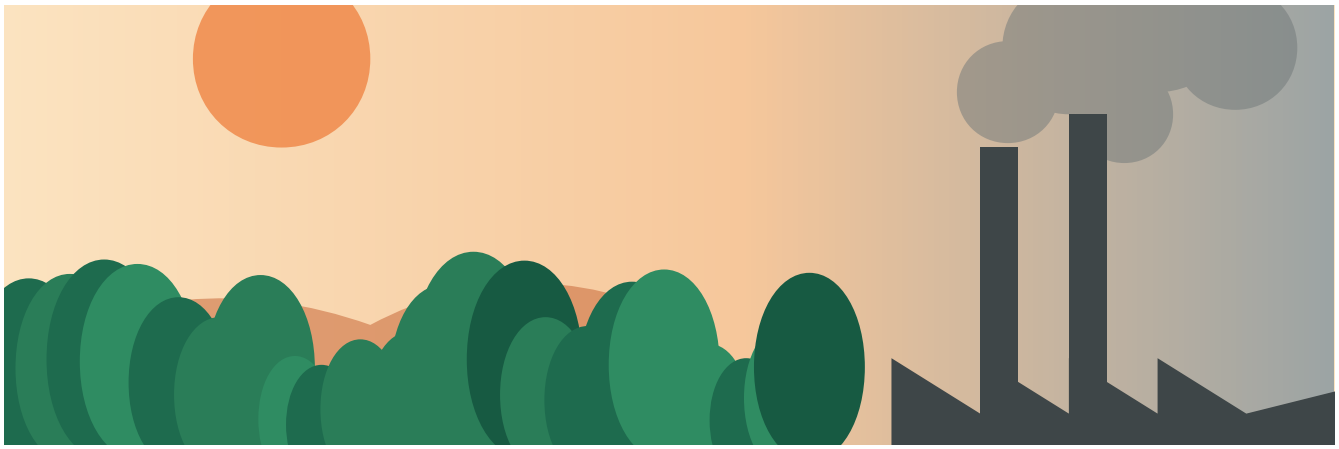


Where Shall the *Hor-Hopon* Go?

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He Thakurjiu, amge kedal kana?

No Mahua trees
No Kadamba trees
No Sal trees
No Kendu trees
No abode for Jaher-Ayo

Alakjari vine is coiling like an ajgar
Around the mighty sarjom tree,
Sucking the life out of it.
He Thakurjiu, amge kedal kana?

Marang Buru, O Marang Buru, amge kedal kana?
The Big Mountain God of the Santals —
The children of Pilchu Haram and Pilchu Budhi,
Dwelling silently in the dense, red-soiled Parganas,
Brewing delicious haandi, roasting mutton and pigs in ferocious fires,
Swaying in vibrant colours to the rhythmic beats of banam and tamak.
E-yo! E-ba! amge kedal kana?

Long ago, Earthworm and Tortoise built our land from deep waters,
Now it is no more ours —
They forced us to leave our kulhis.
Our forests fell to the villainous smile of powerful axes and saws.
Our totemic animals are slaughtered mercilessly with guns.
Mighty factories are malevolent bongas.
Giant machines suck the life out of mineral-rich mountains —
Like dahnis feeding voraciously on the liver of their innocent victims,
Chanting "Iron, Bauxite, Coal, Copper, Limestone" like mantras.
Clouds of dust, pungent fumes and smoke everywhere.

We hunt tubers for food,
They hunt minerals for money.
Venomous wasps swarming over our ancestral hills.

O Sim-Bonga, amge kedal kana?
O Chando-Bonga, amge kedal kana?
O Karam-Bonga, amge kedal kana?

If this land is no more ours,
Where shall your hor-hopon go?

Hor-hopon: the Santal people (literally "children of humans"). **Thakurjiu, Marang Buru, Bonga**: Santal deities and spirits.