



ASECA CHANNEL

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Website: www.allindiaaseca.org

E-mail: contact@allindiaaseca.org

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WELCOME NEW YEAR 2014

ASECA CHANNEL & ALL INDIA ASECA WISH HAPPINESS, PEACE, PROSPERITY AND QUALITY LIFE ON THE EVE OF NEW YEAR TO SUBSCRIBERS, WELL WISHERS, CONTRIBUTORS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS.

May this New Year bring new hope and aspiration through MAJHI MOHOL

Editorial

Initial determination coupled with an urge to take up a challenge and to do something good for a society always yields a good result. The euphoria is always an outcome of response and good feedback. The least requirement is the response one gets from the people for whom the whole exercise or programme is intended. Such is the initiative which has been started aiming at bringing together people who in fact are the guardians of the society as per the normal or traditional practice. The weight of responsibility on these people does not commensurate with the resources or the power they possess. They are scattered and are performing their duties out of curiosity or at least with a hope to keep a group together. The return or the support for their contribution is miniscule and the real power or the fruit of such togetherness of a group is being enjoyed by others who are not or the least involved in the process of bringing people together.

It has been decided to work towards formation of Majhi Mohol at micro level and gradually it would be evolved into a macro level organization covering all India or even at International level. The present endeavour to bring together all the majhis and other members of the traditional village panchayats for a greater visibility and viability cannot be achieved without appropriate response and adequate resources. The responses alone cannot justify the involvement rather it is the resource support which will be effective and act as an elixir to facilitate formation, evolution and development of an association based on a clear vision, wisdom, vigour and vitality. The exercise to bring together a sizable number of people needs necessary wherewithal, commitment, command and common sense. The approaches and the attitudes are often

noticed from time to time but there is certainly a lack of long term approach and planning to carry forward an initiative as part of a long term mission. The social movement runs out of the required steam usually and always there is a need to start the process afresh. And people in turn become skeptical or lose faith in a process which promotes unification or which promises them to bring peace, prosperity, performance and patriotism.

The present initiative to find out and locate people with a sense to serve the Santal Society is going on and it is pertinent to mention that there are plenty of young as well as senior citizens who in fact have the fascination and attitude in contributing and even having willingness to sacrifice for the betterment of the society. At the same time it is the duty and responsibility of other community members who may not be able to connect themselves with such initiative but at the same time they can be instrumental in mobilizing and collecting necessary funds for supporting the noble cause for the benefit of all people in the society. The little donation which may flow from every nook and corner of the country would make a bold change and bring in reform in the society as is being demonstrated by other groups of people in India. It is seen that wherever members of the society stand together and contribute, a miracle happens in terms of the realization they achieve and the society is benefitted by leaps and bounds and as such it would be appropriate to appeal people to contribute generously and for that all are requested to send their responses in the e-mail id of all India ASECA i.e. contact@allindiaaseca.org.

TRIBAL PROFILE AT A GLANCE - MAY 2013

Source: Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Govt. of India

{Continued from December 2013 issue}

5. POVERTY INDICATORS

Percentage of population Below Poverty Line for ST 2009-10		
(Tendulkar Methodology)		
	Rural	Urban
All India	47.4	30.4
<i>ST = Scheduled Tribes</i>		
<i>Source: Planning Commission</i>		

Percentage of population Below Poverty Line								
(social groups wise) -2004-05								
	Rural				Urban			
	ST	SC	OBC	Others	ST	SC	OBC	Others
All India	47.3	36.8	26.7	16.1	33.3	39.9	31.4	16
<i>Legend SC = Scheduled Castes, ST = Scheduled Tribes, OBC = Other backward classes</i>								
<i>Source: Planning Commission</i>								

6. EMPLOYMENT STATUS

Per 1000 distribution of Rural households of different social groups by household type								
household type								
social group	self employed (SE) in			rural labour (RL)			others	all (incl. n.r.)
	agriculture	non-agriculture	subtotal	agricultural labour	other labour	sub- total		
(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
ST	370	70	440	334	131	465	95	1000
All	319	155	474	256	148	404	122	1000
<i>source: Report no. 543 of NSS 66th round, 2009-10</i>								

{To be continued...}

Folklore of the Santal Parganas

Translated by **Cecil Henry Bompas** of the Indian Civil Service, 1909

{ASECA CHANNEL intends to publish the stories in order to familiarize the stories among the general public for their better appreciation}

{Continued from December 2013 issue}

IV. The Cruel Stepmother.

There was once a Raja whose wife died leaving him with one young child. He reared it with great care and when it could toddle about it took a great fancy to a cat; the child was always playing with it and carrying it about.

All his friends begged the Raja to marry again, but he said that he was sure that a stepmother would be cruel to his child; at last they persuaded him to promise to marry again, if a bride could be found who would promise to care for the child as her own, so his friends looked out for a bride; but though they found plenty of girls who were anxious to marry the Raja, not one would promise to care

for his child as her own. There was a young widow in a certain village who heard of what was going on, and one day she asked whether a bride had been found for the Raja and she was told that no one was willing to take charge of the child. "Why don't they agree," said she, "I would agree fast enough. If I were Rani I should have nothing to do but look after the child and I would care for it more than its own mother could." This came to the ears of the Raja and he sent for the widow and was pleased with her looks, and when she promised to love his child as her own, he married her.

At first no one could be kinder to the child than she was, but in the course of time she had a child of her own and then she began to be jealous of the elder child; and she thought daily how she could get rid of him. He was still devoted to his cat and one day when he came back to the house, he asked his stepmother where the cat was. She answered angrily, "The cat has bewitched the boy! It is 'cat, cat,' all day long." At this the child began to cry; so she found the cat and threw it to him, saying, "Here is your cat: you are mad about your cat." But the boy hugged it in his arms and kept on crying at his stepmother's cross words. As he would not keep quiet his stepmother got more angry still; and catching hold of the cat she scratched her own arms and legs with the cat's claws until the blood flowed; then she began to cry and scold and when the neighbours came to see what was the matter, she told them that the boy had let his cat scratch her; and the neighbours saw that she was not loving the boy as she promised.

Presently the Raja came in and asked what was the matter; she turned and scolded him saying: "You have reared the accursed cat and it has scratched me finely; look, it has taken all the skin off; this is the way the boy repays me for all my trouble. I will not stay with you; if I stay the boy will injure me like this again." The Raja said, "Don't cry like a baby; how can a simple child like that know better? when he grows up I will scold him." But the woman persisted and declared that she would go away with her own child unless the Raja promised to kill his elder son. The Raja refused to do this, so the Rani took up her baby and went out of the house with it in a rage. Now the Raja was deeply in love with her and he followed and stopped her, and said that he could not let her take away his younger child; she answered, "Why trouble about the child? it is mine; I have left you your boy, if you don't kill him, when he grows up, he will tell you some lie about me and make you have me beaten to death." At last the Raja said "Well, come back and if the boy does you any harm I will kill him." But the Rani said. "Either kill him now or let me go." So at last the Raja promised and brought her back to the palace. Then the Raja called the boy and gave him his dinner and told him that they were going on a visit

to his uncle's: and the child was delighted and fetched his shoes and umbrella, and off they set, and a dog came running after them. When they came to a jungle the Raja told his son to sit under a tree and wait for him, and he went away and killed the dog that had followed them and smeared the blood on his axe and went home, leaving the child.

When his father did not return, the child began to cry, and Thakur heard him and came down, and to frighten the boy and make him leave the jungle he came in the guise of a leopard; but the child would not move from where he was; then Thakur appeared as a bear, and as a snake and an elephant and in many other forms but the child would not move; so at last Thakur took the form of an old woman, who lifted him in her arms and soothed him and carried him to the edge of the jungle and left him on the outskirts of a village.

In the morning a rich Brahman found him and took him home, and as no one claimed the child he brought him up and made him his goat-herd, and they gave him the name of Lela. The Brahman's sons and daughters used to go school, and before he took his goats out to graze Lela used to carry their books to the school. And going to the school every day Lela got to know one or two letters and used to draw them in the sand while minding his goats; later he got the children to give him an old book saying that he wanted to pretend to the other boys that he could read and out of this book he taught himself to read: and as he grew up he became quite a scholar. One day he picked up a letter and found that it was from one of the village girls arranging to elope that very evening with a young man. At the appointed time Lela went to the rendezvous and hid himself in a tree; soon he saw the Brahman's daughter come to the place, but as her letter had not been delivered her lover did not appear. The girl got tired of waiting and then she began to call to her lover, thinking that perhaps he was hiding for a joke. When she called, Lela answered from the tree and she thought that it was her lover and said "Come down and let us be off." So Lela came down and they started off together; when day dawned she saw that it was Lela who was with her and she sat down and upbraided him for deceiving her. Lela said that they had met by chance; he had not enticed her away, no harm had been done and she could go home if she liked or come away with him if she liked. The girl considered but she saw that if she went home now she would be disgraced and her family would be outcasted, so in the end she agreed to run away with Lela.

They went on and after travelling some days they came to a great city, where they took up their quarters in a tumble-down house and the next morning Lela went into the city to look for work. He went to the cutcherry and enrolled himself as a *muktear* (attorney) and soon the litigants and

the magistrates found out how clever he was and he acquired a big practice. One day the Raja said, "This fellow is very handsome, I wonder what his wife is like?" And he sent an old woman to see; so the old woman went and got into conversation with Lela's wife and returned to the Raja and told him that none of his wives was so beautiful as Lela's wife; so the Raja determined to go and see her himself, and as the old woman said that she would hide herself in the house if she saw the Raja coming, he disguised himself as a poor man and went and saw her; he found that the old woman had not exaggerated and he determined to possess himself of Lela's wife. He had first to get Lela out of the way, so he sent for him and said, "You are a fine fellow and have given me satisfaction. I have one more commission for you, if you perform it I will give you half my kingdom and my sister in marriage." Lela said that he must hear what it was before he made any promise. The Raja said "It is this: in a certain mountain grows the Chandmoni Kusum flower; bring it to me and I will give you what I have promised:"—but the Raja felt sure that if Lela went to the mountain he would be eaten by the Rakhas (ogress) who dwelt there. Lela said that he would go if the Raja gave him a written bond in the presence of witnesses; and this the Raja willingly did. Then Lela went and told his wife and she said, "This is excellent: I have a younger sister in the mountain, her name is Chandmoni and it was she who planted the Chandmoni Kusum flower; when you get there call her by her name and she will certainly give you the flower." So Lela started off and when he was gone his wife fell ill, and her body became a mass of sores. Directly Lela was out of the way, the Raja sent the old woman to see what his wife was doing and she brought back word that she was afflicted with illness; so the Raja sent medicines and told the old woman to nurse her. Lela went off and came to the cave in the mountain where Chandmoni lived with the Rakhas; and the Rakhas was away hunting men, so Lela called out Chandmoni and told her who he was and begged her to hide him; then they planned how they should kill the Rakhas, and she hid him in the cave; presently the Rakhas returned and said to Chandmoni "I smell a man: where is he?" But Chandmoni said that there

was no one there but herself; and that the smell was probably due to the Rakhas having been eating human flesh and recommended her to anoint herself with hot ghee. The Rakhas agreed: so Chandmoni put a great iron pan of ghee on to boil, and when it was boiling she called the Rakhas, and as the Rakhas was leaning over the pan, Lela ran out and pushed her into the boiling ghee and she died. Then Chandmoni asked Lela why he had come, and he told her, "to fetch the flower." She promised to give it to him but asked what was to become of her now that the ogress with whom she lived was dead. Lela promised to take her with him, so they cut off the tongue and ears and claws of the Rakhas and returned to the city. And directly Lela returned, his first wife recovered from her illness.

Then the Raja saw that it was useless to contend with Lela, and he gave him half his kingdom and married him to his sister according to his bond. So Lela lived with his three Rani's and they bore him children and after some years he told them that he was the son of a Raja and he wished to visit his own country and see whether his father was alive. So they set out in great style with horses and elephants and came to the town where Lela's father lived. Now five or six days after abandoning Lela, his father had become blind and, he made over the management of his kingdom to a Dewan, and the Dewan and the Rani managed everything. When the Dewan heard that Lela had come with a great force he thought that he would loot the country and he ran away in fear. Then Lela sent word to his father to come to him, as he was the son who had been abandoned in the jungle, so the Raja set forth joyfully and after he had gone a few paces he began to see dimly, and by the time that he came to Lela's camp he had quite recovered his eyesight. When they met, father and son embraced and wept over each other; and Lela ordered a feast to be prepared and while this was being done a maidservant came running to say that the wicked Rani had hanged herself, so they went and burned the body and then returned and enjoyed the feast. Then the Raja resigned his kingdom to Lela and the ryots begged him to stay and rule over them; so he remained there and lived happily ever after. {To be continued...}

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