



ASECA CHANNEL

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Editorial

Two important events have been reported from Rairangpur during the previous months. One event pertains to revival of the Kati game in Mayurbhanj. It was being organised by the Notified Area Council, Rairangpur, Mayurbhanj, Odisha on the eve of Swayatta Divas celebration on 31st August 2012. Kati game is being played by Santals which one hears from the older people and it appears as if the same game has become somewhat discarded or unsolicited. The originality with which it is being played makes one surprise regarding its rules and formulations. The rules being formulated indigenously can be compared with any other modern games with the provision of referee pointing towards belief in the discipline and orderly performance. With this revival, people will come to know about the game which forefathers were playing and the requirement of preserving the same by the present generation to be passed on to the generation next. Kudos to Sri Thakurdas Hansdah, Executive Officer, NAC, Rairangpur who was instrumental in bringing back this game to the general understanding and appreciation.

Another notable news item is the revival of publication of "Sagen Sakam" - a Santali monthly in Ol Chiki from the month of October 2012. This is a very old publication from Rairangpur since 1965 by Adibasi Socio Educational and Cultural Association and has been a tool for inspiration and introspection throughout these years for propagating Ol Chiki along with promoting the Santali literature. The generation which grew with the success story and continuity of this Santali monthly was seriously thinking about its revival and continuation in the interest of Santali literature and also as an initiative to restore the lost glory. From the copy which is now under circulation, it has been reported that the revival of "Sagen Sakam" has been possible with the contribution of few individuals. As has always been the problem in supporting the magazine for its continuity, it is genuinely feared that same problem

may surface in the near future unless a concrete action plan is formulated with achievable milestones. The people who are around this initiative are hopefully aware of this reality and would frame a framework in response to this reality.

One of the articles in this issue is regarding celebration of "Golden Jubilee" of the organisation ASECA, which is due in the year 2014. The preliminary discussion has been started and formation of the committees etc. is in the pipeline. This piece of information reminds the occasion of Birth Centenary Celebration of Pandit Raghunath Murmu during the year 2005. Experience is a great teacher which teaches us not to repeat the past mistakes or not to indulge in activities which derail the purpose and positivity of such occasion. Adequate care should be taken to see that past mistakes are not being reiterated as people who are directly or indirectly associated during that occasion are aware of various shortcomings and infirmities which were responsible for making inadequate arrangement leading to limited impact on the people at large. There will be tendency and attempt this time also to derail the whole process so that the organisation which was created to bind people with a common thread should not be able to achieve the same. Previously also the same design has been successful and this time also it is expected/feared that there will be no exception.

Existence of any organisation for a long 50 years is a milestone in itself and a major achievement which many organisations cherish to achieve. When that occasion has come, it should not be jeopardized with poor planning and equally unimpressive execution. The occasion deserves to be celebrated with full force and sincerity which in turn would definitely bring in a new era of hope and happiness among the Adibasis of Mayurbhanj. The consultation should be broadbased so that experts and expertise could be pooled together for this occasion and turn this event a truly participative and people oriented.

Unraveling Indian Census Data on Santals (Education)

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Jharkhand is the State where the largest number of Santal population live. The table below depicts the district wise Santals in the State of Jharkhand. Dumka district which is situated in the north eastern part of the State is having the largest numbers of Santals in a district not only in Jharkhand but all over India.

District wise Education profile of Santals in JHARKHAND 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	Dumka	629,338	315,715	313,623	440,737	70.03%	184,653	58.49%	256,084	81.65%
2	Purbi Singhbhum	293,013	147,750	145,263	179,093	61.12%	70,332	47.60%	108,761	74.87%
3	Pakaur	266,066	134,093	131,973	216,477	81.36%	99,162	73.95%	117,315	88.89%
4	Sahibganj	205,209	102,021	103,188	167,112	81.44%	76,382	74.87%	90,730	87.93%
5	Godda	196,774	98,917	97,857	148,238	75.33%	64,018	64.72%	84,220	86.06%
6	Giridih	167,448	85,395	82,053	135,108	80.69%	60,502	70.85%	74,606	90.92%
7	Dhanbad	166,591	84,221	82,370	115,794	69.51%	46,477	55.18%	69,317	84.15%
8	Bokaro	153,612	78,530	75,082	113,350	73.79%	47,969	61.08%	65,381	87.08%
9	Pashchimi Singhbhum	126,048	62,884	63,164	83,133	65.95%	32,011	50.90%	51,122	80.94%
10	Deoghar	116,227	59,286	56,941	86,268	74.22%	36,170	61.01%	50,098	87.98%
11	Hazaribag	78,111	39,294	38,817	60,613	77.60%	26,208	66.70%	34,405	88.63%
12	Ranchi	8,384	4,423	3,961	3,533	42.14%	1,344	30.39%	2,189	55.26%
13	Kodarma	2,271	1,214	1,057	1,908	84.02%	911	75.04%	997	94.32%
14	Gumla	447	235	212	249	55.70%	94	40.00%	155	73.11%
15	Garhwa	436	220	216	367	84.17%	168	76.36%	199	92.13%
16	Palamu	419	219	200	234	55.85%	97	44.29%	137	68.50%
17	Lohardaga	82	45	37	27	32.93%	15	33.33%	12	32.43%
18	Chatra	33	23	10	7	21.21%	3	13.04%	4	40.00%
	TOTAL	2,410,509	1,214,485	1,196,024	1,752,248	72.69%	746,516	61.47%	1,005,732	84.09%

The literacy level of Santals in Jharkhand is 27.31%, which is lowest among all the 3 states in India where large numbers of Santal live, though population wise it is the largest State in India. Districts with Industrial towns i.e. Purbi Singhbhum - 38.88%, Dhanbad -30.49% & Bokaro 26.21% are having more Santal Literacy level than rest of the districts of Jharkhand State.

SANTAL TEACHERS' TRAINING PROGRAMME BEING ORGANISED BY ALL INDIA SANTAL SEMLED, JHARGRAM

All India Santal Semled, Jhargram has been organizing Santal Teachers' Training Programme in Ol Chiki every year. This year also it is being organised from 29th October 2012 to 3rd November 2012. About 100 teachers/students who are teaching/pursuing Santali in Ol Chiki are being invited to undergo a weekly training programme with an aim to refresh understanding and to promote interaction within the teachers/students community. It has been a learning avenue for both the faculty members/resource persons and the trainees who come to the Jeget Vidyagarh, Betkundri near Jhargram in West Medinipur district. The idea of developing this place up to a university level is the target which is being pursued with great anticipation and intense involvement.

Learning Teaching Problem of Tribal Children

(Source: Orissa Primary Education Programme Authority)

{Continued from October 2012 issue...}

School Curriculum

- Curriculum should lead to identification of creativity, not alienation. There is need to incorporate all creative arts, crafts and oral expression, especially those rooted in indigenous knowledge and skill systems.
- Curriculum must develop a critical social science and humanities, content aimed at the achievement of curricular goals. A balance between circular subjects is essential.
- There is needed to develop critical multicultural texts and reading material.

Pedagogy

- Incorporation of diverse pedagogic methods and practices towards enhancing learning and democratic classroom practice is essential.
- Improvement is required in the affective climate of school, to enable teachers and students to participate freely in knowledge construction and learning.
- There is needed to develop pedagogic practices that aim at improving self-esteem and identity of the tribal children
- Non-graded instruction with judicious use of tests for evaluation of learning may be considered; the provision of minimum pass

mark may be introduced for giving promotion to next higher grades.

- Making available a wide range of quality textbooks and other reading and instructional material is absolutely essential.

Language

- Home languages must be made the medium of instruction/communication
- in the early years of school education. They must be seen as integral to creating an enabling school environment for children and crucial for the process of learning. The pedagogic rationale is that moving from the known to the unknown facilitates learning. Language is a critical resource that children bring to school and aids thought, communication and understanding.
- Home languages in classroom process are also essential to build child's self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Transition to regional language will be facilitated through learning of home language.
- Where there is more than one tribal languages used in any village, we recommend the use of the majority language after consultation with Village Education Committees, Teachers and Parents.

- Teacher training must include the stipulation that teachers pass an examination in a local tribal language. Earlier civil servants posted to tribal areas had to pass examinations at least in one tribal language. This seems to have discontinued for the present day bureaucrats. The same provision may be reintroduced not only for the teachers but also for the officials involved in the process of tribal education.

Quality Teacher Education and Enhancement of Teacher Competencies

- As regards the need for quality teacher education and in service training systems the following points are essential:
 - Short-term and long-term needs of teacher education and in service training
 - Identification of existing capacity available and level of preparedness
 - Frequency, duration and appropriate locations for various training programmes
 - Availability of quality trainers and training organizations.
 - Identification of learner's difficulties and identification of suitable remedial measures
 - Availability of suitable training materials and equipments
 - Support and follow-up mechanism
- There is a great need to strengthen teacher education, its overall knowledge and value base and practical training. Teachers must be thoroughly equipped with subject knowledge and critical pedagogy skills.
- There is need to incorporate a foundational base of strong critical social science and humanities knowledge which is governed by democratic egalitarian perspectives in teacher education curricula. Special attention needs to be paid to social sciences and humanities including new emerging areas of tribal studies.
- Teachers also require experiential knowledge through fieldwork about the lives of tribal and other marginalized groups, to understand cultures, school-home linkages and ensuing facilitators and constraints. Together this would help confront unfounded beliefs and stereotypes as well as gain sensitivity towards tribal communities. Teachers' attitudes need to be challenged on a scientific, historical, sociological and experiential basis, to help them understand their own socialization.
- Teacher education curriculum needs to incorporate an understanding and appreciation of cultural diversities in particular the history of rich cultures and traditions of marginalized communities, histories of their protest and struggles and their constructive contribution to nation. An understanding without essentialising diverse identities and the recognition of the interplay between identity of child, culture and learning will enrich curriculum.
- The pedagogic context within an increasingly segregated system of school requires that teachers be professionally equipped to address diverse educational needs of children, particularly of first generation learners.
- Recruitment to teacher education programmes must be made more rigorous to enable entry of those suited and motivated to teach children.
- We need to focus on developing competent teachers within tribal communities.

(To be continued...)

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