

Buxi Jagabandhu

Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar Mohapatra Bhramarbar Ray was the leader of the historic Paika Revolt. He was the landlord of Rodhanga and was nominated as the 'Senapati' by the king of Khurda. Infact the paikas of Khurda headed by Buxi raised their voice against heavy taxation and illegal encroachment of the tax free lands and restriction on salt by the British Rule. Apart from this, a conspiracy was made against him by Krushna Singh who recorded Buxi's entire landed properties rights in his brother's name. This lead to a revolution and Buxi was sardar of the revolution. Due to charismatic personality and good organizing capacity, Buxi influenced the Paikas of nearby areas like Nayagarh, Daspalla, Boudh, Ranpur, Sergarh. Even the movement, spread over to Ganjam, Kandhamal, Harishpur and Khalikote. With the assistance of Kandhas of Ghumusar and scheduled castes of Khalikote along with Paikas, the great Paika Revolt took a larger momentum which the British force feared to face. Buxi though short in height was strong and a great fighter and well adapt in horse-riding and axe-fighting and Guerilla-war. Starting from the year of 1817 the great Paika revolt ended after a long period of 10 years. Pindki Bahubalendra of Daruthenga, Sadhucharan Mangaraj of Khurda and others like Ramachandra Samantasinghar, Dalbehera of Chiturupanchpalli Hari Mansingh, Dalbehera of Bhatpada Dinabandhu Samantaray and many more were the assistants of Sardar Buxi. Being unable to catch Buxi, finally the British Govt. kept his family under house-arrest (Najar bandi) at Ganjam and with the help of the king of Nayagarh, Dewan Baraju Paikaray and Wazi Mohammed, they became able to arrest Buxi by awarding them heavy prize. Keeping Buxi under their scanner, the British Govt. imprisoned the legend at Cuttack where he took his last breath on 24th January in the year of 1829. Buxi Jagabandhu is no more, but he has created history, a history that elucidates the bloodshed story of struggle against injustice of the Britishers.

The Great revolutionary leader Jayee Rajguru

Jaykrushana Mohapatra popularly known as Jayee Rajguru a great freedom fighter and martyr of Odisha was born on, 29th October, 1739 the auspicious day of the Anla Navami in Biraharekrushnapur in Puri District to Chand Rajguru and Haramani Devi. Jaykrushna was born in a family in which his ancestors served in the court of the King of Khurda as Rajguru. His forefathers were the political, military advisors and spiritual teachers to the King of Khurda and were traditionally called 'Rajguru'. Jayee Rajguru was an excellent scholar in Sanskrit and a great tantra Sadhaka. He had mastered Vedas, Puranas and Scriptures in the early years of his life. He had mastery in writing thousands of shlokas with ease. He was an acclaimed scholar among the pundits. He was the royal priest, commander-in-chief and the real administrative representative of the kind of Khurdha, Gajapati Mukundadev-II. He was the head of the administration and chief of the army of Khurdha after his fathers's death. Jayee was a lifelong bachelor. At the age of 41 years he became the Chief Minister-cum-Rajguru of King Dibyasingha Deva-II. Unfortunately Dibyasingha Deva-II died in 1798 leaving the throne and administration into turmoil. Owing to the sincere efforts of Jayee Rajguru Mukunda Deva-II, the minor son of the deceased king ascended the throne of Khurdha in 1798. As the new king was a minor, Jayee Rajguru acted as regent to look after the affairs of entire administration of the kingdom. As regent of the kind Mukunda Deva-II, Jayee Rajguru was assigned important portfolios of the Khurda kingdom such as civil, military and Revenue administration religious affairs and the management of the Jagannath Temple etc. Jayee Rajguru was designated as Dewan, Bebarta (Minister) and Rajguru etc.

When the Britishers attacked Odisha and captured several lands and exuded notice to all the kings to accept their dominance and pay taxes, the king of Khurda never accepted their subjugation as per the advice of Jayee Rajguru. He then started writing to the neighbouring kingdoms and planning strategies. He succeeded in mobilizing and instigating the Odia solders, the paikas. He organized village youths

and trained them military practices, arms and ammunition as he had paramount warfare skills and knowledge of weaponry.

In 1760 the kingdom of Khurda faced the most unfortunate and unwanted situation during the rule of Birakishore Dev, the grandfather of Mukunda Dev-II. In that year Narayan Deva the king of Paralakhemundi invaded Khurda to capture the throne claiming that he was the successor of Ganga Dynasty. Unable to face the enemy Birakishore Deva begged for military assistance from Maratha ruler Shivram Sathe, the Bhonsle king of Nagpur to defeat Narayan Deva of Parala. Shivram sathe demanded & obtained important parganas of Khurda kingdom and rupees one lakh in cash for his assistance. Loss of prosperous parganas like Rahang, Chhabiskud, Sarai, Lumbai along with possession of Purushottam Kshetra of Puri was a great economic loss of Khurda kingdom for which the king suffered and became mad. The loss in the state economy continued till Jayee Rajguru's time Hence he took effort to revive state economy by adopting several economic policies. He also strengthened the Khurda army by recruiting Paikas. His reforms changed the situation of Khurda. The Khurda kingdom became economically sound and militarily strong to face the enemy.

The Britishers intended to obtain a trade route on land from Ganjam to Balasore via Khurda for transportation of goods in connection with trade and commerce. Besides they needed a land passage for the British army to March from Kolkata to Madras which would go through the Khurda Kingdom. Hence, occupation of Khurda Kingdom was essential for the British administration. To fulfill their need the British utilized Shyam Sundar Deva, a brother of late Dibyasingha Deva-II for negotiation with the king of Khurda for land route but failed due to stiff resistance of Jayee Rajguru in 1798. This was the first confrontation of Jayee Rajguru against the British. His intention was to safeguard the interest of the Kingdom of Khurda. In 1803 Col. Harcott the District Magistrate of Ganjam signed the treaty of Deogaon

with the Marathas. According to the provisions of the treaty, the Parganas of Rahang, Chhabiskud, Sarai and Lumbai were transferred from the possession of the Marathas to the British. The British refused to transfer 4 Paraganas to the king Mukunda Deva-II. The British felt that Jayee Rajguru was the key person of Khurda administration behind the rejection of the agreement. The Britishers planned to remove Rajguru from the post of the king's advisor. Jayee Rajguru also took steps to take over the management of Sri Jagannath Temple of Puri. He mustered his army and occupied the 4 Paraganas on his own with contemplation to drive out the Britishers from his State and Country. On October 1804, a group of Paikas drew sword against Britishers at Pipli. This event alarmed the British force. In the meantime Jayee Rajguru approached all the rulers of the State to unite and invade the British.

The ultimate historical fight, the battle of Barunei took place in December 1804 on the foothills of Barunei between the Britishers and the Paikas led by Jayee Rajguru. The handful of Paikas fought against 7000 strong British army by their intrepidity, battle skills and holocaust. The British tempted few locals by offering large taxes in return for information of Jayee Rajguru and as a result he was arrested and taken to the Barabati fort. All his efforts to anchor the king was futile and king Mukunda Deva -II was captured on 3rd January 1805 and was imprisoned in the Barabati fort at Cuttack where Jayee Rajguru was also undergoing his imprisonment. Later both were sent to the Midnapur Jail from Cuttack fearing further violence in the State. The British counsels considered the petition submitted by the king from the prison and released Mukunda Deva-II and sent him to Puri for settlement and as caretaker of Puri Sri Mandir. The trial of Jayee Rajguru took place at Baghitota in Midnapur. Jayee Rajguru boldly confessed to the question of Col. Harcourt that "as the king was only a child, what had been done was by myself". Hence, capital punishment or death sentence was awarded to the Valiant leader Jayee Rajguru after his trial.

He was brutally killed by the British soldiers on 6th December 1806. He sacrificed his life for the motherland and became a martyr. The great patriot Jayee Rajguru preferred death to surrender as to beg mercy. The credit of the first war of India's Independence goes to the "Sepoy Mutiny of 1857". Much earlier to this great event, India had witnessed in the soil of Odisha, the freedom struggle of the great freedom fighter Jayee Rajguru (Paika Bidroha) the kingdom of Khurda vowing to wipe out the rule of the mighty British from 1803 to 1805.

Veer Surendra Sai

Almost 40 years before the historic Sepoy mutiny, the Paikas in Odisha had united together in 1817, which came to be known as 'Paika Bidroha'. The brave and courageous Paikas had raised their swords to uproot the British rule from the Odisha soil. The Chief of "PAIKA" Bidroha Karunakar Sardar was imprisoned, Narayan Paramguru of Kujang and Bamdeva Pattajoshi of Kanika had been banished and the valiant leader Jayee Rajguru was hanged and killed brutally. The great revolutionary Buxi Jagabandhu Bidyadhar became a prey of betrayal and had to face death. At last Mukund Deva was imprisoned and the burning flame of the Paika Bidroha was doused. In 1827 in Western Odisha, Veer Surendra Sai rekindled the doused flames of revolution against the British. He had taken a pledge to throw out the British rule from the Sambalpur soil. From 1827 to January 23rd 1864 this great leader of the freedom struggle had relentlessly struggled to spread the burning flames of revolt against the ruthless and mighty British Government.

In the 1st phase from 1827-1840 his struggle was somewhat intermittent and limited. But it gained tempo and was strengthened in the second phase. Surendra Sai's guerilla war, skilled warfare, tactics, will-power, great patience and courage made the Britishers stoop down. The name of this eminent son of the soil, the revolutionary leader Veer Surendra Sai will indeed remain inscribed in golden letters as a saga in the annals Odisha history.

The Valiant leader Surendra Sai was born on January 23rd 1809 in the Northern Sambalpur about 21 miles away in Baragaon or Khinda village into the Chauhan Royal family. Surendra Sai was married to the daughter of Hatibari Jamindar of Gangpur kingdom and had one son and a daughter. His son's name was Mitrabhanu Sai.

In 1827 the Sambalpur king Maharaja Sai died without an heir. Hence, the Britishers took over the task of deciding the ascendant to the throne. They

disregarded many claimants to the throne and crowned Rani Mohan Kumari who was a widow. Because of this reason many tribal Jamindars revolted and Balaram Sai and Surendra Sai took the leadership of this revolt. The Britishers were assured that the Rani Mohan Kumari was not a good administrator. Hence, they were certain that she was a pawn to their ploy. As a matter of fact Surendra Sai was at the time the true heir of Sambalpur Royal dynasty to ascend the throne but of his stoic personality and rebel attitude towards British Govt. the latter had chosen Rani Mohan Kumari who was a complete misfit for the administration. Hence the wildfire of resentment was widespread and gradually it gained tempo in the Sambalpur region.

Veer Surendra Sai's remarkable war tactics, great courage had triggered fear amongst the Britishers. His comrades with their bow and arrow fought a tremendous guerilla war which the British army could not withstand. Later another army reached Sambalpur with the instruction of the captain of Hazaribagh, Wilkinson. Though they became successful to some extent in dousing the flames of rebellion. They were unable to suppress the revolt completely. The Britishers were compelled to dethrone Rani Mohan Kumari and replace Narayan Singh, a far relation of the Royal family. However he was incompetent. As a result, revolt broke out again. In 1837 when in the midnight of Rahas Purnima, Surendra Sai, Udhyant Sai, Balaram Singh and the Jamindar of Lochanpur Balabhadra Deo gathered at Debrigarh and were chalking out future action plan, the Britishers suddenly arrived there and killed Balabhadra Deo. Luckily Surendra Sai was able to escape along with his brothers. In 1840 A.D. the then English agent of south western border Col. Owsley became successful in arresting Surendra Sai, Udhyant Sai and Balaram Singh and the trio were punished with life imprisonment in Hazaribagh Jail. The 1st phase of Surendra Sai's valiant struggle against the British rule came to an abrupt end here.

In 1849 A.D. at the time of Narayan Singh's death Surendra Sai was serving his imprisonment at Hazaribagh. In 1857 the Indian sepoy's began the first Independence struggle against the British Govt. In that year on July 30th the Indian sepoy's forcibly entered the Hazaribagh Jail and released Surendra Sai alongwith 32 other prisoners. The moment he was set free this great son of the soil Surendra Sai returned to Sambalpur and united the people there for another new struggle for freedom Debrigarh became his centre of activity. Tactfully he began to cut off the external communication ties of the English from Sambalpur region. He tried to obstruct the pathways with great rock boulders with creepers. As a result the British had to face many a difficulty while travelling. The comrades of Surendra Sai hid in these forests and carried on the guerilla wars. They had taken to guerilla war because they knew that weapons of Sambalpur people i.e. their bows arrows, swords, etc. could not withstand the modern weapons of the mighty British army.

In 1861 major Imphe was appointed as the new Deputy Commissioner of Sambalpur. He adopted peace rather than war. Major Imphe declared end of war against Surendra Sai. It was decided to pardon the revolutionaries who had surrendered and allow them to get back their confiscated properties. After this, Surendra Sai's brother and son Surrendered. Major Imphe allowed them with dignity to take shelter in the Khinda Village. Later on May 16th 1862 Imphe Saheb met Surendra Sai in the dense forest and Surendra Sai surrendered. When Major Imphe died on 1863 the political condition of Sambalpur changed drastically. Captain Comberledge was appointed in place of Major Imphe. Comberledge along with a senior police officer Captain Stewart and Mr. Beryl arrested Surendra Sai and his family while they were asleep at night in January 23rd 1864 and sent them to jail. In that night they were taken to Raipur, later to Nagpur jail and after being announced life-term banishment were sent to Asirgarh fort in 1866. This great freedom fighter breathed his last on February 28th 1884 at Asirgarh fort.

This gallant hero of Sambalpur history was able to fight a powerful war against the British rule uniting the brave and courageous Odias with his skilful training tactics of discipline. Veer Surendra Sai will forever shine like a golden star in the horizon for the entire Odia race and will be remembered as a valiant leader for his courage, sacrifices and his ideologies.

Chakhi Khuntia (Chandan Hajuri)

When the burning flames of sepoy mutiny had engulfed the whole country in 1857 among the valiant leaders who had dedicated their lives for the cause of common man were Chakhi Khuntia or Chandan Hajuri. He was a versatile personality. He was a poet, social reformer and great revolutionary. He had a great passion for literature and had a versatile personality.

Born in 1827 A.D. on the auspicious day of "Sambar Dashami" in Harchandi Sahi of Puri, Chandan Hajuri father's name was Hajuri Raghunath Khuntia (Bhimsena Rajpanda) and his mother's name was Kamalabati. His father Hajuri Raghunath Rajpanda was anointing sandal to the lord Jagannath and when he got the good news of his son's birth he named his son 'Chandan' though his nickname was Chakhi. Chandan Hajuri got his early education in Hindi from Ramdayal Pandit. When Chakhi attained the age of 12 years he was married to 'Sundarmani'. From his early childhood Chakhi Khuntia was dedicated and devoted to Lord Jagannath and was a great devotee of the Lord. In 1817 A.D. Puri had become the abode of the Britishers and missionaries who defamed the Hindu cult and Jagannath worship. The Missionary preachers spread degrading remarks against the Lord of the land. Chakhi Khuntia became enraged with the hostility of the missionaries and attacked the preaching centers on the Grand Road Puri and at other places and destroyed the anti Jagannath cult messages and a book on "Jagannath Pariksha" through the mighty British suppressed Chakhi and his group. These anti-religious movements and suppression led on to one of the causes of the historic sepoy mutiny in the later phase.

Chakhi Khuntia's family had familial ties with that of Jhansi Rani Laxmi Bai's. When Jhansi Rani Laxmibai previously known as Manubai was only two years old then the Dewan of the Maratha Ruler of Kashi had visited Puri. Dewan Merapant Tambe had become very close to the Bhimasena Rajpanda family and later it became

transformed onto Guru-pupil relationship. In other words, Hajuri family had become the Guru of the Tambe family. In the meantime, Merapant moved onto Bithur and accepted a new service in the Court (Durbar) of Peshwa Baji Rao who fondly brought up Manubai as his own daughter. And Manubai got married to Jhansi Maharaja Gangadhar Rao and thereafter came to be known as Rani Laxmibai.

Chakhi had gone to Bithur but on his return he got an invitation message in the handwriting of Rani Laxmibai regarding outbreak of revolt. Chakhi had to leave Puri. Chakhi Khuntia at the time had composed the famous Poem "Chakanayana Ku Patita Kahi". Chakhi Khuntia left for Meerut to join the Sepoy mutiny. He reached Jhansi on May 24th 1857. On his arrival, Rani Laxmibai sought the advice of Chandan Hajuri on driving out the Britishers from the land. Chakhi Khuntia conducted survey tour in the state to know about the internal condition and affairs of Rani Laxmibai's State. He secretly toured and came to know the gradually rising of resentment against the Britishers. On his advice Rani Laxmibai increased her army and developed the war tactics. After that Chakhi Khuntia went to Bithur and consulted Baji Rao's adopted son Nanasahab who had by then had lost his empire. With Chandan Hajuri's advice both Nana Saheb and Laxmibai prepared to raise their swords against the British. During the time, revolt broke out at Barackpore with Mangal Pande as the leader and this rebellion spread throughout the country. Chakhi Khuntia warned Rani Laxmibai against the internal enemies. The British attacked Jhansi and Maharani of Jhansi consulted her council but to no avail. Chandan Hajuri at that time dissuaded her from surrendering or from begging mercy before the enemy. He advised the Maharani that being a Maratha she should try to uphold the dignity of her land. These words inspired the brave lady and she fought a bloodshed battle against the enemy. With great difficulty Rani reached Gwalior where Chandan Hajuri was in disguise and leading the rebellion there. But unfortunately Jhansi fort had to witness downfall by the treacherous deeds of Bundel Sarkar Sardar Thakur Lalaji. The Maharani was killed and her last rites were

conducted before Chandan Hajuri. Tears rolled down his eyes. After that for sometime Chandan Hajuri roamed in the forests in disguise and after 4 years of revolt, in 1865 Kumar Purnima, Chandan Hajuri reached Puri. Prior to this, words of his death had reached home and his wife had become a widow. Again on seeing Chandan Hajuri back his wife anointed vermilion spot on her forehead.

He was ordered by the Police Commissioner in Puri after his return to appear before the midtown Police Station daily. But disregarding the sharp spying of the police he became engrossed in his devotional deeds and his dedication towards Odia literature. The revolutionary patriot became a great patron of Odia literature for the rest of his life. On the auspicious day of 1870 Baisakh Shukla Ashtami the valiant fighter and an erudite breathed his last. His love and passion for his land, his supreme leadership quality, his dedication towards Odia literature and above all his devotion to the Lord Jagannath and his unparalleled sacrifice makes him immortal in this land for generations.

Maharaja Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo

A grand patron and promoter of the Odia literary world and one of the dynamic spirits of the Odia language movement of the 19th Century was the illustrious ruler of Mayurbhanj State. Maharaja Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo whose contribution and whole-hearted support has left an indelible imprint in the sands of Odisha. Born on December 17th, 1871 in a Royal family of Mayurbhanj, his father's name was Krushna Chandra Bhanj. He completed his elementary education at Baripada. He lost his father when he was only 9 years old. After death of his father Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo continued his education with the patronage of the then Bengal-Bihar-Odisha's junior British Saheb (Chota Lat Sahib). Later Sri Ramchandra stayed in the Mayurbhanj Bhawan at Cuttack and under the able guidance of Guru Bretam Kiddel Saheb he continued his higher education for 12 years. Both Gobindchandra Mohapatra and Mr. Kiddel influenced and patronized his education as a result of which Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo qualified in the Ravenshaw Collegiate School entrance exam in 1888. Later on he passed his F.A. exam from Ravenshaw College. While studying B.A. he ascended the throne as a result of which he was unable to appear in his B.A. final exam. In 1896 he married Lakshmi Kumari. He formed the state council for democratic system of administration. He was dynamic and took the initiative to organize the State press established by his deceased father. His teacher Pundit Gobind Chandra Mohapatra greatly influenced him for patronizing and promoting Odia mother tongue and development of literary works. He had great love and passion for development of Odia language. During his regime Utkalmani Pandit Gopabandhu Das became his close aide and was appointed as the Govt. lawyer. Maharaja Sri Ram Chandra Bhanj Deo proved a true son of the soil after assuming direct control over the state of Mayurbhanj on 15th August 1892 A.D. and was felicitated with the honour of 'Maharaja' by the British Government in 1903 A.D. Maharaja Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo indeed a man of perfect knowledge and wisdom. He increased the number of schools in his kingdom to 431 by the year

1910 which was only 41 at the time of his accession. He was a staunch devotee of learning. He had a strong conviction that without the progress of Odia language the National solidarity, political stability and social upliftment of Odisha was not possible. As such, he did not confine his activities to Mayubhanj alone but also put forth his efforts for the amalgamation of dismembered Odia speaking tracts. His contribution to the growth of Odia literature is immense. Two leading journals entitled "Utkal Prava" a monthly and "Manorama" a weekly were published on 1st April 1891 A.D. and 23rd October, 1905 A.D. respectively under his patronage. Utkal Prava was published by Mayurbhanj state press. He had taken great efforts to encourage and inspire the authors for which he dedicated "Utkal Prava" to them. Maharaja's "Deshara Adhyatmika Unnati" Rajasikhya Sapekhyā was published continuously in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd editions that shed light on spiritual and material development of society. This book was published in an anonymous name that is 'novice' which literally means 'new preacher'. It was told by one of the literary critics Gokul Chandra Satpathy that Maharaja wrote this essay consulting his bosom friend Sashi Bhusan Ray. Maharaja was also a great critic of literary writings which was discovered through the letters written by him to the different authors.

Maharaja Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo's unblemished love for Odia nationalism and Odia literature crowned him to be nominated as the 1st president of Utkal Sammilani inaugurated at the Idga Padia at Cuttack on 30.12.1903. During his regime the scientific system of iron production was introduced. Among his achievements the railway line from Rupsa to Baripada, library at Baripada comprising of rare invaluable books, opening of 8 hospitals, skill development training school for the artisans at Baripada, 'Matha' industry got a boost during his reign. On December 30th, 1903 in the 1st session of Utkal Sammilani Maharaja Sri Ramchandra Bhanj Deo presided the session as the President. As a true patron of Odia Nationalism and leader of Odia language movement he rendered valuable services by extending financial support for the remodeling the dilapidated parts of

the science department of Ravenshaw College by donating Rs.27,000/- and Rs.7000/- for establishment of S.C.B. Medical College and also constructed buildings for 'Utkal Sahitya Samaj' and Victoria Jubilee library at Baripada where the meetings would be permanently conducted and the books and documents could be stored safely. Maharaja passed away on February 22nd, 1912 A.D. but his unflinching love for Odia nationalism, his genuine effort for Odia language movement and his sincerity to build up a moral and spiritual character of Odia people will forever inspire generations to come.
