

It is called *lhabsang* in the local term after which the visitors come with various gifts and cash for the long life of the baby.

- Older people believe that a baby who is in deep sleep should not be kissed on the mouth as the sleep will be disturbed by nightmares.
- If the new born baby sucks the thumb it signifies that the next birth is a baby boy but if it is an index finger then it is a sign of a baby girl.
- If the baby cries loud for days and nights without any illness it foretells the death or illness of the parents.
- Only those children who have completed eight years of life are entitled to be cremated. Otherwise their bodies are either buried in the rivers or kept in isolated caves.

#### 4.8.6. Beliefs and Superstition concerning Human Body Parts

*Examples:*

- In the Bhutanese society, forehead is considered to be the most critical part of a person. It is believed that the fortune of the person is predetermined in one's forehead. When any good or bad fortune comes to a person the forehead often gets different remarks from other people. It is often believed that a person possessing a good forehead appears awesome and gains natural command over the crowd.
- When you stretch out your thumb, a hollow appears near wrist. The depth of this hollow part indicates the level of devotion to one's parents and family.
- Those who have distinct moles in the corners of the eyes are believed to shed lots of tears. It represents bowl of tears for the suffering that one goes through.
- The grinding of teeth also connects to certain beliefs. When a man grinds his teeth while sleeping it signifies victory over evils, but if a woman does the same it signifies that she is after human blood.
- If there is an unusual growth of hairs on the moles of both men and women you should not pull it out, not even supposed to be touched by their close ones because they symbolize good fortune.
- It is believed that those who have died in accidents

and their limbs went missing; he or she will not be reborn as a whole person in their next life.

#### 4.8.7. Beliefs and Superstition on Days

*Examples:*

- The early hours of the morning are considered to be the most auspicious for deciding the important activities for the whole day. Therefore, it is important that the family begins the day on the positive note.
- When the morning begins with intense sunshine accompanied with light drizzling of rainfall it is believed to be a "mournful day" where nature laments its own sorrow over the death of a human being as humans share a strong bond with nature.
- Among the seven days Monday is believed to be the most significant day to propose or make any important decisions and also to start any business. Even the traditional games like archery and khuru are played on this day.
- The lunar calendar is based on sign of *lokhor chu-nyi* (12 year animal cycle) like the pig, rooster, ox, sheep, dog, horse etc. Each day is associated with one of the astrological signs of animals which ultimately become its own day like the dog day or the rooster day. The significance of each day varies from others. For instance Friday is considered to be inauspicious to travel to far off places as it is believed that the journey would be tough and tiring. Likewise on Saturdays the animals cannot be slaughtered nor can their meat be cooked since the day signifies "red" colour. It is believed to bring death and cause harm to the other animals.
- *Tshe chi* (1st day of the month) is considered to be very inauspicious to cut one's hair and nails or even clothes, whereas *tshe nyi* (2nd day) is considered inauspicious to venture into any new activities, *tshe sum* or 3rd day is considered to be inauspicious to wash one's hair, take bath or wash clothes.
- The most auspicious days are the 8th, 15th and 30th during which most people visit sacred places and offer butter lamps and prayers.

#### 4.8.8. Beliefs and Superstition about Dreams

*Examples:*

- When one sees bad dream filled with images of dead

body or smeared with blood, it should not be shared with others; rather one should talk to a lonely tree or a boulder so that the ill effects of the dream will be heard by the tree or the boulder and the dreamer is relieved of its effect.

- If one dreams of flowers or plants being seared by the sun or the cold morning frost it signifies bad omen, whereas if we dream of moist or fresh flowers, plants and milk it brings good fortune to that person.
- Dreaming of carrying weapons will keep you protected from your foes and you will be victorious over your enemies. However, if you see yourself being attacked by the weapon or smeared with blood or drowning or witness lightening, these are all signs of danger or hardships.
- If you see cow-dung in your dream it is a sign of good luck and most people have strong belief in this dream. It brings success in whatever work you planned to do.
- Seeing yourself riding on the black horse down hills foretells a bad destiny in your life or family so this should be prevented by seeking help from the lamas but if you dream of riding on a white horse up hills it's a very good sign in fulfilling your wishes.
- When you see yourself attacked by insects or being bitten by animals, this dream signifies getting sick and being prone to diseases.
- If you dream of being covered by human excreta it promises monetary gain in your future.
- If one dreams of riding a white elephant it signifies wealth and good health.
- Dreaming of riding a tiger indicates job promotion; but if you dream of a monkey it warns you of bad days ahead.

#### 4.9. HOUSEHOLD & KNOWLEDGE OF ECONOMY

People in Bhutan used to produce many varieties of goods generally for domestic consumption. In addition to fulfilling their day to day needs, these products had great economic and cultural values. Although there are numerous household objects that vary in quality, size and make from region to region, the scope of this paper allows only a quick view of few examples to illustrate the knowledge and skills that had determined the Bhutanese economy in the past.

##### Tea Churn

Tea churn or *ja sum* consists of a vessel and a churner, made of wood or bamboo. Some churns are decorated with brass and copper bands embossed or etched with patterns. It has a circular lid decorated with metal. The end of churn handle is often covered with metal ornamentation. Some simpler churns are banded with bamboo strips and sometimes with yak hair cords.



##### Wooden Container for Storing and Serving Ara

The most commonly used container for storing and serving *ara* (local beverage) is called *jandop*. It is made of wood in a cylinder form. This is often painted in

black and bound with metal bands. These bands have embossed or patterns or incised patterns that range from simple to intricate ones. Today, the *jandom* has been replaced by versatile plastic bottles and containers.



##### Milk Churn

It is a tall wooden or bamboo made churn, cylindrical with its bottom made of wood (in case of bamboo made). It is used for churning milk to obtain butter and cheese. It has a wooden lid, a wooden paddle/beater to churn the liquid.



##### Mortar and Pestle

The mortar (*tsiku*) is a receptacle used for pounding and grinding spices with the help of a pestle (*doti*), in

