

Saluting August 15,1947

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August 15, 1947 is a glorious and memorable day for all Indians, the day when the long suppressed nation got utterance. It was the day when India got her independence from the mighty British Empire. The day reminds us about the end of the British Colonial Authority from India and the end of the widespread movements that continued to roll the nation's economy. The day brought new light and ray of new hopes for India. When the world was asleep, India woke up to life and freedom. A new nation was born on that day bringing the end of the colonial rule, suppressed agitations, movements, etc.

First, the Portuguese came to India in the 16th century followed by the East India Company in the guise of traders in Bengal. The British East India Company came to India in the middle and late

1700s and occupied vast tracts of Indian soil for 347 years whereas the Portuguese and the French had kept their influence on some parts of the country. British East India Company generated more than ten percent of England's revenue per annum to Britain by slaughtering the vibrant economy of India. Against this troubled backdrop, the British rise to power was slow, but remarkably steady because of the competition of the French with the British in acquiring Indian territory.

After the Battle of Plassey, the British Army under the leadership of Robert Clive defeated the Nawab of Bengal and the British East India Company was established. That was the initial entry of British Raj in India. The Battle of Buxar encouraged the East India Company to gain and strengthen administrative rights over Bihar, Bengal and Orissa in 1765. A series of Acts were proclaimed by the British Parliament to strengthen the administrative control of the newly conquered provinces of India, like the Regulating Act of 1773, the Indian Act of 1784, the Charter Act of 1813. Then, the English language was introduced as the medium of instruction in India in 1835 by

the British Empire to strengthen their grip over Indians and to effect broad reforms within colonial India. The triggering of the Indian rebellion of 1857 was a period of uprising in India against the British Rule and it was India's first National War of Independence. It brought about signs of valour and bravery about the sacrifice made by the freedom fighters of Indian heroes with accounts of unimaginable horror and destruction. The uprising was the result of creation of cultural and ethnic differences between the British Officers and Indian soldiers. The policy of divide and rule and attack on the culture triggered widespread resentment among the Indian rulers like Mughals and ex-Peshwas. The war of 1752 brought about a turning point in the history of modern India. The British embarked upon a series of reforms to pacify and integrate the Indian elite and rulers. The Rani of Jhansi joined the rebellion to protect her own interest. Following the Uprising, the British Crown in Parliament formally took over the responsibility of ruling India from the British East India Company and at the end, the Moghul Dynasty came to an end and Queen Victoria took the reign of India with the title of Empress of India in 1877.

What was happening in the Indian society all this while was difficult to overlook. A cultural revolution under the leadership of Raja Ram Mohan Ray had been taking place even before the event of Uprising of 1857. Sati was banned, the Arya Samaj came forward to propagate a new and refined religion, education for women was encouraged and a new breed of intellectuals taking their root mostly from Bengal, took the mantle of showing their presence in Indian freedom movement. This new breed of Indians was a power to reckon with. After the Uprising, India was poised at the dawn of a new era of political awareness.

Dadabhai Naoroji was the first Indian to become a member of the House of Commons of the British Empire by successfully contesting an election. The concept of "Swaraj is my birth right" was coined by Bal Gangadhar Tilak, which thrilled and inspired the hearts of millions of Indians. Like Netaji, Tilak advocated the policy of extremism, non-violence and abandonment of British goods supported by Bipin Chandra Pal and Lala Rajpat Rai. However, the Congress Party of 1906 did not support the acts of violence and disorder.

Bengal took the lead to start the first organised militant movements and it later took political turn giving birth to Indian National Congress with prominent moderate leaders seeking only their basic rights to appear for civil services examinations and more rights, economic in nature, for the people of the soil of the nation. Leaders like Lal Bal Pal and Shri Aurobindo adopted more radical approach for getting political independence from the British Raj. Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi came to the forefront to adopt the policies of non violence. Subash Chandra Bose adopted the policy of violence with military approach to engineer the independence movement. A proper mix of non-violence engineered by Mahatma Gandhi and violence launched by Netaji shook the strong foundation of unshakable British Empire. Leaders like Swami Sahajanand Saraswati advocated for economic freedom of the peasants and labour classes along with political freedom as British East India Company generated more than ten percent of England's revenue for onward transfer to Britain. The Indian National Congress under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi launched

the first Non-cooperation movement in 1920. The movement in the form of protest involved surrendering all titles, honorary offices and nominated posts in local bodies. All sorts of government functions and ceremonies were boycotted showing feeling of strong nationalism. But the British tried to suppress it with iron hand.

The concept and magnitude of the Non Cooperation Movement surprised every political leader in India. Gandhiji's approach of Non Cooperation had touched every man on the street. People came out voluntarily to support Gandhi and his movement.

The government machinery did not actually break down, but came under visible strain and stress. Gandhiji with magical application of his usual innovative skill, mobilized the public in support of freedom movement and the country and the Congress rallied behind him. The right moment had arrived to launch the Quit India Movement. The unnerving part was that the launching of another Civil Disobedience Movement could coincide with the Japanese advances from the far-east towards India. It was an open rebellion championed by Gandhi and adopted by the

masses with voluntary willing spirit to court risks for the freedom that was to be achieved.

The British adopted inhuman and repressive policies in Punjab. On April 12, 1919, General REH Dyer who had taken over the troops in Punjab the day before, prohibited all meetings and gatherings. So when a group of unarmed people congregated at the Jallianawala Bagh, a walled park with only a single narrow entrance, on April 13, 1919 to celebrate the Sikh festival of Baisakhi, General Dyer ordered fire on the innocent people. What followed was to blight the pages of Indian History and its peoples' minds for a very long time to come. A peaceful congregation had been transformed into an unmitigated blood bath.

Later, during the court martial, General Dyer coldly observed that he had fired only 1600 rounds of ammunition on the crowd as that was all he had. He added that he would have fired more had he so deemed fit. It indicated the inhuman feeling of General Dyer to Indians and its freedom struggle.

The brutality of the Jallianawalla Bagh massacre

shocked the country. It also shook the moderates out of their stupor and brought Gandhiji out in the open.

In 1920, under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi, the Indian National Congress launched the first movement of protest – the Non-Cooperation Movement. It involved surrendering all titles, honorary offices and nominated posts in local bodies. Government functions and Darbars were to be boycotted. Parents were requested to withdraw their children from government schools and colleges. Indians stayed away from the British courts and army, and were to stand for elections to government and legislative bodies. Ahimsa or non-violence was to be observed strictly.

The oppressive mood of the British angered the Indian masses to an unbearable extent. Unfortunately, at a time when the movement was showing signs of success, a mob of 3000 people killed 25 policemen and one officer in Chauri Chaura. Similar incidents had taken place earlier on November 17, 1921, in Bombay and on January 13, 1922, in Madras. On February 7, Gandhi suspended the movement. He was arrested on March 13,

1922. Suddenly, the future of Swaraj, or self-rule within a year seemed uncertain.

Gandhi came under criticism from several quarters for dissociating himself from the Non-Cooperation Movement. The man of the masses took the masses along when he made his exit and this was not to be the only time when differences of opinion cropped up in the Congress about Gandhi's actions and each time, in the end, people invariably gave in to the Mahatma. Gandhi had won over the heart of an entire nation.

In 1927 the British government set up a Committee headed by Sir John Simon to review the state of affairs in India. However, the Committee that came to be known as the Simon Commission did not include even a single Indian. The Congress took umbrage to the omission done by the Commission.

At this time, young radicals like Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhash Chandra Bose were insisting on making total independence as the goal of the Congress. At midnight, on December 31, 1929, Jawaharlal Nehru unfurled the Tricolour on the banks of the river Ravi in Punjab and the

Congress called for Purna Swaraj, or Complete Independence. January 26, 1930, was declared as Independence Day. From February 14 to 16, 1930, the Congress Working Committee met at Gandhi's famous Ashram in Sabarmati and requested him to launch the Civil Disobedience Movement 'at a time and place of his choice.'

On February 27, the plan for the agitation was made public. The entire nation was in ferment. Everyone, including the British, was curious to see what the Mahatma would do next.

On March 12, 1930, accompanied by 78 colleagues of the Sabarmati Ashram, Mahatma Gandhi embarked on a 60-mile march to the sea coast of Dandi. He defied the new salt taxes imposed by the government that would directly affect each and every Indian. To begin with, the government thought it better to ignore the event. However, soon the entire country was abuzz with hartals, protests, agitations, processions. The rising tide of discontent had to be checked. Gandhi was arrested on May 5, 1930. Abbas Tyabji took the relay to lead the movement. When Tyabji was arrested, Sarojini Naidu, the nightingale of India, replaced him.

All over India, the mood was upbeat, the atmosphere was tense and the people gathered on the streets to see what Mahatma Gandhi was telling. Louis Fischer wrote about the Civil Disobedience: "The British beat the Indians with batons and rifle butts. The Indians neither cringed nor complained nor retreated. That made England powerless and India invincible."

When the first Round Table Conference was held in London from November 12, 1930 to January 19, 1931, not a single member of the Congress attended it. The British now appealed to the Congress to work with them. Lord Irwin also declared that Mahatma Gandhi and the other members of the Congress Working Committee would soon be freed to consider the matter 'freely and fearlessly.' The Muslim League under the leadership of Muhammad Ali Jinnah demanded separate share in administration in India. It demanded control of foreign affairs and defence, and the matter of minorities. The talk with his Highness, the Aga Khan and Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar, ended in a complete deadlock. Gandhi returned to India on December 28, 1931 empty-handed. By May 1934, the Civil

Disobedience Movement had been completely withdrawn.

During World War II, the Congress decided that India should co-operate with Britain on the understanding that complete independence would be granted to India after that. The British, however were unwilling to discuss the issue of independence during wartime. The Congress had the doubt and wonder about the intentions of the government. Meanwhile, the divide between Jinnah's Muslim League and the Congress had grown sharper. In early 1940, Jinnah declared Pakistan as the goal of the League.

After the fall of France in 1940, Gandhi declared, "We do not seek independence out of Britain's ruin." The British reply to this was an offer to discuss an Indian Constituent Assembly, as well as Dominion Status 'after the war'. The offer was spurned. Gandhi with his usual innovative skill had the country and Congress rallying behind him. The right moment had arrived to engineer the Quit India Movement. The unnerving part was that the launch of another Civil Disobedience Movement could coincide with the Japanese advances from the far-east towards India. At the

call of Gandhi to launch open rebellion, the country was willing to court risks for the freedom that was to be won.

The movement was launched on August 8, 1942 in Bombay. Gandhi declared: "I want freedom immediately, this very night, before dawn, if it can be had. You may take it from me that I am not going to strike a bargain with the Viceroy for ministers and the like... Here is the Mantra, a short one, that I give you... Do or die. We shall either free India or die in the attempt." From 1942 onwards it was quite clear that the count down to an independent India had begun.

In 1946, Lord Mountbatten arrived in Delhi amid a buzz of political activity. After World War II, the British seemed keen to wash their hands off India and at the last Mountbatten was entrusted with the responsibility of transferring power to the Indians, safeguarding British interests and prestige for future interaction with Independent India and Pakistan. On 3 June 1947, Lord Mountbatten, the last British Governor-General of India announced the partition of India and Pakistan. Pakistan became independent on 14th August 1947 by becoming a separate Nation. On August 15th of 1947 at midnight, India

became an independent nation. After partition, violent clashes took place between the Hindus and the Muslims resulting in death of many innocent people. Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation, did not join in the celebrations that followed. Communal disturbance shook the two countries with blood bath. He was elsewhere working in riot torn areas helping the people and praying for peace in the subcontinent. He was very sad and disillusioned seeing the riots. He decided to dismember his mind from active politics. Since day of the formation of Pakistan, Gandhiji was seen with suspicion for siding with the Muslims and surrounding Pakistan from India easily. A Hindu fundamentalist called Nathu Ram Godse shot Mahatma Gandhi on 30th January 1950. India lost the Mahatma who thought to form a nation with the dream of Rama Rajya.

Mountbatten was invited to continue as Governor General of India on request of Prime Minister Nehru and Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. In June 1948, Chakravarti Rajgopalachari took over the Governor General of India from Mountbatten. Patel took on the responsibility of unifying 565

princely states, steering efforts by his "iron fist in a velvet glove" policies, exemplified by the use of military force to integrate princely states like Junagarh, Hyderabad, Jammu and Kashmir into India. The drafting of the Constitution was finalised and completed by the Constituent Assembly with much precision on 26th November, 1949 and India became a Republic on 26th January 1950 with Dr. Rajendra Prasad as the first President of India. With the iron policy of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Goa, Pondicherry and Sikkim were annexed with the Indian Republic. India adopted its democratic principle with the conduction of its first general election in 1952.

The Indian Independence was obtained through the application of proper mix of non-violence coined by Gandhiji and violence adopted by Netaji in cooperation with other militant leaders.

Since independence, a lot has been achieved by us, a lot more needs to be done in the competitive world. We need to learn from our past and move boldly into the future. We have achieved many milestones, but not enough to eradicate poverty, illiteracy, sickness, terrorism, crime, unemployment, vested interests, political

pulls, presence of gap between the rich and the poor, etc. Our achievements are being globally recognised with rise of GDP growth to 9.4% in recent years and is projected to grow at 8 to 9 percent over the next five to ten years. India has started to infuse self-confidence to turn itself to become a developed nation by 2020. We have to turn ourselves as a military and economic power, hand in hand. We will see an independent, innovative, resourceful vibrant India in the future.

Role of Subhash Chandra Bose for Indian Freedom Struggle.

Subhash Chandra Bose possessed revolutionary mind towards Indian freedom struggle. He was born on January 23, 1897 at Cuttack, Orissa. His father was Rai Bahadur Janakinath Bose, a prominent lawyer of Cuttack, and mother was Prabhavati Bose. Later, he was named as Netaji by the world. He completed his early studies at the European Protestant Collegiate School in Cuttack, He came to Calcutta to study at Presidency College in 1913. Upon completing his graduation, he left India for England to appear at the Indian Civil Service Examination in

which he secured 4th rank. Later it was abandoned by him as he was reluctant to work under the British Government. Thus he resigned and returned to India on the call of Chittaranjan Das.

He believed that only military power could wipe out the British Rule from India. But the concept of non violence was opposed by Gandhiji since it directly conflicted with his policy of non violence. The British Empire perceived Subhas as a potential threat and took urgent steps to arrest him without any charge on October 25, 1924. He was sent to Alipore Jail, Calcutta and in January 25, 1925 transferred to Mandalay, Burma. He was released from Mandalay in May, 1927 due to his ill health. After his return to Calcutta, Subhas was elected President of the Bengal Congress Committee on October 27, 1927.

He believed in communal harmony and worked towards Hindu-Muslim unity on the basis of respect of each community's rights. In January 1930 he was arrested for launching a procession against the imprisonment of revolutionaries. He refused to accept conditional bail and was

sentenced to a year's imprisonment.

Upon his release from jail, Subhas was elected and took charge as Mayor of Calcutta Corporation. Subhash Chandra Bose and Gandhiji, both fought for freedom struggle by steering their ideas. However, the two never saw eye to eye on their views of freedom and the movement itself. According to Subhas, Gandhiji had done blunder to the freedom movement by agreeing to take part in the Second Round Table Conference. Subhas viewed freedom as an absolute necessity, unlike the freedom which Gandhiji was negotiating" with the British. Subhas was arrested again while returning from Bombay to Calcutta, and imprisoned in several jails outside West Bengal in fear of an uprising. His health once again deteriorated and the medical facilities diagnosed him with tuberculosis. It was recommended that he be sent to Switzerland for treatment.

Netaji was imprisoned eleven times over a span of 20 years either in India or in Rangoon. He travelled extensively in India and Europe before starting his political opposition to Gandhiji. In Germany, he instituted the

Special Bureau for India for broadcasting on the German sponsored Azad Hind Radio. He founded “Free India Centre” in Berlin and created the India Legion consisting of about 4500 soldiers who were the Indian Prisoners of war. He formed INA in 1941 and set up Provisional Government of Free India in exile. His great words-”Give me blood, I will give you freedom” spoke of his patriotism.

He had the foresight and vision to not only think of a viable liberation struggle, but also to plan for the country’s economic development in the post-independence time. He formed Forward Bloc to fight against the British Empire in India. Since he had a lot of differences with Gandhiji and the then Congress, he decided to leave India in 1941. He took

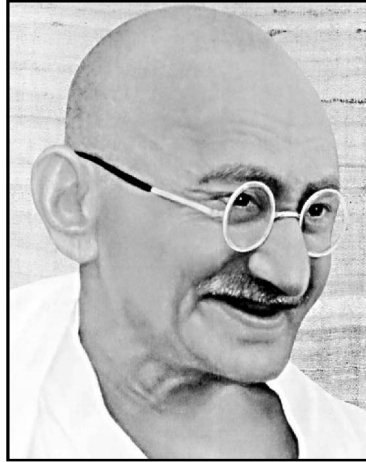
support from Britain’s enemies and engineered a war against Britain. The INA did not succeed to capture the British India but shook the British foundation in India. His vision of free India came true on 15th August 1947. On 18th August, 1945, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, died in air crash while flying to Manchuria to ask for Soviet Russia’s help after the surrender of Japan in the world war II. According to British Prime Minister, Clement Attlee, the INA under the leadership of Netaji had shook the strong foundation of British Empire in India and made their administration impossible to sustain. Had Netaji survived the air tragedy, we should have seen a different India, more stronger and united, free from poverty, illiteracy, communalism, regionalism, etc. He would

have opposed the tragedy of partition launched by Jinnah and saved lakhs of people to die due to communal riot. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was a mass leader with shining examples of sacrifice. His revolutionary ideas, genuine leadership, foresight, love for free India will encourage the Indians for all the time to come. He was an embodiment of shining examples of courage and self-sacrifice. He will be remembered as a champion of the champions in the memories of Indians.

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Mission of the Mahatma

Parikhhit Mishra



Gandhiji's name is synonymous with ahimsa or non-violence which was a means like his other related practices to realize truth, the resolve of his life. But what was truth? It was more than what is usually defined, in short, in a single word 'God'. Truth is strength of weak, deprived, dispossessed, exploited and voiceless multitude. He wrote, "I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth, and as my life consists of nothing but those experiments. It is true that the story will take the shape of an autobiography".

How should one look for truth or its realization? He was straight, unambiguous and uncritical about the qualification of the seeker. "The seeker after truth should be humbler than dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after truth should be so humble himself that even the dust could crush him," he observed.

Here begins the inquisitiveness, the search, where self becomes unimportant, selfless and noble cause takes precedence. Seeker's wisdom shapes ideals, paves the path he would try to traverse. The motto was truth, 'Truth, the word often uttered but rarely realized. Gandhiji aimed at its realization. Gandhiji aimed at its relation, the fruit or goodness of which would be the property of mankind, not of him. That was the great man's thinking and practice who made non-violence familiar all over the world which carried universal conviction. What did preclude its march ahead? Why it couldn't bring conflicts to an end, reduce tension, social friction, territorial dispute and war among nations? Ego of leading individuals elected democratically or who grabbed power by force, nations with mighty military powers and wealth and stupid view of racial

superiority were some of the causes of upheaval; tyranny, colonialism and imperialism are no mean contributors though. History is replete with stronger and more powerful nations' policy of expansionism and hegemonism. The token cases as of now are the Chinese disenfranchisement of Tibetans and illegal occupation Indian territory, and occupation of Iraq by USA.

In Gandhiji's time disquietude of oppression prevailed elsewhere. Two world wars were fought and India was under British rule for over two centuries. Gandhiji was not an anarchist in true sense of the term. He had an ennobling mission of his life for justice, freedom, equality and human dignity which he was set to realize in quest of truth through non-violence. It was a novel experiment which yielded, at long last, spectacular result in South Africa and India in dealing with white imperialist. He was hailed as an apostle of peace and non-violence.

Gandhiji's experiment with truth commenced right from his childhood when he was forthright to make amends to what he felt was a human vice. He made peace with himself only after he got himself purged. He quit smoking, stealing, drinking, meat eating and laying

as he took them as immoral and against the tenets of his chosen principles while restraining himself from the desire at a testing time in a den of vice. His confession was forthcoming of wrong-doing.

He set sail to England in September, 1888, stayed three years, passed the law exam, called to the bar on 11 June 1891 and the following day his return sail to home began. In England he put to test his resolve, gained socio-political, legal, cultural, religious and nonetheless intellectual experience. He stood strong on his vow, his Indianness unaffected and was worth the pledge taken before the Jain Monk Becharji Swami. Lure of wine, woman and meat couldn't detract him even when setbacks he faced were grave and challenging at times in his life. His exposure and study in England conceivably expanded his insights.

On his return to India as a barrister he couldn't make much stride in his profession at Rajkot and Bombay (now Mumbai), but his destiny beckoned to South Africa where he reached in April 1893 to render legal help in Dada Abdulla & Co's dawdling case. He had a year's assignment for 105 with first class return fare,

but his stay spanned twenty years.

Young Gandhiji's life was not that smooth in South Africa. His better sense saved him at an infamous house in Zanzibar. It was third incident in his life untouched by sin. It his first visit to the Durban court he was ordered by the Magistrate to dispense with his turban but he brushed aside and walked out. His unpleasant experiences were piling up. At Maritzburg when refused to move into other compartment although he held a first class ticket the constable pushed him out. On his way to Pretoria he was harassed, his ears were boxed, he was manhandled and forced to sit on the footboard. The colour Prejudice let loose. He filed a protest but preferred not to proceed against the assailant. In Johannesburg the other day he was pushed and kicked on the footpath unwarrantedly near president Kruger's house by a guard on duty but Gandhiji forgave him as he apologized.

Since 1860 Indian migrant labours worked in mines, sugar and banana firms under the white masters. They were largely Tamils and Gujuratis called samis and coolies. Gandhiji was also regarded as a coolie barrister. The Indian migrants didn't avail

any civil right. Gandhiji felt it was too much.

Gandhiji read Tolstoy, Thoreau and Ruskin, founded Natal Indian Congress and found synthesis of religions after going through various religious books. On his visit to India he met active Indian leaders. In 1901 he was allotted only five minutes to speak in Indian National Conference in Calcutta and got his resolution on Indian grievance in South Africa passed. Here he cleaned toilets without distaste. His heart sank at the sight of animal sacrifice in the Kali temple. He was called back to South Africa. His ship was not permitted to move at the Durban port as it was alleged that he had indulged in unremitted condemnation of Natal whites while in India, and to overpopulate Natal with Indians he had brought two shiploads of them. The ships were allowed to enter the harbour after twenty three days spent on the sea. As he landed, some youths recognized him, shouted him down and attacked him with stones, brick-bats and rotten eggs. His turban was snatched, he was bludgeoned, kicked. He fainted but could not escape till brave Mrs Alexander the wife of the Police Superintendent shielded and came to his rescue. He was

then escorted out by the police but the outcry against him did not cease. He refused to prosecute the assailants which helped restore calm. The spirit of ahimsa was upheld.

Gandhiji opposed the anti-Indian bills aimed at affecting Indian traders adversely and imposing restriction on the Indian immigrants. He simplified his life, gave shelter to a leper, dressed his wounds. He had the inner urge to serve as a nurse in a hospital, but could not owing to paucity of time and a different way of life. The lofty desire remained undiminished with him.

In South Africa he was a man in the making of a Mahatma. Here also he took a vow of Brahmacharya, a practice imbued by Raichand bhai. He viewed self-control as the best form of birth control. Not only this, he did all domestic chores by himself setting example of self-dependence, not bothering others. Gita became integral part of his moral and religious guide. He drew spiritual and mental strength out of it and then practiced *aparigraha* or shunning the desire for wealth or acquiring more than the minimum basic needs. This freed himself from meeting the

expectation of his brother. As a nobler pledge he offered himself entirely to the service of mankind. He adopted these ideals in the greater cause of realization of truth. In doing so he could get the corrupt white officers arrested although they were acquitted by the white jury. In this matter he availed the cooperation of Indians and Chinese. While practicing non-violence, he maintained, it was necessary to observe celibacy, stick to the principle of non-possession and endear human virtues. His views found place in Indian Opinion which included dietary practices of vegetarianism, nature cure, health and hygiene, fasting for greater achievements of spiritual disciple and peace which showed the way for atonement. In the process Satyagraha, his innovation, was born in 1906. The non-violent resistance meant a restrained, collective fight with truth force or power of truth.

He likened himself to legendary characters of King Harischandra, a devoted son to his blind parents Sravan Kumar, and a true devotee of Lord Krishna the valiant Arjun.

Gandhiji returned to India in 1914 and toured far and wide: a non-political journey. He founded Satyagraha

Ashram at Ahmedabad which was later shifted to Sabarmati during plague with free access to untouchables.

He lent leadership to the simmering grievances of indigo planters of Champaran and Kheda and to the mill workers strike. He launched Satyagraha on 6th April 1919 against Rowlatt Bill designed to prune the civil liberties of Indians. Satyagraha was not only non-violent weapon, to him it was a process of self-purification.

On 13th April General Dyer ordered firing on the unarmed Baisakhi gathering at Jallianwala Bag, where more than 379 people laid down their lives, condemned all over India, not in Britain. Gandhiji led the Khilafat Committee in launching non-cooperation movement as they accepted non-violence as weapon of the struggle. The goal of Congress Committee was fixated on achievement of Swaraj through peaceful means. Legal luminaries like Motilal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, C.R.Das, C. Rajgopalchari boycotted the law courts. Imported clothes were boycotted. Charkha and Khadi became the symbol of the movement. In 1922 as the crowd turned violent at Chauri Chaura (UP) 22 policemen, were killed.

Gandhiji decided to end the movement.

The civil disobedience movement of 1932-34 and Quit India Movement of 1942 were watershed. Promotion of Hindu-Muslim unity and Khadi and removal of untouchability were uppermost in Gandhiji's mind. These were incorporated in the Congress constitution.

The Mahatma's mission was long, arduous and challenging. He stood firm on the pedestal of non-violence while seeking truth. He was conscious of the global scenario and was conversant with world history. The world suffered from violent wars, racial discrimination, oppression of the weak by strong. He saw rise and fall of Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini and rise of Joseph Stalin with repressive politics, persecution of Jews and devastation wrought by the use of nuclear weapon. He had studied the pulse of the Indian people in South Africa and in India. Poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, economic backwardness were appalling complicated by centuries of repressive foreign rule. Thus, he chose non-violence as the best means to achieve Indian Independence.

Mahatma's endeared policy of non-violence stood on

strong moral ground. Indian independence through peaceful means was an eye-opener to the world community. Ghana got freedom in 1952 under the leadership of Kwame Nkrumah who had adopted Gandhiji's method of non-violence resistance. Richard B Gregg in his book 'The power of Non-violence' wrote the principles of Non-violent resistance had been conceived and applied by numerous seers and courageous people in many different countries. Among them were Lao-tzu, Buddha, the Jain Tirthankaras, Jesus, St. Francis of Assisi, George Fox, Henry, David Thoreau, Leo Tolstoy... But Gandhiji is the outstanding person in modern times who worked out the theory and applied it to mass movements in organized corporate fashion by actual successful campaigns in numerous difficult situations. It seems probable that this method will be used increasingly in coming years, especially since total war is now at stalemate because of nuclear and hydrogen bombs.'

This statement was prophetic but no one for sure knew when a nuclear war would flare up and hasten dooms-day and destruction of our beloved habitat, the good earth.

In the recent history the US civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr adopted the Gandhian Principle of non-violence, launched his movement against racial segregation, and got success in the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and was awarded Nobel Prize for peace. Like the Mahatma he was assassinated. Nelson Mandela who reposed faith in non-violence, the Gandhian ideology in the beginning of his struggle against apartheid, languished in jail for 27 years. His efforts brought apartheid into an end. He was elected as the president of SA and received Nobel Prize for peace.

Gandhian Philosophy emphasizes on liberty, equality, peace, non-violence a world, free from oppression, discrimination-racial economic. Man must limit his want and befriend nature so that the mother earth which meets all needs must survive unharmed.

George Woodcock in his book 'Gandhi' observed. "Practically (which helped him forge original techniques of revolutionary action) and lack of prejudice (which brought him a following and a breadth of acceptance unprecedented in India with its divisions of caste and language and religion)

combined in Gandhi with an exceptional insight into the power of symbolic actions to move men's mind, and with-as Nehru remarked-a curious knack for doing the right thing at the psychological moment."

Woodcock wrote further in the same breathe, "To tramp- as he did in 1930 a couple of hundred miles through the summer dust of Indian country roads, with a lonely beach as his destination and there to pick up a fleck of forbidden salt and defy an unreasonable law: it was a simple, poetic act, but it united the Indian people more than any act by any man before and it hastened the end of an empire."

The mahatma, a disciplined soul, had the vision, dream and resolve guided by truth and non-violence and unarmed tough could bring hope for the Indians removing the British rule was Messianic

as he was dispassionate towards power and pelf what ordinary mortal long.

He deliberated his inner thoughts in Hind Swaraj and said, "But real right is derived from the discharge of duties." He also said, "Anarchy in freedom is better than disciplined foreign rule." He could have been eliminated earlier in South Africa or India by the forces opposed to him and his policies but providence saved him. It was unbelievably a quirk of fate that this apostle of peace and non-violence fell to assassin's bullet plunging the whole nation and world into grief.

The world renowned physicist Albert Einstein gave out his own feeling on the Mahatma and his immortal deeds. "Gandhi is unique in political history. He has invented an entirely new and human technique for liberation struggle of an oppressed people and

carried it out with the greatest energy and devotion. The mortal influence which he has exercised upon thinking people through the civilized world may be far more durable than would appear likely in our present age, with its exaggerations of brutal force ... Generations to come, it may be, will scarce believe that such a one as this ever in flesh and blood walked upon this earth."

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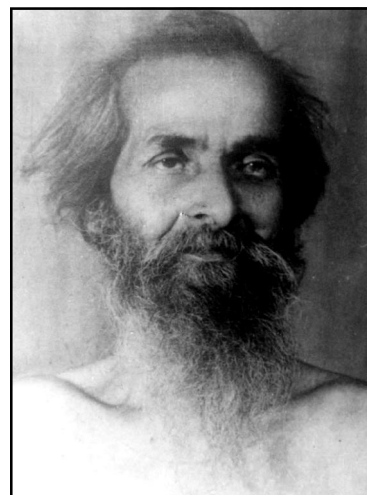
The Role of Acharya Harihar in Civil Disobedience Movement

Dr. Trinath Hota

The resolution of Indian National Congress in its general session at Lahore endorsing Purna Swaraj or complete independence held out a direct threat to the British government and it was feared that the resolution might lead a secessionist movement and cause wide spread violence. The Viceroy, Lord Irwin, was advised by the Secretary of State to observe restraint and have dialogue with responsible leaders of the Congress. But before any dialogue could take place, Gandhi decided to start the Civil Disobedience Movement. In a meeting with Rabindranath Tagore at Sabaramati Ashrama, he told that he was furiously thinking for a planned agitation in accordance with the Lahore Resolution.

On 26th January, 1930 the nation took the Independence Day pledge to carry out Congress instructions for establishing 'Purna Swaraj' or Complete Independence. In February, the Congress Working Committee met at Sabaramati Ashrama and authorized Gandhi to fashion out a programme of the Civil Disobedience Movement and prepare a course of action. Shortly after the Congress Working committee meeting, Gandhi decided to launch the movement by breaking the salt laws of the Government. This is known as the 'Salt Satyagraha'. Under the existing salt laws, the British Government did not permit Indians to produce salt and instead forced them to use the Government-supplied salt. Gandhi decided to break the salt laws as an act of 'Civil Disobedience'.

Before the Salt Satyagraha had begun, Gandhi thought of informing the Viceroy about his programme of action. He wanted to impress the Govt. that he was all for the Non-violent ways to achieve 'Purna Swaraj'. Writing to the Viceroy, he accused the British rule of progressive exploitation by a ruinous and expensive military and Civil Administration, which had reduced



India politically to serfdom and had sapped the foundation of our culture. He proposed to the Viceroy for negotiations for the redressal of the grievances of the Indian people, failing which he would launch the Satyagraha. The Viceroy refused for any talk with Gandhi outright and pointed out that Gandhi was planning for an agitation which was certain to turn violent and hence, dangerous to public peace. Seeing no encouragement in the reply of the Viceroy, Gandhi finally decided to go ahead with his Satyagraha with the following observations- "On bended knees I asked for bread and I have received a stone instead. India is one vast prison house. I repudiate this law (Salt Law) and regard it as my sacred duty to break the mournful monotony of the compulsory peace, that is

chocking the heart of the nation for want of free vent.”

The Civil Disobedience Movement began with Gandhi breaking the Salt Laws with 78 of his followers at Dandi on the sea shore of Gujrat. On 12th March, 1930 he started the historic ‘Dandi March’ from the Sabarmati Ashrama and covered the distance of 241 miles by 5th April, 1930. On the way he was greeted by thousands of people who had come from their villages and towns to have a glimpse of him. The people of Orissa should feel great that a young man of twenty years old named Motibas Das of Balasore went from Swaraj Mandir to join in ‘Dandi March’. On 6th April, 1930 Gandhi reached Dandi coast and picking of a handful of salt, he defied the Government Salt laws. His action was hailed by many congress leaders who were present there and by all Indians.

Being ordered by National Congress Committee the Utkal Congress Committee decided to break the Salt Law. So they decided the place ‘Inchudi’ as the fittest place for Salt Movement with following causes:

1. The salt prepared from the coastal areas, Inchudi can be sold in Balasore market

which was nearest marketing place.

2. There was no facility of communication from Inchudi to Balasore. The road was muddy. So any vehicle or police van would not reach that place soon. So it would be troublesome for English Officers to oppose the Salt Law breakers.

3. Another cause was that a lot of villages are adjacent to Inchudi. By which a number of workers can join Salt Movement. It would be easier for huge gathering.

Gandhi had declared to break the Salt Law on 6th April, 1930 in all provinces. According to this proclamation Gopabandhu Choudhury and Acharya Harihar were chosen by Central Committee to lead Civil Disobedience Movement. As decided Gopa Babu and Acharya Harihar with 21 Satyagrahis started from Swaraj Ashrama, Cuttack at 6.30 a.m. towards Inchudi, 10 miles from Balasore. As the tradition the Satyagrahis were greeted with *dhupa*, *dipa* and sandal paste and they were garlanded by Smt. Rama Devi, Malati Devi, Kokila Devi, Kiranabala Sen etc. Gopabandhu Choudhury was arrested just at the beginning of their historical journey. Acharya Harihar led

as the leader of the Satyagrahis. Being attracted by the leadership of Harihar a lot of women Satyagrahis also joined Salt Movement with vigour and zeal. On the ways the Satyagrahis were greeted by the villagers who came in thousands. Acharya Harihar with his followers was reciting the patriotic song composed by Viplavi Poet Birakishore Das-

*“asare aji asa asa
daria dakhala kari jiba kie asa
sara bharatare hahakara
ame pakei debure pakei debu”.*

(Oh, our friends come and join us. We will go to take the possession of ocean. It will create havoc in the whole country.)

They reached the Permit building in Balasore on 12th April, 1930 early morning. This Permit building belonged to Gouridatta Marwadi. The Satyagrahis were using that building as a resting place. In the evening of 12th April, 1930 Acharya Mahashaya with his followers prayed to God. After sometimes they started their historical journey from Permit building towards Inchudi. On the way the young and old ladies were waiting with candles. From Balasore to Inchudi the way was lighted with candles. No body felt that it was a night. They greeted

Acharya Harihar as well as his followers with all offerings and their bodies were covered with flower garlands. The high honour given to Harihar was a matter of jealousy on the part of kings. Such an honour to Acharya Harihar bestowed by all types of people irrespective of caste, colour, creed and sex was the first and last of its kind in history of Orissa. The slogans of Rama Devi, Malati Devi, Kokila Devi, Janhaba Devi, Subhadra Mahatab, Kiranabala Sen etc. dragged women to accompany them.

Being informed the police force was present there. Their presence was a trouble to the Satyagrahis. The Satyagrahis made a secret plan. On the 12th night of April, 1930 they were assembled near Paschima Thakurani at Inchudi. Their secret decision was that Baikunthanath Das would act as a goddess. Accordingly Baikunthanath Das became Kalisi and told in a loud voice, “who has made my temple impure? I will eat them.” After hearing these words the coward policemen left that place. This plan made it easier for the Satyagrahis to break the Salt Laws.

They reached the bank of Inchudi on 13th April, 1930

early in the morning. That was the day of Mahavisuva Sankranti. The Oriyas observe that day as the beginning of the year. Acharya Harihar finished his prayer. Just at 8 a.m., Acharya Harihar the leader of Satyagrahis broke the Salt Law by collecting salt from the place Tundara, just before Inchudi. From the place of Badi and Gula the surface of the river Dhubagandi eastern side of Inchudi, the Satyagrahis collected the salt and kept on the floor of Paschima Thakurani. Then Acharya Harihar with twelve Satyagrahis proceeded towards Inchudi to break the salt law. At that time the Superintendent of Balasore District, Police Inspector, the Sub-Inspector and the Choukidars about twenty police officers were present at Inchudi. Many people from urban and rural areas were assembled to see the first disobedience movement at Inchudi. In the meantime the leader Acharya Harihar first collected the handful of salt from the ocean. After seeing this the Inspector of Police told, “you have no right to collect salt from the ocean. Why are you taking law in your hand by going against the Salt Act”? To answer this leader Acharya Harihar told, “we know that we have no right to collect salt

as prescribed in Salt Act. But we are doing this Civil Disobedience Movement knowingly after conveying to you all properly. So this is not a matter of astonishment. Our aim and objective is to break this Salt Act by disobedience”.

Thereafter the police forcibly took away the salt from their hand. Still then Acharya Harihar with followers repeated the same thing, then the Police arrested Acharya Harihar with four Satyagrahis. Thereafter another four started to break the law. Although there was strong resistance from the police, the Civil Disobedience of salt movement continued. The women Satyagrahis made a plan. To oppose the tyranny of the Police, the women Satyagrahis made a circle into which the police dared not to enter. There they started to heat the salt water and prepared salt in their pot. The pleasure out of this work was beyond description. Only the eye witness could describe the joy of the Satyagrahis. Some collected the salt by their handkerchief and went to sell in the Balasore town. The Satyagrahis batch by batch collected salt. The Police also arrested them. On 14th April, 1930, the Satyagrahis from different parts of Orissa joined

to break the Salt Law. Lauhastambha Vahini from Cuttack, Patitapavana Vahini from Sambalpur and Ganjam Vahini from Ganjam, Sambalpur Vahini' from Sambalpur and Gujurati Vahini were united at Inchudi to break the Salt Law.

The Leadership of Acharya Harihar influenced another important Satyagrahi Sri Surendranath Das. Surendra Babu surprised the people of Orissa. The Police tried to arrest him. After collecting salt he kept it in a big pot in his village, Bhimpur, near Inchudi. After taking meal he was ready to go and sell the salt in Balasore town. On 14th April at 10 a.m. police had the Gherao to arrest Surendra Babu. He made an interesting plan. He told his wife Gouri to give him all the ornaments and a costly Saree. He put on the ornaments with Saree and came out with a big pot of salt to sell in Balasore town. But after covering fourteen miles he was caught by the police at the police station, Motiganj. He was arrested and taken to Police station. All the ornaments were robbed by the police officers and he was fined Rs.50/- and set free. But after some days he was again arrested.

On 15th April, the Satyagrahis sold the salt on lotus leaf in front of Balasore Collectorate Office. The Police tried to pollute the salt. Still then the Satyagrahis not only sold the salt but also they sold lotus leaves. About eleven Satyagrahis were arrested.

The case against Acharya Harihar and other Satyagrahis was tried. The leader Acharya Mahashaya and the Satyagrahi advocate Gokulananda Dey were sentenced to six months imprisonment. Babu Gunanidhi Mohanty and Chakrapani Rout were imprisoned for three months. Babu Niranjana Sahu, Gokulananda Mohanty and Dasarathi Mohanty were sentenced to one month imprisonment each. On 17th April, 1930 Acharya Harihar with others were sent to Cuttack jail from Balasore.

Many women led by Rama Devi and Malati Devi continued their Satyagraha up to 20th April, 1930. The Police patrolling at Inchudi and nearby places was going on. On 11th May, 1930 a heart touching incident occurred. A fourteen year old village boy from Atihlabad named Sadhu Charan Mohapatra violated the Salt Law and collected salt. Being encouraged five hundred

villagers accompanied Sadhu Charan. The Police was able to arrest only five Satyagrahis including Sadhu Charan. They were imprisoned for four months with fine of Rs. 50/-. They were sent to Cuttack Jail. Thereafter the Magistrate ordered to send them to the school of reformation at Hajaribag. But on the request of mother Parvati Bewa and other Satyagrahis Sadhu Charan was set free. In fact the patriotism of the fourteen year old boy, Sadhu Charan could not be forgotten.

In Cuttack District, Kujanga was an important centre of Salt Satyagraha. In June, 1930, Rani Bhagyavati, Patamahadei of Kujanga along with five hundred women Satyagrahis violated the Salt Law. In Puri District the salt agitation was led by Pandit Nilakantha Das. In Ganjam District leadership was provided by Viswanath Das, Niranjana Patnaik and other Congress leaders. Thus the whole coastal Orissa was influenced by the campaign. In a broader Indian context the Salt Satyagraha of Orissa perhaps occupies the place next only to Gujrat. The leadership of Utkal Gandhi, Acharya Harihar played a role to fructify the cherished desire of Mahatma Gandhi. In Orissa

the Civil Disobedience Movement was wide spread. The village people came forward to join the movement. Another special feature of Civil Disobedience Movement was the participation of women and teenagers called Banar Sena.

Thereafter Acharya Harihar Das was sent to Hajaribag Jail from Cuttack Jail. Being a prisoner he was given to weave *sataranji* in the Jail. He was spinning with much pleasure. He was given the responsibility to impart the moral teaching from the Srimad Bhagavad Gita and the Upanisad. After six months he was set free from Hajaribag Jail in the month of September,

1930. It would be a tribute to Acharya Harihar on the occasion of celebration of Independence Day if the people of Orissa remember his memorable leadership in Civil Disobedience Movement.

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His Excellency the Governor Sri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare planting a sapling in the Raj Bhavan garden on the occasion of Vana Mahotsav Week on 6.7.2010.

Participation of Women of Ganjam District in the Freedom Movement of India

Dr Dasarathi Bhuyan

The nationalist movement towards the close of the 19th century provided the necessity impetus and pull to draw an increasing number of women into the political mainstream. An atmosphere for such a breakthrough was created by the activities of the social reforms and nationalists, who raised demand for education and literacy among women. As the struggle for independence gained a mass character, growing participation of women became necessary. Since then, political consciousness among women has shown an incessant increase in both extent and depth. In India's fight against the British Raj women came forward in their thousands to sacrifice anything they could.

They faced bullets, suffered imprisonment and bore hardship along with their male comrades to win independence. It was the national liberation movement and mainly the effort of Mahatma Gandhi, the Father of the Nation which led to the emancipation of Indian women in the 20th Century.

As no detailed study relating to the role of women in nationalist struggle has been conducted, it will be worthwhile to undertake a comprehensive study covering political awareness and role of women in Orissa.

Under the circumstances, it is useful to see women's political involvement in the national freedom struggle in a historical perspective. A thorough highlight into Orissa's political culture would explain the extent of women's role and participation in the struggle for independence.

The emergence of women into political limelight coincided with the non-cooperation movement of 1921. Labanya Mayee Devi daughter of famous writer and advocate Gopal Chandra Praharaj and wife of a distinguished Advocate Lokanath Bahadur of Puri founded a women's association at Puri named Mahila Bandhu

Samiti. It had the primary membership of a few prominent ladies from the elite class involved exclusively in the literary activities of women. This association gave recognition to women's talent and creativity. At this point of time the Congress party, largely because of Gandhi, made inroads into the public mind of the State. In 1921, the first Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee was founded under the Presidentship of Pandit Gopabandhu Das with forty thousand members. During his tour of Orissa, in March 1921, Gandhi addressed various public meetings in the process; he awakened the women of Orissa who dared to defy convention. These women left their houses in large numbers in order to participate in the freedom struggle. Into the Gandhian spell, fell a large number of women activities. They participated in various activities of the freedom struggle, such as, Satyagraha, spinning, cottage industries and other related programmes under the aegis of the National Congress. This resurgence of women not only influenced individual men and women but also the whole family and this eventually created an atmosphere for a new social order. In the year 1929, Orissa

was the last state to enfranchise women. This belated act served to accelerate women's emancipation.

The emergence of the women from South Orissa in the struggle for India's freedom was a sensational episode. Their burning patriotism, supreme valour and gifted organizational abilities are written in the letters of gold in the history of Indian Freedom Movement.

It is important to note that even the scheduled caste and scheduled tribe women participated in the freedom movement. In the hills of Ganjam district yet some tribal women raised their voices by jumping into the freedom struggle. History hardly recorded their great sacrifice. However, this would not minimize the magnitude of their sacrifices for the independence of their motherland. A profile of women freedom fighters of undivided Ganjam district have been discussed below.

Adruti Laxmibai

Adruti Laxmibai, sister of V.V.Giri former President of India was born at Brahmapur on 12th October, 1899. Her father was Varahagiri Venkat Jogesh, a leading advocate of Brahmapur and mother Smt Varahagiri Sovama was a pious

lady. She studied her primary education at Brahmapur and after that she joined the Theosophical Society at Kasi. She completed her graduation at Dayacician College at Calcutta. She studied Medicine at Vellore Medical College but her ill health could not support to be a doctor. Therefore she discontinued her studies and returned to Brahmapur. She got married to Adruti Venkateswar Rao of Rajmundry. As ill luck would have it, her husband met a premature death within a year of marriage. Due to early demise of her husband she returned back to her parental abode at Brahmapur plunged into the freedom movement by the call of Mahatma Gandhi.

Giri family was hub of freedom fighters particular in Brahmapur and Ganjam District in general. National leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Babu Rajendra Prasad, Meeraben during their visit to the district used to stay at the residence of Giri. As a family member Laxmibai got ample opportunity to serve these leaders. She had a fair knowledge of classical music. She sung the prayer song of "Jay Gandhibad Mangalam" at the time of Gandhi's visit. Their indelible impact on Laxmibai made her a true freedom fighter.

She took part in the freedom movement by participating "boycott Foreign Goods" and picketing before the liquor shops. For her activities she was first arrested on 18th January, 1932 and she was sentenced one year rigorous imprisonment with a fine of Rs. 700/- by Chhatrapur Court. Later on she was sifted to Vellore jail for one and half year. She took active part in the Quit India Movement of 1942. She was a prominent activist in the *Khadi* Movement. She distributed *Khadis* free of cost to the poor people. She was an active member of the Congress during 1930-40. She was the Vice-President of Ganjam District Congress Committee and President of Brahmapur Town Congress. She was also an active member of the State Congress Committee. Her activities during the Quit India Movement are remarkable. She was the President of Ryots Mahasabha of Ganjam district. She presided over at the Ryots Mahasabha of Ganjam district held at Kullada in 1935. India got her Independence when she was in Cuttack jail.

She was elected to the Orissa Assembly without any contest from the Brahmapur Assembly Constituency in 1937 first general election and continued as MLA constantly

till 1953. Only two women members were elected to the Assembly in 1937 and she was the only lady member from South Orissa. She became the Deputy Speaker of Orissa Legislative Assembly and later became the Speaker of the Orissa Legislative Assembly from 29.5.1946 to 20.2.1952.

She attended the Deputy Speaker's national Conference held in Kerala and in that conference she inspected the education policy intensely. For the empowerment of women she introduced free education to the girls in the Orissa. For her sincere endeavour the strength of girl students in the schools of Orissa significantly improved. She was an active member of Orissa wing of "Central Welfare Society". She was also the President of the "Kasturaba Memorial Fund" of Orissa Branch. She served as an adviser for the "Government Girls High School Committee" in Orissa. She was a member in the State Social Welfare Board and extended her services in various fields of welfare activities. She visited Ganjam, Boudh and Phulbani districts and took efforts for the development of poor students. She used to help the girls staying in the Jaya Mangalam Ashram. A. Laxmibai was an ideal

leader, a freedom fighter, a social worker, reformer and a state leader. She remains as a role model for every Indian woman.

Hemalata Devi

Hemalata Devi was born in the family of Kapil Das and Smt. Laxmi Das of Khallikote in Ganjam District on 8 August 1911. She plunged into the freedom movement when she was reading in class seventh. She was greatly influenced by a prominent freedom fighter Sri Gouri Shankar Samant of Khallikote. Sri Gouri Shankar Samant was a Kshatriya by caste and Hemalata was a Brahmin. Ignoring the parochial caste system Hemalata married to Gourishankar at Brahmapur in 1934. Prominent freedom fighters of Ganjam, Sri Dibakar Patnaik, Umacharan Patnaik, Banamali Maharana were present in her marriage ceremony. After marriage Gourishankar and Hemalata stayed at the residence of Rama Devi and Malati Devi and contributed their might for the cause of freedom movement. Influenced by the activities of notable freedom fighter Harekrushna Mahatab, Hemalata had taken training at Puri Azad Sevashram. Gouri Shanakr was appointed as the

secretary of the Congress cell of Ganajam District.

In order to invigorate the freedom movement, a meeting was called at Kabisuryanagar in 1935. The meeting was presided over by Biswanath Das. Gouri Shankar and Hemalata took active part in that meeting and gave enthralled speech to make the freedom movement dynamism. For their speech against the British they were arrested and imprisoned at the Brahmapur jail and later on sifted to the Vellore jail. During the jail period health condition of Gouri Shankar deteriorated severely. They were freed after 18 months in that jail. Soon after their release the ill-health Gouri Shankar died. Notwithstanding her husband's premature death Hemalata decided not to distance from the freedom movement. She was in contact with the prominent freedom fighters of the state. She had a cordial relationship with the illustrious *Raj Parivar* of Khallikote who were committed for the formation of Orissa province. Hemalata took part in the movement for the amalgamation of Oriya tracts into Orissa. The great soul of the district died on 21 October 1998 at the age of 87.

Smt. Sobhabati Panda

Smt. Sobhabati Panda was a dynamic and revolutionary genius of Ganjam. She was a woman of courage. She was born in 1913 in an established Brahmin family of Digapahandi. Gandhi's very first visit to Brahmapur in March 1921 gave a tremendous impetus to Freedom Movement in Orissa. Sobhabati Panda along with her husband Antaryami Panda attended the first public meeting of Gandhi in Brahmapur in 1921. Gandhi's speech had indelible impact on her mind. Very soon she affianced herself in the freedom movement and joined in Alaka Ashram of Gopabandhu Choudhury at Jagatsinghpur. She took active part in the Hindustani Seva Dal training. During the Salt Satyagraha in 1931, she could organize the nearby village women and proceeded towards Huma along with 1000 women. They prepared Salt at Huma violating the Salt Law imposed by the British government. For the violation of Salt law she was arrested and imprisoned for 6 months. After her release she dedicated herself to *Charakha* and *Harijan* Movement and other constructive programmes of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1942 she took a leading role in the Quit

India Movement. During this period he came very close to the ideology of Gandhi. She took active role in the political procession, demonstration, and provoked the people to disobey the British rule and regulations. She was again arrested and released.

Smt. Champa Devi

Champa Devi was born in 1904 in village Dura in the Suburban area of Brahmapur. She was an outstanding freedom fighter of the district. She was a sufferer of child marriage. The conservative Hindu society considered marriage as a sacramental bond between the husband and the wife. It is a bond once for all and not to be broken at any costs. Wife is the life-partner of the husband not only in the temporal world but also in the heaven and in the next birth. Therefore when the husband died, the wife had to live an ascetic life devoting herself to the soul of her deceased husband. Soon after her marriage her husband died and she became a widow at the midst of her adolescence. Suffered by conjugal life she determined to follow the life of a social activist. She was very much influenced by Sribatcha Panda-an architect of Arya Samaj, a social reformer of

Orissa who believed in the natural equality of women with man. Influenced by illustrious women freedom fighters of Orissa like Rama Devi, Sarala Devi, Malati Devi and Kuntala Kumari Sabat, she was a champion of women liberty. She sought liberty for women not only in political sphere but also in other sphere. As a true freedom fighter she organized the women against the British for the liberation of motherland. During the Quit India Movement in 1942 she delivered an impressive speech at Russelkonda criticizing the British. For her speech explosive speech against the British she was arrested and sent to Russelkonda jail for 6 months.

Smt. Kundalata Devi

Another female protagonist of the Indian Freedom Struggle was Kundalata Devi. She was the wife of great freedom fighter of the district, Sri Banchhanidi Patnaik of Gobara village of Ghumusar. She married to Banchhanidhi Patnaik in 1925. After two years of her marriage Gandhi visited to Gobara in 1927 and his address to a mammoth gathering produced unprecedented enthusiasm in the mind of Kundalata Devi. The Pradesh Congress

Committee enrolled 39000 members and collected nearly 21000 rupees. Smt. Kundalata Devi was the only women freedom fighter of district who donated all her ornaments to the Tilaka Swaraj Fund at a meeting at Gobara. During the Salt Satyagraha, she was in charge of Udyoga Mandir at Brahmapur, who motivated the women activists of the district by travelling from village to village. She also dynamically took part in the Quit India Movement of 1942 and participated in Seva Dal Training centre. For her nationalistic activities she was arrested and put behind the bars several times.

Smt. Surjamma

Smt Surjamma was wife of prominent freedom fighter master Soneya of Brahmapur. She has an honourable place in the names of the Orissan Freedom fighters. She associated herself in different activities of freedom movement like the Civil Disobedience Movement, Harijan Movement, and Quit India Movement. She took active part in picketing before the liquor shops and motivated people to boycott the foreign goods. For her anti British activities, she was arrested twice and sent to jail for years together. It is believed that she

died broken hearted on 13th January 1948 when she heard the news of assassination of Mahatma Gandhi.

Smt. Sitadevi Khadanga

Born in 1902 at Aska, Sitadevi Khadanga was another female freedom fighter of the district. She was the daughter of Harihar Panda of Aska. Sri Panda was a time-honoured Lawyer of the district and the famous leader of Oriya movement. She had not received any formal education from any institution. She was inspired by her husband Sri Banchanidhi Khadanga. She was a multifaceted personality. She was a poet, essayist, story writer, novelist, biographer, translator and dramatist. She had penned a number of novels in Oriya such as Posyaputra (adopted Son), Pratyabartan (come back), Agraj (Elder Brother), She had also written a number of dramas like Sahodar (Brother), Mandir Prabesh (Temple Entry), Naree (Woman), Naistik (Orthodox), Nispati (Decision), Prachina, Pantha (Old Method), Basudhara Pida (Agony of the Motherland), and Matruhina (Motherless). She was an active member of Ganjam District Board and Congress Party. Her joining in the freedom movement gave a

great impetus to the women folk of the district.

Smt. Kishoremani Devi

Kishoremani Devi was an extraordinary woman freedom fighter of Ganjam district. She was the wife of a notable freedom fighter Sri Niranajan Patnaik of Aska. Influenced by her husband's nationalist activities she plunged into the freedom movement. Gandhiji paid second visit to Brahmapur on 24th December 1927 and addressed meetings at Chatrapur, Badakhemundi, Samantarapur, Patpur, Russelkonda, Gobara, Boirani, Purusotampur, Polasra, Kodla, and Khallikote. He emphasized the use of Khadi, Charakha and advised the people to give up foreign goods. The call of Gandhiji and the inspiration of her husband provided a new turn to her life. She was very much influenced by Gandhi and joined in the Salt Satyagraha on 7th May 1930. She was active in motivating hundreds of village women of the district to take part in the Salt Satyagraha at Huma. Along with hundreds of women she collected the Salt at Huma and violated the Salt Law. She was always in the vanguard of women freedom fighters. She was the forefront of women *satyagrahis* picketed before the liquor

shops and boycotted the foreign goods.

Smt. Hiramani Bisoyi

Hiramani Bisoyi was the wife of Krushna Chandra Bisoyi who was the protector of Gumma fort of Parlakhmundi estate. In 1766 when the Ganjam district was given to the British East India Company, the British sent Mr Kits Ford to take the administration of Ganjam. But the King of Parlakhmundi, Sri Narayan Gajapati and the Bisoyis started military operation against the British. Narayan Gajapati was defeated by the British Colonel Pitch but the Bisoyis of Parlakhmundi did not pay allegiance to the British. In 1778 onwards Krushna Chandra Bisoyi and his wife Hiramani Bisoyi, in different forests strategies, attacked the British. The couple attacked and imprisoned the British incessantly for a period of twenty years. Unfortunately, spouse Krushna Chandra met a sudden death. Despite the sad demise of her husband, Hiramani shouldered the responsibility of Guma Fort. She ceaselessly attacked the British soldiers; and caused terror in them. As a result the British Magistrate became worried and sent George Russell to incarcerate her. But the costly effort of Russell went

in vain. Then the British sent Buckster to capture Hiramani. The first attempt of Major Buckster was futile. Hiramani's bold fight against the British concerned them furiously. After an elongated fight with the British, finally she was shot dead by Russell. Hearted by her death Mr Russell intoned "I have never seen such type of revolutionary woman. For her bravery, sincerity, soberness she was positioned in my heart as an extraordinary woman. She was illustrious for her activities as a freedom fighter in Ganjam."

Smt. Krushna Priya Devi

Mahuri Queen Smt. Krushna Priya Devi was another notable freedom fighter of the district. She participated in the pre-protest movement of 1872. She was wife of deceased king Harihar Dev. Her brother's son Sri Gopi Martha and Sura Singh Martha were fought against the British in support of her sister. Not only in Brahmpur town, but also in whole district of Ganjam there was a staunch fight against the British by her leadership.

Smt. Apurba Devi

Smt. Apurba Devi was the wife of Sri Ballav Nayak, of village Padmapur Nuagaon near Kodala. There was a non-paying tax movement by the Khalikote Raja and Apurba

Devi joined in that movement. She was a famous woman freedom fighter.

Role of women freedom fighters of Ganjam in Social Reconstruction

During Gandhi's Padayatra programme in 1934, women were called upon to fight the evils of liquor, boycott foreign clothes and discard untouchability. Gandhi's constructive programme had in its objectives, the training and education of women in the fundamentals of organized activity and propaganda. Moreover, the participation enabled men to organize social reform on a local plane. The programme included several social reform activities.

Inspired by Gandhi's teachings, some women freedom fighters participated in the development of *khadi* and village industries. They organized boycotting of foreign clothes and picketing before liquor shops. Some women made an extensive tour by foot all over the district to inspire the women community, awaken their consciousness against bondage, and finally draw into the fray of the freedom struggle.

Conclusion

The nature and background of women's participation in the Nationalist

Movement in Orissa during 20th century largely tallied with the women's movement at the nationalist level. Four characteristics reflecting the circumstances of origin can be identified: (i) male directions, (ii) a concept of complementary sex roles, (iii) absence of a radical onslaught on participation bases of Indian culture; and (iv) orientation towards elite representation and not mass mobilization.

Women's participation was initiated by men and operated under the leadership of man. Though there were disputes over this issue, it was generally the supportive attitudes of men of the elite that helped women to form associations.

There was trend of complementary sex role in regard to women's participation in the Nationalist Struggle in Orissa and the national level as well. The ideas of women competing with men in the economic sphere or of men co-operating with women in the domestic sphere was absent in addition, the obligation on women's movement participants to serve first their family and then the community meant that only middle class women with sufficient time and

man-power could actually do both. Thus this contributed to the fact that women's participation was restricted to the middle and upper classes.

From the beginning, women's participation was oriented towards elite representation and not towards mass mobilization. Gandhi's ideology was very respectful to women and supportive to their uplift, but this was strictly in terms of complementary sex roles. Gandhi argued that women should confine their economic role to home industries. Gandhi's activities did provide the impetus for the participation of Oriya women in the nationalist movement, but the legacy of male direction remained, with Gandhi's attempt mass mobilization, no doubt it increased the number of women available for participation in the movement. The potential contribution of women in mobilizing support was also important. They could convince their family members and others to support Gandhian Campaign and communicate the religious values essential for Satyagraha. Thus thousands of women left the seclusion of their home and joined the nationalist movement. A few women formed associations for

constructive work during the non-cooperation campaign and these were widespread during subsequent campaign.

Gandhi's ideology and techniques inspired women to participate in public activities and broke down opposition to their entry into social service and nationalists' movement. Indeed, his campaigns served as a training ground for many prominent women leaders.

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Kuntala Kumari Sabat : A True Patriotic Litterateur and Reflection of Her Literary Works on Gandhian Movement

Dr. Janmejy Choudhury



Kuntala Kumari Sabat was born on 8th February, 1909, at Jagadampur in Bastar region. Her parents were Daniel and Monica. Shortly after her birth, her parents went to Burma with family. So Kuntala Kumari passed her early childhood at Burma with her parents and imbibed the spirit of fearlessness. Then she returned to Khurda with her mother Monica after her father got remarried at Burma. So Kuntala Kumari stayed at Khurda with her mother for a short period. She completed her early school education at Ravenshaw Girl's School and higher study at Medical School, Cuttack. Kuntala Kumari composed beautiful poems during her school days. She came out successfully from the medical school and became popular as a lady doctor with her sincerity and simplicity.¹ Although a lady physician by profession, she knew the

colonial treatment of the anatomy of an enslaved nation better than her own degree.

Kailash Rao was her literary teacher who guided her literary activities. Kuntala Kumari enrolled herself as a member of 'Nava Vidhan', the 'Brahmo Society'. She got wide applause when poems, 'Anjali' came out. She won approbation from almost all the literary figures of Orissa. A leading cultural association of women conferred on her the title 'Utkal Bharati'. Gopal Chandra Praharaj and Pallikabi Nanda Kishore Bal loved her and adopted her as their daughter. Kuntala Kumari joined a maternity welfare centre, which was newly opened at Cuttack in 1925. Later she left for Delhi on 1st July 1928. The same year she got married to Krishna Prasad. New phase of life began, yet she did not leave her writings. She had written in English,

Bengali and Hindi and contributed to a number of non-Oriya journals and edited a number of Hindi journals at Delhi. During her stay at Delhi, she presided over the 'All India Arya Mahila Sammilani' at Bareilly. During this time also she was invited by the Allahabad University and Benaras Hindu University to deliver lectures. She was the president of the students federation at Aligarh. She was made the chair-person of a reputed social organisation founded by Harbilash Sarada for the introduction of widow marriage and abolition of child marriage. While at Delhi she took steps to encourage, publish and project Oriya literature. At Delhi, Kuntala Kumari was also associated with eminent writers like Maitheli Saran Gupta, Yeasshpal Jee Jain, S.H. Batsayan and a host of Hindi writers. 'Hindi Pracharini Sabha' conferred on her the title of 'Bharat Kavinetri.'

She upheld the essence of struggle brighter and sharper than any value in public life. Every page of her life was a profound ambiguity of social standing. Her love for Orissa and her glorious past finds mentioned in her poems. A disciple of Gandhi she claimed independence as the birth right of Indian people. She took up the task of awakening the women. She encouraged them to join the National Movement under Gandhian leadership. She writes -

*'Senapati Aaji Deichhanti Daka
Utha bharatara Biraputrajaka,
Apurba Asahayoga Ranagune
Arte Antakasi para Janejane,
Bharatara Jete Viragunamani
Chaliasu Senapati Dakasuni.'*³

During the non-cooperation movement she gave a clarion call to the people of Orissa to fight for freedom. She was the voice of modern Orissa. In a real sense she was a visionary and a rebel. She expressed her concern for the suffering mankind and wanted to free mankind from exploitation.

No doubt, Kuntala Kumari had a lot of patriotic fervour in her. She had derived a special pride in herself by portraying Gandhi, Nehru and the spinning wheel in her lucid poems. This instilled a lot of confidence to visualise a free India through the veil of the

darkened British rule. She was imbibed with the true spirit of a colonial poet's vision to awaken public consciousness like Bankim's immortal Bengali song. The Oriya youths plunged headlong into the non-cooperation movement being addicted to her war songs. It ignited the sparks in them spontaneously, so to say rapidly. Although Kuntala Kumari had a brief span of life time of thirty eight years, her creations outlived her to pioneer the cause of rooting out British misrule in India. She composed beautiful numerous patriotic poems and songs. Her first collection of poems came out in 1922. Then it was followed by 'Uchhwasi' - 1924, 'Archana' - 1927, 'Sphulinga' - 1929, 'Ahwan' - 1930, 'Prem Chintamani' - 1930, 'Oriyanka Kandana' - 1937, 'Garjat Krishaka' - 1939.⁴ Her live for man, nature and nation is reflected in her poems. She had a deep hatred for superstitions and conventions, raised her voice against high and mighty. She always tried to protest against injustice and inequalities. She renounced the heartless religious dogmas and practices. She comprehends the image of glorious past of Orissa. At times it carries the romantic strain of love for liberty, equality and fraternity.

She composed the inaugural song of 'Utkal Sammilani', chaired by Acharya P.C. Roy in 1924. the poems in the anthology 'Archana' echoes the voice of poor and lowly, the depressed and the marginalized. Her poetic longing for brave new world is expressed in most of her poems. Some of her poems published in 'Sphulinga', inspired the youth of Orissa and infused dynamism in them. The volume 'Ahwan' captures the spirit of Gandhi's clarion call to people to join the struggle for freedom. In her poems 'Sphulinga' she wants to inspire his fellowmen to get lessons from the past history and to get out of the present set up and dullness. Her poems in Ahwan created tremendous sensation. Her fame as a patriot and poet spread over the country. She had a transterrestrial longing for an ideal world, a golden era ruled by love, justice and beauty. The yearning for liberty is always marked in her poems like 'Garjat Krishaka'. She expressed the poetic anguish over a cause of the elitish exploitation on the toiling mass. The entire gamut of Kuntala Kumari's poetic works oscillate between her love for her land and people and the love for God. The poetic identification with the sufferings of common

men presents two fold note at one moment she protests and revolts and at the next, she discovers the mystical design in everything and everywhere. In nature, and all its creation see could she the face of God. Her poetry, in some degree, reveals all the romantic traits : "Love of nature, love of beauty, imagination, love of past and a wearied sadness." No doubt she has enriched the Oriya literature by her pen. Her commitment to explore the possibilities of a free world with faith in love, beauty, truth, goodness and wisdom. Her noble sentiments and her feelings for the sublime have given her poems a universal appeal. Her writings were regularly published in the 'Samaj' and 'Sahakar' under the title 'Delhi letters'. She expresses the socio-political life of pre-independent India and makes a zealous attempts to reform the tradition ridden society. In the novel, 'Na-tundi', She expresses real thing of the land. 'Raghu Arakhit' is one of her most outstanding works. It narrates the social character regarding marriage, where a compensation was given to the bride's family.⁵

Kuntala Kuamri's voice was more reflected in her poetry anthologies AHWAN (the call) and Gadajata

Krishaka (Feudatory Farmer). The following stanza provides enough stimulus to adorn the spirit of mankind.

*Oh ! my compatriot !!
The man is not born
to die of reminiscence
or to sink in somewhere
It is never a human fate
That gets terminated through a
happiness living
After being condemned to
the fretful glooms of failure
in a deprived morbid prison of
ever - disciplined humiliating;
Thus great Earth is
never a decaying caravan
or a lady nurturing death.*

Her poetry was a great leap towards strengthening the debilitation of Oriya race against the mighty Britishers. It is definitely a great voice to heal up the wounded psyche of several Oriyas condemned to a bonded earth under 'British Raj'.⁶ She was a rebel no doubt and simultaneously a visionary. She stirred the conscience of the people through her writings. Her poems kindled a new spirit in the hearts of the people and inspired them to fight relentlessly against the Britishers.

One of the session of Utkal Sammilani was held at Balasore on 2nd August 1931 with Kuntala Kumari in chair. Jahnabi Devi was the chairperson of the reception.⁷ Nearly twelve hundred people

all over Orissa attended. This meeting was also attended by more than a thousand women. In her speech as the chairman of the Reception Committee Jahnabi Devi refuted the universally accepted view of women's inability to stand on their own.⁸ In this session a central executive committee, named "All Orissa Women's Association" was set up. Here sincere efforts were made to work out a programme for the improvement of condition of women of Orissa.

In an essay entitled "Kabi O Lekhakara Udeshya", she raised the status of a poet by declaring that she is not limited to any time and clime. A true creative artist moves high above such human limitations : "The poet or the writer is nature's representative. He is not confined to any particular nation or time. He belongs to all the nations, to all time and all humanity.⁹ Her death on 23rd August 1938 was a great loss for the people of Orissa. Her brief life was a saga of relentless struggle against evil and darkness. She was a talented woman poet from Orissa, second to none in her bold utterances for the cause of Indian freedom. Although she spent major part of her short life outside the state, she had enough inclination to intercede

the causes of its Gods and Goddesses, aquatic landscapes, rural surroundings, and the people irrespective of rich and poor alike. Therefore, time and tide has not thrown her into the limbo of oblivion. Her ideas and concern for common man got reflected in her works. Her life and creatives made her a legendary personality in her life time itself. She championed the cause of a world-free from evil and injustice. Her passion for justice, equality, liberty and fraternity was astounding. Throughout her life she fought against injustice and exploitation.

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On The Path of Swaraj

Pandit Gopabandhu Das
Translation - Dr. Ramakant Rout

Countrymen, Companion, Kins
and others are Are you frightened at my getting
behind the bar ?
It was apprehended before hand
then, why do you feel so sad ?
Timidity is the coward's character
A hero kills or dies himself either.
In hero's horoscope no retreat is there
For sake of life he dies never.
I know this war of peace is on
There's no need of bomb, bullet or gun.
Neither muscle nor money is needed
No carriage, horse or elephant required.
This spiritual battle is there
to curb the beastly power.
He who, leaving aside wealth, home or relation
Has addressed himself with arm of non cooperation

and by non violence is urge
shall reserve a place in the stage.
Jail is its initial effect
Death may come as ultimate.
Knowing well I have entered to the war
I never mind for honour or dishonour.

Let my body mingle to country's soil
Let march along it one and all.
Let my flesh and bones pile
all holes and ditches of Swaraj fill.

At all on emulation of my life
to the Freedom path any man persuaded if,
His Providence's blissful desire
Let be fulfilled – it is my ultimate desire.

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Laxmi Panda : The Forgotten Soldier of a Lost Army

Anil Dhir

*When you go home, tell
them of us and say,
for your tomorrow, we gave
our today'.*

This is the thoughtful epitaph that is inscribed on the plaque at the Indian National Army' Memorial at Moirang near Manipur's capital Imphal. It was in Moirang that the flag of the Indian National Army was first hoisted on Indian soil on April 14, 1944.

As Indians, many of us fail to realise the impact of what these freedom fighters did for us nearly 65 years ago. The freedom that we take for granted today has been given to us by people who are no longer alive to tell us how they lived each day during those tough and trying times. We should remember not only those freedom fighters who are well known, but also those who died in the freedom struggle without having their names

honoured. Countless ordinary Indians have made sacrifices for our freedom. Our Independence was won due to the efforts of this silent army that trudged difficult paths and endured hardships, without a thought for praise or reward. As our glorious nation celebrates its 63rd Independence Anniversary, very few of these foot soldiers exist. Nearly all of that generation have died out. The living are old, ailing, distressed, lonely, and very, very disillusioned.

Such is the story of Laxmi Indira Panda. She was among the countless Indians who fought for the country's freedom. Laxmi Panda was one of the youngest members of Netaji Subash Chandra Bose's Indian National Army and the only Oriya woman to have enlisted.

Post the Great Famine of Orissa, the British were taking a lot of indentured labourers from Ganjam to the rubber plantations and railways being made in Burma. Huge contingents of labourers would be shipped out from the Gopalpur port and taken to Rangoon. From the period of 1880 to 1925, nearly 60,000 such workers were sent to Burma. Even today remnants of



them are found scattered all over the country. Laxmi Panda's parents too formed a part of this workers army.

Laxmi Rath was born sometime in 1930. She was born in a camp near Rangoon where her parents were engaged in the Railways being laid in Burma. She had early memories of the exploitation of the workers by the Gora Sahibs, and clearly recalled that she too was engaged in the job of cutting grass of the horses of the white supervisors.

When the Japanese overran parts of Burma in 1942, British air bombardments became a daily routine. Her father was employed by the local unit of Subash Bose's Indian National Army, and both her parents were killed in a British air raid. The young Laxmi Rath and her even younger brother were orphaned. The siblings were mute witnesses of the death of their parents.

The determination to avenge the death of her parents made her go to the nearby I.N.A.Camp where she begged for enrollment in the rank and file. The frail Laxmi was hardly fourteen years of age, and was refused by the Camp commanders. However she stayed put outside the Camp gates, and when Subash Bose came for inspection she blocked his way. She was personally taken aside to him, and her determination melted the hearts of the I.N.A. leaders.

She was taken in the Rani Jhansi Regiment under Captain Lakshmi Sehgal. Initially she was given soft jobs of housekeeping and cooking, but the young Laxmi soon proved her mettle and won the hearts of her superiors. She trained in swordsmanship, shooting and espionage. As she was well versant with the Burmese Language, she was often sent across enemy lines for recce and collection of intelligence. When I met her in 2007, she recollected working with the famous Janaki Thevar, Gown, Shah Nawaz Khan, Sehgal and Dhillon. Unfortunately, her brother soon went missing and was never found.

Laxmi Panda
recollected that Netaji



personally gave her a new name “Indira”, to avoid confusing her with the far more famous Lakshmi (Captain Lakshmi Sehgal). Netaji told her that in the I.N.A she would be henceforth known as Indira, and this name struck.

I met Captain Lakshmi Sehgal at Kanpur in June 2008. At the age of ninety three, she recollected this incident. I showed her Laxmi Panda’s photographs, nostalgia brought tears in her eyes. She vividly recollected Indira being the youngest soldier in her regiment.)

Six months of intensive arms training in Burma shaped Laxmi into battle readiness for the onward march to the battlefield on the India-Burma border. She recollected the war time incidents of travelling by

railways flatcars, the trenches and dugouts, the bombing sorties and the Japanese compatriots who fought alongside her. She was injured by shrapnel, the scars of which she still carried till her death.

Laxmi Panda recalled how Netaji had instructed her regiment to break into groups of 150 to move out of Rangoon when the INA was retreating. Laxmi was in the second group that was led by Janaki Thevar and had a rough retreat, their train was bombed and the women had to walk to Bangkok-it took 26 days of night marches braving bombs and machine guns firing at them. Food was scarce, they ate roots and boiled leaves. Many a time they went hungry for days, even eating the flesh of the pack horses that had died.

Laxmi was right by the side of Netaji up till the time he gave the call for disbandment of the I.N.A. She recollects seeing Netaji at Singapore on the 12th August 1945 : “I never saw him again. A week later, I heard that he had died in a plane crash,” she said in an emotion ridden voice, and yes, she never believed that Netaji died as reported.

After the surrender of Singapore, the arrested members of the Indian National Army were classed as white’, ‘black’, or ‘grey’ according to the perceived innocence or culpability of their motives. Laxmi Panda had been classified as white, meaning that she was a hardcore war criminal. Even the British Secret Service agents were baffled by this petite teenaged girl who had wielded .303 Lee Enfield rifles. They let her go free; even the British would not arrest persons who were less than 16 years of age. Laxmi then sailed back to India in a tramp steamer. At Chittagong harbour the British secret police once again arrested all the I.N.A soldiers, and Laxmi had vivid memories of throwing all her papers, medals and her I.N.A uniform overboard. She too was arrested again, but seeing her frail health and young age they let her go.

Laxmi went back to Burma, but she found that she was an alien there. Finding no one of her kin there, the young girl made her way back to Orissa, the home of her parents, a place that she had never seen, but only heard of. Most of the journey from Burma was on foot, however she remembers coming to Berhampur and with the help of a few I.N.A veterans got accommodation and work. She married another I.N.A veteran Khageswar Panda in 1951. Her husband got a job as a driver in Hirakud, where the big dam was being built, and the next few years were spent happily. Her troubles began after her husband died in 1976. Left all alone with an alcoholic son, she had to work as a domestic servant, a day labourer and a store attendant, working for a pittance to eke out a living.

The Government of Orissa recognized Laxmi Panda as a freedom fighter. This recognition entitled her to a meagre pension of Rs.1000/- every month. However freedom fighter status had been denied to her at the Centre despite several INA veterans, including Captain Lakshmi Sehgal corroborating her role. The fact that she had never been to jail was a lacunae. The British Secret Service agents,

who let the frail young girl go free from Chittagong harbour, did her a grave injustice. Had she been arrested, she would have been given a pension of at least Rs.15000/- per month, enough to meet her medical needs and keeping her no good son’s extended family maintained.

I got references about her from the Netaji Research Bureau at Calcutta while I was doing a research on the I.N.A. during June 2007. The name of Laxmi Indira Panda had cropped up in many places, and a few local I.N.A veterans from Calcutta too had told me about her exploits in Burma. All I could gather was that she was a brave Oriya lady, who had fought alongside Netaji and Lakshmi Sehgal in Burma and had survived to come back. I was curious and eager to meet her, as she was the only Oriya lady to serve in the I.N.A.

It took me a full six months to locate her. I went to places afar as Berhampur, Hinjilicut, Phulbani, Angul and Paralakhemundi before I found her at Jeypore in Koraput. She was living in a small hut in a slum along with her son and his family. The one room broken down shanty in Nakarchi Street was home for a family of ten. She had languished in this slum

for years, stricken with poverty and ill health, but even this little comfort has been snatched away from her. Her alcoholic son had thrown her out, and this proud icon was spending her days (and nights) at different places, thanks to a few kind hearted benevolent persons.

The Collector of Koraput had allotted her a small piece of land to build her home, but this is little solace. At the age of eighty years, Laxmi Panda certainly could not build her home. She had to undergo an eye operation and kept very poor health.

For forty years this proud lady had been writing and petitioning to the union government to accord her rightful pension and give her the recognition that was due to her.

When I first met her in June 2007, she was a cynical and frustrated person, who had given up all hope. It took me a dozen visits to Jeypore before I could convince her that her fight could and would be continued. She told me that Giridhar Gamango, when he was the Chief Minister, sent her to Delhi for two weeks, but even his approach had been in vain. She showed me letters that were written by eminent persons including Lalit

Mansingh, the Army Chief, many Ministers, but nothing had been done.

I got word of this and rushed to Jeypore and with great difficulty convinced that I would take her battle to the powers that be at Delhi. I brought her back with me to Bhubaneswar and kept her with me. Her health improved and she was happy to meet all the people to flock to see her. I knew that it would be very difficult to present her case as she did not have any documents to prove her involvement in the INA. All she had was sheaves of petitions, letters and newspapers cuttings which had highlighted her plight.

I took it upon myself to see that she got her due. I began my task from the Netaji Research Bureau at Kolkata; the people there were not very cooperative. In the next six months I travelled all over the country gathering every bit of evidence that I could on the INA and the role of Lakshmi Panda in the Rani Jhansi Regiment. Surprisingly I hit pay dirt at the National Archives at New Delhi and at the INA Museum at Salimgarh Fort in Delhi. I could even get photographs of Lakshmi Panda in her uniform.

I had got information that a huge stock of documents were with a person who shall remain unnamed at Port Blair in the Andaman. I went there and got hold of details, even her gun number. The name of her compatriots, her pay details were all there. I made copies of the same.

I even got letters and affidavits from other INA veterans, including one from Lakshmi Sehgal at Kanpur. I travelled to Imphal, Kanpur, Delhi, Amritsar, Jammu, Chennai and Port Blair for gathering all the information. I used to bring back the details and when I showed them to Lakshmi Panda, she would be so excited, at times weeping of the old days. When I told her the names of her fellow fighters, she recollected so much more.

Within six months I had a six inch thick dossier, photographs, testimonials, copies of written and printed documents. All along, Lakshmi Panda was staying with me, and for the first time she got a ray of hope that she would get her due from the nation.

I wrote to the President of India, telling her of the plight of this poor lady. I wrote of Netaji and the clarion call of "Delhi Chalo" that he had

given to his fighters. The dream of unfurling the tricolour at the ramparts of the Red Fort was what had driven his army to fight in the inhospitable jungle conditions of Burma. Laxmi Panda too wanted to go to Delhi to honour the allegiance and promise that she had made to Netaji. Her “Chalo Delhi” would have been a good 63 years late, but she hoped to make this her last stand. I sent the complete dossier to the President’s Office. It took only a week for the President’s Office to acknowledge and she called me and Lakshmi Panda to Delhi.

Laxmi Panda met the President of India at the Rashtrapati Bhavan on 12th August 2008. I had the privilege of accompanying her. The frail fighter refused the offer of a wheel chair even though the carpeted corridors seemed like miles. The passage was lined with many framed paintings and photos of our national heroes, and Laxmi Panda stopped in front of all the heroes whom she recognised and gave a crisp INA salute.

The ADC to the President had told us that we

would have five minutes with her Excellency. We were ushered into the room where Smt. Pratibha Devisingh Patil received her. The five minutes passed into an hour, the President of India listened to her tale and was moved to tears. The empathy was visible. She repeatedly asked Laxmi Panda what her desire was, if she had any wants or if there was anything that the Government could do for her. “Just give me my due” was all Laxmi Panda said. The President of India offered her a purse of Rs.1/- lakh, which Laxmi Panda refused to accept. On my insistence she took a token amount of Rs.10,000/-.

The President kept her promise. Laxmi Panda was conferred the Rashtriya Swatantra Sainik Samman on the 25th of October 2008. However she did not live long enough after that. Just two weeks later she breathed her last and her only glory was that she died as a martyr.

Laxmi Panda was given a State funeral. The Nation recognised her

contribution, albeit very late. She may have died unsung, but her determination and fight, which lasted a good seventy years should be remembered by each and every son of the soil.

More than 600 soldiers in the ranks and file of the INA were Oriyas. Many of them gave up their lives in the Burma front. Most of them were from South Orissa, having gone as indentured labourers in the plantations and railways in Malaysia, Burma and Singapore. There should be a fitting memorial to these brave Oriyas. Their stories should be told.

It is time, that a fitting commemorative memorial is set up in the State. Inscribed on the pillar should be the names of all the so far identified patriots who lost their lives and liberties fighting for the motherland. This is the least that the present generation could do in memory of those brave men and women.

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Women's Role in the Freedom Movement in South Orissa

Dr. (Mrs.) Bina Kumari Sarma

It is a well known fact that South Orissa played a significant role in the freedom movement of India. People belonging to the cross section of the society participated in the movement extending their whole-hearted support to the national issue. In this movement the services, sufferings and sacrifices rendered by women in particular forms an interesting and important study of history.

During the first quarter of the 20th century after the visit of Mahatma Gandhi to Orissa in 1921 a great awakening took place among the women in Orissa. Their entry into politics after 1921 is one of the most amazing events of the contemporary Orissa history. In this struggle for freedom unmindful of all hardships they faced the police atrocities and went to jails willingly. In their participation they showed not only unusual courage but also wonderful organizing capacity. Moreover in this struggle not only elite women but women

from lower strata, caste and creed also participated in large numbers.

Since Gandhi's first visit to Orissa in March, 1921 on the event of the non-cooperation movement there was great resurgence among the local women. The programme of non-cooperation of Gandhi had negative and positive aspects. The negative aspect of the programme consisted of boycott of British goods, legislative councils, offices, educational institutions.¹ The positive aspect included the promotion of Swadeshi, removal of untouchability, prohibition, national education etc. When the movement was launched in Orissa, a very few women participated mainly in the programme of Charkha and Khadi. On that occasion in Berhampur several brave women of Giri family including the mother of V.V. Giri, Subhadra played their selfless role in the non-

cooperation movement, supporting the active male members.²

Meantime, the birth and growth of a number of women's associations and organization in Orissa created a favourable atmosphere for women's general awakening and emancipation.³ In 1924, the first session of Utkal Women's Conference was organized at Berhampur which was the first of its kind in the initiative of the women of South Orissa. The conference was attended by women belonging to different class, caste and sect. The occasion created great excitement among the women.⁴ Thereafter the Oriya women continued to organize many public gatherings and conferences.

The visit of Utkal Bharati Kuntala Kumari Sabat, the celebrated Oriya poetess, in 1926 to Berhampur and different other adjoining areas provided further impetus to the women on South Orissa. She addressed separately women's gatherings at Surala and Berhampur narrating them the greatness of their ancient culture and tradition including the story of Karubaki.⁵ Thus her visit was a great event as it had a great impact on the women of South Orissa. It gave a new fillip

and inspiration to women's liberation movement.

In 1927 during the second visit to Orissa, Gandhiji addressed a mammoth gathering at the Barracks ground, Berhampur, inspiring the people to reinvigorate their efforts for the freedom of the country by joining the Civil Disobedience Movement. This address in fact created a great stir among the women to go ahead on the path of freedom struggle braving all the obstacles and hurdles that they may confront.

There is no denying that the freedom movement became a mass movement due to the active participation of women. The non-violent peaceful Satyagraha movement of Gandhi attracted women of South Orissa as elsewhere in India from the beginning.

In the district of Ganjam under the auspices of the UPCC a batch of fifteen Telugu Satyagrahis from Berhampur led by Ramalingam Pantulu, Chairman, Berhampur Municipality started on 20th April 1930 to manufacture salt at Kotabambali. Some women volunteers from Parlakhemundi and Chicacole joined with them. Smt. P. Tamma and Suryamma were the main

women leaders in that team.⁶ The other prominent women Satyagrahis were A. Laxmi Bai, T. Arahalu. Baralaxmi and her two daughters. During the time of Salt Satyagraha Smt. J.V. Narayanna led massive women's processions singing patriotic songs and addressed public meetings against the Government. As a result she was arrested along with the above mentioned ladies.

During the time of the Civil Disobedience Movement the Salt Satyagraha in Ganjam took the shape of a mass upsurge due to the effective leadership of Niranjan Pattnaik and Smt. Malati Devi, Sarala Devi and Kishorimoni Devi (the wife of Niranjan Pattnaik) who did extensive tours to the interiors of the district enrolling volunteers and collecting money for the Congress fund.⁷ They in fact drilled the ideals of Satyagraha into the minds of the rural mass, particularly among the women folk of Ganjam.⁸

In the mass Civil Disobedience Movement organized at Ganjam in May 1930 at least one thousand women participated. Among them most prominent were Kundalata Devi and Kishorimoni Devi who were arrested and imprisoned for disobeying civil law, Kundalata

Devi helped Sarala Devi by donating all her golden ornaments at Gobra meeting for the national cause. She moved to different places of Ganjam with Sobhabati Panda and Purnabasi Devi to popularize the Congress ideals.¹¹ Similarly Kishorimoni Devi set up 'Pragati Ashram' at Berhampur for the purpose of providing training and orientation to the young Satyagrahis. She led Satyagraha processions and addressed public meetings and rallies in support of the universal demand for national independence. She played a significant role in spreading the message of the freedom movement all over Orissa.

In the middle of June 1930 some women Satyagrahis threatened to picket liquor shops in Berhampur town under the leadership of Smt. J.V. Narayanna. But when she was arrested the proposed women's picketing was stopped time being. But on 20th June a procession consisting of volunteers and women went round the town singing patriotic songs and a meeting was held. Thereafter another women's procession was taken around the town with Giri's mother Subhadramma, her daughter-in-law Saraswati, and two daughters, Laxmi Bai

and Sarajoni at its forefront to prohibit the sale of toddy in the town. All of them were arrested for joining the Civil Disobedience Movement. This type of involvement and participation of women in the freedom movement in South Orissa was a unique phenomenon.

When the call for individual Satyagraha by Gandhiji was given in 1940, women gave a quick response. The Provincial Committee nominated 48 persons for offering Satyagraha in the first batch. Very few women were allowed to participate in the individual Satyagraha because during this period the Pradesh Congress Committee opened four departments namely Propaganda, Harijan, Minorities and Charkha. When these departments started the Oriya women completely devoted themselves to this work. However, for individual Satyagraha among the four women, Laxmi Bai and Champa Devi from South Orissa were chosen by Gandhiji. P. Tamma also joined the individual Satyagraha and courted arrest.¹²

The Quit India Movement of 1942 provided women with another

opportunity to prove their ability in organizing mass political movements.

In Ganjam, the Quit India Movement took the usual form of burning and destruction of Government offices. Though Berhampur was the centre of activity in the district, yet the movement spread to remote corners. In the 1942 movement P. Tamma took an active part in Paralakhemundi and was imprisoned for two years and six months. Suryamma joined her hands with her husband during the hartal at Berhampur and was imprisoned in the Berhampur jail.¹⁴ Champa Devi was sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment in the Bhanjanagar Sub-jail for picketing and organizing hartals in different places. Sobhabati Panda (from Digapahandi) who had received her training from Alaka Ashram was also put behind the bar during the time of Quit India Movement in South Orissa.

During this time when the women activists were busy in launching the Quit India Movement and courting imprisonment, the emergence of some women litterateurs was important. Among those ladies the name of Sita Devi Khadanga is worth mentioning. At that time, she produced a

good number of provocative books which were meant to infuse nationalistic spirit among the masses. She mainly wrote on the theme of liberation propagating the message of Gandhi. Her important contributions in the field of Oriya literature are Nari, Posyaputra, Naistik, Nispatti, Prachinpanth'.¹⁵

In the Koraput district of South Orissa even the innocent hill tribes who had no idea of politics also joined the Quit India Movement. Among the tribals Bauri Sahu and his daughter Sani Sahu played an important role at Kajendni. Santi moved from place to place and gave important news to the revolutionaries secretly.¹⁶ At that time in Koraput the innocent tribal people were oppressed, beaten mercilessly and tortured in many ways by the police and other civil officials.¹⁷ Therefore, some brave women along with some male leaders rose to the occasion and took arms to fight against the British, the name of some brave women worth mentioning are Smt. Mesti Kastani, Subarna, Satank, Aryati, Kumari Jhara, Smt. Jamuna. Smt. Jani, Kumari Tandra and Kuari Draupadi. These ladies worked for the freedom of the country and

dedicated their lives for the Congress movement.¹⁸

It is heartening to note here in this context that in the tribal areas of Ganjam and Koraput women had first raised their voice for freedom and had started a standard of rebellion against the foreign Government as early as the first part of the 19th century i.e., much before the Congress launched the freedom movement in India. The chief of the Gumma division of the Parlakhemundi region (Ganjam district) Krishna Chandra Bisoyee and his wife Hiramani Bisoyee carried on war against the British for long 20 years. When Krishna Chandra died a martyr's death fighting against the British, the war was continued by his brave and intelligent wife Hiramani. She led the guerrilla war of another 10 years with greater determination. The Government had to mobilize all their resources to capture her. Though after a prolonged fight she lost her war, yet she won an honoured place in the annals of freedom history.¹⁹

Similarly, Bangara Devi, the Koya Princess of Malkangiri, in the Koraput district fought with the British troops in 1860. Khar Parvati, a Bonda woman in the same

district carried on guerrilla warfare against the British. She kept the Government in constant trouble and tension for sometime. But along with her son she was captured and killed by the English troops in 1916.²⁰

At the direction of Mahatma Gandhi the women of South Orissa not only participated in political activities and movements but also remained deeply involved in the constructive programme. Such works included eradication of untouchability, prohibition, social reforms, promotion of Khadi etc. The group of women who dedicated themselves to the constructive work in South Orissa were A. Laxmi Bai, Champa Devi, Kishorimani Devi etc. These ladies received preliminary training and education for constructive works in the Alaka Ashram and in Hindustan Seva Ashram.

The Harijan movement of Gandhian constructive programme became very widespread and popular in South Orissa under the leadership of Champa Devi and Jayamangala Rath. Jayamangala Rath married a Harijan lady, who later on became active worker of Patitapaban Sangh. Champa Devi at her Ashram of Ichapur kept a number of Harijan ladies.

Through Vedic way of offering Mantra and Homa they were made touchables. She stayed there with Harijans and took care of them. She read Ramayana and Mahabharata and did Samkirtan with them at her residence.²¹

The peasant movement also made rapid progress in Ganjam and the adjoining areas under the leadership of Laxmi Bai (MLA) and Hemalata Samanta and T. Arahulu. They established contacts with the Ganjam ryots and toured different areas, addressed big gatherings of ryots and collected lady members for the movement. Gradually a large number joined the movement and offered their membership. They included Uma Devi, Ahalya Devi, Manakya Dei, Bishnu Priya Devi, Sumana Devi, T Annapurna, Tarini Dei. Sulakhya Devi, Padmavati Devi, Sita Devi and V. Kumudini Devi.²²

Women played an important role not only in improving the condition of Harijans or peasants, but also made their best efforts for the uplift of their own community. For the all round development of women they set up several socio-cultural and educational institutes and societies at different places. One such

association was the Utkal Women's Conference organized by the women of South Orissa. As has already been mentioned a couple of ladies including Rasamani Devi and Swarnalata Devi met at Swaraj Ashram, Berhampur and founded the Utkal Women's Conference which held its first session on 30th June 1924,²³ presided over by Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray of Bengal. The main aim of the conference was to discuss and deal with various problems related to women.

Annapurna Devi moved from place to place and organized meetings for women's liberation. She organized a number of primary schools in villages for the development of female education.²⁴ She established at Nari Sadan Berhampur with the help of Parsuram Patro.²⁵

On the whole, it is gratifying to note that women played a very significant role in the freedom movement of South Orissa. They participated in all aspects and phases of the

nationalist movement including the constructive programme.

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Political Movements of Bhagirathi Pattnaik in the context of Gandhian Ideology

Mahendra Kumar Dash

The history of freedom movement in Orissa is the expression of forces that constitutes an integral part of all India struggle. The soil of Sambalpur has produced so many heroes who sacrificed themselves in the service of the motherland against the tyrannical rule of the British Government during the freedom movement in Sambalpur. Sambalpur forms the streams of militant nationalism in the Indian war of Independence where the name of Bhagirathi Pattnaik is written in golden letters.

Bhagirathi Pattnaik as the follower of Gandhi has

worked in the Non-cooperation movement with the Congress members, continued for Peasant congregation during Civil-Disobedience Movement and revolted actively in the Quit India Movement.

EARLY LIFE:

Bhagirathi Pattnaik was born on 9th November, 1884. His father was Jadunath Pattnaik who was an Amin during the Sambalpur land settlement and mother was Kurmari Bani. He spent his early childhood in the peaceful atmosphere of Barpali and took admission at the Zilla School, Sambalpur for higher education. He left school when he was in 9th class due to the accidental death of his father in 1903 at Attabira.¹

Bhagirathi Pattnaik joined as an Oriya Teacher at Simagaon Dhanwantiri near Raipur in 1904. At that time Sambalpur District was under Madhya Pradesh. But he suddenly resigned from the post. Next Bhagirathi Pattnaik joined the Patna King Prithviraj Sing Deo as a Nazir and promoted to the position of Munsif and lastly to the personal secretary of the King. He spent nine years like a deaf, dumb and blind man in the empire of tyranny and suppression. When he started raising voice against

the oppressive king, he was arrested and sent to jail at Bolangir on 9th February 1920.

The Non-Cooperation Movement and Bhagirathi Pattnaik

Gaya Congress:

Bhagirathi Pattnaik being influenced with the spirit of patriotism and nationalism voiced against the tyrannical and unjust rule of the king. Thus he was sent to jail. After his release from Bolangir jail on 07.12.1920, he brought a Charkha and started spinning Khadar. He trained his son Prafulla and wife Jambubati in this regard. At that time Gandhiji had started his non-cooperation movement from 1 August 1920 and Sambalpur took an active part in this movement. The movement was spread out in Sambalpur district under the leadership of Chandra Sekhar Behera. Students left schools, colleges to join the strike. It was on 20th June 1921 a grand meeting was held at Sunaripada of Barpali where Bhagirathi played a great role in enrolling the names of the people in the movement. People were kin to register their names as the members of the congress.²

But due to the Chauri Chaura incident Gandhiji

stopped the movement and took active interest on weaving Khadi, removal of untouchability.

Bhagirathi Pattnaik went village to village for preparing people for the Gaya Congress. The preparatory meeting was held at Balibandha, Sambalpur from 23rd October 1922 to 25th October 1922.

Bhagirathi Pattnaik was selected to the Orissa provincial congress from Sambalpur. Among others Nrusingha Guru, Kunjabehari Meher and Ladabhai Thoria, Mahavir Sing had joined the Gaya Congress.³ They started their journey from Jharsuguda on 21st December 1922. The congress meeting was held from 26th December 1922 to 31st December 1922. After attending the conference they returned to home with a new spirit of Gandhian ideology of prevention of untouchability, spinning charakha and prevention of intoxication etc. Accordingly, Khadi centers were opened in Bargarh, Barpali and Attabira. Bhagirathi was accompanied in this regard by Chintamani Pujari, Laxminarayan Mishra, Achyutananda Purohit and others.

When Gandhiji was arrested on 11.1.1923 after Gaya Congress, Bhagirathi Pattnaik along with his friends observed 'Hartal' in Sambalpur town on 18th January 1923.

In spite of his poor economic family condition Bhagirathi Pattnaik wanted to participate in the Kakinada Congress held on 28.12.1923. He joined Kakinada Congress with the Congress representative ticket no.2447.⁴ Bhagirathi met Muhammad Ali the president of the Kakinada Congress meeting and Motilal Nehru. While returning to Sambalpur Bhagirathi came in close contact with the Berhampur congress committee and reached Puri to join a meeting with Ramdas Babaji and Nrusingha Pattnaik. The meeting was intended to free Gandhiji from Jail. He announced the message of Kakinada Congress at Bhubaneswar, Khordha, Kantilo, Baud, Sonapur, Kumbhari and Barpali.

The 39th Session of the Indian National Congress was held at Belgaon in 1924. Jawaharlal Nehru issued special delegates card for Bhagirathi Pattnaik. Bhagirathi Pattnaik distributed the cyclostyled copies regarding the negligence of the Pradesh Congress

Committee. Gopabandhu observing the situation rushed to Bhagirathi and said : "Bhagirathi Babu. I was really in dark, hence I will lapse the matter let our family dispute confined to our home, what is the need of making a public show of it ?" His affectionate word melted his heart. He withdrew the resolution copies from Nehru and others. Gandhiji visited Sambalpur on 23rd December 1928. He was accompanied by Kasturba Gandhi and Dev Das during his visit. Bhagirathi organized a meeting in the memory of Lala Lajpat Rai who was beaten by an English Officer and ultimately died in November 1928. Protesting against the Britishers Bhagirathi Pattnaik on that day gave a Khaddar Dhoti and a coat to his son Prafulla.

Declaration of Purna Swaraj and Bhagirathi Pattnaik (Salt Campaign)

In the Lahore Session of 1929 "Purna Swaraj" was passed and congress decided to observe the Purna Swaraj Day on 26th January 1930 throughout India. Bhagirathi made all arrangements to celebrate Independence Day at Sambalpur. District Magistrate Bharat Chandra Nayak was present to observe the situation.

Bhagirathi read out the resolution paper passed by the Congress.

Sambalpur played an important role during the Salt Satyagraha movement of 1930. Bhagirathi organized a public meeting at Bargarh with Chaturbhuja and Premsankar to discuss the matter. On 19th March, Laxminarayan, Bhagirathi, Dayananda Chintamani, Sudhansu Sekhar, Nrusingha Guru and Durga Guru were charge sheeted and ordered to appear before the court.

It was during the 2nd phase of the Satyagraha on 8th July, 1932 when Bhagirathi Pattnaik along with his revolutionary workers was arrested. Gandhiji started individual Satyagraha where he pleaded "All those who are able and are willing to offer individual Satyagraha on their own responsibility without expectation of any help from the Congress organizations are expected to do so".⁵

Bhagirathi Pattnaik along with his wife Jambubati Pattnaik and son Prafulla Pattnaik started individual civil-disobedience movement. It was on 22nd September 1933, Bhagirathi Pattnaik along with his family members were arrested while picketing at Bargarh.

After release from jail they began to serve the earth quake destitute. Prafulla worked in the relief camps of Mungher, Saharse, Panchgahia and Bangoan. Bhagirathi Pattnaik met Jawaharlal Nehru who came to supervise the relief work. On 3rd April 1934 they spent a night with Mahatma Gandhi, Bhagbati Devi and Jamunalal Bajaj in one camp.

Gandhi visited Orissa in May 1934 for an intensive study of the problem of untouchables and the method of solution. He reached Jharsuguda on 5th May 1934 at 5 a.m. along with Laxminarayan Sahu, Raj Kumar Bose, Thakkar Bana and some of his associates.⁶ Gandhiji also visited the Harijan Bustee of Sambalpur on the same day. Bhagirathi discussed various problems with Gandhiji and informed him about their success in closing the wine shops at different places.

Government of India Act was passed in 1935. The Congress decided to work within the framework of this new Act because it accorded new status to the provinces. The Act came into force in 1937 and the Congress decided to take part in the election for legislative assemblies at eleven provinces. Bhagirathi took

active part in the election campaign.

Quit India Movement and Bhagirathi Pattnaik

Bhagirathi Pattnaik took active part in the Quit India Movement. The historic "Quit India" resolution was passed on 14th July 1942. It renewed the demand that British Rule in India must end immediately. Bhagirathi organized the peoples at Sambalpur with his son Prafulla. Prafulla Pattnaik also collected funds from Deoghur and Dhunka for the August Revolution. On 17th April 1943 Jambubati Pattnaik died due to heart fail when Bhagirathi and Prafulla were in jail. Ayodhya Prasad Mishra a famous congress leader lit up the pyre.

It was on 10th February 1943, Gandhiji undertook a long fast for 21 days against the atrocities and illegal collection of money by the government. A feeling of high tension spread all over the district. Even illiterate labourers in the interior villages knew the deteriorating condition of Gandhiji's health and expressed keen anxiety regarding the effect of his fast.⁷

Bhagirathi Pattnaik presided over a meeting at Dharmasala, Sambalpur. This

meeting was organized against the anti-people policies of the interim government. He supported the student's movement openly at Sambalpur on 24th November 1945 as a protest against the firing and lathi charge on the students in Calcutta and he organized the students at Bargarh and Barpali. The Independence Day was observed on 26th Jan. 1946 at some centres of the district.⁹

But the Independence Day was celebrated throughout India with great joy and enthusiasm on 15th August 1947. Mr. Garnath Gartia presided over the independence celebration meeting at Barpali.

Conclusion

The contributions of Bhagirathi Pattnaik and his family in the freedom struggle are priceless and immeasurable. His role was not only confined to Sambalpur but also to different parts of India, Bhagirathi Pattnaik as a follower of Gandhiji actively

worked from non-cooperation movement to the Independence of India. Bhagirathi's contribution in the peasant congregations, individual Satyagraha, revolution against the British Government and his stand against untouchability is remarkable and historical. He also raised his voice for equal opportunities to all irrespective of caste, creed etc. He realised that true democracy could not be achieved without education. He emphasized upon the village Panchayats to resolve the disputes of the villagers. Bhagirathi as an ardent follower of Gandhiji entered into the Jagannath temple at Barpali with the untouchables. Bhagirathi took active part in the Bhoodan Movement in 1957. In this movement they got a village 'Panimora' as Gramdan. He identified himself with the communist party of India with Red Flag during the last part of his life. He also participated actively in the communist movement against the price rise, unemployment

and corruption in 1976. This was the last political movement for 92 years old Bhagirathi Pattnaik. It was on 9th July 1980 his great soul vanished with the Supreme Soul leaving his unforgettable deeds, for whom the soil of Sambalpur has been glorified.

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Nayagarh Uprisings

Arun Kumar Sahoo

Nayagarh was one of the most disturbed tributary mahals of Orissa during the British Rule. It is one of the Feudatory States of Orissa situated to the west of Khurdha. It was one of the smaller States of Orissa. All in all, it was a beautiful State, rich in the bounties of nature. During the times of British Occupation of Orissa Nayagarh was under Raja Binayak Shingh Mandhatta. A treaty engagement was concluded with Raja, who was granted a Quabool Nama, and agreed to pay his annual tribute of Rs.5,17,914-16-2/- regularly. But his subsequent relationship with the Britishers was not remain cordial, when he objected to the establishment of Police Thanas in his estate. Besides this he was also suspected of having been involved in Ghumusar Risings, and violating the treaty engagements. Apart from this the next charge against him was that he protected, gave shelter

to the rebel leader Buxi Jagabandhu and several other leaders. But he died in 1823. He was succeeded by his son Brajabandhu Singh Mandhatta. The people were thoroughly dissatisfied with this new ruler due to his oppressive measures and mal-administration which ultimately led to a popular rising during the period from 1849 to 1852.

The Raja generally demanded exorbitant rates and a number of illegal cesses from the ryots. There was no limit to his demands. The militia class who held Jagirs for their services to Raja had to pay rent for their holdings. Besides this, the simmering discontent of the people was caused by the prevailing practice of feudal levies, like Begar, Bethi, Magan and Rasad. The Sarbakaras, Sardars or Lakhrajars and Bebartas, all of them were both autocratic and oppressive. They would declare a defaulting tax payer "Palataka" in order to auction his properties and grab it illegally. They were the intermediaries between the Durbars and the Ryots, who received commissions in proportion to the amount of rent and revenue which they used to collect without paying any attention to the weather conditions and quantity of

production from the agricultural land. They arbitrarily collected more from the peasants to ensure their commissions. They forced the peasants and the rural labourers to work without wages in their lands during the sowing of paddy transplantation and harvesting. Besides this it was observed that the poor labourers had to carry the luggages of government officers on tours and to work on Bethi for the construction of public roads and ponds. In short each and every section of the society in the state was aggrieved and disappointed. Thus this discontentment which was deposited from a long period needed only one strike of matchbox. And it happened when Raja discontinued the system of giving commission to the Paikas, Sarbakaras, Dalais, Dalabeheras and the Ryots. They came forward, joined hands with militia as well as with peasants, the khandhs class who obviously constituted a very formidable body in the estate and started opposing the actions of Raja who became universally unpopular among his subjects.

In 1843 the peasants complained before A.J.M Mills, the Commissioner of Cuttack against the Raja. But at the initial stage British policy

was not to interfere in the internal affairs of that tributary mahal. Early in 1846, the Jagir holder Bhagirathi Mangaraj was dispossessed by the Raja. His cattle, crops and the belongings were forcibly taken away. He started depredations against this illegal act of Raja, being supported by a large number of followers of Nayagarh, Athagarh, Khallikote, Banapur and Ghumushar in March 1846. When the Ruler found himself incapable of controlling the situation, sought help from British Authorities. The British Authorities in Ganjam rendered assistance to Mills to suppress the rebellious activities of Bhagirathi Mangaraj and punished 45 persons with various terms of imprisonment.

In 1849 the ryots who were thoroughly dissatisfied with the autocratic measures of the chief first appealed to F Goldsburg, Commissioner and Superintendent of tributary mahals, Cuttack then to Government of Bengal for redressal of their grievances. As their complaints were not heard, the ryots restored to open revolts under the leadership of Kamal Lochan Paikray and Hari Gajendra Singh. Kamal Lochan, son of the late Dewan Barju Paikray, was deposed by Raja from his

Jagir. Same was the case of Hari Gajendra Singh, who lost his Jagir in Nayagarh. The charge against him was his involvement in the intrigues against Ruler.

Besides these two, many others who had lost their Jagirs were Udhav Samantaray, Sibram Routray, Biku Pattanaik, Hari Routray, Loki Bahubalendra, Raghunath Dora, Balaram Dora, Jaladhar Baliara Singh and Bhagaban Bahubalendra. Imbued with strong ideas to do something and to fight against the oppression and mal-administration, about 5,000 Paikas, Dalabeheras, Dalais combined their efforts to resist the oppressive rule of the Raja. When the Ruler felt that the situation is going out of his control, he sought for British intervention.

When a large number of aggrieved people come to the office of the superintendent to put forth their grievances against Raja, the superintendent was bound to depute the Deputy Collector of Cuttack, Babu Ram Prasad Rai to Nayagarh to settle the matter. Babu Ram Prasad Rai immediately issued the order to place the state under British attachment, suppressed the rising, the Ryots were either fined or imprisoned. Then they

appointed Ram Prasad Roi as Tahasildar of Nayagarh.

But this settlement proved ineffective. Previously the Ryots used to complain against their oppressive ruler, but then they started complaining against the corruption of the British Officers as well as against the oppression of the Amalas. But their complaint produced no favourable results for them. Ramachandra Rai, the Tahasildar continued in his office at Nayagarh, assessed the Khanabari lands of the Paikas, which was unusual in tributary mahals. It created further discontentment among the Paikas. Nayagarh seemed to be in a state of utter confusion. There was disaffection also among the Kandhas of Nayagarh. The Kandhas held their lands free of rent on the condition that they would pay Bhetis or Nazranas and do Bethi for the Raja. In 1849 the Raja forced the Kandhas to pay a tax in cash for their lands, ploughs and houses they held. The Ryots, the militia class and the tribal population, particularly the Kandhas were sufferers due to the imposition of such oppressive measures. Consequently the growing discontentment burst in to open revolt in 1894.

The leaders Hari Gajendra Singh, Kamal Paikray and Udhav Samantaray came forward and decided to take bold step. From jail they wrote letters to the Ryots inducing them to withhold payment of rents and to assemble in Khurdha in huge numbers to start a united move against the authorities. Accordingly in November 1849, the ryots of several villages stopped payment of rents to the government, which became a matter of concern for the authorities. Magistrate of Puri was sent to tackle the situation, who at the request of Raja recommended the names of four ring leaders of the movement. They were Kamal Paikray, Udhav Samantaray, Shibram Routray and Hari Gajendra Singh for exterminate from the estate. This increased further dissatisfaction among the people, who as a reaction to this killed Bhutia Subudhi, chief servants of Raja, Sardar of Sunamui. The Paiks, Kandhas, and other tribes joined the insurgence of Nayagarh. A mass revolt occurred in the estate. The Kondhs of Boudh and Ghumsar came forward to help the rebels of Nayagarh, assembled on a hill called Goonamuttee. They decided to start a serious revolt from the

village Baharijhol, the granary house of Nayagarh Royal family. By the end of 1850, all the hill tribes of Nayagarh, Ghumushar and Daspalla extended their support to the rebel leaders.

The British authorities took immediate steps and the superintendent himself moved towards Nayagarh on 17th December 1850, with an escort of two companies of the 30th Regiment MN I. By that time, Kamal Paikray, along with his followers had fled to the inaccessible jungles bordering Daspalla. Apprehending dangers to the lives of Raja Family he left one company at Nayagarh for the protection of Raja and his Garah, returned to Cuttack on 1st Jan 1851.

The insurgents usually resorted to looting, murder and arson. Anybody or any party hostile to the insurgents were either murdered or threatened to be murdered. The main attack of the insurgents was on the granaries of the Raja located at different villages of the estate. On 19th January 1851 Rebels plundered the houses of Narayan Samantaray and Dama Samantray, the two supporters of Raja of village Ghumsar. Thereafter a series of outrages were committed by the insurgents in different villages of Nayagarh. On 25th

January about 300 insurgents destroyed the village Sunamui. Then they threatened to attack a nearby village, Koral, where the detachment of the Paik companies had been posted. Gradually the insurgents became more and more daring and violent. The Kandhas of Gunighar under the direction of Chakra Bisoi joined Kamal Lochan Paikray, the rebel leader of Nayagarh. It forged the unity between the two rebel leaders, Chakra Bisoi and Kamal Lochan Paikray. This strengthened his strength tremendously. He proposed to destroy the villages, which helped the Raja vigorously. Altogether 132 villages were burnt. Many of the granaries of Raja were burnt. The insurgents even acquired arms and ammunition from the person in charge of the Raja's Barud Khana. All the passes to and from Nayagarh were blocked by stone barricades. Their depredations were mainly confined to "the less open parts of the country where they could secure a safe retreat into the jungles." Thus the revolt had taken a serious turn by the end of February 1851. In fact the Paikas left the burnt villages without helping the inhabitants. Gradually the spirit of discontent extended beyond Nayagarh, particularly to Ranapur,

Khandapara and Daspalla. Gouldsbury concluded that the disturbances in Nayagarh have now assumed the form of a popular insurrection...”

The Raja himself was incapable either of managing or of protecting his territory. Due to the gravity of the situation, after a careful review, Gouldsbury suggested to the Government of Bengal for taking over the entire management of the estate. He also proposed that the Raja should be granted a sufficient amount for his support from the surplus revenues of his estate. Further he recommended that until all the leaders of the insurrection were captured, the estate would remain under military occupation. As the capture of the rebel leaders was a matter of great importance Gouldsbury offered suitable reward for their apprehension which was as follows:-

Kamal Lochan Paikray-	Rs.500/-
Udhab Samantaray-	Rs.300/-
Subram Routray	Rs.300/-
Dinabandhu Pattanaik.	Rs.250/-
Bhagaban Bahubalendra	Rs.250/-
Basu Bisoi	Rs.250/-

Gouldsbury directed W.Ainslie, Assistant Superintendent of Tributary Mahals, Cuttack, to move from Boudh to Nayagarh and take over the charge of civil administration there on 17th Feb. 1851, Gouldsbury himself proceeded to Nayagarh to supervise the matter. Then Captain Findley started his marathon campaign to trouble-spots such as Itamati, Koral, Mahipur and Gunighar. There he dispersed the insurgents and established police out-posts for future protection of the areas. But when Gouldsbury arrived on 21 Feb 1851, the unsettled state of affairs came to an end. He arrested all the family members of Kamal Lochan Paikray and captured Damu Dakua, one of the leaders and many of his followers. Gouldsbury gave a call to the insurgents to surrender to put forth their grievances and to help the British Government in bringing peace to the estate. The open revolt was quickly suppressed and opposition was driven underground but that only kept the fire smouldering

for a considerable period. The impact of the risings in Nayagarh was felt in the neighbouring estate of Daspalla and Ranapur. Such risings were suppressed ruthlessly by the British government as in Nayagarh. However it had far reaching consequences in moulding the minds of men in all the feudatory states of Orissa.

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Tribal Revolt of 1949 in Mayurbhanj

Dr. Kalpana Das

When India got independence on the 15th Aug 1947, the British paramountcy in respect of Indian States lapsed and the state of Mayurbhanj became an independent unit with effect from that date. Soon after the transfer of power from the British hands, 'A Mayurbhanj State Legislative Assembly' was constituted with Sri Sarat Chandra Das as Prime Minister of the state. Sri Das was a leader of the Praja Mandal Party which later on came to be known as Mayurbhanj State Congress.

Sardar Patel summoned the Rulers of Orissa Feudatory states to meet him at Cuttack on 14th Dec 1947. But the Maharaja transferred full powers to his ministry on 9th Dec and took that ground on the conference (14th Dec), remained excluded from the merger negotiations. Had

Mayurbhanj joined with the other states on the 14th Dec 1947 to merge with Orissa, the course of subsequent agitation might have been different. In 1948, started the formation of different groups, some claiming amalgamation with Orissa and some wanting to keep the state independent. By September Maharaja saw that the administration had become chaotic and the ministry divided in this issue. Sri Satat Chandra Das went to Delhi with Maharaja Pratap Chandra Bhanjdeo on the 16th Oct 1948 and the Maharaja signed there the instrument of the merger. Hence the state of Mayurbhanj merged with Orissa. The formal handing and taking over of the state by the Govt. of India took place in Nov. 1948 when Dr D.V. Rege, I.C.S. was appointed as the Chief Commissioner of Mayurbhanj.

The administration of the central government in Mayurbhanj lasted only for a short duration or less than 2 months during which the chief commissioner studied closely and carefully the situation before finalizing his recommendation about the future of the state. After he submitted the report to the State Ministry V.P. Menon visited Baripada on 16th Dec 1948 to announce before the assembly

the momentous decision of the Govt. of India. In a written address to the Maharaja and the Representative of the People, Menon explained the overwhelming desire of all sections of the people except the adivasis to join Orissa as the integral part of Orissa Province and the alike decision of the state ministry.

Actually opposing the merger with Orissa the tribals under the leadership of Sunaram Majhi engineered a tribal movement in favour of merger of Mayurbhanj with Bihar. Formerly Sunaram's demand was in favour of an independent Mayurbhanj opposing merger with Orissa. While the negotiation of Congress leader of Orissa proved unavailing, Sunaram felt convinced that if Mayurbhanj would cease to remain a separate entity, than its merger with Bihar would serve the cause of the tribal population better. Sunaram's arguments touched the tribals in every nook and corner of the state making their agitation more popular and vigorous. Brushing aside the arguments of the Adivasis as highly unreasonable Menon would critically state:-

“The real leader is not the man who can address large public meetings but the man

who can do something for the betterment of his fellowmen. Tasted by that standard the Adivasi leaders have failed in their duties”.

In order to ally all possible fear from the minds of the Adivasis, Menon reassuringly said, “The Govt. of India and the Orissa Govt. will see that the lot of the Adivasis is improved and every fair chance is given to him.” He announced that Mayurbhanj would merge with Orissa on 2nd Jan 1949. But the tribals of Mayurbhanj at once started opposing the decision of Government of India. “Adivasi Mahasava”, a volunteer tribal organization started in 1946 became very popular among the tribals of Chhotanagar area under the able leadership of Jaipal Singh. Jaipal wanted to create for himself a stable political base. With this intention he started working for the upliftment of Adivasis of Bihar, Orissa, Madhya Pradesh and Bengal. Taking advantage of the situation in Mayurbhanj his two supporters Sunaram Soren and Ram Chandra Majhi enrolled about 15000 members both man and woman mostly from Bamanghaty and Panchpir sub-divisions adjacent to Bihar. In this context Jaipal Singh came forward, joined hands

with Sunaram and Ramchandra and started mobilizing the tribals of Mayurbhanj in favour of merger with Bihar.

In the meantime on 18th May 1948 the states of Saraikela and Kharswan merged with the Singhbhum district of Bihar. The leader of Bihar Krishnaballabh Sahay played a vital role in the transfer of the administration of Saraikela and Kharswan to the government of Bihar. Actually it was the result of a armed rebellion of the Tribals and the backstage political intrigues by tribal leaders of Bihar. This victory of the rebels and their leaders worked like a heavy tonic for the Adivasis of Mayurbhanj, who resolved to follow similar course of action to breakaway from Orissa. When V.P. Menon announced the final decision of Govt. of India the tribal leaders like L. Bhawan and Jaipal Singh, the brain behind Saraikela uprising started instigating the innocent tribals of Mayurbhanj. Under the leadership of Sunaram Soren and Ram Chandra Majhi, they declared Bamanghaty sub-division as independent unit with headquarters at Rairangpur. Armed Adivasis equipped with bows, arrows, axe and spear divided into several groups,

either cut off or blocked deployment of troops in different places. They guarded the road leading to Rairangpur. Even students of a school were engaged by their teacher Singray Majhi to collect advance information about any troop movement. They considered the non-tribals as Dikus who lived at the mercy of the Adivasis in utter panic in Bamanghaty and Panchpir area. Thousands of armed Adivasis started holding meetings in different places, even they came down to Baripada town and started demonstration at Police parade ground with the slogan” We shall merge with Bihar not with Orissa”.

It was an unprecedented spectacle at Baripada town generating panic and spreading lawlessness. V.S. Mathews, the Collector of Mayurbhanj with the help of armed military forces started drastic action against the rebels. He ordered firing at Kuldiha, Gunduria, Gitilata, Rairangpur and several other places, where the tribals were assembled in groups to hold meetings. Due to the use of stenguns and rifles, there was heavy loss of life on the sides of the rebels. Govt. imposed punitive taxes on tribals and showed no leniency in realizing

the punitive tax. The tribals leaving their home and hearths fled to jungles. Govt. initiated judicial proceedings against the rebels and arrested rebels and their leaders. Since Mayurbhanj was recently merged with Orissa and Govt. of India had committed to take care of the Adivasis, Mahatab visited Rairangpur, met the tribal leaders and expressed his sincere concern about the

welfare of tribals. Criminal's proceedings were withdrawn from those arrested leaders. After normalcy was restored, Adivasi Congress was set up to channelize the political minded tribals of Mayurbhanj. Hence forth there was no obstacle for merger of Mayurbhanj and the state constituted one of the districts of Orissa from 2nd January 1949.

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Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurating the renovated lounge and reception and improved facilities in Orissa Niwas, New Delhi on 14.7.2010.

Role of Khariar in the Freedom Struggle

Mohammed Yamin

It is a strenuous task to trace the history of freedom struggle in terms of a small principality like Khariar. The tremor of freedom struggle was felt in Khariar region. This paper seeks to highlight the role of this region in the freedom struggle.

Origin of Khariar

Very scanty information is available about the origin of the name of Khariar. Very few records have come to my notice which are placed here after careful scrutiny. Near Badadadhibaban temple, one of the oldest temples of the area, the first living settlement or housing restoration had been made and that settlement might have been called with some name about which nothing substantial is known. In course of time tradition believes this housing settlement was called "Khaliapali".¹

According to G.C. Praharaj², Kaisar-i-Hind (Silver Medal) the following explanation of the word Khalia are found in his compiled work "Purnachandra Odia Bhasa-kosha" (A lexicon of the Oriya language). He stated that, due to the condition of clay and sticky, gravely (soil) cattle suffer from stringhalt. It also means a low marshy land unfit for cultivation, slippery condition of the ground owing to the accumulation of water. A small pool at the foot of a hill where water is left in summer. This locality was named Khaliapali and afterwards it came to be known as Khariar, Khariyalaya and Khadial.

Some interpret "Khadi" meaning chalk and therefore, explain the word "Khadial" means living place for learned people.³

We have also traced the origin of the name Khariar from a report written by Sibnarayan Deo.⁴ He stated that during the reign of Ratan Singh (1818-1842 A.D.) he had shifted his capital from Komna to Khadial. The name Khadial owes its origin to a river of Rajasthan named Khariar which falls into Sambhar lake, Menda, Khadial, Khandel, Rupanagar and Aral rivers fall into Sambhar

lake of Rajasthan. In the Orissa State Gazetteer⁵ this place has been mentioned as Khadial. During the British period Khariar has been mentioned as Khariar, Thereafter, still it is being used in all purpose as "Khariar", which is within 82°/83' longitude and 20°/23' latitude. The shape of the territory is like an English letter "L".⁶

Brief Political History of Khariar

The present Nuapada district (formed after the bifurcation of Kalahandi district on 1st April, 1993) comprises the area of Khariar principality alias state. It was reduced to the status of an estate in 1865 A.D. by the British authority. It had its capital at Komna. Then the state was known as Tonnote state. This state was separated from Patna in 1590 A.D. and its Raja ruled independently. Within 1751-55 A.D. the whole area fell into the hands of the Maratha of Nagpur, but it appears to have been ceded to the British Government by the Treaty of 1803 A.D. with the Maratha.⁷ It can be corroborated by the records of T. Mottle, the first European to visit Sambalpur (1768 A.D.) for trade in diamond clearly reveals the political instability in Sambalpur region due to

struggle between the British and the Maratha for supremacy towards the close of the 18th century." Again in 1806 A.D. Maratha regained their supremacy. Towards the end of 1817 A.D. It was once more reverted to British and it finally in 1826 A.D. ceded to East India Company. It appears from "Aitchison's Collection of Treaties, Engagements and Sanad" that Khariar was finally ceded under Article-5 of the treaty between the East India Company and Raghuji Bhonsale-III, dated 1st December, 1826 A.D. This was further confirmed by a subsequent Treaty dated 26th December 1829 A.D. By article of the Treaty. Chhatisgarh was given back to the Nagpur region. After the death of Raghuji Bhonsale III, the British fully lapsed the dominion status of Nagpur Raja. It is said that this territory was wild, rugged and mountainous covered with dense forest, difficult to access, and of course, thinly populated.⁹

During the period of Prataparudra Singh Deo (1792-1818 A.D.) the capital was at Komna. There was a Pindari raid in this area in 1806 A.D. according to Raipur District Gazetteer.¹⁰ The leader of the Pindari Chittu, was determined to devastate the

Bhonsale territories because the Bhonsale troops had killed the adopted son. In consequence Pindari spread into Chhatisgarh. From a report written by Sibanarayana Deo,¹¹ Pindaris had plundered the Khariar region. It is known that Bhonsale Government had taken Ratan Singh to Nagpur for non-payment of arrear Takoli and kept him there for 14 years. It is known that Majhi Priest and local leaders had collected funds and had gone to Nagpur for payment and finally released Ratan Singh. After that Ratan Singh became Raja in 1818 A.D. and ruled upto 1842 A.D. Raja Ratan Singh died in 1842 A.D. and was succeeded by his son Sunder Singh. He was succeeded by Krushna Chandra Singh Deo.

During his period of reign from 1852 to 1867 A.D. was a crucial period of revolt against the British for he supported the cause of Surendra Sai.

Khariar formed a part of the Chhota Nagpur Division in British record until it was transferred to the jurisdiction of the superintendent of Tributary Mahals, Cuttack, and in 1861 A.D. Khariar state was again transferred as a part of Sambalpur and incorporated in



the Central Province (C.P.) of British India.

Khariar Supported the Cause of Surendra Sai

Veer Surendra Sai, the most illustrious Chauhan of Khinda in Sambalpur region with all his strength was striving to oust the Britishers from the Motherland, but by the later part of 1858 A.D. Surendra Sai found Sambalpur region unsafe and made his stronghold in the hills of Khariar. Manikgarh the traditional bastion of the Chauhan in this part of country, provided Surendra Sai greater protection and safe mobility in 1861 A.D. Raja Krushna Chandra Singh Deo and the people of Khariar region did not pay any heed to the frequent warning of the British authority to drive Surendra Sai away from the state. Instead, K.C. Singh Deo helped Surendra Sai with men

and money. He gave him shelter and maintained secrecy of his whereabouts.¹² That had invoked the British authorities and they regarded K.C. Singh Deo, the Raja of Khariar as dangerous.¹³

Raja K.C. Singh Deo did not receive proper treatment from the British. Despite that, when the 32 Regiment of Madras Native Infantry under Captain Swiney passed through Khariar to join the Regiment at Kamptee. He gave them valuable logistic assistance without which Captain Swiney would never have reached his destination safely. Instead the Raja helped the Britishers to capture some of the camp followers of Veer Surendra Sai. At the same time the Raja of Khariar used to help Surendra Sai with men and money inspite of all this hiccup. The Raja of Khariar never got Surendra Sai arrested and saw that no harm was done to him. Because of this fact, he was called a dangerous Chief in British correspondence. He is also regarded as mere Zamindar in the letter of Acting Commissioner R.N. Share of Sambalpur district dated 23rd January 1862 A.D.

Despite the above hurdle, Khariar Raja and the common people supported the

cause of Veer Surendra Sai. The injustice meted out to Surendra Sai was a climax to one of the most gross forms of political chicanery practised by the British (East India Company) for grabbing Indian territories. In the inaccessible area of Sambalpur Surendra Sai waged a sustained war by Guerrilla tactics in order to espouse the cause of the mute tribal peasants who had flocked under his banner without any fear to the British troops.¹⁴ During this journey of heroism and time of urgent necessity Veer Surendra Sai got valuable support and assistance from Khariar which still remains a statement for posterity and has been a historic testimony for all freedom lovers.

Civil Disobedience Movement

Within the formation of the Indian National Congress by A.O. Hume and during the time of Lord Dufferin in 1885, the Indian freedom struggle got new shape and energy. The whole country was agog with over the Civil Disobedience Movement decided upon by the working committee of Congress on the Lahore session in 1929. The Civil Disobedience Movement began on 12th March, 1930. Mahatma Gandhi with 78 male

members left the Sabarmati Ashram on foot and reached the sea at Dandi on 5th April 1930. As scheduled Gandhiji broke the Salt law on 6th April 1930, this had great significance all over India.¹⁵

During this period, as already observed Khariar state was incorporated in Raipur district of Central Province. The first Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930, led the Forest Satyagraha in Raipur district. We get this information from Raipur District Gazetteer¹⁶ which narrated thus : "The forest Satyagraha started in the district led the arrest of large number of persons on 29th April 1929. Waman Rao Lakhe asked the audience to break laws and destroy the Government on 18th May 1929. He suggested social boycott of bureaucracy. Consequently he was convicted on 25th June 1930 and had to undergo one year simple imprisonment. On the same day car of the Police Superintendent was stoned and two policemen were assaulted by the people.

Raipur District Gazetteer further elaborated that sporadic violence continued unabated in the former Khariar Zamindari. An attack was made on 30th

September on the police party which had gone there to make arrest. The policemen were able to extricate themselves with difficulty after resorting to firing. Two persons were wounded and other sporadic violence occurred at Chaulshara, Patparpali, Khateru and Konnadabri villages.

The above narration of the Gazetteer shows that, police force were deployed in many parts of the district. The Khariar Zamindari was famous for its teak forest and was part of the same district. As freedom struggle was all India in nature, the activities of the forest Satyagraha of Raipur must have spread to the interior villages or forest areas of Khariar.

Saliha Agitation

Saliha, a village is situated at a distance of eight Kms towards north-east direction from Nuapada surrounded by rocky mountains. It appears to have been located within dense forest. It seems to be an ancient settlement, because two pieces of sculpture arts are found on the bank of the tank. One is a rectangular Sakti measuring 2 ft. 2 inches by 1ft. 6 inches. Sakti worship in ancient and early Medieval periods was popular.

J.P. Singh Deo,¹⁹ a freelance archaeological researcher visited the site on 16th April, 1996 and wrote it in his article "Saliha and Its Aftereffect." He makes the following observation.

"Once two stone temples stood there. One was of Shiva linga and other was of rectangular Sakti deity. The second sculpture of a Saliha shows a yogi fasten with a belt (Yoga patta) practising high austerity in sitting position. There is every possibility that once two small temples Shiva and Sakti stood there. At present Konabhaira deity is worshipped as presiding deity by the villagers of Saliha was once a site of Shiva-Sakti worship."

Braja Kishor Padhi²⁰ while dealing with freedom struggle in Khariar Principality states, "The year 1930 A.D. is a landmark in the history of Khariar. The tyrannical rule of Garhjat feudatory state evoked a strong feeling of resentment against the ruler and aroused their sympathy for oppressed masses of the States. The imposition of taxes on the tenants of the states by the Raja of Khariar created resentment against him. The people Khariar state united and organised a meeting at

Salihagarh village in 1930 and protested the taxation taken by the Government. This incident is popularly known as "Saliha Agitation." It was mid of Summer, the people of many villages like Chuhuri, Kodmeri, Nuadehi, Thelkobra, Saliha, Katyanpar, Bairbhadi, Karemeli, Murhela. Patparpali, Dumerdihi, Nilji and Sinapali, etc. and many more villages gathered and denounced against the imposition of wood tax and pandri tax."²¹ In the same way in Kalahandi the peasants revolted against Durbar rule mainly because of the Kulta immigrants from other districts especially Sambalpur who received the patronage of the ruler to improve agriculture in his territories which deprived the indigenous tribal of their traditional rights and privileges. This peasant discontent surfaced in 1878 A.D.²² and in the same Kalahandi Kondh rebellion also took place. They had nursed a deep grievances against the Kulta Cultivators.

The above resentment of common people against the ruler in real terms was directed towards the British because the British forced and imposed the ruler to collect wood and Pandri taxes from the common men. So, everywhere there was some sort of rebellion, one of such was Saliha agitation.

A meeting was organised at Saliha. More than seven hundred people assembled. Their ambition was one. A resolution was passed in the meeting not to give taxes and to revolt against imposition of taxes. One Pratap Singh (Komdat) Supervisor of Nawapara investigated secretly and informed the same to Raja Artatran Deo immediately. He disliked to expose himself. So, he dealt it diplomatically and believed that matter can be settled peacefully and reported the matter to police to control the campaign. To suppress any untoward incident police rushed to Saliha while meeting was in progress. Police gheraoed the campaigners all of a sudden and warned the people to stop the meeting. The people dis-obeyed the order and chanted slogan against the Government. So, to control the agitation police charged lathi. In return people manhandled the police force and burnt the lathis. Some policemen were wounded. Without finding any other alternative the police were compelled to fire at the crowd. They arrested forty to fifty members in the meeting. So in the whole area, there was anarchy and the situation was beyond control. Leaders like, Keju Das Baba of Chahari, Ramlal Deongan of Parakoda,

Ramu of Saliguda, Gouda Rai of Saliha and many more people of Panaguda and Chanabeda villages were arrested and were taken to prison. Some died and many more were wounded on the spot.²⁴

All the above narration of B.K. Padhi is mostly from oral archives and therefore most of the statements may find in excess of the real happening and exaggeration. There was no death during Saliha firing and Keju Das Baba and Kartik Sabar suffered injuries in their leg on 30th September 1930. And It is also found clear from the Raipur District Gazetteer that, only one person was reportedly wounded.

In the further course, with the consent of Raja Artatran Deo, Khariar estate was amalgamated with Orissa province on 1st April, 1936 and remained in Sambalpur district. The people at Khariar like other parts of the new province had regularly received the clarion call of the Congress and many of them actively participated in the cause of freedom struggle.

Non Co-operation Movement & Indian Independence

Mahatma Gandhi launched the Quit India

Movement on 8th August 1942 for which a resolution of All India Congress Committee was passed on 7th August 1942. Gandhi asked the British to leave India for good. Gandhiji was arrested. The news of his arrest was followed by non-violent demonstration in the shape of meetings, hartals and procession throughout the country. Despite the warning from the Superintendent of Police of Sambalpur for unlawful gathering, a number of meetings were held at Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Barpali, Khariar and in Sambalpur in defiance of the notice or warning.²⁵

The Quit India Movement in Khariar was intense and there was widespread protest against the British Raj. Many Congress activists were arrested. Every attempt was made from the people to lodge their protest against the British Raj and early release of Gandhiji. There was widespread unrest in Khariar, Nilji, Sinapali and many more remote villages and people in large numbers courted arrest. With all the above nationalist temper the Quit India Movement in Khariar was only sporadic in its success.

At last, toil and blood of the people of India became materialised with the coming of

Lord Mounbatten as the new Viceroy. He worked out compromise plan for the transfer of power, more suitable to the British hidden agenda of dividing the Nation. At that time there were many Muslims of Khariar including late Mohammed Hussain (Ustadji) who led a protest march from Khariar Masjid (Mosque) to the police station and submitted a memorandum to the police in charge against the partition formula of Lord Mountbatten. The pride and joy in the achievement of freedom on 15th August, 1947, was diluted by the pain and sadness of partition and the consequences of partition. Freedom was only the first step with faith and hope. India began to march forward to meet the challenges of freedom.

The above narration shows the martial, heroic and independent character of the people of Khariar with a seat of culture, knowledge and wisdom from remote past.

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The Heros of Kanika Peasants' Movement Basu - Bisuni

Dillip Kumar Behura

The Britishers invaded Orissa in 1803 and the revolt against them started from October, 1804. Under the leadership of Saheed Jayee Rajguru, the Paikas of Khurda rose in revolt with a view to overthrowing the British rule. With the help of some opportunist local Oriyas, the British administrator succeeded in capturing Jayee Rajguru and put him into death. In this way Jayee Rajguru became the first martyr of Orissa during the British regime.

The brutal death of Jayee Rajguru never terrorized the revolutionaries. The revolution for freedom continued and its flame spread throughout the State. The Britishers introduced 'Feudalism' in India. They created thousands of land lords (Zamindars) in this country to carry out their administration smoothly. The Zamindars were called as kings and their Zamindari called princely states. Kanika was one of them near Kendrapara in Orissa. Sir

Rajendra Narayan Bhanjdeo was the king of Kanika. Contradicting to his character, in one hand, the king himself was a patron of Oriya movement, on the other hand to get more revenue he imposed 64 types of taxes on common man. Though the king thought himself as a pure Oriya, still he liked to imitate the English Culture. The costly living style of the king also cost dearly to the common man. Without giving any respite the taxes were collected forcefully in the presence of police force.

Besides this, in 1922 first settlement of land was started in Kanika. As the manager of Kanika, Indramani Mohanty began this settlement work, so it bore the name 'Indramani Settlement.' On behalf of the British Government, the settlement work progressed in Orissa and Bihar. However, the settlement work created a revolutionary attitude among the peasants.

Before the commencement of Kanika Peasants' Movement in early 1921, the Utkal Provincial Congress Committee was constituted with Pandit Gopabandhu Das as its founder President. Non-cooperation movement started with Gandhiji's first visit to Orissa. Gandhi arrived at Cutack on 23rd March, 1921 and addressed public meetings at Cuttack, Bhadrak,

Satyabadi, Puri and Berhampur within a period of six days.

Several youngmen left their studies, government service and other jobs and professions. Most prominent among them were Harekrishna Mahatab, Nityananda Kanungo, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Nanda Kishore Das and Raj Krushna Bose. Gopabandhu Das, Bhagirathi Mohapatra and Jagabandhu Singh left their legal practice. Gopabandhu Choudhury resigned from his job of Deputy Collector. Pandit Nilakantha Das resigned from Calcutta University and took charge of a National School at Sambalpur. Pandit Lingaraj Mishra and Surendranath Das resigned from Govt. service. Soon after Gandhiji's departure from Orissa, students of Sambalpur Zilla school staged the first students' strike under the leadership of Laxminarayan Mishra.

These developments in non-cooperation movement added fuel to Kanika Peasants' Movement. Congress leader Gopabandhu Das rose his voice against the tyranny of Kanika Raja. He urged the people not to pay tax, that led Kanika uprising. The government arrested Gopabandhu Das and sent him to jail. The peasants got united and revolted against the Kanika Raja Rajendra Narayan Bhanjdeo.

Madhusudan Pattanaik was the leader of that movement. The British army rushed into Kanika to help the King. As the situation came under control the king again with the help of police force forced the people to pay tax.

People refused to pay tax. The leaders of the peasant movement also advised the peasants not to pay tax. The servants of Zamindar and police forces tried to collect the taxes. Those refused or unable to pay tax, police force beat them mercilessly. Besides this, the king oppressed the peasants brutally. There were some honest and lenient Tax Collectors. They also refused collect the tax. One of them was Dinabandhu Khandayat Ray. He tried his level best to solve the problems of the peasants. He also appealed before the Collector in this matter.

The Government accused Mr. Dinabandhu Khandayat Ray blaming him as the mastermind behind the peasants' movement. So he was deprived from his rights. He had lost all of his farming land. The Government ordered him to leave the State. Another farmer Aswini Palei also lost his property due to Government's order. This unfortunate incidents did not discourage the peasants. The speech of Babaji Ram Das in the meetings of Aul and Kanika inspired the people

not to pay tax. The peasants formed 'Praja Sabha' in each village. The main village of 'Praja Sabha' was 'Ayatan'. Madhusudan Pattanaik was the leader. Chakradhar Behera activated the Kanika Praja movement with more enthusiasm. At last the king made a ban on the 'Praja Sabha'. He ordered that "no one can arrange a meeting in the periphery of his State." But the peasants were very bold and in a revolutionary mood. They all got united. One of the leaders of this movement was Dinabandhu Khandayat Ray. He was native of village 'Bartanee'. Bisuni Madhual was a peasant of the same village. Bisuni acted like a messenger and informed the peasants regarding the movement. He was also a very healthy young man, having mastery over martial art. So he was very popular among the leaders. Basudev Sethi of Tentulikoli village was also an able youngman. He was also master in handling Lathi and Batuli. Anand Chandra Jena wrote a book titled, "Dukhini Kanika" which was distributed among the people. The book had reflected the sorrows and oppression story of peasants of Kanika. Anand Jena was a teacher in Meghapur Village. Basu used to go to that village for his traditional service. He also discussed with teacher Anand Jena regarding the

oppression over the people by the ruler. The king of Kanika immediately issued a ban order on the book written by Anand Jena. He also ordered Mr. Jena to leave his State. The oppression over peasants increased day by day. One day police force with officials came to Patrapur village. They declared to auction a house of someone. The people opposed it. The Police tried to arrest some people but other people forcefully released them. The situation was grim. In the next day more police forces were deployed to control the situation.

It was 3rd April, 1922. That was a black day for Indian freedom movement. Under the leadership of Basu Sethi and Bisuni Madhual about 2000 peasants gathered with a firm resolve to resist the army of local Zamindar from entering the village and collecting the taxes, but they had to pay a heavy price for it. Basu Sethi and Bisuni Madhual were shot dead by the British Police on the spot. Thus, the history of revolt of peasants of Kanika against British rulers and the despot king of Kanika had a magic power to inspire the common man in the later phase of the freedom struggle of India.

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Freedom Movement in Jharsuguda District

Dr. Byomakesh Tripathy

The district of Jharsuguda has a special niche in the history and culture of Orissa since early times. Findings of prehistoric tools, rock shelters of stone age period with earliest rock engravings in India at Vikramkhola and Ulapgarh, ruins of early temples, sculptural art of medieval period etc. provide an idea of the flourishing culture in the area. In early historical period, Jharsuguda area was included in the territory of Dakshina Kosala. With the establishment of Chouhan rule in Western Orissa, Jharsuguda became a part and parcel of the Chouhan kingdom of Sambalpur.

The year 1803 was a turning point in the history of Orissa when the British occupied Cuttack on 14th October, 1803. Subsequently

Sambalpur was occupied by the British in 1817 from the Marathas. In 1827, the Chouhan ruler Maharaja Sai died and Rani Mohan Kumari, widow of the Chouhan ruler was installed on the Gaddi of Sambalpur. During her reign, the Zamindari of Jharsuguda was created in 1829, which was assigned to one Ranjeet Singh, a near relation for maintenance of his family. Ranjeet Singh was a son of Siva Singh, grandson of Haribans Singh and great grandson of Chatra Sai, seventh Chouhan ruler of Sambalpur. Ranjeet Singh and his successor lived with Rajas of Sambalpur and he was in the hope that he might succeed the Gaddi. When the British appointed the widow Rani on the throne of Sambalpur, Ranjeet Singh was disappointed and that's why the Rani sent him to Jharsuguda as Zamindar granting in his favour 13 villages by way of consolation. Subsequently Ranjeet Singh along with his brothers Bhupal Singh and Bhawani Singh opposed the rule of the Rani. Consequent upon the confinement of Ranjeet Singh in the fort of Sambalpur, his son Govind Singh took up the case of rebellion. Govind Singh was supported by Krishna Rai of Khariar, Thakur Ajit Singh of Kodbaga, Chandra Behera of

Bamra, Trilochana Rai of Paharsiriguda, Abdhut Singh of Bissikella, Medini Bariha of Kharmura, Jagabandhubabu (a discharged amala of the Rani), Biju a discharged Duffadar of Sambalpur, Shickru Mohanty (formerly a Namadar of Barkandazee), Balaram Singh, Balbhadra Singh Deo of Lakhanpur and many Gond leaders. Govind Singh could muster the support of the total people and thus the movement for freedom in Sambalpur began in Jharsuguda as a protest against British highhandedness. Thus before 30 years prior to the first war of Independence of 1857 AD, Govind Singh raised his sword to drive away the British from Sambalpur. The resistance movement of Govind Singh could not be successful due to strong measures of the British. However, credit goes to him for initiating militant nationalism in the area which was later on sustained by Surendra Sai.

The British government successfully dealt with Gobind sing. Govind Singh was spared and kept in confinement. Ultimately the British realized that so long as Rani remained in power, there would be endless trouble and accordingly in 1839 Narayan Singh, the Zamindar of Barpali was made the Raja of Sambalpur. This

was opposed by Surendra Sai of Ranipur Khinda a village located hardly at a distance of 20 kms from Jharsuguda. Surendra Sai was a descendant of Aniruddha Sai, son of Madhukar Sai, the fourth Chouhan Raja of Sambalpur and had a claim for succession to the throne at Sambalpur in the absence of a direct claimant to the throne as per the traditional rule of succession. With the active support of his uncle Balaram Sing and his six brothers Udanta, Druva, Ujjala, Chabila, Jujjala and Medini, Surendra Sai successfully enlisted the support of the like minded Zamindars and Gauntias and organized a rebellion against the British. The Zamindar of Kolabira a powerful tribal leader supported Surendra wholeheartedly and on his taking up the rebel cause, many others followed. Surendra Sai was successful in organizing a rebellion during 1857-1858, in the area, which became forerunner for the freedom movement in Orissa.

Throughout the National Movement, the people of Jharsuguda took active part by supporting the Indian National Congress. The Nagpur Session of the Congress; held in December 1920 under the presidency of

Vijayaraghava Charier adopted a resolution in favour of adopting non-violent non-cooperation movement. A good number of delegates from Orissa attended the session. Non-cooperation movement was launched in various parts of the district including, Jharsuguda, Talpatia and several other places. Jharsuguda became an important centre and Nrusingh, was in charge of the centre. To support the movement students of the zilla school, Sambalpur called for a complete Hartal and in response to it, strikes took place at Jharsuguda and Bargada. Trilochan Sah Deo of Ranchi, Laxmi Narayana Mishra, Chandrasekhar Panigrahi and Arun Das took active role in spreading the message of non-cooperation in the rural areas. During this time, Mahavir Sing, a contractor of Jharsuguda became a staunch supporter of the movement and his quarter was converted into Congress office. His quarter became the meeting point of all the Congress leaders and workers.

In 1921 it was decided by Indian National Congress that all efforts would be made to raise funds for Tilak Swaraj fund and to prepare Charkha for augmenting the non-cooperation movement. The

target was in order to achieve Swaraj to collect one crore of rupees for the fund and one crore of enrolment of the Congress. In this aspect, Anantaram Behera was in charge of Jharsuguda and Ambika Madhav Prasad Patnaik, Mahavir Sing and Janaki Das Agarwal for Laikera. It was with the efforts of Mahavir Sing in several panchayats, use of Charkhas was popularized. Bhagirathi Pattanaik also took active part in the opening of a Khadarboard with its headquarters at Jharsuguda. Further, at the initiation of Chintamani Pujari, Panchapara and Bhalupatra in Laikera Police Station became two important khadi centers. Mohan Sing of Belpahar showed a great zeal to popularize the non-cooperation in his locality. Congress members were recruited from different parts of Sambalpur and out of a total of 4,800 some 2000 were recruited only from Jharsuguda area.

On 17 December, 1921, the crown prince of England was supposed to visit India and the All India congress committee made no stone unturned to have a complete hartal on the eve of his visit. Mahavir Sing was arrested on 14th December at Jharsuguda.

In Panchapara also, the people organized by Chintamani Pujari supported the cause. On 20th January 1922, Gopabandhu Das arrived in Jharsuguda. Ambica Madhab Patnaik secretary, District Congress Committee of Sambalpur, Anantaram Behera, a teacher of National school and many others received him at the railway station. He visited Panchapara and was satisfied to see the activities there undertaken by the Congress leaders. Though Gopabandhu was served with a notice of 144, the moment he reached Jharsuguda, a conference was organized on 21st January under the presidentship of Mohan Birtia, where the message of Gopabandhu Das was read out.

The Khadi and Charkha movement attracted many members of the depressed classes into the fold. Many Gandas (Harijan) enrolled themselves as congress members. They were moved by the spirit of the Khadi. A Ganda named Kastaram Tanti took part actively in organizing the Khadi and Charkha in rural areas. He was well supported by Sukharam Tanti, Kaidram Tanti and others.

Social movements did not lag behind in Jharsuguda

area. Gandhiji's clarion call for prohibition and removal of untouchability had its effect in the area. Meetings were organized for the upliftment of the untouchables at Panchpara, Turekela, Panpali and several other places. On 13th April 1922, a Harijan (Ganda) of Kulabira Zamindari was organized at Panpali. The people were appealed to give up liquor. The meeting resolved to prohibition of drum beating for untouchables and forbade to take beef etc. In 1923 one Mina Goura was outcaste by his caste men as he had touched the Gandas and had used pan supari (betel) from his hands. A meeting was convened on 18th October, 1923 at his native village Panchapara, where about 200 Gandas were assembled. The Gandas asked the better class Hindus to follow the example of Mina Goura and remove untouchability. The non cooperators like Laxminarayan Mishra and Bhagirathi Pattnaik attended the meeting and raised their voice against untouchability. The anti untouchability movement gained ground in a big way. Subsequently a Harijan home came at the village Panchapara at the initiative of Laxminarayan Mishra. In 1935 even a sum of Rs.728.00 was sanctioned by the Provincial Harijan Sangha for utilization to

improve the social and educational sphere. A Harijan temple was constructed at Pandupathar in Jharsuguda police station. Both Laxminarayan Mishra and Bodhram Dube attended the opening ceremony. The National Flag was hoisted with national song. Both the leaders addressed the people and impressed them to take spinning with right earnest. When Amritlala Thakur, Acharya Harihar Das and Laxminarayan Sahu visited Harijan localities of Sambalpur and Jharsuguda in 1936 they were satisfied with the work undertaken in the area.

The Lahore session of Congress in December, 1929 adopted the creed of Purna Swaraj. The Congress decided to observe 26 January, 1930 as the Purna Swaraj Day all over India. The day was observed with all enthusiasm in the district. With the beginning of the salt campaign in March 12, 1930, the Civil Disobedience Movement was started. Four batches of Satyagrahis were sent by the Satyagraha committee of Sambalpur to defy the British laws and to prepare counter band salt at different places of the coastal districts of Orissa, Mahavir Sing and others toured a number of villages and

collected a group of volunteers for the movement. The people of Jharsuguda accorded warm ovation to those Satyagrahis on reaching Jharsuguda, from where they proceeded by train. With the arrest of important leaders, the civil disobedience movement could not get much momentum. However from August 1932, the programme was revived in a big way. Kastaram Ganda worked vigorously along with other political workers under Mahavir Sing. Leaflets were distributed in the market of Talpatia, near Jharsuguda. These leaflets were published from the Revolution Bulletin Press, Cuttack and it incited the public to boycott foreign goods, British clothes and held out a threat to picket the shops of those who were dealing in British goods. Kastaram and Mahavir Sing were arrested and persecuted.

The civil disobedience movement was withdrawn in May 1934. Gandhi commenced his Harijan tour in Orissa in May, 1934. Gandhiji along with Laxminarayan Sahu and Rajkrushna Bose reached Jharsuguda at first and travelling through Sambalpur, Angul reached Puri. Gandhiji was well received by the people at Jharsuguda and emphasized the need to remove untouchability

from the society. An amount of Rs.405/- was collected for the welfare of the Harijans. No doubt, the coming of Gandhiji was a great boost to the Congress leaders and workers of Jharsuguda area for sustaining the movement against the British.

For popularizing the Congress work, the leaders of the Congress arranged a Peasant Conference at Jharsuguda. A meeting was convened on 5th May 1937 under the presidentship of B.M. Joshi for preparation of the coming conferences. A reception committee was formed for the purpose with Bodhram Doube as the chairman. The district Political conference and peasant conference were held at Jharsuguda on 9th and 10th May 1937. The conferences were attended by congress stalwarts like Rabisankar Sukla of Raipur, Biswanath Das of Ganjam, Harekrishna Mahtab of Cuttack, Abdul Rauf of Raipur and others. These conferences in fact went a long way to boost moral of the Congress workers. Harekrishna Mahatab and Biswanath Das the first Chief Minister of Orissa visited Jharsuguda on 20th and 24th October 1937 respectively and addressed the public. Bodhram

Dubey also visited Jharsuguda in June 1938 and urged the people to get rid of their mind of provincialism and to keep in view the goal of complete independence. During this period, Laxminarayan Mishra could propagate successfully the Congress creed among the masses of the area, for which he received recognition and appreciation of the provincial congress leaders of Orissa. It was at his initiatives in March 1938 an Exhibition of Charkha was held at the village Talpatia and resolutions were passed to remove untouchability between different classes of the Harijans, to open a cotton Depot at Talpatia, to move the Government to include the Harijans amongst the panchas etc. On 17th May 1939 under the leadership of Sradhakar Supkar, a Political conference was held in the village of Telenpali under Jharsuguda police station. The Congress leaders remind the people to present a united front against the oppression of the Government.

The district did not lag behind in the Quit India Movement. On 14 July 1942, the Congress Working Committee passed the quit India resolution, which was endorsed by the All India Congress Committee which met

in Bombay on 7th August 1942. On August 8, 1942, the police arrested Gandhi, Azad and all other eminent leaders of the Congress. Hartals were organized in protest against the arrest of congress leaders in Bombay. Shri Bihariram Tanti and Sukhdev Prasad of Jharsuguda were arrested for having joined the movement of 1942. Pandit Laxminarayan Mishra who had been to Bombay to attend the meeting of All India Congress Committee was arrested on his way back to Sambalpur. However, the movements in the area was sporadic. Sri Durga Prasad Guru, a Congress leader actively participated in fighting the cause of the orient paper mills at Jharsuguda. The Quit India day was observed on 9th August at Sambalpur and Jharsuguda. On August 18, 1942 students of Jharsuguda observed a hartal. No much activity is reported during 1943-46. On June 1947, a political conference was held at

Jharsuguda under the presidentship of Nandakishore Das who happened to be the president of Utkal Provincial Congress Committee. This meeting was attended by stalwarts like Biswanath Das and Malati Choudhury where the leaders exhorted the people to fight unitedly for complete independence of India. Fakir Satpathy organized a labour movement under the Congress Flag and convened a meeting of labours on 8 July, 1947 in the Mazdoor Sangh office of the Congress and pledged to fight for the amelioration of their grievances.

With the passing of India Independence Bill there was a great enthusiasm in the district. In the freedom movement not only the male leaders but also a number of females contributed to the cause and in this aspect the name of Tulasi Devi, Umarani Guha, Sabitaben Joshi and many other are noteworthy.

It is often argued that India's freedom struggle was basically a middle class movement, and confined to urban centers and elite group, But at a glance at the developments in the district amply reflects that the national movement became a movement of the people. The illiterate, the poorest, the lowest and lowly living in remote villages came forward in a big way to oppose the British rule to make India free. It is heartening to see that the peasants, workers, the tribal and the common people of the area actively participated in the movement for which the movement could be a successful one.

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A Gallant Freedom Fighter Champa Devi

Chittaranjan Mishra

“The impatience of some sisters to join the good fight is to me a healthy sign. In this non-violent warfare, contribution should be much greater than men’s. To call women, the weaker sex, is liable. If by strength is meant moral power, the women are immeasurably men’s superior.”

M.K.Gandhi

Emergence of M.K.Gandhi in Indian Politics ushered a new era in the history of India and with discovery of a new weapon like “non-violence” passive resistance gave new spirit to the freedom fighters. This weapon which could be easily handled by men and women, the rich and the poor, the learned and the ignorant, attracted large number of women to participate in the freedom struggle of India. Again the gallant leadership of Mrs Annie Besant gave strength, courage and inspiration to Indian Women. As a result of which a number of women’s organizations were established in different places of

Odisha such as Bharat Shri Mahamandal in 1910, Bengal Mahila Samiti in 1930, (established by Saroj Nalini Dutta) Women’s India association in 1917, Seva Sadana by Mrs Ramabati Ranade at Poone.

Like all other parts of India women in large number of Odisha also participated in national movement. Gandhiji visited Berhampur town in 1921 and addressed a massive rally at its barracks ground. A special and separate meeting for Odiya women were organized by the Congress leaders, in which M.K. Gandhi gave courage and inspiration to Odiya women to participate in National movement. It had been seen for the first time that Odiya women came out of the four walls of the house to attend a public meeting by breaking the age old tradition like “Asuryam Pashya” (indoor life). As a result in 1924 first Odiya women’s association was formed at Berhampur town, all Orissa women’s conference was organized at Cuttack and first women’s educational conference was organized by Sailabala Das at Cuttack in 1928.

In Odisha a hundred and thousands of women played important roles as orators, picketeers, and leaders. They gladly accepted all type of challenges and hardships on the way of freedom struggle in 1930

during civil disobedience movement. Salt Satyagrahis like Sarala Devi and Malati Devi paid an extensive visit to the remote villages of Ganjam district. The main purpose was to raise funds and increase the number of Satyagrahis. Being inspired by these activities one Odiya woman known as Champa Devi joined the National movement.

Early Life:

On 23rd March 1903 Champa Devi was born at Ambapua near Berhampur. Her father was Yudhisthir Padhy and mother was Apariti Devi. She was given marriage to Krushna Mohana Padhy of Dura near Gopalpur of Ganjam district. But they used to stay at Manjusha, as her father in law Harihara Padhy was a priest of the Jagannath temple of Manjusha. To her misfortune her husband faced a prematured death and she became widow at the age of nineteen.

Participation in Freedom Struggle:

In course of time she came under the influence of Jayamangala Ratha, Rama Devi, Sarala Devi and Kuntala Kumari Sabat and left home by breaking all restrictions of a orthodox Brahmin family with her only female child (daughter) Sakuntala to join the freedom struggle. First she went to Baleswar and stayed there for some years. During Civil

Disobedience Movement she participated in salt satyagraha. There she established an orphanage. But due to some management disturbances the orphanage was closed within a very short period. In the meanwhile she gave her daughter marriage at Puri. Then she returned to Berhampur and continued her activities of social service.

In 1942, the last phase of freedom struggle launched by Indian National Congress after adoption of the resolution of the Quit India Movement on 07.08.1942 in Bombay Session. The British Government declared all the Congress organizations illegal. All frontline leaders were arrested and put behind the bar. In many regions of Odisha local leaders took the leadership of Quit India Movement and spearheaded it. Champa Devi was one of them who continued the movement at Berhampur and its peripheries under her able leadership. At last she came to the range of the sight of British Government and was arrested. She was behind the bar of Bhanjanagar jail for eight months in the year 1945.

Period of Social Work :

After her release from Bhanjanagara Jail, she stayed at Badadhoba street and established an orphanage there. But it was also closed like Baleswar orphanage due to management disturbance. In

1957 she established her third orphanage at Babajitata street of Berhampur, later on it was shifted to the place of present Geeta Bhabana which was inaugurated by H.K. Mahatab. In her last life she selected tribal dominated district Phulbani as a suitable place for social work. She entered into Phulbani town in 1964 with her two grand sons (Binaya and Bijaya) and one grand daughter (Geetanjali). For some days she paid a visit to Purunakatak of present Boudh District to render social service to the local people. But after some months she returned back to Phulbani town. She stayed for the first time at Contractorpada, then shifted to Amalapada and at last spent her rest of the life at Forest Colony in a rented house. At Kendupadara near Phulbani she established an orphanage which was inaugurated by the then RDC V.S. Mathews with the presence of Kailash Mishra the then Collector (1972-74). Later on it was undertaken by the government and named as Gapabandhu Balashram. Presently it is under the control of DSW, Phulbani. On 15th August 1972 she was invited to New Delhi on the eve of the Silver Jubilee celebration of Independence Day, and was rewarded as a freedom fighter by Mrs. Indira Gandhi, the then Prime Minister.

Last Days :

During Civil Disobedience Movement she donated some of her gold and Silver

ornaments to Orissa Congress Committee and rest of the ornaments were sold and spent for the orphans stayed in the orphanage of Kendupadara, near Phulbani. So in her last life she was in economic hardship. To her misfortune she was suffering from mouth cancer and shifted to Cutack medical for treatment. There, she was under treatment for seven to eight months. As there was no symptom of any improvement of her health she returned back to Phulbani. Lastly on 3rd March 1977 she passed away from this world leaving behind some memorable footprints in the history of Freedom struggle.

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Sandi Sabar of Kujendri : A Little Known Tribal Lady Freedom Fighter

Raghunath Rath

Till she was nineteen, she never dreamt that she would be a soldier in the country's freedom struggle nor had she heard about India's independence movement. She was leading a sparse life surrounded with illiteracy, ill health, malnutrition and hunger like her fellow tribals. Her wake up call came when she met Biswanath Pattnaik who had arrived at the scene at Kujendri in the last part of January 1940. It was after this meeting that she discovered the soul within her and set on the path of a revolutionary.

Sandi was born to Bairu Gamang and Lujuri as their second child in the first half of 1922. No exact date of her

birth is known as tribals are never careful about recording these. Nilakantha was the first child of the couple. Bairu was the Gamang or chief of his village. As such Nilakantha and Sandi were brought up with great care in accordance with the tribal system. As there were no educational facilities, Sandi was illiterate. Since her childhood she was brave, fearless and simple in character. She had a pleasant personality and was liked by all, irrespective of age and sex.

The following story is an evidence of her bravery. In the last week of February 1940, Sandi, with other women of the village went to collect mahua flower from the forest at the foothills near their village. They had started early in the morning, and as they followed their regular pattern of each one choosing a particular tree. When Sandi went near her chosen tree she saw a bear eating mahua flower. The bear soon turned and lurched towards her with the intention of harming her. The quick witted Sandi gathered her courage and picked up a long wooden sal pole lying nearby and chased the bear.

When the bear attacked her opening his mouth, Sandi pushed the pole into the

mouth of the bear. The bear being afraid of the blow ran away into forest and disappeared.

When she was nineteen, she had to look after some minor household works and helped her parents. She had to graze cattle and goats in the nearby jungle. She also helped her parents in planting seedlings, weeding etc. in agricultural seasons and also helped them in fetching fire wood and water. She also took part in community feasting and dancing. Thus she was leading a tribal way of life till the young Satyagrahi Biswanath's arrival at Kujendri.

I would like to mention a few words about Biswanath Pattnaik unless the episode of Sandi could not be understood. Biswanath Pattnaik (1916) born at village Kumarada near Digapahandi in Ganjam district. At the age of seventeen he joined as a social worker and was influenced by Acharya Harihar. He had rendered his services at the car festival of Sri Jagannath at Puri by serving the cholera affected people in the year 1934. On the way back from Puri, he enlisted his name in the Congress as a four anna member at Berhampur and purchased a Charkha (spinning wheel) and cotton. From that

day onwards he would spin cotton thread and wore only khadi cloth.

He enrolled for getting training to be a Satyagrahi at the Ashram at Bari which was founded by Sri Gopabandhu Choudhury and mother Rama Devi in the year 1938 and completed his training in 1939. He was then engaged in some official work at the Bari Ashram. In the beginning of 1941 he was directed by his guru Gopabandhu Choudhury to go to Gunupur, now in Rayagada district, for extension of cotton cultivation and to promote the Khadi programme.

Biswanath stepped into Gunupur on the first fortnight of January 1941 and stayed with Prahallad Panigrahi a prominent Congress worker and manager of the Khadi Sale Centre. Prahallad Panigrahi convinced Bairu Gamang to give shelter to Biswanath. Accordingly on the last Sunday of January 1941 Biswanath proceeded to San kujendri with Bairu Gamang.

Biswanath reached San Kujendri at sunset and stayed on the verandah of Bairu and took his food prepared in the kitchen of the tribal family. Nilakantha and Sandi also served him. The family of Bairu were soon greatly involved with

Biswanath and were influenced by his personality.

Biswanath single handedly without seeking any body's help started cleaning the village streets from the very next morning. He talked to the people and asked them to cultivate cotton and to spin thread and weave Khadi. He also convinced them not to buy dhotis and sarees made in the mills. Biswanath propagated among the tribals Mahatma Gandhi's doctrines and his work for the independence of India. In his free hours he started teaching tribal boys and girls. He toured extensively in the tribal villages. Gradually the tribals started to believe Biswanath and acted according to his direction. The Saura tribals cultivated improved cotton seeds and yielded a good harvest that year. Sandi was leader among tribal women for cultivation and spinning thread and Biswanath being supported by the Sauras established some country looms for weaving Khadi. Doms were the traditional weavers of that area. He trained some Sauras in the weaving technology with the help of a Dom. Nilakantha and Sandi also learned weaving from him. The Sauras prepared khadi themselves. After some time on the way to Wardha,

Rama Devi saw Sandi there and expressed her eagerness to get her trained at the Bari Ashram.

Later Acharya Harihar and Prana Krushna Padhiary reached Kujendri to encourage Biswanath and give him encouragement for the good work that he was doing. On the 2nd of October 1941 they accompanied Biswanath along with some Sauras and Doms and went to the Radha Krishna temple for worship and to eradicate untouchability. This time too Sandi was given charge to gather women from the Saura and Dom communities. She successfully managed her responsibility and helped in eradicating untouchability in the area.

To fulfil the wish of Rama Devi, Sandi was anxious to go to Bari. Hence she prepared herself. Bhagaban Senapati a Congress worker of village Gulumunda donated her a mat worth of Rs.2.00. Then Sandi wore a Khadi saree and started for Bari with Biswanath Pattnaik. They travelled by the narrow gauge railway line from Gunupur to Nuapada and then by broad gauge rail line to Haridaspur. They then went to Bari by foot. At Bari, Sandi was renamed as Shanti and took up vigorous training for six months. She learned to spin

cotton thread, weaving, cleaning of village to eradicate untouchability to speak truth all the time, believe in non-violence etc. She also learned Oriya and was soon able to read and write. She also learned the ashram way of life, prayers in morning and evening, flag songs as well as leading a routine and simple life.

On returning to Kujendri she became a role model and torch bearer among the Saura women of her area. She vigorously acted to propagate the constructive work that she had learnt at Bari Ashram among the tribals and soon became the leader of tribal women.

During his stay at Kujendri, Biswanath taught flag songs to the inhabitants of the village and used to hoist the Congress flag every morning and ritually get it down in the evening. All the inhabitants were accustomed to his flag hoisting. During the absence of Biswanath, the tribals continued to hoist the flag without any interruption. This news reached the ears of the Collector of Koraput Mr. Willcock. He ordered the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Rayagada, who was also an English man and the Taluk Magistrate, Gunupur to cause

an enquiry into the Kujendri matter.

On receipt of the enquiry report from the Sub-Divisional Magistrate, Rayagada, the Collector of Koraput programmed a visit to Gunupur. In order to threaten the Sauras he chalked out a plan for a show of strength. The Collector gathered together a party consisting of himself, some armed police and forest employees, a few powerful Sahukars, some persons of the royal family, prominent money lenders and a few non-tribal Oriya landlords. The party walked on foot from Bamunihat to Kujendri, except for the Collector, who rode on a horse.

On the other hand Sauras too had made their programme to protest the Collector's visit. It was decided that on the appointed day Biswanath would remain absent at Kujendri. Bairu Gamang, his son Nilakantha and daughter Sandi would play the main role with the other villagers putting up their efforts.

On the appointed day in the first part of July 1942 the Collector and his party arrived at Kujendri and noticed that a Congress flag was flying on the flag post in middle of the street and a person named Jhandu

Bairu was standing on a platform holding another flag in his hand. The Collector shouted his orders to tear the flags. All of a sudden Sandi and about twenty young women rushed towards the flag post and surrounded it in a circle, joining hands with each other. Another circle was made by the elder ladies which covered the first circle. They were determined to protect the flag in exchange of their lives.

About two hundred Sauras observed the situation sitting on the verandas of the street. All of them were prepared as they had covered themselves with winter clothing and held weapons hidden inside.

The women encircled the flag post and danced vigorously singing the song "Jhanda ucha rahen hamara." The Collector silently observed the situation and looking at the tense situation decided not to take any action then and there. He led the party to the lower primary school to take rest, as they were tired after the long walk. From there the Collector and his party returned without taking any action.

On 9th August 1942 at Bombay, Gandhiji called for the "Quit India Movement." He instructed all Congress workers

"do or die" for the independence of the country. Many high level Congress leaders were arrested and put behind bars. Radha Krushna Baswasray from Koraput had attended Gandhiji's Quit India meeting at Bombay. When he returned from Bombay, he was arrested at Sunki in Koraput district. Biswanath got a letter from Radha Krushna Biswasray on the 12th August 1942, where the facts were narrated.

On receipt of the letter Biswanath prepared some hand written pamphlets and sent them to each and every village in the Gunupur region. He also fixed a date for launching of Satyagraha. He held discussions with the people and told them that they should join the Quit India Movement even at the cost of being put in jail or being shot in police firing. But he also promised them that after independence, the tribals would not be harrassed by the employees of the Raja or the British Government. They would be able to live in peace according to their own accord, Bethi and veti will be stopped. Hearing the words of Biswanath many Sauras willfully agreed to join in the movement. They decided on a date for launching the movement.

On the fixed date many tribals gathered at Kujendri. About two hundred men and fifty women assembled to go in a procession. The procession marched towards Gunupur. The procession was led by Jhandu Bairu who was walking with a Congress flag. Sandi too led the women, holding a flag in her hands. Many tribals followed, shouting slogans against the British Government and Raja of Jeypore. Biswanath was leading the mob and the whole process was one of non-violence. The mob made its way from Sankujendri to Gunupur and on the way passed through Kaithapadar. Badakujendri, Lachhapa, Gulumunda, Paaka and Panasguda. Many men and women from these villages joined the procession spontaneously. Gradually the strength of the procession increased and the crowd was more than three hundred persons when they reached the bank of the river Bansadhara.

The procession crossed the river by boats and entered Gunupur town. They travelled through each street of the town shouting anti government slogans. The local police had been given instructions not to obstruct the procession. Later the

protestors were called to the police station and after detention for some time they were allowed to go. All the Satyagrahis were released from the Police Station at sunset. As it was late, they all stayed back at Gunupur for the night.

The next morning the procession went to the nearby villages and propagated the words of Gandhiji and independence. Likewise they moved around different villages for four to five days and then returned to Kujendri. They were sent to Koraput Jail as they were found guilty under British Law.

After Biswanath's arrest, there was no one to instruct Sandi. On her own initiative, Sandi organised Saura women of twenty five villages around Kujendri and trained them in spinning thread. It is known that nearly 1500 spinning wheels were at regular work towards the end of 1942. From 1942 to 1945 Sandi dedicated herself to village reconstruction work.

Sandi was against getting married till 1945. When asked by the village elders, she replied that her work was not yet done, and she would consider getting married only after the country get its independence. However she

succumbed to the pressure and agreed for marriage.

Prahallad Panigrahi had suggested a proposal to Bairu. The boy was Madhu Sabar of village Khilipadar. Madhu was then serving in P.W.D Office, Nabarangpur. Bairu with some of his relatives went to Nabarangpur and discussed with Madhu and later Madhu also came to Kujendri talked with Sandi. They were both willing and the marriage was solemnised in the last part of 1946. After marriage Sandi went to stay at Nabarangpur with her husband. Her first son Balakrishna was born at Nabarangpur. Then Madhusudan was transferred to Koraput. They stayed at Koraput till 1951.

Madhusudan resigned from his government service and contested the elections as a candidate for Orissa Legislative Assembly in the first election held on 1952. He could not succeed in election. After resigning from service Madhu resided at Kujendri and worked as a teacher. On 27th November 1954 Sandi gave birth her second son Nandan. After delivery she suffered from profuse bleeding which could not stopped and she breathed her last on the 28th November 1954. Thus ended the life of a great soul.

Sandi was a freedom fighter who never imprisoned. But when Biswanath and others remained in Jail, she shouldered all the responsibility of freedom

struggle in Kujendri area. Due to her constant effort Saura women used to spin and were made aware about independence and participation in 1942 Quit India Movement. She took part in the freedom struggle for a short span from 1941 to 1946. But within that short period she attracted the attention of many state leaders like Gopabandhu Choudhury, Rama Devi, Naba Babu, Acharya Harihar and many others due to her sheer dedication. She will be ever remembered among the few tribal lady soldiers of freedom struggle for her selfless work.

Raghunath Rath lives at Panasapadi, Baliguda - 762103, Kandhamal.

Early Phase of Freedom Movement in Orissa

Kalayan Kumar Panda

In 1568 A.D. Orissa lost her Independence after the defeat and death of Mukundadeva, the last Hindu king of Orissa. The feudal organization that had prevailed in Orissa broke down at last and the peasant militia was crippled. The Muslims then ruled this land till 1751 A.D. when the administrative responsibility of Orissa was shifted to the control of the Marathas of Nagpur. At last, during the Governor-Generalship of Lord Wellesley, the long cherished desire of the British to occupy Orissa was fulfilled in October, 1803 A.D. as a part of the treaty after the second Anglo-Martha war.

The people of Orissa, both non-tribals and tribals woke up from their slumber from the 16th century till the beginning of the 19th century and began to raise their voice

in the forms of resistance, protest and rebellion against the authorities, only when a foreign trading company began to rule through exploitation and opposed them socio-psychologically. In the true sense of the term, the raising of voices was to be treated as freedom struggle of the people, which was a part of the national struggle.

From the recorded history of Orissa's freedom struggle it is known that people of different categories in Orissa participated actively as well as passively in different phases of the freedom struggle. The 18th century saw the first phase of Rising against the alien powers of northern and southern Orissa. In northern Orissa, the Raja of Mayurbhanja was a powerful ruler. He resisted the authority of the English company strongly. In southern Orissa, the district of Ganjam came under the formal possession of the English in 1765 by a farman of the Mughal emperor. The Raja of Ghumusar gave first resistance to the European authorities. In 1767-68, Raja Narayan Dev of Paralakhemundi rebelled against the British. But insurrectionary activities continued in Ghumusar and Paralakhemundi till the middle of the 19th century when they

were completely suppressed by the British.

The freedom struggle in Orissa began immediately after the British occupation of it in 1803 mainly in the form of armed resistance to the newly established political system. This movement mostly between 1803-1895 was regional in character occasioned by the reactions of the people against the imposition of foreign rule on them causing them extreme hard-ship in different spheres.

The first Rising in early 19th century was seen in Paralakhemundi. As the supporters of the Raja broke into rebellion, the British authorities had to yield to the people's will of being ruled by their own Raja. In the Ghumusar rebellion of 1801, Raja Srikara Bhanja was dethroned and the local battalion called Sibundies were disbanded in 1803 after considerable disturbances since they all revolted against the British. In the second phase of the 19th century, in Ghumusar, the Kandhas and Savaras of the zamindari rose up against the British under the leadership of Dora Bisoi. The chief aim of the revolt was for restoration of native rule of Ghumusar. Dora Bisoi carried on this resistance movement till

he was imprisoned by the British in 1837 A.D. Thereafter he was sent away to Ooty near Madras where he died as a state prisoner sometime after, leaving behind a glorious legacy of brave and resolute struggle against the British.

In 1804, the Rajas of Khurda, Kujanga and Kanika rose against the British authority. The Prime mover of this rising was the minor Raja of Khurda, Mukundadeva II. But the real leader was Jaee (Jayakrushna) Rajaguru, the dewan and guardian of the Raja of Khurda and the chief architect of this anti-British design. The rising was ruthlessly suppressed and an exemplary punishment was given to Jayee Rajaguru. He was hanged to death in 1805 and became the first martyr of Orissa during British regime who had inflexible devotion to the cause of the motherland. With his fall, the last ray of hope for the freedom of Khurda from the British control was extinguished and the historic fort of Khurda also lost its importance, and came to be recognized as the last independent and important fort of Orissa. The idea of revenge got printed in the minds of the people of Khurda which afterwards culminated in the open revolt by the people in 1817, the first of its kind in Orissa against the British.

The first 'spark of rising' at Khurda on 29th March, 1817 was popularly known as the Paik Rebellion as only the Paiks or a kind of militia under the local rulers rose as a body against the British authority. It was led by Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Bhramarbar Ray Mahapatra or Buxi Jagabandhu, the commander of the troops of the Raja of Khurda. His chief associate was Krushna Chandra Bhramarbar Ray. They were assisted by the kandhs, savaras, panas and other tribal people of Banpur, Nayagarh, Boudh and Daspalla and were encouraged by some zamindars and supported by a few Garjat chiefs. The rising manifested general feelings of discontent and disaffection among the people of Orissa. The genuine personal grievances of Buxi Jagabandhu provided the spark to the explosive situation and served as the immediate cause of the rebellion of 1817. He, thus, carved the vengeance at the first opportunity. The rising was suppressed but the insurrectionary activities of the insurgents in other areas continued on certain terms and conditions. He died at Cuttack on 24th January, 1829. His failure, however, does not tarnish his image as a leader of

the people. In 1827, Madhab Samantray, the Dalabehera of Tapangagarh, rebelled against the British with the active support of the people. At last he was imprisoned but subsequently released as the authorities apprehended disturbances again in khurda. The spirit of insurrection spread to the neighboring areas like Banpur, Daspalla and Nayagarh. The Kandhs of Banpur along with the Panas launched their struggle under the leadership of Krutibas Patsani and others.

Under Chakra Bisoi, the tribal freedom struggle got a new lease of life and continued at least for two decades from 1837 to 1856. His rebellion was also spread into various parts of Orissa with spontaneous patriotic feelings and fervour. The long years of his resistance to the British Government in the hilly areas is a landmark in the history of heroic struggle by an individual against the mighty British power. He remained as one of those rare men who had left behind him a romantic tale of inextinguishable patriotism and extra-ordinary bravery in the annals of history.

The Great Rising of 1857 triggered off at Meerut on 10th May, 1857 and it spread

to other states including Orissa. Sambalpur in Orissa was the most troublesome and dangerous place which came under the British suzerainty after the death of the Bhonsale Raja of Nagpur during the Third Maratha War. The great patriot and rebel hero of Orissa who actively participated in the Great Rising of 1857 was Surendra Sai, the rebel hero of Sambalpur, who revolted against the British rule for seven long years, while in India it collapsed in 1858.

In Sambalpur, Surendra Sai rose against the British during and after 1857. Rightly, Surendra Sai roused the sentiments of his beloved tribal followers who ungrudgingly helped him. Many Zamindars and common people of Sambalpur supported him in 1857 against the rigorous administrative measures of the Britishraj in Orissa. Surendra Sai was directly involved in this agitation. The rising, however, came to an end with the arrest of his followers on 23rd January, 1864. Finally, he died in the prison of Asirgarh near Nagpur on 28th February, 1864. "If a patriot is a man who plots and fights for the independence, wrongfully, destroyed, of his native Country, then most certainly Surendra Sai was a great patriot." In this connection

the Secretary to the Chief-Commissioner of the Central Provinces reported, "The Sambalpur district was perhaps the very last district in India in which embers of disturbances of 1857 were finally stamped out."

In August 1857, Rama Krushna Samant Singhar, the ex-Zamindar of Balia in Jajpur area, was reported to have organized the Khandaits under his banner to rise against the British as the Company's rule was about to cease. The insurgent leaders were arrested on the charge of evil designs and seditious conduct but afterwards released after the declaration of amnesty by the British Government.

Chakhi Khuntia alias Chandan Hajuri, a 'Sepoy Panda' of Puri by profession, took active part in anti-British activities being the guru and family priest of the great leader of the Rising of 1857, Rani Laxmibai of Jhansi and as such, he was probably in some northern military cantonment when the Great Rising of 1857 broke out. He was arrested on suspicion in Bihar but as there was no proof of his involvement in the revolt, he was released by the authorities at Gaya. The rumour of his death in north India during the period of the mutiny was false and it became

very clear from his letter written from Gaya to his brother at Puri. However, in course of time, in local tradition he was depicted as a great fighter.

The second half of the 19th Century witnessed a few armed resistances of the people against the British. Within a decade after the mutiny, there occurred two noteworthy incidents like the 'Naanka Fituri' of Khurda and the 'Keonjhar Meli' which were the direct effects of the great famine of 1866 in Orissa.

In May 1866, the people of Khurda under the leadership of Narayan Harichandan rose against the British as they were hard-hit by the great famine of 1866. Since the situation became grave, the Government deployed Police force to suppress it. By 1867 the situation came under control and the rebelling leaders fled to the neighbouring garjats to take shelter.

In Keonjhar the tribals like the Bhuyans, Juangs and the Kolhas having been oppressed socio-economically and deprived of their political and traditional rights, started a long-term struggle against their feudal chief as well as the British overlord in 1867 and 1868. The leader of the adivasis was Ratna Naik. Since the

situation was aggravated and took a serious turn, the British authorities requisitioned troops from Bengal, Chhotnagpur and the tributary mahals of Orissa to suppress the rising. At last in 1868, Ratna Naik and his six associates were sacrificed for the cause. Though the first phase of the rising ended abruptly because of inhuman acts of suppression and even hanging to death, the struggle showed a path to the future generation who revived the movement two decades after.

The second phase of the struggle in Keonjhar in 1890 under the leadership of Dharanidhar Naik, a Bhuyan by birth, lasted for 5 years. The rising aimed at abolishing Bethi and other oppressive systems of exaction. The Bhuyans, the Juangs, and the Kolhas of Keonjhar, Mayurbhanja and Pallahara joined the struggle. Interestingly, some of the non-tribals particularly some school

teachers supported Dharanidhar Naik in this rising. It was, in fact, a unique event in the history of the freedom struggle in Orissa. Raja Dhanurjaya Bhanja of Keonjhar fled to Cuttack to seek the help of the Commissioner. Police force were sent to suppress the rising. Dharanidhar was captured and was imprisoned for seven years. Later on, he was released and led the life of a saint and began to preach his philosophy.

In the last decade of the 19th century and particularly between 1893 and 1895, the last act of resistance movement by the Kandhs was seen at Nayagarh, Ranapur, Khandapara and Dasapalla demanding a change in the administration and of the ruler, who was a tyrant and corrupt. Their rising gradually became violent and uncontrollable. However, it was suppressed

with firmness by the British authorities. Thus the tribals in Orissa showed the way to the posterity how to fight against the aliens. In true sense of the term, the tribals were the harbingers of that great mission in the 20th century.

Thus ended the resistance movement in Orissa which happened to be a landmark in the history of the freedom struggle in Orissa. The movement was mostly regional in character and hence cannot be called as National Freedom Struggle. But as it affected different parts of Orissa against the establishment of British rule, it can be taken to be the beginning of the end of the British administration in Orissa in future.

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Role of Women in India's Struggle For Freedom

Siddhartha Dash

The entire history of the freedom movement is replete with the saga of bravery, sacrifice and political sagacity of hundreds and thousands of women of our country. Their participation in the struggle began as early as 1817 when Bhima Bai Holkar fought against the British Colonel Malcolm and defeated him in guerilla warfare. At a very critical time for our mother land when the British East India Company was fast expanding its empire in India, when Tipu Sultan had been eliminated (1799), the proud Marathas had been humbled (1815), Chennamma the widowed queen of Raja Malla Sarja frustrated the machinations of British to annex her kingdom Kittore, a tiny principality in the present Belgaum District of Karnataka. She fought against the mighty British army and scored initial success.

No other woman warrior in the history of India has made such a powerful

impact on the minds of the Indian people as the Rani of Jhansi, Lakshmi Bai. She was the second wife of the ruler of Jhansi Raja Gangadhar Rao who protested against the 'Doctrine of Lapse'. She refused to surrender Jhansi and fought bravely attired as a male during the Revolt of 1857 and died in the battle field fighting the British forces. Her courage inspired many Indians to rise against the alien rule.

Another woman whom we remember in this context was Hazrat Mahal Begum. She was the wife of the deposed ruler of Lucknow who actively took part in the revolt of 1857 against the Doctrine of Lapse under which Dalhousie wanted her to surrender Lucknow. She gave stiff resistance. But after the fall of Lucknow she escaped to Kathmandu.

Kasturba, the wife of Mahatma Gandhi, was one of the foremost supporters of the Gandhi's programmes. One of the first women to be imprisoned in Transvaal, she took part in the Quit India Movement (1942) and was arrested. She died while imprisoned in Poona.

Many women of Nehru family joined the freedom movement. The mother of Jawaharlal Nehru, Swarup Rani Nehru cheerfully gave her husband and children to the country's cause and she herself,

old and frail, entered the fray at its thickest. Kamala Nehru, married to Jawaharlal Nehru in 1916, participated in various movements, led the Civil Disobedience Movement. She played a prominent part in organizing the No Tax Campaign in the United Provinces (Now Uttar Pradesh). Jawaharlal Nehru's sister Vijay Laxmi Pandit entered the Non- Cooperation Movement. She was imprisoned thrice in connection with the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1932, 1941 and 1942. In 1937 she was elected to the provincial legislature of the United Provinces and was designated minister of local self government and public health. She played an important role as India's representative in San Francisco during the first meeting of the UN where she challenged the might of the British. She was the first woman to become the President of the United Nations General Assembly. When she was just 13 years old, Indira Gandhi organized a 'Monkey Army' (Vanar Sena) comprising of young teenagers which proved her intention to fight for the independence of her country. She joined Congress in 1938 and was imprisoned for 13 months in 1942 by the British. She was India's first and only female prime minister. Four generations of dedication to public causes by the Nehru family stands out as unique in the annals of history.

Sarojini Naidu holds pride of place among women freedom fighters of India. She was responsible for awakening the women of India. She was first woman President of the Indian National Congress in 1925 at the Kanpur Session. In 1928, she came to the USA with the message of the non-violence movement from Gandhiji. When in 1930, Gandhi was arrested for a protest, Sarojini took the helms of his movement. In 1931, she participated in the Round Table Summit, along with Gandhiji and Pundit Malavyaji. She was also the acting President of the Congress in 1932. In 1942, she was arrested during the 'Quit India' protest and stayed in jail for 21 months. She was a gifted poet of the English language and was popularly known as the Nightingale of India. After independence, she became the first ever woman Governor of an Indian State (Uttar Pradesh).

Aruna Asaf Ali played a leading role during the Quit Indian Movement. Her moment of reckoning came in 1942 during the Quit India Movement and she rose to occasion. She unfurled the National Flag at the Gowalia Tank maidan in Bombay to signify the commencement of the Quit India Movement and became a legend for thousands of youth that rose to emulate her. She became a full time activist in the Quit India

Movement and went underground to evade arrest. She edited 'Inquilab' a monthly journal of the Indian National Congress. She was awarded India's highest civilian award, the Bharat Ratna.

Madam Bhikaji Cama was influenced by Dadabhai Naoroji and was a source of inspiration for Indian youth in the UK. She unfurled the first National Flag at the International Socialist Conference in Stuttgart (Germany) in 1907, organized Free India Society and began the journal 'Bande Mataram' to spread her revolutionary thought. She travelled a lot and spoke to people about Indians Struggling for Independence. She could aptly be called "Mother India's first cultural representative of USA".

Kalpna Dutta was another prominent woman revolutionary leader who was influenced by the revolutionary idea of Surya Sen. She joined the Chittagong armoury raids. Later she joined the Communist Party of India.

Rani Gaidineliu was a prominent Naga nationalist woman leader from Manipur who took over the movement of Naga nationalists against the British. Her movement was active during the Civil Disobedience Movement to oust the foreigners from Manipur. For her remarkable

patriotism, she received praise from the nationalist leaders. She was arrested in 1932 and released after Indian Independence. "Rani of the Nagas" the popular title was bestowed upon her by Jawaharlal Nehru for her influence and work for the Nagas.

Sarojini Naidu's daughter Padmaja Naidu devoted herself to the cause of the nation like her mother. At the age of 21, she entered the national scene and became the joint founder of the Indian National Congress of Hyderabad. She spread the message of Khadi and inspired people to boycott foreign goods. She was jailed for taking part in the "Quit India" movement in 1942. After Independence, Padmaja became the Governor of West Bengal. During her public life spanning over half a century, she was associated with the Red Cross. Her service to the nation and especially her humanitarian approach to solve problems, will long be remembered.

Sucheta Kriplani was an ardent nationalist with socialistic orientation. She was a close associate of Jai Prakash Narayany who actively participated in Quit India Movement. This St Stephen's educated politician sang Vande Mataram in the independence session of the Constituent Assembly on August 15, 1947.

She was a member of Constituent Assembly in 1946. She was general secretary of Indian National Congress from 1958 to 1960, and Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh from 1963 to 1967.

Raj Kumari Amrit Kaur was a close follower of Gandhiji from 1919 onwards. A Congress member, she actively participated in the 1930 Salt Satyagraha and the Quit India Movement. She became the first Health Minister in Post-Independent India. She was the founder – President of Indian Council of Child Welfare and the founder-member of All India Women's Conference.

Smt Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay was elected President of the Youth Congress in December 1929 and appealed to the National Congress leaders to declare Poorna Swaraj as their goal. On January 26, 1930, Kamaladevi captured the imagination of the entire nation when in a scuffle, she clung to the Tricolor in order to protect it. Blows rained on her as she stood like a rock to protect the flag, bleeding profusely. She galvanized the All India Women's Conference into a dynamic movement.

Beside the hundreds and thousands of Indian women who dedicated their lives for India's freedom, there were many foreign women who saw in India a hope for the

redemption of the world. A famous disciple of Swami Vivekananda, Sister Nivedita was an Irish lady named Miss Margaret Nobel who arrived in India in January, 1898 in search of truth. She propagated for the cause of India throughout America and Europe. She attended the Benares Congress Session in 1905 and supported the Swadeshi Movement.

Annie Besant, Irish by birth was a staunch supporter of India's struggle for freedom. She founded the Home Rule League in Madras in 1916. She also founded the Theosophical Society of India. She was the President (First Woman President) of Indian National Congress for one term at Calcutta in 1917. She also edited 'New India' and 'Commonwealth'. She had done ample work to formulate favorable opinion about the Indian question in outside world. Even today, India remembers with gratefulness Annie Besant's immeasurable work for the freedom struggle, educational advancement and social reforms.

Mira Alphonse, universally known as the 'Mother' was born in Paris in 1878. She came to India in 1914 and met Shri Aurobindo. She was the inspirer of Auroville, the international town near Pondicherry. She played an important role in motivating women like Annie Besant and Nellie Sen Gupta. The Mother

had also contributed to enrich India's age-old heritage and culture.

Meera Behn and Sarla Behn Mahatma Gandhi's two English daughters helped for the cause of freedom. Born as Madeliene Slade in England, she was named Mira Behn by Mahatma Gandhi. She was a close disciple and associate of Gandhiji. She accompanied Gandhiji to Round Table Conference. She did pioneering work for social reforms in rural areas.

Born as Katherine Mary Heilaman, she was named Sarla Behn by Mahatma Gandhi. She was a great social worker. She set up an Ashram at Kausali in the Kumaon Hills of Uttarakhand. She went from village to village helping the families of political prisoners. She authored a book entitled 'Reviving Our Dying Planet'.

On the auspicious occasion of the Independence Day of our country it will be most befitting on our part to pay our respectable homage to all those brave daughters of Mother India and to those noble and courageous foreign women who fought and contributed enormously to the success of our freedom struggle and all other nation building activities.

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