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Editorial

The country is hosting the XIX Commonwealth Games 2010 in Delhi during 3rd October 2010 to 14th October 2010. This is a great occasion where athletes as well as general public take part with desired interest and enthusiasm. There may be some problems regarding the preparation aspects but the general mood is to witness and host a mega event. There always is a possibility to make arrangements in a better way and natural expectations and aspirations are to attain excellence in all areas of activities connecting with the mega event. The residents of Delhi and adjoining areas have been braving the daily nuances arisen out of the beatification drive. There may be apprehensions regarding smooth conduct of events with utmost satisfaction, but as time approaches, things are coming to proper shape. The athletes will have great time during the mega event and it is expected that Indian contingent would take the advantage of local condition and improves its medal tally.

In this backdrop, question is not asked generally about the domicile status of the athletes. But many regional newspapers have been reporting the details of the athletes citing the place of origin or domicile status. It is in this context analysis is being done on the level of participation of athletes belonging to Adivasi community. The conspicuous presence is in the events like archery, hockey and latest entry in Rugby. The mention of Rugby is important for the fact that it is not being played in the countryside and as such opportunity to represent the country comes from the reality that given proper attention and opportunity in pursuing a game, national and international level players could be grown from the adivasi community. It is, therefore, understood that given a proper opportunity, adivasi athletes could do very extraordinarily in any of the sports/events. The mention of Kalinga Institute of Social Studies (KISS), Bhubaneswar comes naturally, where the adivasi talents are nurtured and

name of Rugby has been made popular in India and in the Adivasi social sphere in a broader way.

The athletes from Sundargarh in Orissa have been displaying shining example of excellence in the field of hockey. They have demonstrated that with the right kind of will power, determination and dedication, sports can also be made a successful career. Many athletes have been employed in the public sector companies, Indian Armed Forces, Railways, Ports in various sports and they are doing fine in the office as well as in the field. The athletes rising to receive the Arjun Award is something not thought of generally though has been realised. This example should act as guidance to the next generation sportspersons who could excel in the sports and pursue the Sports as a career. They have all the ingredients and it is only perseverance and strong will which would take them to a next higher level of achievement and excellence. There are hurdles and only merit and quality only surpass those hurdles. So there is a need to work hard towards acquiring quality in respective profession.

There is a requirement to hone talents and it is only possible through proper support and care. The talent in India is plenty and most of the time, athletes feel frustrated as all the athletes are not going to see the success in their life. Those with adequate family or group support only overcome that grey phase in life and here adivasi athletes lose hope as family or group does not have the required resources to extend support to their athletes. It is not out of place to mention that after winning a gold in the international meet, athletes are not being felicitated by the community they belong. It is due to lack of communication among the community people for which they are yet to feel the requirement to organize an event for felicitation. But the reality is that the athletes are the role models of many though athletes have little opportunity to know their followers.

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

(Source: Planning Commission)

{Continued from August 2010 issue}

The two incommensurate situations give rise to a few questions. If the earning status is more than proportionately higher than the literacy level, then does it mean that there are factors other than literacy contributing to this? Does the asset position make the difference or the size of the family? For example, the Musahar in Bihar combine low literacy with high earning status. We are aware that they are good rearers of pigs, they have a steady additional flow of income by selling meat. At the same time we know that they have the smallest household size among all the scheduled communities.

It is therefore not surprising they have a high earning status inspite of their low literacy. When the earning status is lower than the literacy level, the questions that arise are (a) Is literacy level a *sufficient* condition for raising the earning status? (b) A high literacy rate, made high with a large base of incomplete primary/primary level of education, may not be a *necessary* condition for raising earning status.

It should be of some concern to the State of West Bengal, that except for the Lohara of Jharkhand, all the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes with earning status lower than their level of literacy are from that State.

Gender Disparity in Literacy : While analysing effective literacy we have gone into the problem of *gender equity*. The universal trend is lower female literacy in relation to male. We have attempted to analyse this problem through a Gender Disparity Index (GDI) which is the ratio of female to male level of education falling within the scale of 0 to 1.000.

Table 7.4: Gender Disparity Index (GDI) in Effective Literacy in the three States

State	Gender Disparity Ratio	
	SC	ST
Bihar	0.465	-
Jharkhand	0.736	0.707
West Bengal	0.740	0.682

The gender disparity is highest among the Scheduled Castes of Bihar. Whereas for the Scheduled Castes of Jharkhand and West Bengal they are uniformly lower.

As for the Scheduled Tribes the gender disparity is somewhat higher in West Bengal compared to Jharkhand.

In Bihar with respect to individual castes, the gender disparity among the Dhobi is the lowest (0.771), but the performance of the same Dhobi caste in West Bengal reaches a near non-discrimination level of 0.924. The highest gender discrimination is to be found among the Chaupal of Bihar (0.273).

In Jharkhand the gender discrimination in literacy is uniformly low among the Scheduled Castes. When it comes to tribal communities of Jharkhand, the overall GDI is high but it is marked by sharp differentiation among the tribes. The Ho (0.476) and the Mahali (0.548), surprisingly, give evidence of fairly high level of gender discrimination. The urban-based Oraon (0.926), Munda (0.858) and Lohara (0.826) score high on the GDI.

In West Bengal gender discrimination in literacy is generally low. But interestingly it is lower among the Scheduled Castes than Scheduled Tribes. However, the differentiation within the Scheduled Castes is greater than that of Scheduled Tribes.

The Konai (0.378), the Bauri (0.414) and the Dom (0.500) have high gender discrimination. It is lowest among Dhobi (0.924), Chamar (0.870) and Sarki (0.806). As for the Scheduled Tribes, the variation is from 0.613 for the Lodha to 0.910 for the Munda.

Gender Disparity and Gender Gap : It is not out of place to highlight a few linkages between gender disparity levels in literacy and gender gaps in work participation.

Interestingly, the relationship between gender disparity in literacy and gender gap in work participation emerges sharply. The Dhobi in Bihar with the highest GDI has the largest gender gap in

work participation. In comparison the Chaupal with the lowest GDI has the lowest gender gap in work participation. More or less this pattern is observable among all the five Scheduled Castes in Bihar. This confirms that the lower level of gender discrimination in literacy is accompanied by a higher level of withdrawal of female work participation in Bihar.

However this association does not seem to hold between the Chamar and the Dom in the urban city of Ranchi. Both these castes have low gender discrimination in literacy. But when it comes to withdrawal of women from work participation, it is very pronounced among the Chamar. This means that even when the Dom has achieved a high level of GDI, this has not resulted in any marked withdrawal of their women from the work force. In terms of a social development this is a progressive sign.

In West Bengal, the overall pattern of low gender discrimination combining with high gender gap is not consistent at the level of the individual caste. The Bagdi, Bauri, Bhuiyan, Chamar, Mal and Patni more or less conform to the overall pattern. The Dom and the Konai of West Bengal not only have low GDI but large gender gap. The position of women in this situation is regressive. We have another situation in which a low gender discrimination combines with low gender gap. The Kami, the Sarki, and the Bhuiyan belong to this category. In this circumstance women suffer less gender disparity as also, lesser withdrawal from the work force. From a social development view, like the Dom in Jharkhand, this is a progressive trend.

The picture in the tribal context whether in Jharkhand or in West Bengal provide, by and large, a progressive social development pattern. If a comment has to be made, it is about the Munda of Jharkhand and West Bengal, who appear to be emulating the pattern of low gender discrimination and withdrawal of women from work participation.

Three distinct patterns that have emerged from this analysis configure three different trends in

social change and transformation process. First, more specifically, the tendency to withdraw women from the work force with progressive reduction in gender disparity in literacy and education, presumably is also on account of an improvement in the earning status of a given community. The second pattern, which is characterised by high level of literacy and high level of both male and female work participation, is suggestive of a more gender-oriented egalitarian system. Lastly, the communities with lower effective literacy level characterised by high gender disparity in literacy and substantial gender gap in work participation, points to those communities that are the least socially developed.

Education Level : While examining the empowering role of literacy we have noted that the distinction between literacy and education is very important. In our broad definition of literacy, statistically speaking, a person who has not completed the primary level of education, is as much of a literate as one who has completed the post graduate level of studies. It is necessary to know how literacy and educational attainment relate to each other.

Table 7.5: Educational levels amongst the Scheduled Communities in the three States

State	SC							
	Upto Primary		Middle		School		High Education	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Bihar	33.5	20.1	6.1	2.5	12.6	2.9	3.6	0.4
Jharkhand	43.4	37.7	11.2	7.3	11.9	4.0	4.6	3.3
West Bengal	55.0	44.1	7.8	3.0	4.5	1.4	1.0	0.1

State	ST							
	Upto Primary		Middle		School		High Education	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Bihar	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Jharkhand	37.5	28.4	12.7	7.6	9.9	6.5	4.6	3.2
West Bengal	53.9	41.7	8.5	2.3	3.9	1.9	0.8	0.1

{To be continued...}

ASECA CHANNEL EXTENDS ITS APPRECIATION AND CONGRATULATES BOYHA BISWANATH TUDU, ROURKELA FOR BEING SELECTED BY CENTRAL SAHITYA AKADEMI TO RECEIVE AWARD FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION IN CHILDREN LITERATURE IN SANTALI. WE WISH HIM ALL THE BEST.

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Contemporary Tribal Situation and Issues of Broad Based Discourse at various levels

B.K. Roy Burman

{Continued from September 2010 issue...}

This is very important as there are many instances of bureaucratic interpretation of custom causing great resentment among the people. Besides, even those whom the government consider as experts. Unaware of the historical context of system of resource management in tribal areas have been found to make grievous mistake. Recently an expert group has cited a particular system of resource management in a tribal area as the best example of the preservation of the traditional system without realizing that this particular system was created and maintained by the colonial rulers in their own interest and that it is one of the rare instances of resource management system in a tribal area being molded to serve as part of the State system. Not only historians but even colonial administrators have left records which indicate the system was created to serve a specific political interest. Of late in independent India attempts are being made to extend the same system in other tribal areas of the region and the tribal people are resisting such interventionist attempt. Besides, the same expert group has compared resource management systems in several areas and expressed its opinion in respect of them. The Expert Group did not realize that there are different rationales each of the systems thus compared. If the administration adopts an interventioning agenda based on such expertise it will create an explosive situation. I am mentioning this experience to drive home the point that PESA is mined with social explosives and that PESA with the social explosives embedded in it should be repealed at the earliest. Section 4 subsection (4) of PESA carries the most dangerous social explosive. It has defined village in a manner which can be applied to a neighbourhood I have seen in London. Once during my visit to the house of the famous Anthropologist Prof. Haimendorf in London, he led me to a park through his kitchen. The park has no public access. It is maintained by the surrounding houses as a common resource for leisure time activities. By

rotation different households take the responsibility of maintaining its but they have adjustment to the specific problem of a specific household of a particular point of time. As already mentioned while Chotanagpur Tenancy, the Santal Pargans Act define village with reference to land, in the PESA's definition of village, land as such has no place contrary to Chotanagpur Tenancy Act or Santal Pargana Act which were enacted with historical struggles of tribal peoples for protection of their inextricable relations with the boundaries of which were of ten determined by metaphysical signals and sanctified by worship of boundary deities and other rites and rituals a PESA village "shall ordinarily consist of a habitation or a group of habitations or a hamlet or a group of hamlets comprising of a community and or a group of hamlets comprising of a community and managing its affairs in accordance with traditions and customs". While in the perception of most of the tribes specific land with its specific sacred and profane spots is an inextricable dimension of its collective identity and social organization PESA delimits "community" whatever community may mean from its metaphysically or supernaturability ordained land. It amounts to cultural mutilation. It speaks of managing its affairs, but scrupulously avoids speaking about land owned by the community or land owning the community through two ways metaphysical extensions. PESA indulges in cultural mutilation forgetting that cultural rights are human right. It may not however be fortuitous that in PESA, the village collective has been delinked from land. In 1981, the Committee on Development of Backward Areas set up by the Planning Commission in its report on North East India advocated individualization of community land for the sake of progress.

{To be continued...}

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