

BANDNA PARAB—A THANKS GIVING CEREMONY OF THE KUDMIS

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ABSTRACT

Festival is closely associated with the human culture. To get a relaxation from their monotonous life, man celebrate various festivals in different period which are associated to their day to day activities. Most of the festivals of an agriculturist community are associated with the agricultural work which falls within their agricultural cycle. As a settled agriculturist, the man animal (Particularly the cattle) relationship of 'Kudmi' is very close as well as primitive which maintains purity. The cattle play an important role in their agricultural work and hence, they give regards accordingly. To give thanks to their cattle and agricultural implements in lieu of their constant help in agricultural work for a good harvesting, these Kudmis of eastern India celebrate "*Bandna Parab*" or "*Bandna festival*". On the day of the Bandna Parabs, they thoroughly clean their houses, wash cattles and agricultural implements and decorate them with *Gudi* solution, oil, vermilion, *Merwair* etc., worship in their traditional way and finally dance with them. Though due to different factors the Kudmis are separated from their neighbouring tribes, their core culture is yet intact and well reflected through *Bandna Parab*.

INTRODUCTION

According to the traditional sense, the days or period for a joyful celebration is known as festival. This is basically associated with the agricultural, religious and socio-cultural activities (Mohanty 1997 : 657). Most of the *Parab* (festival) of Kudmis are associated with their agricultural activities which falls within their agricultural cycle i.e. from the sowing to harvesting. Through festivals, they worship the different deities for the protection and increment of their agricultural production. The festivals of Kudmis are set and calculated according to the Solar movement. The calendarisation of Kudmi festivals begins with *Akhain Yatra* which falls on the first day of *Magh* (January-February) and continues upto *Tusu Parab*. The other major festivals celebrated includes Sarhul, Shiva Gajan, Chaitra Sankranti, Desh Sikar, Rohin baruni, Jantal/Ashari Puja, Jawa/Karam, Bandna (Sohrai), Aghan Sankranti, Jitua/ Jita, Jirhul, Raja Shala, Gram Puja, Nawa Khawa/Nua Khiya etc.

The field work was done in three separate Kudmi inhabited (Uni-ethnic, bi-ethnic and multi-ethnic) villages of Jharkhand (Jojopiri), West Bengal (Uhupiri) and Orissa (Kulgi) respectively. The data were collected by using different anthropological methods and techniques.

The present paper analyse the details of Bandna festival of studied agriculturist community i.e. Kudmi. It is mainly celebrated on the day of *Amabashya* (New moon) of

Kartik (October-November) to give thanks to their domestic cattles as well as the agricultural implements for their constant help in harvesting good paddy crops.

MYTHOLOGY RELATED TO BANDNA PARAB :

When Lord Nirakar shiva (Bara Pahar) created men, he had to provide food for a long time. In due course of time when they multiplied into a sizeable number, Nirakar Shiva advice them to produce their own food by cultivating land. But in the absence of agricultural implements and technology, they faced very difficulty and therefore requested him for suggestion. He (Nirakar Shiva) took pity on them by providing some cattles with the condition of paying due care to them. Initially, the relationship was cordial but with the passage of time, it worsened and subjected to sever beating. The cattles had no alternate but to complain to Nirakar Shiva. The complain was of heavy work, long working hours, lack of proper food, unhygienic dwelling place, severe beating, no recreation and no thanks for their contribution. The complain was listened with patience and assured them to go for inspection secretly on the night of *Kartik Amabashya*.

The intelligent men with their reliable source were informed and accordingly they became alert. The people made a thorough preparation to clean their houses as well as the cowshed. On the day of *Amabashya* the cattles were washed and smeared with oil and vermilion on their horn and forehead. They ensured of sufficient fodder and the Gohal (cowshed) is illuminated with a burning Diwa (earthen lamp) throughout the night. The bundle of grass put along with *Diwa* on both sides of entrance of cowshed and *Sohrai* grass on the *Chhain* (roof) are symbolic to the availability of surplus food for the cattles. On the second day, he (Nirakar Shiva) found the people worshipping the deity, *Garaiya* with special offering including sacrifice made in their honor. On the third day he observes that the cattle in merrimood, dancing with the people. The song and musical sound fills the air with warm. Even on his way back, he find the *Bagals/Dhangars* (contractual shepherd) playing with cattles at the *Gochar* (grazing land). Thus the complain made could not be proved.

The cattle in the next season complain of the similar hardship and hence Nirakar Shiva was bound to make a second visit on the same day, and since then the process is continuing as a tradition in the name of *Bandna Parab*.

VILLAGE UNDER STUDY :

JOJOPIRI :

The village Jojopiri is an uni-ethnic Kudmi village located at a distance of 16 Kms. east from Salgadihmore on Ranchi–Tata branch of NH.-33 and falls within the jurisdiction of Sonahatu Police-Station of Ranchi district in Jharkhand. It is about 82 Kms. from states capital. The distance from Ranchi to Salgadihmore is nearly 66 Kms. and connected by a metalled road whereas the remaining 16 Kms. feeder road on the embankment of

a canal is only a fair weather road. The village is bordered by the village Lowadih on the east, Bhuinshudih on the north, Jilingserang on the west and Sumandandi on the south. It has a poor infrastructure facilities with five wells and one pond. Besides a canal passes from west to east close to the habitational area. But there is neither any school nor any tubewell. There are 46 families with a population of 165 (57% male and 43% female) residing in the village belonging to three different clans.

UHUPIRI :

It is a bi-ethnic village situated in the western part of Jhalda police-station under Purulia district of West Bengal. The village is only 02 Kms. east to the river Subarnarekha which forms the eastern most boundary of Jharkhand State. The Ranchi-Purulia connecting highway as well as the tracks of South Eastern Railways passes through the village. The Railway station at Tulin is hardly 200 mts. away from the habitational area of the village. There is one Government Primary School and one Private owned primary school. The village has got the electric as well as telephone connection. There are 45 wells, 04 tubewells and 08 ponds to quench the thirst and necessity of men and animals. The religious place *Gossain than* is located at the centre of the village and *Jahirathan* is close to the village. There is a Shiva temple in front of which the *Ganjan* festival is celebrated and *Chhou* dance performed on 8th day of Baisakh every year. Besides, a Hari temple is also present in village. Kudmi are the dominating group (93.25%) having 113 families with a population of 664 (352 male and 312 female) followed by an agriculturist tribe Muda (Munda). The Kudmis of this village belongs to nine clans namely *Banshriyar, Banshowar, Banwer, Dumriyar, Hansdwar, Kachhmar, Nangtwar* and *Punuriya*.

KULGI :

Kulgi is a multi-ethnic village situated about 1.5 Km. east of the Tahasil town Bahalda, under Bamanghaty subdivision of Mayurbhanj district in Orissa. The entire northern and north western boundary of the village is surrounded by the river Nesa, a tributary of river Kharkai, where as the western part of the village is covered by the Bahalda township, southern part by the village Tentola, south eastern part by the village Soso and eastern part by the village Kumbhirda. The village is well connected to the local town of Bahalda with two metalled roads. It possesses two Anganbadi centres, one working boys school, one Upra-Sevashram, one M. E. School, one High school, one post office and one electric substation. There are total 13 ponds, 12 wells and 11 ringwells and eight tubewell located in the village. The village *Jahira than* is situated at the northern part of the village whereas the three temples (two for Lord Siva and one for Maa Monasa) are in the different parts of the village. The entire village is divided into seven wards and 16 hamlets. The ethnic group is composed of four tribal and 17 non-tribal. Tribal people includes Bathudi, Kolha/Ho, Munda, Santal and Saunti. Non-tribal group comprise Baisnab, Barik (barbar), Bonia (goldsmith), Brahmin, Dhoba (washermen),

Gouda, Ghasi, Jogi, Kamar (blacksmith), Koran, Kudmi, Kumbhar (potter), Patra, Puran, Sundi, Tanti (weaver) and Teli (oil crusher). Total population of the village is 2459 out of which 631 (25.45%) belongs to the Kudmi group forming 113 families. Of the total Kudmi population 339 (53.72%) are male and 292 (46.27%) female.

PEOPLE UNDER STUDY :

Kudmi (Kudumi/Kurmi) is a settled agriculturist community of the eastern India who were identified as an aboriginal tribes before 1931 and enjoyed the same facilities meant for tribes by the government, but later on they were excluded from the list of Scheduled Tribes (Singh 2000 : 6). They are highly concentrated in Jharkhand and bordering areas of West Bengal (Purulia, Bankura and Midnapur) and Orissa (Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar) a well defined territory bounded by the four rivers Damodar, Kanshabati, Subarnarekha and Baitarani where the Kudmis have co-existed with other tribal communities. But in due course of time, some of the Kudmis along with other tribal group have migrated to Assam, Bangladesh, and other parts of West Bengal and Orissa for seeking employment (Mahato 2000 : 25-65).

Most of the Kudmi settlements are found close to their agricultural land. In a uni-ethnic Kudmi village, they always prepare their houses on both sides of the *Kulhi* (village street), where as they prefer to reside in a separate hamlet in a bi-ethnic and multi-ethnic village. The Kudmis are divided into six divisions, where *Paribar* (family) is considered as the smallest unit. A group of *Paribar* possessing same *Gotra* (clan) and living in a common place is known as *Bakhal/Bakhair* (unilineage settlement). If the members of some *Paribars* or more then on *Bakhal* are settle down in a particular locality having a connecting street, is also known in the name of *Kulhi*. A group of *Kulhi* (in some cases single *Kulhi* also) possessing a separate geographical area, common sacred place, burial ground, agricultural field, grazing land and *Akhra-than* forms a *Gram* (village). Traditionally, each Kudmi village is controlled by a village headman known as *Mahato (Mahto)* who solves all the socio-political and judicial problems of the village. The post of *Mahato* is hereditary in nature. After the death of Mahato, it automatically transferred to his eldest son. A cluster of twelve village form a *Paragan* which is headed by *Paraganait* who solves all the inter village dispute under his jurisdiction. A group of *Paragans* (about six to ten) forms a *Thapal*, which is controlled by *Deshmandal*. As per the traditional Kudmi political system, this *Deshmandal* is considered as a real protector of Kudmi ethnic group, who is always assisted by *Potloi*. Unlike their political system, the social structure have several divisions which hierarchially includes *Paribar*, *Gotra*, *Gosthi* (lineage) and *Jat* (ethnicity). The entire community is divided into 81 *Gotras*. In practice they are *gotra* exogamous and *jat* endogamous the Kudmi still maintain their tribal identity including their totemist usages in life style and animistic world views (Mahato 2000 : VI). *Goraiya* is one of their main deity worshipped for the protection and welfare of their cattles as well as increament in their number.

A daily routine of Kudmi gives a clear cut idea about their economic life. The Kudmis are basically dependent on their agricultural activities. Each and every well to do family posses minimum a pair of bull for their agricultural activities. The number of cattles and *Baindh/Puda* (straw rope made pocket for storing grains) and *Dimni* (a large bamboo flake made basket, specially prepared for storing grains) are considered as a yardstick to measure their wealth. For the purpose of agriculture, the implements used are *Hal* (plough), *Juwaint/Juanl* (yoke), *Mair/Moi* and *Karha* (land levelling implements) *Akhani/Akhain*, *Hansua* (sickle), and *Goru/Kada Gadi* (bullock/Buffalo cart) etc.

MAN-ANIMAL RELATIONSHIP :

As a settled agriculturist, the man-animal relationship of Kudmi is very unique and interesting. Cattle is a sacred animal for the Kudmis. The cow is treated as *Go-mata* (mother cow) and given honour and regards accordingly. The cow not only serve as a helping hand in their basic economy but also provide with milk. The cowdung is used as a manure and for purifying the floors as well as courtyard. If a Kudmi happen to touch any part of the body of a cattle with his/her feet or toes, (s)he takes a bow to them. The death of a cattle have direct effect on the whole family. There is a strict regulation for the killing of a cattle by any Kudmi member. The killing is considered to be a socio-religious offence and the responsible person have to undergo *Prayaschit*. If a cow/bull dies due to heavy beating or having rope tied around the neck at the time of death, the person concerned have to observe *Prayaschit*. The person observing *Prayaschit* have to beg food grains from seven villages with a rope hanging in neck. During this period, (s)he does not talk to anybody. Instead makes a sound like *mo.....* or *Homma.....* to draw attention of the people. At the end (s)he has to perform the formal rituals and give feast to the *Deshmandal* as well as the villagers with a cash fine fixed by them.

PREPARATION FOR BANDNA PARAB :

The longitivity and number of ritual performed demands a thorough preparation. This begins with the collection of different kinds of clays/*mati*, viz. *Rugdi*, *Khetmati*, *Lal-mati* (red soil), *Dudhi-mati* (white soil). etc. for levelling the cowshed and *Angan* (courtyard) as well as white washing all the houses. The outer walls are decorated with diluted *Dudhi* and *Lal mati* where as the marketing is completed in the weekly market prior to its arrival. The shopping items includes *Tonki* (bamboo basket), *Khanchi* (bamboo basket), *Kharka*, *Dhupdani* (conger), *Diwa/ Deep* (earthen lamp), Ghee, oil, *Sindoor* (vermilion), *Dhoti*, *Sharee*, Earthen pot, *Palam* (one kind of earthen vessel), Earthen lid, *Ranu*, Cocks and Hens etc. Thus one has to be economically, psychologically and culturally ready to welcome the Bandna festival and celebrate it with greater enthusiasm to thank the animals who are partner in their day to day agricultural activities.

JAGRAN :

The first day of Bandna festival is well known throughout the *Kudmidesh* (Jharkhand and bordering areas of West Bengal and orissa) as *Jagran*. The children look to be in merry mood with the arrival of the day of *Jagran*.

In the morning, *Bagals/Dhangals* draws the cattle to the nearest pond/river or any other water points for washing. After giving a thorough bath to the animals, they are brought back to *Gohal* (cowshed). In the absence of *Bagal*, the same is performed by elder male members of the family. Sometimes, even the children also assist the elders. The cattles are provided with sufficient food specially grass or paddy straw. The female members of the family besmear the courtyard with cowdung solution, before proceeding to the nearest pond or river for bathing and washing them in a new *Tonki*. After bathing, the women return to the house in their wet clothes. The *Tonki* with wet rice is put on the *Chhain* (roof) for draying. A few hours later they bring down the dried rice and grind with the help of *Dhenki* (husking lever).

In the evening they illuminate the rice powdered made *Diwa* on *Sal patta* (leaf of *shorea robusta*) along with a grass bundle on the both sides of the door of all the rooms including *Gohal*. The other places of importance to be illuminated includes main entrance, store room, well, *Khalihan/Khola* (thrushing ground), Manure pits, Tanks, *Tulshi manch/Chaurah* etc. The extinguished lamps and grass bundles are collected and placed on *Chhain*. Though the process of lightening is done by the *Bagals*, irrespective of age and sex the other members of the family equally participate. Later the collected *Diwas* are crushed into powder and the *Pitha* (cakes) prepared out of it are specially meant for the *Bagals*. The *Bagals*, smear oil and *Sindoor* on the horn and forehead of the cattles. In the absence of the *Bagals*, elder members performed the same but for the cows and she buffalo the females are responsible.

The female further prepares *Khapra Pitha* (a type of rice cake) in a *Palam* covered with an earthen lid which is enjoyed by each and every members of the family. Then the actual sprinkling of rice *gudi/gundi* solution on every agricultural implements along with *Gohal*, *Khalihan*, *Tulshi monch*, Manure pits, well etc. are taken place. The main objective behind sprinkling solution is to awaken the implements and hence the name *Jagran* which means to awaken is justified.

In the night, after finishing the dinner *Bagals/Dhangars* along with other elder villagers gathers in one corner of the village or at the house of *Mahto* with musical instruments like *Dhol*, *Nagra*, *Mandal/Madal*, *Jhun-Jhune* etc. for *Dhingwani Bhula*. It is an important part of *Bandna Parab* in which the entire team sing and dance through out the night in front of each house with the motive of keeping the people awaken and at the same time preventing the entry of evil spirits.

The night of *Amabashya* is considered to be the most suitable time for the *Dayen* and evil spirits to play their black magic on the people as well as animals. Therefore, the *Dhingwani* team moves from one end of the village to another while attending each houses. During their movement from one house to another, they sing a song which reads as :

Khoja Khojate Jai,
Pucha Puchhate Jai,
Kati Dhure Ahiraka Ghar.
Ahiraka Ghare Bhai,
Tulashi Ka Pindha,
Anganate Nache Dasha Bhai,
Dasha Bhai Ke Dele Bhai,
Pani ni Padatau,
Rahi Jatao Juge Juge Naam.

(The time passes while searching and enquiring “How far is the house of cattle owner ?” In his house, there is a *Tulshi manch/chauraha*, where the *Dasha bhai* (ten brothers but here entire team) sing and dance. If you contribute to the team, there would not be reduction of wealth rather your name will be commemorated from era to era).

The arrival of the *Dhingwani* team is welcomed by the house owner and treated with *Handia* (rice beer) and *Khapra pitha* according to their capacities. They sing and dance while beating drums, *Nagra* and *Mandal at the courtyard* for which they are paid either in cash or kind or both. The kind includes paddy, rice, vegetables, and *khapra pitha* etc. Sometimes the team members might snatch vegetables or fruits grown in the *bari* for which the owner makes no objection. While leaving the house they warn the house owner as well as cows to remain awake. The same is reflected through the song as :

Jago Ma Lachhmi,
Jago Ma Bhagawati,
Jagi Sutain Amabashya Raat,
Jago Ke Re Pratiphal,
Pow Ba Re Akhani,
Pancha Putra Dasha Dhenu Gai.

(Oh mother Lachhmi, Oh mother Bhagawati; keep awakening, the night of *Amabashya*. The cost of awakening will give you five sons and ten *Dhenu* cows).

In this manner they move from door to door producing alarming sound. At the dawn, they *Dhingwani* team) gathers at the outskirts of the village under a tree or on an open place where they make a symbolic sacrifice of gourd and burn a straw made effigy. Finally, the collection is distributed among its members before they disperse.

GOHAL PUJA :

The second day of Bandna parab, popularly know as Gohal Puja is the most important part. The female members of the house purifies the floors, *Tulshi manch* and *Aangan* with cowdung solution in the morning. The Bagals and the male members of the family carry the *Haal*, *Juyant*, *Karha* and *Mair* etc. to the nearest pond and water source to wash it properly with straw brush. The washed implements are brought back to house and are erected in a systematic manner facing the east. Then comes the turn of cattles to be washed properly and bathed by the *Bagals*.

The headman of family goes to take bath with a *hanshua*. After taking bath he cuts a bundle of paddy straw in his paddy field and returns to home. On his way back he makes no conversation with anybody. At home he keeps the paddy bundle on a *Charpai* and then begin to knit *merwair* (a kind of knitting with paddy straw). The knitted *merwair* are always of odd number in totality and kept on a new basket, specially brought for *Chuman* (benedictory kissing). After smearing oil and *sindoor* on the cattles the *merwair* are hanged in their necks and forehead. Further, it is also tied to the *Dharna* (central pole) of each houses. The *merwair* hanged in *Dharna* becomes of immense importance because of its requirements in the merital ceremony.

The palm/finger impressions of grinded area rice solution are put on either side of the door frame and *Sindoor Tika* (vermilion dot) is given on it. The upper side of the door frame is also smeared with the help of middle fingers. The small straight line marks given are always of odd number.

The lady of the house like the previous day goes to the ponds with *arwa chawal* in a *tonki*. It is washed properly and having taken the bath, return to the house. The wet *chawal* is put on *chhain* for drying. Then the *arwa chawal* is made into fine particle (*Gudi*) with the help of *Dhenki*. *Chalen/Chalni* (Sieve) is used to filter to fine parts. The *Gudi* prepared is made into solution with water and a gum like liquid extracted either from *Gamhar* (*Gmelina arborea*) leaf or on heating the stem of ladies finger. This helps in maintaining the continuity of the *chawk*. (*Alpana*) made with the solution. The *Chawk* is designed and prepared by the lady who happens to be in fasting and begins from the entrance. The design may vary from one clan to another. At the entrance lies a few branches of *Surgunja/Genda* flower, *Chitchiti* or *Apang*, a chunk of cowdung and a stone. The cowdung symbolies purification, the stone gives the representation of Lord Nirakar Siva, the *Surgunja/Genda* flower welcome the cattles whereas the *Chitchiti* prevents the entry of evil forces. The *Chawk* prepared is generally criss crossed squares, connected with one another and a triangle attached to the side arms of the square. The apex of the triangle is further joined with three curved lines. The squares, triangles and the curved lines are drawn with the four fingers of the right hand dipped into solution. Vermilion dots put on each joints, gives an attractive look to it. (Figure-1) But mythologically

it symbolises breeding. The *Goth puja* is performed outside the village, on the way through which the cattles are generally drawn in and out. The Mahato/ Majhi/Pahan performs this *Goth puja* by making a chicken sacrifice or breaking of an egg. He further sprinkle the *Gudi* solution on the cattle and they (cattle) are made to cross through it. On completion of the *chawk pura* all the cattles are made to pass over it.

The lady then begins to prepare *Goraiya pitha* (A special kind of sweet cake made of rice) in a new *Palam* on the newly built *chullah*, in order to maintain the purity of the cake. The house owner arranges all the puja materials for *Gohal puja*. The worshipping materials comprises of *Arwa chawal*, *Sindoor*, *Gudi*, *Surgunja* flower, *Garaiya pitha* on separate *Dona* (leaf cup) of *Sal patta* and *Handia* or *Ranu*, milk, *Diwa*, *Dhupchi* and *Hansua* are arranged in a new winnowing fan. An assistant keeps three chicken ready and both come to the *Gohal* for puja. The puja is performed to the *Garaiya* deity, made of mud having cylindrical shape, kept in the eastern side of the *Gohal*. Some clan members even use *Mohua* (*bassia latifolia*) wood for making the *Garaiya*. Offering is made to the *Garaiya* deity praying for better health of the cattles and increment in the number of cattles. The *Garaiya* is given finger impression of *Gudi* solution and *Sindoor tika* on it. (Figure-2) Further, the pieces of *Garaiya pithas* offered for three times followed by pouring of milk and *handia*. Then the chickens of separate colours mainly black (for *Gai Gariya*) and *rangua* (for *Koda/Bhainsh Garaiya*) are sacrificed. (Figure-3)

Close to the *Tulshi manch* the puja is also offered in the name of their ancestors for the welfare of the family. The cleaned *Hal* are placed at the courtyard facing east and the *Juant*, *Mair* and *Karha* are placed over it. The fasted lady brings *Arwa chawal*, *Sindoor*, *Dhupghansh* (a kind of grass), *Gudi solution* and *Diwa* for the *Chuman*. She gives the palm impression of *Gudi* solution on this agricultural implements followed by *Sindoortika* over it. Then she sprinkles the *arwachawal* and *Dhupghansh* on it. It is interesting to note that, except this day, throughout the year, the women folk are not allowed to jump or touch these agricultural implements following to it the female members of the house make a *chuman* to the cattles with *arwa* rice and *Dhup ghansh* (Figure-4).

At the end of the day lies the *Nimcha Nimchi* ceremony, in which all the cattles are drawn out to the outskirts of the village, while the lady with burning *Dhupchi* put on *Andri/Chitki jada patta* in her left hand. She picks up mustard seeds from her *Khaincha* (a pocket made with *anchal* of her saree) and after making a round over the back of the cows, she put the burning *Dhupchi* invertedly on the ground and crushed with her left leg. This act of performance signifies the drawing out and crushing of the evil spirits if at all residing on the cattles.

The sacrificed cocks are enjoyed by every member of the family in the dinner. Even the nearest friends and clan members also share the joys. The *Bagals* and male members gather in the *Kulhi* at night with their musical instruments to sing and dance.

BARAD BHIDKA :

The third day of Bandna parab better known as *Barad Bhidka* or *Goru Khunta* itself indicates typing of cattles and force them to pay. Like the previous two days the cattles are as usually washed by the *Bagals* or elder members of the family and served with sufficient diet. But they take special care to decorate them in addition to smearing of oil and vermilion. The *Gudi* solution is used to give a stamp mark with the help of a glass or Chillum on the whole body of the cattles. Now a days, people even uses different colours as a substitute to *Gudi* to give them more attractive look. The headman of the family brings paddy straw in the same manner like the previous day and prepare the *marwair* for the cattles as well as to be hanged in the *Dharna*. In addition, a typical kind of knitting called 'Barhin' (a special kind of knitting with the paddy straw) is prepared, specially for *Kada*. The people of present generation find it even more difficult to knit the 'Barhin' as it is comparatively complicated. One can easily notice from the movement of the cattles, that they are in marry mood.

The Khunta (pole) erected at the centre of the *Kulhi* or at some open place is decorated with palm impression of *Gudi* solution and *Sindoor tika* put over it. The head of the pole is tied with *Surgunja* flowers to give a colourful looking. The bottom of the *Khunta* is purified with cowdung solution. A few circles of *Gudi* solution are made around the *Khunta*.

The bulls drawn out from the *Gohal* are tied to the pole one after another. The female members of the concerned family makes a formal *chuman* before the actual *barad bhidka* ceremony takes place. The *arwa chawl* is thrown over the cattle and *Diya* is shown to the bull tied to the pole. The villagers first sing the *Ahira geet* and different types of musical instruments such as *Dhol, Nagra and Madal* etc. are simultaneously played. A few people with dry animal skin, old *Ghang* (leaf made rain coat) and colourful clothes try to tease the bull who in return try to push them back with his head. This created a very interesting scene which fulfills the heart of every member present over there. Further the *Kulkuli* (a cheerful sound) produced by the spectators add fuel to the encouragement and enthusiasm of the players. This action is repeated to a number of times till the bull gets tired and is replaced by another one.

Sometimes *Handia* and *Pitha* are distributed to people participating in the occasion. The song sang on this occasion are as follows :

“Kahe Re Borda Dhulu Na Mulu Ho,
Mudo Kan Dela Na Girai Re,
Eshano Kheilo, Barda Khelbe,
Saitho Juwano Ghuri Jai Re” (Jain 1987 : 73)

(Oh bull ! why are you nervous ? Why are you bowing ? You play such a game that sixty adults will accept defeat).

*“Kati Khane Re Barda Charale Bajhale ?
 Kati Khane Karale Sinan Re ?
 Kati Khane Re Barda, Bir Mati Makhale ?
 Ekhan To Khunta Mariyai Re.
 Adha Rati Pahar Rati Charalo Bajhal,
 Bhinsare Karalaen Sinan Re,
 Boriya Uthoite Bhala Biro Mati Makhalon,
 Ekhan To Khunta Mariyai Re” (Jain 1987 : 74)*

(Oh bull ! when did you graze ? When did you bath ? When did you besmears mud to get ready for dance ? Now you have occupied the pole. I grazed at mid-night, bathed at the dawn and smeared mud with the rise of the sun and now I have occupied the pole).

At the dusk, the *Nimcha-Nimchi* process is repeated in the same manner of the previous day. It was also observed that in some part of the studied area the *Nimcha-Nimchi* of the cattle is carried out on both the days of *Gohal puja* and *Barad Bheka*, whereas in some places it takes place only on the day of *Barad Bhidka*. Similarly, in some part of the studied area the *Chawk Pura* is done at afternoon, just before to the *Gohalpuja* whereas in other part it is done at the evening to welcome their cattles. (Figure-5)

BUDHI BANDNA :

The day after Barad Bhikda is observed as Budhi Bandna. This is of less importance as no formal rituals is performed. But the Bagals mainly erect a single *Khunta* at *Gochar* outside the village. Here only the Bagals participate and they force the cattle to play with their song and teasing nature. Moreover, the barren cows which does not conceive, is made to play by the Bagals by tying to a special *Khunta* of *Aandri* tree.

Conclusion :

Man-animal relationship is a very old phenomena which dates back to Neolithic period when men began to tame animals. The exploitation of the cattles in their agricultural activities probably had begun during this phase of pre-historic period (Sankalia 1974 : 279; Agrawal 1982 : 90 : 122). The aboriginal people who are considered as the son of the soil is no exception to it. Like other agriculturist community, the tribal also depended on the cattles to a very large extent. The relationship from the remote past have remained intact as one could easily notice in men’s habit and regards for their (cattle) products and co-operation. *Bandna Parab*—a thanks giving ceremony is a befitting examples in this connection. The Kudmis observes *Bandna Parab* whole heartedly while the other tribal groups of Chota Nagpur Plateau who celebrates the same festival in the name of *Sohrai* includes Santal (Mital 1986 :90); Munda (Roy 1912 : 305-306) and Bedia (Shukla

1997 : 76-77). In spite of their exclusion from the list of Scheduled Tribes, the 'Kudmis' still maintain their traditional way of life and rituals. Both the mythology and reality of *Bandna Parab* in practice is a supporting evidence to it.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT :

The authors are grateful to Dr. Nabakumar Duary, Research Associate (Cultural), Anthropological Survey of India, Kolkata for going through the paper and making suggestion to improve upon it.

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