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Editorial

Considerable knowledge exists on the medicinal plants in India. The indigenous people (Adivasis, who live in forests) practice medicines derived from plants to cure their ailments. Several rural people use plant remedies to cure their ailments. The knowledge is unwritten being transmitted from one generation to the other. The methods practiced by the Adivasis in many cases are found to be positive, beneficial and scientifically sound. They represent an autonomous system supported by the community. The common customs, traditions, values, beliefs and practices associated with tribal health and diseases have a direct bearing with their treatment of physical ailments. Since modern medicine is costly its network has not reached the interior most areas, the tribal people will not be able to get the benefit at their door steps, hence there is a need for the popularization of the tribal medicine

With the basic objective of generating awareness about ethno-medicines, facilitate the sharing of the traditional knowledge system among the people and to make people aware about the benefits from Patents rights and peoples Bio Diversity register IGRMS organised the National Workshop on Tribal Healers and Exhibition on Tribal Medicine in Bhubaneswar. Tribal Healers from different states of the country participated and provided medicines for chronic diseases.

Unity is strength. The unity among the people in a small remote village in Kondhamal district of Orissa has earned laurels from different sections for making the village Nuasahi as the first alcohol free village in the Panchayat.

The untimely death of Dr. Badal SenGupta, a philosopher and guide, is a great loss for the society. Inaugurating the First Dr. Badal SenGupta Memorial Lecture Programme, Shri Rameshwar Thakur, the then Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh, appreciated the initiatives taken up to perpetuate the memory of Dr. Badal SenGupta and disseminate his ideals and vision he had for the development of the poor.

The water sector reforms or restructuring policies of the government, pushed by the World Bank and ADB, have the underlying thrust of transforming the water sector into a commercial operation and changing the basis from social responsibility to a commodity to be bought and sold. Though the impacts of these reforms are felt by all sections, but the poor, vulnerable sectors like agriculture, even middle class feel the pinch.

In order to promote and protect the rights of indigenous peoples the United Nations has adopted a declaration on the rights of the indigenous peoples which would enable them to retain their cultural identity and traditions while participating in political, economic and social life.

Apart from the above mentioned matters, this issue of SANDESH covers information on the progress of sacred grove campaign, relief operation undertaken by ODAF/IRDWSI, Interactions with Adv. Sanjay Updhyaya, ODAF Bi-annual

Meeting etc for the knowledge of our readers. The valuable comments, suggestions and contributions from the readers have been enriching the news letter. We would appreciate if the esteemed readers continue to send the in their write ups, articles etc on various issues relating to sustainable development of the marginalized communities.

Editorial Team-ODAF

Popularize Tribal Medicine

Traditional tribal medicine is an age-old medical practice that existed in human societies before the application of modern science to health. It has evolved to reflect different philosophical backgrounds and cultural origins. Although modern medicine is widespread, traditional tribal medicine still exists in many countries across the world. Interest in traditional medicine system has increased over the years. People in many countries are now more prepared to look for alternative approaches to maintain their health. Demands for traditional medicine from the public and the growing economic importance of traditional medicine have led to increased interest on the part of both governments, academic communities and healer practitioners.

Tribal medicine approach is holistic with a blending of physical, mental, social and spiritual well being. Its use is global. Even in the face of sophisticated western system of medicine, it has thrived especially in the remote areas of the country. The methods practiced by the tribals in many cases are found to be positive, beneficial and scientifically sound. They represent an autonomous system supported by the community. The common customs, traditions, values, beliefs and practices associated with tribal health and diseases have a direct bearing with their treatment of physical ailments. The traditional tribal medicine practitioners are regarded as the traditional healers in their societies and they do not belong to any specific school, such as Ayurvedic/ Allopathic/ Homeopathic etc. There is no written document on the subject. The principles of ingredients of tribal medicine are derived from plant source. India has a great variety of traditional healing systems. Over the centuries, the tribals have developed their own system. Often healing is considered as a gift that runs in a family and is passed down from generation to generation. The ability to set bones, for example, is thought to be hereditary as is the power to stop bleeding. Intellectual Property Rights and Peoples Bio Diversity Register play a greater role in the protection of rights of Adivasis over their traditional knowledge system. Efforts should be made to organize similar type of exhibition in different states in collaboration with NGOs and Government to ensure wider participation of tribal healers across the states. Since the tribal medicine and medicine parishioners are to be safeguarded for their dedication to the sufferings humanity, there is a need for legal provisions to protect their intellectual property rights.

The Adivasi herbal medicines have absolutely no side effects. On diagnosis and prescription, the Adivasi healers pay more attention to the individual patient's physical constitution and nature than to the specific symptoms of the disease. The Adivasi healers do not charge a fixed rate for the treatment given. Their livelihood depends on offerings, which they accept from patients, who give according to their

wishes or means. Although they stress the need for more awareness on this branch of medicine, the Adivasi healers do not want to 'sell their tradition', and they are against the commercial cultivation of medicinal herbs. They believe that the use of chemical fertilizer to increase the yield would seriously affect the efficacy and healing powers of the herbs.

A large proportion of the population in a number of developing countries still relies on traditional tribal practitioners, including traditional birth attendants, herbalists and bonesetters and on local medicinal plants to satisfy their primary health care needs. Today tribal medicine is making dramatic comeback and scientists are turning to natural products for answer to ailments like cancer, AIDS, hepatitis and rheumatoid arthritis

But traditional herbal medicine in general is of late facing a new threat. The modern pharmaceutical companies are plundering the herbal wealth of the forests for manufacturing their medicines. This endangers the very survival of the species and makes it more difficult for traditional healers to find the herbs they need for their medicines. Measures must be taken to prevent this from happening before irrevocable damage has been done. Another great danger is deforestation, and the Adivasis have already held many protests against this practice, as for them, the forest is their life.

In developing countries, where more than one-third of the population lack access to essential medicines, the provision of safe and effective traditional and alternative remedies could become an important way of increasing access to health care. One way to ensure this is to integrate traditional medicine into the formal health system, thus ensuring better safety and adequate follow-up for patients.

Traditional knowledge is in demand as a source of information of the possible properties of biological material. It is valuable knowledge Traditional tribal knowledge is not protected within the patent system as it stands today. The turmeric case highlights the problems faced by India in preventing bio-piracy. The recording of traditional knowledge seeks to reduce the possibility of bio-piracy, but looks to future legislation to effectively protect the rights of the people. Some important structural changes based on a sound legal footing are proposed, which can be easily incorporated within the present databases, and would go a long way in preventing bio-piracy and protecting the interests of the knowledge-holders footing.

Intellectual property rights and Peoples Bio Diversity Register play a greater role in the protection of rights of tribals over their traditional knowledge system. Before being patented, the composition and preparation mechanism of tribal medicines should not be revealed. Realizing the potentiality of tribal medicines in curing various chronic diseases, Pharma companies are trying their best to have the knowledge and register in their name under intellectual property rights. Various rules and regulations under Bio-diversity act have been formulated to protect the patent rights.

The recording of traditional knowledge is taking place today. It is imperative that the method of recompense be in place before the information being recorded is

made public. Failure to do this would be doing a grave injustice to those who developed this knowledge through generations.

Issues:

Since indigenous/primitive/traditional/folk/tribal medicine, a social institution and an integral part of the whole culture includes a number of medical practices which are often employed in modern medicine, assimilates several drugs used in modern medicine and resemble each other in psychotherapeutic modalities, there is enough scope for both the medicine to operate simultaneously.

Since modern medicine is costly, its network has not reached the interior most areas. The Adivasi people are not being able to get the benefit at their door steps; hence there is a need for the patronization of the tribal medicine.

Since tribal medicine is integrated in other cultural elements of a society, its concept and practice are epistemologically transmitted from generation to generation orally in the absence of written language in non literate and pre literate societies, there is strong need for documentation of such languishing tradition and try them after proper scientific.

In view of growing demand and importance of tribal medicines and the need to recognize the services of tribal healers, attempts need to be made to develop a Directory on Tribal Healers.

Efforts are needed to organize exhibition on tribal medicines in different states in collaboration with NGOs and Government to ensure wider participation of tribal healers across the states.

Since the tribal medicine and medicine men are to be safeguarded for their dedication to combat the sufferings of humanity, there is a need for legal provisions to protect their intellectual property rights.

First Dr. Badal SenGupta Memorial Lecture

On behalf of friends & colleagues of **Dr. Badal SenGupta** (Badal da), FCFC and ODAF; the First Dr. Badal SenGupta Memorial Lecture was organised on 6th August 2007 at Jayadev Bhawan, Bhubaneswar. A large number of friends and colleagues of Badal Da from different corners of India and Bangladesh gathered and paid rich tributes to Late Dr Badal SenGupta who was a heralding light for all of us in our journey, pioneering the idea of people's participation, supporting sustained organisational development and capacity building process in our and many other organizations in different parts of the world. Delivering the First Dr. Badal SenGupta Memorial lecture on **Development Ideology, Praxis and Paradigm**, His Excellency the n Governor of Orissa and Andhra Pradesh Shri Rameshwar Thakur described Dr. Badal SenGupta as a great human being, a genuine friend of the poor and a communicator as well as an inspiring resource person. He was a unique personality, a visionary and simultaneously a passionate development activist. During last three decades, Dr. Badal SenGupta mentored and

influenced many several countries in the world to harness new ideas and open new avenues towards a meaningful intervention for the cause of the poor and disadvantaged. Emphasizing the life and work of Dr. SenGupta as the source of inspiration to create a better social order to live in, His Excellency suggested the organizers to take up initiative for furtherance of his unfulfilled dream. The book “*Dr. Badal SenGupta - A Friend, Philosopher & Guide*” was released on the occasion.

Nuasahi shows the way: Unity keeps the village alcohol free

Nuasahi is located 7 kms from the block head quarter Tumudibandh. It consists of 65 families (61 Adivasi and 4 Dalits). Plain land agriculture is the main source of livelihood. Besides, the villagers also derive their income from NTFP collections and livestock rearing. Most of the families are poor. Quite a number of people are addicted to alcohol and other intoxicant. As a result, a lot of income of these people both in cash and kind was getting consumed by the alcohol vendors. Due to this, the community was always prone to problems mentioned below.

Once, the members of women committee of Nuasahi had attended a mass meeting where some government officials, community leaders and people from the operational villages of the organization had participated. In this meeting, elaborate discussions were made on various developmental activities, various welfare schemes of the government and also on savings and credit activities through self help groups etc.

After attending this meeting, a few dynamic women leaders like Siben, Saraswati and Litangini organized a series of follow up meetings and tried to disseminate the messages of development among the people. As an impact, out of 65 household, 11 women came forward and formed the forum for the development of Nuasahi. They also framed rules and regulation for the forum.

At the initial stage, on behalf of the forum, one formal education centre was opened and responsibility of running the same was given to the unemployed youths of the locality. In this centre, in addition to literacy classes, games, meetings, festivals and different types of cultural functions are taking place. Seeing these positive initiatives of women, a few habituated drunkards tried to tease and misbehave the women leaders. Despite of all these however, the women leaders and the members of the forum continued their efforts and kept the centre running. Realizing the strong determination of the women, men folk also have come forward and joined the forum and thereby made the forum expanded and united.

The forum, in due course, identified some of the critical issues mostly disturbing the community. Taking alcohol by men folk was one of the most critical one. The forum decided to take up anti-alcohol measures. At the outset, initiatives were taken up to stop all alcohol selling centres. As the first step towards this, they tried to convince the alcohol vendors to stop illicit alcohol preparation and selling of country liquor coming from outside. Repeatedly they continued dialogues with the vendors, but in vein. The vendors did not stop preparing and selling alcohol. Seeing no result, the women members started one rally against alcohol through which they propagated the negative effects of alcohol and intoxicants among the

mass. They went to the block and police headquarter and submitted their memorandums. This also failed. Then the women members lodged criminal cases against the vendors in the police station. The police with the support of women members ceased all the alcohol preparation centers.

Once the centers are closed, the habitual alcoholics went to the neighboring villages and continued their habits of consuming liquor. Getting disturbed and irritated enough, few women members left the village and went to their fathers' homes, leaving their children, alcoholic husbands and their own properties. It was very much difficult on the part of their husbands to manage their children, and the domestic affairs. On the other hand the school going children of the same families stopped going to school while others left the school and even tried to leave their homes. A few children tried to educate and convince their alcohol addicted fathers to give up their habits.

Being pressurized by all the corners, alcoholic men folk were forced to give up their bad habits. They gathered together near village Deity and took vows in the name of God not to take alcohol any more. This positive attitude of their husbands made their wives return to their homes, children again started going to schools. This is how the families got united and lived happily free from alcohol. Now the entire village has been declared as the alcohol-free village.

UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People

One of most important initiatives of the UN is the declaration on the rights of indigenous peoples. Out of 192 countries of UN 143 countries including India are the signatories to this declaration adopted by the United Nation on 13th September 2007. The Draft Declaration is a long and complex document with a preamble and 45 articles, divided into nine sections.

Though the declaration has no legal binding on the countries it has recognized the wide range of basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous peoples. Among these are the right to unrestricted self-determination, an inalienable collective right to the ownership, use and control of lands, territories and other natural resources, their rights in terms of maintaining and developing their own political, religious, cultural and educational institutions along with the protection of their cultural and intellectual property.

It highlights the requirement for prior and informed consultation, participation and consent in activities of any kind that impact on indigenous peoples, their property or territories. It also establishes the requirement for fair and adequate compensation for violation of the rights recognized in the Declaration and establishes guarantees against ethnocide and genocide. The Declaration also provides for fair and mutually acceptable procedures like negotiations, mediation, arbitration, national courts and international and regional mechanisms to resolve conflicts between indigenous peoples and States,

National Workshop on Tribal Healers and Exhibition on Tribal Medicine

With the basic objective of generating awareness about ethno medicines, facilitate the sharing of the traditional knowledge system among the people and to make people aware about the benefits from Patents rights and People's Bio Diversity register the first National Workshop on Tribal Healers was organized by the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) Bhopal, from 15 to 19th May, 1998 at Kozhikode, Kerala in collaboration with KIRTADS, Kerala and the 2nd and 3rd National Workshops were organized at its own campus at Bhopal from 18th to 22nd November, 2005 and 14th to 18th February, 2007 respectively.

Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) and Orissa Development Action Forum (ODAF) jointly organised the Fourth **National Workshop and Exhibition on Tribal Medicines** at Martyrs Memorial-cum-Freedom Fighters Home, Bhubaneswar from 14th to 18th December, 2007. The exhibition was inaugurated by Textiles and Handloom Minister Mr. Golak Bihari Nayak. About 120 healers from 11 states including Orissa participated in the festival organised for the first time in Orissa. Large number of chronically ill patients visited the exhibition with hopes of cure. Attending the valedictory function of this national workshop, His Excellency the Honorable Governor of Orissa called upon the tribal healers to pass on their unique knowledge to younger generation so that its benefit can be derived for long. To propagate the message of utility of tribal medicine, he emphasized on conducting more such workshops in the state and setting up tribal medicinal outlets at the district and block levels. A directory of Tribal Healers' was released by the Governor in the exhibition. The exhibition on tribal medicines not only helped in disseminating traditional knowledge system but also in networking among the tribal healers across the nation.

ODAF/IRDWSI Emergency Relief Operation

There has been an outbreak of cholera in Kashipur in Orissa's Rayagada district. Experts from the Bhubaneswar-based Regional Medical Research Centre confirmed some cholera cases in Kashipur and Dasmantpur. The cholera had spread to the neighboring block of Thumal Rampur of Kalahandi district. The affected villages in the Kashipur block include Mandabisi, Dongasil, Kucheipadar, Tikri, Kashipur, and Maikanch.

In order to provide necessary emergency relief, a team of 12 members from IRDWSI and ODAF rushed to Kashipur Block and Kalyan Singhpur Block of Rayagada district and worked voluntarily for 15 days along with the Government Officials in different Gram Panchayats of Kashipur and Kalyan Singhpur Block for distributing medicines and educating the villagers to take preventive measures to keep away the epidemic of Diarrhea. In all most all the villages not only Diarrhea but other diseases also found like scabies, malaria etc and for that medicines were also provided. Around 2000 patients were served by the team in Kashipur and Kalyan Singhpur Block. Similarly, Relief was provided to fire victims of Mali Sahi in Bhubaneswar by IRDWSI.

Capacity Building on Water and Democracy

The Preparatory Workshop on Capacity Building Programme on Water and Democracy was organised on 6th August 2007 at Hotel Grand Central, Bhubaneswar by FCFC National chapter. The workshop deliberated on how water is being privatized and the role of State Agencies and Corporate. Participants discussed on various people's struggles going on in various parts of the country on issues like Privatization of river in Chhatisgarh, inter-linking of rivers, handing over the provision of drinking water to private companies by the government, Koel Karo dam issue, water mining by mining companies and industries, groundwater depletion due to irrigation bore wells supplying water for intensive cash crops etc. The workshop was organised with the primary objective of Focusing on conceptual understanding on water issue, practice, water harvesting, Promoting science based social regulations of managing water at village level, Collect case studies of community water use and management, Preparation of social and economic use of water manuals, Use knowledge centers on water-link to grass root level, Gender mainstreaming, Training on campaign, lobby and advocacy works

An interview with Adv. Sanjay Upadhyaya

Adv.Sanjay Updhyaya , Director , Enviro-Legal Defence Forum , New Delhi, who is being associated with various organisations as an expert on environmental law and tribal rights had visited ODAF Secretariat on 17th November 2007 in connection with commissioning a study on PESA. Team Leaders, staff and consultant of ODAF had interactions with him on issues relating to PESA in the state. An interview with Adv.Snjay Updhyaya was organized by the Editorial team of ODAF and he spoke on different aspects pertaining PESA, PRIs, tribal rights etc. Excerpts from the interview with Adv. Sanjay Upadhyaya :

What are the main objectives of your visit to Orissa ?

State Government has made a request to the World Bank for making an assessment of PESA, emergence of rural institutions, border corporate social responsibility etc. and I have been contracted to look at the PESA issue as I am familiar with this subject, particularly Orissa PESA. I am also looking into the conformity of state PESA with the Central PESA in one district of Orissa.

Whether you conducted this exercise in other states or in Orissa?

Different agencies are active as PESA is concerned. NIRD which is funded by UNDP is also taking active interest in this matter in terms of organizing studies. And different aspects of PESA has been looked into. I am also involved in five states looking into its legal perspectives. Of course there are some Non Governmental Organisations Like ASTHA in Rajastan, some groups in Andhra Pradesh even ODAF in Orissa are also working on PESA

How do you think that PESA will be implemented efficiently?

I am here to ask all of you how this can be implemented. As lawyer I can say that there are certain discrepancies between what is the mandate of the central act and how the state is implementing it .Whether it is in right spirit or not. How this is to be looked into at the state context. There are certain discrepancies between central and state act. There are some ambiguous kind of provisions in the act. The rules framed differ from the legislation. I am here to see that. Further some time law is very clear but the operational norm is not clear. What will be criteria for granting land ; similarly the beneficiary, grant in aid etc. No specific format is there. Though there is clarity is there but operational mechanism is not there. PESA can be implemented effectively if these three things like resplendency is removed, the ambiguity is clear and the operational part is in place.

You have conducted lot of studies of tribal self rule, How do you think about the tribal self rule can be established ?

In my opinion the real empowerment is the Gam Sabha at the hamlet level as this is the operational jurisdiction. If you redefine the village on a hamlet base context and the Gram sabha or gram sasan on it which again moves from that gram sabha to upper level and that is the real empowerment. Now one village has 20 hamlets and it is impossible to administer. The real issue is how to define the unit of Governance and unless the unit of governance is manageable you can not put the superstructure. People who created this law In terms of self rule, I think unless you redefine the village in hamlet then consider the Gram Sabha. One village has 20 hamlets and it is totally impossible unless you redefine the village and that is the real empowerment. There should be clarity of the definition of what is village empowerment and make that unit as viable in stead of linking with others typical PRI system. Scheduled areas were created for special administration. Constitution says the Governor has to look at it and also the Tribal advisory Council and the state should also look it. The scheduled area need to be looked at differently than normal areas and that is the core of issue of PESA.

How do you think that this kind of exercise will be helpful to the people in Scheduled area?

As a Lawyer my responsibility is to demystify the legal jargons. Unless you simplify the law and disseminate that knowledge among the people. One should understand the law every time first time . If a lawyer is consulted to explain the law one is finished. One should never need a lawyer to read the law. One of the objective of this study is to simplify the legal jargons, so that people can understand what are their rights over resources, who are the officers and how they can be consulted. When a state Government asks for a study that becomes need based and that recommendations are normally owned by the government . It has certainly more value in terms of its acceptability.

ODAF Bi-Annual Meeting

The Bi-annual meeting of ODAF is organised twice in a year corresponding to the six monthly reporting period. Apart from the team leaders and Executive Secretary of ODAF, the core staff of the member organizations involved in the implementation of ODAF programmes, villagers and the consultants and staff of the ODAF secretariat usually participate in the meeting and share their experiences, problems, possible solutions strategic action plan reports etc. In 2007, the ODAF Bi-Annual meeting was organised in Hotel Grand Central, Bhubaneswar from 9th - 13th 2007. Sixty Seven participants from different member organizations participated. During the Bi-Annual Meeting, Mr. Sanjay Patra, Executive Director of FMSF was invited as a resource person for the session on Social Audit and Social Accountability and FCR rules. Mr. J. K. Reddy, Auditor of ODAF was invited as the resource person for the session on the Income Tax for NGOs.

Evaluation of FCFC

The Forum of Collective Forms of Cooperation, FCFC is a platform of CFC which was developed in 2002 for collective forms of collaboration partners for mutual dialogue, exchange and learning, from experiences and insights among partner organizations. The values guiding the FCFC are non-institutional and non-hierarchical initiative to promote, strengthen and practice of collectiveness without interference in the individual partner organization. Gender equality, participation, decentralisation, transparency, accountability, justice and equity, peace, collectiveness, mutual respect, people centred and secularism. The forum has three regional chapters-Northern (PIDT), Eastern (ODAF) and Southern (SCINDeA), apart from the National Secretariat which is functioning from the office of SPAR, Kolkata, NGOs like AFPRO, CASA, PIDT, CWS, SPAR, SWARAJ, INSAF, CNI-SBSS AND ODAF are part of the Eastern regional process of FCFC and work with the people of North Andhra Pradesh, Orissa, Chhatisgarh, Bihar, West Bengal and North Eastern states. As per the project agreement, the preparatory meetings for conducting external evaluation of FCFC in APRIL 2008 was organized during the period February and march 2008 at Delhi, Kolkata and Bhubaneswar.

ODAF Society Meeting

The Annual general Body Meeting of FCFC was organised on 11th and 12th January at Hotel Green park in Visakhapatnam. All the team leaders of the member organisation of ODAF attended the meeting and deliberated on the on going programmes and future activities of ODAF. The ODAF Management Committee meeting was also organised on 12th of January, 2008. In both the meetings the members of ODAF suggested to celebrate the 20 years of existence of ODAF.

Exposure Visit of EED-Tsunami Partners to ODAF

A group of 15 persons from IRDWSI, Nellore; CARD, Sullurpet; RRDS, Gudur; Navajeevan organizations along with a staff of ODAF visited Grama Vikash and Seva Bharati organizations the Tsunami rehabilitation programme in Andhra Pradesh and Tamil Nadu, visited the member NGOs of ODAF.

The group has visited the Kanheiput, Tamana, Samiapalli, Bahalpur, Botopalli, Sindurpur Villages of GV field areas and also the Konkia High School and its office at Mohuda, Berhampur during the period 12th-14th August 2007 and visited Mundigarh, Sandhipadar, Chachiga, Pangalpadar, Batikilu villages of Seva Bharati field areas during 15th -16th August 2007.

During the field visit the said group had interaction with the community leaders, villagers, primitive Adivasis, Scheduled Castes and the staff of organizations about their culture, language, source of income and the organizational efforts for mainstreaming them. The visiting team also saw the housing facilities, safety tanks to storage the water, Development of Non conventional Energy, water supply on a natural process, sanitation, housing facilities in the villages, High School at Konkia at GV field area and in SB they had a meeting with the people's network called 'jilaitamu', interacted with the primitive Adivasis (Panga, Kutia, Gondo, Desia Kondh), Scheduled Castes, school children and villagers in the villages.

Sacred Grove Campaign in Orissa

With the primary objective of creating awareness about the cultural, biological and ecological importance of sacred groves and learn local practices of maintaining such groves with their knowledge system, ODAF has launched the Sacred Grove campaign in different parts of the state since August 2007.

People in large number including the school children, have visited the the sacred grove photo exhibitions mounted in different parts of Northern Orissa and they were made aware about the importance of sacred groves in the protection of rich bio-diversity of the country. During the exhibition, interactions and discussions among the people, local priests were made on various aspects of sacred groves and the need for its preservation at the community level. People explained the existing traditional practices of worshipping these groves and how the development process initiated by the state along with the change in attitude of human being has caused in destroying this practice. It was felt that the exhibition in these areas has created a kind of awareness among the people about the usefulness of these groves, its proper documentation and protection. Even in some places like Dhenkanal and Anugul (Palalhara), the Adivasis including women have shown interest in taking the pledge for protecting the sacred groves in their areas. They formed committees in their areas to aware people about its present relevance in the protection of bio-diversity.

Large number of people including academicians, intellectuals, activists social scientist, bureaucrats, school children etc visited the exhibitions mounted at Rasgovindpur, Palalhara, Chakapal(Dhenkanal), Hindol, Bhubaneswar and Nayagarh District of Orissa.
