



It will not be out of place to mention here that Santali is an independent language spoken by over 7 million to 8 million people. The speakers of this language are spread mainly in the states of Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal, Bihar and Assam. The Santali speakers are also spread across the border namely in Bangladesh, Nepal and Myanmar. The existence of script "Ol Chiki" for the language has been a tool of uniformity across the states. The demand for its inclusion is as old as the Constitution of India itself.

Some of the important developments vis-à-vis implementation of Santali language in the country are given below:

1. Primary Education in Santali has already started in the States of Orissa and West Bengal. Government of Jharkhand has already initiated actions in this regard;
2. Govt. of West Bengal has officially recognized "Ol Chiki" as the script of the Santali language since 1979;
3. Passing of a unanimous resolution by the West Bengal Assembly seeking recognition of Santali language and forwarded the same to the Central Government for taking appropriate action;
4. Santali has been introduced in the Secondary Board Examination in West Bengal;
5. West Bengal Government vide resolution dated 5.3.2001 had constituted a "Committee on Santali Language" to examine and review the feasibility of teaching of Santali language in Ol Chiki script under the Chairmanship of Dr. Pabitra Sarkar, Ex-Vice Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati Viswa Vidyalaya. The Committee has submitted its report recommending among other things due recognition for Santali language for overall development of the community. The recommendations are under implementation by the Government of West Bengal;
6. Sidhu Kanhu Murmu University, Dumka, Jharkhand offers a BA and an MA course in Santali;
7. Ranchi University offers MA course in Santali;
8. Vinova Bhava University, Jharkhand offers Santali in Intermediate of Arts;
9. A number of published Books both Literary and Text books , Journals, Periodicals are available;
10. A living and rich language continuously being deprived of recognition from Central Government which affects its further development in general and community development in particular.

It may be mentioned that the demand has been brought to the kind notice of Hon'ble Prime Minister and other concerned among others by Shri Salkhan Murmu, Hon'ble M.P. and Mrs. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Orissa. Hon'ble M.Ps. namely Shri Basudeb Acharia, Dr. Ram Chandra Dome, Shri Rupchand Murmu, Smt. Sandhya Bauri, Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat, Shri M. A. Kharabela Swain et al have from time to time demanded in the Parliament to include this language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Moreover, recent announcement of Shri Arjun Munda, Hon'ble Chief

Minister of Jharkhand to include this language in the Eighth Schedule by 15<sup>th</sup> of November, 2003 has raised the hope of the Santal people to the zenith.

Considering the above, we appeal to the Union Cabinet to take a decision to include this language in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. It would be a gift to the Santal people from the Central Government on the eve of ensuing Birth Centenary Year (2004-05) of Pandit Raghunath Murmu, the inventor of Ol Chiki. We also sincerely hope and appeal to leaders of other political parties to extend their support for this genuine cause.

Thanking you,

Yours faithfully,

(P. C. Hembram)  
General Secretary

**Copy for kind information and necessary action to:**

1. Smt. Sonia Gandhi, Hon'ble Leader of the Opposition, Lok Sabha
2. Shri Arjun Munda, Hon'ble Chief Minister, Jharkhand
3. Shri Babulal Marandi, Hon'ble Ex-Chief Minister, Jharkhand
4. Shri Somnath Chatterjee, Hon'ble M.P.
5. Shri Salkhan Murmu, Hon'ble M.P.
6. Shri Basudeb Acharia, Hon'ble M.P.
7. Dr. Ram Chandra Dome, Hon'ble M.P.
8. Smt. Sandhya Bauri, Hon'ble M.P.
9. Shri M.A. Kharabela Swain, Hon'ble M.P.
10. Shri Shibu Soren, Hon'ble M.P.
11. Shri Rupchand Murmu, Hon'ble M.P.
12. Prof. Rasa Singh Rawat, Hon'ble M.P.
13. Shri Prithibi Majhi, Hon'ble Speaker, Assam Legislative Assembly
14. Smt. Joba Manjhi, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Jharkhand
15. Smt. Droupadi Murmu, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of Orissa
16. Shri Upen Kisku, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of West Bengal
17. Shri Maheswar Murmu, Hon'ble Minister, Govt. of West Bengal
18. Shri Chaitanya Prasad Majhi, Hon'ble Ex-Minister, Govt. of Orissa
19. Smt. Saraswati Hembram, Hon'ble Ex-Minister, Govt. of Orissa
20. ASECAs (Jharkhand, Orissa, West Bengal)
21. Adim Owar Jarpa, Bhubaneswar, Jumid Kherwal, Cuttack

(P. C. Hembram)  
General Secretary