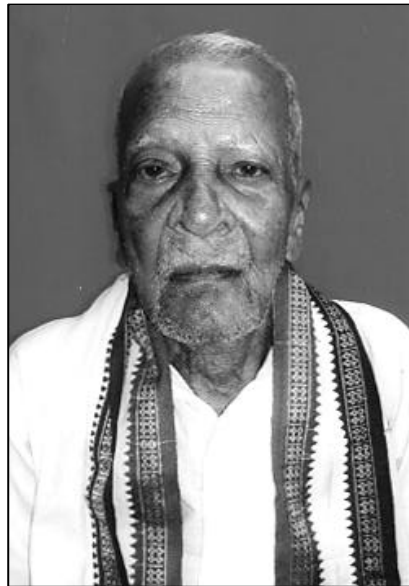




## Binayak Mohapatra - A Forgotten Freedom Fighter of Ganjam

*Braja Paikaray*

Freedom fighter Binayak Mohapatra was born on 27th day of February, 1920 in Village Nimina under Asika Block in the district of Ganjam as the son of Late Nilakantha Mohapatra and Braja Kishori Devi. In his childhood while he was still a student of Kendupadar Upper Primary school his father died. He passed class five from Kendupadar Upper Primary School in the year 1930. In that particular year responding to the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi Salt Satyagraha had already been started and spread in all corners of the Country. Though Binayak was a young lad of 10 years only he desired to join the Salt Satyagrah and accordingly went to Brahmpur to meet Sashi Bhusan Rath the then editor of Oriya daily newspaper "Asha". Being advised by Sashi Bhusan Rath, Binayak went from Brahmapur to Cuttack by train and met Govinda Misra of Ganjam at Khadi Bhandar situated at Nayasadak of Cuttack town. Prominent. Congress leader Sudhir Ghose was educating the young boys regarding the rules and regulations of Congress



party who had joined the "Banar Sena". Sudhir Ghose came to know young Binayak through the then Congress leader Govinda Misra of Ganjam and offered him Khadi cloth and napkin and accepted Binayak as a member of "Banar Sena". The Congress workers were cooking their own food and Cuttack town Congress Committee was bearing all expenses of their fooding and lodging. Binayak stayed in a rented house of Chhatra Bazar along with six other Congress workers after staying some months at Naya Sadak.

During pre-independence era foreign clothes bundle were brought to Cuttack Mal godown from Cuttack Railway station by bullock cart.

As per the instruction of Cuttack Town Congress Committee the "Banar Sena" members and other Congress workers started Picketing in front of the bullock cart. Young Binayak joined the picketing. The "Banar Sena" members and Congress workers were arrested by the Police and were beaten in the police station mercilessly. The 'Banar Sena' members who were beaten in



the police Station were offered Rassgolas by the Cuttack Town Congress Committee.

In the meantime Binayak suffered from typhoid disease. The British Govt. had proclaimed that the Govt. as well as private doctors would be punished if they dare to offer any medical treatment to the freedom fighters. But defying the order of the British Govt. one nationalist doctor named Rajani Babu offered free medicine, free food and free medical treatment to Binayak Mohapatra. Being cured from typhoid disease he was instructed by the Cuttack Town Congress leaders to return to his village.

Though Binayak returned to his village he could not stay in his home for long time. Again in the year 1931 he came to Cuttack and stayed in a rented house at Chhatra Bazar along with some other Congress workers. In the meantime British Govt. made an ordinance that the house owners would be punished if they rented out their house to Congress workers. Therefore Binayak and his friend Congress workers were driven out from Chhatra Bazar rented house by their land lord. Deprived of hearth and home Binayak and his friends stayed under an "Osta Tree" situated near the rented house. They used to cook their food under that tree in the day time and take rest in the night on Ganesh Mandap of Chhatra Bazar. On one occasion while Binayak and his comrades were preparing themselves for taking food, the police came, arrested them and left them in the deep forest of Banki. Later on they were rescued by the Congress workers of Cuttack Town Congress Committee. At that time the former Chief Minister of Odisha late Naba Krushna Choudhury was the Chief Co-ordinator of Cuttack Town Congress Committee.

On another occasion while a bullock cart loaded with foreign made clothes was passing

through Ranihat, Cuttack Binayak and his friends started picketing and blocked the road. The Bullock Cart driver namely "Gandharb" assaulted Binayak who became unconscious. When he regained his consciousness he found himself in Lal bag Police Station. He was forwarded to the Court and then sent to Cuttack Jail as an under trial prisoner. Prominent freedom fighters like Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab, Sudhir Ghose, Gopabandhu Choudhury, Baikunthanath Mohanty, Manmohan Choudhury and Lokanath Patra of village Pailipada of Ganjam district were inmates of Cuttack jail at that time. Braja Sundar Mohanty, the then S.D.O, of Cuttack sentenced Binayak and his five friends with 6 months imprisonment and they were sent to Munger Jail of Bihar. Freedom Fighter Dibakar Bhuyan, Prafulla Misra and Nilamani Swain were co-prisoners of Binayak Mohapatra in Munger jail. After completion of 6 months jail term Binayak returned to his native village Nimina.

Being informed regarding the return of maternal uncle Binayak, his nephew Trilochan Misra of Vir Harekrushnapur Sasan came to Nimina and advised Binayak to take admission in Sadasiva Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya of Puri to study Ayurveda. Binayak took admission in Sadasiva Sanskrit Mahavidyalaya and stayed at Puri.

The Quit India Movement of 1942 had stirred the entire nation and the country. Mahatma Gandhi had called upon the people of India "To Do or Die" and advised the Englishmen to quit India as soon as possible. The Indians were eager to be free from the British bondage and to gain Independence. They responded to the clarion call of Gandhiji and joined the Quit India Movement spontaneously. Binayak Mohapatra, his classmates Amarnath Misra of Digapahandi and Sridhar Rath of Village Bikrampur of Ganjam



District inspired the students of Sadasiva Sanskrit college to take active part in Quit India Movement. The British Police got this news and warrant of arrest was issued against Binayak, Amarnath and Sridhar. In order to avoid police arrest Ramanath Misra, the elder brother of Amarnath came to Puri, took his brother Amarnath as well as Binayak to Brahmapur from Puri by train in the night time. Binayak's class mate and friend Sridhar Rath was arrested by the British Police.

Time passed away rapidly. When law and order situation was restored Binayak returned to Puri prepared himself for the examination and got first class in Ayurveda Acharjya. After the declaration of result Binayak returned to his native village Nimina. In course of time Binayak got appointment as Kaviraj at the Ayurvedic medical hospital of Gajapati Nagar situated near Huma of Ganjam district.

Within his service tenure since 20th March, 1948 to 25th August, 1976 Binayak could be able to establish Nilakantha Sanskrit Vidyapitha at village Nimina in the memory of his father and Talsar Sanskrit Vidyapitha at village Talsar of Khallikote.

For his outstanding contribution towards freedom struggle of India Binayak Mohapatra has been honoured by the former Prime Minister of India Smt. Indira Gandhi in 1972, by the former Chief Minister of Odisha Sri Janaki Ballav Pattanaik and by the former President of India Smt. Pratibha Patil on 9th August 2007 in Rastrapati Bhavan on the eve of observance of Kranti Divas at New Delhi.

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