



# ASECA CHANNEL

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## Editorial

Santali language has not lost its unique characteristics due to which it has been able to retain its user group. It has passed through different phases and ages remarkably with the staunch support of people. During various stages of development, people have used this as a pivotal tool for maintaining solidarity, unity and group identity. It is not the recent or new phenomenon that people are thinking or talking about past, present or future of the Santali language and literature. It is heartening to learn that from time to time efforts were/are being taken for the development of the Santali literature. Traditionally, Santali literature has been mostly oral literature and from time immemorial it has been pursued with desired or more than that thrust. The oral literature refers not to written, but to oral traditions, which includes different types of epic, poetry and drama, folktales, ballads, legends, jokes, and other genres of folklore. It exists in every society, whether literate or not. Pre-literate societies, by definition, have no written literature, but possess rich and varied oral traditions -such as folk epics, folklore and folksong - that effectively constitute an oral literature.

It is a subject matter whether Santals had a written form of communication system. In his book "Austic Civilisation of India", Shri N. N. Hembram opines that Santals had a formal system of communication having their own written treasure which had perhaps been lost in their sojourn. Considering the fact that there is huge treasure of literature material available in the Society, it is worthwhile to recognize the genius qualities of the Society.

Considering the vast literature store in the oral form, which are still to be recorded/documented fully remain in that form only. Every individual person is a source/creator/carrier of literature. They possess that quality. Literary excellence flows naturally with ease from every individual soul in this society.

From the modern perspective, which basically considers written form of literature, many scholars from the Society took upon them the responsibility to create written literature upon becoming literate. The efforts being undertaken by the forefathers are really worth emulating and encouraging. They had also dared to dream on creation of literature in their own mother tongue.

Whatever literature in written form is available to day is due to their untiring efforts. People, though illiterate have not stopped creating literature in their own way.

It is not proper or germane to compare the Santali literature with other literature of the neighborhood linguist groups due to unequal situation and socio-cultural divergence. The language which received patronage flourished whereas others continue to lag behind in the absence of recognition and support. Santali language along with other Adivasi languages languished due to protracted official apathetic policy. The feeling of complex creeps in in the minds of the people whose languages have been subject to neglect and they are forced to think that theirs are in the nascent stage and development is yet to be achieved. The paramount truth is that all languages have their own unique strengths and it is the people who make it great. It is not always true that old language or literature only has the strength to excel whereas others which are of recent development lack that strength to prosper and excel. The requirement is to harness the potential and store whatever are available in the social platform. The continuing neglect to these languages or development of literature by the present authority has remained to be raised by various forum as well as intellectuals of the Society. It is unfortunate to learn about the people from time to time to project only the shortcomings in this regard.

The voices for the languages which continue to receive raw deal are yet to be raised for their development from the people in general and intellectuals in particular. Rather than finding shortcomings in the language and development of Santali literature, people should master the courage to face the challenge and voice their grievances so that some developments could be continued and achieved. It is also not desirable to find faults with the persons or aggressively oppose them who do not share similar sentiments or understanding.

In view of the above, one cannot subscribe to a view that the history of Santali literature is non existent or there is nothing special to mention about history of Santali literature. The history of Santali literature is required to be enriched through proper construction, documentation, research and methodical approach.

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Greetings and Happy New Year 2010!

It is mentioned for your information that your All India ASECA journal is very much impressive and knowledgeable for we people. I am writing in connection with Dusadh, Dhari, Dhor communities in Uttar Pradesh that various districts of Uttar Pradesh are making schedule caste certificate for the above mentioned castes such as Gorakhpur, Maharajganj, Deoria, Siddharthnagar etc. whereas some of the district which is very very close to these district such as Sant Kabir Nagar, Basti, Balarampur etc. are not issuing schedule caste certificate or any caste certificate at Tehsil level. They are stating that Dusadh caste is only in Uttar Pradesh because at village level only Dhari caste is there which is not mentioned in the schedule caste list of Uttar Pradesh so, the schedule caste certificate will not be made at any cost without inserting against Dusadh, Dhari in the schedule caste list of Uttar Pradesh. We are facing a lot of problems in the absence of the schedule caste certificate in Sant Kabir Nagar, Balarampur, Basti district of Uttar Pradesh. In view of the above, it is my humble request to kindly look into the matter and publish the same in your next issue of ASECA CHANNEL and open the Uttar Pradesh Government's eyes.

Looking forward to your early guidance please. Yours sincerely, Ramakant.

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

(Source: Planning Commission)

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*{Continued from January 2010 issue}*

Moving to individual tribes in Jharkhand, the Oraon and Munda stand out with a conspicuous level of performance. There are 34 graduates/postgraduates out of 37 households of Munda and 59 graduates/postgraduates out of 63 households of Oraon. This means there are 93 graduates./postgraduates among the Oraon and Munda out of a total of 103 among the tribals in Jharkhand.

Their performance at various level of education in terms of gender equity is uniformly high . Among the Munda the GDI moves from 0.687 at primary/incomplete primary level, to 0.812 at the middle level, to 1.17 at the secondary/sr.secondary level and 0.833 at the highest level, with an overall GDI of 0.858. The Oraon, in comparison, have the following corresponding GDI figures: 1.24, 1.09, 0.840 and 0.570 with an overall GDI of 0.926. It is evident that urban factor is an important contributory factor explaining the higher level of performance among the Munda and Oraon.

▪ Significantly although the Lohara is predominantly in Ranchi and their performance does

not match with the Oraon and Munda in so far as literacy and education levels are concerned, when it comes to gender equity there is not much of a difference (overall GDI 0.826).

#### **Table 6.9: Levels of education amongst the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand (Not reproduced)**

For the rural-based Mahali, Santhal and Ho their percentage at different levels of education sharply declines from the secondary level onwards. The overall GDI of the Santhal (0.738) is the least among them, followed by Mahali (0.548) and Ho (0.476). Though Ho are at the bottom of scale, there are six graduates (four males and two females) among them.

#### **West Bengal**

Coming to West Bengal, of those who have either an incomplete primary education or have completed primary education, as many as 53.9 percent are males and 41.7 percent are females with an overall percentage of 48.0 percent. The gender disparity is 0.774. At the middle level of education, 8.5 percent

male and 2.3 percent female have attained this level of education. The gender disparity is markedly high at 0.270.

As we move up to the secondary/sr. secondary level of education, 3.9 percent male and 1.9 percent female have attained this level of education. The gender disparity is 0.486.

As for higher education, there are only 11 graduates from in 557 households. Of these 11 graduates, 9 are Santhal. There is only one female Santhal in this category.

Like the Scheduled Castes of West Bengal, their literate population is insignificantly represented at levels of education above the primary/incomplete primary. At the middle level they are 5.5 percent, at the secondary/sr. secondary level they are 2.9 percent and at the highest level only 0.5 percent. Of the 56.8 percent total literates among the tribals in West Bengal, as large a number as 48 percent have done the primary/incomplete primary level of education. The corresponding figure for the Scheduled Castes is 49.8 percent out of 57.4 percent literates.

- At the level of individual tribes, the general pattern of higher concentration of the literates at the primary/incomplete primary level is almost uniformly reflected. Also reflected is a generally low gender disparities with the exception of the Lodha (0.532). Among the Munda (1.087) and Bhumij (0.982) there is hardly any disparity.

**Table 6.10: Levels of education among the Scheduled Tribes in West Bengal (Not reproduced)**

Within this overall pattern it is interesting to note that the Mahali comes next only to Bhumij and Munda, with 60.4 percent literates. However, there is none who has gone beyond the middle level. Even at the middle level they are the least with only 2 persons. The gender disparity is low at 0.703.

Although the overall literacy rates among the Scheduled Tribes in Jharkhand and West Bengal seem to be at par. We must remember that the urban weightage of Oraon and Munda in Jharkhand is quite high. If we adjust for this factor in the overall literacy rate of Scheduled Tribes, it is higher in West Bengal.

However, notwithstanding this in Jharkhand from the secondary level upward is better.

**Enrolment and Dropout :**

In our study, in addition to different levels of literacy and education we could also collect some valuable data on enrolment pattern at the level of elementary education, comprising primary and middle level school education.

We also sought to obtain data on those who are continuing after enrolment, and those who dropped out. Finally, we sought to identify the main reasons for dropout.

**Scheduled Castes**

***Bihar***

Generally speaking taking into account all the nine castes with 392 households, the total total enrolment is 341 students, of which 232 are males, 109 females.

The average female enrolment ratio (females to total enrolment) is 32.0 percent.

**Table-6.11: Enrolment and dropout at the level of elementary education (primary and middle school) of the Scheduled Castes in Bihar (Age group 6-14 years) (Not reproduced)**

For the Dhobi, out of eight households 13 have enrolled and all of them are continuing. However, surprisingly even the Dhobi have a low female enrolment ratio of 23.1 percent.

- The Chaupal presents a similar pattern with no dropout. Out of 29 households, as many as 24 are enrolled with no dropouts. Their female enrolment ratio is even lower at 16.7 percent.

- Both the Dusadh and the Chamar have very low percentage of dropouts (6.4% and 9.3% respectively). Compared to others both have reasonably good female enrolment ratio with 37.6 and 33.3 percent respectively.

- The condition of the Musahar seem to be worst. Out of 69 households, only 13 have enrolled, of which 8 have dropped out (61.5 percent). The only two females who enrolled have discontinued.

{To be continued...}

**ISSUE OF ADOPTION, SUCCESSION AND INHERITANCE IN SANTAL SOCIETY**

Source: Jharkhand High Court

*{Santal Society is continue to be managed and governed by the laws, rules, customs, precedents which are unwritten nor properly documented. Due to absence of properly documentation of accepted laws, traditional / customary judgement on similar cases differs from place to place. Here is a judgement from Jharkhand High Court on adoption, succession and inheritance which is of immense interest to the members of the Santal Society in particular. The same is being reproduced for the common knowledge and benefit of all.}*

*{Continued from January 2010 issue}*

17. In the case of **Madhu Kishwar and others Vs. State of Bihar & others** [(1996) 5 S.C.C. 125], provisions of Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908 which provide succession to property in the male line was challenged as discriminatory and unfair against women and, therefore, ultra vires to equality clause in the Constitution. In the said case, the Supreme Court observed: -

*“37. The public policy and constitutional philosophy envisaged under Articles 38, 39, 46 and 15(1) and (3) and 14 is to accord social and economic democracy to women as assured in the Preamble of the Constitution. They constitute the core foundation for economic empowerment and social justice to women for stability of political democracy. In other words, they frown upon gender discrimination and aim at elimination of obstacles to enjoy social, economic, political and cultural rights on equal footing. Law is a living organism and its utility depends on its vitality and ability to serve as sustaining pillar of society. Contours of law in an evolving society must constantly keep changing as civilization and culture advances. The customs and mores must undergo change with the march of time. Justice to the individual is one of the highest interests of the democratic State. Judiciary cannot protect the interests of the common man unless it would redefine the protections of the Constitution and the common law. If law is to adapt itself to the needs of the changing society, it must be flexible and adaptable.*

*38. Law is the manifestation of principles of justice, equity and good conscience. Rule of law should establish a uniform pattern for harmonious existence in a society where every individual would exercise his rights to his best advantage to achieve excellence, subject to protective discrimination. The best advantage of one person could be the worst disadvantage to another. Law steps in to iron out such creases and ensures equality of protection to individuals as well as group liberties. Man's status is a creature of substantive as well as procedural law to which legal incidents would attach. Justice, equality and fraternity are trinity for social and economic equality. Therefore, law is the foundation on which the potential of the society stands.”*

Their Lordships further observed: -

*“28. As per the U.N. Report 1980 “women constitute half the world population, perform nearly two-thirds of work hours, receive one-tenth of the world's income and own less than one-hundredth per cent of world's property”. Half of the Indian population too are women. Women have always been discriminated against and have suffered and are suffering discrimination in silence. Self-sacrifice and self-denial are their nobility and fortitude and yet they have been subjected to all inequities, indignities, inequality and discrimination. Articles 13, 14, 15 and 16 of the Constitution of India and other related articles prohibit discrimination on the ground of sex. Social and economic democracy is the cornerstone for success of political democracy.*

**{To be continued...}**

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