



ASECA CHANNEL

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Editorial

In the recent past, there are plenty of activities concerning welfare of the Santals. Apart from other small or local events, there were 5 occasions/conferences in the span of 4 months starting from November 2008. The events are as follows: 1. Annual General Body Meeting & Conference by All India Santali Writers' Association on 8th & 9th November 2008 at Medinipore, 2. International Santal Council Conference at Jamshedpur on 21st & 22nd December 2008, 3. Installation of a statue in the name of Pandit Raghunath Murmu and naming of a road in Bhubaneswar after him organized jointly by Rajgal Jaher Ayo and Department of Culture, Govt. of Orissa at Bhubaneswar on 11th January 2009, 4. ASECA, Rourkela Conference at Rourkela on 1st February 2009 and 5. All India Santal Conference at Keonjhar on 21st and 22nd February 2009.

By any standard, it is amazing. The organizers deserve to be complemented as organizing any event requires time and resource which needs to be arranged. That is why it is difficult than giving suggestions. The organizers have been able to collect resources and spend time and energy to see things happen. It is observed that outcomes from the event or participation of the people are not commensurate with the efforts put in by the organizers. All the time it is expected that this time things are going to happen or things will at least improve but, as usual, the basic problems remain unaddressed. The basic problem concerning participation of the people should be considered first. The attendance will certainly discourage the volunteers who are involved in organizing these events. The attendance is becoming thinner and thinner and from the participation level it is felt as if people have lost interest in social affairs or are thinking that these

activities are irrelevant. The feeling of oneness has certainly taken a backseat may be due to achievement of self independency in terms of monetary gain through employment. Perhaps, one needs to be reminded that s/he should not forget the root, as foundation is equally important in growing and sustaining the position in the society. There is a need to introspect so as to generate a desire of sharing and caring for the welfare of the society. The involvement of young mass is obviously important as the present leadership at social level has grown old or is growing old. The baton of social responsibilities need to be gradually transferred from the senior citizen to the young mass. Otherwise, sooner or later, we are going to feel a vacuum where a situation will arise, no one will be willing or is trained to take social responsibility. This aspect needs to be addressed urgently and people/organisation should start looking out for fresh talents. With the involvement of everyone, there will be harmony, progress and prosperity in the society.

On the other hand, the social workers during interaction reveal about so many problems or problem areas afflicting the society. The prominent among them is the inconsistencies in the official proclamation and implementation. Introduction of mother tongue education though declared by various State Govts., has not been implemented and remained as victim of the official red tapism. The ground reality in other aspects of social life is equally pathetic. Here comes the unity of the people which makes the people, official and/or the government to realize their role and responsibility. For this to happen there is a need to have an overall co-ordination and participation of people as well as organizations. Otherwise, it is rightly said that nobody can diminish you but by yourself.

Sahitya Akademi Awards 2008

Sahitya Akademi awarded 23 authors in different languages for the year 2008 at New Delhi on 17.2.2009. The awardees are: Dr. Rita Chowdhury, Assamese; Mr. Sarat Kumar Mukhopadhyay, Bengali; Mr. Bidyasagar Narzary, Bodo; Dr. Champa Sharma, Dogri; Prof. (Dr.) Suman Shah, Gujarati; Mr. Govind Mishra, Hindi; Mr. Srinivas B. Vaidya, Kannada; Gh. Navi Aatash, Kashmiri; Mr. Ashok K. Kamat, Konkani; Mr. Mantreshwar Jha, Maithili; Late K. P. Appan, Malayalam; Ms. A. O. Memchoubi, Manipuri; Mr. Shyam Manohar, Marathi; Mr. Haiman Das Rai (Kirat), Nepali; Mr. Pramod Kumar Mohanty, Oriya; Mr. Mitter Sain Meet, Punjabi; Mr. Dinesh Panchal, Rajasthani; Dr. Om Prakash Pandey, Sanskrit; Mr. Badal Hembram, Santali; Mr. Hero Shewakani, Sindhi; Mr. Melanmai Ponnusamy, Tamil; Mr. Chitriprolu Krishna Murthy, Telugu; Mr. Jayant Parmar, Urdu.

Badal Hembram, born in 1958 in Kaiti village of Burdwan, West Bengal, holds a Bachelor degree. Besides Santali he knows Bengali, English and Hindi. He started his career as an Apprenticeship at the Gun and Shell Factory and is presently serving at

the same factory as Charge Man I. He has been writing since his school days and has published sixteen one act plays, three novels, three plays, a collection of poems and a collection of short stories. Recipients of Raghunath Murmu award by All India Santhali Writers' Association and felicitated by the West Bengal Government and Dalit Sahitya Akademi.

Manmi (ମନିମି), the collection of short stories by Badal Hembram gives a vivid picture of the life of Santals describing their social problems in an extremely poignant manner. The stories, varied in style and substance, are wonderfully crafted. Hence the book is considered a valuable addition to Indian short fiction in Santali.

The writer can be contacted at: 70/9, Seven Tanks Estate, Gun and Shell Factory Quarter, Dum Dum Road, Cossipore, Kolkata – 700 002, West Bengal, Tel: 033-25466348, Mob: 09433348018, 09051838940

INSTALLATION OF STATUE OF LATE SUNARAM SOREN

The approach and our clarifications were published respectively in the issues of September & October 2008. We have been waiting responses from various quarters. But keeping in view the lukewarm response, the project was thought to have no takers. However, we are delighted to know that there are people who have immense interest but due to time constraint are not able to respond as expected. We are thankful to have the consent of the following for this project.

1. Mr. Bhalanath Tudu, Qr. No. B/9 Sector 16, Rourkela Dist: Sundargarh, Orissa - 769 003
2. Mr. Ramdas Soren, Gudipada, Balasore, Orissa
3. Mr. Pitambar Marndi, New P&T Colony, Sector 6, Rourkela, Orissa - 769 002
4. Mr. Lakhan Besra, Genius Villa, Bhubaneswar

We request others to participate in this effort and let us complete the project together.

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

(Source: Planning Commission)

{Continued from February 2009 issue}

Scheduled Tribes

Jharkhand

Among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand, of the 544 households, 84 (15.4%) have wells, 9 have tap connections and a single household has tank. Of the 84 wells, 66 are in Ranchi town. Thus, the rural scenario is largely one of reaching out for water outside their homes.

Between the Oraon with 42 households (66.7% of all Oraon households), the Munda with 18 households (48.6%) and presumably Lohara with 6 households (10.3%), all the urban households have 78.6 percent of all the wells, leaving 21.4 percent of the wells (18 nos.) for 72.4 percent of rural households (394 nos.).

The 18 households out of 394 rural households, which have the well in their premises, 15 are Santhal (5.0%) and 3 are Mahali (6.3%). None of the 184 households of Ho have a well. This means 50 percent of all tribal urban households and only 4.6 percent of all rural households have well/tap in their homes.

It may be far-fetched at the stage to interpret the source of water among the rural tribal households being located outside their premises as an avoidable deprivation. Given their strong communitarian ties, sharing water as a common resource may be a cultural feature of their tribal organisation.

West Bengal

Of the 557 tribal households in West Bengal, only 49 (8.8%) have wells in their premises. None of the households have hand pumps or tap connections.

Of these 49 wells, 35 are amongst 298 Santhal households. It means that the wells (71.4%) are enjoyed by only 11.7 percent of all Santhal households. As many as 9 Oraon households (11.5%),

but only 3 amongst Lohara and 1 household of Munda have wells.

Once again this is suggestive of a tribal feature rather than a tribal deprivation.

(b) LATRINE

Scheduled Caste

Bihar

Among the Scheduled Castes in Bihar, the members of about 95 percent households (372 nos.) defecate in the open. Only about five percent households (20 nos.) have septic tanks.

With respect to individual castes, 11 households of Dusadh (9.7%) and 4 households of Chamar (2.5%) have septic tank facility in their houses. The Dhobi stands out in contrast with half of their homes having septic tanks.

Jharkhand

Among the Scheduled Castes in Jharkhand, the members of about 52 percent households (29 nos.) defecate in the open, about 27 percent (15 nos.) have septic tanks in their houses. The rest use the community toilet (21%, 12 nos.).

More than half the Chamar households (56%) have private latrines, and a similar percentage of Dom (57.2%) go to community latrine. It is important to note that in an urban setting, more than half the scheduled caste households are still having to defecate in the open.

West Bengal

The picture in West Bengal is not too different from Bihar, with 93.7 percent households (415 nos.) defecating in the open whilst 3.4 percent (15 nos.) use the dug well in the open but inside the compound.

Only 2.9 percent (13 nos.) have septic tanks in their houses.

▪ With respect to individual castes, only one house each of Bagdi, Chamar, Konai, Patni have septic tank. The Dhobi have the highest number of households (23.5%) having septic tanks in their houses.

Jharkhand

When it comes to Jharkhand, 82.0 per cent households (446 nos.) defecate in the open, 1.1 use pit/dug wells outside their houses, 0.4 percent use the community latrine, the rest have septic tanks (16.5% ,90 nos.). As expected most of the septic tanks are located in 84.1 percent of Oraon (63 nos.) and 81.1 percent of Munda (30 nos.) households. One household each of Mahali and Munda are using the community latrine. The Munda and the Oraon are the sample households of Ranchi town.

West Bengal

Among the Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal, the members of 95.7 percent households (533 nos.) defecate in the open, 3.0 percent (13 nos.) use the pit/dug well in the open space outside their residence. Only 1.3 percent households each of Lodha, Oraon, and Bhumij; and 4 households of Santhal have septic tanks. As for pit/dug wells, 5.4 percent of Santhal households (16 nos.) and one household of Lodha are using pit/dug well for defecation.

One thing becomes clear, the pit/dug well within the residential compound is a West Bengal feature.

(c) Cooking Arrangement

Scheduled Castes *Bihar*

FROM:

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ALL INDIA ASECA,
SFS Flat No. 326, Pocket 10,
Sector 11 (Extension), Rohini,
Delhi - 110 085.

Let us now examine the cooking arrangement of Scheduled Castes in Bihar. Most of the Scheduled Caste households in Bihar cook food inside their premises (68.9%). Whilst 15.5 percent households have some kind of a separate kitchen inside their homes, an equal number have to cook outside (15.6%).

Table 5.6 : Cooking arrangements among the Scheduled Castes in Bihar (Not reproduced)

▪ Among the Dusadh, 27.4 percent households have a kitchen arrangement, followed by the Chaupal (17.2%), Chamar (8.8%) and Musahar (5.7%). Among the Dhobi 6 out of 8 households have a separate kitchen (75%).

▪ It will be appropriate to refer to the fuel being used to cook while we are discussing cooking arrangement. Wood is commonly used as cooking fuel.

Interestingly all the 6 Dhobi households having a separate kitchen use gas chulla (75%), whilst 14 households of Dusadh (12.4%), 4 of Chamar (2.5%) and one of Chaupal (2.4%) also possess this kitchen utility.

Jharkhand

In Jharkhand, 21.4 percent households have separate kitchen, the rest 78.6 percent have cooking arrangement inside their homes. None of the households cook outside the residence.

Table 5.7 : Cooking arrangements among the Scheduled Castes in Jharkhand (Not reproduced)

(To be continued...)

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