



ASECA CHANNEL

(A monthly Journal from All India ASECA)

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Volume: XI Issue: 6 June, 2012

Annual Subscription Rs50/- Single copy Rs5/-

Editorial

The celebration of Guru Kunami (Birth Anniversary of Pandit Raghunath Murmu) has been the inspiring and illuminating event for the Santals in particular and people around them in general. It has been celebrated with much reverence and also with associated fanfare. It is grand in size and essence when analysed with reference to national canvas and contemporary social milieu. It bears much significance in an era when people are engrossed and engaged in fulfilling personal need and nursing personal aspirations and ambitions. However, there is a space where people still relish and connect themselves with this occasion and with various organisations. This is only possible due to the unequivocal dedication of people in this pursuit and purpose. The people still find their ways and devote time to organise this event and enjoy the event in a more eventful way and in a spirited environment.

Unlike celebrations of other Gurus in India, the celebration of birth Anniversary of this Guru of Adivasis, does not receive official (government) support and financial aid. In the backdrop of even emortalising the names of great mythological gurus/heroes, non seriousness in according due respect and recognition remains an unanswered and even puzzling reality which is beyond someone's comprehension, common sense and knowledge. It is just to recollect the experience during the centenary celebration of Pandit Raghunath Murmu in the year 2005. None of the stakeholder states namely Odisha, Jharkhand and West Bengal did something to remember forget about creation of monument in the memory of this great son of India. The guarded silence on the part of the people at the helm of affairs was difficult to understand and even it is difficult to understand now also.

It is thought germane to share some highlights of present day celebration of Guru Kunami. It has now touched the nerve of the rural and common people, who are coming together for this occasion and are participating in a way what is worth emulating. For organising the event, the girls who are married off are coming back to the village during that period and are closely associated for making all arrangements including preparation for the group songs and cultural events for the occasion. One development which is worth elaborating is that the participation of girls has outnumbered that of boys. The boys it seems have other priorities and may be preference

to pursue during that period. The girls are, however, are pretty sure and unequivocally contribute towards making this event a memorable one. The involvement is so intense that they are associated from the beginning. Even they erect the pole and fix the tent and all other activities including decoration part. It is quite heartening to see the level and participation of girls with such passion and pristine perfection.

The people on that day are visiting various places where the celebration has been organised. One remarkable development is that people (common) people are hiring vehicles and are visiting these places. Though better offs in the community are staying away from such events and participation is only confined to enjoying the cultural programme. Other side of the story is that some political leaders as usual are also being invited to grace the occasion and witness the cultural programme. The event through content and essence is surrounded with one common element that is the participation of people and more importantly the common people. May be they derive some strength from such association and participation and through this they rejuvenate themselves and are trying to satiate their hope and future through drawing inspiration from such involvement. The event now is more than just celebration and one can make out and understand the people's perception of the event and aspiration they expect from such event. It is a kind of fostering the understanding of fraternity and belongingness among the people and what they want to achieve in the future for themselves and for the generations to come.

At the end it is not just the celebration but an occasion to bring people together and with this to unite them through a common thread of understanding. But it is yet to be seen the outcome of such togetherness. People come and go without consolidating a resolve to achieve something spectacular and noticeable. There is something lacking in the process for which the real things what should have come out are not coming out in the true sense. Rather, in this process also, there are some interested groups who only reap the harvest without toiling for initial move. There is a need to get things in a proper shape and perspective so that the result of such initiative and endeavor should touch every life and in the process should be a benchmark for the next generation and symbol for others to follow and take notice.

Unraveling Indian Census Data on Santals (Education)

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In West Bengal state, apart from the Metro city of Kolkata, there are many small towns and district head quarters where Santals have migrated to live in for various reasons. Below table presents the district wise Santal population in various cities & towns of West Bengal. Unlike Orissa, where large numbers of Santals are living in the Capital city of state i.e. Bhubaneswar, in West Bengal the Santals living in capital city i.e. Kolkata is much much lesser than those living in smaller towns of other districts like Bardhaman, Midnapur Hugli etc.

District wise Education profile of Santals in Cities & Towns of West Bengal as per Census 2001

Sl. No.	District	Total Population			Illiterate					
		Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female			
a	b	c	d	e	f	g=f/c	h	i=h/d	j	k=j/e
1	Bardhaman	66,286	33,589	32,697	42,551	64.2%	17,729	52.8%	24,822	75.9%
2	Medinipur	13,182	6,763	6,419	5,488	41.6%	2,181	32.2%	3,307	51.5%
3	Hugli	5,217	2,556	2,661	2,687	51.5%	1,118	43.7%	1,569	59.0%
4	North Twenty Four Pargana	4,908	2,567	2,341	1,838	37.4%	780	30.4%	1,058	45.2%
5	Nadia	4,543	2,288	2,255	2,497	55.0%	1,011	44.2%	1,486	65.9%
6	Dakshin Dinajpur	4,315	2,234	2,081	1,637	37.9%	710	31.8%	927	44.5%
7	Puruliya	3,166	1,691	1,475	1,371	43.3%	523	30.9%	848	57.5%
8	Haora	3,057	1,656	1,401	1,131	37.0%	510	30.8%	621	44.3%
9	Birbhum	2,905	1,446	1,459	2,043	70.3%	905	62.6%	1,138	78.0%
10	Kolkata	1,967	1,245	722	490	24.9%	229	18.4%	261	36.1%
11	Uttar Dinajpur	1,654	931	723	764	46.2%	403	43.3%	361	49.9%
12	Bankura	1,325	700	625	452	34.1%	180	25.7%	272	43.5%
13	Jalpaiguri	1,130	587	543	642	56.8%	294	50.1%	348	64.1%
14	Murshidabad	1,130	601	529	544	48.1%	261	43.4%	283	53.5%
15	South Twenty Four Pargana	1,118	585	533	545	48.7%	241	41.2%	304	57.0%
16	Maldah	1,109	588	521	479	43.2%	203	34.5%	276	53.0%
17	Darjiling	331	163	168	112	33.8%	37	22.7%	75	44.6%
18	Koch Bihar	153	80	73	71	46.4%	35	43.8%	36	49.3%
TOTAL		117,496	60,270	57,226	65,342		27,350		37,992	
		Percentage			55.6%		45.4%		66.4%	

The above Table depicts the education profile of Santals living in cities and town of West Bengal. It is observed that the literacy level of Santals, living in urban area is 44.4% in West Bengal and balance 55.6% people are illiterate. Literacy levels of Santals living in the Capital city i.e. Kolkata is 75.1% which is more than state average i.e. 45.4%. Bardhaman is the district in West Bengal having most illiterate Santals living in urban (city & town) area.

Learning Teaching Problem of Tribal Children

(Source: Orissa Primary Education Programme Authority)

{Continued from April 2012 issue...}

□ The children's characteristics shows the poor state of affairs in all the four tribes. Hence, the children of all the four tribes are to be cared for in the educational institution, attention should be focused on these characteristics.

□ The general factors indicate socio-economic environment is much below than what is expected for better learning. Attitude of people for MLE is fairly good and classroom is relatively enjoyable for children to learn. From this observation one can feel that various socio-economic development programme must address to fulfill the needs of Santal children so that they may come to school, stay in school and achieve in school.

The learning achievement of children belonging to different tribal groups such as Juanga, Bonda, Saora and Santal were assessed by using standardized achievement test developed by OPEPA for Class – II and Class – V. In each test the full mark is 50.

DIFFERENCE IN ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL OF THE FOUR TRIBAL GROUPS OF CLASS – II & CLASS – V STUDENTS

It was attempted to establish the hypothesis that there is no difference in achievement level of four tribal groups. In order to prove the hypothesis or otherwise, the mean, standard deviation and t-test were calculated for each subgroup generated by tribes Juanga, Bonda, Saora and Santal for subjects of Oriya and Mathematics in the educational level of Class – II and V.

An observation of mean score in certain cases of Juanga and Santal fails to establish difference in

achievement between Oriya and Mathematics ($t = P < 0.5$). As regards Class – II achievement differences, the Bonda and Saora tribe have significantly poor performances in Language than Mathematics ($t = -3.14, -12.63$ for Bonda and Saora tribe respectively). When we look at achievement in Class – V in all 4 cases of tribal groups

differential achievement mean is significant ($t = -3.83, 13.06, 2.80, -3.30$), but in case of Juanga and Santal Mathematics learning is superior to Language learning. In case of Bonda and Saora the position is just reverse. It is also reverse when we compare the similar situation prevailing in Class – II, where Language learning was inferior to Mathematics learning. The state of affairs need for the research.

In educational planning for classroom intervention focus has to be placed on Language learning (Bonda and Saora). Whereas, as they grow up in educational ladder mathematical ability should receive greater attention. These observation are made in the basis of t ratios.

GENDER DIFFERENCE IN ACHIEVEMENT LEVEL OF THE FOUR TRIBAL GROUPS OF CLASS – II & CLASS – V STUDENTS

Gender difference in achievement level was another hypothesis were a null hypothesis was entertained. The mean achievement and dispersion scores for boys and girls separately along with the t ratios reveal that Juanga boys are inferior in Language achievement to Juanga girls both at Class – II and Class – V, while there is no

difference between boys and girls in achievement in Mathematics in Class – II. the girls are superior than boys in Class – V in Mathematics achievement.

In case of Santal, there is no such difference between boys and girls neither in Oriya nor in Mathematics in Class – II, whereas in Oriya the boys and girls belonging to Santal tribe have a different picture, while girls are superior to boys in Language achievement, the boys are superior to girls in Mathematics achievement.

So far as the Saora children are concerned the achievement of girls in language is superior to that of boys in Class – II and Class – V. Only in case of Class – V Mathematics achievement the boys are superior to girls.

The next in order comes the Bonda tribe. Two conclusion emerge that the girls in Class – II have better achievement in Language than the boys, but the reverse is true for Class – V children in Mathematics. In Mathematics at both levels boys are superior to girls.

These results reveal that there does exist a gender difference and educational intervention have not being able to bridge the gap in achievement difference. There is a need to focus from lower level of education from language intervention as well as teaching of Mathematics to bridge the gap. These are basic needs of such children, irrespective of whether to this or that tribe.

An observation indicates that for Class – II children the

Oriya achievement of Juanga children are superior to that of Bonda and Saora, but Santal children are better than Juanga.

In Mathematics, Juanga are inferior to Saora and Santal children (0.28, - 3.68, -7.97).

As regards Class – V there is a clear-cut difference present among Juanga children with reference to all three other tribal groups in achievement Oriya (-12.06, -5.25, -9.02). As regards to Mathematics achievement Juanga children are superior to Bonda children but inferior to Santal, whereas the difference between Juanga and Saora children is not established.

Although, these results have come up in a differential way, probably there is a need further probe as to why inter-ethnic difference exists in an unsystematic fashion.

An observation indicates that the Bonda children are superior to Saora children in Class – II Oriya, but inferior to Santhal children. While in Mathematics the Bonda children are inferior to Saora children.

In Class – V Oriya the Bonda children are superior to Saora children. In Class – V Mathematics there is a clear-cut difference between Bonda and Santhal children. The Santhal children are superior to Bonda children.

An observation indicates that the Saora children of Class – II are inferior from Santhal children in Oriya language. It is the same for all the variables.

(To be continued...)

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

• **Editor:** Purna Chandra Hembram • **Published and Printed** by Kuanr Chandra Kisku on behalf of All India Adivasi Socio Educational and Cultural Association (Registered), New Delhi • **Printed** at S. K. Enterprises, B- 975, Mangol Puri, Delhi 110 083 and published from SFS Flat No. 326, Pocket 10, Sector 11 (Extension), Rohini, Delhi 110 085.