



# ARTICLE

## Traditional Healing Process of the Chakmas

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### Abstract

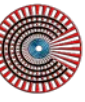
*The Chakmas are Mongoloid tribal people living in the Chittagong Hill Tracts of Bangladesh and Mizoram, Tripura, Assam and Arunachal Pradesh of India. They are Buddhist by religion and they have a rich indigenous tribal medicinal system which is still carried out by some locally called Vaidyos. They maintain records of medicines developed from locally collected herbs or plants and symptoms of diseases in their own language i.e., Chakma. The present paper is an attempt to give a brief outline of this rich healing tradition of the Chakmas. It is a descriptive one and is based on the reading of the manuscripts of the Vaidyos available to the first author.*

**Keywords:** Vaidyo, Vaidyali, *aurveda*, Mandar (magical chanting), *Bāyu* (air).

### Introduction

The Chakmas are one of the ethnic Mongoloid hill tribes mostly living in the Chittagong Hills Tract of Bangladesh, in the Indian states of Mizoram, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Arakan region of Myanmar etc. They have their own tradition, culture, history, script, literature, folklore and healing system. Their women weave their own clothes and decorate it beautifully with flower designs from their traditional flower pattern called *Ālām*.

History is obscure about the existence of the Chakma. Some traces of the Chakma are found in the 9<sup>th</sup> Century in the Burmese history as 'thek'. The Burmese called the Chakma as 'Thek' (pronounced Tsek or Tsak). The Portuguese called them *Cagama* or *Chuckma* and the British named them 'Chakma'. However, the Chakma identify themselves as "Chāngmhā". As per their



traditional belief, the Chakma originated from the Sakya clan of Gautama Buddha fame. Their tradition, culture and exogamous division of society is almost similar to the Himalayan tribes like the *Rai* and *Limboo*. The Burmese write the word Sakya as *Thekya* (pronouncing 'Sakya') and 'ma' denotes to people. Hence Chakma actually denotes to 'Thek' 'ma' meaning the 'Sakya People'. As per self-introduction of 'Chāngmhā', in Burmese 'Chāng' means an elephant and Mā means people. Hence 'Chāngmhā' means 'Elephant people'. It is because, as per traditional history, the *Bijak*, when the Chakma first established a kingdom in Burma in the ninth Century under the command of Regent Vijoygiri, he ascended the throne in the new capital by riding an elephant called *Dhawalgiri* as per Sakya tradition. (It is said that the Sakya used to ascend a throne by riding an elephant and when there is no heir for the throne, they used to release the royal elephant. And whoever is taken on the back by the elephant was made the king. It is also said that when there was no heir on Kapilavastu after the expiry of Suddhodhana, the royal elephant took Mahanama to be the next king of Kapilavastu.) Hence the Chakmas identified themselves as Chāngmhā--meaning the people of the king who ascended the throne by riding on an elephant.

The Chakma ruled a kingdom in Burma till 1333. After the defeat of Chakma kingdom in 1333, the condition of the Chakmas was rendered very much pathetic due to atrocities committed by the Maghs (Burmese and Arakanese). Hence they had to flee to Bengal in 1448. The people who reached *Kadalpur*, near Chittagong were known as *Ānokya Chakms* (western Chakma, the mainstream Chakmas), the people who fled from Burma and could not reach *Kadalpur* and settled in the way at *Toingang* (River with abundant of food courses like meat, fish and vegetable) were known as *Toingangyā* to *Tongchangyā* and the defeated people who remained in Arakan were known as *Doinakyā* or *Daingnet*.

### Healing Method

The Chakmas traditionally believe that a human body is formed of five elements- water, earth, air, fire and ether. According to *Vaitdyali* (healing system) a human body is consist of: (1) Forty nine varieties of *Bāyu* or air, (2) Fifty two *Bāzār* of market, (3) Fifty three *Gallis* or streets, (4) Nine *Darajās* or doors, (4) Eight *Gudhi* or rooms, (5) Seven *Tālā* or locks, (6) Five *Chābhi* or keys, (7) Thirteen *Khils* or nails, (8) Eighty *Khāmbhā* or posts, (9) Seventy two thousand *Nāri* (pulses, nerves, veins, arteries) out of which ten are main, (10) Three *Bichchans* or beds, (11) Five main



*Muni* or sages, (12) Five *Prāna Bāyu* or life air, (13) Seven *Sāgar* or seas, (14) Eighteen *Maghām* or abodes, (15) Nine *Chanda* or moons, (16) Three *Tari* or boats, (17) *Kāmāni*, (18) *Bālhuch* or pillow, (19) *Mālum*, (20) *Nāngal*, (21) *Dogan* or shop, and (22) *Monurhā* etc. And these elements are influenced by external forces like gods, goddesses, spirits, deities, humane, animal and by other living beings, from time to time. If our *Cherāk*, the lamp of knowledge is inactive, we get sick. If our lamp of knowledge is bright, we can avoid illness and save ourselves from the influences of these elements. The Chakma believe that the cause of all illness and harm are the act of a human, a deva or a spirit. So, to get relief from such harm one should try to cure it with medicines, or drive away the spirits applying mantras, get protection wearing *Āng* (Yantras) in the form of *Tābit* (talisman), get protection by binding or burying an *Āng* and medicine around the house or place of habitation or kill the disease causing spirits by calling and bind them in the process called *Khāng* (if it is with an egg) *Tonā* (if in other process), or appease them with Pujo and sacrifice of animals to release their hold.

A human may cause harm with *Mandar* (magical chanting), *Jādu* (administration of corrosive substances) or *Tonā* (applying black magic on the supposed body of a person in which portion of wearing clothes, hair, nail, soil from foot print or soil from place of urination is necessary), *Chāllān* (deputation of spirits) *Bāān* (releasing of *Bāān*, literally arrow in the form of black magic) etc.

A *deva* or spirit may cause harm if their rules are violated or their habitation or place of dwelling is invaded by making *jhum*, garden, construction of house etc. or making dirty by easing urine, latrine etc on such places of habitation. In such a case they possess and hold such a person and cause *Ājhar* (influence/affect) to kill by causing illness. It is also believed that the spirits go for human hunting and if any one falls in their way, are attacked by them with *gulhee* (pallet / shot / bullet). Therefore, the names of illness are sometimes named as *Ājhar* (possession/shelter/affect), *Gulhee* (pallet/bullet), *Pirye* (pain), *Ābāng* (tumor), (lump), *Agalāni* (vomiting), *Āgājhā* (eczema), *Ājinā* (wart), *Ārāngā* (chicken fox), *Baat* (small fox), *Bāk jāl* (tongue ulcer), *Kāch* (cough), *Ba Pirye* (Venereal disease), *Krenghā* (infantile disease) etc. more than five hundred diseases.

The Chakma traditionally believe the hold of gods in every illness, accident, misfortune etc due to planetary position. Hence to free the body from the hold and influence of spirits they appease, worship the gods and spirits and also apply *Mandar* (mantra), *Dāru* (medicines) and various form of magic in the form of *Tābit* (Talisman), *Āng* (yantras), *Tonā* (application of magic on supposed



disease causing object), *Khāng* (application of magic with certain rite) etc. They also use *Jādu*, *Tonā*, *Chāllān*, *Mantra* and medicines to destroy and control an enemy. A healer who performs *Pujo* and appeasement of spirits is called an *Ojhā* and a healer who prescribes medicinal *Tāllik* (medicinal formula) and apply *Mandar* (magical chanting) is called *Vaitdya*. A person may be both a *Vaitdya* and *Ojhā*.

The *Vaitdyas* are traditionally thought and trained by a *Guru Thāghur* (Master Teacher) who is a veteran and experienced *Vaitdya*. *Vaitdyali* is both *Bhāledi* (welfare) and *Kubidi* (destructive). The initial stage of teaching starts with *Tālliks* and *Mandars*. A *Shichjya* or student apprentice is first taught *Tālliks* and the less important mantras. The teacher teaches the main courses only when he has full confidence on the *Shichjya* (student) that he is faithful and he will not cause any harm to innocent people without a legitimate cause. Since as per traditional belief, if a *Shichjya* causes any harm to others without a legitimate cause, the teacher also gets the share of the sin and one should cause harm to others with full ability only if

- (1) Own livelihood is taken away,
- (2) Own land is grasped,
- (3) Own wife is taken away,
- (4) Harm is caused to self, and family members and
- (5) Showing anus with humiliation is regarded as the gravest offence.

A. *Shichjya* should apply all his knowledge to harm such humiliator. Otherwise, all his teachers will also go to hell! On the other hand, if a person does not apply the harmful knowledge to harm any innocent person, he gains the virtue of looking after an *Arhant* monk. Earlier, while learning *Vaitdyali*, a *Shichjya* had to undergo meditation under the guidance of the *Guru* in the deep jungle where ‘*Kabā patra ba nei*, *Dhinghi kilyā Ra Nei* (where there is no sound of crow, sound of leaves and no sound of paddy pounding (people), at *Sajhān Khalā* (the cremation ground) and on *Tāngyā Magadā* (on a hung dead body) etc.

The *Guru* teaches his *Shichjya* about the functions and locations of the vital parts of a body with the help of an anatomy chart called *Mānāp* (anatomic chart). A *Mānāp* is said to be of two kinds, *Jedā Mānāp* (live) and *Marā Mānāp* (dead). The vital points are known as *Jāgā- Jabin* and the most important or vital parts of the body and the *Vaidyas* (physicians) on which blow air chanting *mantras* are 36 in number. These 36 points are also called *Chhatrich Maghām* or *Jabin*. They are: 1. *Tālo* (Crown of head), 2. *Bāng Chokh* (Left eye), 3. *Dein Chokh* (Right eye), 4. *Kobāl* (fore head), 5. *Bāng Kān* (Left ear), 6. *Dein Kān*



(Right ear), 7. *Bāng Nāga Phalā* ( left nostril), 8. *Dein Nāga Phalā* (right nostril), 9. *Mu* (Mouth), 10. *Thughurhee* (Chin), 11. *Tadā* (Throat), 12. *Demi* (below the neck), 13. *Bāng Kangadhā* (left end of Collar bone), 14. *Dein Kongodhā* (right end of collar bone), 15. *Bāng Bagal* ( left arm pit), 16. *Dein Bagal* (right arm pit), 17. *Bang Hadho gabhi* ( end of left wrist (front), 18. *Dein Hado gabhi* (front end of right wrist), 19. *Buk* (Chest), 20. *Bāng Dudho Mādhā* ( Left nipple), 21. *Dein Dudho Mādhā* (right nipple), 22. *Gupta Dwar* (Back, between two shoulder blades), 23. *Bāng Dudhottole* (three fingers below the left nipple), 24. *Dein dhago harho thum* (end of right ribs), 25. *Lheplevi* (Solar plexus), 26. *Nābhi* (navel), 27. *Tal Pet* (three finger below the navel i.e. abdomen), 28. *Bāng Ādhu* (left Knee), 29. *Dein Ādhu* (right knee), 30. *Bāng Jam dwar* (between the left Thumb and index of foot), 31. *Dein Jam Dwar* (between right thumb and index of foot), 32. *Bāng Thengha pit* (Back of left feet), 33. *Dein Thenga Pit* (back of right feet), 34. *Bāng Telodi* (ends of tleft high), 35. *Dein Telodi* (end of right thigh) and 36. *Puno Tinjurhi Hār* (coccyx). These are nothing but parts of the body according to their functions.

The *Guru* also teaches his students as to how to identify the cause of illness whether it is *Mānei Karam* (caused by human being) or *Deva Karam* (caused by spirits. If it is caused by *Manei*, it can be cured with *Mandar* (magical chanting) and *Dāru* (medicine). If it is *Deva Karam* (caused by spirits), identifying its power, the hold is released with *Mandar* (magical chanting) and appeasement with *Pujo* (worship), *Dāli* (sacrifice of animal) and *Dāru* (medicine). An experienced *Vaitdya* is supposed to diagnosis an ailment by touching the nerves of a patient. He also applies the following methods to ascertain the cause of illness:

- (a) *Tābit Bānhi Denā*: In this method, a talisman is bound on the patient and who is supposed to disclose the cause of illness.
- (b) *Dāban Chānhā*: In this process, mantra chanted oil is applied on a *gheelyā*, nail or a mirror. A person born in the zodiac of *Tulā* (scale) is only supposed to see the cause on the mirror, nail or *Gheelyā*.
- (c) *Dāru Bānhi Denā*: In this process, certain medicine (mantra chanted) is bound on the patient and who is supposed to disclose the cause in sleep.
- (d) *Khurhee Hādhāna*: In this process a *tulā rāshi* man is possessed with spirit and he is supposed to go to the offending place where the spirit held the patient.
- (e) *Bān Tulhee Denā*: In this process a *Tulā Rāshi* born man is possessed with spirit and he is supposed to disclose the cause of illness while under the possession of the spirit.
- (f) *Mralā Chānha*: In this process, a bamboo stick is chanted with mantra and the stick is measured every time asking question. If any difference is found in the measurement, the cause is ascertained.



- (g) *Ganānā*: It the process of calculation observing certain sign and symbols.
- (h) *Tel Parhā, Nun Parhā, Pānhi Parhā*: In this process, oil, salt, water etc. are chanted with *Mandar* (magical chanting) and the patient is asked to taste it. The cause is ascertained with the feel of taste by the patient.
- (i) *Badā Tonā*: In this process, an egg is chanted with *Mandar* and the egg is broken. The cause is ascertained on seeing certain spot, colour etc on the yolk.

The *vaidtyas* also believe in the hold of spirits if a patient does not get cured within stipulated time and also after application of *Bājeiā* (Time tested) medicines as per *Tāllik* (medicinal formula). Medicine is prescribed after the symptoms and signs of the patient are found to be identical as is written in the book of *Tāllik*.

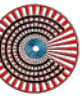
The Chakma worship many deities for protection and cure from illness. Among them *Kāelia, Parameswari, Oshyā, Gangā, Bhoot, Dein, fairies, Planetary deities, Khāgini, Moghini, Jugini, Preta, Matris* etc. are main. *Kaleia* is identified with Siva, *Parameswari* with *Durga* and *Oshya* with *Ganesh*. They are worshipped at marriage and as family deities every year or whenever in distress for peaceful and prosperous family life. *Gangā*, for protection, at the time of purification, ward off misfortune, ill luck, accident, and to release hold in an illness. *Bhoot* in illness, *Deins* and fairies are also in illness. They are also seen to worship *Barmha, Vishnu, Siva, Kali, Lakshmi* and other deities mostly in illness. Among the other deities they worship are: *Kālā Khedar, Jugini, Siji, Mongshā, Hātyā, Motyā, Khāgini, Moghini, Khegā, Bhaghā, Ajurho, Dyo, Chelā, Ājrel, Nimochyā, Ijingyā, Ijingi, Ulombotyō, Chekkhang, Kālubhang, Lāgochyā, Lāgorhi, Sip Kumori, Phool Kumori, Bar Kumori, Jal Kumori, Undur Kumori, Bhoot Kumori, Mhekkhāng, Sājhani, Nājoni, Phejari, Surjyokelā, Chandrakelā, Dāgini, Kāligā, Diburhi, Sāpuri, Sighidhwach, Indradumba, Lulangsu, Ulanga, Nāridyang, Thān, Bar Shelyā, Nārengyā, Biātrā, Phool Ganga (Dhal Ganga/Dhaleswari), Rākkhwal, Bar Kumori, Sil Kumori, Mech Kumori, Bat Kumori, Bini Kumori, Swadip, Pwa Devedā, Kālī jandur, Gāttolyā, Chembāk, Mralā, Mrali, Krengā, Krengi, Parmāmhoch, Rwah proo Hājhangmhā, Khukkhyong, Sibāngsā, etc. All these deities are appeased at illness, believing their hold called *Ājhar* as stated in the book of *Tāllik* as to what symptoms appears in a patient for the spirits' hold. The *pujo* or appeasement of the spirits is performed as stated in the various *Pujo Bijaks* (detailed procedure of appeasement).*

These deities and spirits are said to possess different powers. They cause different illness to human beings and on being offended by encroaching their place of habitations or falling in the way of



their hunting. Therefore, the names of illness are named as *Ājhar* (affect), *Gulhee* (pallet/bullet) etc. The place of habitation of sprits are known as *Mogham* and thirty six are main So the main *Mogham*s are collectively known as '*Chhatrich Moghmā*': They are as under:

- (1) *Bādol Khāt* (Bat's cave) – the eye.,
- (2) *Tārā pochchyā gāt* (a hole, the anus)  
- ear hole. Den of bats.
- (3) *Biji Khāt* (the ear)
- (4) *Byātrā Bhidyā*- theknee.
- (5) *Cherāk Ghar*
- (6) *Chhinā kijing*- the neck
- (7) *Debedā Gourh*
- (8) *Dyo Dhulon*- the elbow. A tree whose both ends are rooted and a stream flow between or whose middle is up. The swing of *Diyo*, the male fairy.
- (9) *Tārā Pochchyā Gāt*- a pīt, the navel.
- (10) *Gera Aruk*- the figure of a millipede, the backbone.
- (11) *Gongā- Damdamā/Mājā*- triangular stream source.
- (12) *Hājā*- Pihr Khānā the salt forming stream or place. Female organ.
- (13) *Heil Gāch*- a big evergreen trees, it is believed to be the abode of ghost.
- (14) *Jāmā Bāch*- paired bamboo.
- (15) *Kājhee*- the rope (four limbs)
- (16) *Kāmār Dogān* – the coccyx.
- (17) *Kara Mādi*
- (18) *Khār Chhāgoni* (ash strainer).
- (19) *Kodoro Tong*- the holes of pigeons.
- (20) *Ubho Dogān*- (navel).- Den of porcupine
- (21) *Kuung Gāch*- Legs. Where two line of trees, three each are found.
- (22) *Māgeim*
- (23) *Manap Āruk*- (the body)/Munichsyora/Nimuchchya Āruk- skeleta figure made by six tillas.
- (24) *Tudhing Khalā*- the ankle.
- (25) *Nāga Khāt*-a place where water flows from two sources of a cave ie. the nose)
- (26) *Nah Tānā*- the chest



- (27) *Neil Chumo Gāt*-(mouth to ass), a tunnel, a borrow, - the mouth.  
 (28) *Pāāh Murho*- the three hills formed like the posts of an oven  
 (29) *Pāgochyā Gāch*- (parasital trees), abode of ghost.  
 (30) *Ubudho gāt* (the anus)  
 (31) *Puri Khāt*- Den of fairies  
 (32) *Puri Khalā*- the field of fairies.  
 (33) *Rādhā Ghara Chuk*- a hill top, the head.  
 (34) *Rijhyang*, a water fall.-armpit  
 (35) *Sāmugho Leijha Bach*- snail tailed bamboo...  
 (36) *Tāng Mhāng Ghāt*.

Apart from the above, the places where like *Bhet bhedi* (clayey place), *Bāndar morā* (dead monkey), *Bilei Jhām māchchyā* (jungle cat jumping place), *Changarā Marā* (dead sham bar), *Gui Marā* (dead monitor lizard), *Chānnwa Bāch* ( a place where four bamboo leans forward and at the top a spider weaves a net), *Pāgala Gour* (mad person rave), *Peikh Marā* (dead bird), *Phārāngi Gour* (leper's grave), *Pwa Kābā* (baby grave), *Murho Shelhoch Khāt* (eel pond on a hill), *Bāmhoch Khāt*, *Sil Kugur Khāt* (gecko like lizard cave), *Ui Phut*(bubble forming clay) , *Dur Morā* (dead tortoise), *Sugor dyā bheedha* (the hillock on which fining of pig was decided) etc are also believed to be haunted and not good for habitation and so are avoided for construction of house or cultivation.

Deities like *Biātrā*, *Rwāproo*, *Mrolā*, *Mroli*, *Krenghā*, *Krenghi*, *Pormāmoch* are Planetary deities related with child birth and child disease.

### ***Phee/Bolā/Bhārbwa/pānhishwanā/Phārā/dajhā/Khumho***

Apart from above, the Chakmas take finding of dead animals on any place as Taboo and ill-fated like *Shambar*, *Deer*, *Monkey*, *monitor lizard*, *Tortoise*, *Snake* *Birds* etc. For which they drive away the ill luck called *Phee* with the rite of *Bolā Kādā* (cutting away of ill luck)/*Bur Pārā* (exchange of ill luck). There are also some other *Phee/Bola* like (1) seeing dead animals like *Gui*, *Dur*, *Huring*, *Chongora* etc, 2. *Chil phee* (sitting of a kite on a roof), 2. *Mānei phee* (death of a person in a house from other *gutthi*), 3. *Chāng phee* (killing by an elephant), 4. *Māng phee* (entry of king in a common man house), 5. *Nāga phee* (entry of snake in a house), 6. *Lo phee* (falling of blood from unknown source in a house), 6. *Ui phee* (entry of black ant in a house), 8. *Sigira* (sitting of a falcon





on the roof of a house), 9. *Mhollha Phee* (sitting of a vulture on the roof), 10. *Kurhoi Naram Badā Pāriley* (laying tender egg by a hen), 11. *Jāmā Badā* (If a domestic hen lays twin egg), 12. *Kugur Chālat udhile*, (If a dog climb the roof), 13. *Dhāgedhi Kalātthur nighilile* (if a plantain flowers from the side), 14. *Herā kujut phul phudhile* (if an Elephant tear flowers), 15. *Bāk phee* (after attack and killing by a tiger), 16. *Undur phee* (at biting of clothe by rats), 17. *Barmhā Phee* (if a dwelling house burns in fire), 18. *Marā Phee* (on the death of a family member), 19. *Byāni Phee* (at the birth of a child at home), 20. *Byāh Phee* (marriage) are known as *Phee* 21. Entry of a new born mother without *Kajai pānhee*, 22. Bringing in of a dead body from outside, 23. Giving birth of a baby by outsider in the house, etc., is known as *Balā*. All unusual happening and things totaling thirty six are *phee* and *bolas*. They also believe in the idea of the inauspicious position of a house called *Bharbhwo*. That a person should not construct a house between brothers, sisters and brothers, in between people of same *gutthi* (*genus*). That the younger should not construct a house or make a jhum or garden below an elder where the water from elder's house or jhum / garden flows through the house or land of the younger. It is believed that the younger has got no strength to endure water from the elders and it is harmful for the younger relative and his family members.

**DAJHĀ**; Frequent illness, disturbance of family peace, death of parent, poverty etc. are known to be due to planetary disorder called *Dajhā*. Death of parent is called *Matri Dajhā/Pitri Dajhā*. one suffer for six years, due to *Chandra Dajhā* one suffer for sixteen years, due to *Mātri Dajhā* eighteen years, 101 years in *Pitri Dajhā*, 19 years in *Guru Dajhā*, 20 years in *Sukra Dajhā*, 20 years in *Sani Dajhā*, 12 years in *Rāhu Dajhā* and 19 years in *Kedu Dajhā*. Due to *Rahu Dajhā*, a house burns, due to *Chandra Dajhā*, one suffers from various ailment and involves in litigation and losses, due to *Mātri Dajhā* one suffers from various ailments, due to *Pitri Dajhā* one cannot get proper yield from agriculture, Due to *Guru Dajhā* one earns bad name and stigma, faces loss, in *Sukra Dajhā* one takes the good as bad and the bad as good, in *Sani Dajhā* one receives injury, due to *Rāhu Dajhā* one suffers for a long time from illness and bodily, get nightmare, house burn. In *Ketu Dajhā* one dies.

A *Dajhā* should be removed with *Mādhā Dhwa* and *Grichthi Chumulang*. *Phee/Bolā* should also be removed with *Mādhā Dhwa* and *Bur Pāra*. The Chakma also observe *Perā* and *Jugini* before start of a travel or start of work. They maintain certain prohibitions called *Khumho*, which are reportedly instruction of an *Ojhā* after performance of *Bāgho Bur*. They also observe omen at the time of travel or going for marriage proposal, *Bo Ānhā*. Coming across empty water pot, dead in



the village, dead animal are believed to be bad. Full pot, corn full bag, are believed to bring good luck.

It is also said that the master of all haunted and offending places is *Kala Khedar*, the king of witches. He is the son of *Sighi Pudi or Sibong Pudi*, a daughter of *Mokkhya Raja* (Daksha of Purana?). It is also said that when *Bangali and Changali*, the two sons of *Mokkhya Raja* were fighting for the throne and shooting arrows at each other, one of their sisters *Sighi Pudi*, entered in between and she died from their arrows. Therefore, in order to to compensate it, they promised their nephew *Kala Khedar*, an illegitimate son of *Sage Kashyapa/Sukra Charjya* and *Sikipudi* to be the master of all offending places and he will get the share of all offerings of the human being to spirits. Therefore, while offering anything on an offending place, *Kala Khedar* is offered a black cock.

*Pujo* or worship: A *Pujo* is performed to appease the deities disease causing spirits. Methods of all *Pujos* are not same. Some are performed with idols and some without. The performance depends on the *Bijak* or life history of the deities as well as their likes and dislikes. The life history of the deities and the method of *Pujos* are kept preserved by the *Vaitdya*s in the form of *Pujo Bijak*.

On illness and at distress: (1) *Bhat Jora*, (2) *Gonga Pujo*, (3) *Bhoodo Kurho*, (4) *Bhoodho Sugor*, (5) *Chela Sugor*, (6) *Dibuchsya Sugor*, (7) *Reido Sugor*, (8) *Kali Chhagol*, (9) *Mrola Pujo*, (10) *Eda Dagoni*, (11) *Khang*, (12) *Adrik Khang*, (13) *Kali Chhagol*, (14) *Chumulang*, (15) *Gristhi Chumulang*, *Trinat Pujo*, (16) *Tridep Pujo*, (17) *Jum/Bhui/Jaga Mara*, (18) *Puri Pujo*, (19) *Sajho Kurho*, (20) *Ghar Band*, (21) *Para Bon*, (22) *Madha Dhwo/Bur Para/ Bola Kada/ Phee Kadana*, (24) *Eda Dagana*, (25) *Sindi*, (26) *Mogini Pujo*, (27) *Deino Pujo*, (28) *Prettya deveda pujo* (29) *Haja Kuluk Marana, Thānmānā*

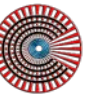
While performing a *Pujo*, the *Oujha* put prayer before the deity for the release of hold stating that the offering is on behalf of the patient and if the patient has offended knowingly or unknowingly, he/she should be pardoned. It is that the deity should be pleased with the offering. If the *Pujo* is with the sacrifice of animal, the *Ojha* will say that he is offering life for life, blood for blood, eye for eye, flesh for flesh, liver for liver etc., the patient should be released the hold.

The followings are the materials generally used in a *Pujo*:

- (1) *Dāli*; Sacrificial animal like chicken, pig, goat, duck, pigeon etc.
- (2) *Phool Pāghor*; Flowers of different colour, except of thorny and bitter plants.



- (3) *Memā Michshri*: Sweetmeat and materials made of sweet.
- (4) *Gheelā-Kojoi Pānhi*; The water prepared by dipping carnel of GHEELA, a round shaped fruit (horse chest nut like), KOJOI, a tamerind like jungle fruit found on thorny creeper, raw turmeric, metal like gold and silver which is regarded as sacred and suitable purifying a place.
- (5) *Mārei* ; Piece of bamboo chips decorated with downward bristle and which is posted on the sacrificial platform.
- (6) *Āk Pādā*: Tips of leaves like jack fruit or similar thick one used to test whether the sacrifice is read of different color like red, black, yellow accepted.
- (7) *Pālyāng* ; A bamboo plaited platform used to put Pujo materials.
- (8) *Dwa Pallā Pālyāng*: Two storied bamboo plaited platform.
- (9) *Ubho Cherāk*: Oil lamps whose wick is of spinned cotton thread and which stands upright.
- (10) *Mukti*: Idol made of clay or rice flour.
- (11) *Ābedhi Sudho* ; A thread which is spinned by a girl who has not attained puberty and it is regarded as sacred thread.
- (12) *Āgā Pādā*: The tip portion of plantain leaves which is spread on the platform of a Pujo.
- (13) *Gongā Ghar* ; A bamboo platform erected on the bank of a river or stream for the purpose of sacrifice of animal. It may be triangular or square in shape.
- (14) *ChoL* (rice): usually five measures. It is remeasured after the Pujo is over to test whether the Pujo was fruitful. If it is fruitful, the quantity of rice is believed to increase.
- (15) *Rāngā Kālā*: Thread string of different color like red, black, yellow, green, blue, orange, purple etc.
- (16) *Teng*: Money.
- (17) *Khoi*; Popped rice.
- (18) *Kābar*; Clothes of different measures depending on the Pujo.
- (19) *Ādārḥā*; Provisions of Pujo material like rice, curries, sweetmeat etc. put as offerings.
- (20) *Ghat*: Water pot with mango leaves, durba grass etc.
- (21) *Tabā*: Water pot, earthen or metal.
- (22) *Chharh*: Earthen/metal lid of a pot.
- (23) *Chārḥā*: Broken piece of earthen pot.
- (24) *Āk Pānhi*: Unused water freshly brought from river or stream.
- (25) *Mutro Chumo*: Small bamboo cylinders meant to put medicines; and



(26) Pujo Bijok: The life story of the deities and sprits and the procedure of performing *Pujo*.

The followings are the terms used in *Vaidyali*:

1. *Tāllik*: It is the traditional medial formula preserved in Chakma script. It contains the name of the ailments, symptoms and complications. It also contains the names of medicines and how to apply it and what other simultaneous food, drink, medicines should be taken with the main medicine and what should not be taken with the medicine. The medicines are two kinds, *Banājā* (fresh plant, shrub, herbs) and *Pājārhi* (preserved herbs, seeds and chemicals). The simultaneous food, drink and medicines are called *Unumān* and the prohibition is called *Bājhā*. In the Chakma system of treatment a patient is generally prohibited taking of turmeric, chillies, sour material, greasy and oily materials and sometime meat and fish. It is only in case of *Rangā Pirā* (jaundice), sour vegetable and crabs are encouraged to take. Example of typical *Talliks*: *Tallik Ranga Pirar: Lakkhyan: Jar hai, Halattya gurhi Mudey, Bal parey, Chokh holottya hai, Ghum ejhe. Tār Dāru: Rohn- sāt kājhā, Gul murich- sattwa, Sobona sindur, Magardhwaj, Bobo Turing sāt āgā. Iyanhi bādi sātwa buri bānei ekkwa ekkwa garhi dīney tin bār modhu di khāi.*

Formula for jaundice. Symptoms: Fever, Urine becomes yellow, weakness, Eyes become yellow, Feels sleepy. Medicines: Seven cloves of garlic, seven numbers of black peeper, *swarna sindur*, (a chemical), *Makardhwaj* (a chemical), seven shoots of *Bobo Turing* (a shrub). Grind it into a paste and make seven balls and dry in the sun. Take one ball at a time thrice in a day with honey.

2. *Jādu*: It is drugging of an enemy with corrosive poison or other substance to cause harm.

3. *Tonā*: It is spelling magic on certain object, taking it to be a supposed spirit or enemy to cause inactivate or cause harm. By doing so, it is believed that the cause of illness will be destroyed or driven away and the enemy will be harmed, destroyed.

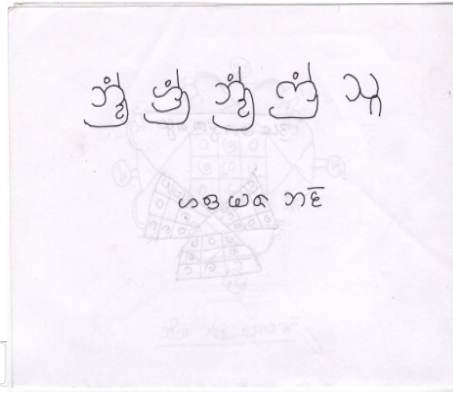
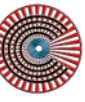
4. *Chāllān*: It is the process by which spirits are deputed to a certain enemy or place to cause harm to enemies.

5. *Bāān*: *Bāān* is literary an arrow. It is spelling of *mantra* on an enemy to cause harm.

6. *BAND* is the process of binding with mantrato spread further or to stop further action.

7. *Āng*: It is the megalical pattern called *Yantra* in Hindi and Bengali. It is used in talisman and for protection from *Tonā* and *Chāllān* and from the spirits.

Typical *Āng*: 1. *Hājā Mārā*(deactivation of salt forming place which believed to cause skin disease like leprosy).



Write it on a *Ulu Pāghor* (petal of elephant apple) or on an egg of black hen. Add *Tāngmāng ghādhu* and *Tei Udol* with the *Āng* and bury it on *Gaba Hājā* (salt forming streamlet where methun visit) and *Heidho Hājā* (salt forming streamlet where elephant visit).

*Khāng*: It is a kind of *Tonā* where the disease causing element is called and destroyed. It is done for skin disease like ring worm, eczema, abscesses, and some times for cough, colic pain etc.

*Kājhan*: It is the method of making a *mantra* chanted thread for a child with pneumonia type chronic cough worn around the body.

Typical *Kājhan*: Take nine strings of *Ābedhi Sudho* to the length of the patient. Chant this mantra on the thread for nine times and make one knot at the end of every chanting.

*Mandar*: A *mandar* is the *mantra* or magical chanting. *Mantras* are spelling of orders and invoking power of the mythological deities like *Rama*, *Brahma*, *Vishnu*, *Siva*, *Durga*, *Kali*, *Hanuman*, *Ganga*, *Manasha*, some sages, *Yama*, *Ravana*, etc.etc. Some *mantras* also have Mohamedan terms like *Alla*, *Mohammad*, *Lai La Illalla*, *Bismilla*, *Rahaman*, *Phir* etc. Some contains Burmese language and some with Buddhistic terms.

*Parhā*: Reading out and blowing air on the material or spot on food, drink, medicines etc.

*Bhāp Lonhā*: The process of inhaling vapour of medicines or steam bath.

*Bānhee Thonā*: To bandage.

*Phāgu*; Powder.

*Su Gorānhā*: To puncture with a red hot pointed stick especially a boil, carbuncle etc.

*Rokkhyā Bānānhā*: The process where the *vaitdya* paste underground honey fly wax on the *tigini* (tip of hair) with medicine like mustard seeds etc of a child for protection.

*Tābit/Kabach/Lhāppwai*: It is talisman or amulet worn to ward off evils and harm. Here *Ang* or magical writing with chanting of magical sound is applied.

Typical Tabit: 1. *Gā Band*.



Write the above *Āng* and pour it in a *Tābido Khul* with *Jārbwa Pwa neii* (navel of illegitimate child of *Bhādo* month), *Sannyo Kalā Gāch*, *Sannyo Arjun*, *Sannyo Kereit*. Give life to the tabit with *Telhāk* or *Teimbrenig* and bind it on a Tuesday or Saturday. It is for protection.

*Buri*: The medicinal balls (tablets). It is generally in the shape of cotton seed, plum seed, jute seed etc.

*Ghaji Khānā*: To take after rubbing the medicine on a stone, applying water making syrup.

*Garam Denā*: To apply heat. Here, a portion of the leaves of the medicine is bundled in cloth, other portion with the root is boiled. On the mouth of the pot, a *Chābārbamboo* plaited mat with hole is put. Above it the bundles are put to get heat and applied on the affected part.

*Lwah Dāk Gorānhā*: It is the process by which a red hot iron is dipped in the medicinal syrup.

*Lep Denā*: To apply medicine water on affected part.

*Guli Denā*: To apply a medicine and massage.

*Kābānā*: To puncture with a tip of hot red metal especially on a swollen part in sprain etc.

*Pātti Denā*: To cover a wound with a medicinal leaf to suck the pus etc.

*Band Gorānhā*: To draw boundary with mantra so that the disease does not spread, especially on a boil, carbuncle and swelling glands.

*Duch Mārā*: It is driving away of the offending cause or spirit from a place.

*Sinān*: It is chanting of mantra on water of a container, generally a pitcherful to give bath to a patient for cure or for early recovery. In a *Sinān*, rice, flowers and lamps are also used. After chanting mantra on the water, the *Vaitdya* blow air on the vital parts of the patient. The patient is also asked to drink it and later bathed.

## Conclusion

The knowledge of *Vaitdya* (*healing*) is getting lost day by day at the death of the *Vaitdyos* since there is a tradition among the Chakma to flow away the books on *Vaitdya* in the river or to burn it after the death of the *Vaitdya* by his children. It is carried out with the traditional belief that if the knowledge

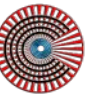


falls in wrong hands and if any harm is caused to any innocent person (since the knowledge is both BHALEDI (welfare) and Ku Bidi (harming), without any legitimate cause, the *Guru* also shares the consequence of such act. Therefore the *Vaidyos* never teach a student the harmful knowledge without being sure that such a student will never use them without a legitimate cause. It is also said that one *Vaidyo* had tested his student by sitting on the chest of the student and urinated. It was to test his temper. As a rule a person has the right to use his *Kubidi* knowledge on an enemy if he had illegal relation with his wife, eloped with the wife, graved his land of cultivation etc. In that case, the applier does not gain any stigma of sin but even his *Ojha-Guru* will go to *Hell*. It is also said that if any person shows his anus with contempt, one must use all the *Kubidi* knowledge on such person. Or, his *Ojha-Guru* (teachers) are bound to go to hell! It is also said that, if anyone having the knowledge of *Kubidi* does not apply on anyone's body, he is said to have gained the virtues of looking after an *Arhant Monk*. Hence while teaching the knowledge of *Vaidyali*, the *gurus* teach the students both *Bhalei* and *Kubidi* knowledge.

To conclude, the present attempt to represent the traditional medicinal system of the Chakmas will be proved effective, if this indigenous tradition gets proper care and support from Governments and Non-government organizations for its continuation and promotion across the world and further research is taken by those related with this subject.

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**NB:** Moreover, it is necessary to state that the study of the medicinal tradition of Chakma community is mainly based on the first author's long acquaintance with and experience of the system. He strongly desires to popularize this rich system of indigenous medicinal system of his community.

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