>urok</i>	egret, heron

### 3.4. The names related to *sa* 'animal'

Examples:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>iroi</i>	buffalo
<i>kauren</i>	big bull
<i>səmu</i>	elephant
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əbə</i>	rabit



### 3.5. The names related to *til* 'insect'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>k<sup>h</sup>oimu</i>	hornet

### 3.6. The names related to *həi-ra* 'fruits'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>cəmpɾa</i>	lemon
<i>həinəu</i>	mango
<i>komla</i>	orange
<i>ləp<sup>h</sup>oi</i>	banana
<i>nobab</i>	<i>Citrus maxima</i>
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əbi</i>	cucumber

### 3.7. The names related to *ritu* 'season'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>bəsəntə</i>	spring
<i>jeniŋ</i>	spring
<i>heməntə</i>	a season
<i>səɾət</i>	autumn

### 3.8. The names related to *maikəi* 'direction'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>ciŋk<sup>h</sup>əi</i>	the direction on which the sun rises (north-east) (m)
<i>malemjanbə</i>	shining of earth (m)
<i>malemjanbi</i>	shining of earth (f)
<i>noŋpokjanbə</i>	shining of east (m)
<i>noŋpokjanbi</i>	shining of east (f)

### 3.9. The names related to *k<sup>h</sup>oŋgi pott<sup>h</sup>ok* 'mineral object'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>məni</i>	jewel
<i>mukta</i>	pearl
<i>səna</i>	gold





<i>təmp<sup>h</sup>a</i>	ruby
<i>təmp<sup>h</sup>asəna</i>	ruby-gold

### 3.9.10. The names related to *migi māgun* ‘quality of the person’

Examples:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>ibemnuysi</i>	the sweetest girl
<i>liŋjelt<sup>h</sup>oibi</i>	the courageous and best girl
<i>lint<sup>h</sup>oiŋəmbi</i>	the best and able girl
<i>k<sup>h</sup>əmbə</i>	the last one
<i>sənat<sup>h</sup>oi</i>	the best gold
<i>t<sup>h</sup>ajəmanbi</i>	beautiful as moon
<i>t<sup>h</sup>oibi</i>	the best girl
<i>t<sup>h</sup>oibə</i>	the best boy
<i>t<sup>h</sup>oit<sup>h</sup>oi</i>	the best one (m/f)
<i>wəŋlen</i>	the one who is high in mental caliber

### 3.9.11. The names related to *hannəgi* ‘indigenous’

Examples:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>ibemmə</i>	my daughter
<i>ibuŋo</i>	my son
<i>icəl</i>	younger sister
<i>laŋlen</i>	daughter
<i>məŋgi</i>	a given name to be feared by the grave (to reduce untimely dead)
<i>məŋlem</i>	the one who remains from the grave
<i>pari</i>	son
<i>təmpək</i>	the only one son

### 3.9.12. The names related to *əpubə* ‘borrowing’ (English, Hindi and others)

#### 3.9.12.a) The names related to *turel* ‘river’

Examples:

<b>Name</b>	<b>Gloss</b>
<i>gəŋga</i>	a river
<i>ʃətmuna</i>	a river

#### 3.9.12.b) The names related to *lairik* ‘book’

Examples:



Name	Gloss
<i>gita</i>	holy book

**3.9.12.c) The names related to *p<sup>h</sup>iləm kumbə mi* 'film actor'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>arnol</i>	a person
<i>brusli</i>	a person

**3.9.12.d) The names related to *sanəroi* 'sport star'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>diŋku</i>	a person
<i>ronaldo</i>	a person
<i>taison</i>	a person

**3.9.12.e) The names related to *lāibakki miŋ* 'country's name'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>jəpan</i>	a person
<i>ləndən</i>	a person
<i>nepal</i>	a person

**3.9.12.f) The names related to *əibə mi* 'writer'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>kəməl</i>	a person

**3.9.12.g) The names related to *səisəkpə mi* 'singer'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>tamənau</i>	a person
<i>ləta</i>	a person

**3.9.12.h) The names related to *t<sup>h</sup>ijinbə mi* 'scientist'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>niutən</i>	a person

**3.9.12.i) The names related to *senemagi miŋ* 'movie's name'**

Examples:

Name	Gloss
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*rəmbo* a person

### 3.9.12.j) The names related to *langi əkən ət<sup>h</sup>əu* 'warrior'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>hitlār</i>	a person
<i>nepoliən</i>	a person

### 3.9.12.k) The names related to *pot<sup>h</sup>ok put<sup>h</sup>okp<sup>h</sup>əm* 'company'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>honda</i>	a company
<i>suzuki</i>	a company

### 3.9.12.l) The names related to Bengali-Meitei *jansinnəbə* 'hybrid'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>babuməca</i>	younger son
<i>babujaimə</i>	middle son
<i>kəinahənbi</i>	my eldest daughter

In the above example, *babu* of *babuməca*, *babu* of *babujaimə* and *kəina* of *kəinahənbi* are the Bengali-Meitei hybrid names (Chelliah, 2005).

### 3.9.12.m) Structure of a Meitei Full Name

Before the conversion to Hinduism, full names in Meitei had the formulaic structure shown in **Table 4** (Nameirakpam, 2005).

**Table 4. Structural Pattern of a Meitei Full Name**

Categories	Father's Name	Family	Marital Status	Married To	Given Name
Single	Nongmaithem	-	-	-	Thabal (Male)
Married	Nongmaithem	-	-	-	Thabal (Male)
Single	Nongmaithem	Ningol or canu	-	-	Thaja (Female)
Married	Nongmaithem	Ningol or canu	-	Angom Ongbi (Husband's Family Name + Ongbi)	Thaja (Female)

Marital status was indicated by the female names. In Meitei society if a married woman was there, his husband's family name and Ongbi (married to) would be there.

After the conversion to Hinduism, most of Meitei given names were also replaced with Sanskrit-derived Bengali names. Some title and cast name were added before and after the full names of Meitei i.e., shown in **Table 5**.



Table 5. Structural Pattern of Meitei- Hindu Full Name

Categories + Title	Father's Family Name	Marital Status	Married To	Given Name + Cast Name
Single (m) + Shri (Mr)	Nongmaithem	-	-	Thabal+ Singh
Married (m) + Shr (Mr)	Nongmaithem	-	-	Thabal+ Singh
Single (f) + Married (f) Kumari (Miss) + Shrimati (Mrs)	Nongmaithem Nongmaithem	Ningol or Canu Ningol or Canu	-  Angom Ongbi  (Husband's Family Name + Ongbi)	Thaja + Devi Thaja + Devi

### 3.9.12.n) The names related to *lai* 'God'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>dev</i>	a god
<i>imoinu</i>	a goddess
<i>indrə</i>	a god
<i>ləksmi</i>	a goddess
<i>krisnə</i>	a god
<i>ram</i>	a god
<i>sənaməhi</i>	a god
<i>sibə</i>	a god

### 3.9.12.o) The names related to *əhan əkon pokpə* 'order of birth'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>ibejaimə</i>	the next to the first child (f)
<i>ibojaimə</i>	the next to the first child (m)
<i>ibemhəl</i>	the first child (f)
<i>ibohəl</i>	the first child (m)
<i>ibetombi</i>	the last child (f)
<i>ibotombə</i>	the last child (m)
<i>ibotombi</i>	the last child (m)
<i>k<sup>h</sup>əmbə</i>	the last child (m)
<i>k<sup>h</sup>əmbi</i>	the last child (f)
<i>k<sup>h</sup>omdon</i>	the last child (m)



<i>k<sup>h</sup>omdon bi</i>	the last child (m)
<i>tomba</i>	the last child (m)
<i>tombi</i>	the last child (f)
<i>tondonbə</i>	the last child (m)

### 3.9.12.p) The names related to *təubə ɣəmbə/həisiɣbə* 'caliber/ personality' of a person

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>ləmjiɣbə</i>	the guide (m)
<i>k<sup>h</sup>əgembə</i>	the one who conquers Khagi (China)
<i>pak<sup>h</sup>əɣbə</i>	the one who knows the father (m)
<i>telhəibə</i>	the one who is smart in archery (m)
<i>t<sup>h</sup>əuɣəmbə</i>	the able fellow (m)

### 3.9.12.q) The names related to *səoŋ səda* 'physical appearance' of a person

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>əiɣbi</i>	the sober girl (f)
<i>əmubi</i>	the dark complexion on (f/m)
<i>əɣəubi</i>	the fair complexion one (f)
<i>əpabi</i>	the lean fellow (m/f)
<i>ərubī</i>	the clean girl (f)
<i>əsəɣbi</i>	the green colour (f)
<i>caubə</i>	the big fellow (m)
<i>caubi</i>	the big fellow (f)
<i>piktru</i>	the little fellow (f)
<i>p<sup>h</sup>əjəbi</i>	the pretty girl (f)
<i>tət<sup>h</sup>ot</i>	the soft & cute girl (f)

### 3.9.12.r) The names related to *luciɣbə* 'great personality'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>irabot</i>	a person
<i>gand<sup>h</sup>i</i>	a person
<i>nehəru</i>	a person
<i>subascəndrə</i>	a person

### 3.9.12.s) The names related to *t<sup>h</sup>a* 'month'



Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>iyel</i>	equivalent to July
<i>mera</i>	equivalent to October
<i>t<sup>h</sup>awan</i>	equivalent to August

### 3.9.12.t) The names related to *mətəmgi k<sup>h</sup>oycət* 'periodic'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>isiycaubə</i>	flood
<i>lanca</i>	war son

### 3.9.12.u) The names related to *mətəm* 'time'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>nyyjai</i>	mid-night
<i>noyyanbə</i>	morning
<i>səndja</i>	dusk

### 3.9.12.v) The names related to *məhəi təmp<sup>h</sup>əm* 'institution'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>kəinahəl iyli skul</i>	an institution
<i>ənəndə siy hijer sekendəri skul</i>	an institution

### 3.9.12.w) The names related to *ləjəysəy* 'hospital'

Examples:

Name	Gloss
<i>siyə hospital</i>	a hospital
<i>maipakpi hospital</i>	a hospital

Sometimes, an interesting occasion is found in Meitei society. In English the original English's name is male but after borrowing in Meiteiron it becomes female names as below:

Examples:

Name	English	Manipuri
<i>kenni</i>	male	female
<i>toni</i>	male	female

## 4. GIVING REFERENCE ON MEITEIS' INDIGENOUS NAME ORDER

About the writing of **Reference**, according to *MLA Hand book for Writers and Research Papers*, when one gives reference to the Research Papers, the surname will be written first and after that a comma ',' s be there. Then the given name should be written. The following is an example of writing reference of a male person named Mangal.



If Meiteis write their indigenous name order i.e., Surname + Given Name, there might not be changed in the position of given reference except putting a comma in between the surname and the given name. It should be written as follow:

4a) *niyombəm, məyal*

Another point is also same. When Meiteis write the modifying name order of revivalist movement i.e., Surname + Given name + Gender Identifier/Cast Name/Name of Race, there might not be changed in the position of given reference except putting a comma after the surname, as given below:

4b) *niyombəm, məyal məitəi/siy*

From the above example, about the writing of reference it comes to know that there should not be changed in Meiteis' name order. After the surname '*niyombəm*', a comma ',' should be given.

On the contrary, some Scholars give reference as below:

Examples:

4c) *siy, niyombəm məyal*

or

4d) *məyal, niyombəm*

As the word *siy* is unlike a surname which is used as an optional name in Meitei society (it may be gender identifier or name of cast or race name), it should not be written in front of a name as reference.

Another thing is that usually the name *səna* 'gold' and *ləimə* 'queen' were reserved for only those persons who were related to royalty. Commoners were prohibited from using these names. Later in the twentieth century, these names were no longer reserved for royal family. Now-a-day, a change is that these names are used freely, example, R.K Sanahal, Sanathoi and Leimaton etc.

Another phenomenon is that Meitei people consider first borne baby of the twin as a younger one of the second child.

There are also some names which can carry cultural meanings. For instance, the birth control name such as *k<sup>h</sup>omdon* (the baby boy who is to be suckled), the prevention of death such as *məŋgi* (the one who threatens the grave) and survival name such as *məŋləm* (one (m) who is left out by the grave), sex governing names "giving a male's name to a female child to be caused the sex of the next child male and vice versa (Nongthombam, 2007)."

## 5. CONCLUSION

From the very beginning the tradition of king's names of Meitei had at least two names. One is childhood name and another is nickname or reign name. Prior to the British colonial rule, given names of royalty were usually kept as secreted names. An example of Meitei royalty's nickname of King Chandrakriti is *Ningthem*. Yuvaraj Tikendrajit's nickname is *Koireng* etc. Besides the reign name was given to the king relating to the memorable incident e.g., Khagemba (1597-1652 A.D.), *Khagi* means 'Chinese' and *Ngamba* means 'conqueror'. As Meiteis accept names from all languages, the modern naming practice is also very complex in nature. The given names of the children are also based on the choice of the parents. Someone gives indigenous names, some give borrowed names accordingly.

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1. *Salai* means a large group of families who originate from a same ancestor.

2. *Sagei* means a group of families who are descended from a same ancestor

3. If the gender identifier is *ca*, then the person will be a male. Otherwise, it will be a female e.g., *canu* is a female marker.



## Abbreviations and Symbols

+	-	combined with
-	-	dash
m	-	male
f	-	female

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