



Sahitya Akademi

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meet the author

Bhogla Soren





Bhogla Soren is a well-known Santali dramatist. He was born in a lower middle class family on 4 September 1958 at Kharband village in the district of Singhbhum, Bihar (now East Singhbhum, Jharkhand). His father Mora Mansingh Soren was a farmer and also a practitioner of santal traditional medicines in villages. He was a religious person. Bhogla Soren was brought up in the care of his mother.

He got his primary education at his village and after that he was admitted to a school, 4 kms away from his village. After passing Intermediate science from Tata College Chaibasa in 1978 he did a B.Sc. (Hons) at Jamshedpur Co-operative College but he discontinued his education due to continuous draught from 1976 to 1979 in that area.

Bhogla Soren started tuition with the help of his senior school friend Sri Ghasiram Murmu. During that period he got a chance to meet Pt. Raghunath Murmu, the great orator, guru, philosopher, playwright and inventor of Ol-chiki script. Pt. Raghunath Murmu told the gathering that evening, "You people do something for the betterment of our society. I have laid the foundation for the

propagation of Ol-chiki script, literature, culture and for socio-education in our mother tongue. It is the duty of younger generation to carry forward the work of script, literature, culture and socio-education to maintain the identity."

Bhogla Soren was deeply impressed by the personality of Pt. Raghunath Murmu. He read his two plays, *Bidu Chandan* and *Kherwar Veer* the same year. While he was in high school he had read almost all the literary books of Bengali literature of prominent writers like Rabindranath Tagore, Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Sarat Chandra Chattopadhyaya, Michel Madhusudan Dutta, Tara Sankar Bandopadhyaya, Kazi Nazrul Islam and Sukanta Bhattacharya.

He started writing Santali songs and poetry in his school days. His first book of songs was published in 1978 by Dr. Anil Kumar Murmu. This was his first publication. He got the opportunity to travel to Santali cultural centres of India with the help of his friend in 1980. This was the time when Jharkhand movement was taking shape under the leadership of some of the intellectuals of Jharkhand and at the same time some magazines were published in Hindi and Bengali languages from the Jharkhand region of Bihar. The *Sal Patra* in Hindi and *Silalipi* were very popular among the people of Jharkhand.

He started writing in *Silalipi* patrika which was edited by Dr. Bankim Chandra Mahato, HOD of Bengali, Jamshedpur Co-operative College, Jamshedpur, from where Bhogla Soren was

pursuing his undergraduate course. His articles in Bengali on the culture of Jharkhand were published in the magazines in 1980.

His Santali novel, *Upal* is based on a young girl and her struggle for imparting higher education to her step brother. And also how she manages to keep her family united and why she revolts against the age old tradition of superstition and social belief of Santal people.

Another novel *Rapud Sankha* was also written during that period, which is based on the story of a young girl who works as an industrial contractual labour. It is the story of symbolic trend of all tribal women who are generally forced to work under industrial contractors in metropolitan cities. They face different type of harassments in work places. They do not want to work in the cities if they can feed themselves in their ancestral village. They sing melodious songs in the

evening on the road side when they return from their work places. It is the reflection of sorrows of entire tribal life. Bhogla Soren's novel deals with the sorrow of these working women.

It is the natural beauty of the village where spent his childhood which was quite idyllic with a mountain, stream, ponds, water lillies and mango trees. He remembers his village again and again when he begins to plot for a story. He remembers the village Akhra where group dance is performed in the evening by young girls and boys with the beating sound of mandala, nagara, ghanta and flutes.

Bhogla Soren was deeply inspired by Pt. Raghunath Murmu's dramas and liked to imitate his style of narration.

Bhogla Soren's Sahitya Akademi Award winning play *Rahi Ranwak Kana* deals with two parallel love stories while exploring the social system of the Santal community. The characters are well-developed and the dialogues capture the intense drama of love and its social repercussions.

Shri Jadumani Beshra, former convener of Sahitya Akademi and Founder General Secretary of All India Santali Writers Association has concluded, "The plays of Bhogla Soren vividly describe and depict contemporary socio-cultural and economical aspect of the Santal community. Language used is simple and lucid, which touches the hearts of the readers/audience easily. Themes are very powerful with rich literary values. Bhogla Soren is one of the successful playwrights in Santali language



With Family



Receiving award from Sri. Arjun Munda, Chief Minister, Jharkhand, 2004

after legendary playwright Pandit Raghunath Murmu.”

His first one act play *Muhin* was staged at Karandih in 1983. The Dramatic Club, Karandih was established in the same year with the help of his friends Shri Sushil Hansdah, Panchanan Marandi, Dhar Baskey, Singroy Hansdah, Mrs Nayami Baskey and some drama artists. He was the founder General Secretary of Dramatic Club and he continued up to 1993. During that period and later years his dramas have been staged more than 250 times throughout India. It is estimated that his dramas are also staged by other theatre organizations more than 50 times till date.

Bhogla Soren is now working as Sub-divisional Engineer (Vigilance) at BSNL, Jamshedpur. He was appointed as Office Assistant in the Department of Post and Telegraphs in 1981. And after getting promotions he was appointed as Sub-divisional Engineer in 2004. He has also been imparted training in Strategic Financial Management from Hyderabad in 2007.

He started publishing a half yearly (then quarterly in later

years) Santali literary magazine *Sobornakha* in 1988. He then became the honorary Editor of the magazine. It was the time when limited Ol-chiki presses were available in the country. *Sobornakha* was printed from Dulai Printers, Karandih. It was a Letter Press. The magazine was composed manually there and the sales of magazine was limited. It was published with an aim to serve the society.

Bhogla Soren was the founder President of All India Santali Writers Association founded in 1988. He was the Founder Secretary of Pandit Raghunath Murmu High School, Karandih. He joined as honorary Editor of *Olong* (A bimonthly Santali literary magazine) in 1994 for one year. He has written many articles regularly in Santali, Bengali and Hindi magazines. He is the recipient of many honors and awards including Sahitya Akademi Award in 2010. His books were also prescribed texts included in the syllabus of graduate and postgraduate programmes in many Universities.



Receiving certificate of Honour from Sri. Prafulla Shamal,
Panchayati Raj Minister, Odisha, 2010

Bibliography

Poetry

Nari Baha, 1979

Novel

Upal, 1989

Chapoy, 2011

Play

Sosnok, 1991

Rahi Ranwak Kana, 2008

SuraSkom, 2009

Mandishom Poran Poraini, 2010

Khobor Kagoj, 2010

Rahi Chetan Te, 2012

Essay

In Hindi

Santali Bhasa, Lipi aur Sahitya ka Vikash, 1992

Jharkhandi Pahchan evam Bhasayen, 2004

Chronology

1958 Born at Kharbandd village In Singhbhum District

1978 Passed Intermediate science from Tata College Chaibasa.

1979 Published his first book *Nari Baha*, a collection of Santali Songs

1981 Started career as Office Assistant in the Department of Post and Telegraphs, Jamshedpur

1983 Established Dramatic Club, Karandih and became the Honorary General secretary.

1984 His short play "Khobor Kagoz" staged by Dramatic Club, Karandih, got first place in All India Adivasi drama competition in Jamshedpur.

Promoted as Telephone Inspector

1985 Honorary Secretary of Guru Gomkey Pt. Raghunath Murmu High School, Karandih, Jamshedpur.

1986 His first drama (five act play) *Sosnok* was staged by Dramatic Club, Karandih at Jamtara, Santal Pargana, Bihar (now Jharkhand)

1987 Married to Duli Rani Murmu

1988 Started publishing half yearly (then quarterly in later years) Santali literary magazine *Sobornakha*. He became honorary Editor of the magazine.

Became the founder President of All India Santali Writers' Association.

1993 Received Gold Medal for drama *Khobor Kagoz*

- from Yatra Committee, Bhimpur (W.B)
- 1994 Joined as Honorary Editor of *Olong* (A bimonthly Santali literary magazine) for one year.
- 1997 Received Certificate of honour for his special contribution to Santali literature from SC/ST Welfare Association, Jamshedpur.
- 2003 Received Pandit Raghunath Murmu Award for his special contribution to Santali drama from AISWA, Jhargram
- 2004 Promoted as Sub-divisional Engineer in BSNL Jamshedpur.
Received Pandit Raghunath Murmu fellowship for his significant contribution to Santali literature from AISWA, Jhargram.
- 2005 Received Certificate of honour for his significant contribution to Santali culture from ASECA, Rourkela, Odisha.
- 2009 Received Certificate of honour for his special contribution to Santali literature from Gurugomkey Pandit Raghunath Murmu Utnaw Sawnta, Jamshedpur.
- 2010 Received Pandit Raghunath Murmu Award from Birsa Memorial Society, Sarjomda, Jamsedhpur
- 2011 Received Sahitya Akademi Award – 2010 from Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi for his play *Rahi Ranwak' kana*.
Awarded Jharkhand Ratna from Dainik Jagran, Ranchi.
Received Akhra Award - 2011 from Jharkhandi Bhasa Sanskriti Akhra, Ranchi.
Received Jharkhand Gaurav Vivekanda Smriti Puraskar from Vivekanda Yuva Samitee, Nuwagram, Haldipokhar, East Singhbhum (Jharkhand).
Honour from All India Santali Writers' Association (Jharkhand Unit), Chakulia, Jharkhand.
- 2013 Certificate of Honour from RASCA (A Santali film organization), Jamshedpur.



Receiving Sahitya Akademi Award from Sunil Gangopadhyay, President, Sahitya Akademi, New Delhi, 2011