



ASECA CHANNEL

(A monthly Journal from All India ASECA)

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Volume: XIII Issue: 12 December, 2015 Annual Subscription Rs50/- Single copy Rs5/-

Editorial...

With the onset of winter season, whole country is engaged in bidding farewell to the current year and to welcome the New Year. There are all around festivities irrespective of rural or urban areas. People celebrate with great enthusiasm and zeal and through this engagement people get opportunity to interact with each other and take advantage of this occasion to share some moments with others. In urban centres, which are far off places from the usual habitation in respect of tribal or linguistic groups, this kind of occasion is organized with sincerity and regularity. Recently, Mumabi Satal Welfare Association organized Silver Jubilee Year of such event and it was celebrated in a befitting manner. Likewise other metropolitan cities are also following the same trend. People come together and engage themselves in knowing each other from a single platform and contributing towards consolidating fraternity and solidarity. In far off places knowing people is required for emergencies and other purposes and society comes handy and immediately at the time of distress as well as at the time of good times. People connect themselves with each other and enjoy with the same groups of course this happens only with the hard work done by some committed and enthusiastic volunteers and senior people in the region/area.

Critical appraisal, however, does not lead to a comfortable conclusion in the sense that it is yielding very limited results. Through development of partly cultural affinity is achieved, the congregation is not in a position to contribute in a grand way. The issues are limited, approaches are also limited and the outcomes are also limited by limited willpower to harness great things or major solution out of such association. The organizers are not encouraged enough or they are not given some kind of comfort by the participants in organizing such events. All the

time involvement and organizing responsibilities lie with some selected people and their patience is being tested time and again whether to continue such efforts. But still something is being organized with a hope for realization in the future in the making of a great future.

It is observed that in any other formation of association of people, some kind of concrete ideas are floated and those are contemplated through definitive action plans and sincere mobilization of both people and resources. Perhaps this is the area, which needs serious introspection and dialogue wherever tribal interests are concerned. There are so many issues troubling the tribal societies and the intellectual class cannot shy away from the real issues challenging their existence and development.

Many a time it is alleged that the developed group of a particular society does not care much for the benefit and development of their respective society or fellow members. Whenever some challenges surface they are the last in the line to defend the case or come forward to find the solution. The tribal society is existing and still in continuum because of the countryside population as they are the actual people who still cherish to carry forward their cultural traits and value system whatever way or whatever manner they can afford to continue and contribute.

While many aspects are talked about a particular society it is naturally expected that rich and literate persons would form a formidable platform for protection and progress. It is generally observed that whatever little social movement is taking place it is not because of the influential people from that particular community but because of relentless involvement of non-influential people.

The influence that may have been earned in various areas and through different involvement be it intellectually, politically etc. should have been used partly for the overall development of the society in

which one belongs. But that is not happening. All are engrossed with so many limitations and perhaps people are not free to choose or profess a pattern or path of their choice because of some external factors, which are not in sync with the development process of the weaker sections of the society. Prosperity,

power, position ipso facto have not been able to render service for the benefit of the people. There are issues and it is feared that it will continue to remain in the future also. But hope is there, some kind of intervention is bound to happen to see light at the end of the tunnel.

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 September 2015 issue}

XXIV. The Oilman's Bullock.

The man who overheard this conversation was much astonished and went off to the oilman and told him all about it. Next day the whole village had heard of it and they were all anxious for the oilman to match his bullock against the Raja's elephant; but the oilman was very frightened, for he feared that if he sent such a challenge, the Raja would be angry with him and drive him out of the country. But the leading villagers urged him and undertook to find the money if he lost, and to persuade the Raja that the oilman was mad, if he became angry with him. At last the oilman consented, provided that some of the villagers went to the Raja and proposed the match; he was too frightened to go himself. So two of the village elders went to the Raja and asked him to match his elephant against the oilman's bullock for five hundred rupees; the Raja was very much amused and at once fixed a day for the fight. So they returned and told the oilman to be ready and raised a subscription of five hundred rupees.

The evening before the contest the oilman gave the bullock a big feed of meal and oilcake; and on the eventful morning the villagers all collected and watched him oiling its horns and tying a bell round its neck. Then the oilman gave the bullock a slap on its back and said "Take care: you are going to fight an elephant; if you owe me so much money you will win, and if not, then you will be defeated." When he said this bullock pawed the ground and snorted and put down its head.

Then they all set out with the five hundred rupees to a level field near the Raja's palace; a great crowd

collected to see the fun and the Raja went there expecting easily to win five hundred rupees. The elephant was brought forward with vermilion on its cheeks, and a pad on its back, and a big bell round its neck, and a mahout riding it. The crowd called out "Put down the stakes:" so each side produced the money and publicly announced that the owner of the animal which should be victorious should take all the stakes. But the oilman objected to the mahout's riding the elephant; no one was going to ride his bullock. This was seen to be fair and the mahout had to get off; then the fight began. The bullock snorted and blew through its nose, and ran at the elephant with its head lowered. Then the elephant also rushed forward but the bullock stood its ground and stamped; at this the elephant turned tail and ran away; the bullock ran after it and gored it from behind until it trumpeted with pain. The crowd shouted "The Raja's elephant is beaten." And the oilman took the five hundred rupees and they all went home. From that day the oilman no longer put the bullock to work the oil mill but fed it well and left it free to go where it liked. But the bullock only stayed on with him for one month and then died.

XXV. How Sabai Grass Grew.

Once upon a time there were seven brothers who had an only sister. These brothers undertook the excavation of a large tank; but although they spent large sums and dug very deep they could not reach water and the tank remained dry.

One day as they were consulting what to do to get the tank to fill, they saw a Jogi coming towards them with a lota in his hand; they at once called to him to come and advise them, for they thought that, as he

spent this time wandering from country to country, he might somewhere have learned some thing which would be of use to them. All the Jogi said to them was “You have a sister: if you sacrifice her, the tank will fill with water.” The brothers were fond of the girl, but in their despair at seeing their labour wasted they agreed to give the advice of the Jogi a trial. So they told their mother the next day that, when their sister brought them out their midday meal, she was to be dressed in her best and carry the rice in a new basket and must bring a new water pot to draw their water in. *{To be continued....}*

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RASHTRIYA DALIT PRERNA STHAL

For over a millennium a substantial mass of this Nation’s populace belonging to the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs) have been the victims of an iniquitous social order based on varna and caste that has held them in its thrall and blighted every aspect of their existence over the ages. A number of Saints, Gurus and Mahapurush (Great Men) born into these sections of society have dedicated their whole lives to and made great sacrifices in course of the righteous struggle for the transformation of this unjust and inhumane social order to a humanistic equalitarian social order.

In recognition of and to honour the historic devotion and unparalleled contributions of these stalwarts towards the struggle for social transformation and improvement of the neglected, the BahujanSamaj Party (BSP) Government of Uttar Pradesh under the leadership of Hon’ble Chief Minister Ms. MayawatiJi has for the first time in this country’s history taken the unprecedented and momentous decision to commemorate their struggle and honour these great souls in a manner befitting their stature. A decision that is certain to be hailed for posterity and recorded in golden letters in the pages of history.

As you are aware, every action, decision and policy framed by the Uttar Pradesh Government of BahujanSamaj Party led by Hon’ble Chief Minister Ms. MayawatiJi has been based on the principle of “SarvjanHitaya and SarvjanSukhaya” (Progress and Prosperity to all). In this context it has been an

enduring theme of this Government’s policy to acknowledge and honour in every possible manner. The saints, Gurus and Great Souls whose contributions to the cause of social transformation has for long been ignored due to the prevailing casteist mindset in the country.

The Uttar Pradesh Government of Hon’ble Chief Minister Ms. MayawatiJi has constructed a number of “Sthals” (Grand Memorials) to commemorate the struggle of these inspired souls in Uttar Pradesh particularly in the State Capital Lucknow and near the National Capital Delhi of these one of the most prominent grand and expansive “Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal, Noida, District Gautam Buddha Nagar, Uttar Pradesh. A detailed outline of which follows:

“Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal” (NOIDA, DISTRICT GAUTAM BUDDHA NAGAR, UTTAR PRADESH)

The “Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal”, an urban landmark is planned as a gateway to Noida (A booming industrial and institutional area in District Gautam Buddha Nagar) and to the state of Uttar Pradesh at large located on the Eastern bank of the river Yamuna. It addresses both NOIDA and the National Capital of Delhi while the west bank of the river is dominated by the national memorials and pre-eminent monuments of many eras. The “PrernaSthal” visualized as a symbolic representation of the ideals and ideas underlying the humanistic movement for social transformation” has been envisaged as an urban landmark on the eastern bank of the Yamuna river. The PrernaSthal built over an area of 82.5 acres (334.334 square meters) is broadly categorized into three zones.

Proceeding from north to south, visitors approach in the area of the “first Zone” (measuring 36.25 acres/146.734 sq. meters) which houses “the Rashtriya Dalit Smarak” comprising an area of 0.5 acres (2.643 sq meters) designed using an architectural vocabulary drawn from the traditional architecture of the Buddhist era. The Memorial capped by a central cupola and four flanking domes fluidly combine traditional form with modern construction technique.

While entering this Samrak, the visitors ascend the high twin plinth of the structure and through the entrance pavilion, proceed I to the memorial installed within are grand statues, murals and memorials inscriptions representing the continuous and ongoing struggle for social transformation.

Three eye-catching bronze statues of Parampujya Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr. BhimRaoAmbedkar, BahujanNayakManyawarShriKanshi Ram Ji (and in accordance with his Will) the statue of his sole political successor Ms. MayawatiJi, the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh adorn the marble clad central chamber while the three side chambers house bronze murals highlighting their individual achievements with regard to movement for social transformation. Externally the central dome of this memorial rises to a height of 40 meters and is clad in pink sand stone within is a magnificent bronze inner dome. The memorial is flanked by two 52 feet high bronze fountains on either side to provide comfort to the visitors.

Sculptures of 20 (twenty) grand elephants, 10 each on withr side of the monument with their trunks raised up in traditional gesture of welcome flank the main building. Historically elephant statues in various forms have been in use in public buildings, monuments, temples, palaces in ancient India and other south east Asian countries. As the "Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal" has also been planned to represent the historical continuum of social transformation in the country. The elephant was considered and appropriate symbol and mascot in this context.

Extensive formal green areas form the foreground and backdrop of the PrernaSthal. The Central faci of the large green spaces are the two 52 feet high bronze fountains on the either side of the Memorial structure various public conveniences and facilities for the visitors complete the overall composition.

The "second zone" measuring 13.25 acres (53.776 sq. meters) is a circular space encompassed within the loop of the Gautam Buddha flyover (leading to Sector 18 of NOIDA) developed as a commemorative plaza with an attractive 18 feet high bronze statue of Bharat Ratna Baba Saheb Dr. BhimRaoAmbedkar at the centre while the area encompassing the outer perimeter of the flyover is an extensive plantation and service area for the larger benefit of the visitors additionally this space provides a beautiful pedestrian pathway linking the adjacent zones othe the PrernaSthal.

The "Third Zone" covering an area of 33.1 acres (133.823 sq. meters) is accessed through two monumental gateways within. The landscape theme revolves around a central focal feature. The 100 feet high "SAMTA MUAKE PRATEEK STAMBH", a granite clad column surmounted by the "Ashok Chakra" representing Truth, Harmony and Righteousness. Eleven 18 feet high bronze statues of the Pioneers of the social transformation movement have been erected around the "Samta Mulak Prateek Stambh". As a mark of respect and honour to them. 20 granite columns with bronze elephant capitals 10 (ten) on either side of the "Prateek Stambh" lead into the landscape rolling greens and formal plantation beds combined with extensive plantation of shady trees. Various shrubs and ground cover enhance the beauty of the "Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal"

The main objective of the development of this grand "Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal" is to represent the process of social transformation in a concrete shape and to convey the message for generations to come in keeping with this concept. The "Rashtriya Dalit PrernaSthal" has been designed and developed using natural stone that has metamorphosed over many millennia and has attained an immutable form.

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Delhi - 110 085.

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