



Conference Cum- AGM SEA 2023

Theme: Threats and Challenges to Identity of Adivasis

Organizer: Santal Engineers Welfare Association (SEA), Hyderabad Chapter

Date: 24th December 2023 | Venue: Hybrid Mode



Background of the Conference:

All species, along with human beings in the so called progressive society, are facing threats and existential challenges for which they have to struggle for their survival on a day-to-day basis. The adivasi/indigenous people are among the most affected and at the receiving end compared to the other communities. As per the available data, India has the highest number of indigenous people (more than 700 groups) in the world after Africa. More than 50% of the tribal populations are below poverty (NSSO), more than 40% are illiterate, and about 40% of under-five tribal children are stunted (CNNS report), which is very high compared to the national average in India. Tribal have a unique culture that is so important for the next generation sustainable society and specifically for the global environment. It must be preserved not only for their identities but also for the human race. The problem has compounded due to displacement at the expense of globalization, industrialization, mining, building dams etc. Till date, more than 80% of the adivasi population in India lives in rural villages, where as a few have migrated to cities for a better livelihood. Among the city- migrated population, most of them are unskilled labours, and only a very few works in the government/public organizations and a negligible number in business/entrepreneurship. Although, particularly from santal community some have reached the highest constitutional including the current president of India Madam Smt. Draupadi Murmu, however, the challenges and threats of underprivileged santals remain same or surmounting over the period of time.

The existential threat and challenges in village and in urban are distinct. In the village, although to some extent the adivasi are able to preserve their cultural heritage but they are far lagging behind in the basic life sustaining amenities like housing, health care, connectivity, education, employment etc. Apart from these issues, there are chronic cultural problems within the santal community which has plagued the young mind on their path of socio-economic development. The burning challenges among these are how to remove black magic/witch hunt practices, minimize spending time in *hat-pata*, eradicate the consumption of rice-beer, eradicate the addiction of gambling, how to inculcate business practise/entrepreneurship skill and well-being among the village adivasi. Importantly, how to bring economic empowerment? On the other hand, most of the second and third generation adivasi people living in cities are disconnected from the mainstream culture. Many do not follow their culture, social values and rituals or never bother about what is going on with their village brothers and sisters. Along with the internal challenges, the external threats are still persisting in many parts of the rural adivasi regions. Some of them which requires coordinated attention includes exploitation by so called upper class *Diku*, land grabbing by outsiders, encroaching, defiling and staunching religious places, religious conversion by allurements, blocking reservations to needy and deserving or covertly snatching reservation facilities by other mainstream people.

The symposium will offer us a platform for our esteem members and their family, and distinguish personalities from santal and adivasi society to deliberate on the stated threats, challenges and issues, to find some workable solutions to a way forward in the future.

About SEA:

The SEA is a non-profit professional society of santal engineers registered under the Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 having member more than thousands with 13 chapters almost all metro cities in India and an overseas chapter. The organization is working restlessly on various welfare projects ever since its inception in year 1990 with the mission transform the santal society into a progressive and modern society, yet retaining its unique social-cultural identity, traditional values, universal human values, human identity through the process of educational, economic and socio-cultural rejuvenation.

Aims and Objectives:

- Educational: Focus on technical education, oriented towards self employment. To set-up infrastructural facilities to achieve academic excellence among the (Adivasi)tribal students.
- Economic: Insert entrepreneurship development revolution. Emphasis on core competency sector like agriculture, cottage and small scale industries, poultry, fishery, goatary farming etc. Conduct studies on developmental issues and advocate appropriate technology/ developmental policies affecting rural and Adivasi populations.
- Socio-Cultural and Literary: Promote and preserve unique socio-cultural traditions and values using modern technology and media.
- Health and Hygiene: Bring awareness on hygienic and healthy lifestyles and food habits in Adivasi villages eradicate disastrous effect of alcoholism and other dreaded diseases.
- Environmental: Preserve the rich forest ecosystem inextricably connected with socio-cultural traditions of Adivasi. Plantation of Sal and other trees. Preservation of Herbal plants.
- Women Empowerment : Focus on women education, develop awareness and encourage them choosing career, jobs and entrepreneurship.

Every year, conference-cum AGM is organized in the month of December to appraise the members of various projects and works undertaken by SEA over the last year, and plans for future activities are discussed and deliberate on different social issues on the AGM day.



Major Projects & Achievements

Over the years, SEA has successfully completed projects such as financial support to model schools, IAS coaching, talent hunt, publishing MIL books in Santali, software development of Akil Ahla, SEA hostel, plantation of sal trees and indigenous plants, carrier counselling, facilitator to industrial and river dam project displacement, facilitate to achiever from the society. The organization was a driving force for donations to migrant workers during the Covid lock-down.



The Talent Hunt Academic Decathlon (THAD) programme was successfully conducted for 17 high schools of Kusumi Block, Mayurbhanj, Odisha. Mr. Sudam Marandi Hon'ble Minister of School and Mass Education was the chief guest during prize giving ceremony @ Badampahar Govt high school Mayurbhanj on 15/10/2023. Many local intellectuals, guardians and students appreciated the THAD programme.

The Hon'ble minister also appreciated the initiative of SEA.



Social Support



On 13/04/2023, donated stationaries , chairs and tables , darri, almirah and also handed over cheque for printing of textbooks in Ol-chiki to Pt. Raghunath Murmu Santali Model School, Balarampur, Luhasila, Bijatala Block ,Mayurbhanj, Odisha.

Courtesy: SEA Bhubaneswar Chapter



On 6-05-2023, handed over books, stationaries, groceries and cheque to Mr. Naren Hansda of Sidhu Kanhu Mission Purulia, West Bengal

Courtesy: SEA Kolkata Chapter



Donation Drive During COVID-19 Lockdown



Hyderabad



Bhubaneswar



Chennai



Kolkata



Delhi NCR



Bangalore



Tree Plantation Drive



Courtesy: SEA Bhubaneswar & Kolkata Chapters



Career Counselling & Model Village Project



Mundhabani Village, Moroda Block, Mayurbhanj, Odisha



Bargimara Village, Kusmi Block, Mayurbhanj, Odisha



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