A PEACE PACT is established between two communities that may be in a conflict situation, or even between ones at peace (if they need to set up trade, for instance). It may also be a renewal of an old pact. This is initiated by two individuals from each area who are the most involved, often local leaders. Later the first, second and third of kin may become the ones responsible for keeping the peace. Each will hold a token of his status.

There are a number of stages in establishing the budong:

1. **Palanos/Inom** – A feast given by a host where potential peace pacts may be generated. Two people may meet and conceive of the idea of a peace pact. They may decide to talk it over with their respective regional heads when they get home.

   In their respective regions, a search is done for possible powerful prospective peace pact holders.

2. **Sipat/Alasiw** – The selected persons exchange spears or other tokens and the period of truce is declared for a specified period.

3. **Simsim/Singlip** (the tasting) – There is an actual meeting between the two leaders. All grievances are discussed to find the basis for settling differences. A date is set for the next meeting.

4. **Lonok/Inom** – This is a big affair where the issues raised are reviewed and then a set of provisions drafted, usually written in a document called the *pagta*. The regulations for a particular budong are set down to define what are to be strictly observed. This need not be celebrated in the same year. The pact celebrations (renewal, transfers, warm ups) take place during the dry season from March through May. *Lonok* is a two-night affair. The guests arrive from the early morning of the first day until the end of mid-morning of the third day. The first day is devoted to dancing, singing and presentation of skits and plays by children. The serious discussions do not begin until the second day when the *pagta* is worked out.

5. Upon the announcement that the *pagta* is accepted, the pact holders and their wives form a double line facing each other. They drink wine in a bowl on top of inverted mortars, without touching the bowl. This is called the *totom* or wine-drinking ritual. Then gong playing and dancing continue.

6. **Pokaw/Paliwat** – What follows are boasting sessions (*palpaliwat*) by men, chanted and made to rhyme. This concludes the peace pact celebration in the mid-morning of the third day. Guests are given gifts of food or clothing as they go home.
AT NIGHTFALL, elder men from an ato, the men’s ward in a village, go to Mt. Kalawitan to keep fire and watch in the fawi, the place of the great ancestors. They go fully armed with their spears, head-axes and shields. One of the youngest in the group carries a chick in a fiki, a small basket. While going up the mountain, the chick is induced to chirp along the way. The chirping announces to the anitos (spirits) that men are coming and to make their intentions clear. Upon reaching the fawi, they begin to dance to a rhythm created by the beating of their shields. Others gather firewood and build a fire to be kept burning through the night. The oldest in the group recites the kapya, the prayer pleading for rain, so that the plants in the terraces will not die.

The following day, they perform the palis in the ato, where a chicken is again offered for the same purpose. In the evening, they have the gong, pattong, playing through the whole night.

If the rains still fail to come, the elders gather in their ato and decide to undertake the pal-layog ritual. This time, five pigs are prepared for sacrifice. Someone is asked to go to the mountains to get tikem (sacred plant) for a sangfo, a kind of canao or ritual feast. Again, the elders gather to select the house in the village where the sacrifices will be made and will bear the tikem. On the same day, the village observes a tengao. The women go out for the pasuk’ey bearing gifts of tobacco leaves to all men in the different ato. If after these the rains still do not come, they perform a group prayer, manaing, to beg rain from Lumawig. But if the deity is still adamant, they again observe a tengao and then perform the layaw where they club or beat one another, or run away with the possessions of others in a show of general chaos to show Lumawig their desperation. If the plea remains unheeded, they go on an extended tengao. At the end of this period, usually, the rains fall.

JTP

BONTOC, MOUNTAIN PROVINCE, NORTHERN LUZON ISLAND, NORTHERN PHILIPPINES. This fire ritual is observed by the Bontoc in the municipality of Besao, in Mountain Province, Northern Luzon.