



ASECA CHANNEL

(A monthly Journal from All India ASECA)

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Volume: XI Issue: 10 October, 2012

Annual Subscription Rs50/- Single copy Rs5/-

Editorial

The collective experience and wisdom shape a framework for any society. The spirits of sharing and caring, give and take among the members within a community provide a platform to grow, prosper and achieve higher heights in life. The examples are plenty in India. The dominant communities in India share common characteristics of helping the fellow community members who are in need of help and support. The feeling of belongingness brings them together and to a certain degree of indulgence to help each other at least in developing the confidence required for scaling new heights in life. The sharing does not limit to the sharing of knowledge and experience but it extends even to creation as well as sharing of wealth. The mutual co-operation and co-ordination help each other to safeguard each other's interest which in turn result into expanding the horizon of interest, interaction and influence. The more a community preserves its cohesiveness and sense of charity for the development of the community as a whole, it has reaped the benefits in terms of higher levels of emancipation and achievement in social, educational and economic front. It is not easy, though, to pursue the activities through continued commitment to pull all together and carry them along, but people have continued their efforts as a result of which these communities find an exult position in the society. The character of the persons is important than the numbers, which contributes immensely for the common benefit of a community.

Such instances and experiences in the context of Adivasi community are not commonly seen. The time has come when the first generation educated and employed persons are retiring from their respective offices/organizations. It is commonly seen that these section of people generally do not come back to their ancestral places. The more a person is retiring from a higher position, the likelihood is more that he would not return back to his place of birth. Had he paid at least customary visit to his ancestral place, some

positive knowledge sharing would have occurred through his association with the people whom he shares common identity. The common concern cited is the incongruence in the level of wisdom and life style. Due to difference in economic prosperity, many aspects of life do not seem to converge. Concurrence on any social or other issues does not come easily due to difference in level of knowledge, limited interaction and communication. The change in social milieu has also contributed stratification in the society thereby emergence of barrier in the process of free flow of communication. The natural outcome of this process is the nourishing of personal development and little concern for the overall development of a community.

The new life style, though is satisfying in a limited way as far as the individual identity and personal aspirations are concerned, but the identity which is shared is the collective identity. And there lies the contradiction. The ultimate loser is the community as a whole. The incremental loss may not be noticed immediately, but its impact is definitely there and the shocks being generated have to be absorbed. The dilemma is that in the absence of suitable shock absorber in place in the society, the society has to take the brunt and may collapse under the burgeoning pressure of such shocks.

It is a matter of worry as the traditional and modern wisdom are not being enriched through a process of continued exchange. It is a matter of concern that such institutions have also not been developed where the process of knowledge sharing, idea exchange can take place for mutual benefit. Persons who are in a position to create such institutions are either ignorant about the requirement or are not interested to such initiative. There are instances of some efforts here and there which need enduring support from within the community so as to overcome the strategy deficit for the benefit of the respective community in general and each and every member of the community in particular.

Unraveling Indian Census Data on Santals (Education)

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The urban Santal population in Jharkhand (107,679) is less than that of West Bengal (117,496) though in overall level Jharkhand is the largest State in terms of Santal population. Urban Santal population in Jharkhand is largely concentrated (around 73%) in Industrial towns like Jamshedpur, Bokaro, Dhanbad instead of state capital city of Ranchi where Santal population is only 2,318.

District wise Education profile of Santals in Cities & Towns of 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	Purbi Singhbhum	36,491	18,711	17,780	16,196	44.38%	6,132	32.77%	10,064	56.60%
2	Bokaro	25,974	13,442	12,532	14,261	54.90%	5,471	40.70%	8,790	70.14%
3	Dhanbad	16,098	8,407	7,691	9,481	58.90%	3,939	46.85%	5,542	72.06%
4	Pashchimi Singhbhum	7,090	3,662	3,428	3,826	53.96%	1,505	41.10%	2,321	67.71%
5	Hazaribag	6,153	3,165	2,988	3,466	56.33%	1,408	44.49%	2,058	68.88%
6	Dumka	5,786	2,951	2,835	2,680	46.32%	1,242	42.09%	1,438	50.72%
7	Deoghar	2,818	1,585	1,233	1,400	49.68%	571	36.03%	829	67.23%
8	Ranchi	2,318	1,274	1,044	462	19.93%	170	13.34%	292	27.97%
9	Pakaur	1,683	832	851	719	42.72%	384	46.15%	335	39.37%
10	Godda	1,522	814	708	484	31.80%	203	24.94%	281	39.69%
11	Sahibganj	984	560	424	265	26.93%	138	24.64%	127	29.95%
12	Giridih	556	258	298	165	29.68%	36	13.95%	129	43.29%
13	Palamu	59	34	25	7	11.86%	5	14.71%	2	8.00%
14	Gumla	55	31	24	14	25.45%	4	12.90%	10	41.67%
15	Lohardaga	49	26	23	10	20.41%	8	30.77%	2	8.70%
16	Garhwa	19	12	7	5	26.32%	4	33.33%	1	14.29%
17	Kodarma	14	8	6	4	28.57%	1	12.50%	3	50.00%
18	Chatra	10	7	3	2	20.00%	-	0.00%	2	66.67%
TOTAL		107,679	55,779	51,900	53447	49.64%	21221	38.04%	32226	62.09%

The literacy profile of Santals living in urban area of Jharkhand State is 49.36%. The urban Santal literacy rate for 3 districts in Santal belt where steel plant exists are, Sundargarh 66.8% (Rourkela - 7,135 total urban Santals), Purbi Singhbhum 53.62% (Jamshedpur - 36,491 total urban Santals) & Bokaro 45.1% (Bokaro - 25,974 total urban Santals).

SILVER JUBILEE CONFERENCE OF ALL INDIA SANTALI WRITERS' ASSOCIATION

All India Santali Writers' Association is organizing its Silver Jubilee Conference at Geetanjali Community Hall, Kharagpur on 15th, 16th and 17th December 2012. In addition to the Book Fair, new books will be released at the Conference. Eminent writers will be felicitated.

As per the programme, Ms. Mamata Banerjee, Hon'ble Chief Minister, West Bengal is expected to grace the occasion and inaugurate the Conference. Other dignitaries have also been

The Association has requested a large gathering during the Conference and solicited co-operation from every one to make the celebration a grand success.

In reception:

1. Adibasi Socio Educational & Cultural Association, Kharagpur Branch,
2. Jirihiri Kherwal Tirla Gaonta, Kharagpur,
3. Kherwal Purudhul Gaonta, Kharagpur

Delegate Fee: Rs. 400/- only

For further details please contact:

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Learning Teaching Problem of Tribal Children

(Source: Orissa Primary Education Programme Authority)

{Continued from September 2012 issue...}

Moreover the system of examination and evaluation at present do not lay emphasis on passing or failing in the examination, whoever enrolls gets, promotion to the next higher class, even if, she/he is failed to score minimum pass mark in aggregate.

Curriculum formulation for tribal children

The curriculum does not acknowledge cultural rights of the tribal children who are denied of their own culture and history. School curriculum fails to take account of tribal cultures as autonomous knowledge systems with their own epistemology, transmission, innovation and power.

The 'cultural discontinuity' between school and home draws attention to the rigidity of school organization and the emphasis on discipline in contrast with socialization practices and the lives of children, as reasons for non-attendance.

The earlier practice of giving punishment to the low achievers/irregulars/indiscipline behaviour is now a days discouraged by the government assuming that it may lead to wastage at the primary level.

The language issues for tribal area schools

Despite several policy documents and a constitutional provision (350A) recognizing that linguistic minorities should be educated in their mother tongue at primary level, there is practically no education in tribal languages. Although states in India were organized on linguistic grounds, political powerlessness of tribals people prevented the formation of states based on tribal languages.

They are confined to minority status within large states and are compelled to learn the state language in school. Primary teachers are predominantly from non-ST communities. And despite the pedagogic significance of initial instruction in the mother tongue, teachers do not bother to learn the tribal language even after several years of posting. The general

picture at primary school level is often one of mutual incomprehension between tribal students and their non-tribal teachers.

Several studies have pointed to the significance of the language question at the primary school levels.

Quite apart from the pedagogic problems this creates – such as destroying the child's self esteem, and reducing the possibilities of successful learning in later years, the denigration of tribal languages amounts to denigration of tribal worldviews and knowledge. The education system with its insistence on a common language as a means of achieving a common nationhood has been instrumental in the destruction of tribal language, culture and identity. Loss of a language means the loss of a certain way of knowing the world.

IMPLICATIONS

At the very outset it must be stated that for policy and programmatic changes that we have recommended can only succeed if equality and justice are firmly brought back on the educational agenda. In any event, there is enough indication, given the requirements of scale and sustainability, of the dire need for establishing full fledged, high quality regular schools in educationally impoverished areas. The need can hardly be fulfilled without massive funding and committed state support the creation of a nurturing environment and active encouragement of a responsible public education system by the society. The relationship between cultural and educational goals needs to be publicly debated with a view to coming to terms with questions of hybridization of cultural differences and a host of epistemological and ethical issues. Development of culturally sensitive policies and programmes is the key concern. This is particularly

important in the context of the difficulties of making schools closer to tribal communities.

Institutional Context

- We strongly reiterate the need for equitable provisions in terms of quality of schooling at different levels, educational infrastructures and other facilities, qualified teachers, teaching learning materials, quality textbooks and other requirements is crucial to enhance the professional autonomy and working conditions of teachers, and their self-esteem. All nonteaching workload must be taken out of the teacher's portfolio of responsibilities. The educational environment of substandard/dysfunctional schools must change for any meaningful and effective curricular reform.

- We recommend the need to identify areas and groups, which continue to suffer marked exclusion and neglect towards a more focused implementation of enabling policies. We also emphasise the need to invest greater financial and educational resources for their educational development.

- School Organisation: There is need for flexibility in school structures and cultures. School times, calendars and holidays must keep in mind local contexts.

- There should be regular supervision of school activities, so that the lapses at any point can be identified and proper action can be taken instantly for improvement of the situation. The school system requires a more generous and efficient provision of facilities meant for tribal children. It is important for all concerned to engage with those struggling for rights of these communities, especially those committed to their educational advancement.

(To be continued...)

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 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.**