



Scheme for “Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India”

Form for National Inventory Register of Intangible Cultural Heritage of India

A. Name of the State :- *ODISHA*

B. Name of the Element/Cultural Tradition (in English) :- *DHANUYATRA*

B.1. Name of the element in the language and script of the community Concerned, if applicable:- *ODIYA (Sambalpuri)*

C. Name of the communities, groups or, if applicable, individuals concerned (Identify clearly either of these concerned with the practice of the said in element/cultural tradition) :-

DHANUYATRA MAHOTSAVA SAMITEE organise this event in Bargarh district, there is no such particular community, group or individual who promotes this event, this is a traditional practice in this district. The BARGARH DHANUYATRA MAHOTSAVA SAMITEE was established in the year 1948 but prior to the establishment of this SAMITEE it was being enacted by "Sanchar" dance form performers.

D. Geographical location and range of the element/cultural tradition (Please write about the other states in which the said element/tradition is present,

Bargarh is one of the thirty districts in Odisha and it is situated in its Western border in between 20^o.20'.0" (North) latitude and 83^o.37'.15" (East) longitude. This district is located towards the south of the river Mahanadi and the district headquarters is 330 KMs from Bhubaneswar, (State Capital of Odisha) by road. No such element/cultural tradition is observed in any other state.

E. Identification and definition of the element/cultural tradition of the India

(Write "Yes" in one or more boxes to identify the domain(s) of intangible cultural heritage manifested by the element. If you tick 'others', specify the domain(s) in brackets.)

- i. () oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage
- ii. (Yes) performing arts
- iii. (Yes) Social practices, rituals and festive events
- iv. () knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe
- v. () traditional craftsmanship
- vi. other(s) ()

F. Provide a brief summary description of the element that can introduce it to readers who have never seen or experienced it

Every year in the month of Pausa, (December) Dhanuyatra is celebrated for eleven days of the month from the 5th day of the bright fortnight till the full moon day. For this occasion the town of Bargarh becomes the city of Mathura, the river Jeera becomes the river Yamuna and Ambapali situated on the other side of Jeera becomes Gopapura. For eleven days the whole of Bargarh town is transformed into a very big stage even though the story of Kansa, his death and the exploits of Sri Krishna are enacted in 14 main places at Mathura and 4 main places in Gopa. This mass festival came in to existence in the year 1948. This festival is one of its kind due to the separate stage along with movable stage used to show the mythological story as also due to the special involvement of the entire populace in the process.

G. Who are the bearers and practitioners of the element/Cultural Traditions? Are there any specific roles or categories of persons with special responsibilities for the practice and transmission of it? If yes, who are they and what are their responsibilities?

The Members of the BARGARH DHANUYATRA MAHOTSAVA SAMITEE are the bearers of the cultural traditions, they organise the event every year starting from actor selection to performance. They organise the event in coordination with district administration and local cultural troops.

Actors: Actors are selected through open selection process by a panel of Directors. Roles are specific but the actors are not constant. Some actors perform for more than one year as per the selection committee's decision. The actors perform according to the situation and spontaneously among the public without any specific script and dialogue.

Characters: Ugrasena, Kansha, Devaki, Vasudeva, Heti & Praheti, Akrura, Satyaki, Sakrajit, Krutavarma, Anadhrusta, Uddhaba, Putana, Sakatasura, Bakasura, Trunavarta, Aghasura, Sandhasura, Kesisura, Chanura, Mustika, Kubalaya, Hansaditya, Prayadota, Rajaka, Kubuja, Sudama Mali, Rishis, Prahari/Rakshi.

Basudev, Devaki, Debamidha, Marisha, Devaka, Rohini, Balarama, Subhadra, Kunti & Suprabha, Pandu & Damaghosha, Yudhistir, Bhim, Arjun & Sishupal, Dama, Sudama, Sridama, Basudama, Arjuna, Subala, Gandharba, Ujjwala.

Nanda, Yasoda, Parjanya, Bariyashi, Sumukha, Patala, Upananda & Abhinanda, Tula & Pichari, Sunanda & Subhananda, Angana & Atula, Sananda & Nandini, Mahanila & Sunila, Jasodhara, Jasodeba & Sudeba, Bema, Rema & Surekha, Jasodevi & Jasadwini, Chatu & Batu, Jatila, Gola, Chandrasena, Sriradha.

Selection Process: Actors are selected through open advertisement followed by interview by a panel of local eminent directors for a term of four years but however replacements are made wherever and whenever necessary. Trained and stand by actors are used in case of emergency.

H. How are the knowledge and skills related to the element transmitted today?

- *The knowledge and skills related to the element are transmitted to the new generation through the process of rehearsal and execution of the play at different locations of the district.*
- *Rehearsal Process: selected actors do the rehearsal for more than one month under the supervision of various directors before their final performance.*

I. What social functions and cultural meanings do the element/cultural tradition have today for its community?

This event promotes various local traditional art forms; this event gives a platform to the local folk artistes for their performance. During DHANUYATRA the local folk artiste perform various dance forms like Ghumra, Ghupkudu, Kirtan, Dalkhai, Samprada, Rasarkeli, Sambada Nrutya and Sanchaar Kala etc...

J. Is there any part of the element that is not compatible with existing international human rights instruments or with the requirement of mutual respect among communities, groups and individuals, or with sustainable development? I.e. describe any aspect of the element/cultural tradition that may be unacceptable to Law of the country or may be in opposition to practicing community's harmony with others.

No there is no such complicacy in this performance. Whatever is conducted on stage is accepted to the public and every event is conducted as per law of the country. Human right is not violated during the performance and the event gives mutual respect to the communities, groups and individuals.

K. Your Project's contribution to ensuring visibility, awareness and encouraging dialogue related to the element/cultural tradition

This will be a compilation of authentic information relating to all performances and performers and other aspects relating to the performance. This project will draw the attention of the viewers, particularly the new generation to our glorious past, mythological tradition and the valuable teachings of the BHAGABAT where the victory of Krishna and the defeat of Kansha symbolises victory of the Good over

the Evil. This will create awareness among the youngsters about our rich cultural tradition and heritage.

L. Information about the safeguarding measures that may protect or promote the element/cultural tradition

a. (Write "Yes" in one or more boxes to identify the safeguarding measures that have been and are currently being taken by the communities, groups or individuals concerned)

i. (Yes) transmission, particularly through formal and non-formal education

ii. () identification, documentation, research

iii. (Yes) preservation, protection

iv. (Yes) promotion, enhancement

v. () revitalization

b. Write about the measures taken at local, state and national level by the Authorities to safeguard the element/cultural tradition?

Recently the Dhanuyatra Mohotsava is declared as National Festival. And EZCC is regularly providing its support for promoting the event. State Tourism and culture department promotes this event and gather public support for organising this event.

M. Write about the threats, if any, to the element/cultural tradition related to its practice, visibility and future longevity. Give facts and relevant reasons based on the current scenario.

There is no direct threat to the practice, visibility and future longevity of the element/cultural tradition but the change of taste of the present generation which is mostly influenced by films and serials is a matter of concern. It needs theoretical preservation and documentation for promoting the cultural tradition. This event is organised in a specific area, so to promote and spread the idea in other regions we have to create awareness and involve other cultural groups for popularizing this event.

N. Safeguarding measures proposed

(This section should identify and describe safeguarding measures to protect and promote the element/cultural tradition. Such measures should be

concrete and can be implemented to formulate future cultural policy for safeguarding and promoting the element/cultural tradition in the state)

The following safeguarding measures are proposed to protect and promote the cultural tradition.

- *Establishment of library/Archive for preservation of CDs, Cassettes, souvenirs and other related documents.*
- *Sanctioning of a repertory grant from ministry of culture for the training and practice of the actors, musicians and technicians.*
- *Budget provision for the remuneration of the artistes involved in the execution of the cultural tradition.*
- *Grant for infrastructure building such as rehearsal hall, permanent stage structure etc.*
- *Arrangement for media coverage to highlight the cultural tradition in National and International level.*
- *To link the event with tourism*
- *Developing a website for DHANUYATRA MAHOTSAVA SAMITEE covering all relevant documents, video, still photographs etc.*

O. Community Participation

(Write about the participation of communities, groups and individuals related to the element/cultural tradition in formulation of your project)

A large number of actors (Male & Female) Directors, musicians and technicians are selected from among the local community to enact the longest unwritten play, DHANUYATRA. In addition to that to encourage community participation and promotion of various folk art forms dance troops are invited from various parts of the country and even abroad to perform during the performance of the event. Different groups such as Ghumra, Ghupkudu, Kirtan, Dalkhai, Samprada, Rasarkeli, Sambada Nrutya and Sanchaar Kala, Troops from Russia and Japan perform regularly during this event. I will interact with all these groups and collect information for formulation of this project.

P. Concerned community organization(s) or representative(s)

(Provide detailed contact information for each community organization or representative or other non-governmental organization that is concerned with the element such as associations, organizations, clubs, guilds, steering committees, etc.)

- i. Name of the entity : BARGARH DHANUYATRA MAHOTSAVA SAMITEE
- ii. Name and title of the contact person: SURESWAR SATPATHY (ABAHAK)
- iii. Address : At: Bargarh Po: Bargarh, Odisha
- iv. Telephone number : Mob: 09437075234
- v. E-mail:bargarhdhanuyatramohatsava1947@gmail.com
- vi. Other relevant information

Q. Give information of any Inventory, database or data creation centre (local/state/national) that you may be aware of or of any office, agency, organisation or body involved in the maintenance of the said inventory etc.

Bargarh DHANUYATRA MOTSAV SAMITEE has collected the data and compiled it. Except them no one has not done anything in this regard.

R. Principal published references or documentation available on the element/cultural tradition

(Books, articles, audio-visual materials, names and addresses of reference libraries, museums, private endeavours of artistes/individuals for preservation of the said element, publications or websites)

NIC, Government of Odisha, developed a website for Bargarh Dhanuyatra. Dhanuyatra related documents, articles and photographs are available in this web site. The Bargarh DHANUYATRA MAHOTSAVA SAMITEE publishes souvenirs in regular intervals.

Signature:

Name & Designation:

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1. Brief introduction of the project.

Dhanuyatra at Bargarh is the oldest and the most famous one. Every year in the month of Pausa, (December) it is celebrated for eleven days of the month from the 5th day of the bright fortnight till the full moon day. For this occasion the town of Bargarh becomes the city of Mathura, the river Jeera becomes the river Yamuna and Ambapali situated on the other side of Jeera becomes Gopapura. For eleven days the whole of Bargarh town is transformed into a very big stage even though the story of Kansa, his death and the exploits of Sri Krishna are enacted in 14 main places at Mathura and 4 main places in Gopa. This mass festival came in to existence in the year 1948. This festival has earned its fame in the World as much due to the separate stage along with movable stage used to show the mythological story as also due to the special involvement of the entire populace in the process. Therefore, this festival is rightly called the greatest play in the world enacted in the biggest open air theatre.

It is a destination where from the commoner to the highest elite do get together. Dhanu yatra, the eleven day long annual extravaganza, thus recognizes Bargarh in the cultural map of India. It is at par with the standard of Orissan heritage and culture. It's an open air theatre stretching more than 5834 sq.km. and comprising a village and a town in between. The cast too is lengthy; virtually every villager has a role to play. And from the entire eleven days, the people of Bargarh oblige what king Kansa and not the district administration orders.

This festival appears to be synthesis of stage, theatre and cinema is held within a period of eleven days preceding the 'Pous Purnima'. Unlike stage play or cinema, the acts are played at different places as laid in Puranic description and visitors have to move from place to place to see the play live. The Raj Darbar is used as a stage for all possible cultural performances from classical music and dance to varieties of folk dances, poppet show, dummy horse dance, devotional dances and music, including innovative performances. The drama being played without a written script, neither the actors nor the cultural performances are bound by any strict rules and principles. Thus the Bargarh Dhanu yatra is one of the most popular religious folk drama performed in a secular manner on the largest possible open air stage with obligatory social involvement of people as actors of the drama transmitting socio-cultural

wealth from one generation to the other at a very low cost providing immense socio-cultural and economic benefit for the locality as a whole.

2. Objectives of the research, data creation, or documentation of the project.

Dhanuyatra of Bargarh is a unique cultural event, a fusion of Song , Dance, Drama, Art and Culture, the longest ever unwritten play performed for a fortnight where the stage spreads over miles and miles with innumerable number of characters ranging from Gods, Demons, Human beings, Animals, Reptiles and even the Rivers and Roads. The open air theatrical performance is an example of Environmental theatre but unfortunately, this aspect has not been highlighted and has not received due attention as it should have been. Hence my humble attempt shall be to bring it to the knowledge of the lovers of art and culture with an emphasis on the Environmental aspect of the event.

Dhanuyatra through spiritual and mythological in nature with the clash of Swords and Spears, it is not merely an entertainment but it has a tremendous Sociological impact on both the urban and rural mass. As a student of Sociology it shall be my priority to highlight the sociological aspect of the great cultural event.

Dhanuyatra, the grand cultural festival of Western Odisha presenting the saga of Lord Krishna needs a comparative study with that of the nine day long world famous Ratha yatra (Chariot festival) of Eastern odisha presenting the Leela (Story) of Lord Jagannath. In Dhanuyatra the Human beings enact the role of Gods where as in Rath yatra Lord Jagannath his broher Balaram and sister Subhadra assume human forms for nine days. 'Dhanuyatra' and Ratha yatra both are to be studied as Occasions of fostering universal brotherhood bringing unity, amity and equality. Another such similar cultural event is the 'Ramleela' performance of Rama Nagar celebrating the glory of Lord Ram but it has been highlighted worldwide where as Dhanuyatra is yet to receive such attention. I hope my documentation would be able to popularize Dhanuyatra like that the Ratha yatra at Puri and Ramleela at Ram Nagar.

3. Implementation of the project.

- This event is observed and performed in between December and January the actor selection and rehearsal is done in the month of December. This is a seasonal activity done every year in this specific period only. So to capture the event I will move with my camera team for recording of the entire process and collect all documents and evidences during my visit.
 - During my visit I am going to interview the artistes regarding their training process, performance and hazards.
 - Interview with the organizers for identifying their achievements and problems.
 - Going to conduct interview with the audience for the impact assessment of the event.
 - Documenting the Rehearsal process and Performance.
 - Still photography of DHANUYATRA.
 - Video Documentation of DHANUYATRA.

4. Time frame of the project.

This is a seasonal activity conducted during the month of December and January as per the local calendar. The actor selection is done in the month of December. Actors are selected once in every three/four years. If there is any problem from actor's side then the selection committee selects another actor in his place. The Performance is held in the month of January, this year it is going to be observed in between 16th December – 26th January 2016. So in this period I will collect all relevant documents and prepare systematic information as well as a documentary of DHANUYATRA and submit the same to SANGEET NATAK ACADEMY for further necessary action reference.

5. Specific areas of the respective state in which the art form(s) is practiced – Geographical, typographical and other related aspects that the project may cover.

Bargarh is one of the thirty districts in Odisha and it is situated in its Western border in between 20^o.20'.0" (North) latitude and 83^o.37'.15" (East) longitude. This district is located towards the south of the river Mahanadi and the district headquarters is 330 KMs from Bhubaneswar, (*State Capital of Odisha*) by road. The mythical demon king Kansa, who was killed by his young

nephew Krishana, rules Bargarh town. In this eleven day festival, the entire past (Dwapar Yuga) is re-enacted blow by blow. Considered to be one of the largest open air dramas enacted anywhere in modern time, the central theme of this festival is borrowed from the “Krishana Leela” and “Mathura Vijay”.

6. Photos (primary level) related to the project /art form.

Last year performance photographs annexed separately for your kind information.

7. Conclusion of the project as you have envisioned.

Documentary film on Dhanu Yatra, Bargarh

A detailed project with still photography and interviews.

Catalogue of the veteran artistes working in Dhanu Yatra

Process Documentation of the Entire Event

Documenting the Public participation and Impact on the society