WITCHCRAFT & SORCERY
Social and Medical Perspective

Dr G SAMARAM MBBS
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Concept of Banamati

The belief that certain members of the community can harm others by supernatural means
What is Witchcraft?

Harmful anti-social attitude and action, by possessing the evil powers with a pact with devils
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN
WITCHCRAFT AND SORCERY
Witch

Witch is a female with inherent supernatural power to harm others
Sorcerer is a conscious individual endowed with evil intentions, malice and hatred, having magical powers.
Historical background

Europe and America

7 million were killed in the name of witchcraft
Indian Context
అమలపెట్టండి 'అసాధారణ' నిపుణులు నాలుగు మంది లోపలి మానవంతాత్మక సంఘటన నిర్వహించండి.
Social sections - affected

✓ Socially and Economically poor
✓ SC, ST, and BC
✓ Women
Causes for Banamati scare

1. Cultural belief
2. Social milieu – oppressed and suppressed.
3. Illiteracy
4. Ignorance

(Contd.)
Causes for Banamati scare (Contd.)

06. Lack of Medical help
07. Political and social rivalries
08. Marital/personal problems
09. Psychological
10. Belief in supernatural and evil powers
11. Superstitions
Reasons for Banamati

1. Ill health
2. Death
3. Loss of property, animal
4. Business failure
5. Crop destruction
Type of villages where Banamati belief is more
Who is suspected as Witch/Sorcerer?

1. Abnormal and strange behaviour
2. Stranger to village
3. Social feuds
4. Chanting something which others do not understand
Methods of torture of the suspected (1)

1. Fine – Individual/family
2. Beating
3. Plucking of teeth
4. Cutting of tongue and ears
5. Breaking limbs
6. Disfiguring
Methods of torture of the suspected

7. Social outcast/boycott
8. Forced to vacate house/land
9. Driven away from village
10. Illegal occupation of property
Methods of torture of the suspected (3)

11. False Accusations
12. Torture of Relatives
13. Burning alive
14. Mental Torture
BANAMATI INVESTIGATION
The Karnataka Legislative Council constituted a committee to investigate the problem. Dr H Narasimhaiah, Member of the Legislative Council headed the team.
The findings of the investigative team revealed, in unmistakable terms, that Banamathi and witchcraft do not exist at all and it is nothing but a fear complex perpetuated by the vested interests, and rumours played havoc with the people.

The investigative team also revealed that some of them were having mental and social problems.
ATHEIST CENTRE’S
Investigations in
Andhra Pradesh
Team of Investigation 1983
• The social evil Banamathi is widely prevalent in most parts of the Telangana
• This is popularly known as Banamathi or Chetabadi or Chillangi.
In 1983, the fear of Banamati gripped the Medak District of AP. When the fear of Banamati reached epidemic proportions and also turned into a law and order problem, Mr K Aravinda Rao, the then Superintendent of Police of Medak District and the District Administration, invited Atheist Centre to help them to resolve the problem. Apart from addressing big meetings, thousands of the so-called victims of Banamati or sorcery were examined by the medical doctors and interviewed by the scientists. The total number of victims were around 7000.
Team discussing with the AP C.M. N T Rama Rao
ANDHRA PRADESH

Witchcraft in Medak

MAIMOOD Ali, circle inspector of Andhra Pradesh police, has a very strange duty to perform. He is stationed in the Medak district unofficially to exorcise devils and cure victims of \textit{banamati}.

To social workers and psychologists, \textit{banamati} or \textit{chillangi} is nothing but hysteria. Common people of Telangana districts and of Karnataka areas like Bid, Bijapur and Gulbarga, however, believe that the "devil" can be exorcised by the sita.
Press Coverage
Investigation in Medak District

Dr Samaram and Dr Rama Subba Reddy, a member of the team who is a neuro psychiatrist presented papers in first Andhra Pradesh State Annual Conference of Neuro Sciences held at Guntur in April, 1985.
వీటిలో (రాడాని)  
పడారా విశ్వాసం?

మనం ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే వాడి ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. ఇది ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. ఏ సమయంలో ఇది ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. ఆహారం ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. ఈ సమయంలో ఇది ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. 

చెప్పేది ఈ ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. ఈ సమయంలో ఇది ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. ఈ సమయంలో ఇది ప్రత్యేకంగా ఊదాహరణ చేయాలంటే ప్రత్యేకమైనవి. 

20.1.84 నుండి ఆహారం చేసినది.
ಮುಂದುವರೆದು ಪ್ರತ್ಯೇಕವಾಗದ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ಬೇಡದ ಭಾಗದಲ್ಲಿ ಅದರ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಿಗೆ ಉದ್ದೇಶ್ಯದಿರುತ್ತದೆ.

ಈ ಹೊಂದಿದ್ದಾನೆ ಮತ್ತು ಕೇಂದ್ರಾಧಿಕೃತ ವಸ್ತುಸಂಯೋಜಕ ಇತ್ಯಾದಿಗಳಿಗೆ ಸಂಬಂಧಿಸಿರುವ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಿಗೆ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವಿದೆ.

ನೀಡಲಾಗುವ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ವಸ್ತುಸಂಯೋಜಕ ಮತ್ತು ಕೇಂದ್ರಾಧಿಕೃತ ವಸ್ತುಸಂಯೋಜಕಗಳ ವ್ಯಾಪಾರಿಗೆ ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವಿದೆ.

ಆದ್ದರ ಕಾರ್ಯಸಾಮರ್ಥ್ಯವನ್ನು ರಚಿಸುವ ಹಾಗೆಯೇ ಪ್ರತಿಯೊಂದು ವಸ್ತುಸಂಯೋಜಕ ಮತ್ತು ಕೇಂದ್ರಾಧಿಕೃತ ವಸ್ತುಸಂಯೋಜಕಗಳು ಅಸ್ತಿತ್ವವಿದೆ.
Press Coverage
BANAMATHI

In R.R District, the western parts like Rajendranagar, Chevella, Shabad, Vikarabad Tandur, Basheerabad, Batwaram & Karnakota Mandals are badly affected by this evil.
PROFILE OF BANAMATHI

• In Ranga Reddy Dist. the people living in about 130 villages still believe Banamathi.

• In the name of Banamathi violent acts are being committed in the villages disturbing their peace & tranquillity.

• Villagers are resorting to cutting tongues, plucking tooth, brutal killings, live burnings etc. of innocent people.

• Most of the victims are SCs & BCs
## BANAMATHI VIOLENCE

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<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>44</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>55</td>
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<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>70</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>13</strong></td>
<td><strong>28</strong></td>
<td><strong>41</strong></td>
<td><strong>359</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
BALEJAGUDEM INCIDENT

- On 30/31-03-2002 at Balejaguda of Vikarabad, people cut the tongues and plucked the tooth of Anantaiah (50), Anathamma (40) his wife and a suspected sorcerer Venkataiah in a ghastly manner after tying them trees and beating them indiscriminately.
Anathaiah showing his cut tongue and plucked tooth
The Brutal double murder of Nagasanapalli.

- On 16-4-2002 in Nagasanapalli village the villagers killed Sayanna(30) and his brother Samuel(25) and burnt them to ashes.
- They also belong to SC community.
నకనిన్నను మారండి మరియు విమలమని బిగించాడు.
DHARUR BANAMATHI CASE

Chakali Manemma (48) of Dharur to get her mentally retarded son cured by a village witch craftsman by name Yousuf, dug the floor tiles and kept blood, mutton etc. in her house believing Banamathithi.
DHARUR BANAMATHI CASE

SP Inspecting the scene of offence where the Banamathi puja was allegedly performed by Yousef in the house of Manemma at Dharur
DHARUR BANAMATHI CASE
CHANDANAVALLI
BANAMATHI MURDER

• On 28-5-2002 B. Narasimhulu (35) SC was brutally killed and burnt to ashes in Chandanavilli village suspecting him to be a Banamathi witchcraftman in the presence of his own family members.
THE TREE TO WHICH NARSIMHULU WAS TIED AND SET ABLAZE
THE MATCH BOX USED IN THE COMMISSION OF OFFENCE
THE CHARRED BODY OF NARSIMHULU
THE MOTHER-IN-LAW AND CHILDREN OF THE DECEASED NARSIMHULU
THE CHILDREN OF NARSIMULU WITH THEIR FRIGHTENED LOOKS
NANDHARKHANPET CASE

- On 3-6-2002 V. Ramulu (30) was tied to a tree, killed, and burnt to ashes by the villagers in ghastly manner
- He is also SC by caste
THE TREE TO WHICH V.RAMULU WAS TIED AND BEATEN
RAMULU KILLED AND BURNT TO ASHES
THE ASHES
MANTHATTY BANAMATHI CASE

- On 18-6-2002 the villagers brutally crushed one Goresab(56) to death, with boulders suspecting him to be a sorcerer responsible for ill health of one boy.
GORE SAB’S HOUSE INFRONT OF WHICH HE WAS MURDERED
THE DECEASED GORE SAB
THE CRUSHED HEAD OF GORE SAB
THE ACCUSED WHO KILLED GORE SAB BRUTALLY
THE WOMEN ACCUSED
WIFE OF GORE SAB PLEADING FOR HELP
MEETING AT MANTHATI VILLAGE  2-7-2002
GATHERING
S.P. SRI RAMACHANDRA RAJU ADDRESSING THE VILLAgAERS AFTER VISITING THE SCENE
THE VILLAGERS OF MANTHATTI LISTENING TO S.P.
On 27-2-2002 one Yadamma (35) SC was tied to a neem tree, beaten, and attempted to set her ablaze suspecting her to be a banamati sorcerer.
YADAMMA TIED TO NEEM TREE
PUBLIC MEETING AT SUBHANPUR VILLAGE 2-7-2002 (NIGHT)
GATHERING
WAR AGAINST BANAMATHI

• To control the Banamathis violence and to bring about an awareness on blind belief over Banamathis, witchcraft etc..as a cure for the ill health of villagers, a special campaign called BANAMATHI VYATHIREKHA PRACHARA UDYAMAM was launched in April 2002 by RR Police.
WAR AGAINST BANAMATHI

The services of experts like Dr. Samaram, Dr. Vijayam of Nastik Kendram Vijayawada, famous Mimicry artist Sylvester, Hypnotist T.S.Rao, Magician Goutham, Psychiatrist Dr. Indla Ramasubbareddy, Media expert like Ravi prakash Teja news, Cinestars like Babumohan MLA, AVS, Sivajiraja, Gundu Hanumatha rao, Judicial officers led by District session judge sri Vidyaprasad, Cultural troupe of Mokila school children, Political leaders were utilized in this campaign against Banamathi
MIMICRY ARTIST SYLVESTER, S.P. SRI RAJU AND
Dr. SAMARAM IN THE CAMPAIGN
Dr. SAMARAM, T.S.RAO, Dr.I.R.S.REDDY, Dr.VIJAYAM AND RAVI PRAKASH IN THE CAMPAIGN
THE FAMOUS PSYCHIATRIST
Dr. INDLA RAMA SUBBA REDDY ADDRESSING THE GATHERING
HYPNOTIST T.S. RAO, HYPNOTISING A PERSON
KAMALAMMA A VICTIM OF BANAMATI VIOLENCE
SPEAKING
MAGICIAN GOUTHAM DISPLAYING A MAGIC ITEM
S.P. SRI RAJU AND Dr.SAMARAM TALKING TO A VICTIM
NIYANTHA DISPLAYING A SCIENCE ITEM
GOUTHAM’S MAGIC SHOW
GOUTHAM MAKING A BANAMATI BELIEVER TO MOUTH FIRE
GOUTHAM AND SYLVESTER’S MAGIC SHOW
VENTR LAQUISIM DISPLAY BY SYLVESTER
GOUTHAM AND SAMARAM CHANGING A BANAMATI BELIEVER
M.L.A. AND CINE ARTIST BABU MOHAN
THE CAMPAIGNING TEAM
FROM L TO R: T.S.RAO, Dr.SAMARAM, M.L.A. BABU MOHAN, S.P. SRI RAJU, Dr. VIJAYAM, SADIQ IN THE CAMPAIGN
CINE ACTOR A.V.S. PARTICIPATING IN THE CAMPAIGN
CINE ARTISTS G. HANMANTHA RAO, SHIVAJI RAJA, A.V.S. S.P. SRI RAJU, DIST. JUDGE SRI VIDYA PRASAD.
CINE ARTIST GUNDU HANUMANTHA RAO
THE SCHOOL CHILDREN OF MOKILA EXHIBITING THE PLAY LET ON BANAMATI AT YACHARAM
THE SUDDULU DANCE
A BANAMATI PATIENT (HYSTERIA)
THE BANAMATI PATIENT IN THE GATHERING
THE ALLEGED SORCERER WITH FRIGHTENED LOOKS
5000 LAMBADA TRIBAL GATHERING AT MANSANPALLY
THE PARTICIPANTS
THE ASSEMBLY OF 150 PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES
D.I.G. SRI N.S.RAO., COLLECTOR JAIN, D.J. VIDYA PRASAD AND H.M. DEVENDER GOUD RELEASING WALL POSTERS AT YACHARAM
DIST. JUDGE SRI VIDYA PRASAD ADDRESSING THE GATHERING AT YACHARAM
పోటో వెలుగు విధానం స్వాగం మాత్రము

- ముద్దుతున్న చిన్న పోటో ద్వారా సంప్రదాయాన్ని సూచిస్తుంది.
- పోటో ప్రపంచంలో ముఖ్య కారణం అని నిరోధిస్తుంది. ఈ పోటో కొండలలో ఈ పోటో కనం ఉంది.
- పోటోకే ప్రపంచంలో ముఖ్య కారణం అని నిరోధిస్తుంది. ఈ పోటో కొండలలో ఈ పోటో కనం ఉంది.
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PUBLIC MEETING AT TANDUR
Hon’ble Minister for Information
Sri S.Chandra Mohan Reddy at Tandur public meeting
JUSTICE SUBBA RAJU OF HUMAN RIGHTS COMMITTEE
Dr. VIJAYAM, JUSTICE SUBBA RAJU AND S.P. RAMACHANDRA RAJU WATCHING THE PROCEEDINGS
S.P. SRI M.V. RAMACHANDRA RAJU ADDRESSING IN THE MEETING
GATHERING
PUBLIC MEETING AT SHANKERPALLY

- On 03-07-2002 Public meeting was organized by CPI, R.R.District on “MANAMU-MANA NAMMAKALU”
- Around 200 people attended meeting
DISTRICT COLLECTOR AJAY JAIN
ADDRESSING THE GATHERING
S.P. SRI RAMACHANDRA RAJU, ADDRESSING THE GATHERING
THE GATHERING
Reasons for Banamati Belief

1. Poverty – 80%
2. Illiteracy – 80%
3. Lack of Mobility – 90%
4. Lack of Health – 80%
5. Suppression & Oppression – 70%
6. Superstitions & Belief in Mantras – 95%
MEDICAL ASPECTS

- Lack of access to health facilities
- Strong belief in Evil Powers
Mass Hysteria
• Hysteria of Conversion
• Hysteria of Dissociation
• Paranoid Psychosis
• Schizophrenia
Recommendations

• **Awareness Programs against Banamati**

*Improve Health Facilities in Rural Areas*

(contd.)
A scientist demonstrating how a coconut can be set on fire simply by sprinkling water on it. In fact, potassium permanganate powder is filled in the husk of the coconut and glycerol is sprinkled on it. The moment glycerol seeps inside the husk and comes in contact with the potassium permanganate, the resultant chemical reaction sets the coconut husk on fire. Using this method, some sadhus are fooling people. – Express photo by R. K. Dayal.

**Promote Science & Scientific Outlook**
Recommendations (contd.)

• **Mobile Medical Teams**

• **Admit Banamati Patients in Hospitals and provide immediate medical care & educate against Banamati**
Recommendations (contd.)

- Appoint Psychiatrists & Psychologists, Medical Social Workers in Mandal HQ
- Socio-economic uplift and poverty eradication measures
- Improve communications (electronic & transport) in rural areas
- Encourage NGOs
Recommendations (contd.)

- Start more schools in rural areas
- Formal / Non-formal education
- Include in School Syllabus lessons against Banamati
- Make stringent laws against Banamati
- Make Banamati Offences cognizable
- Strong punishment for offenders
Recommendations (contd.)

- **Role of Media (print & electronic)**
- **Ban TV Serials and Cinemas which strengthen Banamati belief**
- **Promote Science Yatras / Magic Shows**
Recommendations (contd.)

- Organize youth and women
- Cultural programs
- Protect Banamati Victims
RESPONSIBILITY OF GOVERNMENT

• Dispel superstitions
• Promote Scientific Temper
• Provide Medical Facilities
• Proactive role in fighting Banamati
• Political Will
Role of Social Workers, Medical Practitioners & Public
THANK YOU