



ASECA CHANNEL

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Editorial

Tribal society is from time immemorial being administered by the traditional headmen or the selected or elected representatives. The life of tribal people and social order have been largely influenced and controlled by these elected or selected people. Every group has its own ways and means to frame rules and different control mechanism. The system and usage in the society are framed and put into practice by these people and they are and have been responsible for the well being of the members of the society and continuation of a social order. The isolation, self-sufficiency and adequacy of administrative mechanism in the respective group have limited their scope to explore other methods for the administration and maintenance of the group. The customs and usages are tailor-made and adopted to suit the expectations and requirements. The extent of control, hierarchy and management practices were framed and adopted accordingly. The influence of such headmen in the respective society has been immense and is prevalent and in use till to date. These seats of authority have been duly approved by the society and are respected, honoured and followed in letter and spirit. It can be seen that arrangement and practice are adequate to address the grievance of the society and these social headmen are given required authority and power. The main reason of not being able to exercise their authority and power is lack of knowledge in using their good office in a better way. This perhaps is due to the fact that traditional arrangements are revolved around oral tradition. In the absence of any written down documents, the religious or social rule book, management of the affairs of the society has not been smooth. The inability to transform the traditional arrangement into legal or institutional arrangement is limiting the scope to convince people about the relevance, goodness, richness of tribal way of life or culture.

Apart from the traditional arrangement, change in the social pattern and increasing influence of modern theory and practice has also influenced the life of tribal groups in a great way. The emergence of some association in addition to the traditional institution for the

welfare of the people can be cited as example. The society's welfare has been the main concern among the protagonists of these associations. The noble idea to do something good has inspired them to take initiatives. The sense of urgency and relevance has made them worried from time to time and thus emerged a number of associations or groups to do something special and new. A number of such associations are operating throughout the country and these are doing their jobs as per their capability and understanding. From time to time, it is experienced that these organizations are also not being able to bring about desired / expected results though their contribution and involvement has been continuous and immense. There may be some difficulties in realizing the desired effects or results but their existence has been recognized, respected and acknowledged.

The emergence of social organizations backed by the official recognition threw insights to the prevailing outlook. Their efforts were directed towards augmenting the initiative and work of the traditional institution. The traditional headmen or people in general welcomed the initiative undertaken by the educated mass of the respective society. The initiative has indeed augmented the work undertaken hitherto by the traditional headmen.

It is observed that the group of people who have been engaged in activities related to overall development of the society have grown old and the youngsters in such organizations are conspicuous by their absence. The generation gap has thrown open a challenge as to who will augment the strength in the society. The traditional arrangement is not adequate or well equipped to confront the challenges of the modern day politics or life style. The forces of young people are required to fill the hiatus and the new and renewed force should be welcome in such fold for the betterment and bright future of the respective society. The responsibility needs to be shared among the people old and young alike to see the emergence of a vibrant society. The respected seniors should start identifying the talents for their due absorption in the system of present social or cultural associations.

Tribal Scheduled and Areas in Orissa

(Continued from October 2008 issue)

Provided that the reservation for the Scheduled Tribes shall not be less than one-half of the total number of seats;

Provided further that all seats of Chairpersons of Panchayats at all levels shall be reserved for the Scheduled Tribes;

h) the State Government may nominate persons belonging to such Scheduled Tribes as have no representation in the Panchayat at the intermediate level or the Panchayat at the district level:

Provided that such nomination shall not exceed one-tenth of the total members to be elected in that Panchayat;

i) the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be consulted before making the acquisition of land in the Scheduled Areas for development projects and before re-

settling or rehabilitating persons affected by such projects in the Scheduled Areas; the actual planning and implementation of the projects in the Scheduled Areas shall be coordinated at the State level;

j) planning and management of minor water bodies in the Scheduled Areas shall be entrusted to Panchayats at the appropriate level;

k) the recommendations of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory prior to grant of prospecting licence or mining lease for minor minerals in the Scheduled Areas;

l) the prior recommendation of the Gram Sabha or the Panchayats at the appropriate level shall be made mandatory for grant of concession for the exploitation of minor minerals by auction;

(To be continued...)

OBITUARY

Shri Durga Charan Majhi (Tudu) (15.5.1962 - 27.8.2008)

It is not possible to know the time of departure from this world. A person with social bend of mind thinks many things for the welfare of the society. But untimely death washes out all the aspirations and ambitions dreamt about by the individual. The death of Shri Durga Charan Majhi (Tudu) in his prime age has deprived the society a lot especially his contribution and guidance. Durga Babu was born on 15.5.1962 to Late Raghunath Tudu and Mrs. Kapura at Raidahi village under Kushalda post in Udala Sub Division of Mayurbhanj District, Orissa. From his childhood, he had the inclination to help others and to do something different constructive for the welfare of the society. He had a dream to see the society flourish and achieve all round development and particularly to promote and propagate Santali education through Ol Chiki. His educational qualification (B. Ed. & CT) had come handy in offering insights and methods to propagate Santali education mainly to eradicate illiteracy from the society. As a teacher and President of ASECA Udala Branch, Mayurbhanj he had blended both the position for the welfare of the Society. The persons who knew him would agree that the society has lost a great son and thinker. Let's hope the members of ASECA Udala Branch will carry forward his unfinished work and keep ASECA's flag flying at Udala.

We had last met on 10.5.2008 at Khunta. We were informed about his illness and suddenly news came about his death. ASECA CHANNEL prays God to bless the bereaved family particularly his mother, wife Mrs. Jira Tudu, daughter Parayni and son Soner Raghu with enough strength to bear the irreparable loss and the departed soul with eternal peace.

Scheduled Communities: A social Development profile of SC/STs (Bihar, Jharkhand & W.B)

(Source: Planning Commission)

{Continued from October 2008 issue}

West Bengal

As in Jharkhand very few among the Scheduled Tribes, only 12 households, (2.6 percent) have taken loan.

- ❖ Among the Santhal 4 have taken loan from the money lenders, 1 for house construction, 1 for social consumption, 2 for agricultural purposes.
- ❖ 3 Oraon and 1 Munda household have taken loan from the money lender for agricultural purpose.
- ❖ As for institutional credit, 3 households of Bhumij and 1 household of Santhal have taken loan from the bank for agricultural purposes.

The tribal pattern of borrowings shows little relationship with money lender/landlords, and even less use of institutional credit. This suggests that there is no dependency relationships with money lenders/landlords, and not much initiative in investment in agriculture or business through institutional loans.

Expenditure Pattern

As discussed earlier, data on expenditure is generally regarded as a more reliable indicator of the economic health of a household than income. In our basket of food items, cereals (rice, wheat, maize, jowar, bajra), pulses, non-cereal items (milk, ghee, cooking oil, spices, egg, meat, fish), vegetable and fruit items, have been included. Among nonfood items we have included, land rent, education, health, transport, fuel, clothes, footwear, paan-tobacco, electricity, liquor, festivals and entertainments. What we wish to gain from such a wide variety of items of consumption is a fair assessment of inter-caste, inter-tribal patterns, as also capture some elements of food cultures.

For example, amongst the Scheduled Castes in Bihar, whilst rice and wheat are consumed in both the panchayat areas (in north and south Bihar), in north Bihar we find the Chamar, Chaupal and Dusadh, additionally consuming maize. Pulses are consumed by all households in Bihar. Thus rice/ wheat and

pulses form common diet for all households. The Dusadh and the Dhobi are good consumers of milk in Patna district (over 60 percent households), whilst in Saran they are fewer (about 10 percent). A similar pattern can be observed with respect to the consumption of ghee in Patna district (50% households of Dhobi and nearly 30 percent households of Dusadh). In the Saran district of south Bihar it is only five percent or less amongst the Chamar, Dusadh and Chaupal. Typically the consumption of meat amongst the SCs in Bihar is high. It is higher in Patna district (Musahar, 98 percent; Dhobi, 75 percent; Dusadh, 71 percent; Chamar, 56.3 percent). In Saran district, 93 percent among Chaupal, 51 percent among Dusadh and 35 percent among Chamar consume meat.

In Jharkhand, rice and wheat are the predominant cereals, wheat being consumed by more households in Ranchi than in the rural areas. Pulses, too form a staple diet.

When it comes to milk, the percentage of households consuming it is much less (30% among the Munda and Oraon and 6 percent of Lohara, in Ranchi; 7 percent of Mahali and 14 percent of Santhal in Dumka; and 4 percent of Ho in West Singhbhum). In Ranchi town 19 percent of Chamar and 4 percent of Dom consume milk. Meat and fish are consumed universally by the STs and SCs in Jharkhand.

In West Bengal, as can be expected, rice is the staple cereal diet for all. When it comes to wheat, between 35 and 62 percent of all SCs and STs consume it in Burdwan; 45 percent in Midnapur; and 35 percent in Darjeeling district. Overall, the SC consumption of wheat is higher than the STs, and among the Santhal it is the least.

Pulses are consumed almost universally, with marginally less consumption among the tribals. Milk consumption among the SCs and STs is not very pronounced (it is less than 10 percent in Burdwan; in Bankura, it is 5 percent of SCs, and 27 percent of

percent of Santhal; in Darjeeling, 21 percent of SC and 12 percent of Santhal). The consumption of ghee is negligible. As for consumption of meat and fish, they are almost universally consumed (around 90 percent and above).

Scheduled Castes

Bihar

In Bihar, the average size of a Scheduled Caste household is 5.69, for which the average annual expenditure on consumption goods is Rs. 20,882. The average annual per capita expenditure works out to Rs. 3670.

Table 4.43: Annual expenditure of Scheduled Caste Households in Bihar (Not reproduced)

- ❖ When we look into the per capita annual expenditure of individual castes, we find that for the Chamar and Chaupal it is below that of State average. Interestingly it is marginally higher among the Chaupal (Rs. 3187) when compared to the Chamar (Rs 2984).
- ❖ Even more surprising, the Musahar has a higher per capita annual expenditure than the Chaupal and Chamar (Rs. 3782).
- ❖ Among the Dusadh it is substantially higher at Rs. 5242.
- ❖ It is highest among the Dhobi with Rs. 9496.
- ❖ When we look into the *average annual expenditure per household*, we find that it is lowest among the Musahar with Rs. 14,182, higher among Chamar (Rs. 18,862), higher still among Chaupal (Rs. 20,016). Predictably, it is highest among the Dhobi at Rs. 83,568.

the lowest per household annual expenditure has a high per capita annual expenditure above the State average?

This is explained by the extraordinarily small size of their household at 3.75 members per household. So, the per household expenditure is low because there are less members to expend on, whereas their per capita expenditure is higher. The per capita expenditure of castes is a function of household size.

Jharkhand

In Jharkhand the position of Scheduled Castes is much better than in Bihar. The average size of household is 5.88 with an average annual expenditure at Rs. 24,690.

Correspondingly, the average per capita expenditure is Rs. 4199.

Table 4.44 : Annual expenditure of Scheduled Caste households in Jharkhand (Not reproduced)

- ❖ In terms of individual castes, the average per capita expenditure of Dom at Rs. 4113 approximates the overall average.
- ❖ As for the Chamar it is higher than that of the Dom (Rs. 4820).
- ❖ The average annual household expenditure pattern is similar to that of the average per capita expenditure. It may be noted that the average size of the Chamar and Dom household is almost the same.

The higher consumption expenditure of both the castes reflects the higher level of urban earning and living.

(To be continued...)

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