

Name of the Element: **Baha Parab - A celebration of nature-human nexus**

Name of Inventory: Test Inventory 1

Serial No: B-00001

Brief Description

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.

Region: Santal communities in Rajshahi district, Rajshahi division, North of Bangladesh

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