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GURU GOMKE PANDIT RAGHUNATH MURMU CENTENARY CELEBRATION - UPDATE

BACKGROUND

As per the proposal Mrs. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Orissa convened the first meeting by inviting the proposed persons and other social organizations/Associations and individuals. The meeting took place on 01-02-2003 at Hotel Kesari, Bhubaneswar.

Mrs. Joba Manjhi, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Jharkhand, Mr. Chaitanya Prasad Majhi, Ex-Minister, Govt. of India & Govt. of Orissa, Mrs. Saraswati Hembram, Ex-Minister, Govt. of Orissa, Mr. Sudam Marndi, Hon'ble MLA, Mr. Bhadab Hansdah, Chairman, Mayurbhanj Zilla Parishad, Mr. Nitya Nanda Hembram, President, All India Majhi Madwa, Mr. Laxman Majhi, Ex-MLA, Mr. Sashi Bhusan Marndi, Ex-MLA, Mr. S. S. Hansdah, IPS, representatives of ASECA (O), ASECA (WB), AISWA, Marshal Dahar, Adim Owar Jarpa, Jumid Kherwal, ASECA (Rourkela), ASECA (Bhubaneswar), All India ASECA, New Delhi and other distinguished persons attended the meeting. Mr. Droupadi Murmu was the Chairperson of the meeting.

It was decided that:-

- Guru Kunami (Baisakh Kunami) should only be celebrated to respect the wish of Guru Gomke;
- The name of Central Committee to be retained. Participation from all sections of the society should be there. People to be urged to contribute as per their capacity;
- This celebration should be observed unitedly involving all the people of Assam, West Bengal, Jharkhand and Orissa;
- Apart from celebration, promotion of Santals art, culture and literature should also be considered;
- Multi-lingual publication to spread awareness among various sections of the Indian society.

On a proposal to include more members in the Central Committee, a list was prepared based on the willingness of individuals/associations present there. The members present in the meeting suggested some more names. In total, Around 40 names were included in the list in addition to the initial 20 names to form the Central Committee. It was decided to obtain consent of those suggested persons and convene second meeting on 23.2.2003 at Bhubaneswar to constitute Central Committee.

2. MEETING HELD ON 23.2.2003

Mrs. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Orissa convened the second meeting again. The following persons were invited to the dais. Mr. Droupadi Murmu, Mr. Sashi Bhusan Marndi, Ex-MLA, Mr. Laxman Majhi, Ex-MLA, Mr. Sankha Hansdah, General Secretary, ASECA(O), Mr. D. R. Hansdah, General Secretary, ASECA (WB), Mr. Bala Ram Tudu, President, ASECA(Bihar/Jharkhand), Mr. S.S. Hansdah, Mr. Parau Murmu and Mr. P.C. Hembram. Welcoming all to the meeting, Mrs. Droupadi Murmu invited General Secretary, All India ASECA to conduct the business and explain various issues pertaining to formation of Central Committee. Some of the prominent persons present were: Mr. B.K. Majhi, OAS (I), Mr. Meghray Murmu, Mr. Rupchand Hansda, Mr. Jadumani Besra, Mr. B. Naran Majhi, Prof. Birbal Majhi, Dr. Bidu Bhusan Hembram from Jhargram, Mr. Ramray Majhi, Mr. Madan Mohan Tudu, Mr. Pitambar Marndi from Rourkela, Mr. Karu Murmu, Mr. Baiju Majhi and Mr. Ram Chandra Majhi from Cuttack. Mr. Kanhu Charan Murmu. It is not possible to give more names due to space constraints.

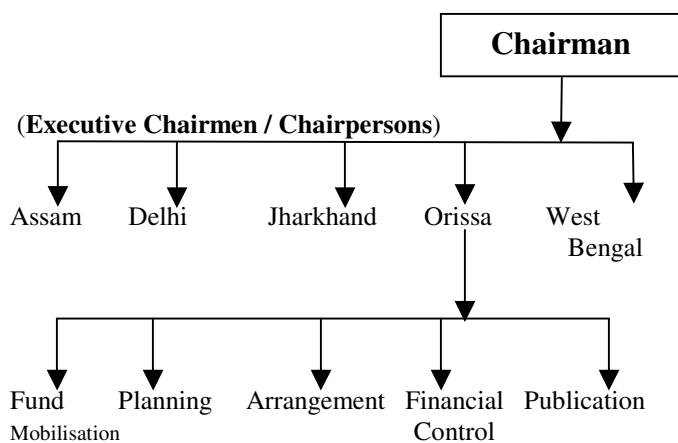
2.1 ISSUES EXPLAINED BY GENERAL SECRETARY, ALL INDIA ASECA

From among the members of the Committee (names included in the list who have given their consent or otherwise), Chairman will head the Central Committee followed by state level Executive Chairmen/ Chairpersons. The following are the Committees in various States: 1. **Fund mobilization**; 2. **Programme Planning and allocation of fund**; 3. **Event Arrangement and Management**; 4. **Financial Operation and Control**; 5. **Publication**.

From the pool of names, one will head any of the above Committees and collectively share responsibilities with other

members. Executive Chairmen/Chairpersons will be responsible for overall monitoring and co-ordination of all activities in the respective states. Other members of the respective state have the option to participate in one or more than one Committees.

It is suggested that members of the Central Committee to organize meetings at least at Ranchi and Kolkata. It is expected that respective Executive Chairmen/Chairpersons to convene the meetings so that a final shape of the Central Committee and its functioning can be expedited. The structure of the Central Committee shall be:



The formation of different committees will be similar in nature in various states.

2.1.1 Fund Mobilisation

Following options can be considered:

- Through a common coupon system using the registration number of an association for better control
- All the associations /individuals to use their good office, influence to mobilize fund issuing their receipts;
- Local contributions to be collected locally and govt. contribution/grant to be routed through a single association.

2.1.2 Programme Planning And Allocation of Funds

Main functions to be organized in: 1) Dandbose in Orissa (Birthplace of Guru Gomke), 2) Santal Pargana (Dumka) in Jharkhand, 3) Betkundri Dahi (Jhargram) in West Bengal, and 4) Delhi.

It was suggested not to organize major events by any other bodies on the same, near by venue or on the same date when Central Committee is organizing the event in order to consolidate the focus. Associations/bodies/individuals can opt for token celebration of the event. The consent of the locals for their active support and co-operation will form the basis for organizing the event in a befitting manner. As such, it will be endeavoured to seek their opinion before initiating /finalizing venue.

Funds mobilized in a State can be utilized for organizing the event in the other States as per requirement. It is

left to the wisdom of the Central Committee to take appropriate actions as per prevailing situation.

Members present in the meeting can roughly state about their contribution. Individuals /Associations can also state their share of contribution. Detailed planning report can be prepared subsequently.

2.1.3 Event Arrangements & Management

As far as possible, responsibility to be given to local individual (s)/Association(s)

2.1.4 Financial Operation & Control

A Central and/or State level Bank Account(s) to be opened in any of the Nationalised Banks. A member from the Central Committee to be given the responsibility of financial control in the states or as the case may be. The respective Executive Chairman/Chairperson and the Head of the Financial Operation and Control Committee shall operate the Accounts jointly. Final settlement of dues and publishing audited report shall be their responsibility. Funds collected from various sources to be channelised to the account(s).

2.1.5 Publication

Apart from publications relating to life and works of Pandit Raghunath Murmu, other publications like Ol Chiki Dictionary of P.O. Boding Dictionary or publication of manuscripts can be taken up as far as availability of funds permits.

2.2 ANY OTHER ISSUES

Matters can be taken up for discussion subject to availability of time. The Central Committee as and when it is formed can consider other proposals.

2.3 OUTCOME OF THE MEETING TO BE COMMUNICATED TO THE PERSONS DESIGNATED FOR VARIOUS POSTS/ RESPONSIBILITIES

The desire of the house to be communicated to the persons about their assignment with a request to take up responsibility in the interest of the Santal community. Their consent to shoulder the responsibility is required to be ascertained to ascertain the success of the Centenary Celebration.

2.4 OTHER PROPOSALS

Mr. B. K. Majhi and Mr. B. Naran Majhi also submitted two separate proposals where the latter found similarity in approach in his and proposal of All India ASECA. It was considered that proposal of Mr. B. K. Majhi is falling in line with the proposed one though with different nomenclature and his concern would be taken care of by the committees involving persons of eminence.

2.5 NAMES PROPOSED

2.5.1 The name of Mr. Babulal Marandi, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Jharkhand was proposed as Chairman of the Central Committee. Executive Chairmen/ Chairpersons are: **Assam:** Mr. Prithibi Majhi, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly; **Delhi:** Mr. Shibu Soren, Hon'ble M.P. (Lok Sabha); **Jharkhand:** Mrs. Joba Manjhi, Hon'ble Minister for Women & Child Welfare, Tourism and Housing, Govt. of Jharkhand; **Orissa:** Mrs. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Minister for Fisheries, Animal Resources Development, Govt. of Orissa; and **West Bengal:** Mr. Upen Kisku, Hon'ble Minister for Welfare of Backward Classes, Govt. of West Bengal.

The house unanimously accepted the above names.

2.5.2 State Level Committees: It was requested to voluntarily give names for Chairmanship or member for various state level committees. Only Mr. Madan Mohan Tudu announced his name for the Fund Mobilisation Committee. Before, other names could pour in, some people refused to accept the structure of the Central Committee as explained above. It was suggested by them that next to the level of State level Chairmen/ Chairpersons, there is no need to constitute state level committees in different states and instead it will be replaced by a committee consisting of a General Secretary, 4 Assistant General Secretaries, a Treasurer, 4 Assistant Treasurers, an Editor and 4 Assistant Editors. Others, who have given their consent or otherwise will remain as members of the Central Committee. Some even questioned how State level committees could become part of Central Committee, as they will be functioning in different states?

2.5.3 Questions Answered: It was explained that State level committees are interlinked mutually and also through a working hierarchy. The structure of the Central Committee is well defined and there is no problem. It was further explained that the respective committees as per their requirement and convenience would appoint General Secretary etc. In the beginning, constitution of main committees should be given priority, as other things will follow upon their formation.

2.5.4 Over Reaction by some: Sensing that new proposal is not being considered, few people (around 4-5) started shouting and demanded that their proposal of appointing Secretaries etc. should be accepted. The noise, disturbances perhaps were enough to push their demand and ultimately proposals and seconds followed for appointment of General Secretary etc. and the formalities were completed with naming some persons for the posts. Thus the posts of Secretaries, Treasures and Editors replaced the State level Committees referred above.

2.6 ANALYSIS

Before questioning the merit of others proposal, it will be essential to inform the general public on why that proposal was not accepted by General Secretary, All India ASECA who was conducting the session.

1. All India ASECA considers that composition of the Central Committee should be enough to neutralize the threshold barrier. The criteria of "The Best", "One of the Best", or "Most Suitable" have been considered for inclusion of members in the Central Committee. Experience, Expertise, Exposure, involvement have been given due priority. The best outcome can be ensured through appropriate system design, standardization and proper integration.
2. We were considering the names of Mr. Sudam Marndi, MLA, Mr. S. S. Hansdah, DIG, ASECA (Orissa), Mrs. Saraswati Hembram, Mr. Uday Nath Majhi and/or Mr. Chaitanya Prasad Majhi to head committees of Fund Mobilisation, Planning and Allocation of Funds, Programme Arrangement and Management, Financial Operation and Control and Publication respectively. Committee Composition in other states would also have similar intellectuals/ leaders of that State.
3. There is a scope to choose a suitable person to head each committee with identified responsibility for each activity in the State. Decision can be taken through collective wisdom, which ensures participation of all as a Team. The idea is to create an enabling environment for the centenary celebration.
4. Sitting in Bhubaneswar, it is difficult to take a view on another state when representation is very less. It is not worthwhile to take decision on the composition of the said committee without due process of consultation. Unilaterally some decisions cannot be taken and for that purpose a formal meeting at Ranchi and Kolkata is essential.
5. This celebration is not considered as mere collection of money and financing some activities but to bridge the hiatus created/evolved within our community due to various reasons, which comes in the way of settling issues of common interest.
6. The main objective is to ensure peoples participation. The composition of committee should instill confidence among people and we should harness the potential of our people by assigning them tasks to enhance overall quality. In this arrangement, the committee has definite role to play and duties/responsibilities and authorities are clearly defined and shared. There has to be a balance between the stature of the person and roles assigned.
7. If the alternate proposal to eliminate the state level committee was agreed to, it was like refusing the services of the able persons for the celebration. It was not understood why so passionately the proposal to eliminate the state level committees was preferred when participation and involvement of every interested persons are ensured in a better way. This is the peculiarity, which compelled to think something is missing. Due to this alternate proposal was turned down keeping larger interest in mind. There is nothing personal which influenced the decision. The right to accept, partially accept or reject a proposal by the person conducting the meeting was exercised as per convention only.

3. POINTS FOR CONSIDERATION OF ALL

It is pertinent here to mention that All India ASECA prepared an approach paper and suggested some names for further action in the matter. Indulgence of All India ASECA continued as per the desire of the Convenor to assist the process of formation of Committee and offer suggestions on other related matters. Had it not been so, our direct involvement so far as formation of Central Committee is concerned would have been ceased by now. All India ASECA took upon itself a role to bring together various forces/forums/factions to achieve the intended goal.

Somehow, the committee without the state level committees has been constituted with the inclusion of two Vice Chairmen (Mr. Salkhan Murmu, Hon'ble M.P. and Mr. Nitya Nanda Hembram). We have no problem in their inclusion as Vice-Chairmen. The name of Mr. P. C. Hembram, General Secretary, All India ASECA, however, was accepted as General Secretary of the Central Committee, which will surely puzzle many. It is mentioned here to highlight our point that in spite of being offered a prime position in the committee, we are not convinced or satisfied due to obvious reasons.

All India ASECA considers the present Central Committee as inadequate and incomplete to help realize the dream of Pandit Raghunath Murmu. Moreover, the methods adopted for its formation cannot be accepted, as it will establish a bad precedent.

With a view to uphold the virtues of humility, decency and decorum, All India ASECA is constrained to disassociate itself from the committee formed below the State level Heads. The dignity of purpose, principle and procedure needs to be respected while associating our names with Guru Gomke Pandit Raghunath Murmu.

Through this article we are consulting the public in general and the dignitaries in the Central Committee including those proposed by us in particular. We do not intend to question the authority of Mrs. Droupadi Murmu or other members of the Central Committee. It is our humble submission of the facts in order to get feedback. We are hopeful of getting the views of the dignitaries who have given their consent. If needed, a meeting can be organized at Delhi.

If undelivered please return to:
ALL INDIA ASECA,
SFS Flat No. 326, Pocket 10,
Sector 11 (Extension), Rohini,
Delhi - 110 085.

Dear Sri Purna,
With reference to your D. O. letter No. 1/1C/AIASECA/2002 dated 3.1.2003, I am willing to be a member of Apex Committee to organize a National Level Centenary Celebration of Guru Gomke Pandit Raghunath Murmu.

With regards, Yours sincerely,
S. S. Hansdah, IPS
DIG (Modernisation), Cuttack
30 January 2003

FORM IV

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

Date 1.3.2003

Barisa Kisku
Publisher