



STATUS, DEVELOPMENT TREND AND FUTURE OF SANTALS

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Santals are one of the original major tribes of India with very rich mythology of creation of living being, creation of human being i.e. *mythology of Hans-Hasli & Pilchu Haram Pilchu Budhi*, evolution of language, mythology of invention of writing script i.e. "*Oi Chiki*", great history of our dream land (living place), *Jharkhand*, rich oral literature, Culture, religion and tradition. Santals are the single largest linguistic tribal community not only in India but also in the whole World. The statement that "*Santals were one of the original inhabitants of this great country called Bharat*" is now being established and proved by the scientist in India and World over through genetic study, which is called *Genome Diversity in Indian Population Project (GENDIP)* in India. In the changing time of human origin to this modern era, where the concept of global village is a reality, the very existence of Santals as a community is a big question mark.

The past and present status of Santals as a community, in the barometer scale of human development is definitely in the lower side. Though in individual capacity there is instance of success story and there are Santals who are in exalt position at par with mainstream population in India and in the World for that matter, but the community has failed miserably in their group behavior, collective approach, social solidarity and unity. The relation between one Santal to another Santal is as deplorable as other comparisons, where one Santal is at the helm of the affairs and another is living in the hell with the mercy of the Almighty. The present day status of Santals can be clearly visualized by making comparison between *Santal-Santal*, *Santal-Tribal*, *Santal-Other locals (local Diku)*, *Santal-Indians (Indian Diku)* or *Santal-Foreigner (Saheb)* with respect to Economic, Educational, Social, Religious and Political angle. Santals' educational status in the newly created state of Jharkhand demonstrates the misconception and miserable position of Santals and tribals in their own state (Table 2). The creation of Jharkhand state with 18 districts (4 more district are created later on) where there is provision for 9 SC 28 ST reserved legislative seats out of total 81 seats, no way gives the picture that it is a Santal or tribal state though Jharkhand was thought to be Santal and tribal phenomena. With 27.67 percent tribal population it is as good as other non-tribal states. From the (Table 1) and (Table 2) it can be observed that though population wise the Santals are about 10 % of Jharkhand, success in one of the competitive Examinations is only 4%. Among the tribals, Santals are 35.47%, highest in number, but success is only 14%. The literacy rate of Santals as per 1981 census in the then state of Bihar was mere 12.5%. The 1981 census report shows zero literacy of Santal Women in the state of Tripura. With this status and development trend of Santals in Education (which can be said as an individual phenomena) where Santals have succeeded in some extent, their future in other direction i.e. Social, Cultural, Religion (which are said to be group phenomena) can be perceived easily. There is a vacuum in Sarna religion though it is strongly bonded with the belief in nature and thereby others are alienating it. Santal language which is the mother tongue of

sizable number of people is not being recognized by the Union Government because of fragmentation among the Santals in political party line like Congress Santals, BJP Santals, Janata Santals, Jharkhand Santals and so on. The modern political process like Panchayat Raj is eroding the social institution like Majhi Pargana System. The customs, rituals are having as many versions as the number of santals because of our oral tradition and lack of documentation. With all these present transitional status and development trend, Santals are caught in a spider clutch in search for an Identity.

Table 1: Tribal Population Profile of Jharkhand

Sl.	Tribes	Population	Percentage to Tribal Population	Literacy Within Tribe
1	Asur	7,783	0.13	10.62
2	Baiga	3,553	0.06	4.22
3	Banjara	412	(Lowest) 0.01	12.38
4	Bathaudi	1,595	0.03	16.93
5	Bedia	60,445	1.04	10.82
6	Bhumij	1,36,110	2.35	16.45
7	Binjhia	10,009	0.17	14.52
8	Birhor	4,057	0.07	5.74
9	Birjia	4,057	0.07	10.50
10	Chero	52,210	0.90	17.30
11	Chich Baraik	40,339	0.69	20.17
12	Gond	96,574	1.66	20.00
13	Gorait	5,206	0.09	16.61
14	Ho	5,36,524	9.23	17.71
15	Karmali	38,652	0.66	13.30
16	Kharia	1,41,771	2.44	24.86
17	Kharwar	2,22,758	3.83	17.22
18	Khond	1,263	0.02	15.99
19	Kisan	23,420	0.40	13.41
20	Kora	33,951	0.58	9.28
21	Korwa	21,940	0.38	6.14
22	Lohar	1,69,090	2.91	12.71
23	Mahli	91,868	1.59	12.74
24	Mal Pahariya	79,322	1.37	7.58
25	Munda	8,45,887	14.56	22.16
26	Oraon	10,48,064	18.05	23.28
27	Parhaiya	24,012	0.41	15.30
28	Santhal	20,60,732	(Highest) 35.47	12.55
29	Sauria Paharia	30,269	0.68	6.87
30	Savar	3,014	0.05	9.55
31	Unspecified	6,660	0.10	3.94
	Total	58,10,867	100.00	16.99

Source: Collected from Various Census Reports 1991.

Table 2: Result of Jharkhand Combined Entrance Competitive Examination Board, 2001

Sl. No.	Category	Group : PCB		Group : PCM		Total		Santal %age within ST
		No of Students Qualified	%age	No of Students Qualified	%age	No of Students Qualified	%age	
1	General	69	29	102	28	171	28	
2	BC	26	11	37	10	63	10	
3	EBC	43	18	64	18	107	17	
4	SC	35	15	52	14	87	14	
5	ST	68	28	107	30	175	28	
6	Santhal	7	3	17	5	24	4	14
7	SMQ					14	2	
8	Total	241	100	362	100	617	100	

The prediction of Santals' future with any method including scientific way with 100% certainty is an impossible proposition. Based on past history and present trend following future changes are going to affect the Santals in India in a great way.

1. The global phenomenon of change in Earth's temperature, rainfall, soil fertility and other geographical change.
2. Increase of Populations.
3. Indian Constitution and Legal system are going to change.
4. Liberalization and globalization in terms of trade, economics, commerce, social and cultural.

Considering the above inevitable changes the Santal community may have following alternative future scenario.

- i) May exist as a developed community with different identity.
- ii) May vanish as Santals or as tribe for that matter with the present development process of pseudo assimilation.
- iii) May exist but with same or more miserable condition.

Considering all the deliberation and depiction of different scenario of Santals following problem areas of Santal community can be perceived and some ways and means for their remedy can be thought of.



Problems:

1. No social consciousness, social force or social capital for that matter.
2. Lack of education or proper education.
3. No or less documentation of Literature.
4. No standardization or uniformity of social customs, rituals etc
5. Wrong concept of development in assimilation process.

Suggested Solutions:

1. Development of unity and social solidarity through network of associations and individuals.
2. Disseminating of social awareness, consciousness, development of social capital through organizing seminars, Workshop, conference, publishing journals and other mode of communication and strengthening the social Institution.
3. Standardization of social customs, rituals and documentation of it and other literature.
4. Use of "Ol Chiki" script for mass literacy drive in mother tongue through non-formal education.
5. Harness, develop, document the core competence and positive things of tradition and culture and discourage or minimize the negative aspect of it through documentation.



SANTAL IDENTITY


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Till recent times, Santals never faced with a problem relating to their identity. The need to define what makes a person to be called a Santal was not considered that important as they recognize each other intimately and closely. Santals in general had same occupation i.e. agriculture and development in economic and education sphere was almost at the same level. Santals preferred isolation to integration with other societies and continued to pursue their own life and style in a unique way. The class hierarchy associated with the integration process may be the reason for their not choosing this mode. Santals continued to live a life on the edifice of mutual trust, co-operation and with certain common features. Non-dependence on members of the other communities in all social affairs earned them a distinct identity and contributed to their being known independently and separately. The Santal society is self-sufficient and it sources its services to conduct social affairs from within. The question of Santal identity is perhaps the response to the reality in which they are now living.

The need to compare him/her self with others so far as identity is concerned was absent due to limited interaction with others. It never occurred to them to compare themselves with other social group, as social relationship was mutually exclusive to each other. Their gradual exposure with outside world and of course spread of education provided them scope to interact with the members of other social group. The opportunity to mix with members of other social group came when Santal students were admitted to the schools, colleges, universities and due to change in the profession from traditional to modern; primary to secondary onwards up to white-collar jobs. Unfortunately, Santals are late starters in the field of education as this opportunity was too restricted for the members of this community in general before independence. The persons enjoyed the privilege to be taught were generally the sons of the people associated with the administration in the then Princely States. It was a boon for this community as some people got education despite the practice of untouchability and we as a community owe respect to those teachers who liberally taught Santal students.

With gradual exposure came the experience of treatment or acceptance by the other communities. The feeling of superiority by others forced Santals for introspection to find out the parameters/nomenclature for which others feel so elated for their identity. The educated mass those who have capacity and access to know other society's features found that there were also elements in Santal society, which are at par, superior or comparable with others. That was perhaps the reason why a renewed initiative was undertaken to establish Santal identity and is being pursued even today. Before suggesting what makes a Santal different from other people or what are the features inherently associated with a Santal identity, the author likes to draw the attention to the following discussions relating to Santal identity. This discussion had taken place through Internet within a group of 63 members. It is interesting for the sole reason that perhaps this is the first occasion where members of the same community shared their views, ideas on their identity. Though it is not




complete and it was abandoned half way for the reasons best known to the participants but it certainly throws some direction and understanding of the term Santal. This kind of exchange of views will no doubt have a positive contribution in disseminating knowledge about Santal society. This is desirable to bring to light different shades of thoughts for further understanding and by doing so the right thing will be appreciated and accepted by the masses based on its own merit and reasoning. In the discussions the terms like race, religion, culture, tradition etc. have been used quite frequently. These should not be treated strictly according to Anthropology or Sociology definition/meaning but have been used here based on common understanding of the terms. But the theme can be understood clearly from the texts.

The discussion started on 26 October, 2001 with the posting of following messages:

Hi there, all my Santhal friends. I've joined this group recently and this is my first mail to all of you. Before, proceeding further, I would like to introduce myself - I'm Francis Hembrom from Sahibgunj district. I finished my schooling from St. Xavier's Sahibgunj; thereafter I went to Calcutta to St. Xavier's College and then I went to Xavier Institute of Social Service, Ranchi for Personnel Management. I completed in May 2001 and joined Tata Steel in May itself. This is about myself and I would be very happy if I could know more about you all also. I thank the person who has taken the initiative of building this site. It's definitely going to help us bridge the gap between places and even people - I say people because here in Jamshedpur and after staying for 4 months I've found that there is a very-very gap between the Christian and the non- Christian Santhals. But one thing that each and every one has to contribute is that we'll have to propagate this site amongst our Santhals. Frankly speaking, many of our Santhals net users don't have any idea about it. I myself came to know about it just a couple of week's back and I thank Joy Raj Eric Tudu for giving me the information about it.

Well, this was on my side and I'll love to hear from your sides. Regards, Francis.

Dear Francis, Thanks a lot for joining this e-group and expressing your concern on the issue of Santal identity. Conversion has been the thorny issue and continues to be so in the years to come. Here I don't want to condemn or support something outrightly which has different meaning to different people. I'm expressing my views here so as to facilitate healthy discussion on this. It is wrong to say Christian or non-Christian Santals as Santals are an entity with specific nomenclature with a history dates back to the birth of Jesus Christ. A person can either be a Christian or a Santal and not a combination of both. The process of proselytisation emanated from the very fact that those who did/do not like the social milieu of Santals changed their belief on the Saviour and embraced Christianity. The use of term Christian Santals or with this prefix with some tribal group is based on convenience so as to avail some concessions given to the Santals/tribal groups by the Govts. Otherwise there is no point in calling oneself by a name which he disliked in some point of time. The use of term Christian and non-Christian Santals defies the concept of unique society. If we allow the existence of this duality, then automatically blame comes to the persons responsible to create a division in a unique society. It is, therefore, advisable to the persons converted to Christianity not to call themselves as Santals. If they are doing so, they are committing blasphemy in their newly found belief. The gap you are identifying is the response to this reality. My endeavour is not to pinpoint who is wrong or who is right but to highlight the difference between the principle and practice. Traditionally, Santals are a self-supported and self-sufficient social group. For this reason they cannot be called



as Hindu Santal, Christian Santal, Buddhist Santal or Muslim Santal etc. I feel proud to be known as a Santal without a prefix or suffix. Those who like to use prefix or suffix can share their side of story. It is interesting to see that Santals those who had/have decided/desired to assimilate themselves in an international stream (community) still prefer to be known by a name which once upon a time was disliked. From the fact that persons with strong support base (as a member of Christian community) still cherish and feel comfortable to be known as "Santals", repose a sense of pride in me that Santals too have some characteristics though not all which are superior than the Christian Commandments. It is nice to see intelligent and highly educated people like you have started questioning this duality in search of a unique identity. Yours PC Hembram

Hello Francis, Welcome to this Egroup. I also wanna put my two cents thoughts in this issue i.e. division of Santal race under Christian and non-Christian Hindu and in this situation what we santhals egroup should comprise of Santal is not only a race, but also a religion. When we refer "Santal" as a race, we mean it is a group of human, and officially meant as schedule tribe of India. When we say religion, it consists of certain belief and some tradition similar to other religion like Hindu, Muslim, and Christian. We named it as "Sarna". The relationship between "Santal" and "Sarna" is such that one is called Santal when s/he obeys the tradition of Sarna religion. They are like two sides of a coin. The significance of Sarna religion is implied by calling her/him self as Santal. So in my opinion, one should call himself as Santal when he will worship in Jaher, belief in Marang Buru, marry according to the Santal culture and prefer to cherish the Santal culture and tradition. (I don't pin point anyone either Hindu /Christian, who is going out of this circle) In this context, how the concepts of Hinduism/Christianity came in to our race? Generally we, Santals were poor in terms of knowledge, wealth and power. So in the past, the identity of our religion was ignored. We were counted as Hindu. Although, the original Hindus consider us as lowered class Hindu, but we preferred to stay like that as we didn't have voice to raise against them. But we never neglected to adopt our Sarna tradition. In the mean time, the Christian community came to India and started helping the poor people. The few Santals need their help (some actually needed it) and others sold their identity with the money. But the sad part is that they almost washed away the tradition, culture of Santal society. They left the Jaher culture, they left the puja at their home to their forefathers, and they left the marriage tradition of Santals. This is what they have done mistake. If Christianity is adopted for help, then none will stop you from making "Johar in Jaher". None will stop you by making marriage in Santal tradition, but most of so-called Christian-Santals hesitate to do that. I wish if someone is called himself as Santal, he must prefer to follow the Santal culture and tradition. He must create the faith of Sarna in his and his children's hearts. Hope, all of us will recover back to that very soon.

In this context, for whom is the we santhals yahoo group? It's for all type of Santals, who feels him/herself as Santal. I don't want if someone is going out of this feeling, to be out of this group. But hope we all will comeback to strengthen us with the spirit of Jaher culture, because its mission is not to divide us but to unite us to struggle for our common targets.

PS: We are not conservative, we are preserving the Santal identity.


With regards , Raj

Hello, Before presenting my views here, I would like to review of some of the definition, which is really very important for discussion. Definition of Ethnic Group: The term ethnic means of or relating to sizable group of people sharing a common and distinct racial, national, religious, linguistic,



or culture heritage. Definition of Community: A group of people who shares "some thing" common. It can be any thing. e.g. Community Halls, Community kitchen, or computer graphics community etc.... Christian can be Santhals? If you use all these definition, you will have idea that there is some kind of vagueness of all definition. There is not any clear-cut way of definition given here and if you go through any book of sociology, you will find lots of definitions. That is where lies the root cause of all problems. It gives some kind of discretion to the people who are practicing it or who are in command position. I am little bit surprised to see that we are trying to find simple solution out of complex and vast class of solutions. Two of my friends have given their opinions about this. But I find the assessment or estimate are from the religion point of view. Why cannot think in terms of community? We have vast numbers of things common, e.g. physical characteristics, Linguistic, etc. Let leave alone the religion part right now for sake of arguments. This definitely serves one kind of platform for community. We can think of betterment of language, script, we can together also think of betterment of community as a whole. Here does not lie any conflict or it does not originate any problem to be recognised as Santhal community. But our problem lies in the thin division line goes between the religion and culture. This is inextricably mixed with each other. Why there is division or conflicts? Religion originates in an attempt to represent and order beliefs, feelings, imagination and actions that arise in response to direct experience of the sacred and the spiritual. As this attempt expands in its formulation and elaboration, it becomes a process that creates meaning for itself on a sustaining basis, in terms of both its originating experiences and its own continuing responses. The essence of Christianity is a belief, a particular truth claim: that Jesus was the sole Son of God and that he redeemed mankind from sin by his crucifixion and resurrection. Modern Bible scholarship has made that belief untenable. The propagation of these beliefs was entirely within the Jewish tradition, at least within its fringe of culture and tradition of that time. Christian religion is flourished at Europe, so many of European culture have assimilated into the Christian Religion. Other way, this culture is synonym of Christian. Although it is not true! When missionaries preach this religion, they some time are unable to understand or separate the culture and religion and they impose the tradition of Europeans in the name of Christian. This gives some kind of wrong impression of Christianity. That is why you can find out lot of difference between "Christian Santhals" and Santhals. I have quite lot of experiences at organising Get-together at Bangalore. I can still remember some reason we could not organise the get-together in October. We planned to host this at December 1st or 2nd. And the same time there was some person wanted to host Christmas party at his residence. We had been forced to change the schedule of get-together and many of them refused to come to get-together. Even some told me, my religion comes first and then my culture or whatever it is. I really got pain for their thinking of culture like this. There is no scope of Culture when it goes little bit against the religion. This I can highly take as a sample from vast populations. This reflects conflict of religion and culture and tradition. This kind of behavior of disgruntled people makes or creates the division of Christian and Santhals. This some time does not allow the assimilation of Christians into Santhals community frame work. Now let me look at ourselves...How much we are able to preserve or conserve our cultural roots and vignettes? Why are we so resistive to assimilate some thing else in the frame work of community? Let us introspect ourselves...When we are allowed to assimilate some of Hindu Culture into our tradition, why not other? For example, our name...Naresh, Ramesh, Raj, Jhadeswar etc. This is not the name from our language. It is from Bengali or Oriya language. We never hesitate to tell that this is not part of our language, why not put some kind of Santhali name...e.g. Marang, Greetin, Burulukui etc. So it means that we are presenting the interpretation of dogmatic views. Is not it? What we can conclude from this? We have to think some





thing what we can do better out of the present situation. Which way we can preserve our fundamentals of our culture and tradition with small assimilation or incorporation of other elements. My views: One should not call Santhals Christian or some thing like this to distinct oneself from other. I feel it is better to say I am a Santhal... Not Christian Santhals... With regards Naresh

Hello everybody, It's nice to have a new member in our group, a warm welcome to Francis. As Francis has raised the question of a gap between non-Christian Santal and Christian Santal I would like to have a few say in this regard. It is very sad to say but it is a fact that there in fact exists a gap. As far as I know some Santals who have adopted Christianity as their religion have almost given up their rites and rituals that have been descended from our forefathers. (I don't know whether all those Santal who have adopted Christianity are like that or not, but the ones who I know). This is something very unfortunate. In my view all religions preach the same thing, that is to love mankind, to adopt peaceful means etc. So whether you adopt Hinduism, Christianity, Buddhism or Islam, is not a big factor. The question is how you preserve your identity as a Santal. This identity can be preserved only when you follow your tradition comprising rites and rituals and the others. When you forgo all these things I do not think you remain a Santal. Therefore I would like to conclude by saying that whatever may be your religion, if you want to remain a Santal you should not forget your roots and your rich traditional background and enrich it by observing all ceremonies in your traditional way. With regards, Jyotsna Saren

Hi. I would like to put my views on this type of important issue. Yeah I am a Santal and I mean 1) my belief 2) my culture 3) my tradition 4) my language. I can term the first three as my religion THE SARNA. And I can say my religion and my language are very much different from any other religion (or beliefs) of this World. Of course SARNA is not recognised in India or World. So as I feel myself a responsible Santhal person I try my best to preserve our tradition, our religion. And I request you all responsible Santhal in egroup family to try your level best to preserve our Santhal heritage. Otherwise we will be nowhere. Of course I don't want to comment on other religion-what is their good thing or bad thing. But I also expect other religion shouldn't blame my belief. This identity issue made me unrest till last few years. But I couldn't express because of no proper environment. Thanks a lot to EGROU. Yes, Christians who forgot Santal tradition, how can they claim to be Santhal? You know when you tell your surname kisku, murmu, tudu...other person ask you "are you a Christian?". This is because Christianity has exploited our belief. My request, be firm and bold to resist this exploitation. Yes Christianity helped Santhal in one-way, but looted us in other way. You know Christian missionary tried to spread their belief in the name of "LITERACY CAMPAIGN". These things really I can't allow. And thanks to my GODFATHER you resisted somehow and saved us, though you are poor. And there is other thing I want to put. Our surname is distorted like anything. Can you accept it? No we should not. I feel very angry and disappointed if somebody makes mockery of our surname. Such as for Murmu...murmur, Marndi..ar.andi, Soren.....Sareen, Kisku...Khisku. something like that. Of course this may be because of our identity problem. So let us try to stop it. Again, there are also other issues, which are to be addressed. So at first we should be united, strong enough to face this type of challenge. Here are my important suggestions: 1. Let us make proper and optimum utilisation of this advanced information age that means to make optimum use of EGROU site to prosper our society. 2. Don't be passive to this type of important issue. Everybody should speak his mind and share his views. 3. Let's activate ourselves to contribute something to our society-SANTHAL SOCIETY. Well I expect numerous views and suggestions. Bye. Barisa Kisku




Hello,

About the ongoing discussion on Christianity over Santal, hey let's make a healthy discussion. It's going to be one sided talk. If anyone has better idea, how and why some Santals chose Christianity as their religion, then please put your views at here. Discussion on any matter should be from both sides and we wish if someone is talking on support/against of some issues that needn't imply that (s)he is totally of that mentality. Our discussion should be the source of various views, discovery of various secrets and great source of lessons about our society, culture and tradition. Wish we shall practice the constructive confrontation by focussing on problems and not in persons.
Regards Raj

Dear friends, JOHAR ! It was only a concern expressed by one of our new members about the prevailing mentality and difference of opinion between people of different faiths among the Santhals in Jamshedpur. However this needs a serious discussion and I have tried to form a general opinion in this topic. To aware us that too much of intellectualisation of this issue would confuse us more on our cultural identity. In fact what is seen so far is most of the members are getting carried away by the ongoing campaign against Christianity. I am a SANTHAL. I mean it. I am a Christian by faith - for a simple reason that I was born and brought up in a Christian family. Now according to many of the members I am not a Santhal. To be more specific the point raised by Mr. Kisku doesn't bother or rather doesn't restrict me from being called a Santhal. I need not require to claim for my own identity, this should be very well understood. To me many of you are Christians by deed. We need to know the meaning of Christianity and have broad view of the word "Christian". Now why there is a different view of the Santhals who have adopted Christianity and what about those Santhals who go to MANDIR to perform pujas and get themselves identified along with the HINDUS ?? Is that any form of SARNA?? What would you call a Santhal ATHEIST ?? I don't see any reason for discrimination among Santhals. The form of 'caste certificate' issued by the government also doesn't state your religion. Is it really necessary to discriminate?? And who does? We - the "intellectual lot" of our marginalised community. Santhals in Santhal Pargana still live in egalitarian society in spite of many of the converted families. A strong campaign is going on by the political parties to disturb the unity of the Santhal of this region and I'm afraid they are yielding positive results. And if one thinks that a Santhal of other faith no longer remains a Santhal, then we would be called a bunch a intellectual fools deciding the future of over one crore Santhal ,majority of whom do not even know our topic of discussion. I know some Santhal who do not pronounce their surname in public, never taught Santhali to their children so they do not speak the language. Some feel shy to do 'DOBOH JOHAR' in public. Is this not disgusting!! Identity and Faith are two different aspects and cannot be the sides of the same coin for everyone. A Santhal will always be a Santhal whether he worships in Jaherthan, Mandir, Church, and Mosque or be an Atheist. We should be able to discern the times and re-think our respective ideologies, which would help us, grow a better SANTHAL day by day. Thanking you,
Joy Raj Tudu.

Dear friends, Here I want say few points.

1. Tudu babu said that there is ongoing campaign against Christian . That's right but that does not mean we are carried away by that type of issue. In fact I feel bad when some Hindu activist discriminately attack poor adivasi Christian. Why not rich Christian? Of course, personally I am against this attack. Everybody has right about



his religion. But again one can't say I am both "Hindu and Christian" or "Muslim and Sarna" or Christian and Sarna"


2. Once again repeat I respect all religion. At the same time I expect same treatment from other. I can go to any religious place if they allow me. And of course I have been to Mandir and Church. That does not mean I am Hindu or Christian. Nobody can hijack my religion that's in my heart.
3. I said earlier that, Christian missionary comes to poor Santhal village and tells them that they want to give free education. At initial phase they don't say anything about Christianity. When they taught them few things about education, they start their own mission. They start teaching about JESUS and their belief. That means I think their hidden agenda is to convert poor Santhal to Christian in the name of LITERACY CAMPAIGN. This is real opportunism. This type of incident happened in my own village. But when we came to know their REAL INTEREST behind it, we got them out.
4. As it is known some people fear to say their surname. Yeah this is right but I think this is because we don't have recognition, for which we are struggling. We don't want to pronounce our surname by Christian support. If you take their support, in turn they take something from you, which have happened already.
5. Yeah there is economical problem among many Santhal, that we will try to do some project by our different Santhal association to eradicate it. But we will not sell our religion for that. At last I say, I don't have any intention to hurt any people. But fact is fact. bye. Barisa Kisku

Johar, Recently, joining of a new member, actually his casual remark - "gap between ...", triggered a spontaneous outburst of feelings, opinions from our members. I am sure, as all of them have mentioned, the intent is to have an open discussion and not to challenge an individual about ones belief and faith. The issue of Santhal identity is haunting us now more than anytime before. Not that the disintegration started now but, we now have better ways of reaching each other, and hence better way of becoming aware of

an issue and better way of getting involved in it. And I also believe that the responsibility lies in our intellectuals' hands to give it due importance, to place it in the right perspective, to give it the right direction and enough momentum.

I am sure that there are many more Christian Santhals, though there is just one posting so far showing this. The fact that someone believes to be a Santhal, irrespective of their religious inclination, should make us proud about our Santhal community. It may be right time to know more about what makes them Santhals and what differentiates them from Santhals.

Indeed, the religion, culture and tradition are so intricately inter-related, it is almost impossible to define them sharply without referring to each other. The religion is not only how and where people perform puja, it pretty much lays down the guidelines for running the life. In other words, it is the religion that dictates most of the day to day practices, and the same practices, later,



become traditions. So the question here is, who is Santhal. I could think of a few criteria. Santhals are those -

1. who believe in Sari-Sarna and practice it;
2. who strictly follow Santhal traditions;
3. who are knowledgeable about Santhal culture & traditions.
4. who speak Santhal language;
5. who read and write Santhal language; and
6. who are born in a Santhal family.

Now, how many of us fulfil all of the above criteria?

I have no doubt in the inherent strength of our religion, culture and traditions, but I do believe that all of these have, somehow, not evolved with the changing times. And this is going to be one of the main reasons for having more and more differences. Well, they do not evolve on their own, people need to be involved. So, it is up to us to make this happen.

In the conclusion, agreeing with Naresh, I would like to say that for now we should focus on the common interests - there are plenty -, and leave the ones seriously controversial. Of course we can always discuss and educate ourselves as long as we derive some positive outcome from it. Jai Jharkhand ! Devendra

Johar, Thanks for your instant reply. What worries me most is the complex which we have seem to develop in this series of discussion. Why do we think that there has to be criteria for being a Santhal? And secondly on what basis are you making criteria to be fulfilled by each existing Santhal? One should not forget that we can be of immense help to the downtrodden lot of our community be it in whatever capacity and position. Further the point made by Mr. Kisku of carrying out dual religion is simply ridiculous!!! I am a Santhal better than anyone in this cosmos is, I can speak the very best of Santhali language and carry out our Santhal tradition much better than most of us .Why is it so difficult to embrace a Santhal who follows a different religion ?? I should not be asking this for the second time but you should be specific in stating your opinion clearly rather than running around the bush. There are a lot of other issues, which need to be discussed as regards the recent declaration of reservation of quota to the tribals in the state of Jharkhand. Are you all aware of this? I also would like to hear from rest of the members. Please feel free to comment on the ongoing topic of Santhal Identity.

Much Regards, Joy Raj Tudu.

Dear friends, I hope for the views from other members. Otherwise it seems one-sided discussion. And I do hope there is solution to every problem. In my perception we do have following problems:

- 1) we don't have recognition;
- 2) we have economical problem;



3) our literacy rate is very low; and

4) few social drawbacks.

Mr. Tudu babu is focussing only economical and literacy problem. But he is ignoring the first one, which is also equally important. Now, few people may be economically very strong, but they lost their original identity. So I think all these are to be addressed parallely. When we think about our recognition, CRITERIA OF SANTHAL come into picture, the point is well described by Mr. Devendra babu. When recognition issue is concerned we shouldn't mix-up it with any borrowed ideologies. We should strengthen our ideologies and eradicate any social drawbacks, rather than completely forgetting our original ideologies. Please take active participation in this discussion, otherwise it will remain like daydream. bye. Barisa Kisku


Hi all, Again returned back to the discussion by highlighting few of the good points presented by different members, which have made the discussion pretty well. At the same time, it seems some people's anger of years got burst and may lead personal conflict. I wish let's compromise with the issue from all sides. Barisa Kisku said>> Yes, Christians who forgot Santal tradition, how can they claim to be Santhal? Jay Tudu said>> Now why there is a different view of the Santhal who have adopted Christianity and what about those Santhal who go to MANDIR to perform pujas and get themselves identified along with the HINDUS?? Exactly arguments of both are worth pondering. We need to introspect ourselves, our way of life before blaming someone. People from both the sides have washed away few of the criteria noted by Devendra Murmu. That never means, we, such people are not to be called as Santals. I think one's claim to call himself on the basis of speaking Santal frequently, is not sufficient. I have seen some gentleman from "muchi" community at Rourkela(I forgot the name) have contributed enough in Santal literature, and many times has been invited as a speaker in Santal gathering. That never means that he is a Santal. In such cloudy situation, I think the sole criteria to be called as Santal is to have "Belief in Jaher Culture". Whoever you may be Hindu/Christian none stops you to do so, unless yourself hesitate doing so. I have seen the saddest part of so called Christian Santal is that they hesitate to do "Johar in Jaher".

Devendra Murmu said>>The religion is not only how and where people perform puja, it pretty much lays down the guidelines for running the life. In other words, it is the religion that dictates most of the day to day practices, and the same practices, later, become traditions.

This is how our tradition came. So when someone claims that I fully obey the tradition of Santal, then it's implied that he has belief in SARNA. On the contrary, if someone doesn't have belief in SARNA, then how he can claim that he obeys tradition of Santal.

If we see our past, as Hindu, we got a place as untouched lower class Hindu. On the same time Christian came and looted our identity on the name of service and literacy. We have been betrayed from both these religions. Don't you think it's our time to find out our root (ref: Naresh's mail on 31/10/2001). Jay Tudu said>>>Santhal will always be a Santhal whether he worships in Jaherthan, Mandir, Church, and Mosque or be an Atheist.

Does it mean that someone born with surnames majhi, marndi, hembram, tudu ... is a Santal? Or does it mean someone who just talks in santali is a Santal? I guessed people would have changed their surnames had they not got the reservation facility and at the same time would have



been treated as Adivasi. I doubt people would have forgotten santali long years ago had they spoken santali just because they know santali. We still talk in santali, where we have more fluency in other languages. Analysing all these, I conclude that neither speaking santali nor getting birth with Santal surnames should suffice to give us Santal identity. On the other hand, in this democratic government, none can debar you from your Santal identity. This is where we, ourselves, should preserve our Santal identity. If we hesitate to introduce ourselves as Santal rather than Hindu/ Christian, then none can save our identity. On the same time as PC Hembram told, we should feel proud to be known as a Santal without a prefix or suffix. If we want to enrich our languages, want to show our uniqueness as Santal to the world, we have to struggle combinedly to many problems of this community. And among them one of the great weapons for us is to preserve our Santal culture and tradition.

So finally I want to say, doesn't matter where you worship apart from Jaherthan. We shouldn't divide ourselves as Hindu/Christian rather we should love to see us all as the Santal community with SARNA belief as all our traditions are based on that. We should forget what have made us erect such wall between us. We should combinedly work to make a big fight against other problems in our society. On the same time, I request those Christian-brothers/sisters, who have ignored the Santal tradition, to adore it back. I request those Hindu brothers/sisters, who used to hide their origin in the way to expose their highness, please try to identify yourself as Santal and feel proud of it. In this context as Jyotsna told the question is how you preserve your identity as a Santal. This identity can be preserved only when we follow our tradition comprising rites and rituals. So friends, let us obey our Santal culture and tradition and enrich it. Unless we, the intellectual mass do it, we can't expect it from the people left at villages.

Regards Raj

JOHAR, Nice to have this discussion at a good momentum, thanks to Raj for giving us space for further introspection within ourselves. The subject of this posting is what I mean.

Without ignoring the past I am also trying to focus on this subject in today's context. In my view I have stated very straightforwardly my opinion on the situation of a Santhal today. Now stating my knowledge about the Santhali language and tradition was mistaken as my claiming of being a Santhal, and as I have stated earlier that I need not require to claim for my own identity. To let you know in Santhal Parganas almost all the shopkeepers can speak Santhali with much confidence... they aren't Santhals.

What I have noted that there is a general opinion formed for those Santhals who have been converted. Let me share that today I was with a training program for the youth organized by the 'National council of Churches in India' in Nagpur. And after my paper presentation regarding the ongoing war against Afghanistan, there was a resource person who asked me about my background and he was happy to hear that me being a Santhal and we contribute to a crore in today's population, and also have an ethnic background much different from others. Interestingly he was an anthropologist and believe me he knew of Santhals better than anyone of us. People may call you in names but we should call ourselves Santhal. It is true that we should preserve our Santhal identity by following our traditions. But does that mean preserving Santhal identity by outcasting Santhal following other religions??? And if it is such I have no terminology for this sort of opinions. It is true that the "GAP BETWEEN" is because we have build 'WALLS' instead of 'BRIDGES'. I'm also afraid this 'difference'




is leading us nowhere.

Joy Raj Tudu, Nagpur.

Hello, The whole discussion is revolving around the Santhal identity somewhere comes to a standstill around the Culture and tradition . Culture and tradition is the basis of ethnic identity. And most fortunate part is that Santhal loves more to preserve and propagate the tradition as compared to other tribes like, Ho, Oraon, Munda etc. Devendra mentioned in his mail that some of the criteria, which is one kind of quantification of qualitative aspects of culture. Although number of criteria can be debatable, but as a whole it gives some kind of measure towards the definition of Santhal identity. Here I want to let others know some of the paradox of Santhal identity. It is fact that it is Christianity which gave the Santhal (in broad sense the tribal) identity to Santhal people and it is the Christian missionaries who rediscovered the most of the culture and traditions of Santhal. Who actually did the research on tribal people unlike other Indian researchers coming into the cores of the society and living with tribal people and tried to find out the independent identity of tribal society and place Santhal society into the world map in respectable format. So we should be thankful to them at least for this reason. But problem starts here, after finding the powerful cultural roots and vignettes, which we are now proud of, Santhal or tribal (Christian) starts finding unusual dilemma in one hand Christianity and on the other hand deep rooted cultural and traditional heritage. The articles by Bishop Dr. Nirmal Minz (Tribal identity), Dr. Chritopher Lakra (Christianity and Tribal identity) clearly reflects this views. ("Souvenir 97" Jharkhand Cultural Association, Bangalore). It is more like Christianity taught to stand up but at the same time it has taken away the ground to stand. This kind of further discussion here is more a repetition of same problem and has no foreseeable solutions. Here I think we should try to find out the reasons and or focus more on the issues which creates the gap between the Santhals and Christians. As Joy Tudu suggested to find the bridges or if necessary construct the bridges to reduce the in between gaps. Let us focus more why there exists the gap ? What are the responsible factors which contributes for the creating the gaps. I think that will lead us to some kind of solutions. I feel that will be more fruitful discussion in pursuit of tribal identity. Here I invite members to list out or put forward reasons what they feel towards the gaps and give some constructive suggestions to minimize it. Perhaps that will lead us to more prosperous and strong Santhal society wrapped with marvelous cultural and traditional mosaic. With regards, Naresh

Hi friends, It's nice that we are discussing about an important issue - Santhal identity. But still I see there is limited interaction. Some are just giving lecture and others are simply listening to it. So I feel it's not a proper discussion. Let's make more effective by participating by maximum members. Here I would like to know specifically from Christian friends, if they like to share about their impression about SARNAISM. 1) when some Christian friends say, they born and brought up in Christian family and can speak Santhali, so they are Christian Santhal. But I guess their grand father or great grand fathers were born in Sarna family. So by applying same logic, why there is discontinuity in SARNAISM. Is their any specific reason? I can say, they can rewind this discontinuity, if they wish. Mind you this is your FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT, so it's up to you. 2) when Christian friends say, they love to speak Santhali then, why don't they love SARNAISM, when Sarna and Santhal are inseparable. Is their any specific reason?

Hoping for cooperation from Christian friends. Please share your views. Bye. Barisa Kisku



Johar, Well, it looks like very few members are showing interest in the discussion. Anyway, I remember one of the postings of Purna Chandra, which had put this question - to look for the definition of Santhal. When I mentioned a few criteria, to be Santhal, my intention was to trigger a thought process, which eventually would lead us to the correct, or very close to the correct, definition of Santhal. I was expecting responses like - these are neither necessary nor sufficient; along with some suggestions.

The fact about Christians' role in Santhals' lives may be well documented; and the Christians may have contributed in a big way in educating, training and helping tribals; and in the shaping of tribal life in general. Thank you Naresh for the information. So, what do we learn from this? That if any worthwhile effect that would also strengthen our identity, has to come from within our community and not from outside; whatever has been done or are being done by others - Christians or Hindus - will, ultimately, always serve their interests more than ours.

People are talking about the gaps, walls and bridges. I am trying to understand these in the present context. It goes without saying that we cannot address the issues unless we know them well. In fact, I had already asked about the differences, apart from the very obvious - Jaher Bonga and praying in Church. Can someone knowledgeable elaborate on the differences that has developed and continuing to develop among us.

Also, instead of still talking about the gaps in this specific two religions, can we help ourselves in trying to understand as to what are some of the things that are diluting our Identity and what possible cures do we have?

Regards, Devendra

Hi , It is nice to discuss a topic on identity crisis. Many people you might have come across who feel depressed saying themselves as Santals. It happens as they do not feel their existence has a strong anchor in this society. Let's say about turning or converting into Christianity. I say it happens only because of not having knowledge what SANTAL means or what SARNA implies. So it is our job to bring about the awareness in them and make them feel great as being and born as SANTAL. Dillip.

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It can be seen from the above that Culture or Santal Culture has been used quite often. A minimum understanding of Culture and why a person is called or known as Santal becomes sine qua non for giving opinion on this issue. It becomes necessary to have minimum awareness level so as to be able to explain the criteria for and characteristic of a Santal. A Santal because of his having traditional unique characteristics is considered different from others. These are:

1. Religion (Dhorom, Bonga Buru, Dhorom renag ka.mi)
2. Language (Ror)
3. Name (Njutum)
4. Social Behaviour (Sa.ga.i, Bebhar)


The above criteria are not strictly in order. These features have been preserved and are continuing among common Santals as tradition. Let me explain the items. Religion is a belief, which is established through religious practices during various auspicious occasions including a person's birth to death rituals. Language they use for communication purpose. By name (family name) one is distinguishable i.e. Hembram, Hansdah, Tudu, Marndi, etc. Only a Santal can distinguish a Santal from the first name from experience but for an outsider it is difficult to know him as a Santal. In most of the cases they do not convey any meaning. Traditionally a person inherits the name of grand father(s)/mother(s) or close relations but naming a person choosing good words from Santali language is the new trend followed by mostly educated Santals. This trend is becoming common practice now-a-days. This aspect as well as other features is covered under Culture, which is dealt in this paper at the end. Social behaviour includes the social relationship, respect and love associated with the relation and the form and practice of hospitality within the society.

It can be seen that these features can be followed/adopted by any one. So how it can be distinct from others? That vital component of identity in addition to the above is affiliation and/or recognition which makes all the difference. That means above 4 are not sufficient unless there is mutual recognition by the members among themselves. This is the present status of Santals to identify themselves and time will tell how far it will lead them to remain united. Let us see how it applies.

1. An individual retains some, seeks affiliation and gets recognition;
2. An individual retains some, does not seek affiliation but still gets recognition;
3. An individual does not retain any but seek affiliation and gets recognition; and
4. An individual does not retain any nor seek affiliation but still gets recognition.

For continuing a society a segment has to retain some unique characteristics which as whole make them distinct from others.

One can apply this to know his position how and why he is a Santal. The practice of Bitlaha or non-cooperation (which is called differently in different places) is a short-term measure of non-recognition and the author has not come across a term used for non-recognition in perpetuity.




Thus it is clear that in Santal Tradition there is a scope of reformation; a scope to correct a mistake. The present dilemma of Santal identity is based on this concept of recognition. People belonging to same stock are not recognising each other due to difference in one or more than one aspects given at serial numbers 1 to 4. Let me illustrate how it works. Let's say there are two persons claiming themselves as Santals totally unknown to each other met in a place. Their link breaks ab initio in the absence of two features one is language and other one is name. In the presence of any or both, they become friendly immediately by knowing each other's name or by the language (Santali) they speak. Subsequently, invitation to each other's residence follows. There also they are comfortable when the social behaviour is the same. But they gradually differ if they profess different religion or follow different religious practices. In spite of all good will, they fail to recognise each other as equal though originally they belong to the same stock. The present day dilemma and controversy on identity revolve around this only.

According to a different school of thought on Santal identity, one can call him/her self as Santal irrespective of his religious belief and affinity. An example is explained to buttress the claim. It goes like this. A Tamil, Telugu, Malayalee or a Punjabi introduces him/her self as a Tamil, Telugu as the case may be to the outsiders irrespective of his religious beliefs and permanent domicile status. It will be enough if a person talks and writes in Santali and follows Santal Culture. Here, perhaps, Santal Culture is used lightly with the impression that belief is not a part of Culture. Otherwise, this argument loses its logic in this stage itself. Accepting this argument in this form, however, throws open following questions:

1. Whether the above identity is based on Language or territory?;
2. Does this identity represent a single group or any combination of groups?;
3. Is it a Cultural identity of a territory initially and people carry this identity wherever they go;
4. Whether religious division has come after the development of Cultural identity;
5. Can this principle/idea be applied in toto vis-a-vis Santals or it is a patch work to find out a temporary short term solution for a single issue i.e. the religion.

There is a flaw in this argument. Importing this idea and feeling satisfied with it open a Pandora's box. From this, it can be advocated in future that as there is no uniqueness in matters of language, social affairs, education etc. in those identity we can also do away with all kinds of similarities among Santals. In other words Santals can act differently but still qualify to be known as Santals. Will it serve any purpose? It is a fact that identity of Tamil, Telugu etc. does not represent a group of people but a group of community/society. Santal is a community/society (group of people) who shares the same culture. The centrifugal force within a social framework is undesirable as it contributes disintegration in a unique society. As such, this argument is untenable as far as Santal identity is concerned.

It is the constitutional right of every citizen to choose and follow his religion and every body is entitled to this right and also to apply their conscience. Why then there is a dilemma in the minds of the people who choose a different faith? May be because they are not far from their root or still



they cherish to remain within that. Secondly may be they are apprehensive about their well being through their original root. Or, perhaps compulsion forces them to put their legs in two boats. The solution to this dilemma lies in knowing and strengthening the Culture through coming together.

Let's understand the meaning or definition of Culture. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) sponsored book "Traditional Cultures in South East Asia" defines, "Culture means total accumulation of material objects, ideas, symbols, beliefs, sentiments, values and social forms which are transferred from one generation to the another in a given society."

While referring Anthropology and Sociology books on the definition of Culture the author finds the above definition amply covers the points given in those books.

Culture finds expression through material and mental accomplishment of a society. Agricultural knowhow, house pattern, hunting, instruments and weapons etc. are the material or technological facet of culture. Customs, conventions, methods, art, knowledge, belief, law etc. are mental or non-material facet of culture. Whatever man has made or done is material culture and another aspect is related to the system of meanings. The meaning that lies hidden in ideas and emotions is culture. Culture is dynamic and it can change from time to time. It implies that a Culture is evolved through a continuous process and the change has an acceptability among the majority of the masses. The change introduced by few cannot form a part of the Culture without the approval of the majority. By definition persons with differences cannot belong to a common Culture. It is an accumulation process backed by acceptability of the group to accommodate changing and emerging scenario and need not necessarily mean rigidity, which is transferred from one generation to the another. Culture encompasses so many other issues including identity issue.

If the present trend is any pointer, Santal identity has been abused but still is embraced. This is the paradox with which Santals are now living. People may feel satisfied by calling themselves as Santals based on the recognition they receive from the respective groups, but in the process Santals have lost their unity, strength and solidarity. May be the virtues of Santalism will catch fire one day and illuminate all Santals with its radiant flame which will inspire them to be united through a common culture thread to forge strength and solidarity. That day is perhaps not too far.



RESERVATION SYSTEM IN INDIAN CONSTITUTION AND ITS REVITALISATION BY SANTALS

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ABSTRACT

The father of Indian Constitution, Dr. B. R. Ambedkar had kept some reservation provision to be pursued by the government of India and the States as well to minimize the distance between rich and poor. For the essence of his political philosophy, the trilogy of Liberty, Equality and Fraternity, he is treated as an icon in the history of Indian politics. But now there is threat to his credential i.e. the reservation policy for ST/SC. There is storm among intellectual mass against such reservation facility. Is this system really bad, does time demand no more reservation? Even after 50 years of execution of such rule, does Santal, one of the biggest tribal communities in India, has achieved what it was intended? By introspecting the system, it is found that neither the reservation policy is bad nor its base is improper. There are some faults in implementation. As a community, all the Santals have to take some major steps to come up from the current situation.

INTRODUCTION


In Indian Constitution, under the Part XVI, Articles 330-342 describe about the special reservation for Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. Since last 50 years, people under these categories are getting the benefits of such facility. Parallel to it, these people are treated as a special class of people officially, but practically they are under the class of under-trodden, untouchable people, the people from the lowest class in the society. Many times, these people have to face the hesitant look from others and suppression from upper caste people and also from the government, run and ruined by upper classes. In the name of ST/SC upliftment, the government bearers never neglect to fill their own pockets. Again the upper class people never stop themselves from raising voice against reservation.

BACKGROUND STUDY

Why is reservation for SC/ST necessary?

The reservation policy in India is a remarkable step to enhance the economy of India. A nation can improve only when major portion of its citizen improve and not just by creating some millionaires. So it is most important to minimize the difference between rich and poor of the society. In other words, we need to uplift poor people by supporting them in different way.

India is a country, where people interact more socially than professionally. While interacting with others, there comes an impression in people's mind of caste, gender and area. This finally matters in deciding any grant or doing any work for them. Thus while most of the positions in Govt. and Non-Govt. organizations are already being held by the upper class people, it is observed that the lower class people always face trouble to get the work done. Thus in many steps of working life;



people take the issue personally more than professionally. So the best way to resolve such problem is to approach socially, where even people treat others from the angle of caste, gender and area. So the reservation system is made on the basis of caste.

Sometimes, many people suggest that the reservation should be implemented on the basis of income. But it is not a good alternate as in India, people can buy their income certificate with money. So finally rich people will be the officially poor and the vice versa. The rich will get the benefits and will be richer where as the poor will be sufferer. If the reservation system will be implemented on the basis of income, prior to that the corruption should be totally eradicated.

Actions for alternate reservation:

If the present reservation system will be changed on the basis of income, following policies need to be changed:

1. All need to change their mind sets to accept others socially and personally in matters of worship and marriage etc. Now it is not accepted in upper class families. Then how can they demand to eradicate reservation on the basis of caste?
2. No personal intervention is entertained in any official work. Anyone irrespective of caste, colour and religion, must be treated as same in letter and spirit. It can be officially implemented easily, but hard to do in work.
3. No work can be done on the basis of caste. Anyone can worship in temple, anyone can cut hair irrespective of Brahmin or Barbers. No one can be stopped to do anything irrespective of its caste. There should not be any profession based on caste.
4. Anyone can change his surname and be accepted, as he wants to wash away his original identity. Finally we will end up with one class irrespective of surnames.


But is it preferable? Absolutely not, because India is a country diversified in castes, colors, races and religions. And Indians want to preserve it for years. When they are not interested to loose their hereditary identity, then how can it be the new identity on the basis of financial background?

Finally, it is observed that there is no alternate better way of reservation in India. But even after 50 years of implementation of such rules, why are the people from reserved categories still lagging? Where does the problem lie? While introspecting that in detail, it is found that this policy is not properly implemented.

Bad implementation of reservation policy.

The people in charge of such responsibility and the people under reserved categories are not properly utilizing this facility as follows:

1. In most of the cases, the cut off mark in any selection is such that the weaker candidates from reserved categories are even unable to qualify the cut off mark. Most of the time, this cut off mark is much more than it should be. So there must be separate cut off mark depending upon the average reserved candidates' performance. The rule should be strictly adhered to the number and not to any cut



off marks. On the other word, the fixed percentage of candidates from reserved categories must be allotted the reserved seats.


2. In the work field, once the people started working, in some places, the reservation policy is stopped for promotion. Because of that, very few people from reserved category are in higher positions. So there must be reservation in all levels of government. Although such polices exit, but it is hardly implemented.
3. In most of the places, the people in-charge of reservation system, are themselves non-ST/SC and they deny the beneficiary from the beginning. So how can they be expected to work properly to uplift these people? The people in charge of such work must also belong to ST/SC categories.
4. Many times, ST/SC students are kept in separate hostels, known as PM hostel, where no general students stay with them. Although from outside, it is assumed that government is fulfilling all the difficulties of these students, but practically they are lacking many things. They are lacking the competitive environment, the outlook gained by interacting with more intelligent students, basically the general students. It doesn't sound much, but it affects the student life in background. So the proper study environment should also be provided in these PM hostels by allowing few top general students. These general students will create the environment, which is really better than the present situation. Not only the books and money give you the lessons, the environment has also the impact upon this.
5. In some cases, the ST/SC people are unaware of the facility available for them. They don't know what are the facility that can be availed for their own profession, for their children's study or for any social work related to their community. If the government can keep such provisions without utilization at all, then what is the need of keeping such facility? These things should be informed to all the ST/SC people. They must be guided to make the best use of it. There must be some awareness programmes to educate people about their rights and responsibility in the society, government facilities and direction to improve in life.

Santal as a Scheduled Tribe

According to the Article 342 of Indian Constitution, Santals belong to Scheduled Tribe category and Santal people can avail the facility provided under reservation policy for ST. The present population of Santal in India is more than 5 lakhs. In spite of such a huge population, people from this community are rarely seen in higher positions. They hardly qualify in national level competitive examinations, where as the Mina community of Rajasthan used to take a major share of such facility. The Santals need to take some major actions to come up in future.

Actions for the Santals

1. There are certain communities like Mina community among Schedule Tribes who are rising where as there is hardly any sign of improvement among the Santal community. The cause behind this is, the Mina community has some how improved



among other Schedule Tribes. During the initial years of reservation policy implementation, these people were selected in all high level positions and the rest of the people hardly took such positions. By now, second generation from this community are availing the facility of reservation where as Santal is still struggling hard to get benefits out of reservation. So for this reasons they excel in national level competitions. So Santals have to take some major steps to raise their community. The well to do Santal people have to help some Santal students who are under poverty and lacking all the family support to taste the sweetness of reservation facility in higher level. Every educated Santal need to support at least one poor Santal financially as well as morally. Also each Santal has to guide the rest to step up in every field of life. They need the help of other Santal and they have to help other Santals to lift this community from the current situation.

2. They need to improve their own language "Santali". Unless they improve their language, they are losing some bases in their identity. In this diversified nation, a caste or community is well recognized by its mother tongue. That's why Santali needs to be improved to improve the Santals. Unless the poor ignorant people can express their feeling in their own languages, they will be depressed by rest of the people in every field. To make improvement of this language, every Santal need to talk, read and write Santali. They need to express their silent feelings inside them in Santali, then only they are treated as emotionally attached with Santali. Another important thing every Santal need is to buy more and more Santali book to encourage the Santali writers, contribute books, articles, papers in Santali to enrich this language. A language can't be enriched by money, but can be enriched by its linguists, writers, publishers and its readers.
3. The most important thing to think for this community is to prepare themselves for future amendment of reservation policy. If in future, the reservation policy will be changed from its current way of implementation, then how to survive in that situation. So Santals have to struggle now in their daily work as if they are fighting without reservation. If they limit their scope of competition within their community, then they can't improve. They have to compete in global market, and then only they will rise. Also day-by-day, most of the public organizations are privatized, where no such rule can be set to provide reservation for scheduled tribes and scheduled castes in these organisations.

Conclusion

The policy in Indian government changes with change in government-party. So there is threat to reservation policy. Time may come, where social life in India will be more professional and personal. Before that, the Santals need to ponder and react to come up and compete in open market. To come up the whole community, each Santal need to co-operate in every aspect of life, need to sacrifice for the community, and have to make the best utilization of their rights and government facilities. Then only one day this community can live without the fear of any anti-reservation rulers.



THE PLIGHT OF THE SANTHAL WOMAN

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She is an unwelcome guest at the arrival on earth; she is kept away from the school so that her brother could be accommodated, she works hard on the paddy field so that the family could get a square meal, hardly she attains puberty and she is married off so that she is no more a 'liability' to the family. This is not the story line but true tale of majority Indian girls and Santhal girls are no exception. She attains her womanhood amidst all these odds.

Women are the oppressed lot in every society. Right from childhood to adulthood to womanhood, she is the one who suffers the most, toils the most and yet her contribution goes unnoticed. Everywhere she is treated as a burden, a good for nothing except of course when it comes to 'breeding' children, as if she is a child producing machine. Some may differ, but this mentality still prevails and more so in the tribal as a whole and in particular in the santhal society.

The santhal girl is much ignored compared to her opposite sex when it comes to imparting of education. The much lower percentage of santhal girls going to school than the boys substantiate this. Even if she is sent to the school, she is rarely encouraged to carry on or circumstances force her to drop out. Infact, in many cases she is asked about the use of this education because after all, in future she has to bear child and look after the family. There cannot be any prejudice and form of exploitation than this.

How many of the santhal girls are encouraged to go for higher education? If the daughter is a graduate than the family and the society feels that, that is enough for her whereas they have no qualms about sending their sons for higher studies due to this double standards? Woman is denied education at the higher level. This sort of reservation for the men raises doubt as if women are inferior. Women are equally endowed with the same power as men, physical strength or the physical features apart. Infact women are known to be more laborious and dedicated to their work. We in the society are very much responsible for such a trend. Women need support and encouragement. Time will come Women themselves can fight their way through, pushing aside all the odds and obstructions on our way. Where there is a will there is always a way.

Come marriage, and here too she is supposed to play a role of a backbencher. Yes, a santhal woman marries. But under what condition and with how much freedom of choice? If she ever talks of exercising freedom in this regard, her stand is severely criticized. And what happens when a marriage fails? She is blamed, allegations are put on her, and she is held responsible for the whole mess. Why such treatment is meted out to her? Is this justice? And how long they will remain as silent spectators to the whole injustice?

Once in the nuptial tie, do the santhal woman have much say in the decision-making? Here, her role is that of a cook, a washerwoman, a nanny, to sum up, that of a domestic help to say. Nobody recognizes the hard work that she puts into making the 'house' a 'home', not even herself, not to talk about the men folk. Lots of hard work goes into looking after the home, rearing the children, running errands for the house. And when asked what she does, the answer is 'nothing, a house-wife'. The society must recognize their role as homemakers and not house wives alone. The world is changing and so are the concepts. So women should not belittle themselves nor let the men to continue image bashing.



And what is this menace of witch-hunting all about? Why is it the women alone who suffer in this regard? We often hear of woman being killed after she has been declared a witch, infact, such killings make stories in the newspaper, at times finding a place in the front page. Why is only the woman branded a witch? And always a poor and helpless woman bears the brunt. The society needs introspection to find out reason why the man is not branded a wizard or a male witch? This is discrimination in its most cruel form. There is an immediate need to cleanse the system that is so anti women.

One of the fields where Santhal women have made an inroad is the panchayat, a decision making body in the panchayat level. Thanks to the reservation policy for woman in gram panchayat. But, this provision of the Constitution is yet to be implemented in its true spirit. Though it is the woman who is elected as Pradhan or a member of the local self government, in most cases it is her husband/brother/father who runs the show indirectly. It is they who dictate her to do.

In spite of the changes, the developments taking place around Santhal society, Santhal women have remained too far behind the women of other community. The community cannot boast of producing a sizable woman civil servants, engineers, professors, doctors or scholars. Perhaps none in some of the fields and only a microscopic number in the rest. Why have they failed to make a mark in any of those fields? Why are they lagging behind time? Why they have failed to keep stride with the other women? Santal Society as well as Santal Women in particular need serious introspection, a sincere re-examination.

Education is perhaps the only mantra, the only cure that can steer us away from all the undesirable happenings taking place around us. Illiteracy is the mother of all the evils in our society. It the root cause of all the atrocities that are thrown at us. Illiteracy makes us feeble, weakens our stimulating power to adapt to the changes taking place around us, makes us unresponsive to the system which is so very gender biased. Therefore there is the immediate need for us to obtain the light of education, to make ourselves 'women of letters'.

Why have Santhal Women remain illiterate, uneducated, why still in the darkness? This is because there is a dearth of facilities, do not get the kind of encouragement that is needed as parents are poor. May be, many Santhal women have not realized the importance of education. As such this segment of society is neglected a lot and no importance is attached to their education. Should they take this lying down? Yes, if they want to remain still in the dark and no if they want to come out of the cocoon to see the light of the world. The ball is in their court and the author is sure women all want the later as their option. For that they have to struggle together, go a long way inspite of all the hurdles and fight their way through.

However, one should not forget to be decent enough to admit that there exists some exceptions. There are few who are ready to accept woman at par with man. There still are few fathers, few brothers left in Santhal community who are not exploitative towards women, who are ready to provide all that a daughter is entitled to, send them to school, college, university may be abroad to get a good education. But how many of brothers and fathers are sincere to the core about this? There is a need to get their support and the co-operation of men.

Will they be sitting, crying and waiting for that support and encouragement if that is not coming their way? Are they going to remain mute spectators on the injustices inflicted upon them, perhaps not. They will open eyes, waking up from sleep to the stark reality. They will unite together in their struggle and fight their way through. They will go on and surely shall overcome someday.



THE SUPREME SANTAL

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Santal the aborigin of India belong to Kherwali Community. Santal, Munda, Ho, Kulha and allied are known as Kherwali. The term Kherwali means warrior, those who never surrender themselves before any rulers. Kherwali Community like to maintain free and independent life.

In pre-historic ages, the entire northern Indian subcontinent was dominated by this Kherwali group. Kherwali came into existence in Indian subcontinent from the day of stone age. Anthropologically, this Kherwali belong to proto-Astraloid race.

The number of population of this Australoid race was vast compared to any other race like Mediterranean, Mongoloid and Alpine, in India. So this race was dominating in prehistoric ages in this subcontinent.

The population of this Kherwali proto-Astraloid race was distributed in entire northern Indian subcontinent starting from present Afganistan to Central India, Khandahar in Mohenjodaro, Harappa, West Punjab, Baluchistan, Rupar, Kalibangan, Champagarhm, Kushinagar, Lothal, Chhotnagpur, Shantal Pargana were abode of Kherwali.

The recent excavation in Harappa, Mohenjodaro, Punjab, Baluchistan implies that remains of skeleton and skulls found in these places belong to the proto-Astraloid race. This Kherwali group is having close resemblance with the remains of the Indus Valley civilization. So these facts imply that within the last 4000 years back the Kherwali civilization attended the apex stage of prehistoric civilization.

In the later stage this proto-Astraloid Kherwali divided into different communities. The reasons may be due to formation of Jainism, Budhism, arrival of Aryan to India and origin of Bhakti cult.

The major fraction of Kherwali was influenced by Jainism and became desciple of Mahavira Jaina. Jainism became very prominent during the period of Parvas Nath (Paresh Nath) the 23rd teacher of Jaina. Vardhaman who later on known as Mahavir attained supreme knowledge while sitting under Sal trees. Both of these theachers preached supreme knowledge in places like Paresh Nath, Chhotanagpur, Champagarh, Mithila in the recent Jharkhand and Bihar states.

The concentration of Kherwali population was maximum in Paresh Nath area of Chhotanagpur. Majority of the Kherwali became the desciple of Mahavir, in order to attain the Supreme Knowledge of Jainism. In course of time dispute took place between Paresh Nath and Mahavir. The 12 No. of doctrines prescribed by the Jain became difficult tasks to be adhered to in case of the general rural people.

The Jain people were to maintain very hard life. So Jain people divided into two sections Swetambar and Digambar. The Santal were follower of Digambar section of Jainism. Digambar are



those who put on yellow dress whereas the Swetambar put on white dress. Being the follower of Digambar the Santal put on yellow dress in every ritual ceremony. Santal use yellow dress at the time of birthday ceremony, marriage ceremony, death ceremony, Asthi Visarjan ceremony (Ganga Damodar Yatra). Being the follower of Mahavir the Santal offer worship to the God "Marangburu", the God of Himalaya (Siva) and the Jaher Era, the Mother goddess under the Sal trees. The tradition has been continuing from the day of Mahavir. In course of time Santali language became very popular among the Jaina teachers. The Sanskrit Language was constructed from Santali language. There is complete Similarities between Santal and Sanskrit language.

Santal were leading peaceful life, avoidance of falsehood, non stealing, non-injury and were maintaining saintly life. In the version of British rulers the word Santal means, Saintall = Santal. Santal are now distributed into different parts of India, mainly in Jharkhand, West Bengal, Orissa, Bihar, Assam etc. In outside India population is found in Nepal, Bangladesh, Australia and South Eastern Islands.

Santal community is again divided in 12 categories with respect to the surnames. Each surname is associated with Totem. Totem adopted may be animals like bull, elephant, deer, tortoise, snake, squirrel etc. birds like goose, peacock, dove, myna, parrot etc. Totem may be also trees. Santal associated with particular Totem does not kill or cut rather he pays respect to the Totem.

The Santal are divided into following clans with respect to their surnames and Totem associated.

- | | | |
|------------|------------|-----------|
| 1. Hansda | 2. Murmu | 3. Kisku |
| 4. Hembram | 5. Soren | 6. Marndi |
| 7. Tudu | 8. Besra | 9. Baskey |
| 10. Pauria | 11. Chaney | 12. Bedea |

In this juncture of changing global situation Santal must come forward to elevate his community by educating reforming to become pioneer in developing his society.

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SANTALI LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Ramray Majhi

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Santals reside largely in the districts of Balasore, Mayurbhanj, Keonjhar and Sundargarh of Orissa state, East Singbhum, West Singbhum, Dhanbad, Hazaribag, Giridih, Deoghar, Dumka, Pakun, Godda and Sahebganj of Jharkhand state, Santal Pargana, Bhagolpur, Purnea in Bihar and Purulia, Midnapur, Bankura, Birbhum, Burdwan, Hooghly, Malda, West Dinajpur, Darjeeling and Coochbihar in the state of West Bengal. They are also scattered in the hilly districts of Assam and Mizoram. They also populously reside in the Nepal and Bangladesh. Santals speak Santali language at home and prefer to write in Olchiki script.

Santal language movement is pioneered by Adibasi Socio-Educational and Cultural Association. It is a leading non-Governmental and non-political organisation of Santals in Jharkhand state, Orissa, Bengal and Assam. At present Assam ASECA has been silent as the internal disturbances reigned supreme by some extremist organisation. To remember the dreaded day of May '95, it is cited that about three lakhs Santals rendered homeless by arson, looting spree and merciless killing of women and children by extremist outfit of Assam. Their socio-economic state became challengeable as they were deprived of their fundamental rights to get education, to live on without speaking own language and without practising their religion at their sacred worship place in the 'JAHER'. To put a bird-eye view, I would like to reproduce the lines of reports in Competition Success Review of Jan 1996.

Parts of the excerpts says : "Bloody ethnic conflict, gory fratricidal killing and secessionist violence have pushed Assam to the brink of chaos. It was in the lower Assam around Gosaingaon and Kokrajhar sub-division unprecedented violence was witnessed. The ethnic violence have taken a toll of more than one thousand lives besides plundering property worth crores of value. Riots spread all over Kokrajhar subdivision in which Hatugaon, Bismari, Karigaon, Amguri and Salfanguri areas were affected. Centre had deployed six companies of CRPF and nine Army columns. It was widely alleged that the forces were not asked to fire upon the rioters even if they were seen torching the houses."

The sacred worship places of Santals were levelled plain on the earth and no signs of their own were left. But where lies the truth ? Who brought them their sense of living together? Who scared away of their fear ? The bond of unity was their language and religion, ultimate media to be identified themselves of what caste and creed was only by dint of speaking identical language. The language spoken in Santali was a Santal, he was his brother, their problems were synonymous.



Here language played the role to bring them into single fold of unity though there are other aspects of unity which are not being brought to light. Therefore it has become our foremost duty to preserve our language by writing a lot of books, by educating our children in our mother tongue, by influencing our Government to include our language in Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. For the purpose, we have to open our own Santal medium schools, organise regular seminars, demonstrations, conferences to bring awareness among ourselves and convey our sentiments to silent Government that the Santals need for their overall upliftment. Above all, Santal language is one of the oldest Austric group of language spoken by largest tribal population in India. It is in existence all over Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh, Assam, Tripura in India, in Nepal and Bangladesh too. Santals have their own script popularly known as OL CHIKI which is phonetically fit, scientifically proved, economically adoptable and psychologically suitable for the Santal language and easier to instruct tribal students. It has its own grammar, dictionary, shorthand and can be suitably developed in typewriting and already developed in computer typing mechanism.


CULTURE

Santals have their distinct culture. They have their own religion SARNA, have special fooding habit, speciality in their mud dwelling house stiff and strong like stone and asphalt and they have speciality in thatching art. They toil hard in day time in agrarian nature and spent joyful night by singing, dancing, drumming and playing flutes.

The dances and songs of Santals are classics. The rhymes are Lagne, Tuhur lagne, Dong, Pak don, Gulyari, Dahar, Baha, Rinja, Dhimsar, Jhika, Humti, Gunjar, Shorai, Dhogen and Dasain. Dahar and logne are the songs sung with group dancing with the male drummer. Dahar enejs are performed generally during the month of Poush, Magh and Fagun. Lagne enej happen to be in the month of Chait, Baisakh, Asar, San and Bhadrav. Tuhur Lagne from Sohorai to Sakrat. Sohorai during the month of Sohorai(October-November), Dasain during Dasain bonga (Bhadra-Ashin), Dong and Pakdons are performed during the month of Chait, Baisat (Baisakh), Jhent (Jyesth), Bir Sereng and marriage 'binti' can be sung without dancing. Baha dance is danced at Baha Parab occasion, Rinja and Dhimsar dances are danced at Karam Parob. Other songs are Sung at the time of paddy plantation or at the time of plucking vegetable leaves and melancholy song at the time of extinction of life of a member in the community.

INSTRUMENTS USED IN DANCES AND SONGS

SAKWA - Sakwa is a trumpet made of buffalo's horn and antelope's horn. This instrument is used at the time of Baha Porob and at Sendra Bir (while hunting) to encourage and inspire the party.



BANAM (Fiddle) : It is an instrument played while singing song. It is made of wooden piece in one side is bigger and other narrower. The bigger part and solid part is made hollow and the narrow part is used as handle. Thread and long hairs of the horse tail is knotted at the both ends joining each other. The bigger hollow portion is tight covered with leather of goat or preferably any suitable species of thin leather. Gum of the Salga, a deciduous forest tree is pasted at one side of the body. One part of the banam used in right hand is exactly like a small bow. Before using the bow with banam, the bow is smeared with the paste then can be played well. This instrument can be played along with all songs.

TIRYAU (Flute) : A flute is made of narrow hollow bamboo. Its best size can be four hundred fifty to six hundred fifty millimeter length and twenty to twenty-five millimeter of diameter best known in Santali-'bar langa mat'. It consists of four to five holes of about eight to ten millimeter on the body to use four finger and one for blowing air by mouth and one end may be open and other closed. It can be played alone or along with songs of other. Play can match any rhythm of song and play of harmonium etc.

TUMDAH (Drum) : A tumdah is made of burnt clay. It is tapered cylindrical in shape and one end is tight, covered with untanned leather of bullock and other end by goat skin. The part covered by bullock skin is beaten with left hand and the other by right hand. The whole is placed with trips of bullock hide. This instrument can be used in all the occasions of dancing and merrymaking.

TAMAK (Drum) : A tamak is a kind of Kettle drum. It is like half globes of various sizes. Some tamaks are used to be lifted by two men. Those tamaks are used in Sendra or mass hunting. Others are drummed in time of Lagne, dong, baha, dahar and at most of the all dances. It is covered with raw hide and drummed with the help of two heavy drum-sticks.

BHUANG : This is made out of a shell of gourd. This instrument is exclusively used at Dasain dances performed during the month of Dasain (Ashin-Bhadrav) in order to praise Devi Durga.

Other instruments used at the time of group dancing are Chor-churi, Dhak, Kortal, Ghanti etc. Girls dance by keeping hand in hand moving forward with rhythms. Boys beat tamak, tumdah, chor-churi in front of dancing girls and lead them in circular line. With them other men folk and women-folk dance throughout the night maintaining full discipline. Others watch and enjoy the rhythmic dance.

These instruments are used since time immemorial. We should not neglect these by adopting the newly invented instruments.

Santals have their distinct culture, tradition and social laws. All traditional laws are maintained in disciplined manner with strict code of conduct and these are passed orally from generation to generation. They have various customary laws, marriage laws and supreme laws like LOBIR BAISI. In the arena of marriage ceremony it is started from Sar Sagun followed by Orah duar njel, Horah chinah, Taka Chal ultimately holding of marriage. Some categories of marriages are - Tumki dipil, Ghardijawain, Sangha bapla, Or ader bapla, Nir bolo bapla, Itut Sindur bapla, Sange Bariat etc. In all, there are ten types of marriage prevailing in present marriage system.


We should preserve this nice cultural system and follow strictly where the demand against bride, the socially hated system of dowry is practically nil in the society. It is notable that in the prevailing system it does not invite the abhorrent killing of young bride in the Santal society.

RELIGION AND RITUALS :

Santals practise religions of SARNA. According to Santal legend this religion was directed to first man and woman on the earth. They were Pilchu baba and Pilchu Ayo. Almighty Thakur himself taught the couple how to prepare brew and offer it first in his name. Thakur himself shown them Sal tree where to worship. This is now called Jaher Than 'the sacred place'. Santals are firm devotee of almighty in various forms and worship in form of various rituals. They are devotee of Sing Bonga (Sun God), Marang Buru who sometimes get sacrifices as Litagosain, Jaher Ayo (Era) a benevolent spirit whose another name is Ramsargi, Moreko, Gosain era, Pargana haram, Majhi haram, Jomsim Bonga, Sima Bonga, Sud Bonga, Tandibonga, Hurut Khuntud bonga, Bir Bonga, Buru Bonga, Jatra Bonga, Chhata Bonga, Pata Bonga and Orah Bonga. Orah Bonga belongs to Septs or Paris. They are as follows :

<u>Name of Paris</u>	<u>Name of Orah Bonga</u>	<u>Name of Sima Bonga</u>
Hansdah	Banspahal, Deswali	Dharasone, Dhara Sendra, Katkom Kudra
Kisku	Songs	Champa Danagar
Hembram	Guraiya	Gar Sinka, Lila Chaundi
Marndi	-do-	Dhanghara, Kudra Chaundi, Bahataduar
Murmu	Bat Pahar	Sene, Kudraj, Gosain rai
Soren	Guraiya, Sarchandi	Achrali
Tudu	Thunta Tursa	Dhanghara
Baske	Bat Pahar	Deswali
Besra	Songs	Champa Danagar

(Source : Hor Koren Mare Hapram Horean Katha)



Santals perform community worship at Jaher Than. Their bhog is a community feast. They don't distribute it at outside among themselves and other unlike any other religion.

Santals Jaher now remain open without boundary. As it is sacred place it is needed to keep clean and free from unscrupulous element. It should be protected with boundary wall so that no dispute arises with encroachers.

In sad demise of any member belonging to society needs some rituals. The dispose of the dead body is done at burial ground by arranging funeral pyre. Others prefer to bury the body without coffin box. Both system prevail in Santal society. Disposing of body is done followed by first phase of purification ceremony ' the Tel Nahan'. Then Bhandan as final purification ceremony. It requires participation of members from family, members from village where death occurred, a little quantity of soapy earth called Narka hasa, mustard oil or as advised by village head, brushing twigs generally of Sal trees and cotton thread as directed by elders. At bathing ghat, Narka hasa Puja is performed by left hand and the Bonga get worship are Pilchu haram and Pilchu Burhi. After return from bathing 'Rumuh' ceremony is held. For that three people are selected in whose body 'bonga' can take possession. One for the person died, one for elders called Purudhul and other for the almighty Marang Buru. Articles required at the rumuh ceremony are unboiled rice known as chaolejang, Handi, Hatah etc. Bonga possessed at the body in purpose of dead person speaks true causes of death on asking.

Now a days the burial ground at villages are encroached by the encroacher and at towns became common with others. Burial ground may be reserved and protected from outside by boundary walls.

ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES:

Economic activities of Santals concentrate around agriculture. They eke out their lives on agriculture. Economic activities are limited to weekly market and village fairs. Selling and buying system is limited to them. Their marketing activities are not in profit motive rather than to earn their livelihood with selling self-produced foodgrains, vegetables and forest produces.

At present, Government Loans are also not intended to be utilised for strengthening the business or industries by tribal peoples. They should be provided with abundant loans for running small scale industries. At present, the project cost of a scheduled small scale industry is nearly Rupees two lakhs. Government is providing loans to Adibasis for agricultural production and allied activities like for purchasing cows, pigs, buffaloes, broilers etc which are even not sufficient. Now Santals are entering to the arena of higher education, they should be provided financial assistance for trade and business, small transport operators and other



small scale to medium scale industries.



CONCLUSION

Santals are peace loving men. They like to live in group oriented villages. Their Society is proud of giving birth to legendary leaders like Baba Tilka Majhi, Hulgaria Sido Kanhu and father of OLCHIKI, Pandit Raghu Nath Murmu. Their contribution to society has helped to bring national integration in Indian Culture.

Practice of corruption is social evil, exploitation to poor class is act of blood sucking demons. Some unscrupulous men have encroached their land and some bought their land in unholy manner. Existing laws of Government are sufficient if enforced strictly in land purchase deal, or else Government should enact such land laws that they should not be deceived of their landed properties and they should be returned back original land forthwith. Their case should be sympathetically considered where they have been displaced due to setting up of some industries and by dams /projects.

