

History remembers Jayakrushna Rajguru Mohapatra as a great lover of motherland, a fearless patriot with the heart of lion and an illustrious warrior. He was a complete man and immensely talented. At the same time he was a Sanskrit scholar, *tantrasadhak* and expert in statecraft. He was not only a warrior endowed with vivacity, courage and gallantry, but also a prominent military strategist. He was the main adviser of the king of Khurda Divyasingh Dev and Raja Mukunda Dev II. From the time of his appointment as Rajguru of Khurda in 1780 till his unlawful execution by the Britishers on December



Jayee Rajguru, A Great Odia Patriot

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6, 1806 he was the most illustrious figure in the administration of Khurda state.

His basic assignment was the preceptorship of the Khurda Raj Family. But at times he was functioning as the prime minister as well as the commander-in-chief of Khurda. His life was cut short as he was executed at the age of 66. But during this limited time span he had excelled on all fronts and dazzled the mind of the people of Khurda. It is a fact that his complete life sketch could not be depicted and his place in history could not be correctly ascertained. As the historians have little access to the original documents relating to his career, many stories of

exuberant narratives are admixed with his life history and truths of his achievements are dangerously subsumed. But considering all points of view Jayee Rajguru stands tall amongst the most illustrious Odia personalities in history. He was a selfless patriot, who never thought of subjugation of his country under any foreign power.

Historiography

From the outset we should discuss about the original source materials necessary for the construction of the history of Jayee Rajguru. Real research on Odishan history started with the coming out of the 'History of Orissa' by

Dr. Harekrushna Mahtab. The non-Odia historians who wrote about Odisha were very much apathetic about the prominent Odia heroes, who were the symbols of Odia pride and glory. Important government files and letters related to Jayee Rajguru were preserved in the Collectorate record room of Puri. But in 1916 there was a fire in Puri Collectorate building and all the files preserved there were burnt. Corroborated files could not be found in the record rooms of Board of Revenue, Cuttack. Neither was it found in Calcutta Museum nor in the national library. Such files may be available in India office, London. But effort has not been made to trace it.

The next original source would have been a poetry book composed by one Madhusudan Bipra entitled '*Firingi Kali Bharat*'. "*Firingi Kali Bharat*" was a palm leaf manuscript under the custody of Sri Bichitrananda Routray of village Tapanga in the district of Puri. Poet Madhu Bipra the composer of '*Firingi Kali Bharat*' composed verses on the war of Khurda and resistance movement by Tapanga *Dalabehera* of which he was an eyewitness. Out of experience and personal knowledge he has written this book. The book was completed in 1835 (April). So by 1804, he must have been at least a young man as a teen to observe and understand the events happening around him. Shri Madhu Bipra had his residence in village Badaput near Tapang, Dist- Khurda. But a few historians are of the opinion that Madhu Bipra's book was a latter creation. But the fact is that the book was completed on 25th day of *mesh*, 1242 (April, 1835). And the event of 1804-06 was very nearer to his memory. The language of the book is very similar to the Odia written in early 19th century. So this book '*Firingi Kali Bharat*' can be considered as an authentic source for writing the history of Jayee Rajguru. Another

original document in this regard is a letter written by Jayee Rajguru Mohapatra himself and found in the Gangamata *math* of Puri. Madala Panji, the temple chronicle of Srimandir can also be taken as a primary source for writing history of Jayee Rajguru.

The literature and secondary sources available in this topic can also be used with caution to write the history of Jayee Rajguru. In 1960 researcher Chakradhar Mohapatra had published an article entitled 'Jayee Rajguru' in a magazine named '*Banaphula*' published from Cuttack. Kedarnath Mohapatra published his *Khurda Itihasa* (in Odia) in 1969. The twelfth chapter of this book dealt with Gajapati Mukunda Dev (1798-1817). In this chapter Sri Mohapatra briefly discussed about the activities of Jayee Rajguru and his position in the royal court of Khurda. Dr. Prafulla Kumar Pattnaik published an article entitled 'Jayee Rajguru' in the birth anniversary souvenir of Pranath Mahavidyalaya (1970).

Jayee Rajguru Smruti Parishad was established at the birth place of Jayee Rajguru Mohapatra, Biraharekrushnapur near Puri. On behalf of this organization a booklet on Jayee Rajguru was published under the editorship of Jatadhari Mishra in 1994. Research is in progress by the collaborative effort of *Jayee Rajguru Smruti Parishad* and *Puri Zilla Sanskruti Parishad*. A state level seminar was also organized on December 6, 2000, the death anniversary of *Jayee Rajguru*. Using the articles presented in the seminar a book entitled "Saheed Rajguru" was published. This book may be considered as a milestone in the process of research on Jayee Rajguru. In this book the letter written by Jayee Rajguru found from *Gangamata*

Matha was attached. A committee was formed to write the life sketch of Jayee Rajguru in the district of Puri. The secretary of Jayee Rajguru Smruti Parishad Sri Jatadhari Mishra came out with a book entitled " *Odishara Pratham Saheed Jayee Rajguru (in Odia)* ". This book was published by Jayee Rajguru Smruti Parishad. *Zilla sanskruti Parishad*, Puri also published a book entitled " *Saheed Jayee Rajguru* ".

Nikhila Utkal Brahman Mahasabha, Odisha with its head office at Puri also published a souvenir highlighting the life and sacrifices of 'Saheed Jayee Rajguru'. This souvenir was published in 2003 with articles in English, Hindi and Odia. In this publication among others the articles of Dr. Laxminarayana Rayasingh, Dr. Nilakantha Mishra, Dr. Jayanti Ratha, Dr. Bishnu Mohan Das, Sri Jagabandhu Padhi, Dr. Ketaki Mohapatra and Dr. Purna Chandra Mohapatra found place. As this souvenir was prepared in the praise of this patriot, some exaggerations are natural. But it is a reliable piece of literature to know the general history of Jayee Rajguru.

The other books which throw some light on the life and time of Jayee Rajguru are as follows.

- (1) Jagannath Pattnaik, *Jayee Rajguru (Od)*
- (2) Prafulla Kumar Pattanaik, an unknown chapter of Orissan history
- (3) *Utkal viswa Vidyalaya, Sankshipta Odia Gyanakosha (Od)*.

In his book " *unnavinsha satabdira odisha* " Pandita Surya Narayana Mishra also dealt with Raja Mukunda dev II and Jayee Rajguru. Dr. Bhabani Chandra ray in his book Buxi Jagabandhu had taken the pain of writing

something about the Raja of Khurda, Mukunda Dev. The general books of history which deals with Jayee Rajguru and his times are,

Bhabani Charan Ray - *Foundation of British Orissa and Orissa under the Marathas*.

Digambar Harichandan, *Khurda Darpan (Odia)*

Harekrushna Mahatab, *History of freedom movements*

Fakir Harichandan, *Khurda Itihasar Antarale, (Od)*

Sushil Chandra Dey, *History of freedom Movement in Orissa*

Dr. Jagannath Mohanty, *Odishar Pratham Swadhinata Sangrami (Od)*

K.C Das, *Odishara sasatra Mukti Sangram, (Odia)*

Sushil Chandra Dey, *A guide to Odishan records*.

In *Odisha Review* (a government of Odisha publication) N. R Patnaik, P.K Patanik, Jayanti Rath, Pritish Acharya etc. also wrote articles on Jayee Rajguru. Besides these many popular articles on Jayee Rajguru appeared in different magazines and newspapers. However most of the writings are the contributions of non-historians. Such articles are overwhelmed with emotion and sentimental patriotic vanity. Such articles are not written with scientific historical precision. Such writers have given importance to myths, hearsays and folklores. Sometimes they have added dramatization and extravagance to make their writing attractive and sensational. So when writing the history of such a person like Jayee Rajguru, we must handle the matter with care and caution. Such study must be done

historically and with objective. If you shower praise on Jayee Rajguru without cross-checking and corroborating facts, be sure it will be more harmful to the image of such a great patriot than the abuse, the British officials perpetrated on him.

Of late with certain motive the politicians started eulogizing certain Odia heroes hither to left neglected. Efforts are on in the government level to uphold Paik Revolt of 1817 led by Buxi Jagabandhu as the first war of independence. Such a sensational distortion of history has been outrightly rejected by sensible historians. And in this connection the name of Jayee Rajguru has been dragged for incursion in the Paik Revolt of Odisha, which is not a fact at all.

In recent past Narayan Rao came out with a book entitled “Jayee Rajguru, A profile of a great patriot of Odisha.” Dr Bijaya Chandra Rath has also produced a book entitled “Jayee Rajguru and Anti-colonial Resistance in Khurda.” Dr. Dharendra Nanda, Chairman, Jayee Rajguru Smruti Sansad, Odisha had presented a paper in the National level History symposium on “Paik Rebellion”- A forgotten Era of Indian Freedom struggle at India international centre, New Delhi in joint collaboration of Government of Odisha and Indian Council of Historical Research.

Non-historical literatures in form of fiction (stories and novels) are also available with the main theme of Jayee Rajguru. Of them the historical novel “Jayee Rajguru” published by Friends Publishers, Cuttack demands special mention. This historical novel is written more on the basis of historical facts. As it is a novel of pure historicity should not be expected from this. However published in 2018, this novel is an eye opener for the historians who are engaged in research to prepare a historical monograph on Jayee Rajguru.

Debates attached to the history of Jayee Rajguru and his times

Sometimes the role of Jayee Rajguru in the royal court of Khurda comes under scanner. The Britishers termed him as mischief monger and cunning. They thought that Raja Mukanda Dev was misguided by him against the British. He was blamed to be a man of highhandedness and taking advantage of his long association with the court of Khurda. He was accused of collecting taxes from certain *praganas* without the knowledge of the king. He even did not hand over rupees forty thousand which he collected from Colonel Harcourt to the *Raja* of the Khurda. In fact he had a non-compromising personality and sometimes he behaved with the king in paternal capacity. But actually he loved the minor king too much and it was for him Mukund Dev II could become a king overcoming sanguinary family feuds. No doubt he collected taxes from the *praganas* like Rahanga (near Puri), Chabiskud (near Brahmagiri), Sirai (near Satyabadi) and Lembai (near Delanga). In fact he was doing this to prove the claim of Khurda on them, which the British government denied. Simultaneously it is true that he had not handed over the money he collected from Harcourt to the king. But he did not spend the money for himself. He spent the money paying the soldiers their arrears which were overdue.

A question has been raised as to whether he was a freedom fighter or not. In the present context the term freedom fighter is differently used. The person having a role in the Indian freedom struggle is called a freedom fighter. The time to which Jayee Rajguru belonged was a period of different political history. Indian nationalism was not present at that time. He was fighting for the defence and to maintain the

freedom and sovereignty of Khurda. In that sense he was a freedom fighter. He sacrificed his life for his own country, so naturally he was a great martyr. He thought that as long as he lived his motherland Khurda would continue to be independent and he was fighting with a foreign enemy. That is why when he was tried in a mock trial he never admitted that he conspired against an established British government. Rather he thought of himself as a prisoner of war (pow) and the alien force might kill him. Considering all this Jayee Rajguru can be called a great patriot, who sacrificed his life in the defense of his country and independence.

In recent times a tendency has developed among the scholars of writing history to connect Jayee Rajguru with the Paik Rebellion of 1817. The heroic effort of Jayee Rajguru in the battle of Barunei against the British has been belittled where it was termed as an uprising of Zamindars and it is stated in the book "Freedom Struggle" published by National Book Trust. Such uprisings were continued till 1817. Dr B. C. Rath in his book 'Jayee Rajguru and anti-colonial resistance' tried to prove that Khurda revolt of 1804 had its continuation till 1817 and subsequently the movement continued along with the Paik Rebellion. But the fact is different. Rather the Battle of Barunei (December 1804) was the last battle the British fought to complete the occupation of Odisha. The battle in which the Britishers defeated the Marathas and occupied the Barabati fort was not the last battle they fought to occupy Odisha. They had to fight a more formidable battle which may be known as Battle of Barunei. In this Battle of Barunei the British forces under Fletcher fought with the Paikas of Khurda. Jayee Rajguru made an all out effort to form an alliance with the Zamindars of Kanika, Kujanga and Harishpur as

well as with the Marathas. In the primary battles at Pipili and Delang he pushed the Britishers to the backfoot. For the Battle of Barunei (1804) he chalked out a military strategy by deploying soldiers at different strategic point and safeguarding the fort of Barunei. However he was defeated in the battle. He was captured, did not pray for mercy, saved the king and himself accepted death for the sake of his motherland. He was a great patriot and none other was comparable to him.

Jayee Rajguru believed that with the eclipse of Maratha authority from Odisha, Khurda was a free and sovereign country. The king of Khurda Raja Mukunda Dev did not sign the document of allegiance sent by the British. Naturally the war, which Jayee Rajguru fought against the British, was never a rebellion against any established government. It was a patriotic war of a sovereign nation against a foreign enemy.

Some misconception has been recorded in certain history textbook. In such a book it is mentioned that the Raja of Khurda accepted a bribe of one lakh rupees from the English to help them in the occupation of Puri. It is a travesty of truth. The fact is that king Mukundadev II was promised a bribe of one lakh by the Britishers. The Britishers had actually paid rupees ten thousand to the king. This negotiation between the Raja and the British was made without the knowledge of Jayee Rajguru. When Jayee Rajguru came to know this he became unhappy with the minor king. Afterwards Jayee Rajguru marched to Cuttack with two thousand armed *paiks* and by force collected forty thousand from Colonel Harcourt.

Another debate is on about the place of execution of Jayee Rajguru. From the Madala

Panji it is ascertained that Jayee Rajguru was hanged. But the place of this execution was not mentioned there. Chakradhar Mohapatra in his article in *Banaphula* gave the opinion that Jayee Rajaguru was hanged in Baghitota of Midnapur (now in West Bengal). Praffula Kumar Patnaik gave the same view in his article published in the souvenir of P.N. Mahavidyalaya in 1970. In course of time this view was accepted by the majority of historians. A bust statue of Jayee Rajguru was also established at Sutahat near Haladia of Midnapur district of West Bengal. A banyan tree at Midnapur was also identified (as the tree on which Jayee Rajguru was hanged) by the members from *Jayee Rajguru smruti Parishad*. But such demarcation was not scientific and without proof. From different sources it is proved that Raja Mukundadev II was taken to Midnapur. But such proof is not available in case of Jayee Rajguru. The higher authority of Major Fletcher sought an explanation as to why Jayee Rajguru was immediately executed in a unfair trial. Madhusudan Bipra in his '*Firingi Kali Bharat*' mentioned that Jayee Rajguru was immediately executed. From this it is assumed that he was hanged in Khurda. In Khurda there is a banyan tree named "*Fasidia Baragachha*". A local scholar named Dibyasingha Champati is of the opinion that Jayee Rajguru was hanged in that banyan tree. The inconclusive debate is going on.

Brief life sketch of Jayee Rajguru

Jayee Krushna Mohapatra was a scion of Gadadhar Mohapatra, the illustrious Rajguru of Khurda king Harekrushna Dev. Gadadhara was a noted scholar and was the writer of *Kalasara*. Gadadhar was a resident of Village Biraharekrushnapur near Puri. The father of Jayee Krushna Mohapatra was Chandrasekhar Rajguru, who was otherwise known as Chand

Rajguru. He adorned the court of Raja Divyasingh Dev II of Khurda as the Rajguru.

Jayeekrushna was born on 29th October 1739. His mother was Haramani Devi. Jayeekrushna had his early education in the Sanskrit Toll of Emaramath and Gobardhan Peetha of Puri. During his student career he could compose Sanskrit verses and recite them with clarity. Simultaneously Jayeekrushna received the training in horse-riding, wrestling as well as fencing and boxing. Jayeekrushna could conduct religious rituals and could satisfy gods and goddesses through *hawan* and sacrifices. He lost his father and was brought up by his mother Haramani Devi, who was very much attached to her son. In the early years of his youth he had gone to Kasi (Benaras) and had fruitful discussion with the scholars of Kasi. The themes of discussion were life, life-after death and religious code of Hindusim. He also met a *Tantrasdhak* in Benaras and from him he learned '*Dasmahavidya sadhana*' as well as *Dhoomavati mantra*. After his return to Khurda he engaged himself in social work. He remained a bachelor. The burning problem of the time was the *Burgis*" minace. Taking advantage of the weak administration the Burgis intensified their terror in the villages of Khurda. It was said that the Maratha officials had their share in the booty of the *Burgis* and that is why no action was taken against them. It was intolerable for a patriot and fearless man like Jayeekrushna. He personally moved from village to village and encouraged the *Paik* youth to face them with bravery. He gave the young Paiks military training as well as the technique of making arms and weapons. He developed a *Panchasutri Yojana* to fight against the *Burgis*.

Jayee Krushna Mohapatra became the Rajguru of Khurda

Technically Birakeshari Dev I was the king of Khurda from 1736 to 1793. During his reign the Gajapati of Paralakhemundi Jagannath Narayan Dev invaded Khurda in 1760. Birakeshari Dev I took the help of the Marathas and defeated him. But Birakeshari Dev I had to hand over four rich Praganas, Lembai, Sirai, Rahanga and Chabiskud to the Marathas. The transfer of these Praganas to the Marathas weakened the economic status of Khurda. This Birakeshari Dev became mentally imbalanced and killed his sons for which he was taken as a captive by the Marathas. Divyasinghdev II ruled as a caretaker king from 1779. He became the real king of Khurda in 1793 when Birakeshari Dev I died in prison. Technically Divyasingh Dev II was the king of Khurda from 1793 till his death in 1798.

In a very difficult and politically volatile situation Jayee Krushna Mohapatra was picked up as the Rajguru of Khurda by Divyasingh Dev II in 1780. As the Rajguru he had taken certain positive steps to counteract *Burgi* menace. Khurda was not recovered from the famine condition of 1770s. Bengal famine of 1770 had also adverse effect on Khurda's economy. The rate of rice increased. There was also a reduction of the number of pilgrims to Puri. The financial condition of Sri Jagannath Temple was not satisfactory. There was a general demoralization of the Paiks of Khurda. They were indulged in social evils like drinking and visit to brothel. The Britishers were already present militarily on both sides of Odisha. They had already occupied Ganjam. The Marathas were losing ground and they were not in a position in giving protection to Khurda. In fact the Britishers were planning vigorously to occupy Odisha and ascertain

geographical contiguity between Bengal and Madras Presidencies.

Under this Socio-economic and political setting Jayeekrushna Mohapatra became the Rajguru of Khurda. At the same time he assumed the responsibility as the Prime Minister and Commander-in-chief of Khurda.

Military Career of Jayee Rajguru

At the outset he made effort to strengthen Khurda internally. He took the Paiks in confidence and as it is stated earlier he implemented his "*Panchasutri Yojana*". He discussed with the *Gadadhipatis* of Khurda, Dandimala, Kumapalli, Rameswar, Kuhudi, Banapur, Mugalabandi, Balahbadrapur, Tapang, Manikagarh, Panchagarh and Haladiagarh. He also organized the tribals like the *khonds*. He made contact with the *Mahantas* of the *Mathas* like Narottam Das of *Gangamata Math*. He requisitioned the service of a medicant named Sambhu Bharati and tried to keep the Zamindars and Rajas of Odisha in his good book.

During his career as the Rajguru of Khurda he had to lead some military campaign. During the rule of Divyasinghdev II Jayee Rajguru with the help of the Paiks of Dandimala, Terapada, Banpur invaded Banki. In this military campaign he was assisted by Buxi Jagabandhu. However in this war Khurda incurred loss when around 200 soldiers were killed. Jayee Rajguru was injured. The brother of Buxi Jagabandhu was killed. The Dhalla king of Banki became victorious and Jayee Rajguru retired to Khurda defeated and dejected.

During the reign of the minor king Mukunda Dev II, there was a war between Ranpur and Khurda. The Raja of Ranapur

Vrindaban Narendra was creating disturbances in Khurda. Mukunda Dev instructed Jayee Rajguru and Buxi Jagabandhu to invade Ranapur and punish the king of Ranapur. In this war Ranapur was defeated and the township of Ranapur was devastated by the victorious army of Khurda.

The next military adventure of Jayee Rajguru was the attack of Damapada. The army of Damapada was led by Basudev Bhramarabara, the brother of Brajabehari Srichandan, the Raja of Banki. Jayee Rajguru became victorious and Basudev Bhramarabara was killed. Jayee Rajguru instructed Dewan Harihar to invade Banki. Out of fear the Raja with his family fled away from Banki *Garh* and sent Harekrushna Pattnaik to Cuttack to seek the mercy of the Marathas. On the instruction of the Marathas, Mukunda Dev suspended the military operation on Banki. Jayee Rajguru was called back.

Preparation of the Khurda war and Battle of Barunei. (1804)

The military activities of Jayee Rajguru was termed as a rebellion by the British. Indian historian called it Khurda Revolt. But considering the nature of the military activities it must be bluntly said that the military adventure of Jayee Rajguru against the British in 1804 was a war, which culminated in the Battle of Barunei in the month of December 1804. British occupation of Odisha was complete only after this Battle of Barunei, which was more emphatic and more extensive than Harcourt's occupation of Barabati Fort in 1803.

In 1803 Mukunda Dev II, the Raja of Khurda was a minor and Rajguru Jayee Krushna Mohapatra was his regent and advisor (*Bebarta*).

On behalf of the king, as the prime minister and commander-in-chief of Khurda he was holding a respectable status in the administrative circle of the state. The Britishers under the Governor Generalship of Lord Wellesley had planned to occupy Cuttack, Puri and Balasore by force. The British strategists had decided to attack Puri and Cuttack from Ganjam in the south. They requested the king of Khurda to provide them safe passage through Banapur. Jayee Rajguru was against such arrangement. But the Britishers hatched a secret deal with Mukunda Dev II. Mukunda Dev II put a condition that after defeating the Marathas, the Britishers would hand over Lembai, Rahanga, Serai and Chabiskud to the King of Khurda. Simultaneously the Britishers would pay Rupees one lakh to the king of Khurda for supplying soldiers to the British. Actually rupees ten thousands was given to the Raja of Khurda. J. Melville, Commissioner of Cuttack submitted a report in this regard to the Governor General of India on 21st September 1803. But in this report no mention was made about the transfer of the aforesaid four *praganas* to Khurda. Only the promise to pay rupees one lakh to the Raja was mentioned.

Jayee Rajguru smelled foul play in this secret agreement and he never believed positively about the promise of the Britishers. However for the time being he followed a policy of wait and watch. On 14th October 1803 Barabati fort was stormed and the Marathas fled away from Cuttack. The king of Khurda did not interfere in the military operation of the Britishers. Rather he kept a contingent of 300 soldiers ready to supply in case the Britishers needed it. But it was not necessary.

But after the British occupation of Cuttack, Balasore and Puri, the Britishers refused

to hand over the four *praganas* to the Raja of Khurda. But Jayee Rajguru could not digest such breach of trust by the Britishers. On 11 March 1804 he marched to Cuttack with two thousand Paiks. He was being assisted by Digambar Bhuyan of Rodanga and Bali Sundaray. He met Harcourt in the bungalow of Lalbag, Cuttack. J. Melville along with Harcourt wanted to bribe Rajguru. But Rajguru refused. He demanded to pay rupees ninety thousands as agreed upon and hand over the four *praganas* as promised. But the Britishers cleverly disowned such promise and informed the Rajguru that- “not even a span of land would be spared.” However they paid the Rajguru a sum of rupees forty thousand and promised to pay the rest fifty thousand in future.

Jayee Rajguru correctly studied the mind of the Britishers, who were determined to bring the *Garjats* under their control. For that purpose they had prepared a draft agreement on November 29, 1803 and getting them signed by the Garjat kings. In this agreement there was the provisions to accept the suzerainty of the Britishers and pay annual tribute to the East India Company. Almost all the Odia speaking Garjats signed this document. On the advise of Jayee Rajguru the Raja of Khurda did not sign it.

The Britishers put pressure on the Raja of Khurda to sign the agreement. As he was not succumbed to pressure the Britishers were convinced that the young Raja has become so defiant due to the misguidance of Jayee Rajguru. They also pressurized Mukunda Dev II to dismiss Jayee Rajguru from all the offices he held. Even they requested the Raja to send Jayee Rajguru to Cuttack for a discussion. Jayee Rajguru understood the ill will of the Cuttack officials and refused to go to Cuttack. At last under heavy pressure Mukunda Dev signed the agreement on

2nd August 1804. But this agreement was never functional and the Raja of Khurda did not pay any tribute (*peshkasi*) to the Britishers. The Britishers held Jayee Rajguru responsible for gross insubordination and enmity of Raja. In one of his letter dated 23rd October 1804 Col. Harcourt wrote. “It appears that the Raja is not inimical to us, but his *dewan* is extremely so and he controls everybody and everything at Khurda. The commissioners in their letter of 2nd August 1804 had directed the Raja to send his *peshkasi* without delay. They also sent one Golam Amin as Advisor to Khurda king and he would substitute the Rajguru. The Raja in the advice of Rajguru defied the instructions of the commissioners of Cuttack.

Open hostilities between the Raja Mukunda Dev II and the British authority was on the cards. Jayee Rajguru started intensive preparation to fight a decisive war against the Britishers. The tributary chiefs of Odisha were approached to extend their support to Khurda in the event of a war against the British. The services of one religious mendicant Sambhu Bharati was requisitioned to contact the Rajas and Zamindars of Odisha and solicit their support to the cause of Khurda. A Triple Alliance was formed among the Rajas of Khurda, Kanika and Kujang. The Zamindars of Bishenpur, Harishpur and Marichpur also joined the confederacy. Bhonsle Raja of Nagpur was also contacted by Jayee Rajguru. Two officers of the Raja of Berar, Antaji Naik and Kanoji Naik met the Raja of Khurda and Jayee Rajguru and promised help both with men and arms against the British.

Open hostilities and Khurda war

The war preparation of Khurda did not go unnoticed by the Britishers. Jayee Rajguru was

considered as the root of all the troubles, and there was open demand by the British to remove him from office, The Commissioners of Cuttack decided to send one Captain Blunt to Khurda but he could not come to Khurda due to the stiff opposition of Rajguru.

On the advice of Jayee Rajguru, the Raja of Khurda started to assert his authority. In July 1804 one Achut Barik was appointed *Muquadam* to collect tax from Batgaon near Puri. Dharamu Harichandan was appointed to collect tax from the four disputed *praganas*. The soldiers from Khurda also raided some villages in those *praganas*. Attempts were made by Jayee Rajguru to take over the administration of Sri Jagannath Temple.

The Britishers retaliated by arresting Sambhu Bharati. Antaji Naik was also caught at Sambalpur, when returning to Nagpur with the letter of Jayee Rajguru to Bhonsle. The Dalabeheras of Rameswar and Panchagarh, the *Khandaits* of Mendhasala, the Zamindars of Gada Haladia were instructed not to help the Raja of Khurda. In the month of November, 1804 military operation against the Raja was initiated by the British. On 22nd November 1804, a contingent of soldiers led by Captain Hickland attacked the Paiks of Khurda stationed at Pipili. About two hundred Paiks of Khurda were killed in the battle. But at last when returning from Pipili the soldiers of Hickland were attacked and he was defeated. Captain Storey reached Gangapada but he was driven away by the guards stationed at the place. From the south Major Fletcher marched towards Khurda with a big army. Fletcher was helped by the agents of the Raja of Nayagarh, Khandapara and Ranapur. They reached Taratua. Colonel Harcourt and Melville with ten thousand soldiers marched towards

Khurda and was helped by the Raja of Banki. They reached Tangiapada situated towards north of Khurda.

On behalf of the Raja of Khurda Mustafa Khan was sent to Tangiapada to safeguard the gate there. Jayee Rajguru was called back to Khurda from Delang. The grandson of Sambhu Bharati, Vaishnav Bharati was sent to Gangapada to fight against the British. Vaishnav Bharati showed rare feat of heroism and killed a number of British soldiers at Gangapada. At Tartua gate and Tangiapada the soldiers of Khurda faced reverses and they retreated to Khurda fort at Barunei. Fletcher became victorious at Tartua. Now the fort of Barunei became the centre of battle for the opposing forces.

Battle of Barunei, Dec-1804

The British forces had established their camp at Mukunda Prasad. From this military camp the Britishers proceeded towards the north side of the fort of Barunei. This fort of Barunei had the king's palace in it and was surrounded by strong stone wall. It was guarded by different contingent of soldiers in different directions. The king, his family, Jayee Rajguru, Buxi and most of the important military personnel were inside the fort.

The Britishers deployed at least four batteries of 12 pounds each, Howzer and batteries of 6 pounds around the fort. With continuous firing from all sides the British soldiers advanced towards the fort. On the advice of the Sardars of Banki and Khandapada the Britishers deployed the soldiers in strategic places. Colonel Harcourt appeared on main door of the fort. Major Fletcher led the assault on the fort. With him there was a regiment of one hundred and

twenty European sepoy. He was also assisted by Bengal infantry battalion (2nd and 7th). After heavy firing by artillery guns the fort door was damaged and opened. There was pitch battle between the two forces. To capture the fort, the Britishers had to fight for three days and night. Hundreds of soldier from both sides were killed and wounded in this Battle of Barunei in the first week of December 1804. Jayee Rajguru wanted to send the king to Puri. But he sent the king and his family towards Rameswar forest under the guard of reliable and faithful Sardars and Paiks. Jayee Rajguru and Buxi could not defend the fort. They secretly came out of the fort and went to Bengitangi forest situated on the west of the fort of Khurda. In fact the fort was thus captured after being sieged by the Britishers for three weeks.

Result of Khurda War

From Bengatangi forest Rajguru went to village Balijhadi and from there he was going to Ranpur. On the way he was captured by the British forces at a place now known as '*Sandhamaru Kona*'. He was brought to Major Fletcher who was stationed at Khurda. There is a view that immediately without any fair trial he was hanged at Khurda. Even of now there is a banyan tree in Khurda which is called '*Phasidia Baragachha*'. But the generally accepted view is that he was taken to Midnapur. He was kept there in confinement for two years and was ultimately executed there.

From Kaipadar jungle the Raja of Khurda sent his Vakeel to Colonel Harcourt for negotiations. But the Vakeel was arrested at Cuttack. The desperate *Raja* sought the help of Fateh Muhammad, the *fauzdar* of Banapur. But he got him treacherously arrested on January 3, 1805. For sometime he was kept in Barabati fort

but then shifted to Midnapur. From there the Raja submitted a petition to the Governor General in council that during the *mooktarship* of Rajguru he had no power. He had been kept virtually in confinement at Khurda and the Rajguru had instigated the Paiks to raid the British territory.” Such a letter was dictated by Harcourt to punish Rajguru. The trial of Jayee Rajguru took place at Baghitota in Midnapur. The Britishers found him guilty of waging a war ‘against the lawfully established government of the land’. Jayee Rajguru admitted the version of the king that he himself was responsible for the military activities in Khurda. But he claimed that he was fighting to defend his free nation against the invasion of a foreign enemy. At best he was a prisoner of war (POW) and the Britishers were free to punish him as such. He was ordered to be hanged to death. Rajguru was brutally killed by the British soldiers by tying his two legs to two branches of banyan tree in the broad day light of December 6, 1806.

By a proclamation issued on 7, December 1804, the Raja of Khurda was deposed and his territories were annexed to British Odisha. The Raja of Khurda was released from the Jail in 1807, but the estate of Khurda was not restored to him. Under Regulation IV of 1809 he was given the management of Sri Jagannath Temple of Puri. He was also given the *malikana* amounting one lakh of rupees of the revenue of his estate. His residence was at Balisahi palace of Puri.

The allies of the Raja of Khurda were also punished by the Britishers. Balabhadra Bhanja, the Raja of Kanika was taken as a prisoner and sent to Medinapur in July 1805. Chandradhwaja Sendha, the Raja of Kujanga was

dethroned and his elder brother Madhusudan Sendha was recognized as the new Raja there.

Conclusion

Jayee Rajguru thus was a great patriot who fought for the defence of his motherland. He was of the strong conviction that he was not a rebel or even a revolutionary. He was a soldier of his sovereign motherland. To save his royal master he bluntly said that he was responsible for what happened in Khurda against the Britishers. He fought for his principle and conviction till his death. Just after the British occupation of Odisha in 1803, which was a cakewalk, Jayee Rajguru showed to the Britishers that another more formidable battle was waiting for them. In fact the Britishers had to fight the Battle of Barunei before their complete occupation of Odisha. It was not 1803 but December 1804 should be considered as the date of British occupation of Odisha. And it was Jayee Rajguru who had championed the cause of the Odias and gave the Britishers the real fight. He was selfless and was overwhelmed with the only cause that is patriotism. He was a great inspiration of Odia nationalism.

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11. Burgi- Maratha Militia men who were involved in loot, rape and arson in Odishan villages.
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 - a) Adoption of daily exercise and reject wine and prostitute.
 - b) Revival of *Paik Akhad* and organization of Paik forces
 - c) Arms and ammunitions are to be produced inside Khurda and they would be tested on *Sheetal Sasthi* and *Champak Dwadashi*.
 - d) Research must continue to produce more powerful weapons.
 - e) Physically every individual would be so strong that he would not depend upon others for help.
13. Basudev Rath Somyayatri, *Gangavamshanucharitam*
14. Quoted in *Sahid Jayee Rajguru Souvenir*, Published by Nikhil Utkal Brahman Mahasabha, Orissa, Puri, 2003, P-2, (Article P. K. Patnaik, A great martyr).
15. See the letter of Jayee Rajguru as in ref-3.
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