

## Heritage Information

Unique Id:

BGD-50.81.2024.00117

### Section-1: Identification of the element

#### Heritage Location

Division

Rajshahi

District

Rajshahi

Upazila

Tanore

Details Address

Geolocation(Latitude)

24.5873

Geolocation(Longitude)

88.5747

Community Category

Religious

Community

Hindu

Name of the Heritage, (as used by the community or group concerned)

Baha Parab

Short title of the Heritage, (preferably within 200 words)

Baha Parab - A celebration of nature-human nexus

Concerned Community(ies)/Group(s), (who recognize the element as part of their cultural heritage)

Santal

Physical location(s) of the element/how often it is practiced

Tanore, Rajshahi

Short description of the Heritage, (preferably within 350 words)

Baha Parab is the holiest festival of the Santals, the second biggest festival after Sorhai, the harvest festival. It is observed in the Bengali month of Falgun (February-March), which is the first month of the Santal calendar. This is also the time when the most common trees like Mahuwa, Peepal, Mango, Palash, Neem, Sal and Muringa bear new leaves, flowers and fruits. In Bangladesh Santali Baha Parab or Baha festival of the Santals are observed on 12-14 March to welcome spring in a traditional manner and celebrate rejuvenation of nature. Baha means flower in the Santal language, for which the festival is also known as festival of flower. This traditional spring celebration is a three-day event and the

celebration involves the preparation of two thans or groves in the village where it is celebrated. The 'Jaher Than' (holy grove) is always on the edge of the village where many spirits live and where a series of annual festivals take place. The Majhi Than, a raised mound of earth covered with a thatched roof outside the headman's house, is where the Majhi's ancestors' spirits live. The festival begins by warding off evil spirits on the first day, and on the second day deities are invoked, including Marangburu, the main deity of the Santals. The third day is primarily about celebration with villagers making merry singing and dancing. The festival shows how the Santals remain connected with the agricultural cycle by dovetailing it with life-cycle rituals for birth, marriage and burial at death.

#### Domains of the Heritage (applicable fields)

- Oral Traditions and Expressions
- Performing Arts
- Social Customs and Traditions
- Knowledge and Practices related to Nature and Universe
- Traditional Craftsmanship
- Food

### Section-2: Characteristics of the element

#### Practitioner(s)/performer(s) directly involved in the representation or practice of the Heritage (including roles, name, age, gender, social status, and/or professional category etc.)

The village priest purifies the doors of each house and administer rituals and prayers in each thans or sacred groves in two consecutive days; a number of village women who has long been participating in the Baha festival in collecting flowers and leaves of the sal tree dance 'Baha enenj', a number of men remain engaged in playing the music.

#### Other tradition bearers (individuals/groups and their roles)

N/A

#### Language(s), register(s), speech level(s) involved

Santali

#### Associated tangible elements used (if any)

Flute, Tamak and Tumda (Drums) are used. Pitchers made by village artisans are in use.

#### How are women and people of other genders associated with this Heritage?

Women are a focal point since they prepare their household and collect all the natural elements used during the festival as well as participate in the singing and dancing all throughout.

#### Division of labour during the practice of this Heritage

There is division of labour. The priest has his specific role, the women have their specific activities, while the music is played by men.

#### Elements to which other customary practices or practices may be connected or accessed in any respect of the heritage (if any)

The songs rendered during the festival are connected to evocation of the blessings for fertility and continuity of the descendants, for good rainfall, abundant harvest and easy hunts. Some songs are used in other rituals too.

#### Modes of transmission to others in the community

The entire village is involved in the festival as it is the collective well-being which is central to it.

#### Organizations concerned (non-governmental organizations and others)

Brotee Samaj Kilyan Sangstha and the village people

### Section-3: State of the element (viability)

**☐ Threats to the enactment**

Urgent Safeguard Needed

**☐ Enactment Threats Description**

Modernization and its impact on traditional lifestyle. Since traditional life has become unsustainable, Santals tend to streamline their cultural activities.

**☐ Threats to the transmission (if any)**

A community in transition has little cultural strength to transmit the tradition from generation to generation.

**☐ Threat to associated tangible elements and resources (if any)**

The tangible elements are still in use.

**☐ Viability of associated intangible elements (if any)**

The intangible elements are under threats of disappearance since their transmission is under threat.

**☐ Have been taken any safeguarding measures to preserve this Heritage practices? (if any)**

Not yet but there are programmes in the pipeline.

**☐ Section-4: Data gathering/documentation, Consent and preparation of inventory entries**

**☐ Consent of community/group/individuals concerned for data collection with a view to inventorying**

Community has full consent regarding the safeguarding of all tangible and intangible elements involved in the Baha festival.

**☐ Restrictions on use of collected data, (if any)**

No restrictions whatsoever.

**☐ Section-5: Resource Person**

**☐ Data provider/Resource person (persons/groups, community representatives)**

All resource persons are from the community. There are one elderly community member and four young members of the community working to collect data.

**☐ Date of data collection**

23-01-2023

**☐ Place(s) of data collection**

Tanore, Rajshahi

**☐ Section-6: Safeguarding techniques**

**☐ Existing safeguarding techniques adopted by the community for the safeguarding of the Heritage**

Ensuring transmission to the new generation by teaching songs, recitations and prayers.

**☐ Suggestions for safeguarding of the Heritage from the community**

Collecting them in VDO format. Writing them for future publication.

## Section-7: References to literature, discography, audiovisual materials or archives

### References to/in literature

Life of santal Tribe, written by Abraham Mathew gives an overall account of the Santal people. The third chapter talks about Santal's religious life, their deities, festivals, belief system and worship system.

### Audiovisual materials or archives

Yet to be developed.

### Discography or archives

N/A

## Section-8: Modalities for updating the information contained in the inventory entry

### Data Compiler (persons/groups, including community representatives, who compiled the information)

Two community members who have been working for Brotee

### Date of Community Consent

29-01-2023

### Consent of community/group/individuals concerned for data collection with a view to inventorying

Oral consent by community members, articulated by the village chief.

### Present Condition of Heritage

Becoming less

### Brief description of Present condition of the Heritage, (if any)

The three-day Baha festival is often observed in two days at present. It is in the process of losing its original attractions as often the ritualistic aspect of the festival is reduced to formalities, thereby losing its former regour.

## Section-9: Community suggestions

### Brief description of suggestions for safeguarding of the element by community members/experts/holders, (if any)

There needs to organized effort it maintaining the tangible and intangible cultural elements attached to the festival. Village elders and the priest as well as a number of anthropologists may help revive the lost aspects while efforts may continue to bring back the traditional zeal to celebrate Baha in its entirety.

### Restrictions on use of collected data, (if any).

There is no restriction on the current data as we are still in the process of collecting further data to ensure the preservation of all the aspects of Baha.

## Section-10: Upload Document

### Heritage Details Document



Heritage Images

