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Tusu Festival of the Kudumis of Northern Orissa: Origin and Causes

Basanta K. Mohanta

Department of Anthropology, Indira Gandhi National Tribal University, P.O. Amarkantak

District Anuppur 484 886 Madhya Pradesh, India

Mobile: 09407343438; E-mail: drmohantabk@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT The Kudumi is an important agriculturist community of eastern India. They are mainly residing in Jharkhand, part of West Bengal (Purulia, Bankura and Midnapur) and Orissa (Mayurbhanj and Keonjhar). They celebrate different festivals and most of them are related to their agricultural activities. The *Tusu parav*, *Bandana*, *Karam* and *Jitua* are the most important festivals of the Kudumi community which are celebrated with equal joy and happiness. The present paper analyses the details of the *Tusu* festival of the Kudumi which is celebrated during *Makar Sankranti* which falls in the mid of January. There are different types of views, that is, historical, mythological and anthropological which are available regarding the origin of the *Tusu* festival. A brief discussion on all these views is made in this paper. Although earlier it was a community specific festival but now it is widely adopted by the neighbouring tribe and caste people and has become a regional level festival.