



## CIM Reaches out to the Santhals

It was a joyful occasion to minister to the Santhal tribal people in Dumka, Jharkhand as part of the Certificate Course in Basics of Christian Management which CIM conducted in partnership with ESAF. All participants were from Santhal tribe and thus the whole programme was translated to Santhali.

The Santhals are one of the largest ethnic groups in India. Historians believe that they were the ancestors of the tribal community residing in the eastern part of India. They occupy primarily in the Chotanagpur Plateau with the largest settlement in Jharkhand and West Bengal. They love music and dance and believe in supernatural beings and ancestral spirits. Their language is Santhali.

Catholic, Lutheran, and FMPB are the main Christian presence in the region. The Mahalis are a sub group of Santhals who are skilled bamboo craftsmen, however, their living conditions remained very low as they were mostly exploited by the middlemen. Moreover as the products were not having good finishing it could

not be marketed in cities. The average earnings were only Rs. 20-25 per day.

ESAF started their ministry there about four years back, with the initiative and leadership of Mr. Ajith Sen. ESAF concentrates among the craftsman by providing them trainings and marketed the products through its Producers Company. Now the same craftsmen are earning Rs. 100-150 per day. Simultaneously ESAF also started Community Schools (Child Care Centers) in villages. Though there are Govt. schools in the villages most of them do not function as there are

only one or two teachers for the entire school. These children now come to the ESAF Community Schools which are mostly held in small sheds. ESAF approached CIM to train its School teachers, SHG Coordinators and Craftsmen.

After finishing a Certificate Course in Damoh and another Grassroot Seminar in Jabalpur (both in Madhya Pradesh) CIM staff moved to Jharkhand. The programme started on 15th March with a devotion by Prof. S. D. Jeyakumar (Director, OD, CIM). It was the first time in their life that the participants



were undergoing a formal, off the job training. Though they seemed little hesitant to interact initially, the ice breaking (which we extended for about an hour!) literally melt the ice. As the learning pattern of the participants was different, we used mostly group activities and demonstrations as the training methodology. The first session was on Biblical Leadership taken by Mr. Aby Alexandar. Other sessions for the day were Integrity (Prof. Jeyakumar), and Dealing with People (Mr. Aby Alexandar).

Second day's sessions started with a devotion taken by Mr. Henry, Regional Coordinator, FMPB. In the second day the participants were much relaxed and interacted very freely. Before starting the sessions the participants were asked to reflect their learning's of the previous day. All participants expressed what they learned. The sessions for the day were Finance Handling, Balancing Ministry and Family (both taken by Prof. Jeyakumar) as well as Managing Your Time and Goal Setting (by Mr. Aby Alexandar). In the closing ceremony, participants were rushing past one another to share how the programme was a blessing in their life and literally we had to stop them due to lack of time. All were excited to be part of the course.

We also had a day of training sessions for the ESAF office staff who belonged to different states, and thus the medium of instruction was Hindi. The topics were Managing Your Projects, Finance Handling (Prof. Jeyakumar), Leadership and Managing Your Time (Aby Alexandar).

There was a field visit arranged to the villages on the fourth day. We first visited the Craft Business Incubator unit of the ESAF SHG products and interacted with the staff there. From there we moved to Baramashia where the ESAF Community School was



starting their classes for the very first day. The students, staff and the Parents welcomed the guests in their traditional way by songs, dance and washing of the feet. Prof. S.D.Jeyakumar prayed and dedicated the class. After having a traditional lunch from a Santhal home we proceeded to another school in Bosco and interacted with the Children and staff.

CIM is glad to be part of God's Mission on equipping the Santhal

Christians to stand for Christ in their own community!

*(Note: CIM Certificate course is a short duration course designed for the Bible College / Training Institutes and deals with the basics of Biblical Management. The course consists of 13 subjects which are most relevant to Christian Ministries.)*