

# Accompanier Accompanier

*Journeying Together Towards Building Communities of Resistance & Hope . . .*

CNI-SBSS' e- publication for internal circulation

April 2007

## Meditation

Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love. This is how God showed his love among us: He sent His one and only Son into the world that we might live through Him. This is love: not that we loved God, but that He loves us and sent His Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another, for God lives in us and his love is made complete in us. 1 John 4 : 7-12 (NIV)

## Dang Darbar : a rendezvous for district cultural identity of the Dangs!

Come Holi, and tribals in Dang eagerly await their annual celebration: the Dang Darbar. known as the biggest annual festival of *dangji* adivasis. With a view to preserve the sanctity of warrior kings since 1842, the district administration has been organising the festival every year, a week prior to Holi. Even after more than 150 years of its historical legacy, the idea of the *darbar* remains the same. On this day, five Dangji kings, nine *nayaks* and 671 bhaubands are honoured and given political pensions by the district administration. Every year, the amount to be disbursed to the kings is fixed by the district administration, according to traditional norms and conditions.



Dang Darbar-2007 was inaugurated on 27<sup>th</sup> February 2007 at Ahwa by Governor of Gujarat, Naval Kishor Sharma amid hundreds of tribals. Besides this, rewards were also distributed to villagers, who have contributed significantly to the protection of forest cover in Dangs. The historical legacy of Dang Darbar has it that there were five Dangji kings who ruled the Dangs district, which was known as *Dandakaranya*. Though the Britishers had conquered almost all the regions in the country, it was getting difficult for them to win these kings. So in 1842, they executed a forest lease with the kings and *nayaks* in lieu of an annual sum to be paid to them. This amount was paid to the kings by holding Darbars. Thus the tradition of paying political pension or lease to the kings started and has been kept alive over 150 years.



## Efforts recognized and appreciated by masses :

Dang Darbar carries special importance for CNI SBSS as Diocese of Nasik, CNI RCSA Pune was invited to be a part of this annual celebration. Working under the banner of Dang Adivasi Vikas Samiti,

the CNI SBSS-DBSS team has created a niche in Dang area with their noble efforts. The stall set-up in the exhibition attracted a large crowd who learnt and understand the scope of the work with the charts and pictures displayed. Visitors from different villages interacted with the team and asked questions. Pamphlets on Right to Information and National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (NREGA) were distributed.

### Adivasi Mahila Sammelan, Jharkhand

International Women's Day was more than an event for the DBSS ChotaNagpur and its partner in mission CNI RCSA – Tribal Identity and Indigenous Rights as the commemoration of this auspicious occasion resulted into a grand finale 'Adivasi Mahila Sammelan' a vast but organized gathering of determined women! With an objective to mobilize the women power from the five blocks the reference areas of ChotaNagpur DBSS, making them aware of present situation and realities about the *adivasi* policies, this movement building process ensured their involvement at broader level promoting the collective effort and empowering them with the bargaining power to exercise their political rights. Follow-up and continuation of this empowering process was carried out in the culmination program held during 19-21 March 2007 at HPDC, Ranchi involving a crowd of 250 women representatives from five blocks and eight clusters.



Social Activists Dr Rose Kerketta and Ms Dayamani Barla, Ms Surodhini Murmu, a *grampradhan*, from Bhuktandeh, Shikaripada block, Santhal Pargana were the special guests. They discussed major issues like Women and Land Rights, prevailing problems and present status of *adivasi* women highlighting industrialization leading to displacement, losing control over resources and migration of *Jharkhandi* women towards metro cities for livelihood.

A special meeting was also held with District Collector and Block Development Officer. DBSS has been invited by the district administrative office to be a watch-group for NREGA. It was also planned to select few blocks from the district as models to address the human-trafficking concern.



### Happy Birthday ...

Many Happy Returns to our accompaniers - Lolati (18<sup>th</sup> April), Bidyut (22<sup>nd</sup> April), John (27<sup>th</sup> April) and Dr Shailendra Awale (29<sup>th</sup> April).

May Lord Almighty Bless all of them abundantly and be with them always as they are serving Him being an important actor in His mission.

### Days to Remember in the month of April

06 – Good Friday, 07 – World Health Day, 08 – Easter Sunday, 12 – National Street Theatre Day, 18 – World Heritage Day, 22 – World Earth Day, 26 – Chernobyl Disaster Anniversary and 28 – World Day for Safety & Health at Work.

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**Round Table**

The Round Table held in March 7, 2007. Consortium partners EED, BftW, Christian Aid, FMSF and CNI SBSS participated. Partners expressed their appreciation for CNI SBSS in showing the mettle and significant progress.

**Heiner Knauss**, Head Asia Pacific Desk EED visited CNI SBSS on March 17,

2007 to build and enhance the relationship between CNI SBSS and EED.

**Gerhard Mohr** who looked after EED's developing funding to partners in South Asia retired from his long and eventful contribution to the development world. SBSS participated in his felicitation function.

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**SBSS: The Resource**

CMAI invited R. John Suresh Kumar to be a resource person in a Workshop on Disaster Management held in Surat for Allied Health Professionals

**Consultation and Participation**

Dr. Shailendra Awale on 29 March attended a national level dissemination workshop on "Decentralised HIV/AIDS VCT services in Rural Settings in India: Opportunities and Challenges" organised by Christian Aid in New Delhi

Richard Behara, Palampur (HP) Austin Luther, Agra, Prakash Dhodia, Ajmer Rajasthan and Sinju Mathew SBSS participated in South Asian People's Summit for Pro-people Policy Advocacy from 31<sup>st</sup> March to April 2 in New Delhi organised by SANSAD.

**Karyashala "Developing Alternative" is Progressing**

SBSS to learn and consolidate its experience in building People's Organisation is organising work camp which is actually underway in Sangli, Kolhapur, Maharashtra 2-5 April. Around forty participants from FCFC network and DBSS are involved in the process.

**FORTHCOMING EVENTS...****And the Countdown begins...**

With each passing day, the dates for Accompanier's Meet are fast approaching. Everyone is busy preparing the big day, all are eager to meet, to share, to express, to learn and experience in the spirit of accompaniment. See you soon (10<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2007) at Matheran's Rangoli Retreat near Neral.

**HEARTY GREETINGS ON EASTER...**

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*Accompanier* is an electronic newsletter for SBSS' internal circulation, freely transmitted by Synodical Board of Social Services (SBSS), a justice & development arm of the Church of India (CNI).

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