

## The Tribe of Rayagada District of Odisha: A Study on Kandha Tribe

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### Abstract

Odisha is the homeland of the tribal's. There are sixty two type of tribes are in Odisha among them the Kandha tribe is considered to be one of the major tribe. Their concentration is mainly found all over the blocks of the Rayagada regions of the state of Odisha in India. In this district we can found many types of Kandha people like Dangaria Kandha (*Dangran*), Malua Kandha (*Tekran*), Desia Kandha (*Panga Kui*), Jharania Kandha, Jatapu Kandha etc. All this types of Kandha people named as per their dwelling place. They speak the Kui/Kuvi language which belongs to the Dravidian linguistic group. Their chief occupation is Agriculture. In a year the first six month engage themselves in the agriculture work and the rest six month they engage in different work like Daily Labaour, Carpenter, etc. Hunting is not their daily work but when they are get leisure time they will go for hunt into the native forest and brought any Bird and Animal. In their agriculture field the produce Paddy, Millets, *Hanwa*, *Suan*, *Kanga*, *Kating*, *Kahada* and other crops which is essential for the life. Most of the Kandha houses are made by the wooden planks and mud. They have two separate rows of house which are face to each other. Their staple food is Gruel, Rice and different seasonal raw materials of the forest like the wild root and leafs. The women of this tribe decorate themselves by wearing different ornaments like Nose ring, Ear ring, Neckless made by the coins, finger rings etc. Their main god and goddess are Dharti Penu, Katia Wali, Mudra Wali Jatra Kudi etc. They have strong belief to their god and goddess for that they observe different types of festivals like The Kandula Parbu, Merriah Parbu, Chaitra Parbu, Bali Parbu, Ghanta Parbu, Mandiarani etc. In their festivals all the people of the village from the children to the grandparents engaged themselves in singing and Dancing. They young boys will beat the Baja and the Dhapu while the young girls will dance and sing according to the rhythm.

**Keyword:** - Society, Culture, Ornaments, Festivals of Kandha tribe.

### Origin of the Kandha Tribe

As per the Lament of Kiribiri quite a long time ago, there were seven siblings went chasing in the wilderness for the "Chaiti Parbu". While the "Dai Kudnja" more youthful sibling was going to murder the Deer. The Deer declined him and revealed to him a bit of uplifting news. The Good news that there was a gathering at "Yamapuri" following two days there will be a flood. On the flood, the entire world will be annihilated. No one will alive. So I demand that please proceed to spread this data to all appropriately he proceeded to advise to everything except no one reacted to him. From that point onward, he proceeded to make a pontoon and inside the vessel he put the vital products forever. At that point alongside his sister sat inside the Boat. Following two days there was a flood on the rising water they streamed. Right now, entire world is brimming with water. No one

alive is pulverized on the earth. After such a significant number of years the god couldn't get venerated so he turned out to be sick. So God made Crow and sent to discover the life on the earth, the crow moved around the earth and educated to God that God, there is no life on the earth yet I have seen a vessel close to the sea shore. God again sent the Crow and Woodcutter there they went there and brought the leaf and consumed for which with the contact of fire haze god got solid. At that point God again needs to make life on the earth. He demonstrated that wherever is brimming with water so he dried the earth by making seven suns in seven ways. With a contact of the Rays of Sun, the land began to dry. At that point god imagined that as there was seven suns are outlandish on the earth so he pulverized six suns. For this, the god advised the moon to conceal your stars and keep them until I was not

educated you. What's more, God told the sun that sun, the moon has eaten his Son and Daughter to know reality the sun went to the moon and got some information about the child and little girl of the moon that time moon told that I have eaten my child and little girls. At that point the sun returned and began to eat the suns' the seven sun are named as Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. From that point forward, the earth feels good from the hot. At that point the moon liberated the stars on the sky. As the god needs to make life on the earth he advised to the crow and woodcutter fowl proceed to bring the sibling and sister. God sent the sibling and sister to see if there is life or not on the earth an alternate way. They proceeded to return and distinguished as sibling and sister right now sent them to discover the individuals however in the wake of meeting close to the god they could recognize themselves as sibling and sister. The god basically imagined, that it would be hard for me to make the new age if both these distinguished as sibling and sister. At that point god again sent them to discover life and behind them, god sent Chickenpox while they return and meet in a divine being place they couldn't distinguish themselves as sibling and sister with the contact of them two the Kandha People turned out and the life started to begin the earth.

### **Naming of the Kandha people**

There are various assessments with respect to the source or deduction of the name "Kandha". In Telugu, the Kandhas are classified "Kodu Vandlu", in Odia "Kandha Loko" and the Kandha called them "Kui" which is "Kui laku" in the plural structure. As per Capt. Macpherson, Kandha is gotten from the word Konda which implied slope in the Telugu Language. Thusly since they live in the slope zones, they are slope individuals or Kandha individuals. Be that as it may, Sashibhusan Thiady didn't concur with Capt. Macpherson. As indicated by him. The *Kandha* individuals are also called "Kuis" or "Kuis" and their language isn't Telugu yet "Kui". He further contended that the Kandha individuals are, all in all, an activist race and they are continually having a sword in their grasp. As the sword is called Khanda, so from the Khanda, the word *Kandha* is determined. In a portion of the

old records of the Madras administration, *Kandhas* are portrayed as Kandha individuals. As per Risley and Thurston, the wilderness roots are the most loved nourishment of the *Kandhas*. They had followed the beginning of the word Kandha to Kanda. Like different tribal's, the Kandhas had their own homes in the timberland and slope territories of Kandhamal. A few researchers accept that '*Kandha*' is a related word with "Gond". All things considered, it ought to be composed Kand, both being gotten from the Tamil "*Kandhas*' a slope.

It is to be seen that due to the insufficient, unconvincing, and frequently dubious information, nothing can be said with sureness with regards to the starting point of Kandha. Be that as it may, Macpherson's supposition is increasingly worthy. The determination of the name Kandha from Telugu "Konda", a slope gives off an impression of being progressively conceivable.

### **Coming of Kandha people in to Odisha**

Once upon a time there were no Kandha people in Odisha but in mean time they rushed to Odisha from Vindhayan region of Madhya Pradesh and entered the Kalahandi area. Then again, in smaller groups they scattered all over Odisha. One group marched North-West Odisha and settled at Patna, Sonapur, Baudh, Dhenkanal, Sambalpur etc. And the other groups proceeded South-Eastwards leaving the Belghar hill ranges (In Kandhamal district) as the Eastern boundary and settled at Koraput, Ganjam and Andhra Pradesh. Modern Kandhamal district was blank at the time due to some natural barriers or for some other reasons.

### **Family Structure:**

Family is considered to be the smallest unit in the Kandha society. The Kandha family consists of husband, wife and their unmarried children. After getting marriage the son are separated from their parents and divide their paternal property into equal shares. As long as the parents are alive no married son will be recognize as the village elders to deliberate in the village meetings. In the family there is equal position of husband and wife. They do not address each other by their respective names. They will address themselves according to

the name of their daughter and son i.e. *Rama taba*, the husband seeks the advice of the wife in different matters.

#### **Marriage Customs:**

Marriage is the accepted form of union between a man and a woman in the Kandha Society. Generally adult marriage is the prevailing custom. Traditional marriages are conducted by either negotiation or service. The informal types, namely marriage by consent and marriage by capture, are very popular. They perform traditional marriage only in the months of Push and Magha. *Irpi-Kalu* or distilled liquor is also a prestigious gift exchanged between the two parties. Young boys and girls of different clans have an opportunity to dance, sing and woo each other for the whole night. The advanced section of the Kandha community has started imitating the other non tribal people fashion of marriage. In marriage by capture the bride price is more and the groom's father pays a penalty as compensation for the bride's loss of prestige. Levirate and sororate marriages are prevalent in Kandha society. Polygynous marriages are also preferred if the first wife proves to be barren or indolent. Widows remarry widower and no bride price is paid.

The Kandha peoples marriage system of the different from others. It is an auspicious occasion and considered quite expensive affairs among the kandhas. The marriage can't be within the same clan or Punja is prohibited. The minimum age for the marriage of boys is 20 to 22 years and of girls it is 16 to 18 years. They practise different types of marriage like Marriage by arrangement, Marriage by Capture, Jhika Marriage. In addition to this, remarriage, having more than one wife (Polygamy) are also prevalent among the kandha.

#### **Village Councils:**

The Kandhas follow the traditional village council system. It is a powerful council in Kandha community. *Jani* and *Bismajhi* are the formal heads of the village. As stated above the Mutha or Padar play an important role in the administration of the villages. Mandal is the head of these Mutha, Mandal decides cases of intra village conflicts as well as those of adjacent villages. The post of *Jani*,

*Bismajhi* and *Mandal* are hereditary. The village council of Mutha plays vital role in maintaining social control and enforcing social sanctions. The present panchayat system also plays a vital role in the community life of the people where the ward member and Sarpancha are involved in the community gatherings. Another person called Bariko( belongs to Scheduled Caste, Dambo community) plays the role of a messenger between the Kandha villages. At least One Dambo family lives in every Kandha village.

#### **Culture**

##### **Settlement Pattern:**

The villages of the Kandha square measure set during a tangle of thickly overgrown hill ranges. The earliest ones square measure settled within the valleys and therefore the later ones either within the hill slopes or at the crest. The quality of a website for habitation is set by the supply of sufficient land for shifting cultivation and a perennial supply of water. Each development of a house in another site is gone before by magico-strict expectation to discover custom value or in any case of the site. Both the individual concerned and the medication man (*Dishari*) go to the site before sunset in the wake of cleaning up. The previous delves a pit in the site. At that point the last puts some un-boiled white rice in the pit, covers the grains with a leaf cup made of Siali leaves and toward the finish of the ritual sprinkles water over the cup by presenting some mysterious recipe. From that point them two leave the place and continue relentless toward home without thinking back. The following day them two go to the spot to perceive what has befallen the grains. In the event that the grains are dissipated, at that point they presume that the precursors of the individual concerned don't need him to remain there and in this manner, the site is viewed as unfavorable. Then again, on the off chance that they find that the grains are unblemished, at that point it is presumed that the predecessors have demonstrated that the site is favorable and along these lines, endorse the site for building the proposed house.

A village is comprises in to two separated wards, one is for the Kandha (Scheduled Tribe) people

and another is for the Domb (Scheduled Caste) people. The houses are built in linear pattern. A narrow street runs from one end to the other of the village separating the two rows of houses.

At the entrance of the every Kandha village a thatched house with bamboo splits is built to represent the shrine of the village deity called Jatrakudi Penu, who is believed to protect the people from the evil eye., Kuddi is built at the middle of the village. Here the Dharti Penu resides. After the Kuddi, Kotebali is found. It is the male deity or husband of dharanipenu which is known as Kotebali. The Katebali is composed with some stones at the middle of the village. A space called, *Turky* is set apart near the village for dumping the garbage. Kandha village has a *Jhateni* (Sweeper). His work is to sweep the streets of the village and keeps cleans.

#### **Food Habits:**

Both men and women dine at the same time. Their main food is Mandia Jau (Gruel made of one type of grain called ragi) and Peja (Gruel prepared from millet and rice). In addition to this they eat the flesh of buffalo. Beef, pork, mutton etc. besides this they use to take leafs and roots of plants as food. Their favorite dish is dry fish. They add Turmeric, red chili and salt for cooking purpose. They drink liquor like Salap (Sago-palm juice), Tadi (date-palm juice) and Mahuli (liquor made from Mahula flower). During their socio religious functions both male and female members take the wine. Young boys and girls used to dance in the night in the central place of their respective villages in a circle accompanied by biting musical instruments called Dhampa, Gini (clapper), Drums(Dudung), Flat drum (Dadadi), bell –metal rings (Ghagudi). Liquor is considered as food and at the same time a ritualistic food to satisfy deities and spirits.

#### **Dress Pattern:**

The dress worn by the Kandha has its peculiarity. They use a long cloth around the waist. The male wear two clothes one around the waist up to the knees and another is a towel for the upper portion of the body. The female folk put on one piece of white Saree made of cotton called "Khadi", to

cover the upper portion and another cover the lower portion. They also use an embroidered scarf, because they do not wear garments like blouse, bra etc. They use to embroil their own cloths.

#### **Ornaments:**

Both men and women are fond of ornaments. The women beautify themselves with hair pins, earrings, nose rings, and necklaces. The necklaces are made of 25 paise, 50 paise and one rupee coins. The female Kandha use to wear a big sized ring around their neck made of either silver or alumina. Ear rings, nose studs are generally made of Gold. All most all Kandha stud their noses and decorate their noses with rings. Both men and women wear waist chains. The Kandha women keep a small knife called (pipli) "*Mila Katri*" having copper or brass handle in their hair knot. Male members also used to keep a middle sized knife or Katri and a wooden pipe for smoking in their waist.

#### **Occupation:**

The soils by and large is laterite and sloppy. Therefore it is not suitable for agricultural operation. Hence by selecting some specific place they follow shifting cultivation i.e., podu chasa. They change the land after 3 to 4 years of regular cultivation. They produce Paddy, Ragi, Maize, Jower, Kosla, Kangu, Katinga, Ghantia, Mustard, Niger, Til, Caster, Black Gram, Arher, Horse Gram, Field pea, Orange, Banana, Pine apple, Jack fruit, Mango, Guava, Papaya, Turmeric, Ginger etc. They follow the traditional method of exchange i.e., barter system. But a change has been noticed in the recent past. The entire economic life of the Kandhas mostly revolves round the forest. There is division of labor among the Kandha on the basis of age, sex and special skill, specific persons are used for specific purposes i.e., for carpentry, thatching of roof and house construction. The women are very hard working, pain staking and shoulder major responsibilities.

#### **Religious Life:**

Kandhas are animistic and polytheists and believe a large number of supernatural beings who control their entire society and day to day life. The whole life of the Kandha is controlled by their religion.

One of their main festival is Kadru Parbu (Merriash festival) observed in the month of February and March. The role of religious specialists is very much significant among Kandhas. Namely:-

**The Jani:** - Community level religious specialist who performs all the rituals on village level.

**The Bejuni:-** Diviner-cum-medicine man who also functions as astrologer and psychologist.

**Gurumai:-** The women religious functionaries also play vital role in appeasing spirits on individual level.

They celebrate a lot of festivals all over the year, such as Mandia Rani Parbu, Kandula Parbu, Ghanta Parbu, Kadru Parbu etc. In these festivals they worship different deities like Jakiri, Jatrakudi, Katiawali and Mudrawali.

The important function of the Kandha is the Kadru Parbu or Mariah sacrifice. It will be performed in between three to four year.. Katiawali or Dharani Penu is worshipped in this function. To satisfy her they used to sacrifice human beings long back, which in due course has been substituted by buffalos. In this regard the British Administration played a magnificent role to motivate the Kandha people to give up human sacrifice. This is very expensive occasion and people of several ages and clan participate to celebrate this festival with pomp and pleasure.

The entire life of Kandha is full of religious sacrifices. Their house construction, name giving ceremony, nose and ear piercing ceremony, death ritual etc. are associated with religious rituals.

The Kandha people who took birth in the nature, enjoy the nature, to certify the nature he will do certain ritualistic work finally he sleep in the lap of the nature. From this we came to know that there would not be alive the nature without the Kandha people and no Kandha people will alive without the nature. They are inter-related between each other.

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