



# ASECA CHANNEL

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## Editorial

From time to time information pours in that various social organizations are determined to find solutions to the problem areas affecting the growth and development of tribal society. The common approach is to organize conferences/meetings at different places to discuss as well as disseminate information on issues influencing the life and style of tribal people. The outcome may be different at different places but it is nice to see that some activities or the other is taking place at various places regularly and continuously. There may not be concrete programme or achievement, but definitely these are instrumental in sending messages across various strata of the society. It is not out of place to mention that little efforts may be here and there with different pace and progress, but it is definitely showing a strong sense of involvement of the people and their resolve to do something good for the people and community at large. At the same time it is important to note that however little is being done are not being programmed as desired but the efforts are being monitored and put in place though in a disjointed manner.

From the present state of involvement of different groups in holding and organizing such events, it can be seen that macro level efforts are missing and in that place people are motivated and guided by their understanding of the matter and group behaviour and approach is always to address issues only at micro level. The degree of involvement and level of indulgence is somewhat becoming lukewarm due to factors not limited only to the financial limitation. Under such scheme of things, many volunteers who were instrumental in raising voices starting from spreading education to demanding due recognition to Santali language and introduction of mother tongue education at the primary level are gradually realizing that they have become leaderless and directionless. During an interaction with them, they have raised a pertinent question of emergence of a plethora of organizations who are claiming to be the champion of the tribal self determination. But the underlying fact is the absence of a right kind of approach and right kind of people to spearhead the demand and associated intense

campaign to make it heard by the people at the helm of affairs.

The present trend points to the fact that people are not organized through a common thread and common sense of belongingness rather they are a group of people with limited resources and approach and there is a tendency to maintain aloofness between different groups. There is a strong resistance to come together as there is a fear of losing independent identity and importance. But in the process, there is none who can claim to be a group with adequate resources and formidable knowledge base.

Under such circumstances, there emerges a thinking by a group of some volunteers that there is a need to come together and have a strong bond and formidable association so that right kind of approach with adequate wherewithal can be arranged for the continuous and intense intervention in bringing about right kind of solution for the development of the marginalized people.

The people who can advise these enthusiastic youths are not coming forward due to various reasons ranging from shortage of time, paucity of resources, absence of communication link, distance or generation gap. It is not a natural phenomenon where people volunteer to take suo-motto cognizance of problems and offer their services by involving themselves to sort out the core as well as peripheral issues. It is being seen that gradually, people are organized on the basis of their profession, level of development and economic status. But reality speaks that issues of mass concern is yet to be handled or at least discussed in the appropriate forum to at least identify and discuss the matter. Going by the present trend of groupism among the people, it is natural to expect that true or desired achievement in the social, economic as well as educational sectors is very difficult to realize. People should learn from others how they are achieving something through common approach, involvement and contribution. No goal can remain unachievable when it is pursued through mass participation, systematic approach with a common or unambiguous set of value system and determination.

## Unraveling Indian Census Data on Santals (Religion)

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In recent times there are lot of news on the Religion of Santals and Adivasi vis-à-vis the other mainstream religions in India. One group of Santals based at Cuttack – Orissa, has filed a PIL application, with the honourable High Court of Orissa to recognize “Sarna” religion and direct various government departments to allow entry of Santals’ religion as “Sarna” in Government documents.

**District wise RELIGION profile of Santals in ORISSA as per 2001 Census**

Sl. No.	District	All religions	Hindus	Hindu %age	Muslims	Christians	Sikhs	Budhists	Jains	Other religions & persuasions	
1	Mayurbhanj	565,268	283,749	50.20%	128	2,920	2	1	11	277,879	49.16%
2	Baleshwar	84,713	81,001	95.62%	40	881	-	1	2	2,689	3.17%
3	Kendujhar	61,097	55,724	91.21%	28	470	1	-	3	4,858	7.95%
4	Khordha	10,072	9,653	95.84%	4	67	-	-	2	337	3.35%
5	Sundargarh	10,021	6,873	68.59%	14	233	2	-	6	2,889	28.83%
6	Jajapur	9,181	9,150	99.66%	3	1	-	-	-	27	0.29%
7	Dhenkanal	8,412	8,266	98.26%	1	-	-	-	-	145	1.72%
8	Anugul	5,993	5,434	90.67%	6	50	-	-	-	485	8.09%
9	Bhadrak	3,202	3,200	99.94%	1	1	-	-	-	-	0.00%
10	Nabarangapur	3,125	3,116	99.71%	-	8	-	1	-	-	0.00%
11	Cuttack	2,827	2,817	99.65%	1	6	-	-	-	3	0.11%
12	Malkangiri	2,569	2,363	91.98%	6	200	-	-	-	-	0.00%
13	Jagatsinghapur	2,560	2,344	91.56%	1	19	-	-	1	194	7.58%
14	Kendrapara	1,901	1,889	99.37%	-	5	-	-	-	-	0.00%
15	Kalahandi	1,249	1,245	99.68%	-	-	-	-	-	4	0.32%
16	Koraput	1,072	1,010	94.22%	3	9	-	-	-	44	4.10%
17	Balangir	1,060	1,052	99.25%	1	1	-	-	-	6	0.57%
18	Jharsuguda	459	432	94.12%	4	19	-	-	-	4	0.87%
19	Sambalpur	415	394	94.94%	2	13	-	-	-	6	1.45%
20	Bargarh	364	361	99.18%	-	3	-	-	-	-	0.00%
21	Nuapada	298	291	97.65%	-	4	-	1	-	-	0.00%
22	Ganjam	292	274	93.84%	-	12	-	-	-	6	2.05%
23	Rayagada	274	1	0.36%	134	-	-	-	1	-	0.00%
24	Gajapati	157	33	21.02%	-	124	-	-	-	-	0.00%
25	Kandhamal	155	122	78.71%	-	33	-	-	-	-	0.00%
26	Debagarh	126	74	58.73%	-	51	-	-	-	1	0.79%
27	Sonapur	105	105	100.00%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
28	Nayagarh	84	78	92.86%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
29	Baudh	15	15	100.00%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
30	Puri	2	2	100.00%	-	-	-	-	-	-	0.00%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>777,068</b>	<b>481,068</b>	<b>61.91%</b>	<b>377</b>	<b>5,130</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>289,577</b>	<b>37.27%</b>

In Odisha, the district wise Santal population with their religion recorded as per Census 2001 is shown in the table above. It may be noted that out of total 777,068 Santals in Odisha, 481,068 (61.91%) have been shown under

Hindu religion. Only 287,844 Santals in Odisha, which are clubbed under other religions and persuasions in above table, are perceived to have been recorded their religion as “Sarna”. In Cuttack district 99.65% and in Khordha district where the Capital city of Bhubaneswar is located, 95.84% Santals have been shown under Hindu religion as per 2001 Census.

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## Sahitya Akademi Award for 2012 in Santali to Gangadhar Hansda

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Gangadhar Hansda, born in 1958 at Janardanpur, P.O. Dhrupada in Keonjhar district of Odisha, holds an M. A. degree. Besides Santali he knows Odia, Hindi and English. He started his career as Probationary Officer at Union Bank of India in 1958 and took voluntary retirement in April 2012. He started writing in 1979 and his first work got published in 2004. His important works include collections of short stories like Peter Bare and Banchaw Akan Goj Hor and novels like Dare Umul and Samay Sakda. Recipient of Short-Story Writer of the Year Award from All India Santali Writers’ Association in 2005 and Guru Gomke Sirpa from Adibasi Socio Educational and Cultural Association.

Banchaw Akan Goj Hor, the collection of twenty short-stories by Gangadhar Hansda successfully reveals the true picture of Santal society. The stories are well-crafted and creatively project the trials and tribulations of people living in metro cities. The language is lucid and simple making the work eminently readable. As such, the book is considered a

significant contribution to Indian short-fiction in Santali.

### Selected Bibliography:

**Fiction:** Dare Umul (ଡ଼ାୟୁମୁଲ୍), Samay Sokda (ସାମୟ ସକ୍ଦା), Short Fiction: Peter Bare (ପିଟର ବେରୀ), Banchaw Akan Goj Hor (ବାଞ୍ଚାବହା ଅକାନ୍ ଗୋଜ ହୋର), **Essay:** Lepej Tiril (ଲେପେଜି ଟିରିଲ୍), Ladeya Matkam (ଲାଡେୟା ମାଟକାମ୍), Saonhed Ar Saonta (ସାଓନ୍ହେଡ୍ ଆର ସାଓନ୍ତା), **Translation:** Turuy Man Iral Ghunt (ତୁରୁୟ ମାନ୍ ଇରାଲ୍ ଗୁନ୍ତ୍), Haramba (ହାରେମ୍ବା)

**Miscellaneous:** Santal Nagam (ସାନ୍ତାଲ ନାଗାମ୍), Ror Sanes (ରୋର ସାନେସ୍)

Contact: Madhuban, Ward No.: 9, Behind Ranisati Mandir, Madhuban, Baripada, Dist: Mayurbhanj, Odisha – 757 001, Phone: 06792-257737, Mob: 09658217031

**Other Awardees:** Assamese: Chandana Goswami, Bengali: Subrata Mukhopadhyay, Bodo: Guneswar Musahary, Dogri: Late Bal Krishan Bharua, English: Jeet Thayil, Gujarati: Chandrakant Amritlal Topiwala, Hindi: Chandrakant Devtale, Kannada: H. S. Shiva Prakash, Kashmiri: Makhani Lal Kanwal, Konkani: Kashinath Shamba Lolyekar, Maithili: Shefalika Verma, Malayalam: K. Satchidanandan, Manipuri: Jodha Chandra Sanasam, Marathi: Jayant Pawar, Nepali: Udai Thulung, Odia: Gaurahari Das, Punjabi: Darshan Buttar, Rajasthani: Aidan Singh Bhati, Sanskrit: Ramjee Thakur, Sindhi: Late Indra Vaswani, Tamil: D. Selvaraj, Telugu: Peddibhotla Subbaramaiah, Urdu: Krishan Kumar Toor.

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### Speech by Gangadhar Hansda Award winner in Santali

Honourable President and Vice-President of the Sahitya Akademi, Respected Secretary, Respected Office Bearers and Members of the General Council, my fellow awardees of different languages, Ladies and gentlemen. Let me begin with my respectful “Johar” to this august assembly. I am very thankful to the Sahitya Akademi for giving me this privilege to share my creative experience with you. Friends, I am receiving this award for my short story book “Banchaw Akan Goj Hor” written in Santali language.

A writer begins his expedition by expressing his life’s outlook and experiences in the form of words. Writing becomes a pastime and true friend of a writer. It can be a Drama or Poem, Prose or Novel or Short Story, he talks all through the life with them. Like a devotee he sacrifices his self along with all sorts of bliss and sorrows, scarcities and necessities in it. In order to carve his ideas

in literature he appears as varied personality, sometimes in a straight line or in a roundabout way. In this process of shaping my philosophy in works, I have become a writer. I was born in a small village named Janardanpur which is located in the District of Keonjhar in Odisha. Being born in a needy family, my early days were undoubtedly very tough. From Class I to 11<sup>th</sup> standard, I went to school barefooted. Thereafter, I got admission in Keonjhar College, Keonjhar to pursue my further studies. I accomplished my graduation there and in course of that degree, I started writing plays at the request of our village youths. During those days Santali dramas in villages were adored and appreciated a lot. But very few books in Santali language were available at that time. So the village youths expected for some books of Santali plays from the educated persons. Being the first graduate student of my village, they

insisted upon me to write a play I started writing during summer vacation of my college and the moment a scent is ready they also started rehearsal. Thus the play writing was over within a month and I was amazed to see my play staged after a week.

That play was highly appreciated by the audience which encouraged me to write more dramas. Had they not claimed drama book from me, I might not have been here among you to receive this award today.

Anyway, after completing my graduation course I went to Utkal University, Bhubaneswar for Masters Degree. During M.A., I also got a job. I stayed away from my village after joining in my job. But I could not lose and mingle myself in the crowded life of the town. The lifestyle of the village, its blind belief and culture very often disturbed my attention. I have closely observed the migration of village people to town and their sufferings. The simplicity which exists in villages lacks in the town. Rather a competition an always be seen in the town to put others far behind in all respect. Such race has perceived differently in my mind to which I have sketched in my writing. When I was staying in my village, I used to write plays only, but after I got the job I began writing short stories. During my service I had come across numerous characters of varied nature. I was working in a bank which mainly provides service to the people of different kinds. In that job I got ample opportunity to meet with a large number of customers and also developed intimacy with some of them. That convention provided me better scope to know about them and their family. I was staying away of my family most of the time because my wife is also an employee. So when I met different people, I made them my friend in pen and paper and shaped them in stories. My first posting was in Uttar Pradesh. Later on I was transferred to my parent state where I got the chance to visit my family on every Saturday and Sunday. At that time the act of travelling by bus has increased and during the journey I met more people and got more characters for my stories. I honestly confess that the travelling has made me a short story writer.

I also used to write Prose and Novel. I have highlighted mostly the rural problems therein and have suggested some solutions for it. You know, tribal literacy rate is below 20% in our State. So in my first Novel "Dare Umul" I have tried to convince my people regarding the importance of education for better life. Likewise, in my second Novel "Somay Sakda" I have emphasized upon physical labour to come out of the poverty and underprivileged conditions. At the same time I have given a stress in my Essays to safeguard our culture and religion because it will never let us to be unruly and separate from our creed.

Stories are my true expression. I have been writing stories since 1979, but due to financial hardship my first publication came out only in 2004. The readers might have approved my point of view in stories and acknowledged my concern and as such I am here to have a share with you.

For that I am extremely thankful to my readers. I also express my heartfelt thanks to the judges and Sahitya Akademi who have chosen me for this award.

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I, KUANR CHANDRA KISKU, hereby declare that the particulars given above are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

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