

Acharya Harihara

Born on 1879 in the auspicious full moon of Phalgun, Acharya Harihar was born in a conservative Brahmin family in Sriramchandrapur village Sakhigopal in Puri District. His father's name was Mahadev Brahma and his mother's name was Sraddhadevi.

After completing his primary studies in the village he studied in the Puri District School. From his early childhood Acharya Harihar was dedicated towards social service. He had laid the foundation stone of a associated social service in the land of Odisha. He united the student forum and youth for service to the needy and downtrodden. After his F.A. completion Acharya Harihar went to Kolkata for his P.L. studies. He returned as he had no interest in law studies. After serving as a teacher in Puri District School, Acharya Harihar became a teacher at one of the Nilagari Gadjat School. Later, Acharya Harihar became a teacher at Pyarimohan Academy School at Cuttack. By then the Bakula Bana Vidyalaya had been set up by Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das, Pandit Nilakantha, Godabarish babu, Pandit Gopabandhu and Nandakishore babu were serving there as teachers then. Acharya Harihar became a teacher at Bakula Bana Bidyalaya in 1921. He was a favorite teacher of the students and they called him 'Acharya'. Later Acharya Harihar established "Widow Ashram" where he under took the responsibility of educating the students.

He walked along as he propagated the message of the freedom struggle in every nook and corner of Odisha. From 1921 to 1924 he was imprisoned in the Swarajya Struggle. Acharya Harihar attended the Kendrapara conference of the political workers as the President. In 1930 he was arrested as the lead person during the Balasore Inchudi Salt Satyagraha. He formed Banara Sena in which small children were the members in 1942 he was an active participant in Quit India Movement. During his imprisonment at Hazaribagh jail in 1946 he translated the Bhagwat Gita into Odia language. In 1947 after Independence, he roamed across Odisha, walking along with Maa Ramadevi and Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das

to teach public about 'Bhoodan'. He had given away 812 villages by 1955 to spread the message of the Bhoodan.

While serving at Pyarimohan Academy, he had composed a grammar book of English named child's easy first Grammar which has relevance even today. Inspired by Mahatma Gandhi he dedicated his life in setting up and managing the Sangha, Ashrams, Khadi centers. On February 21st 1971, at the age of 96 years, Acharya Harihar breathed his last. The last one of the Panchasakha of Bakula Bana passed away only to become immortal in the mind and heart of generations.
