

Tai Khamyang scholar Deben Chowlik passes away



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Mithun Baruah 27 April 2022 Updated 28 Apr 15469 views

Renowned Tai Khamyang scholar, 84-year-old Deben Chowlik, passed away last Wednesday due to age-old ailments at his residence situated in Bhattor Powai, Powaimukh, Margherita, Tinsukia . He was an expert in the Tai Khamyang language from the great Tai Khamyang community and had been struggling to keep this language alive as one of the knowledgeable members of the Tai Khamyang community in Powaimukh Tai Khamyang village under 124 Number Margherita Constituency of Tinsukia District.

He was one of the very few people who could speak the Tai Khamyang language, so his death is a irreparable loss not only to the Tai Khamyang community, but to all of us. He has a vast storehouse of traditional knowledge of the community. I was fortunate to have worked with him closely during my effort to document this language in the process. I was able to record some stories and narratives that he spoke in his mother tongue. There was always so much more to learn from him.

As the old man passed away, there were only a few elderly people in the community who were still holding on to their language. This is a stark reminder of how fast language endangerment is happening fast. Unless and until the young members of the indigenous communities make conscious efforts to keep their languages alive, we will lose many languages along with their cultural, traditional and other indigenous knowledge/ information in the coming days. Manash Pratim Gogoi, Journalist of Margherita said.

With every language lost, the world becomes poorer with regard to linguistic and cultural diversity and knowledge of high value, said a scholar. Bhaskar Sharma MLA of 124 Number Margherita Constituency is the son-in-law of Tai Khamyang scholar Deben Chowlik. He left behind his wife, five daughters, son-in-laws, grandchildren and many relatives. Margherita Journalists Association, Margherita Senior Citizens Association, Purvanchal Bhikkhu Sangha and many other organizations of Margherita condoled the death of renowned Tai Khamyang scholar Deben Chowlik and conveyed deep condolences to the bereaved family members.

Mithun Baruah

Mithun Baruah reports from Margherita.

BY MITHUN BARUAH

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