
Mundari Culture and Festivals: An Ecosophical Study of Ramdayal Munda's *Adi- Dharam*

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Abstract

'Jharkhand' word comprises of two words, *Jhar* and *khand*. *Jhar* means bush or forest and *khand* denotes some part of earth or land. Then Jharkhand means the land of forest. This eastern state of India is famous for its natural resources and natural beauties. This treasure is protected by the *Adivasi* or tribal people of Jharkhand. *Adivasi* means the earliest or the first inhabitant of the land. It can be said that *Adivasi* and Nature are not separate entities. They are a complement to each other. Their culture, tradition, food, festival, and language are age-old, rich, and closely connected with nature. There are thirty-two tribal groups in Jharkhand and Munda tribe is one of the major tribal communities in Jharkhand.

Adi-Dharam is a book written by Ram Dayal Munda who was an anthropologist, folklorist, linguist, and academician. He was awarded Padmashri in 2010 for his immense contribution to Art in Jharkhand. This book *Adi-Dharam* is documentation of the religious beliefs of *Adivasi* of India especially in the Munda tribal community of Jharkhand, published in 2000. Through this book, Ram Dayal Munda tried to make a collection of festivals rituals, narratives, and prayers of Sarhul, Karma, and Sohorai festivals. This paper would deal with Ram Dayal Munda's keen observations of festival prayers, rituals, and festival narratives. This paper would also reflect on questions like how does the tribal culture connect with Mother Nature? It would also examine the ecosophical aspects of the Sarhul, Karma, and Sohorai festivals of *adi dharam* or ancient religion of the Munda tribe.

Keywords: Festival, Culture, Nature, Ecosophy, *Adi-Dharam*, Ram Dayal Munda.