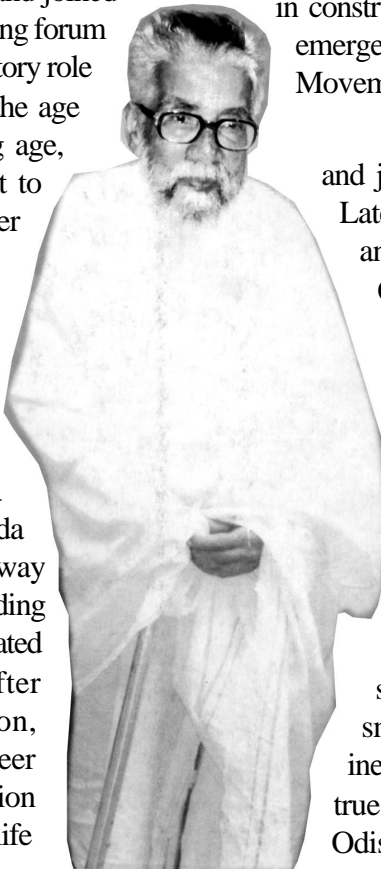




Patakura Gandhi

Surya Mishra

Rajkishore Nayak, eminent Gandhian, social worker and thinker was born on 12th November, 1925 (full moon night in the holy month of Kartik) in Arilo village in the undivided district of Cuttack in Odisha, as the son of Banchhanidhi Nayak and Subasee Debi. As a school student, he was inspired by Freedom Movement and joined 'Banara Sena', the enthusiastic young forum that is more known for its participatory role in the Independence Struggle at the age of only 14. From an early young age, Rajkishore nurtured deep interest to serve the victims of flood and other natural calamities and was dedicatedly engaged in relief and rehabilitation activities. While pursuing his higher studies in Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, Rajkishore was influenced by the lives and works of Ramkrushna Paramahansa, Swami Vivekananda and Swami Sivananda that paved way to enhance his spiritual understanding and way of life. He actively participated in 'Quit India Movement'. After completion of higher education, Rajkishore opted to endear a career of teacher as he believed education as an instrument of construction of life



and became a teacher in Khandasahi High School, Cuttack; later on continued for long time in Ashram Balikuda High School and Korua High School, from where he saw an illustrious queue of enlightened students to serve the society.

As Rajkishore was a staunch believer in constructive ideals of Gandhian spirit, he emerged as a frontline leader in 'Bhoodan Movement' in our State.

Rajkishore resigned as a teacher and joined active politics on the call of Late Biju Patnaik, the great statesman and popular leader. In 1970, he was Chairman of Garadapur Panchayat Samiti and became directly involved in Socio-economic growth of people. He was elected a Member of Odisha Legislative Assembly in 1971 and 1974 from Patkura Assembly Constituency and became a source of inspiration for the young generation.

With an utterly simple living style, with a loin cloth as Dhoti and a small scarf on the shoulder and an inexhaustible smile, Rajkishore was a true Gandhian. He became President of Odisha State Khadi and Gramodyoga



Board in the year 1977 and 1993. During his tenure as President, he had many innovative ideas and plans to enrich popular appreciation for Khadi and sale of Khadi and Village Industries products in the State. He was also Chairman of Certification Committee (Eastern Zone) of National Khadi Commission.

Besides, Rajkishore involved himself in many philanthropic and charitable organisations. He worked as Honorary Secretary of 'Asureswar Gorakshane' (A shelter home for disabled cattle folk), established in pre-independence period and served the institution till his last.

For his remarkable contributions in the field of propounding Gandhian value and message, popularising Khadi and Village Industries and

social service, Rajkishore had received a good many state and national level awards, honour and felicitations.

Remembered as a torch bearer of Gandhian spirit and activism, and fondly known as "**Patakura Gandhi**", Rajkishore Nayak breathed his last on 4th January, 2010.

Rajkishore Nayak has become a source of inspiration for the generation to come, being an embodiment of steadfastness, principles, simplicity and missionary commitment.

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