**WANCHO**

Wancho is the best kept secret tribe of Arunachala Pradesh occupying the Patkai hills of Longding district in the Northeast state of Arunachal Pradesh, India. The irksome and appalling a site practice of head-hunting of the Wanchos in the past, their warrior streak, their ethnic dresses, language, cuisine, and their song, music and dances make them fame across the region. The tribe’s name Wancho according to their interpretation is derived from a local term "Wang-Cho", meaning, the hill of Wang flower or hillmen living under the rule of king. The Wanchos were known as the Nagas of East or the Banferia Nagas during the pre-independence period and at the time of the British India Administration. During the days of Ahom king, they were Bar-Mithunias, Haru Mithunias, Banferias, Bar-Banchang and Haru-Banchang. The tribe name 'Wancho' become widely accepted after the administration of area was taken over by the Indian government post-independence. The Wanchos are Tibeto-Burmese ethnic group of mongoloid stock and speak Northern Naga language of Tibeto-Burman language family. The tribe claims to have migrated to their present habitat from a place called Nyannu, situated towards the south-west beyond the Patkai hills or Purvanchal ranges. From Nyannu they travelled to the current habitation via Tangnu and Changnu, two villages of Tuensang district of Nagaland. Those who came via Tangnu are called Tangjan and the others who came via Changnu are called Changjan. These two are the main divisions of the Wanchos. They have an estimated population of around 35,000 people. The Wancho together with the Nokte of Tirap district of Arunachal Pradesh, and Konyak of Mon, Nagaland still retain the belief and practices of Animism and have not much deviated from the original practices of their religion. The Animist Wancho believe in the existence of two prominent and powerful deities, Rang and Baurang. However, many Wanchos have gravited toward Christianity. Their main indigenous festival is Oriah celebrated for a week or so in March-April every year. The Wancho dance is a popular dance form during festivities and has quite a noble touch to it. Men dance with a decorated cane busket hanging around their waists and carry swords in their right hand while dancing. The distinct part of the Wancho dress is a coloured shoulder band. Tattooings play a major role among the Wancho tribe. Tattooing in their language is called Hu, but Chu is the more common term. The Wancho society is patrineal as the property devolves in the male line. The law of primogeniture operates for the eldest son inherits property. The political organization of the Wanchos is quite developed. Every village has a council of elders called Wangchu - Wangcha presided by the village chief.

Wancho population is 56,886 as per 2011 census report.