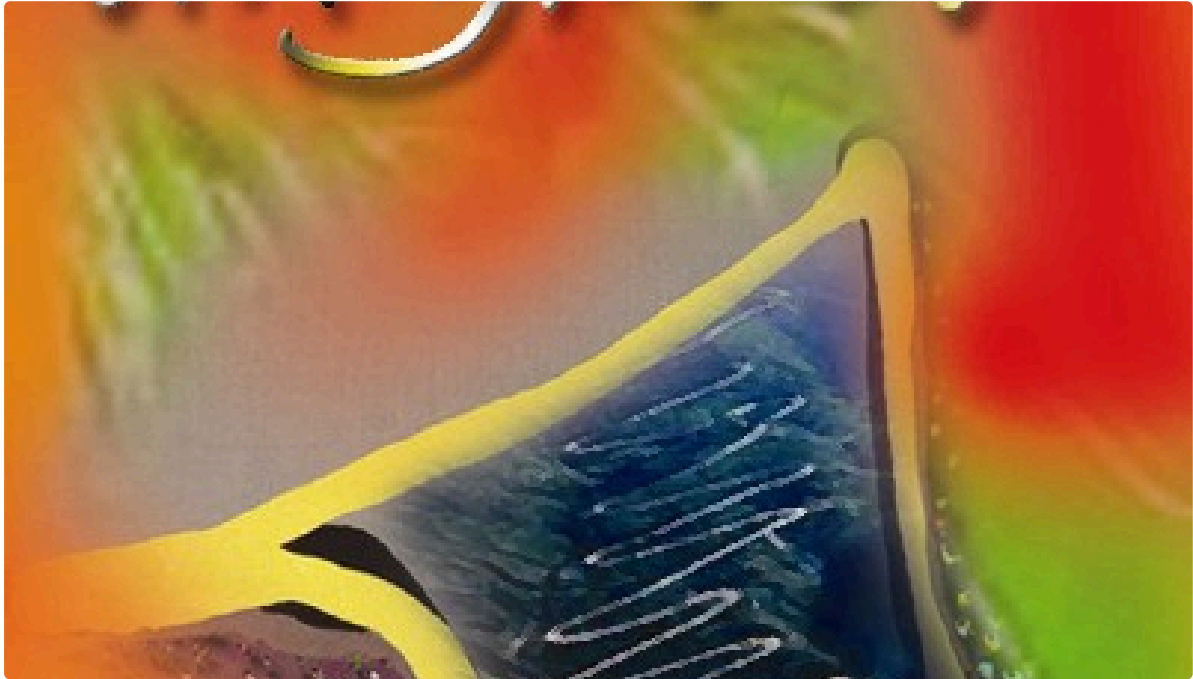


Stillwell Road to be resurrected in Ledolam



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Ritupallab Saikia 24 December 2012 13633 views

It was the winter of the year 1942, Ledo, the small, beautiful and quite town of upper Assam have been seeing a flurry of activity. A 1726 Km long road link stretching upto Kunming in China via Myanmar is being constructed from the Zero Point in Ledo. It was the time when the terror of World War II has taken everybody in its grip. Japan has intensified its attack on the Allied Forces and as a part of their war strategy Japs have cut down all communication links between India and China. The stiff picks of Himalayas have come in the way of the only air route left to transport arms and ammunition from India to China. Already many pilots of the allied force have lost their life in this Himalayan supply line better known as “The Hump”. To keep the chances of allied forces alive in the WWII, they need an alternative route to supply arms, ammunition and logistics to China. General Joseph Warren Stilwell of United States Army has been entrusted with this herculean task of building the road link that connects India with China.

Atlast after two years of toil, sweat, hardship and sacrifice of precious lives of thousands of young soldiers, under the leadership of Stilwell the long, seemingly never ending road way from Ledo to Kunming was completed. Among the thousands of American soldier there was a young American named George Jonathon who amidst the turmoil of the War and the demanding job of completing the road way had a chance meeting with Radha, a young damsel hailing from a tea garden of Ledo. Did George survive till the completion of the road and was he destined to meet Radha. The answers to all these heart touching event will be revealed in “Ledolam”, a novel penned by one of the most read novelist of the present generation Juri Borah Borgohain. Ledo is known as Ledolam in local Singpho language.

In her interaction with Assam Times, Borgohain said that the idea to write a novel on historic Stilwell road was germinated in her mind when she had been to Joyrampur in Arunachal Pradesh in February, 2008.

“There I had a chance to visit a Chinese soldiers’ cemetery of soldiers who have laid down their life in the construction of the Stilwell road and I was highly touched by it and that is when I have decided to write a novel centering around the plot of the history behind the Stilwell road and it would be a fitting dedication and homage to all those nameless soldiers and laborers who died building the road” she added. The novel is expected to hit the stall within this month.

Ritupallab Saikia

BY RITUPALLAB SAIKIA

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