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Editorial

There were and still are attempts to bring together the traditional village heads and other members of the traditional institution under a common platform by many enthusiasts and social workers. But the result has been lukewarm due to the fact that the people and their understanding of the requirement is at different level and there seems to be no coherence in meeting of minds due to reasons which is still to be recognized fully and rectified. The people at the grassroots level are self sufficient as well as self reliant and due to this fact the mission or object of forming such organization is not felt or not so much craved for by the common villagers. The attempts in the past have been at various levels and with different dimension. The endeavor, however, has not yielded desired result nor adequate to safeguard the interest of the community as a whole. The process and formation have not been totally inclusive in nature and due to lack of a sense of partnership or ownership, the envisaged organization has fallen short of delivering the desired result.

Many right thinkers, however, are still optimistic in organizing such grassroots, foundation level social institutions. The idea is being floated to facilitate formation of association leading to a macro level federation type arrangement. The instances are there where people are being organized through a process to form a frontal organization to safeguard the interests of the members. But in the case of Santal society, the absence of such frontal organization is always felt in general. The reason has also not being established why such formation has so far not being materialized. The impression has been that there is lack of sincerity and people have not been adequately and appropriately explained about the necessity of such formation or there are some issues for which conducive atmosphere is not being created to enable such formation to grow and deliver.

Whenever new concepts take a shape or an old concept is being launched afresh, general tendency is to argue and question the intention and ideas. Due to absence of appropriate channel of communication,

people without proper understanding and involvement start spreading their ideas, which at times creates further confusion. The intention and involvement take the backseat. The virtues of belongingness and oneness have not been realized so far as well as not pursued with desired earnestness. The time has been the essence and when people are organized through a common understanding or they resolve to do good to themselves or to do common good for their respective communities, the Santal society cannot afford to lag behind. There has to be actions and activities from the discerning groups to construct and consolidate.

The recent development has been to explain the requirement to make the community understand that it is the people who are originally from the grassroots level should be developed so as to take care of themselves and the organizations. The minimum wherewithal will be required to support the new associations or formations and the people who actually are the members of the traditional institutions should be at the helm of affairs. There are certain groups in all the communities who always try to derail any new initiatives and that is perhaps the human tendency. But the number is very less and as such easily manageable. In the larger interest of the community, any kind of such intention to derail the process has to be confronted with right kind of approach and ideas.

The leadership in the community has not been demarcated properly. The duties, responsibilities and authorities are not being assigned or perceived in a balanced manner. The people who are serving the community in a greater way are not being given their due as their services are being perceived to be naturally forthcoming or anticipated. Little is being realized that without a proper arrangement and argument, the community is not in a position to face the emerging challenges it is going to face in the recent times and the times to come. The traditional institutions and people need to be organized and empower them to reach a position to safeguard the interest of the community in general and the people in particular.

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**Sahitya Akademi Award for 2014 in
Santali to Jamadar Kisku**

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Jamadar Kisku, born in 1949 at Katgora, West Bengal. Jamadar Kisku is a well known Santali Writer. He holds a Bachelor's degree. Besides Santali, he knows Bengali, English and Hindi. He has been writing, acting and directing plays in Santali at Kherwal Opera, Kolkata. Some of his significant works are Dular Kasayena (2011) and Kahni Mala (2012). He is the recipient of Raghunath Murmu Award (2006). He is the Editor of a Santali literary magazine, Tapal.

Mala Mudam is a unique play which reflects the socio-cultural values and modern conflicts in the changing global economic phenomena. It sends out an excellent message to hold together collapsing social values and joint family system under the threat of cosmopolitan changes. As such, Mala Mudam is considered as an important contribution to the genre of Indian drama in Santali.

The award was conferred by Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi on 9.3.2015 at New Delhi.

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Other Awardees: **Assamese:** Arupa Patangia Kalita, **Bengali:** Utpal Kumar Basu, **Bodo:** Urkhao Gwra Brahma, **Dogri:** Shailender Singh, **English:** Adil Jussawalla, **Gujarati:** Late Ashvin Mehta, **Hindi:** Ramesh Chandra Shah, **Kannada:** G. H. Nayak, **Kashmiri:** Shad Ramzan, **Konkani:** Late Madhavi Sardesai, **Maithili:** Asha Mishra, **Malayalam:** Subhash Chandran, **Manipuri:** Naorem Bidyasagar Singha, **Marathi:** Jayant Vishnu Narlikar, **Nepali:** Nanda Kangkhim, **Odia:** Gopal Krishna Rath, **Punjabi:** Jaswinder, **Rajasthani:** Rampal Singh Rajpurohit, **Sanskrit:** Prabhu Nath Dwevedi, **Sindhi:** Gope Kamal, **Tamil:** Poomani (P. Manickavasagam), **Telugu:** Rachapalem Chandrasekhara Reddy, **Urdu:** Munawwar Rana.

BAHA PARAB IN NEW DELHI

Baha Parab was organized in Delhi by the Delhi Santal Group on 1st March 2015 at 1, Motilal Nehru Marg. Shri Jual Oram, Hon'ble Minister of Tribal Affairs (MTA), Govt. of India was kind enough to extend the courtesy to organize this event in the premises of his residence. People from the National Capital Region attended in a large number and made this event a grand success.

Shri S. K. Vashishth, IAS, Pvt. Secretary to MTA and Shri S. S. Modi, OSD to MTA graced the occasion and appreciated the noble idea of coming together for preserving the cultural values and fostering the virtues of belongingness.

The young organizers were urged to arrange such events in the future also as a measure to promote and preserve Santal culture in the Capital of India.

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 February 2015 issue}

XXI. The Magic Cow.

Then he called the village headman and chowkidar and they searched and could not find the cow and they advised Kara to keep the cow and calf as it must be better than his own barren cow; but he refused and said that he would complain to the magistrate and he made the headman promise not to let the carters go until he came back. So he went to a Mahommedan magistrate and it chanced that he was an honest man who gave just judgments and took no bribes, and made no distinction between the rich and the poor; he always listened to both sides carefully, not like some rascally magistrates who always believe the story that is first told them and pay no attention to what the other side say. So when Kara made his complaint this magistrate at once sent for the carters and the carters swore that they had not stolen the cow: and offered to forfeit all the property they had with them, if the cow were found in their possession.

Then the magistrate sent police to search the encampment and the police pulled down the pile of packs that had been put round the cow, and found the cow inside and took it to the magistrate. Then the magistrate ordered the carters to fulfill their promise and put them all in prison and gave all their property to Kara. So Kara loaded all the merchandise on the carts and pack bullocks and went home rejoicing. At first the villagers did not recognise who it was who had come with so much wealth but Kara made himself known to them and they were very astonished and helped him to build a grand house. Then Kara went to the Raja from whom he had borrowed the money for his parents' funerals and paid back what he owed. The Raja was so pleased with him that he gave him his daughter in marriage and afterwards Kara claimed his father-in-law's kingdom and got possession of it and lived prosperously ever after.

And the seven sons of his first master who used to scold him were excited by his success and thought that if they went to foreign parts they also could gain great wealth; so they took some money from their father and went off. But all they did was to squander their capital and in the end they had to come back penniless to their father.

XXII. Lita and His Animals.

Once upon a time there was a man who had four sons: two of them were married and two were unmarried and the youngest was named Lita. One day Lita went to his father and asked for fifty or sixty rupees that he might go on a trading expedition and he promised that if he lost the money he would not ask for any share in the paternal property. As he was very urgent his father at last gave him sixty rupees and he set out on his travels. After going some way he came to a village in which all the inhabitants were chasing a cat; he asked them what was the matter and they told him that the cat was always stealing their Raja's milk and the Raja had offered a reward of twenty rupees to anyone who would kill it. Then Lita said to them "Do not kill the cat; catch it alive and give it to me and I will pay you twenty rupees for it; then you can go to the Raja and say that you have killed it and ask for the reward; and if the Raja asks to see the body tell him that a stranger came and asked for the body, for he thought that a cat which had fed on milk should be good eating and so you gave it to him." The villagers thought that this would be an excellent plan and promised to bring him the cat alive. They soon managed to catch it hiding under a heap of firewood and brought it to Lita and he paid them twenty rupees and then they went to the Raja and got twenty rupees from him.

Then Lita went on, and by-and-bye came to a village where the villagers were hunting an otter in a tank; they had made a cut in the bank and had let out all the water. Lita went to them and asked what they were doing; they said that they were hunting for an otter which had been destroying the Raja's fish and the Raja had promised them a reward if they killed it, and they had driven it into the tank and were draining off the water in order to catch it. Then Lita offered to buy it of them if they brought it to him alive; so when they caught it they brought it to him and he gave them money for it and continued his journey with the cat and the otter. Presently he saw a crowd of men and he went up to them and asked what they were doing; and they told him that they were hunting a rat which was always gnawing the Raja's pens and papers and the Raja had offered a reward for it, and they had driven it out of the palace, but it had taken refuge in a hole and they were going to dig it out. Then Lita offered to buy it from them as he had bought the other two animals and they dug it out and sold it to him.

He went on and in the same way found a crowd of men hunting a snake which had bitten many people; and he offered to buy it for twenty rupees and when they had chased it till it was exhausted, they caught it alive and sold it to Lita. As his money was all spent, he then set off homewards; and on the way the snake began to speak and said: "Lita, you have saved my life; had you not come by, those men would certainly have had my life; come with me to my home, where my father and mother are, and I will give you anything you ask for; we have great possessions." But Lita was afraid and said: "When you get me there you will eat me, or if you don't, your father and mother will." But the snake protested that it could not be guilty of such ingratitude and at last Lita agreed to accompany it when he had left the other animals at his home.

To be continued...

ADIVASI SOCIO RENAISSANCE ASSOCIATION (ASRA) is organizing a village level conference on the eve of Birth anniversary of Saonta Guru Shyam Sundar Hemram on 10th April 2015 at Khadisoile Jamuna, Post: Deulia, via: Barsahi, Dist: Mayurbhanj, Odisha – 757 026. Contact: Shri Sadashiba Soren. Mob: 09937651972

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