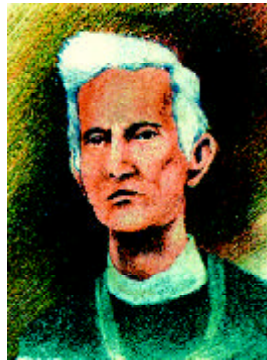


Makers of Modern Odisha

FAKIR MOHAN SENAPATI

Born on January 14, 1843, at Mallikashpur in Balasore. Father, Laxman Charan Senapati and mother Tulsi Devi. He played a leading role in establishing the distinct identity of Oriya language and literature. Fakirmohan Senapati is regarded as the father of Oriya nationalism and the modern Oriya literature. He dedicated his life for the progress of Oriya language in the later 19th and early 20th century. The story of Fakirmohan is indeed the story of the “Renaissance” of Oriya literature. Besides he was a social reformer and educator who used his pen to criticize and correct the aberrations prevalent in the society. He is called the father of Oriya fiction.



He is aptly called as Thomas Hardy of Orissa. The four novels of Fakirmohan, written between 1897 and 1915, reflect the socio-cultural conditions of Orissa during the eighteenth and the nineteenth centuries. While the three novels, *Chhamana Atha Guntha*, *Mamun* and

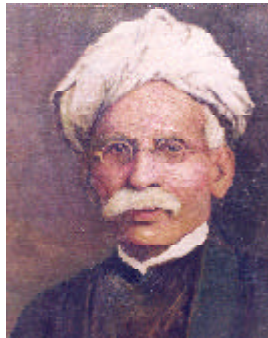
Prayaschita explore the realities of social life in its multiple dimensions. *Lachhma* is a historical romance dealing with the anarchical conditions of Orissa in the wake of Maratha invasions during the eighteenth century. He has written quite a few memorable short stories, such as ‘*Rebati*’, ‘*Patent Medicine*’ and ‘*Randipua Ananta*’. Fakir Mohan is also the writer of the first autobiography in Oriya, ‘*Atma Jeevan Charita*’.

Fakir Mohan’s first original poem ‘*Utkala Bhramanam*’ (Tours of Orissa) appeared in 1892. It is not really a travel book but rather an unusual and humorous survey of the contemporary personalities prominent in the then public life of Orissa. His other original poems published are *Puspamala* (The Garland), *Upahar* (Gift), *Puja Phula* (Flowers of Worship), *Prarthana* (Prayer) and *Dhuli* (Dust-grains). Fakir Mohan Senapati translated single-handedly the whole of the ‘*Ramayana*’ and the ‘*Mahabharat*’. For having translated both the ‘*Ramayan*’ and the ‘*Mahabharat*’ single-handed and his wide versatility in the word of letters, he is popularly known as ‘*Vyasakabi*’ in Orissa. He was also conferred the title ‘*Saraswati*’ by the king of Bamra, the then feudal state. A great lover and a creator of new era in Oriya literature he was the founder of an organization called ‘*Utkala Bhasa*

Unnati Bidhani Sabha', which was started in 1867 to create a new awareness among the people of Orissa and to propagate Oriya language. Died on June 14, 1918.

UTKAL GOURAB MADHUSUDAN DAS

Born on 1848, April 28 at Satyabhamapur of Cuttack District. Father Choudhuri Raghunath Das, Mother-Parvati Devi. Madhusudan Das was the first Oriya to fetch the degree of M.A.B.L., from Calcutta University. He was popularly known as Madhu Barrister, respectfully regarded and addressed as "Utkal Gourav". He was deeply moved and shocked to see the discrimination, made against the Oriyas by administrative authority. He was convinced that the miserable plight of the Oriyas was only due to the apathetic and indifferent attitude of authorities towards the interest of the Oriya people. The Oriyas could not stand united only because of their vivisection and annexation with three different provinces. So, he took a solid stand for the unification of the scattered Oriyas by organising and mobilising strong public opinion among the Oriyas and pressurised the British rulers for the unification of the scattered Oriya-speaking tracts for the socio-economic and cultural growth of the Oriyas at large.



Madhusudan organised Utkal Union Conference to form the channel for discussion and negotiations with the authorities to solve the problems and open avenues for a new era of unification and integration and played a piloting role in engineering the plans and programmes, pioneering the aims and objectives and

championing the cause of the Oriya movement. "Utkal Sammilani" came into existence in the year 1903 with the extinction of "Utkal Sabha", it spearheaded the movement of the unification of Oriya-speaking units under one administration with right earnestness, disciplined plans and programmes.

Due to the ability and inspiration of Mr. Das, people of all categories and sections conglomerated under one political banner. It inspired people with a surging up feeling of oneness of culture, tradition and language and a rare sense of nationality. This impact thundered the sky of Orissa. It went up to such an extent that "freedom movement" and the Oriya movement got inter-linked under the stable leadership of Mr. Das and Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das. Sometimes the two movements were lacking harmony on the issue of priority. This situation impelled people to join hands with Mr. Das in the forum of Oriya movement, then the Congress. Utkal Sammilani or the Utkal Union Conference maintained its separate identity from the Congress.

As a legislator, Madhusudan Das acclaimed a commendable height of wide appreciation and position. It was mostly due to his sharp wit and inspiring speech of effective magnitude. He was selected as the Minister of local self-Government of Bihar-Orissa.

He was a leader of versatile performance and could arrest appreciation and love of the people and the Government during the tenure of his ministry. In spite of his popularity, he resigned in 1923 on a matter of principle. It speaks of his integrity.

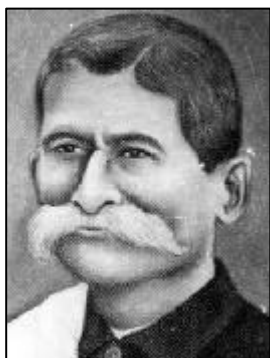
His journalistic approach was reflected in his weekly paper 'The Oriya' started in 1917. It was his intense desire to highlight the interest of

Oriyas, criticising the Government's policy through this channel of weekly paper. He was very genuine and emphatic in his voice and action.

He was a national pioneer and a staunch patron of Orissan development. He breathed his last on the 4th February 1934. He was a bonafide benefactor, a nationalist in true sense, acquiring the first Master Degree and first B.L. Degree as the first Oriya. He was the first Oriya to be the member of Legislative Council, the first Oriya to sail abroad, to visit England twice and to have the membership of Central Legislative Assembly as the first Oriya and the first Indian Minister.

GANGADHAR MEHER

Born on August 9, 1862 on the day of Sravana Purnima at Barapalli, Sambalpur in a weaver family. Educated up to 5th class. Dr. Mayadhar Mansingh has high esteem for Gangadhar Meher and in his History of Oriya



literature he has opined "All told, Gangadhar Meher is one of the rarest personalities and poets in the whole range of Oriya Literature". His poetic creation includes 'PRANAYA-BALLARI', 'KICHAKA BADHA', 'INDUMATI,' UTKAL LAXMI', 'AYODHYA DRUSYA', 'KABITA KALLOLA', 'ARGHYA THALI', 'AHALYA STABA', 'MAHIMA' BHARATI BHABANA', 'KUMARA JANMOTSAV', BHAKTI UPAHAR, 'PADMINI', 'KABITA MALA & KRUSHAKA SANGITA'. His prose creation include ATMA JEEVANI', SHRI NRUPARAJ SINGH', 'PURANA KABI FAKIR MOHAN', SWARGIYA KASHINATH PANDA', 'EHAKI

PRUTHIBIRA SABDA?, SIKSHIT', ASIKHSIT & SIKSHYA BHIMANINI.

The popularity of his literary creation is due to narration of the beauty of the nature just like Kabibara Radhanath Ray. It is unique. Gangadhar is widely known as poet of nature, can be compared with poet Shelly, Byron and Keats. He was the messenger of Upendra Bhanja's style and ideals. His popularity is not accidental. There are many reasons behind this. Just like Kabi Samrat Upendra Bhanja, his poetries are replete with high ornamental words, unique composition style, using in befitting cases, simile and metaphor and appropriate words. His poetries are sonorous of rhythm of words and languages. He is rated as a great poet in Indian Literature. Died on April 4, 1924. His poetries can be divided into lyrics, devotional, patriotic, reformative, ethical, agricultural, elegy, and narration of nature.

SRIRAM CHANDRA BHANJA DEO

Born on 17th December 1871 in a royal family of princely state of Mayurbhanj, Sri Ram Chandra ascended the throne on 15th August 1892. He worked for the all-round development of Mayurbhanj state and implemented various benevolent measures for the welfare of the people. Pandit



Utkalmani Gopabandhu became the friend, philosopher and guide of this ruler. Sri Ram Chandra brought about significant changes in the spheres of language, health and administration. A narrow gauge railway was commissioned

between Rupsa - Baripada during his reign. He constructed two major reservoirs at Haldiha and Haladia with an expenditure of Rs.6 lakh from royal treasury. Similarly in the educational sector he raised the number of primary schools from 44 to 400 in his royal jurisdiction.

Although he was the king of Mayurbhanj, he had great love for the entire Orissa. Under the able leadership of Madhusudan he gave momentum to the cause of making Orissa a separate Province. In 1903 Sri Ram Chandra presided over the 1st session of Utkal Sammilani. Afterwards owing to the concerted efforts of this Sammilani the dream of Orissa for becoming a separate State came to reality on 1st April 1936. This illustrious son of Orissa passed away on 22nd February 1912.

UTKALAMANI PANDIT GOPABANDHU DAS

Born-9th October 1877

The then Prime Minister Indira Gandhi, has aptly written, "The second half of the 19th century gave birth to outstanding men and women in various parts of the country. The brilliance, social reforms, education, law and literature are astonishing. Shri Gopabandhu Das was one such nation builder".



The age long hopes, yearning and prayers of the people of Orissa were fulfilled with the advent of Utkalamani Gopabandhu. He was the builder of modern Orissa and was the source of inspiration and ideals for her people. He dedicated

himself completely for the country to that extent that he had to lose his only son in his bid to redress the suffering of others. He wanted a society - free from poverty and ignorance where man could live with self- respect and would be able to develop his own consciousness. He vowed and worked throughout his life to achieve the objective.

Recognising the noble standings of Gopabandhu, Acharya Prafulla Chandra Ray on 28.6.1924, the veteran scientist and patriot of Bengal assigned the title of Utkalamani, (Jewel of Utkal) to his name. In 1909 he had started Satyavadi (M.E. National) school with Pandit Nilakantha Das and others in which Pandit Godavarish and Acharya Harihar also joined little later. The school soon became popular, for its qualitative and character building values. Along with Madhusudan Das he continued his struggle to arouse the people of Orissa to press their demands for the separate Orissa province through Utkal Union Conference. He gave it a new image by his practical works to keep up the cultural, literary and linguistic affinity and independent identity of Oriyas then living in Bihar, Bengal and other Provinces. At Bahadaguda of Dhalbhum he also started an Oriya M.E. School. Then in order to spread the Oriya language and literature he started weekly 'Samaja' on the 4th October 1919.

His immortal words still inspire the younger generation.

"Let my body mingle with the dust of this Land,

And let my countrymen walk along my back.

Let all the holes in the road of freedom be filled with
my blood and bone,

And let my life be sacrificed when my people awake
into freedom."

He was a poet par excellence. The idea of nationalism and love for Lord Jagannath and Puri has been emotionally described in his poem.

“The Indian-lotus blooms in the world- pond
 And the Holy Nilachal is like pollens in one lotus,
 And whenever I am in India I am always in my room,
 In my eyes the Indian stone is a holy stone,
 And every place is as beloved as my Puri,
 And all water is as holy as the water of fine holy rivers,
 And every holy place is my Nilachal”.

Bandira Atmakatha & Abakasha Chinta are his unique creations. He was versatile, genius, a freedom fighter, maker of modern Orissa, saviour of Oriya language, a social worker, and ideal teacher, philanthropist, journalist, poet, philosopher and a preacher of Jagannath cult. Died on 17th June 1928.

PANDIT NILAKANTHA DAS

In the early part of the twentieth century, those highly qualified youths who wanted to bring renaissance in the field of education and culture on Orissan soil, Pandit Nilakantha Das is one of them. The others were Pandit Utkalamani Gopabandhu Das, Acharya Harihar Das, Pandit Godabarisha Mishra and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra. These five comrades are popularly known as “PANCHASAKHA OF SATYABADI ERA”. At the prime of their youth these five comrades had taken a vow not to enter into Government Service and serve the country and ensure its prosperity.



This illustrious son of Orissa was born on 5th August, 1884 in the family of Ananda Das at Sri Ramachandrapur village in the district of Puri. He had his early education at the village school. In 1899 he was admitted to Puri Zilla

School. In 1909 he passed his B.A. and had been to Calcutta to continue his M.A. and B.L. studies. In 1911 after returning from Calcutta Pandit Nilakantha joined as a teacher in Satyabadi School. He then continued as a Headmaster of the school for a large period. Later he joined as a Professor in Oriya and Philosophy but relinquished his service in order to join non-co-operation movement. He was elected as a working member of Utkala Pradesh Congress Committee and also a member to All India Congress Committee. He edited a newspaper titled ‘Seba’ from Sambalpur. After staying nine months at Sambalpur he returned to Sri Ramachandrapur. He was arrested in 1922 for anti-British activities and put to Hajaribag Jail for six months. In consultation with Pandit Gopabandhu Das he decided to contest for General Assembly. In 1923 he was elected as a member of Central Assembly. He participated in Simla Conference in 1926. In 1928, after the death of Pandit Gopabandhu he took up the leadership of Congress in Orissa. As per Lahore Congress decision he resigned from Central Assembly and joined ‘Salt-Satyagraha’ movement and was imprisoned for 6 months. He started untouchable movement and served for the depressed class. For the second time he was also elected as a member to Central Assembly. In 1933 he edited a monthly Oriya Journal titled ‘Naba Bharat’. In 1934 after the death of Madhusudan the entire burden fell on his head and the first phase of Mahatma Gandhi’s tour to Orissa was arranged by him.

In 1936, Orissa became a separate province, Pandit Nilakantha joined as the President, P.C.C. For his able leadership, out of 60 seats, the congress got 36 seats.

Under his chairmanship for the spread of higher education in Orissa, he decided to establish

an university for which a committee was constituted and later on as per recommendation of the committee, Utkal University was established. In 1951 he was elected to Orissa Legislative Assembly from 'Swadhin Jana Sangha' a new party. In 1955 as per request of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru he joined Congress. In the said year he was appointed as Pro-Chancellor of Utkal University. He was re-elected in 1957. He remained as Speaker of Orissa Legislative Assembly from 1957 May to 1961 July.

Death laid its icy finger on him on 6th November 1967. With his death, Orissa lost a patriot, freedom fighter, able legislator, reformer and a poet and one of the architects of modern Orissa.

MAHARAJA SHRI KRUSHNA CHANDRA GAJAPATI NARAYAN DEO

Maharaja Shri Krishna Chandra Gajapati Narayan Deo of Paralakhemundi, the son of Late Goura Chandra Gajapati Narayan Deo was born on 26th April 1892, educated in Madras, assumed rulership in 1913, an enlightened and benevolent ruler; a patron of education and culture organised the annual session of the Utkal Union Conference at Paralakhemundi in 1914. In 1916, he was nominated by the Government to hold the post of Honorary Commissioner of the Land-Force of the Defence of India, laid a light railway through his Estate connecting Naupada with Paralakhemundi; set up a big library in his palace for research scholars, an important member of the justice party of Madras, member of the Royal Agricultural



Commission in 1927, member of the Madras Legislative Council, represented the case of Orissa at the Round Table Conference, London, 1930-31, deposed before the joint Parliamentary Committee for the union of Paralakhemundi with Orissa in 1934, placed the printed Memorandum before the authorities and strongly advocated for inclusion of the Oriya portions of Paralakhemundi in Orissa and Orissa for a separate province; formed the non-Congress Ministry in Orissa in 1937, the Government conferred on him the title of Maharaja in 1936 in recognition of his honour and merit. In 1941 November the Maharaja was invited to form the Ministry and assumed the Chief Ministership. Member of the Constituent Assembly of India 1947-50, life member of the Royal Society of Arts and Royal Asiatic Society, London; Life Member of Utkal University, Utkal University conferred on him the degree of LL. D. This worthy illustrious son of Orissa passed on 25th May 1974.

DR. HAREKRUSHNA MAHATAB

Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab was the son of Krishna Charan Das and Tohapha Debi. He was born on 21st November 1899 at Agarpada in undivided Balasore district. After matriculation from Bhadrak High School, he joined Ravenshaw College, Cuttack for his higher studies, which were left incomplete as he was irresistibly drawn to the National Liberation Movement in 1921. Thereafter his life was a saga of struggle and dedication to the cause of country's freedom. He started weekly Prajatantra in 1923 at Balasore. First imprisonment on charge of sedition in the year 1922. He was the member



of Bihar and Orissa Council in 1924. He joined Salt Movement and imprisoned in 1930. He participated in Harijan Movement in 1934 and opened his ancestral temple to Harijans for the first time in Orissa. He was the President of State People's Enquiry Committee in 1938 and recommended cancellation of Sananda of Rulers and merger of Ex-State with Orissa Province. He participated in Non-Co-operation Movement and courted imprisonment in 1941 and "Quit India Movement" in 1942. Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab was the Chief Minister of Orissa from 1946 to 1950, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry from 1950-52, Secretary General, Congress Party in Parliament 1952, Governor of Bombay from 1955-56, resigned from Governorship in 1956 and again became the Chief Minister of Orissa from 1956 to 1960. Dr. Mahatab has been rightly recognised as the architect of modern Orissa for his pivotal role in the merger and integration of former princely States, founding the State's Capital at Bhubaneswar and the sanction and construction of the multi-purpose Hirakud Dam Project.

He was elected to Lok Sabha in 1962. He was also elected to Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1967, 1971 and 1974.

He was the founder of the Prajatantra Prachar Samiti which till today publishes Daily 'Prajatantra' and 'Jhankar' a monthly journal. He was Chief Editor of the publications since inception. He was the President of Orissa Sahitya Academy and Sangit Natak Academy for a couple of terms. Permanent member of the Utkal University Senate. He was a distinguished historian and writer in English and Oriya. He was conferred Honorary Degree of Doctor by Andhra University, Degree of Doctor of Literature by Utkal University and Doctor of Laws by Sagar University.

True to his multifaceted personality, Dr. Mahatab earned distinction as an accomplished writer "History of Orissa", "Beginning of the End". Apart from this, he had authored several novels, plays and poems which are acclaimed for their literary value. The compilation of his popular column "Gaon Mazlis" published in Daily Prajatantra received the Central Sahitya Academy Award in 1983.

Dr. Harekrushna Mahatab was a political leader par excellence. He towered over the time and events to lead the people of the State through years of transition during independence and thereafter. This illustrious son of this soil passed away on 2nd January, 1987.

RAJA BAHADUR RAMACHANDRA MARDARAJ DEO

The significant contribution of many a great leaders during 1920s and 30s resulted in the formation of a separate Orissa Province. Raja Bahadur Ramachandra Mardaraj Deo of Khallikote was one of them. He was born to Raja Harihar Mardaraj and Rani Kanak Manjari Devi on 13th January 1900. In the days to come, he was destined to shape the future of Orissa.



As a child, he was nicknamed Eric. He was brought up under the guidance of Governess Mrs. F. Harvey Dunn. He lost his father Raja Harihar Mardaraj Deo on 20th July 1909. Then he was sent to Madras for schooling at Newington. He studied at Christian College upto the age of his eligibility to take charge of his own

estate. He came to the throne of Khallikote on 14th January 1921.

As first step in his pioneering efforts towards the formation of Orissa Province, he impressed upon the Philip-Duff Committee set up in 1924 in favour of this cause. Mr. C.L. Philip and Mr. A.C. Duff came to Rambha, stayed in the palace of Raja Sahib as his guests from 17th to 21st December 1924. A well attended public meeting was organised at Khallikotegarh and the impressed Committee gave a report in favour of the amalgamation.

However, the O'donnel Commission which was constituted later on gave a very discouraging report. But, Ramachandra Mardaraj debated against it in Madras Legislative Council. Inaugurating a special meeting of Utkal Union Conference on 21st August 1932, he emphasised on the merger of Oriya tracts as per Philip-Duff Committee recommendations.

Raja Sahib attended the 3rd Round Table Conference in London where he forcefully made arguments for the cause. To augment his approach, he hosted the famous 'Orissa Banquet' on 12th January 1933 and there he impressed upon Sri Samuel Hoare, the Secretary of State for India and finally managed to get the approval of Sir Samuel in favour of a separate Orissa Province.

As per the deliberations of 3rd Round Table Conference, a Joint Parliamentary Committee was constituted to look into this matter. Finally, the Government of India Act, 1935 was adopted and the clause 289 of this Act provided for the formation of a Separate Orissa Province.

Raja Ramachandra Mardaraj Deo was a dynamic leader with full creative energy. His

wide administrative and political experience and competence was a source of strength and inspiration for people who worked with him. He dedicated his life completely for the people of Orissa and worked for their welfare. The great Raja Sahib breathed his last on 23rd January 1963.

BIJAYANANDA PATNAIK

Bijayananda Patnaik popularly known as Biju Patnaik—Born on 5th March, 1916—Son of Late Laxminarayan Patnaik—Education : B. Sc. standard; Married : Shrimati Gyan Patnaik, two sons and one daughter; Prior occupation : Business; Hobbies : Aeronautics and Industry; Travel Abroad : U. K., U. S. A., U. S. S. R., Paris, Indonesia and several other countries; Political activities. Since boyhood fond of adventurous life; During student life set out on cycle from Cuttack to Peshawar; joined Indian National Airways and became its ace pilot, During “Quit India” Movement collaborated with underground leaders; Imprisoned for thirty months ; At the risk of his life he brought the Indonesian Premier Mr. Sultan Siharir to New Delhi by plane at the time of Indonesian Freedom Struggle. First Indian plane was landed by him in Kashmir in 1947, when Pakistan attacked India ; on returning to Orissa took interest in Industries and established many; President, U.P.C.C. for one term; Member, A.I.C.C., In 1961 Mid-term election under his leadership brought unprecedented absolute majority for Congress Party; Became Chief Minister 1961–63 and resigned under “Kamraj” Plan; Kalinga Airways is one of his creations.



Donor of 1,000 pound prize to UNESCO as Science Award; Elected to the Orissa Legislative Assembly 1952, 1957, 1961 from Jagannathprasad, Surada (Ganjam) and Choudwar (Cuttack) respectively; again elected in 1971 and 1974 from Rajnagar (Cuttack); Chairman, Planning Board, Government of Orissa from 1971 to 1972 June. Took active part and rendered valuable service to the people of Rajnagar area in particular who suffered from the havoc caused by the cyclone in October, 1971. Elected to Parliament in 1977 and Cabinet Minister of the Central Ministry 1977 to 1979. Elected to Lok Sabha from Kendrapara Constituency in 1980. Again Shri Patnaik was elected to Lok Sabha from Kendrapara Parliamentary Constituency in 1984 Lok Sabha election. He was also elected from Bhubaneswar Assembly Constituency to Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1985 General Election. He resigned from Kendrapara Parliamentary Constituency and became the Opposition Leader in Orissa

Legislative Assembly. Again he was elected to Orissa Legislative Assembly in 10th Orissa Legislative Assembly Election from Bhubaneswar Assembly Constituency. In 1990 under his dynamic leadership the Janata Dal secured more than three fourth majority of the Orissa Legislative Assembly which is quite unprecedented. He was unanimously elected as the Leader of the Janata Dal in Orissa Legislative Assembly and on his birth day he was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Orissa on 5th March, 1990. Again he was elected from Bhubaneswar Assembly Constituency in March, 1995 and became Leader of Opposition. Later he contested for Lok Sabha Election held in June, 1996 from Aska and Cuttack Constituency. He was elected from both the Constituencies. He resigned from O. L. A. and joined as Parliament Member from Aska Lok Sabha Constituency. This veteran leader passed away on 17th April, 1997 at Escort Hospital, New Delhi.