

Tribals' Home Construction-A Trust System

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Abstract

A shelter, a nest, and a cloth are the most important of the basic human needs. A person needs a nest to withstand these three elements: cold, sun, and rain. To build this, people build different types of houses depending on their financial circumstances. If they have the financial means to build a house in flat areas, people can easily find people to work. Skilled workers (masonry) are also available. However, tribals who build houses in hilly or forested areas have to work harder to do so. Because it is very difficult to find a habitable area in forest areas, tribals choose high places and places near water bodies for building houses. By building a house on a high place, water does not accumulate around the house or in the surrounding areas during the rainy season. Moreover, building a house in a high place provides an opportunity to anticipate the presence of migratory wild animals and take precautions. Also, they choose a place to live close to water facilities so that they can meet their daily needs.

Keywords: Tribals, Home, Construction, trust, belief, financial circumstances, safety, facilities

1. Introduction

If we look at the structure and daily necessities of the houses of the tribal people, most of the things used in the house are available in the forests. They build very spacious houses according to their family background to protect them from the sun, wind, and light. The speciality of these tribal people is that every house looks clean. That is why they look healthy.

There are 35 tribal tribes in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The tribals live mostly in the districts of Warangal, Adilabad, Khammam, Mahabubnagar, East Godavari, Visakhapatnam, Vizianagaram and Srikakulam. The author is a member of the Telugu University Folklore and Tribal Knowledge Foundation, so has witnessed the living conditions of the tribals of these areas, and has been working to preserve their cultural traditions for the last two decades.

As part of a project on tribal undertaken in the auspices of Warangal, a study was conducted on tribal tribes like Lambada, Koya, Kondareddy, Valmiki, Goud, Bhagata, Garu, Nookadora, Kondadora, Kotia, and Tondu by visiting Warangal, Adilabad, Khammam, East Godavari, and Visakhapatnam districts. Among the tribal multifaceted facts collected as part of this, house construction is one of the facts that contribute to the tribal studies.

Tribal house construction

The house is the queen of tribal knowledge or folk knowledge; if the house is clean, the people living in it will also be clean. That is why the structure of the tribal house is built in accordance with nature in such

a way that air and light come in properly. In fact, everyone thinks of the house only as a place to live. But if you look closely at the house, it is useful for many purposes. Even if the common man builds a single-room house with his financial means, or the upper classes build multi-room, multi-storey houses despite their financial means, both use the house in the same way for various purposes. It is an age-old custom to use the house according to the season, in daily life, on occasions of festivals, pubs, fairs and celebrations. The concept of a house is based on the convenience of the rooms. In any case, even if there are no ordinary rooms like kitchen, living room, and bedroom, if a common man builds just one room, he transforms it into a kitchen, living room, bedroom, life-cycle celebration room, music room, entertainment room, and a house of relaxation and lives in it. That is why a house is called a home for living because it is used in many ways and helps people live a healthy life.

The house is a symbol of tribal knowledge or folk wisdom. If the house is clean, the people living in it will also be clean. That is why the structure of tribal houses is built in accordance with nature in a way that allows adequate air and light. In fact, everyone thinks of a house only as a place to live. But if you look closely at the house, it can be used for many purposes. Even if the common man builds a single-room house with his financial means, or the upper classes build multi-room, multi-storey houses despite their financial means, both use the house in the same way for various purposes. It is an age-old custom to use the house according to the season, in daily life, during festivals, pubs, fairs and celebrations. The use of the house is based on the convenience of the rooms. In any case, even if there are no ordinary rooms like kitchen, living room, and bedroom, if a common man builds just one room, he transforms it into a kitchen, living room, bedroom, life-cycle celebration room, music room, entertainment room, and a house of relaxation and lives in it. That is why a house is called a home for living because it is used in many ways and helps people live a healthy life.

Tribals build their houses in a place that is suitable for them. They build their houses in a place that is suitable for them, keeping in mind the economic conditions, natural resources, and climate. Since the houses of tribals are all in harmony with nature, they build their houses in forest areas. If we look at them district-wise and region-wise, there are different types of houses.

Especially if we look at the houses of the Koya tribe, there are houses with a perimeter wall, two-span houses, three-span houses, and four-span houses. The houses of the Konda Reddy tribe are called Gaddi Rogidi, Penkati Logidi or Penkuttillu, the houses of the Gadaba tribe are called Dubbagaddi Illu, Penkuttillu, the houses of the Valmiki tribe are called Gebula Illu, the houses of the Naugvasala Illu, the houses of the Kondadora tribe are called Guttapillu, Penkuttillu, Sabu Illu, the houses of the Bhagata tribe are called Kattera Goda Illu or two-pinakala Illu, Derada Illu, Gebula Illu, the houses of the Khondu tribe are called Nakka Illu, Mudi Illu, Derada Illu, Sahada Illu, the houses of the Mali tribe are called Rekula Illu, Penkuttillu, and the houses of the Kotia tribe are called.

The houses are built like Mod Gor or four-panel houses, gable houses, hut houses, stilt houses, slab houses, etc. The houses are named according to their shape and construction. The construction of tribal houses is diverse. It is customary to build a house that is suitable for habitation. All the tribals of the Gudem participate in new construction work. They help each other. However, each tribal tribe follows its own method in the construction of the house. As part of the new construction, there are different beliefs in the selection of the site, the construction of the walls, the doors, and the arrangement of the roof. Since each tribe has its own type of belief, all those beliefs are treated as a belief system related to that tribe. In the

process of building houses, different tribal tribes first select the place where they want to build a house and follow different methods to determine whether the place is habitable or not. The method they follow is related to the beliefs of the respective tribal group. In this order, everyone in that group makes it a rule to follow it without fail. That is why, since it belongs to a group, it is called the belief system of that group or tribe.

Home site selection and belief system

The tribal tribes select the site before building a house. They follow various methods for selecting this site. Some tribal tribes have different beliefs in selecting the site, some in laying the foundation, and some in laying the stones. For this, they decide on the Muhurta with the Gudem priest or Muhurta and follow various methods for selecting the site. All these methods depend on their belief system. They start the construction of the house only after they have complete faith in the method they follow.

As part of the construction of a house, the site selection process involves first levelling and cleaning the area. The auspicious day is indicated by the Gudem priest or Muhurthangadi. In this order, if we consider the site selection for the Gaudu tribal tribes, after seeing an auspicious day, the housewife makes a circular circle with saffron and turmeric in the middle of the selected site. Some flowers are placed there. In the middle of the decorated area, three rice grains are placed next to each other. After that, everyone goes home.

The next day, if you examine the rice grains, they should not be separated as they were placed the day before. A place that is not separated is very good for building a house and a settlement. If the rice is separated and scattered, that place is not good, and another place is chosen for building a house. Some Gaudas follow another method. According to this, on an auspicious day, the owner of the house brings a pidatha (a pot of water) from a nearby hill at night and goes to the ground (Nagu) and brings Ganga (Veer) to a place where no one is, where no one is. With that water, a pipe is made in the middle of the place, and flowers are placed. The pidatha is decorated with turmeric and saffron, and the turmeric horn is tied with a thread. If the water in the white part of the pidatha rises and reaches the pidatha level, then the house is considered good, and construction is started. If the water in the pidatha does not fall and decrease, then the place is left as unsuitable for building a house.

The Kondareddy tribals call their house Logili. They follow a special method when choosing a place to build a house. They inspect the house plot along with the priest or the head of the caste. Considering Lakshmivaram to be an auspicious day, that evening, the area surrounding the house is cleaned and covered with dung. A small pit is dug in the middle of the plot, and the inside is also covered with dung.

After that, the priest pours a pound or a kilo of jowar/paddy into the gondi and puts straw on all four sides and covers the basket on top. The owner sleeps there that night. In the morning, the owner of the house learns three things. First, the person who slept should not have any dreams. He should sleep with his eyes open. Second, the grain in the gondi should not be scattered when the basket is opened and should not go beyond the straws. Third, when the grain is remeasured, it should come out more than the grain that was poured in.

Only then do they start construction work at this place. If the owner of the house has any dream while sleeping, if the grain is average when measured, or if the grain comes out beyond the ears, then that place

is not good, and they choose another place. It is believed that if the grains come out more when measured, then life will be happy. Some other Konda Reddy tribes do not choose a place, but rather show it to the Muhurtagadi as the Kottah Muhurtham. This is called the Ratta or Ratu Muhurtham. Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday are considered auspicious days for this Muhurtham. Tuesday, Saturday, and Sunday are not good, and if one starts building a house on these days, life will not go well, and the house will not stand. Kottah means a mound or a pillar, which acts like a pillar. It is believed that only a branch of a neredu tree should be used for this. The first Ratta or Kottah is placed in the northeast corner. First, a gondi of the right size is prepared, and turmeric, saffron and safflower seeds are added to it, and the stone is decorated. Then a coconut is crushed, and a stick is placed on it. Similarly, if the top is placed on a Sunday, it is believed that it will be offered to the fire.

The Gadaba tribe casts a koti to find out whether the land on which they are building a house is good or not. They cast a koti on a certain auspicious day, and that night, they pour some rice into a neredu leaf and place it in the middle of the house and offer it to their caste deity. When they see the koti, they believe that if the rice in the leaf is high, the family will be happy, and if the rice is low, they will have difficulty, and they decide not to use that land for construction. Similarly, the Valmiki tribe casts a koti or skunku on the selected house site. That is, the owner of the house digs a small hole in the middle of the land at night in the selected place and places a pot (gampa). He puts a leaf in the pot, pours a handful of rice into it, puts another leaf on top and covers it with soil. He sprinkles saffron and turmeric, lights incense, breaks a coconut and puts a koti. He comes early in the morning, removes the lid from the bell, and measures the rice poured into the leaf. Even if they are a little more than a soledu, they decide that the place is good for building a house, and even if the rice does not grow, it is the same or decreases, they decide not to build a house there. This rice is used on the day of the housewarming. Some more rice is added to these, cooked as an offering and distributed to the guests.

The hill tribes consider the day as auspicious for choosing a place to build a house. On that day, they covered the place with dung at night. In the middle, they place three or five rice grains side by side. These grains are left there overnight and are checked the next day. If the rice grains are cracked or scattered, they decide that the place is not suitable for building a house. If the grains are intact, they confirm that the place is suitable for building a house and start the work.

In the Khondu tribe, they choose an auspicious day, which is Sunday, Tuesday, or Friday. That evening, they went to the designated place and dug a hole in the middle. They put a pot in the hole, pour some seeds, and cover the pot with a stone. The next day, if the pot is taken out and the seeds are still there, then the place is considered suitable for building a house. If the seeds are few, then it is considered unsuitable. Even if there are a lot of seeds, they consider it an auspicious sign and start building a house in that place.

Thus, the Goudu, Mali, Kondareddy, Kondadora, Valmiki, and Gadaba tribal tribes give priority to the selection of a place for the construction of a house. Although almost all of them call it Kotu Muhurtham or Rata Muhurtham, the methods followed are different. On the other hand, the Mali, Lambada, Nayakpodu, Gondu and Bhagata tribal tribes give priority to the construction of houses and start the work after the Muhurtham is shown by the priest. Laying the foundation for laying the foundation stone of these works.

Similarly, when erecting a door, installing rafters, and beams for the roof, or covering the roof, the work is started at the corresponding time and the construction of the house is completed. Tribals follow certain practices not only in house construction but also in house entry, and in the absence of any restrictions. All these practices are based on their belief system.

Conclusion

Tribals have established a belief system in the construction of houses, starting from the selection of the site to the construction of the house. They do not choose the site for the house even if something goes against what they believe. They do not even build the house. This entire belief system is subject to their thoughts, tribal group customs and traditions. That is why the belief system has been mentioned as a major factor in tribal multifacetedness. Although the belief system followed in the construction of tribal houses is related to the identity of each tribe and each system, in recent times, many tribal tribes have been moving forward by believing in the Panchagam and showing Muhurtas. In any case, this belief system is considered to be a tradition passed down from grandparents since time immemorial. There is a need to study such a powerful belief system and identify its scientific values. The customs and traditions in this belief system indicate the existence of that tribal tribe. Therefore, it is the responsibility of local folk scientists and researchers to study such belief systems and publish their findings.

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