

A RIVER. A CULTURE. A LEGACY
THAT FLOWS THROUGH TIME.

DHANSIRI

A JOURNEY THROUGH THE LAND, LEGENDS
AND LIVES ALONG THE DHANSIRI RIVER

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Chapter 1

I Love Dhansiri In the Ahom language, the name Tima means a river that flows from the water. Dhanya remembered that she had said the same thing last year and perhaps even before that. Hedin Sen Anderson discovered the source of the Dhansiri River. An Indian explorer named Klintap confirmed that the Tsang Po and the Brahmaputra in Tibet are the same. Golaghat in Assam, Dimapur in Nagaland, Chumukedima district. This is a river that flows for 352 kilometers. After its origin, the Dhansiri flows eastward for approximately 1700 kilometers. This river descends to a depth of about 4 kilometers. Here it winds around the Namcha Barwa mountain and forms the deepest Tsang Po gorge. It covers the Himalayas for about 60 miles in the east-south direction. The Brahmaputra River flows south around the Garo Hills at Dhubri. It enters Bangladesh. Here the river divides into two branches, the Jamuna and the Meghna. It flows through the plains of this region for about 279 kilometers, meets the Padma River, forms a vast delta, and then flows 246 kilometers south before emptying into the Bay of Bengal. The Dhansiri River originates

in Arunachal Pradesh. After the confluence of the Dhansiri and Brahmaputra, a stream called Kalang joins the Brahmaputra near Guwahati. The rivers Tonsa, Jaldhaka, Teesta, etc., join the Brahmaputra in Bangladesh. The main tributaries of the Brahmaputra are Bhareli, Ber, Subansiri, Kameng, Manas, Champamati, Saral, Bhanga, Sankosh, Nowa, The Hing, Burudi Hing, Jhansi, Disang, The Khongiri, Dhansiri, etc. The Subansiri is a river that originates in Tibet and joins the Brahmaputra in India. Dhanya was talking about Dhanasiri in the same way she had spoken about her in class last year. Dhanya felt that the members of the Navratri tour at Dimapur railway station were looking at her suspiciously, as if they didn't believe her. She felt dizzy. Dhanya was afraid that the clouds gathering over the mountains would suddenly engulf her in rain. Still, she smiled faintly and turned to call Rashmi. The slight chill she felt as the wind blew reminded Rashmi of the Vezhambal festival that was to begin the next day. Dhanya descended a few steps from the homestay. Anushree showed her the lamp. "Good morning, Parvati, thank you, Dhanya." Parvati's voice was full of gratitude. Dhanya was surprised to hear Anushree's conversation from the steps of the homestay. Parvati, with a shawl over her shoulder and a lamp in her hand, was coming up humming an English song with Rashmi. Wongscha was feeling her way through the darkness of the stairs with her stick. Pooja's breathing quickened as she climbed the stairs. Pooja was leaning against the wall, panting. In the lamplight, the pimples on her pale face looked like earthenware pots. Dr. Jay-Jay whistled through his lips and climbed the

stairs. The doctor didn't need a stick. With a bag full of medicines slung over his shoulder, Dr. Jay-Jay was returning after checking in that morning. "Why did Dhanya drag me to Dimapur against my will? I had a rehearsal in Kohima." Rashmi saw the water cascading down from the three waterfalls of Seytikima from Dhanya's homestay. Dhanya had prepared handloom products and handicrafts made by the artisans of the Dai Seifi handicraft village for sale. During the December festival, Rusaphe, Dhanya, and Navras always make it a shopper's paradise. Dr. Jay-Jay was eating a twig he had broken off a bush. Sunhe Beto is a type of shrub with white leaves, cotton-like petals, and honey inside its flowers. Dr. Jay Jay continued her journey through the snowy valleys of Diskou on frosty mornings. Dr. Jay Jay told Dhanya about the Doyang River from Mount Tia. Rashmi was called to see the gardens on Mount Tia from in front of Dr. Dhanya. Dr. Jay Jay came to call Dhanya. Meanwhile, several people arrived at Navarasa and patted Dr. Dhanya on the shoulder, without telling her the things that couldn't be conveyed by simply calling her. The sins committed last year on the slopes of the Tia hills of Wankhosung. The nuns who had heard them confess their sins were burned, their Bibles wrapped in charcoal. They lay there on the ground. Dr. Jay Jay spoke about the untouchable Alipis, the Wezambal festival, and the songs composed by the Ao tribes at Toka Imong, the main festival of Wokha. Rashmi combed her hair and recounted the sins committed by Dr. Jay Jay. She had come to let her hair down by the window. Outside the homestay, rain was continuously falling onto the lawn from

the sloping roof. Behind the clouds creeping across the overcast sky, the Tia mountains of Wankhosung were occasionally clearly visible. Chitra's hands were trembling as she arrived at the rehearsal, and drops from the glass of hot tea were falling onto Chitra's saree, and Anushree noticed the emptiness that was reflected on Chitra's face in the darkness. The sounds stuck in the organ began to resonate, and Dr. Jay Jay's long, red, blood-stained fingers were administering injections with a syringe, moving straight and then back. Gayatri, who was singing in the choir, her voice flowing in soft, effortless waves in the Dhansiri.

Chapter 2

The city of Dimapur was founded in the 13th century by the Kachari rulers, who were driven out of their territory in Assam by the invading Ahom people along the banks of the Dhansiri River. Unable to walk at the Kachari Rajbari, Dr. Jay Jay heard faint movements in the Potha forest and saw them fall through strands of hair glistening in the sunlight. Dr. Jay Jay shook his head, wiped his forehead with a towel, rested his cane and bag on the steps of the Kachari Rajbari, and held his breath. The fatigue of the journey left him, and he merged into the crumbling ruins. The Kachari Rajbari came to the world's attention in 1840. It was built by the Kachari king Chokradhos. Before the invasion of the Ahom dynasty, which ruled the Dhansiri valley, these areas, including present-day Dimapur, were under the control of the Kachari kingdom. Along the Dhansiri River: Walk past the numerous structures built during the Kachari dynasty, most of which have disappeared. The remains are mushroom-shaped domes. The ruins of the Kachari Rajbari consist of a series of pillars. Some of these pillars are in ruins, while others still stand majestically. The mushroom-

shaped domes are 30 carved megaliths considered symbols of fertility. During the British rule, Lieutenant Grange, an officer of the colonial government of Assam, first brought this region to the attention of the outside world through an expedition he undertook through the hills of Nagaland. He recorded his expedition in 1840 and published a part of his account in the journal of the Asiatic Society. According to him, this forested area belonged to a fort. Dr. Jay Jay took the bag off one shoulder and placed it on the other. He took off his coat and put it in the bag. The blowing wind awakened him. The trees above, the red carpet of Gulmohar in the forest below. The wind that moves the sheep: Rashmi had heard all about the people who went hunting in the forests of Gwalior. Memories that had surfaced like a part of their past life suddenly plunged into darkness. Dr. Jay Jay quickened his pace and disappeared into the forest. Further on, in the master's classrooms, Grange's description of Dimapur mentions several pillars of varying styles, a gateway, a broken bastion, palace walls, and a small fort in the northern part. The fort is said to have three sides and a moat. Grange notes that it was built by Chokrados, the fourth king of the Kachari dynasty, according to oral tradition. In 1874, Major H. Godwin Austen, an officer of the Topographical Survey of India, attempted to study the area further. He describes these structures as a well-preserved gateway and rows of mushroom-shaped pillars of varying sizes, the tallest of which was 15 feet high, and most of the pillars were 12 to 13 feet tall. Some researchers speculate that these structures resemble phallic symbols and are shaped like lingams, which may have been

important at the time, while others speculate that they were for entertainment, like the game of Chaturanga. Many experts favor the Chaturanga idea. Whatever the reason, one thing is certain: these pillars are definitely a unique structure. Hidimbapur is the place where Dr. Jay Jay of Dimapur takes a spear from the forest. Ghatol Kachan, who slays Duryodhana's army and falls to Karna's spear, is a soldier of the Kachari royal court. The 30 pillars of the Kachari royal court temple - the doctor went from the forest to the Barbari Kanta temple. Ghatol Kachan's son is Barbarikan. Barbarikan is the one who gives Shiva the trident. The name Kachari Rajbari comes from Barbarikan, and Kachari Rajbari was the capital of Barbarikan. During his business trip to Ladakh, Dr. Jay Jay also visited the Hidimba Temple on the banks of the Beas River in Manali. Bhima had killed Hidimba and married her, and they had a son named Ghatol Kachan. In his burning memories, Dr. Jay Jay brought Hidimba with him, carrying Akshaya's bowl. Hidimba was Bhima's favorite wife. Bhima and Hidimba formalized their marriage in the forest until they had a son. The Pandavas accepted this proposal on the condition that they enjoy their married life and then Bhima would return to them. Ghatol Kachan married Ahilawati, and their sons were Barbarikan, Ajna Parva, and Meghavarna. Wherever I looked on the banks of the Dhansiri River, I saw large stones scattered around. I took out my glasses from the green bag that Dr. Jay Jay had bought for Anushree and put them on. When I looked at them, I saw a great darkness. It wasn't black like night, but a stream of black light. Dr. Jay Jay stepped onto it and walked carefully,

taking care not to touch the stones. A washerwoman washing clothes on the stones looked up. Her hands were raised in the air. Seeing Dr. Jay Jay walking alone and quietly, the dogs on the banks of the Dhansiri River barked loudly, baring their teeth and mouths, and ran after him. The dogs did not dare to go near the doctor. Dr. Jay Jay

Chapter 3

Trisha's pet dog, Zoro, died in December. Christmas was not celebrated in Dimapur. Christmas celebrations had also been suspended in Bethlehem after the war. Trisha was trying to reach Dimapur because she was going to Valluvar Kottam in Chennai for a decorative fish exhibition. A red alert had been issued in Dimapur after a cloudburst. The Brahmaputra River originates from Lake Manasarovar in Arunachal Pradesh. Its source is the Chemayungdung Glacier located on Mount Kailash near Lake Manasarovar. Flowing through the Himalayas, several smaller streams join the Brahmaputra. Initially, it flows eastward through the Himalayan mountain range. In China, the Brahmaputra is known as Yarlung Tsangpo, and in Bangladesh, it is known as Jamuna and Meghna. Trisha saw the Dhansiri River joining the Brahmaputra River near Guwahati. This river originates from the Eastern Himalayas and flows through the Kameng district of Arunachal Pradesh, passing through the Sessa and Eagle Nest Wildlife Sanctuaries and the Pakke Tiger Reserve. The Kameng River, also known as the Bharali River, originates

from glaciers located below the Gorichen mountain range. The Chemayung River, the Himalayas, the Gorichen mountain range, everything flows here. In Dimapur, the Yarlung Tsangpo River joins the Dhansiri. River disputes, electrical goods, Dr. Jay Jay, national permit lorries, goods being loaded from the warehouse by laborers from Bihar, and all this was constantly in the news. The dog at the warehouse was also given a bath that morning. The eastern part of the Eagle Nest and Sessa Wildlife Sanctuaries is irrigated by the Tipi River, which joins the Kameng River at Tipi village on the Daluk Pong-Bomdila highway. Other major rivers flowing through West Kameng district are the Ganga, Bichom, and Dirang Chu, which are tributaries of the Kameng River. Most rivers in the Indian subcontinent have feminine names, but the Brahmaputra River has a masculine name, a rare exception. In Sanskrit, Brahmaputra means "son of Brahma." Both India and China generate hydroelectric power from the Brahmaputra River. Since the river flows through deep gorges, building dams in the mountains is risky, which is why power generation from other rivers, including the Dhansiri, is limited. The Dhansiri River flows through dense pine forests and reaches one of the world's highest rainfall areas. During the monsoon season, the Dhansiri River carries a massive volume of water. In the summer, melting snow from the Himalayas also contributes to the Brahmaputra's flow. The Mongols of Ulaanbaatar established a culture in Dimapur. The Mongol Darad were nomadic people who traveled on horseback along the Dhansiri River until the 18th century. Genghis Khan, Kublai Khan, Subutai, Ögedei Khan,

Sana Bazar, D. Sükhbaatar, Hulagu Khan, T. S. Daminu Surén, Asroi, Akinori. Memories and debates surrounding Mongol-era leaders along the Dhansiri River remain vibrant even today. The Hornbill Festival, celebrated in December, transforms Nagaland's Dhansiri River valley into a paradise for solitary travelers. The rich culture, lush vegetation, and centuries-old traditional cultural heritage make Nagaland one of the most colorful states in India. The hornbill is an integral part of the Dhansiri's culture, and 16 tribal communities believe that their culture thrives on the music of the hornbill.

Chapter 4

When we say documentary, we mean the 11 districts of Nagaland where the Dhansiri River flows: Kohima, Phek, Mokokchung, Chung, Wokha, Suha Boto, Suven Sang, Mon, Dimapur, Kiphire, Longleng, Peren. This documentary, completed after traveling through all these districts, was screened by Kerala Vision in 2009. It also included an interview with the girl who made the documentary. The Nagas believe that Longkhum is the resting place of the souls of the dead, from where they embark on their journey to heaven. Many historical and religious stories are prevalent in the villages of Nagaland. Nagan Babu is known as Nagan Babu because he lived here and shared these stories. Longkhum is known as the vegetarian capital of Nagaland. The vegetables from here are sent to Burma, Mongolia, Bengal, and Assam by boats on the Dhansiri River. Anushree and Trisha Pujitha Menon, after arriving at Navarasa Solo Trippers, saw that every corner of the village was filled with vegetables, from tomatoes to cabbage. Hornbill birds were flying from the banks of the Dhansiri River towards the Saramati mountain range. Tourists come to

Saramati looking for distant views of Burma. From Longwa, you can experience India, Nagaland, and Burma. Longwa is a place where the people consider the borders of Burma and India as mere lines. The locals here have dual citizenship. Snow-capped Saramati mountain ranges, dense forests below. Mamita had already booked her seat for the Hornbill festival in December during her Navratri solo trip. Answara had understood from reading and hearing stories that rejection and humiliation cause a lot of pain and wounds. I heard Answara narrating the Dhansiri novel. Has it been edited? Is Answara a character in it? Where? In which chapter does Answara appear? Anaswara can be seen in the three chapters edited by the messenger. Nagaland has 16 tribes, the most powerful of which is the Konyak tribe. These people, who cross the Patkai mountain range and possess mountain strength and wildness, are the tribal kings of Burma and India. A chair from a British helicopter that crashed in Burma during World War II is kept there. Whatever the villagers on the Myanmar side find, a portion of it goes to the king, and the rest goes to the palace. The Konyak people are skilled hunters. If they hunt a tiger or a buffalo, its head and legs belong to the king. The king's palace is filled with animal skulls, given as gifts of love by his subjects. Anaswara toured the palace to learn about the deceased royal families who were buried on beds adorned with tiger heads. They wear green garments, necklaces made of tiger teeth, and metal skull lockets. Longwa is the land of the Konyak kings. It is a very beautiful and picturesque border village in the Mon district of Nagaland. Nagaland time is one hour ahead of

Myanmar. Anushree informed Anaswara about this over the phone. The spirit of the Konyak kings who cross the Patkai mountain range is compared to that of a tiger. Drums are used as a means of communication to convey news and warnings from the palace to the entire village. The walls are adorned with pictures of the king's coronation and pictures of dignitaries who visited the palace. The Oling festival is celebrated in the courtyard of this palace. It is a harvest festival celebrated in April. On that day, the entire village dances in colorful clothes, and there is a special war dance performed by the warriors. The theme of their dance is always war. Even their dance postures resemble fighting an invisible enemy, and various weapons hang from their bodies. Angkh was the title of the ruler of the Konyak kings. The Angkhs would marry a daughter from a neighboring village and then pass on the power to their son. Anushree, Anashwara, Mamita, Trisha, and Pujita, who had come on the Navratri pilgrimage, all went to see the king's kitchen. They saw a large and clean kitchen. Many gifts given by the villagers hung above the stove. Animal skulls, horns, and pork also hung above the stove. Tea water was always boiling on the stove, which had doors that opened on both sides. One part of the kitchen was completely covered with pearl necklaces and decorations made by the queens. The king sacrificed a Mithun (a type of bovine) and prepared a grand feast for the Navras guests who had come on the Navratri pilgrimage. This dish was made of smoked meat and bamboo shoots. The palace is a large seven-room palace, with the carcasses of hunted animals hanging on the kitchen wall. The queens who cooked in the kitchen would present

garlands they had made to the Navras. The Navras regularly visit this palace during the festivals in April and December. Anashwara asked Pujita, "Who is Mithun?" Pujita explained that Mithun is a type of bovine.

Chapter 5

The beautiful housewives with deep-set noses had transformed Dhanya's house into a homestay. The fog from the Burmese mountains had begun to cover the valleys. Fearless men were walking towards Burma across the border. Women working in India would carry baskets on their shoulders, laden with rice, vegetables, and firewood, and travel to Burma. The entire meaning of Dhanya's heaven and earth is defined by Dhanya herself in the hands of the Brahmaputra River. Wongsha, an old man who carries children on his shoulders, lives as the guardian of Dhanya's house in both Burma and India. A short walk from there, towards Burma, leads to Morang. Morang is the place where the traditional knowledge of the Konyak tribe is passed on to the new generation of boys. Morang is where everything from hunting and food processing to headhunting and other martial arts is taught. When I returned, the sun was setting by the banks of the Dhansiri River. A cool breeze was touching the Saramati mountain ranges, and the full moon was rising above the clouds and mountains. Dhanya wished the night would never end. The

villagers' lives are simple; agriculture, life, dance, and song make life rhythmic. At dawn, I went to meet the chief Angkh Raja. Discussions about preparing facilities for the nine rasas (emotions/moods) had also been completed. From the Saramati mountain range, the Dhansiri River can be seen flowing. To the west of Saramati lies Myanmar, full of lush green mountains, and India, brimming with natural beauty. There is a watchtower near the border stone. From there, Dhanya's house appears like a dot in the distance. From here, the guardhouses built by Dhanya for the people who went from India to Myanmar to work as farmers are also visible. Dhanya and her companions continued to cultivate their agricultural land by gathering grains from the dense forests. On the return journey, there was always torrential rain during the months of June, July, and August. The rain, carried by the wind that caressed the Saramati mountain ranges and embraced the Dhansiri River, became music for the hornbill birds. The sound of the rain knew no boundaries. It provided equal moisture to the soil and nature of both India and Burma, making them fertile. Dhanya's house has a door covered in intricate carvings. The room is decorated with the skulls of hunted animals, beaded necklaces, and masks made by the villagers. A teapot is always simmering on the hearth, and the fire never goes out. Above the hearth, hanging in the smoke to dry, are crows, chickens, hornbill birds, pieces of pork, baskets of firewood, and many other items. On the threshold, a wooden sculpture of a Konyak man and woman is placed, along with a Naga drum made of palm leaves (also called a long drum), and the rhythmic

sound produced by striking the wood can be heard. This might be to announce a death, a birth, a marriage, a festival, or to warn of wild animals entering the village. The mist rising from the mountains of Burma had begun to envelop the houses.

Chapter 6

Wong Sha's wife, Nepo, returned with a piece of sorghum cooked in mustard oil. She showed him the huge tree by the Dhansiri River where the headhunters hung their heads. From the Saramati Mountains, the pine trees where the headhunters hung their heads were visible. The sun's rays were falling on the pine trees, reminding her of the blood that had flowed into the Dhansiri River. The fog had lifted from the Saramati Mountains, and Nepo remembered that it was on these very pine trees along the Dhansiri River that the warriors had hung their heads. The blood-soaked heads hanging from the pine trees were washed clean in the Dhansiri River and presented to the king of Ank by the warriors. The Dhansiri River was stained with the blood of the barbaric warrior who had sacrificed his life for the protection of Dharma. The only wish of that barbaric warrior was to witness the beginning and end of the holy war. For this reason, his head was placed on a hill near Kurukshetra, and the headhunters cherish the memories of the holy war in the Dhansiri River. The months of June, July, and August were the rainy season. The Kuhi flowers

had begun to bloom on the Saramati mountain ranges, and Kohima was bustling with people. Taimuddin had forbidden the Mongols from plundering their enemies without permission. The blood-stained pine trees of the Mongols, even after their heads were cut off and hung, left many shadows on the pine trees along the Dhansiri River. The Naga people are a race formed from a mixture of Mongols and Indians. They became residents of Nagaland. They live in Kohima, which is adorned with Kohima flowers. The Mongols were nomadic pastoralists who lived in small tribes. They often clashed with each other along the Dhansiri River. Between seasonal camps, the Mongols raised cattle, sheep, yaks, and camels. The Mongol Empire, founded by Genghis Khan in 1206, was the largest contiguous empire in written history. The Mongol Empire stretched from the Danube River in Hungary to the Yellow Sea in China. Genghis Khan, also known as Temüjin, conquered the nomadic Mongols in the 13th century. The Mongol Empire officially ended in the 14th century after the unification of Turkic groups. The rise of the Mongol Empire was facilitated by heavy rainfall and a temperate climate. Periods of warm and humid weather promoted the growth of local vegetation. This allowed the Mongols to raise more cattle for food and more horses for warfare. At that time, the Dhansiri River was more fertile and capable of supporting a large number of horses. This was crucial for the development of the Mongol Empire, as Mongol soldiers were skilled horsemen and archers. Along the Dhansiri River, the Mongol army was primarily cavalry, giving them high mobility and speed. Their operations and strategies

were guided by signals and a well-organized messenger service. The Dhansiri River became a place where people voluntarily offered peace before being invaded, leading to conversions. A society developed along the Dhansiri that kept written records of events. Continuous contact was maintained between societies and nations, and through the Mongols, Nagaland became a prominent state of India.

Chapter 7

After a period of intense heat, residents of Dimapur woke up to heavy rains on the morning of June 11, 1998. However, the Sunday cheer turned into a nightmare for Nagan Babu as the rains caused severe flooding in several colonies and low-lying areas. Several areas, including Police Colony, Vilhue Colony, Forest Colony near Holy Cross School, and Lengrijan, were submerged. With the onset of the monsoon season, flooding in Dimapur due to the overflowing Dhansiri River had become a common occurrence, inundating roads, residential buildings, and drains. Many residents of the affected settlements reported that they faced this flooding every year, with the rising water levels of the Dhansiri River damaging their homes and properties. Nagan Babu's personal belongings, kitchen utensils, household appliances, and everything else were destroyed in the flood. Flooding of the Dhansiri River is a common occurrence. The main reasons for the flooding during the monsoon season are attributed to the lack of proper urban planning and haphazard infrastructure development in Dimapur town. Additionally, illegal dumping of waste has led

to clogged drains. Officials of the Dimapur Municipal Council were also aware of these problems. Therefore, the Dimapur Municipal Council had announced a program to undertake comprehensive cleaning of all drains under its jurisdiction before the onset of the monsoon. Nagan Babu noted that the Indian Meteorological Department had predicted heavy rainfall in some places in Nagaland and other northeastern states on Sunday evening. Residents of Nagaland and Assam living near the Dhansiri River were staying at a school in Dimapur. Nagan Babu was also staying at the same school. The ground floor of the school was badly flooded, and the furniture and other belongings had to be immediately moved to the first floor. Animals kept in cowsheds and pigsties were moved to safer places to prevent them from drowning in the floodwaters. The statement read, "The staff and students will be happy to have a holiday tomorrow." Although the statement was written in a lighthearted tone, it underscored the impact of the flooding on the school's regular functioning. While cleaning and relief operations continue, the entire community has been urged to remain vigilant against unexpected weather conditions. According to the Dimapur district administration, the most affected settlements were Sachu, Selian, Grong, Nagarjan, Bor Lengri, and Domokhia rural areas. The Indian Army and Assam Rifles were engaged in rescue operations. The Indian Army and Assam Rifles safely evacuated elderly people, women, and children who were stranded due to the rising water levels of the Dhansiri and Diphu rivers. Dimapur: Continuous rainfall for three days has submerged the houses of residents in

Domokhia village in knee-deep water. Soldiers have provided hot meals to the residents of Dimapur. Electricity and drinking water facilities have been arranged at the relief camps. To address the recurring flood problem in Dimapur, the district administration has also decided to arrest land encroachers. Officials have assured the people that appropriate measures will be taken before the onset of winter. Due to the rising water levels, the DDMA (District Disaster Management Authority) has appealed to the public to avoid fishing, picnicking, and water-related activities along the riverbanks. A wall at the Kohima Police Headquarters collapsed. A wall of the Soil and Water Conservation Department in Kohima also collapsed on Friday. Heavy traffic jams were reported on Nagarjan Road in Dimapur due to flooding. Nagarjan, United Colony, Sachu Colony, Selian Gro Gram Colony, and Burma Camp are among the most affected areas.

Chapter 8:

Wongsha and his wife, Nepa, witnessed the collapse of a mechanized brick factory located on the banks of the Dhansiri River in Dimapur on July 10, 1998. They still remember the scene in July 2025. Wongsha is not answering his phone. The Dhansiri River in Dimapur is overflowing. I remember being told earlier that floods create a sense of surprise and confusion. The cows and pigs that had been swept away had returned to the hollow brick factory. The factory building was destroyed in the flood, and after the water receded, it was used as a cattle shed. For a long time, Wongsha kept all kinds of animals there, including goats, cows, and buffaloes. Babu, an employee of Coolbar, had a factory in Dimapur. Dhanya had heard that the factory was destroyed and swept away in the Dhansiri flood. Only the cattle and Nepai and Wongsha, who loved and cared for them, returned from the factory. The factory had several types of raw bricks. But they all had varying amounts of cement. They were made by mixing sand, stone chips, material excavated from the bed of the Dhansiri River, and other materials. The adoption of concrete-based

alternatives to polluting clay bricks is being presented as an environmentally friendly policy. But experts say this ignores the carbon footprint of the supply chain and the destruction of riverine habitats. Kilns that produce traditional clay bricks by burning coal and wood cause air pollution. Burning 7 million tons of coal emits more than 24 million tons of carbon dioxide. A 2014 study conducted by the Dhaka Department of Environment in collaboration with the World Bank and the Norwegian Institute for Air Research found that most of the air pollution in Dhaka comes from brick kilns. Babu ran an organization in Nagaland that worked on developing less polluting construction materials. They used to transport cement bricks to Dhaka. The government research institute in Dhaka, the Housing and Building Research Institute, has been studying mechanized brick factories located along the Dhansiri River since 1988. The Dhaka government has set a target of eliminating air pollution from the brick industry by 2025. To meet the growing demand for construction materials in Bangladesh, the government is investing in and promoting alternative bricks.

Chapter 9

Flat-nosed Mongolian housewives, with the help of Nepa, had transformed Dhanya's house into a homestay for the April harvest festival. In 2012, members of Navarasa came together and decided to stop the hunting of birds by the Nagas and turn them into bird protectors. In December, millions of red-legged birds gather in Pangti village of Wokha district. Angered by the ban on bird hunting, the Naga tribesmen came out with weapons and arrows to fight. Chaos erupted in the village. But the forest department and the state government took action. Several conservation organizations and students came forward and encouraged the tribals to protect the forests. Gradually, the government planned to find alternative means of livelihood for them, and the villagers' anger began to subside. The small red-legged partridges found in the hills of Pangti are no longer hunted by the villagers. "These birds were our source of livelihood and provided us with income." Although some people still remember hunting the birds, the village has completely transformed into a bird sanctuary. By October, millions of birds from Mongolia and Siberia arrive in Nagaland.

They stay in the mountains of Pangti village for about a month and a half, where they feed on insects. Ten species of red-legged partridges fly to South Africa via Maharashtra. The Amur falcon is a species of falcon that can fly for several days without stopping during its migration. Dhanya saw these falcons flying over the Dhansiri River from the Saramati Mountains. Before 2012, the tribals hunted them and sold them for 10 to 25 rupees per falcon when the market was crowded, and buyers came from even distant districts to purchase them. Large nets were tied along the birds' flight paths. The Naga people also laid nets across the Dhansiri River. It's impossible that the birds, while flying, could see the long, thin white nets strung between the trees used for bird hunting in Pangthi village. The Naga people would catch the birds trapped in the nets, tie their legs, and hang them on a stand. If a net came loose, it would be tied again. On one day, some people would tie the nets as instructed by the Naga leader. The next day, it would be the turn of the others. In this way, all the villagers would get a chance to catch a bird in a month and a half. While strolling on Mount Saramati in the morning, Navarasan saw flocks of hornbill birds and the Amur hornbills that arrive for the harvest festival in April. Trisha, continuing her conversation with Pujita, explained that the sage-tailed owls were actually Amur falcons. Mamita, an animal conservationist and bird lover, had released them into the mountains and forests. Dhanya boiled water for tea in a kettle on the stove, which was still burning. Dhanya had woken up early and prepared several things to dry in the smoke over the stove, such as hornbill beaks, pieces of pork, and a

basket of firewood. Answara was busy with the preparations for the Oling festival in the palace courtyard. The Oling festival is a harvest festival celebrated in April. Pujita, Trisha, and Anushree's brother left their bird watching and animal conservation work in the Rang Park Reserve Forest and started bringing vegetables from the Long Woo vegetable production center to the palace. Without telling anyone, Pujita started playing the drums in the palace. Walking on the road to Burma, when Nepa reached Morang, he took out his bow and arrow from the basket hanging on his shoulder to show Soumya, who had shown interest in learning archery, and shot an arrow at an eagle. From the Saramati mountain ranges, the eagle flew towards the Dhansiri River in search of pine trees. With a dizzying head and a broken bow, the eagle flew along the Dhansiri River, searching for Dhanya's house. Along the banks of the Dhansiri River, amidst the sound of horses' hooves, Mamita was riding her horse, talking to Wongsha in Hindi and English. Suddenly, the rhinoceros fell from her shoulders and collapsed, paralyzed, in front of a house by the riverbank. The veterinarian Surabhi treated the rhinoceros and cured it. As the Ayong festival began, Surabhi released the rhinoceros. The war dance had already started. Surabhi revived the music of the hornbill bird in Long Khum, and this music became the music of the soul of Dhansiri. A grand feast has been organized in Long Khum for Surabhi, who gave life back to the hornbill, which was believed to be dead. Surabhi might return after the Oling festival, the harvest festival held in April. Surabhi never announced her intention to attend the Hornbill Festival in

December. The O Naga tribe believes that Long Khum is the place where the souls of the dead rest during their journey to heaven. The village celebrates Surabhi, who gave life back to the hornbill.

Chapter 10

A similar sound emanates from every house. These sounds compete with each other to silence those who have left their homes and entered society, and then they subside. When those who promised to return after leaving home finally come back, the noise starts again. Coming home, going out into society, then returning home again and collapsing with chest pain—this experience is called life. Nagan Babu, wandering around the houses in Dimapur searching for his German Shepherd dog, was reminded of his old memories of the cool bar in front of the collapsed Holobrick factory. Discussions had begun in the houses along the Dhansiri River about breeding Trisha breed dogs. News of the success of the Aoling festival held in April and the immortal man who made it an integral part of his life had reached even the palace in Burma, along with the Navarasas, for the organization of the Hornbill festival in December. Dhanya had seen Jija in the Dimapur floods, in the army quarters, as a soldier's wife and mother of two children. Amur falcons, which can fly for many days without stopping, were flying over the Dhansiri River and the Saramati

mountains. Jija had also seen them flying over Pangti village. Some pillars of various shapes, a gateway, a ruined minaret or palace walls, a small fort in the north, ponds inside and outside the walls—all were shrouded in the shadow of wasps. Dimaraj wanted to shift his capital to Dimapur. In the Dimasa language, the name of this stream was Dimai Disa, where Dimai means a type of vessel and Disa means stream. The Dimasa rulers of that time collected water in a type of vessel and called it Dimase. During the Kachari period, there was a shortage of water, so they dug the Kharnai lake, which was one of approximately one hundred and fifty-two lakes in the kingdom, and built about fifty-two lakes in and around Dimapur. Dima was one of the one hundred and fifty-two lakes of the Raji period. Dimaraja Kharnai Lake, one of the fifty-two lakes in and around Dimapur. Kharnai Lake is located in Sibnagar Dimasa Bahujan village under the Dhansiri area of Karbi Anglong, Assam. Dimaraja Kharnai spans over 100 bighas. To the east, its northeastern boundary is bordered by the BG railway line and the Dhansiri River. To the west, it is surrounded by the same village and the road leading to Dimapur. To the south, there is the BG railway line and the Dhansiri River. Later, the Dima Disa River gradually widened, forming a tranquil valley on both its banks, suitable for agricultural productivity at that time. Thus, it later came to be known as Dong Siri. That is, the place where the banks of the tranquil valleys are located. Dong means 'is' or 'exists' and Siri means 'peaceful place'. Dong Siri later transformed into Dhansiri. The Dhansiri River originates from Dimakhara, located between Nagaland and the

Dima Hasao district of Assam. The Dhansiri River flows north through Karbi Anglong, Dimapur city, Golaghat district, and finally merges with the Brahmaputra River. In the wildlife-rich Dhansiri forest, located below the Laisang peaks, a German Shepherd dog named Zoro would run to Nagan Babu. While searching for Zoro, Nagan Babu saw several important trees like Intangi along the banks of the Dhansiri River. Due to erosion at the confluence of the Dhansiri and Kapili rivers, the Mikir Hills had become completely isolated. Sitting in a cool bar, Nagan Babu told the nurses from Germany and the nursing students studying to go to Germany that the dog was missing. During the harvest festival in April, the children and families of Wongsha and Nepa ate dog meat curry. Parvati knew this. Parvati hadn't told anyone. Nagan Babu had also eaten dog meat. It is said that Dimapur was founded by the Kachari king Mahamanipha. It remained the capital of the Kacharis until it was captured by the Ahom ruler Suhangmung. Wongsha and his family reported from Mansarovar that the Chinese Ming dynasty had declared the kingdom of Dimapur a sacred place. Ni Pe and Woshang named their children after themselves, such as Lawang Pe and Shourang. Dimapur was built in honor of the former rulers. These mysterious megalithic structures include mushroom-shaped domes, believed to be the chess pieces of giants, and other monuments that reflect the customs and architectural grandeur of the Kachari people. These ruins, adorned with mushroom-shaped pillars, are believed to be associated with the rituals of Phala Bhuista. The Dhanya social teachings provided services. Members of

Navarasa Tour, who bought shawls, bamboo products, and tribal jewelry from the Hong Kong market, had the opportunity to enjoy local delicacies made from fermented bamboo shoots, smoked meat, and fish. The city's restaurants and street food stalls offered Navarasa Niv.