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SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER - 2021

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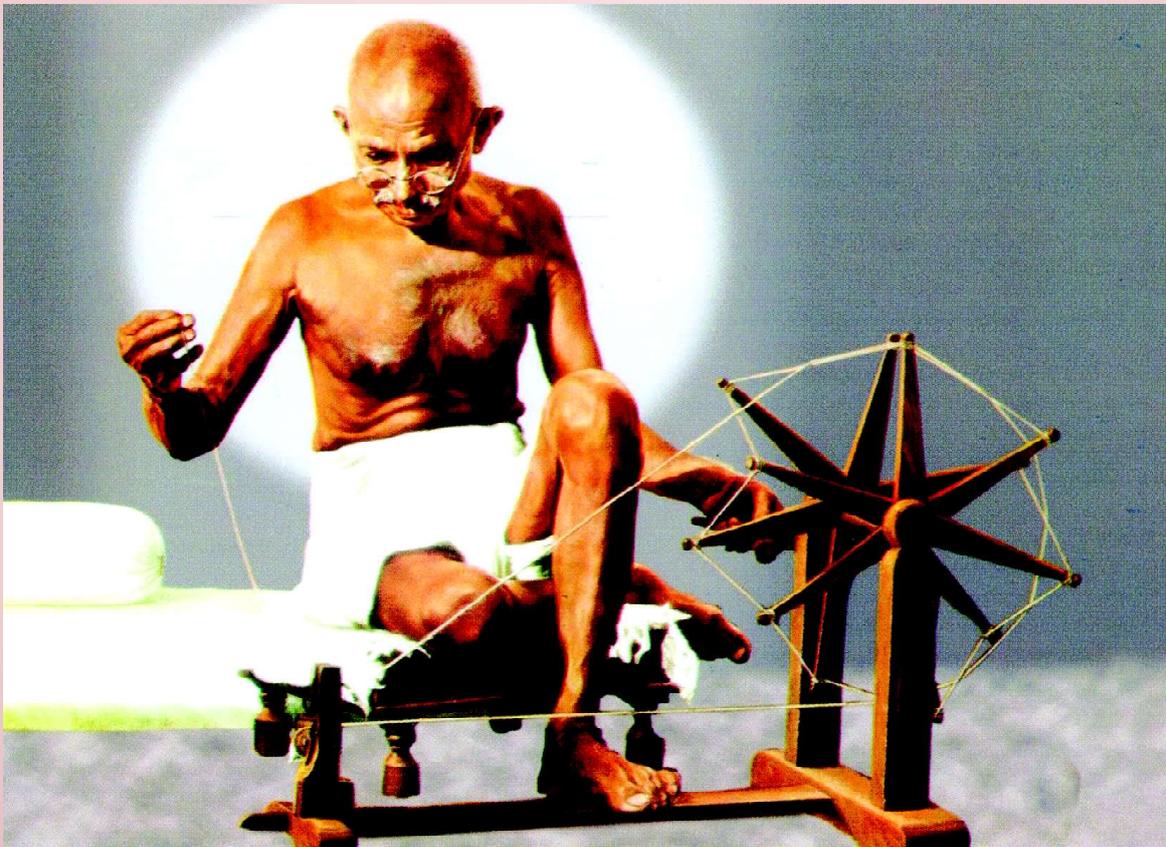
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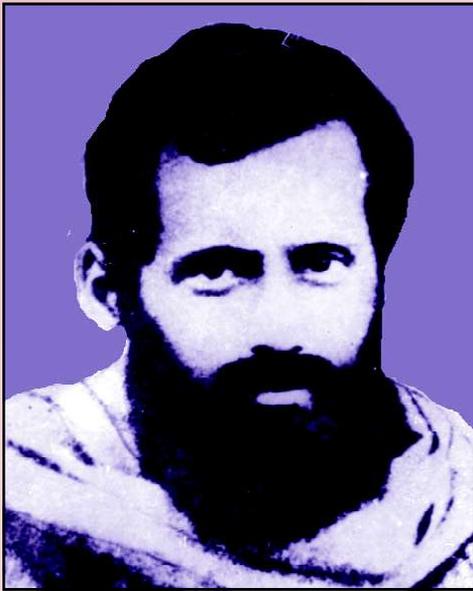
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## BIRTHDAY TRIBUTES

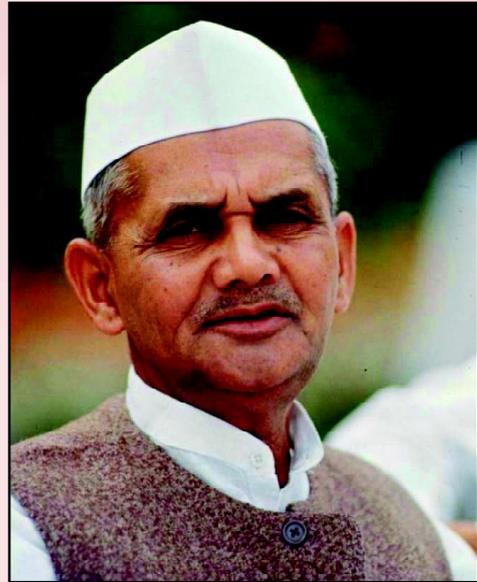


Mahatma Gandhi  
2.10.1869 - 30.01.1948

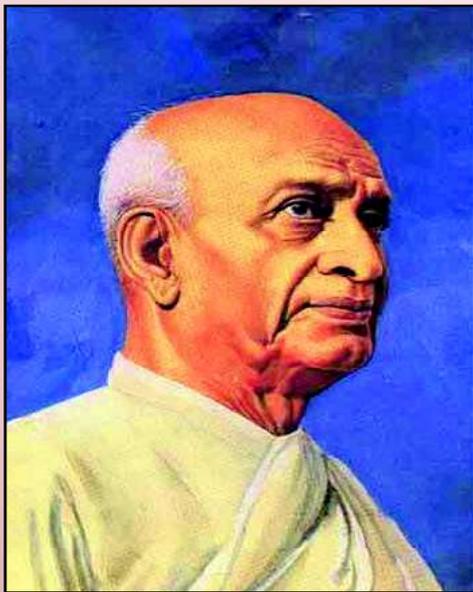
## BIRTHDAY TRIBUTES



Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das  
09.10.1877 - 17.06.1928



Lal Bahadur Shastri  
02.10.1904 - 11.01.1966



Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel  
31.10.1875 - 15.12.1950



Jaya Prakash Narayan  
11.10.1902 - 08.10.1979

*Our Sincere Obeisance ....*



**Baji Rout**  
**(Shot dead on 11.10.1938)**

## Mission Shakti (2001-2021)



### The Prelude

Learning from implementation of poverty alleviation initiatives reveal that participation of women in the process of development has resulted in the creation of a socially vibrant grassroots process and more importantly with the women identifying with the process as their own. This aids half of the nation's population to participate as active subjects in the development process and acquire the necessary skills through experiential learning. This results in the rediscovering and redefining of their selves, redesigning their organization and has started the process of rethinking on reasons for being poor.

It is well-established that women's micro and small scale enterprises can provide an opportunity to accelerate general levels of economic activity and at the same time promote a more equitable distribution of development benefits. For effective execution, Self Help Groups (SHGs) created with the objective of eradicating poverty by developing a supplementary credit delivery mechanism must evolve through a process of sustainability.

The setting-up of the Self Help Mission under the Mission Shakti brand aims at looking into the day to day management functions of SHGs and their multi-tiered federations dedicated to capacity building of women, facilitating & monitoring their activities and providing the much needed techno-managerial support. This would create a system that would sustain itself even long after the external support mechanism is withdrawn.

### Objectives, Goals & Approach of the Mission

Facilitation of creation of conducive environment and expansion of self-help movement, development of quality SHG in the state, strengthening the quality of existing SHGs in the state, building cluster federations at block, district & state levels, institutional capacity building, skilling & capacity building at every level in the state, development of built-in monitoring system right from SHG level, setting up a supportive MIS at every level and convergence with nodal agencies responsible for overall SHG strengthening process are the key objectives of the Mission.



The goals of the Mission are to (a) develop a client-managed, client-controlled and client-owned micro-finance federation, (b) enlist the number of SHGs, cluster/federation & grade them into categories C, B and A as per criteria fixed by the Mission, (c) create a benchmark of the SHGs, cluster/federation for future impact assessment, (d) create a resource team in each district, (e) develop capacity building material for all levels, (f) create conducive environment in the districts so as to involve maximum number of women in the SHG movement, (g) establish sustainable social intermediation between Government / Non Government Organizations & SHG members, and (h) develop MIS for effective monitoring.



The Mission's approach would be (a) strengthening the socioeconomic base through creation of assets and social & economic benefits, (b) increasing awareness for cooperation and greater equity for a larger attitudinal change, (c) improvement of general social consciousness, leading to socioeconomic empowerment which forms the base for self-respect and dignity of life, (d) creating a system for continued effort for empowering women through an appropriate self-help movement and (e) setting up appropriate monitoring system for measuring progress of goal achievement.

### **The Inception: 2001**

Mission Shakti was launched on 8th March 2001 by Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha to empower women by organizing them into Self Help Groups. The brainchild of Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik, it has now turned into a Silent Revolution transforming the lives of women, their families and the spaces they inhabit. All these SHGs started with small savings, many of them even contributing handful of rice to the group kitty. Today they have scaled up their business portfolios and have investment profiles and turnover in lakhs. The annual credit off take is nearly Rs. 2000 crore and their cumulative savings nearly Rs. 6000 cr.

Mission Shakti was formed under Women & Child Development Department in 2001 and it started with an objective of forming two lakh groups in two years. By 2009, more than 40 lakh women were organized into 3.72 lakh groups across Odisha. The major focus was on organizing women in SHGs in

rural as well as urban areas, and developing the SHG platform as a key medium for capacity building programmes. For all livelihood programmes, SHG was officially adopted as the grassroot level unit of implementation.

For greater reach and efficiency of women empowerment focused initiatives, a separate Directorate of Mission Shakti was created in the Department of Women & Child Development in April 2017. The Department itself was renamed the Department of Women and Child Development and Mission Shakti.

The Directorate looks after the Mission Shakti activities of Self Help Groups and its Federations. For strengthening WSHGs, different initiatives such as micro credit support, seed money, financial assistance to Block Level Federations (BLF) and Drudgery Reduction support was taken up. Currently Mission Shakti has 70 lakh women organized into 6 lakh Self Help Groups covering all habitations across Odisha.

Formation of a separate department namely Department of Mission Shakti comprising of all government programmes of SHGs under one wing has been declared by the Hon'ble Chief Minister on his address on 8th March 2021. Department of Mission Shakti will go a long way in strengthening the SHG initiatives already undertaken by different departments & agencies and bring it all under one platform providing greater focus, synergy & avoiding duplication of activities.

### **SHG and Institution building**

Mission Shakti SHGs are homogenous informal groups of 10 to 15 women per group, voluntarily formed, having an impulse towards collective action for a common cause and conveniently save whatever amount they can, out of their earning and mutually agree to contribute to a common fund of the group to be lent to the members on rotational basis for meeting their production and emergent credit needs.

Institution building is a major dimension under Mission Shakti and represents organizations and inculcated values to achieve the goals and objectives of Mission Shakti. This is mainly concerned with the promotion of strong and viable multi-tiered institutions and collectives for women empowerment in Odisha. Strengthening of SHGs and its institutions to spearhead women empowerment initiatives of Government of Odisha at the grassroot level is a key area of focus. Further it supports promotion of higher level institutions/collectives of women SHGs such as at Gram Panchayat Level Federations (GPLFs) at the Gram Panchayat level, Block Level Federations (BLFs) at the ICDS Project level and District Level Federations (DLFs) at District level. These federations function as autonomous community institutions for the holistic development of SHGs. Mission Shakti also works towards promotion of producers' groups to give impetus to livelihood interventions through collective approach.

Mission Shakti focuses on quality management of those institutions through wide range of supporting hands at different level ranging from the Sub District to the State level. Under 'Mission Shakti' banner, in total 8005 Federations were constituted at panchayat, block, district and state levels.

**Unique Livelihood Convergence Models:**

The uniqueness of the Odisha Model of SHG development is the convergence of women's entrepreneurship with Government Programmes. In its first meeting on 29th May 2019, the Cabinet approved a proposal to tie up women SHGs with different Department initiatives for provisioning of government services and procurement of goods in a structured manner amounting to Rs.5,000 crore over five years. Such convergence aims at deepening the engagement of lakhs of women with Government programmes at the grassroot level, ensuring last mile delivery of services while providing additional and sustainable livelihood opportunities to women SHGs. This epoch-making decision has led to unique and sustainable livelihood convergence models empowering WSHGs.

**Mission Shakti today is an unparalleled story of women's empowerment.**

SHGs are involved in diverse activities in convergence with different departments. like online paddy procurement using Paddy Procurement Automation System (P-PAS), pisciculture in long term leased GP Tanks, combating malnutrition through decentralized system of production & supply of Take Home Ration (THR), Management of MDM, management of Aahaar Kendras ensuring food security of the poor, manufacturing LED bulb, electricity meter reading & billing, civil construction, producing pickle to brass utensils, dry fruits, wood crafts, ready to eat foods, modern appliques etc. Over last two years Government business worth more than Rs.3500 cr have been provided to Mission Shakti SHGs and its Federations across the State.

**Financial Inclusion: SHG Bank Credit Linkage, Mission State Interest Subvention Scheme & Financial Literacy**

Facilitation of bank credit linkage to SHGs for nurturing women entrepreneurship is a key objective of Mission Shakti. The annual bank credit linkage to SHGs amounting to more than Rs.4000 cr supports livelihood diversification, income generation and personal consumption in case of exigencies.

To reduce the interest burden and encourage SHGs to invest more capital in livelihood activities, loans upto Rs. 3 lakh is provided to SHGs under 'Mission Shakti Loan' at 0% annual rate of interest on prompt and regular repayment. State interest subvention scheme aims at accelerating the SHG bank linkage programme, promoting livelihood diversification, nurturing sustainable banking practices among women and rewarding responsible loan repaying SHGs with proportionate reimbursement of interest making the effective bank credit annual rate of interest 0%. Department of Mission Shakti has so far settled interest subvention claims amounting to Rs. 257 cr benefitting more than 4 lakh SHGs towards reimbursement of interest paid against bank loans. The interest burden leveraged, acts as a catalyst for SHGs towards taking up new challenges for setting up / scaling up enterprises thereby further strengthening local economy, contributing more to state GDP and generating more employment opportunities locally. To ensure last mile delivery of banking services in unbanked and under-banked Gram Panchayats, the Odisha Government made a historic decision of engaging Women Self Help Groups and Federation Members as Business Correspondent Agents (BCAs).

Mission Shakti has tied up with different banks for engaging suitable women groups and Federation Members as BCAs, thereby furthering the financial inclusion efforts in Odisha using ICT based Business Correspondence (BC) Model through community institutions. So far 1252 SHG members are engaged as BCAs with a total transaction amount of 230.44 cr. Challenging the gender stereotypes, this innovative initiative demonstrates the effective convergence of Financial Inclusion Strategies and the Women Self Help Group Movement under Mission Shakti.

### Capacity Building

Different types of training and capacity building programmes are arranged for SHG members through nodal agencies and community institutions under Mission Shakti. This include a wide range of capacity building programmes such as Village Level Training on WSHG Management, livelihood based advanced training, financial management, leadership development, awareness on social entitlements, digital literacy, periodic refresher training programmes, workshops, exposure visits, buyer seller meets, peer group interactions, brainstorming events etc.

### Graduating SHGs to Entrepreneurs:

Mission Shakti extends opportunities for self-employment to SHGs by linking them with social welfare programmes, aggregate marketing initiatives and creating their own identity in the commercial enterprises sector. Mission Shakti aims at providing sustainable livelihood options to SHGs through financial linkage, strengthening SHG institutions, training & capacity building, marketing of SHG products, and procurement of goods & services. Large number of SHGs/ SHG members of Mission Shakti are into different food processing activities to sustain their livelihood. In convergence with MSME Department, Mission Shakti aims to scale new highs by facilitation of graduating SHG livelihood activities to small and micro enterprises under existing MSME schemes.



### District wise SHGs and Members

SI No	District	SHG	Member
1	ANGUL	21323	224095
2	BALESHWAR	29798	397168
3	BARGARH	20228	235565
4	BHADRAK	24116	248276
5	BOLANGIR	22450	252409
6	BOUDH	5518	57932
7	CUTTACK	32641	391581
8	DEOGARH	6135	67073
9	DHENKANAL	18116	219043
10	GAJAPATI	11241	135136
11	GANJAM	41201	428859
12	JAGATSINGHAPUR	19248	244877
13	JAJPUR	24867	327852
14	JHARSUGUDA	7335	82655
15	KALAHANDI	20541	219217
16	KANDHAMAL	14695	163905
17	KENDRAPARA	21696	230427
18	KENDUJHAR	26240	287421
19	KHORDHA	25400	288267
20	KORAPUT	24605	348192
21	MALKANGIRI	8908	119870
22	MAYURBHANJ	39184	463330
23	NABARANGAPUR	19410	201540
24	NAYAGARH	11883	175024
25	NUAPADA	10570	109461
26	PURI	31088	336725
27	RAYAGADA	13094	152019
28	SAMBALPUR	13848	168372
29	SONEPUR	8947	92773
30	SUNDARGARH	27687	330946
<b>Total</b>		<b>602013</b>	<b>7000010</b>
		Old SHG - 314646	Old SHG Member - 3953110
		New SHG- 287367	New SHG Member - 3046608

## Provisioning of Government business to SHGs

Sl. No	Name of the Activity	SHGs involved	Turnover 2019-20 (in cr)	Cumulative Turnover 2020-21 (in cr)
1	THR Preparation	556		
2	MDM	14000	65.46	
3	Paddy Procurement	321	556.31	445.79
4	Electric Meter Reading	1064	56.62	59
5	Pisciculture in GP tanks	6382	29.73	46.52
6	Poultry (Layer) in Deep Litter System	1600		1.61
7	Supply of School Uniform	1471	52.36	23.03
8	PDS Dealership	2538	51.71	36.35
9	Dietary Service in Hospitals	23	1.85	1.71
10	Mushroom Cultivation (Dir of Horticulture)	3000		8.74
11	Vegetable Cultivation (Dir. of Horticulture)	6000		17.38
12	OUAT Convergence programme	3000		2.06
13	Millet Mission	802		0.25
14	Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)	1161	8.08	3.52
15	Egg Distribution to AWCs	32	4.29	0.97
16	Silk Saree through Boyanika	65	1.5	0.18
17	Supply of provisions to Ashram School / Govt. establishment.	20	6.91	0.45
18	Aahar Centre Management	7		2.8
19	Floriculture (Horticulture)	28	1.23	0.38
20	Farm pond supervision under MGNREGS	9019		3.63
21	UWEI	6937		69.96
22	Other Govt. Programmes	3100	43.67	18.52
23	Exhibition		7.03	0
24	ORMAS		84.18	13.32
25	TDCC & OTELP		0.94	0.14
26	OLM		38.27	37.23
	<b>Total</b>	<b>47126</b>	<b>1010.14</b>	<b>793.54</b>

## SHG Livelihood Activities and Turnover - (Department Convergence)

Sl. No	Name of the Activity	Turnover till Last Month (In Cr.)	Turnover During September 2020 (In Cr.)	Cumulative Turnover 2020-21 (In Cr.)
1	Paddy Procurement	319.1	0.00	319.10
2	Electric Meter Reading	30.21	11.36	41.57
3	Pisciculture in GP tanks	37.98	0.00	37.98
4	Poultry (Layer) in Deep Litter System	1.61	0.00	1.61
5	Supply of Pre School Uniform	2.97	10.91	13.88
6	PDS Dealership	22.57	5.49	28.06
7	Dietary Service in Hospitals	0.73	0.22	0.95
8	Mushroom Cultivation (Dir of Horticulture)	5.33	1.87	7.20
9	Vegetable Cultivation (Dir. of Horticulture)	7.1	5.07	12.17
10	OUAT Convergence programme	1.17	0.34	1.51
11	Millet Mission	0.08	0.05	0.13
12	Non Timber Forest Produce (NTFP)	2.23	0.42	2.65
13	Egg Distribution to AWCs	0.97	0.00	0.97
14	Silk Saree through Boyanika	0.14	0.00	0.14
15	Supply of provisions to Ashram School / Govt. establishment.	0.45	0.00	0.45
16	Aahar Centre Management	1.33	0.06	1.39
17	Floriculture (Horticulture)	0.38	0.00	0.38
18	farm pond supervision under MGNREGS	0.18	0.10	0.28
19	UWEI		69.96	69.96
20	Other Govt. Programmes	18.52	0.00	18.52
21	Exhibition	0	0.00	0.00
22	ORMAS	8.23	1.65	9.88
23	TDCC & OTELP	0.06	0.02	0.08
24	OLM	19.1	6.13	25.23
	Total	480.44	113.65	594.09



Hon'ble Chief Justice of Supreme Court of India Shri N.V. Ramana during his visit to Odisha.



Hon'ble Chief Minister of Maharashtra Shri Uddhav Thackeray expressing his gratitude to Hon'ble Chief Minister of Odisha Shri Naveen Patnaik.



Hon'ble Member of Lokayukta Dr. Debabrata Swain presenting the book 'Secrets of Similipal' to Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik.



Shri Suresh Kumar Dalai, Commissioner-cum-Secretary, Shri Ranjan Kumar Das, Director, Odia Language, Literature and Culture, Dr. Lenin Mohanty and Dr. Bhagyalipi Malla during the Gandhi Jayanti celebration by Culture Department at Odisha State Museum, Bhubaneswar.



Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik inaugurating Utkal Alumina Expansion Project at Doraguda, Rayagada through VC. 5T Secretary Shri V.K. Pandian is also present.



Shri Bishnupada Sethi, Principal Secretary, Shri Indramani Tripathy, Director, Shri Niranjana Sethi, Director(T) and Dr. Lenin Mohanty, Editor, Odisha Review and Utkal Prasanga, Department of I & P.R. attending the meeting for celebration of 'Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav', a national initiative to commemorate the completion of 75 years of Independence.

# Ripples of Pandemic in Bishnupada Sethi's *Beyond Here and Other Poems*

*Dr. Provakar Palaka*  
*Ms. Anjali*

## Abstract

These are the times of sudden deaths and harrowing distresses experienced by almost everyone in the society in the backdrop of Coronavirus pandemic. The modern times have become a matter of questioning for its moral, social, cultural and political order as it stands exposed for all its vulnerabilities. This is certainly an issue which needs to be understood in its broader context. How is it that humankind is going to come to terms with this situation and be resilient when they are striving to survive it with hope and courage. In fact, there is a long literary tradition which reflects on the fears of humans towards infectious diseases and how they have dealt with it. In the first section, this article attempts to briefly trace the history of literary manifestations of pandemics all around the world in different times and spaces and in the next section it discusses at length Bishnupada Sethi's select poems from *Beyond Here and Other Poems* (2021) depicting various nuances of the pandemic.

Keywords: Coronavirus, Pandemic, Lockdown, Pestilence, Epidemic.

## Literary manifestation of Pandemic:

There have been multiple perspectives on how humans have tried to understand diseases and pestilence. From Greek historian Thucydides (460–395 BCE), to the Latin poet Lucretius (99–55 BCE) who attempted to establish that diseases don't have supernatural origins; *The Decameron* by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–1375) and *The Canterbury Tales* by Geoffrey Chaucer (1343–1400) made connections between diseases and human behaviour; Daniel Defoe's (1659–1731) *A Journal of the Plague Year* is a narrative of events and anecdotes, regarding the Great Plague of London of 1665; *The Betrothed* and *History of the Column of Infamy*, both written by Italian novelist Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873) are descriptions of the plague that struck Milan around 1630. Mary Shelley's (1797–1851) *The Last Man* (1826) is one of the first apocalyptic novels telling of a future world that had been ravaged by a plague. Edgar Allan Poe's (1809–1849) *The Masque of the Red Death* (1842), Jack London's (1876–1916) *The Scarlet Plague* (1912) are also in the backdrop of the

diseases. Albert Camus' *The Plague* (1947) resonates very well with the present times where the possibility of collective resistance and cooperation amongst individuals is the key idea proposed by the author as one ideal way of dealing with pandemics and diseases. The idea that no single individual should be left alone should be the foundation of our social, cultural, economic and political order. In a more recent work "Epidemics and Society: From the Black Death to the Present" Frank M. Snowden, a professor emeritus of history and the history of medicine at Yale, examines the ways in which disease outbreaks have shaped politics, crushed revolutions, and entrenched racial and economic discrimination.

Bishnupada Sethi, a civil servant by profession, is also a well known Odia poet who writes both in English and Odia language. He has a number of poetry collections to his credit: *Where Shall I go? My World of Words* and *Beyond Feelings*. He was instrumental to popularize Mahima philosophy in Odisha by extensively writing on it and by preserving Bhima Bhoi's birthplace, Khaliapali, Sambalpur district of Odisha. In



Odisha, poetry writing by the civil servants is not something uncommon but rather a convention. Poets like Ramakanta Ratha, Sitakanta Mahapatra, J.P.Das to name a few who were civil servants like Bishnupada Sethi. But what makes Bishnupada Sethi distinguished from all others is in terms of context and presentation of real life. In this context Raj Kumar, a well-known critic, says, "Their poetry are abstract and mythical. On the other hand, Bishnupada Sethi's poetry is just the opposite. His poetry is real, contemporary and down to earth." In the context of introducing *Beyond Here and Other Poems*, the poet writes in the backside of the cover page, "There are individuals inside the book who are in dialogue with me."

Pandemic Covid-19 is an incident of such great magnitude in recent history which has emotionally broken people across the globe. Pandemic and its devastating effects have already started surfacing in the pages of literature. Bishnupada Sethi's *Beyond Here and Other Poems* is an example of that. The poet has so skillfully captured the grim reality of life adversely affected by Covid-19 in this collection of poetry. The poems contain a positive outlook on the dire situation as it asks and compels its readers to be strong and courageous when there is hopelessness all around.

In one of his poems “As I draw a deep breath” the poet sees a gloom that has descended with the spread of Covid-19 and continuous lockdown that followed. The poet is reminded of the tradition of Odisha where even the death of a calf is mourned. But the pandemic has created a situation where no one is found even to mourn the death of human beings dying being affected by Coronavirus. It reads:-

At this time-

When the world is locked down  
A gloom has descended,  
A fear gripped us all.  
Believe me  
As I draw a deep breath,  
A smell of familiar stench-  
Unnerves me. (p.12)

The poet can smell the stench of death in every breath that he takes. This ‘unnerves’ the poet and is ‘gripped by fear’. What makes him even more fearful is to find no one to mourn over the dead. The poet also recollects memories from his childhood when even the death of a calf is being lamented. The poet writes:

Now the old world is gone,  
So also the tradition of lament singing-  
As the modern time frowned upon it. (p.12)

With the onset of modern times, the old traditions and customs have lost meaning. The sensitive attitude towards animals was once a reality but in the present times even human life has become less than it ever was. Humanity is losing its essence; it seems there is no meaning to human life. Birth, marriage and death are very important aspects of human life and society. But the Corona Pandemic hit human life so hard that it was so heart wrenching to see relatives too fearful of getting infected if by accident they come in contact with the dead. It was surely a deplorable sight to see the way the dead were given funeral rites. The poet captures such a painful sight of the modern times in his own words:

Someone is dying.  
Some are in acute pain.  
There is no one to do a favour-  
By lamenting singing. (p.12)

Bishnupada seems to be inconsolable to watch a society which once lamented even the death of animals, looks heartless towards the dead especially in the times of Pandemic.

In “Beyond the Lock Down” the poet writes about the migrant labourers. The title itself suggests the pandemic lockdown is behind the poetic inspiration. The poem describes the plight of the migrant labourers in various cities compelling them to travel back to their villages barefoot under the scorching

heat. However, the poet goes beyond the pandemic, which compelled migrant labourers to go back to their villages. He sees life itself as a journey in which hunger, which is no less than Coronavirus, has compelled people all the time to move miles and miles in search of work and food. Bishnupada writes:

Over the years  
in search of work, food and rest.  
I continue the journey  
Unmindful of cyclone and flood  
Drought and epidemic drive me further away.  
My feet are bared. Little clothes I do wear.  
Heat, rain and cold  
All the extreme weather  
Hurt and benumb. (p.20)

Displacement and migration are not happening for the first time. But the fact is that it is always the poor people who are the victims of natural calamities like cyclones, drought etc. These events have compelled people to move from place to place in search of ‘work, food and rest’. The words ‘hurt and benumb’ reveal how the poor people have always been the victims of these natural calamities.

The ending of the poem is very powerful. It sees hope against hopelessness, strength against helplessness. The poet persona seeks for strength and courage to overcome the arduous journey and reach to a place where he can sustain the life of his family. His desire to see a smile in the face of his family members fills him with determination and strength to fight. The lines read:

I rise to go-

The earth below  
And the sky above  
Give me a call  
And fill my mind with strength  
My dear ones need to smile and grow. (p.21)

“Cheering up the Brave hearts” is a poem in tribute to the brave medicos and paramedics who have lost their lives by battling heads on during the spread of pandemic. Indeed the medical professionals were ‘brave hearts’. When people were coddled at homes, these brave hearts were treating the Covid-19 patients by risking their lives. Many of them died to save others’ lives. So, the poet persona salutes them saying, “We stand to cheer up the brave hearts.”

By seeing the medical professionals selflessly working to save lives, the poet is comforted knowing that human civilization will surely win this battle however formidable it might look. He says:

They remind-

Like many a time in the past  
As a human civilization  
We shall have the conquest  
With science as a weapon. (p.25)

The last two lines, “We shall have the conquest, with science as a weapon” speak a volume at the backdrop of India’s desperate response to the pandemic by imagining it to disappear by beating thali, burning the candle, etc. Rather the poet is convinced that with our scientific approach to Pandemic, human civilization will surely conquer.

There are many poems in the book depicting the social, cultural and psychological plight of people who suffered in their own ways during the pandemic. The poem “Where are the Children Gone” rightly describes how pandemic led to a situation which pushed everyone to confinements. The poet writes:

Where are the children gone!  
The play fields are empty.  
The elderly people aren’t visible in the parks.  
Few rodents run helter-skelter  
In the hideouts the lovers prefer. (p.109)

Poet grieves over how the children have disappeared from the streets and so the elderly ones from public places like parks. The normal daily routine has been disturbed and there is a sense of abandonment and barrenness about the present situation. The following lines depict how the pandemic situation has led to this sad and disturbingly silent atmosphere which is visible all around:

The roads in front of my house appear wide and long.  
No vehicles are at sight.  
The silence is eerie-  
Seldom the sirens of ambulance puncturing it.  
A great grief, panic and deep pain-  
Seems looming all over.  
The morning chants from the nearby temple are missing.  
All are huddling in their havens. (p.109)

The Covid-19 crisis has exposed all the vulnerabilities of our society. The line ‘the silence is eerie’ reveals how silence can be really frightening and terrifying. Here ‘silence’ has caused grief, panic and deep pain all over. The only sound which could be heard was the occasional sirens of ambulance carrying the Corona patients. People were left with no option but to stay huddled in their havens, at homes.

In “My Chase with the Monster”, the poet has talked about life as a journey where one has to challenge the difficulties and always focus on the brighter side. He uses the metaphor of a monster to refer to the darkness or negativity that can pull someone down or render an individual become fearful of the challenges life sometimes poses. The poet writes:

There’s an inner voice  
Wafting from all around-  
It’s time to give a quiet farewell  
To the fear inside.  
Life is a great gift.  
Do good, be kind.  
Monster would always be there  
But won’t rule over this earth-  
It’s the order. (p.83)

In other words, it is the poet’s intention to fill the reader with determination and strength to challenge all sorts of hardships by bidding farewell to fear inside. He appeals everyone to celebrate life by being kind and doing good to others. Here the poet uses the metaphor of ‘monster’ to represent pandemic or any other calamities. But the poet is convinced that victory surely belongs to life and death or its elements cannot rule over people.

In another poem “You Must Come Out” which appears to be very radical in tone. “You” in the title perhaps refers to Lord Jagannath. Lord Jagannath is an integral part of Odisha. In the poem it seems that the poet is deeply unsettled with the situation and he wants Lord Jagannath to intervene and come out and not sit silently in his abode. It is a strong urge from the poet.

At this difficult time-

The whole of humanity is facing a test  
And crying,  
Immense are the people’s suffering,  
The miseries are becoming limitless,  
All the faiths are too facing a crisis.

As an ardent devotee  
I pray with all humilities at my command-  
You must come out of the abode,  
And see for yourself how  
Your children are suffering. (p.117)

## Conclusion

The spread of Pandemic, lockdown and its social, mental and economic pressure caused by it subsequently, is certainly more than a human mind can bear and comprehend. The silence and solitude,

once praised and appreciated in the poetry, sounds so ghostly and scary during the Pandemic time. Bishnupada Sethi has taken recourse to poetry to express his feelings and frustrations, determination, hope, all in his poetry. Surely poetry could be a kind of therapeutic agency which gives scope to the poet to express. And he does it so beautifully.

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### Appendix:

In an interview with Bishnupada Sethi, I got the opportunity to have a conversation with him about the anthology and following were some of the questions that were asked during the interaction:

**(Q) :-There are quite a few poems on Pandemic and its impact on life. You are also the Principal Secretary of the department of Disaster Management. Can you share some thoughts that made you restless about the pandemic and how those experiences led you to write some of the poems included in this collection?**

(Ans):-Way back in 2003 when I was working on a project which was a part of the United Nations Development Program to initiate a policy dialogue on resettlement of people, who got displaced because of the various development projects. I met such bureaucrats who would say that “poor are better than the rich in Odisha and they don’t need any policy.” I was shocked, ‘how can such a learned person make such a statement’. For six months I struggled to find a person who would agree to have a policy dialogue on the resettlement issues. Then I was introduced to L. K Mahapatra, by a very senior and powerful official who said “if there is anybody who understands the plight of the poor people and particularly the marginalized tribals it is Dr. L.K. Mahapatra.” I met Dr. Mahapatra and had a beautiful discussion on how poor people suffer.

When I was steering this resettlement policy, I had written my first poetry anthology, “Where shall I go?”. I would like to read out an excerpt from the book:

Where shall I go!

Leaving this land,  
For which I am only a trustee.  
As a tribal, I am duty bound  
To pass it on to the generation next !  
Who would shift the banyan tree !  
And the village spirits lying underneath.  
What would happen to the streams ?  
Singing praises in the names of God,  
And the rocks lying there,  
Our monuments for ages.

I will set my ancestors free,  
Whose spirits I had installed in the home;  
I am not sure,  
If they won't be angry,  
As I failed to preserve things, given to me.  
They were lucky,  
They knew no state,  
No king ever ruled them before.

After I leave the land,  
They would build the modern temple  
For making gold out of earth.  
A new era would dawn  
With promises of more happiness;  
And I know not for sure  
If it means anything  
To me or people like me.

This is my tribute to Prof. L K Mahapatra. We worked together and in three years' time, we made a policy which was the best in the country. Odisha was a pioneer to resettlement policies. L K Mahapatra really understood the pain of the tribal people.

During the pandemic we know very well that it is the poorest that get the hardest hit. Regions like Odisha, Bengal used to be very hard hit by the famines in the years before independence. We know British rule was designed to loot the country and during British rule 60-70 million Indians had died. There was a famine in 1866 in Odisha and about one third of the Odisha population died because of

hunger. That time the eminent poet of Odisha BhimaBhoi who is the preacher of Mahima religion, must have been sixteen or eighteen years old then and wrote a poem which is now world famous. Sitakanta Mahapatra has translated this poem. He wrote,

‘Nothing to eat  
Nothing to wear  
Boundless is the anguish among the world’s creatures  
Let my soul be condemned to hell  
But the universe be redeemed’

During this pandemic we saw the worst in our lifetime. Unfortunately, our memories are very short, but all the sensitive people will remember the images of people who travelled long distances barefooted. Some on bicycles, children on suitcases and many people succumbed to the heat, dust and lack of food and care. Those images were very disturbing. Life had come to a standstill. So, I wrote a few poems like “Beyond the Lockdown”, “Where are the children Gone”. Children have had the worst suffering in these last two years. They have not gone to the playground. They have not gone to the schools. They have not met their friends, and many have become gadget savvy and children have suffered very badly. In “Cheering the Brave Hearts”, we are cheering the brave hearts like those of doctors, paramedics, anganwadi workers. Similarly, as an ardent follower of Lord Jagannath all people of Odisha and the entire country believe that Lord Jagannath has seen all miseries, famines, cyclones, droughts. And people believed that Lord Jagannath must come out and see the plight of people who worship him so I have written a poem “You must come out”. After there was a judgement of the honorable Supreme Court that Rath Yatra was celebrated without the devotees and this year also it is celebrated the same way, I had written that he had come out of the temple. I had dwelt in some mythological issues, for example when the lord of universe comes out of his temple and when he is on the chariot, the food offered to him is spilled and scattered. It is believed that ghosts take that food and that is how they get entry to heaven. I also read a novel of Ishika Rai who also refers to how lord Jagannath is important as a medium between this material world and the other world.

While writing these poems, I went through many disturbing emotions and not just poems, but I have also written articles which have got published as well. Poems on migrant workers, what migration workers are subjected to is not a feature of only this pandemic. It is recurring. They are always on the move. Migrant workers did not move out for the first time. It is an annual sojourn. He goes to Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and every other day he is on the move in search of food and care. It is his life.

**(Q):-Most of your poems talk about life as a journey. While you talk about celebrating life you are also equally overwhelmed by the uncertainties of life and the power of death. Are there some experiences which developed your thoughts on life and death?**

(Ans):- Journey in this life has been a long one. It has something to do with personal life. A person who was born in a small village when there was no road communication, no buses, no trains, and the person coming out of that village, going to a small town, then a bigger town, landing up in Mumbai, getting into

Civil Service then getting exposed to the life and culture of the tribal societies, the cases of malnutrition, hunger and the uniqueness and richness of culture. For example, in a district called Rayagada, the *LanjiaSaora* community, Peter Betsky's 'Talking with the Dead' tells how rich the tribal culture is. They may not be very rich materially. Though the tribal society is not there anymore because everyone has become a Christian but twenty years before when *LanjiaSouras* were living in that ancient faith, if somebody was aggrieved because there was a loss of life in the family, then the head priestess would come and intercede between the world of the dead and the person living and chant mantras which was actually chanting the name of all the ancestors. Thereby she'll get possessed and would connect the dead to the living. So, the culture is very rich and it is more than twenty thousand years old. Somebody can say that this is primitive and superstitious but if you really appreciate it, you'll find a lot of beauty in it and that is the way of life you must respect. Likewise, if a tribal is worshipping a rock in Niyamgiri, you must respect because all his ancestors are living there and if you dispossess him and throw him out of that place he'll think that he has been cursed by the ancestors and won't live peacefully throughout his life.

So, a lot of exposure to the uniqueness of our people, culture, diversities, the dance, the song, the music; in personal life, the pride, the fall of the important people, egos, oppressions, deceptions and then human way of doing things. So, the great exposure that I had in my life has a deep impact on writing down some poems.

Once I came across news that children in Afghanistan have been bombarded, such events have deep impacts. I would remain sleepless and then would find some lines and make it as a poem.

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*Our Sincere Obeisance ....*



**Manorama Mohapatra**  
**Eminent litterateur and Former Editor, The Samaja.**

*Our Sincere Obeisance ....*



**Prof. Rajkishore Mishra**  
**Eminent litterateur, Former Secretary, Odisha Sahitya Academy and**  
**Editor, Odisha Review and Utkal Prasanga.**

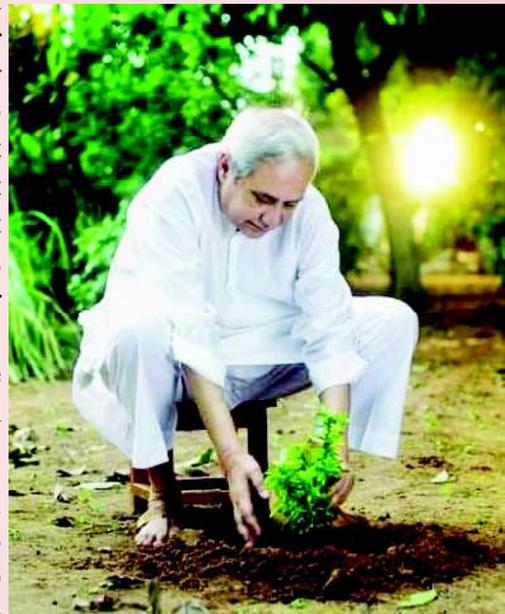


Hon'ble Governor of Odisha Prof. Ganeshi Lal administering the Oath of Office to the newly appointed State Chief Information Commissioner Shri Jalada Kumar Tripathy.  
Hon'ble Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik attending the function through Video Conferencing.

## *Editor's Note*



The COVID-19 pandemic impact has been devastating across the world. Many countries have been affected by multiple waves of COVID infection. India has also been severely affected by two waves of COVID infection. Our State has been on high alert to tackle the pandemic situation. Odisha's model of Disaster Management is now recognised world over for its efficiency and human approach. Our State has been affected by two waves of infection so far. We have been able to ensure that all the health care systems are in place and we are not overwhelmed by the spread of infection. Our Government has been taking proactive steps to ensure that we are always ahead of the curve and in control of the situation. While other States had to unfortunately grapple with Oxygen shortages, our Government has been able to successfully manage the Oxygen logistics for our hospitals and we have also provided Oxygen to other States saving many precious lives.



In this backdrop, in spite of having a long tradition of Shakti worship wherein Durga Puja is celebrated with great pomp and fervour is now being observed following COVID guidelines. People of Odisha deserve thanks for cooperating and supporting fight against the pandemic. Together we will overcome this crisis.

Under the dynamic leadership of our popular Chief Minister Shri Naveen Patnaik, the Government of Odisha is committed to bring about transformation in every sphere of life. The vision of transformation under 5T with an objective to empower people of our State is meant to take public services delivery to the doorsteps of common man. With Biju Swasthya Kalyan Smart Health Card a new era in State Health sector has ushered in. It is historic, a paradigm shift in the system of health services in India, where a patient would get the best health care without any expenses. About 3.5 crore people from 96 lakh families will be benefitting out of it.

While our Government has had to deal with crisis after crisis, It has not lost sight of the commitments made to the people of Odisha in the last elections. Government's major focus in this term has been the

principles of 5T- Transparency, Technology, Team work, Time and Transformation. Every department has adopted a transformative agenda and is working relentlessly towards achieving the goals.

To connect directly to the citizen, the Government had started the Mo Sarkar feedback system. Over a period of time, there have been visible changes in the attitude and behavior of the Government servants at all levels towards the citizens. There have been sincere efforts for systemic and process-based changes to make administration and service delivery more citizen-friendly and technology oriented.

Government is having a special focus on the development of education and health. Massive investment of over Rs.8500 crore in development of healthcare infrastructure across the State is under progress. The SCB Medical College and Hospital is being developed as a great institution with an investment of Rs.3500 crore. More than 786 doctors and 5137 paramedics have been recruited in the last one year alone. Towards women's empowerment we have been supporting the Mission Shakti Groups across the State. In a pioneering move, a separate Department for Mission Shakti has also been created. To preserve the cultural heritage of our State, the State Government has launched various projects for heritage conservation across the State in Puri, Konark, Samaleswari Temple and Harishankar-Nrushinghanath Temple etc.



Education is the key to unravel the full potential of our children and therefore, the Transformation of the High Schools has been a main agenda and more than 1000 schools have been taken up in the first phase this year. To prepare our youth for the global job market, our Government has started the World Skill Centre as part of our "Skilled in Odisha" program. Our youth will be provided quality skills in every sector so that they can compete with the best in the world. Odisha continues to be a favourite investment destination. In spite of COVID situation we attracted some of the biggest investments in the country. Economy of Odisha is bouncing back from the adverse impacts of the pandemic and we are back to track. We have attracted investment to the tune of over Rs.4.5 lakh crore since pandemic. Odisha has now emerged as the top most investment destination. Our Government's stable policy and facilitating environment has enabled the growth of industries in our State. Due to all these there has been a visible transformation in our State which has helped us rise high in human development index.

The people of Odisha have blessed our Government with 5th consecutive term and under the dynamic leadership of Shri Naveen Patnaik the team has been working very hard to live up to the expectations and fulfill all the commitments made. The Pandemic has created a unique situation where the lives and livelihoods of people are at stake. In spite of all the challenges, Government is quite confident that it will emerge victorious in this crisis with the cooperation of the people of the State, and continue to carry forward the good work for the transformation of Odisha.

**Editor, Odisha Review**



## Images of Mahisamardini Durga in Odisha : An Iconographic Study

*Balabhadra Ghadai*

Goddess Durga is said to one of the most powerful deity who appears in Hindu mythology in numerous forms and names but ultimately all these are different aspects manifestation of one goddess.

An important manifestation of the Mother Goddess in Odisha is the Mahisamardini Durga being worshipped at several places symbolizing the victory of good over evil or of godly power over animal spirit.

Mahisamardini Durga images can be divided into three distinct types taking into account the changes in the form of the buffalo demon. In the early images the demon appears in buffalo form, next he is shown with human body and buffalo head; and finally the form crystallizes into human form issuing out from the decapitated trunk of a buffalo.



In Odisha we find Mahisamardini Durga images having two to twenty arms with various **ayudhas** ranging from very early time to modern period. The present image of Viraja in the temple

at Jajpur, which is assigned to pre-Gupta period by R.P.Chanda and Gupta period by Dr.K.C.Panigrahi, is the earliest known image of two armed Mahisamardini Durga. It is made of black chlorites stone and three feet on height. She is mounting on a ferocious lion. In her right hand she is holding a spear which pierces the body of the buffalo. In her left hand she pulls the tail of the animal, her left foot presses the head of the buffalo. This two-armed Mahisamardini is unique

in nature and such type of figure is not found anywhere else in Odisha. The temple ruins at Sarsara in the Sundargarh district is of considerable importance, due to the two-armed



Durga images found here which can be dated to the 6<sup>th</sup>-7<sup>th</sup> century A.D. In this image, the demon of Mahisa is depicted in a complete buffalo form, but very peculiarly holding a sword in its proper right foreleg which is designed like a hand. The Goddess is standing in **Dvibhanga** posture, putting her proper left hand on the head of the buffalo and pressing its head which is looking up. In the proper right hand Devi is holding a long **sula** piercing it on the neck of the demon. Her **Vahana** lion is seen in the right side of the pedestal near proper left foot. Unfortunately the head of the image is missing.

Among the four-armed Mahisamardini Durga, an interesting specimen of this variety is found in the compound of the Markandesvara temple at Bhubaneswar. The other important specimen of this variety is found in the temple of Madhava at Niali and in the temple of Charchika and Banki. A four-handed Durga in her Mahisasuramardini aspect is enshrined in a separate shrine to the north of the brick-built Jagamohana of the Kosalesvara temple at Baidyanath in Sonepur district. In her up-raised proper right hand is a **Khadga**, while in the lower left hand is a **Dhanu**. She is holding a long trident in her upper left hand which is pierced into the mouth of the demon. In her lower right hand she is holding the tail of her **Vahana** the lion. In another place i.e. Banei in Sundargarh district also we find a rare four handed Durga image in the Alidha posture amidst loose sculptures found in the Kumari temple precinct, on the right bank of the river Brahmani. Here Devi is seen to be putting her uplifted left leg on the back of the beast Mahisa, while pressing its head with her lower left hand so that the head is turned one side by that pressure and simultaneously piercing its neck with the **Trisula**, which is in her lower right hand.

In the up-raised upper right hand of the goddess Durga is a **Khadga**, while there is a **Sankha** in her upper left hand. Her **Vahana** lion is seen to be seated crouching, while biting the tail of the Mahisa. Here the human figure of Mahisasura is absent. This image can be dated to the 7<sup>th</sup> -8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. also. The four armed image of goddess Durga enshrined in the Durga temple at the village Nuasatanga (Motia) in the Niali Block of the Cuttack district is carved in standing posture on the double-petalled lotus pedestal. She holds conch shell, disc in upper two arms while the lower two ones hold the trident, by which she is piercing the heart of Mahisasura.

Six-armed Mahisamardini Durga images are rare in Odisha. An interesting specimen of this variety is found on the wall of Parsuramesvar temple of Bhubaneswar. Here the deity is seen holding a sword in upper left hand while in the upper right hand she is pressing the face of the demon buffalo. In middle left hand She is piercing the **Trisula** on the neck of the demon while in lower left hand She holds a pointed **ayudha**. In the right middle hand She is holding **khetaka** while in the lower right hand she holds a bow. Goddess Mahisamardini also appears as the **Parswadevi** in the northern niche of the **Vimana** of the Rameswar temple. This six-armed image is depicted in her conventional archer's pose. The goddess is shown killing the demon Mahisa by piercing the trident by holding it in her lower left hand. The demon is absent in the sculpture. Her right leg is on the back of her mount lion. She holds a mace in her uplifted right hand whereas the upper left and middle right arms are broken. The goddess is wearing a **Karanda Mukuta**. Other two examples of this type are found at Astarang in Puri district and at Belkhandi in Kalahandi district.



Images of eight-armed variety of Mahisamardini Durga are widely found in Odisha. During the early Bhaumakara rule, Durga image became eight-armed. The finest product of this variety is found in the northern central niche of the Vaital temple. It is a beautiful icon and eight-armed Mahisamardini Durga. Here the deity holds a sword, a sula, a trident, and a **vajra** in her right hands. She holds a **khetaka** with a loop handle, a bow and a snake in the three left hands while she presses the buffalo head of the demon with her remaining left hands. The deity tramples over the chest of the demon in her right leg while the demon represented in a sitting posture. In the Prachi Valley such images are found at Amarkuda near Niali, in the temple of Ramesvar at Ramesvargarh and also at Mangalpur near Kakatpur. The eight-armed image at Amarkuda holds a discus and a trident in two of the right hands, of which the other two have been damaged. In her left hands she holds a lotus, bow and snake, the remaining one being placed on the face of the demon. A devotee is depicted to the right side of the Goddess. There is another eight armed image of Durga to the right side of the main entrance of the temple of Ramesvara at Ramesvargarh. The image is badly mutilated and only a bow is seen in one of her left hands while only three weapons viz. the sword, the quiver and the trident piercing the head of the demon are seen in her right hands. The eight armed Durga at Mangalpur, only half a mile to the south of Kakatpur is in a very bad state of preservation. The lower most hands of the Goddess carries a severed head. Her other **ayudhas** are not distinctly visible. The Goddess has been represented here as a Tantric deity. There are two images of eight-armed Mahisamardini Durga preserved at the site museum of Khiching in the district of Mayurbhanj.

Such representation of eight armed Mahisamardini Durga are also found in the Hanumanesvara temple at Jajpur, in the temple of Sisiresvara at Bhubaneswar, in the Kichakeswari temple at Khiching, on the back-wall of the Bhagavati temple at Banpur, the Lingaraj temple at Bhubaneswar at Mukhalingam.

Among the eight armed varieties the image at Somesvara is worthy of note. The Goddess is represented in the dancing pose holding in the right hands **dambaru**, skull cup and a dagger while the remaining hand bestow a boon to the worshipper depicted below. In her four left hands, she carries **Khataavanga** on which lies a dead body, rosary, another **Khataavanga** and human head. She wears a garland of skulls and a serpent belt surrounds her waist. Her head dress is terrifically represented with a small garland of skulls flanked by two human hands which is surmounted with the blood of a cobra. Flames of fires are rising upward representing her hair knot. In spite of all these terrific aspects, the Goddess looks calm and peaceful with half closed eyes expressing deep meditation.

The images of ten-armed Mahisamardini Durga became most expressive in the temples of Odisha from 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D. onwards. The **Dasabhuja** or ten armed Durga was depicted as a war Goddess, armed with weapons of different Gods like Siva's trident, Vishnu's disc, Varuna's conch, Agni's dart, Yama's iron rod, Vayu's bow, Surya's arrows, Indra's thunderbolt, Kuvera's mace, Brahma's rosary and pot, Viswakarma's sword and Himavan's lion.

There is a Dasabhuja Chamunda at Chaurasi locally known as Jagulai. She sits in **Ardhaparyanka** pose. The Goddess carries in her four right hands dambaru, sword, skull-cup



and a dagger, her remaining hand being in abhaya mudra. She carries a rosary in the uppermost left hand while the remaining left hands carry a heavy **Khatabhanga** and a trident, with the next hand she holds Chhinna mastaka and exhibits **Varada** pose with the remaining one. In Jajpur a detached image of Chamunda in the Trilochanesvara temple compound is ten-armed seated in ardhaparyanka with her right knee uplifted. She has an emaciated body with sunken belly. She wears a long garland of skulls, necklace, arm-band and anklets. Her round eyes project from sunken sockets and her teeth are visible through her sinister smile. Her hair is arranged in **Karanda Mukuta** with a string of pearls at the base. Of the numerous Dasabhuja Mahisamardini images mention may be made of the beautiful ones at Pitapur, Lataharan, Niali, Jogeswar on Prachi valley, in Bhattarika temple near Baramba, Kanak Durga near Remuna in the district of Baleswar, Padhuan near Basudevpur, at Khiching in the district of Mayurbhanj, and at many other places of Odisha.

Twelve-armed Mahisamardini sculptures are not many in Odisha. The most interesting image of one twelve-armed Mahisamardini Durga is found in the Kanakesvara temple at Kualo situated in the Kamakshanagar Subdivision of

Dhenkanal District on the bank of the river Brahmani. There are two such images, one in a new temple on the eastern edge of Bindusarovara tank at Bhubaneswar known as Dwaravasini and the other known as Dakeswari near Chandbali in the district of Baleswar.

Two eighteen-armed Mahisamardini images are noticed, one such image is found as a presiding deity in the Kapileswar temple of Dia near Nirakarpur in Khordha district and the other as the presiding goddess in Prachi valley. Moreover, a twenty-armed Mahisamardini is found at Salebhata in the Ang valley of Bolangir district which can be dated to the 11th century A.D.

Thus, from the above discussion it is evident that Mahisamardini Durga in various forms is one of the most worshipped goddess of Odisha. Of all her forms, She is the ultimate representation of infinite power, purity and strength of purpose, which resides within the divine essence of every being.

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## Advent of Darubrahma Shree Jagannatha in Purushottama Kshetra

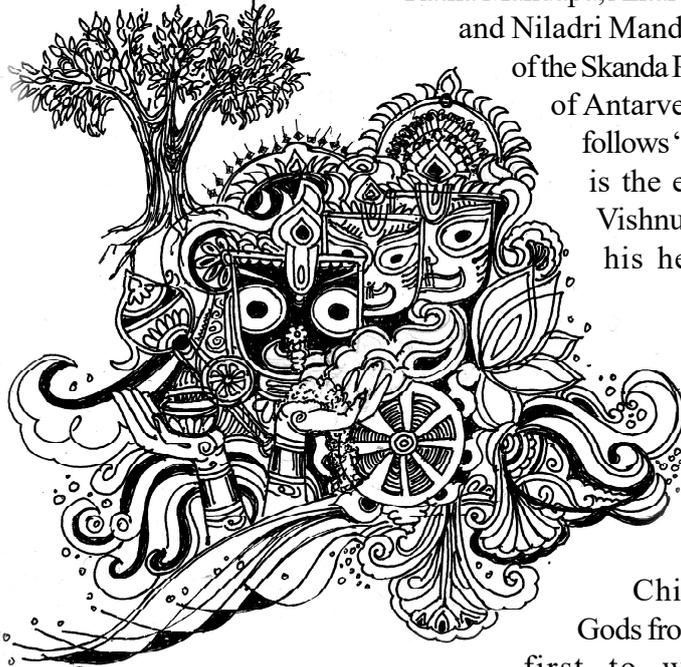
*Dr. Bhaskar Mishra*

Imperishable soul is essentially the source of spiritualism. Real bliss in the mundane world is spiritual happiness which is nothing but the truth. In order to get that happiness one should surrender completely before the *Paramatma*. Ultimate divine happiness is that when an individual soul gets united with the supreme one. *Purusha* as mentioned in the Rig Veda, *Purushottama* as referred to in the "Aagama", "Purana" and "Jagannatha consciousness" as prevalent among devotees of the world are but the real reflection of spiritual consciousness. *Parambrahma Paramatma* has manifested as the Darubrahma (Wooden manifestation) Shree Jagannatha at Purushottama Kshetra.

Since time immemorial the benevolent four deities, in their wooden manifestation appear

on the holy Rantasimhasan of Shreemandira at Purushottama Kshetra (presently known as Puri) and bless multitudes of devotees. The sacred seat or Simhasana, on which the mysterious four deities are worshipped, is known as Ratna Vedi, Ratna Mandapa, Antarvedi, Ratnasimhasana and Niladri Mandapa. In Utkal khanda of the Skanda Purana, the significance of Antarvedi has been stated as follows "Purushottama Kshetra is the embodiment of Lord Vishnu and Antarvedi is like his heart". According to legend and popular belief the said sacred seat is Niladri Mandapa.

As described in the Skanda Purana sabara King (Tribal Chief) Viswbasu and Gods from the heaven were the first to worship the deity Nilamadhava Shining like the effulgence of blue emerald. This deity of 'eighty one angulas' height was found holding a conch, a disc, a mace and a lotus in his four hands. Further, as per the description in the said Purana, after the mysterious





disappearance of Nilamadhava, the wooden manifestation of Shree Balabhadra, Devi Subhadra, Shree Jagannatha and Shree Sudarshana appeared on the most sacred place i.e on the *Antarvedi*, so famed as the most holy place of Lord Vishnu. The 4<sup>th</sup> chapter of the Shree Purushottama Kshetra Mahatmya of Skanda Purana describes as follows. “As this Antarvedi in the Purushottama Kshetra is extremely sacred, celestial bodies cherish a desire to remain here only. Here everyone feels privileged to have a glimpse of Lord Purushottama”.

Since time immemorial, Shree Purushottama Kshetra (Puri), the place of sportive art of Darubrahma Shree Jagannath, has been known as the most sacred place for the Vaishnavites. Founders of different religious schools, sects and cults have acclaimed the Chaturddha Murti on their own ways. The divine images or the principal deities of Shreemandira have been described in numerous ways in the puranic scriptures.

As per the description in the Utkal Khanda “Shree Purushottama Kshetra Mahatmya” of Skanda Purana, King Indradyumna came to know about Shree Nilamadhava from Vidyapati, the brother of his royal priest. He along with his family members, fellow citizens and courtiers proceeded towards Nilagiri situated at Purushottama Kshetra. But before reaching Nilagiri the manifest idol of Nilamadhava disappeared. The “Skanda Purana” further described that during the last part of “Kalpa” (a fabulous concept of time heralding a new creation) a heavy hurricane arose from the Mahodadhi (Sea) and as a result, Lord Nilamadhava was buried beneath heaps of golden sand. The disappearance of Nilamadhava

shocked the Gods and they prayed fervently before Lord Vishnu. It was heard through an oracle that Lord Vishnu would again appear at Nilachala.

King Indradyumna of Avanti condemned himself for not getting a glimpse of the idol of Nilamadhava. Consoling the King Maharshi Narada said, “O King ! the sportive art of Lord Shree Hari is unique and unparalleled. Nobody is able to understand his sportive art. Although I am beyond death I could not make out the sportive art of the Lord. Maharshi Narada further described that his father Lord Brahma also rests in the navel-lotus of Vishnu. He also could not understand the mystery of Vishnu (Shree Nilamadhava). But Brahma Himself confessed before me (Narada) that the manifest God comprised four forms and they have their blessings on you. Besides, when Lord Nilamadhava was in His stone form, He also appeared in the company of three others. Nilamadhava has further assured that he would appear again in four different images in wooden form”.

Brahmarshi Narada who came to help King Indradyumna has stated that Lord Vishnu, consort of Goddess Lakshmi has appeared in four different images and intended to oblige him. Human beings would get salvation by visiting the divine appearance of Lord Vishnu.

While King Indradyumna retrieved the holy wooden log from the sea and desired to sculpt the idols, Lord Vishnu appeared in disguise as an age-stricken, extremely old carpenter. He in disguise constructed the four idols within 15 days. These mysterious four idols are of Bhagaban Shree Purushottama Jagannatha (Lord Vishnu), Devi Subhadra, Lord Balabhadra and Lord Sudarshana. The idol of Purushottama or Lord Shree Jagannatha was carved with the symbolic



representation of conch, disc, mace and lotus. Similarly the idol of Lord Shree Balabhadra had the symbols of mace, plough, disc and lotus. The idol of Devi Subhadra was sculpted having a posture of *abhaya mudra* and holding a lotus. Lord Sudarshana found place in the shape of a divine staff among the deities.

As per the suggestion of Maharshi Narada, King Indradyumna brought the four divine idols on the sacred chariot constructed by Biswakarma. King Indradyumna discussed at length with Narada, other saints and brahmins about the consecration of Shreemandira and installation of deities on the bejewelled platform.

It has been described in the “Shree Purushottama Kshetra Mahatmya” of Skanda Purana that it is Rishi Bharadwaja who conducted the consecration ceremony of Shreemandira and Dhwaja (Flag) of the temple and prayed Lord Brahma for infusing life to the idols. Bhagban Narayan by means of His sportive art desired that the holy logs which bore the signs of conch and disc should be infused with life. But Brahma could not be at one with the proposal of Narayana. He conducted the consecration ceremony through Vedic rituals. On the other hand it has been described in “Niladri Mahodaya” that Lord Brahma chanted the Sam Veda for Lord Jagannatha, Rig Veda for Lord Balabhadra, Yajur Veda for Devi Subhadra and Atharva Veda for Lord Sudarshana.

At the time of consecration ceremony of the temple, Brahma engaged *rishi* Bharadwaja as Acharya, Agasty as Brahma, Narada and Basistha as Pracharaka and other sages for chanting of suktas and mantras.

With the help and co-operation of sages and rishis the consecration of Shree Jagannatha Temple was completed. After this, Lord Brahma enthroned the deities on the bejewelled platform. The mirrored reflections of the deities were offered ceremonial bath. The installation of the deities such as Shree Balabhadra, Shree Jagannatha, Devi Subhadra was done with recitation of the Purusha Sukta, Shree Sukta and Devi Sukta respectively.

In accordance to ‘Mahapurusha Vidya’ the sacred Simhasana of Lord Shree Jagannatha symbolises the primordial sound “AUM” or Pranava. The assimilation of Ratna Simhasana and Pranava is unique. A full bloom lotus is perceived on the pranavatmaka Simhasana. Hence, the Ratnasimhasana is verily a Lotus itself.

Verse 32 of chapter-9 of Mahapurusha Vidya describes as follows:

“In the conch-shaped Niladri upon the hundred petalled lotus shape of the Ratnasimhasana, I witness Lord Jagannatha decked in all exquisite adornments, resembling that of a newly formed cloud who is seated in the company of his elder brother Balabhadra, Sister Devi Subhadra on his right and Chakraraj Sudarshan on his left. Lord Shree Jagannatha is being adored by Brahma, Rudra and Indra. I offer my benediction to this Lord, the Darubramha, the essence of all the Vedas in the company of His dear associates.”

Descriptions in the ‘Skanda Purana’ and the then Puri District Gazetteer give the following information on the four deities enthroned on Ratnasimhasana.



The height of Shree Balabhadra is 85 *jaba* ( a little more than 7ft.) having conch shape and white in colour. The height of Devi Subhadra is 51.5 *jaba*. Hers is lotus like shape and yellow in colour. Shree Jagannatha's height is 84 *jaba* and His appearance is in the form of a disc (Chakra) and colour is cloudy dark. Shree Sudarshana's height is 84 *jaba*. His appearance is mace like and colour is red. According to scriptures, the deities have been sculpted as per Chakra (Wheel) Yantra, Sankha (conch) Yantra, Padma (lotus) Yantra and Gada (mace) Yantra.

The four deities on the bejewelled throne although extremely mysterious it is Shree Jagannatha alone is the epicentre of all ineffable thought cycle. Purushottama Shree Jagannatha symbolises both mundane and cosmic consciousness. He is the primordial deity and self manifest. The deities dispel all woes and bestow incessant bliss. For this only the deities have been described as "Darumaya Brahma" (Wooden manifestation of the Brahma) besides the principal wooden deities, metallic images of Shreedevi, Bhudevi and wooden image of Madhava are also found in the company of Chaturddha Murti on the Ratnasimhasana. So these deities are called as "Saptadha Vighraha". Darshan of these deities

would surely remove all mundane afflictions and sins and give incessant bliss. These two things are indeed the prime bestowal of Lord Shree Jagannatha.

Venerable Acharya, Saints, Pandits chant the following Shloka by witnessing the four deities

*"Jagannatha Balabhadra Subhadra Chakrarupine,  
Darubramha Swarupaya Chatturdhamurtaye  
namha"....*

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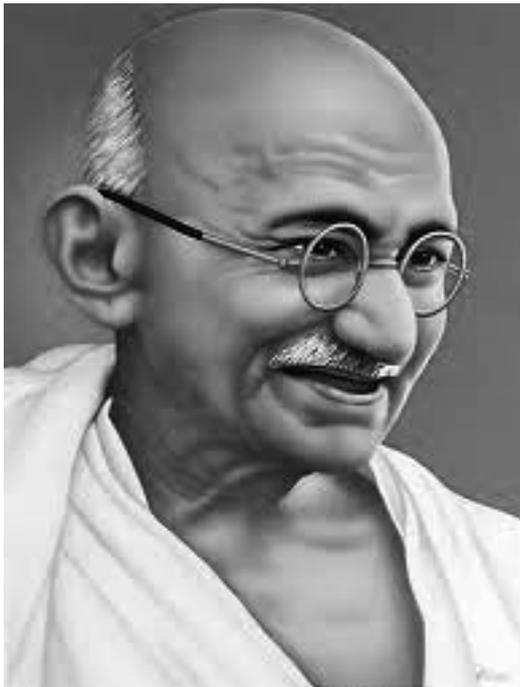
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## Gandhi and Environment

*Jayanta Kumar Das*

The first two decades of the 21st Century has witnessed serious ecological hazards across the globe. The situation has gone to such an extent that people have started questioning their own activities and there is a serious concern world-wide as how to save the planet from further onslaught of human species. The pollution has become all pervasive due to some underlying factors i.e population explosion, acute poverty, rapid industrialization, overuse of renewable resources, deforestation, emission of harmful substances, industrial and synthetic wastes, global warming, depletion of ozone layer and nuclear hazards. The application of Gandhian principles can effectively check the further progress of these effects. To stop pollution and to save the mother Earth from further devastation requires well thought out analysis and concerted efforts by all the Nations. The simple do's and don'ts in our day to day life is going to make a huge



difference in preserving the Nature. If the pollution goes unabated then the entire planet will become lifeless. It is high time to focus on this emerging global issue and find out the ways to safeguard

the environment by adhering to Gandhian ideals. Gandhi's views on environment are of immense value in the present scenario. He visualised the imminent danger and pointed out. "Nature is lenient. It does not punish us for our sins immediately." These words speak volumes. It has long lasting impacts as we see the happenings around us. His views on Nature are found mentioned in most of his writings. His famous quote—"Nature has enough to satisfy everyone's needs but not to satisfy everybody's greed"—shows his concern

for Nature and environment.

Realising the gravity of environmental issues over the years, international conferences so to say Stockholm conference of 1972 or the



Rio Earth Summit 1992 were convened much later than the concerns raised by Gandhiji. Gandhiji always laid emphasis on sustainable development which has been reiterated at this summit. It is an undisputed fact that human wants are insatiable and that is why men are resorting to reckless exploitation of natural resources. If we respect nature, follow the path of sustainable development and become non-violent and truthful in our approach, then there lie the solution. Hence the ideas of Gandhiji need to be rediscovered and all out effort to be made to put these ideas into practice. Gandhiji once remarked. "The earth, the air, the land and the water were not an inheritance from our forefathers but a loan from our children. So we have to hand over to the next generation at least as it had been handed over to us." In our country the major movements to protect environment derived inspiration from Gandhiji, for example, Chipko movement by Chandi Prasad Bhatt and Sunder Lal Bahuguna and the Narmada Bachao Andolan by Baba Amte and Medha Patkar. Sustainable development goal of U.N is akin to Gandhian vision of development. Gandhiji is of the firm belief that sustainable development is achievable without doing any harm to the Nature.

Gandhiji had cautioned the world about the problems of large scale industrialization which we are experiencing today. He observed that mechanization would not only lead to industrialization and urbanization but would also lead to the destruction of environment. In his book "Hind Swaraj" written in 1909, Gandhi's Vision of Swadeshi and Swaraj focussed on production by the masses than the mass production which would result in the establishment of a new economic order. On urbanization Gandhi pointed out "It is a process of double drain from the

villagers. It can never support ninety percent of India's population which is living in her seven lakh villages" (statistics as per the year 1934). He was against removing cottage industries from villages as he believed that this would remove whatever little opportunity was there for making the use of the hand and head. "And when the village handicrafts disappear, the villagers working only with their cattle on the field, with idleness for six or four months in a year must be reduced to the level of the beast and be without proper nourishment either of the mind or the body, and therefore without joy and without hope" – Harijan 7-9-1934. For this Gandhiji had propounded the theory of Basic Education in which mind, hand and body of a student would work together. In Basic Education, labour occupies an important place which teaches a person to become self-sufficient and self-reliant. It enlarges the heart and enriches the personality. This mode of education helps in promotion of sustainable development and creates awareness to address environment related issues. Gandhiji realised that the urbanization and industrialization have created enormous problems for the very survival of human beings. Accordingly he advised people to go back to villages and get themselves involved in handicraft and cottage industries which are labour-centric and which help in keeping the environment clean and green. He believed in the principle of simple living and high thinking and to him prevention is always better than cure. According to him, industrialization flourishes on exploitation of both man and Nature. Believing in the doctrine of live and let live, Gandhi laid emphasis on peaceful coexistence and reverence for all living beings. His policy of non-violence has an effect on reduction of carbon foot prints. He used to tell "non-violence is the law of our species as violence is the law of the brute". The essence of Gandhian philosophy is to



transform the individual and society simultaneously in accordance with the principles of truth and non-violence. Gandhi developed those ideologies from Bhagvad Gita, Jainism, Buddhism, Bible etc. Tolstoy's book 'The kingdom of God is within you' had a deep influence on Gandhi. Gandhi's policy of satyagraha means exercise of non-violence method against all forms of injustice, oppression and exploitation. In Western values he observed craze for comfort and luxury, multiplication of wants and self-indulgence which could lead to greed, conflict and suppression of the weak by the strong. His slogan "small is beautiful" has got a very deep meaning. "Let us wipe every tear from every eye" was the motto of Gandhiji. Once in course of conversation, English historian Edward Thompson told Gandhiji about the gradual disappearance of wildlife in India to which he replied "wildlife is decreasing in the jungles, but it is increasing in the towns." Gandhiji expressed concern over urbanization and rapid industrialization which resulted in depletion of natural resources and presence of toxicity in air, water and soil. He was greatly influenced by Jainism and Buddhism which see Nature as a living entity and believed in harmonious relationship with nature. He remarked "I need no inspiration other than Nature's. She has never failed me as yet. She mystifies me, bewilders me, sends me to ecstasies". His concept of Ahimsa encompassed all living beings which include trees, plants and insects.

Gandhiji believed in Sarvodaya which means welfare of all. Truth, non-violence and aparigraha are the foundation of Sarvodaya. It seeks to build a new society on the pillars of spiritual and moral values. Freedom, equality,

justice and fraternity are the basic tenets of Sarvodaya. Gandhi wanted welfare of all through the principle of Swadeshi which is his vision for economic development. The economic ideas of Gandhi bears close resemblance with ecological economics. It has concern for future generations and long term sustainability which ensures minimum use of natural resources. Gandhiji's concern for conservation of nature is reflected in his publications 'Hind Swaraj' and 'My experiments with truth' and journals like 'Harijan', 'Young India' and 'Navjivan'. He was giving priority to sanitation, hygiene and cleanliness and urged the people to minimize their wants so that there will be less burden on Nature. He viewed sanitation as more important than independence and cleanliness as godliness. To him, the ever rising population, glaring poverty and unplanned urbanization are hindrance to eco-friendly environment which has its effect on limited natural resources. The road to happiness lies when we learn to live in harmony with Nature. If the cherished dream of Gandhiji is put into practice then we will certainly be able to preserve our planet from the brink of disaster. The goal of our life is to live in agreement and not in conflict with the Nature. Therefore, Gandhiji had rightly said 'You must be the change you wish to see in the world.' The future depends on what we do today.

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# Olive Ridley Turtle : The Curiosity of World and Pride of Odisha

*Prof. Prafulla Kumar Mohanty*

**"We must try to preserve whatever is left of our forests and the wildlife that inhabits them."**

- Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru

## I. INTRODUCTION

Turtles (Latin word *tortuca*-a tortoise) are any of several marine and freshwater reptiles with bodies enclosed in a bony shell similar to that of the tortoises, but which have flippers or webbed toes for excellent swimming. This term is seen to have been associated with turtledove (wild dove), turtle graphics (computing on-screen drawing and plotting that involves using a turtle, turtle-neck a round close-fitting neckline that comes up higher than a crew neck but not so high as polo neck), and turtle soup (a type of soup made from the harder parts of the sea-turtle and traditionally flavoured with a combination of aromatic herbs, e.g, basil, marjoram, chervil, savoury and fennel).

All the reptiles are cold blooded animals as they depend on external environment to regulate their body temperature. Among reptilian animals, three different forms of body are observed. First type is lizard with dorso-ventrally flattened body. Second category is elongated type which is of cylindrical body form like in skinks and snakes. Finally, the third form is the body

formed with fused backbones like tortoises and turtles.

Indian reptilian fauna are very unique ranging in size from gigantic elongated estuarine crocodile measuring length more than eight metre to wall lizards or geckos of few centimetre in total length. More than 530 species of reptiles are reported to occur in India out of which 197 species are endemic. In Odisha, 131 species of reptiles (3 species of crocodilians, 17 species of turtles, 31 species of lizards and 80 species of snakes) are enlisted and reported.

## II. TYPES OF TURTLES IN THE WORLD

There are over 310 species of turtles in the world which are divided into three major categories or groups as stated below.

- 1) Tortoises or land turtles found on land
- 2) Freshwater turtles or terrapins found in freshwater
- 3) Marine turtles found in sea on marine (saline) environment

There are 13 families in the order. The origin of turtles dates back 220 million years ago making them older than both crocodiles and snakes. In geological time scale, reptiles like



turtles are believed to have originated during Mesozoic era having three periods namely Triassic, Jurassic and Cretaceous.

There are seven types of sea turtles in the world (Table-1) which are distributed in various parts of the sea. Six out of the seven species namely loggerhead, green, leatherback, hawksbill, Kemp's and Olive Ridley can be found throughout the ocean in both warm and cool waters.

In Odisha, turtles and tortoises of various species under five different families are noticed (Table-2).

**Table-1 - Types of sea turtles in the world**

Common name	Biological (Scientific) name	Major distribution
Loggerhead	<i>Caretta caretta</i>	United States
Green turtle	<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	East coast of Florida
Leatherback	<i>Dermochelys coriacea</i>	Pacific coasts of Mexico, Costa Rica, Coastal Malaysia
Hawksbill	<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	Yemen, North eastern Australia, Red sea, Caribbean, Oman
Kemp's Ridley	<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>	Rancho Nuevo, Mexico
Olive Ridley	<i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i>	Pacific coast of Mexico, Costa Rica, Indian Ocean
Flatback	<i>Natator depressus</i>	Northern coastal area of Australia, Gulf of Papua, New Guinea

**Table-2 - Turtles and tortoises of Odisha belonging to the order Chelonia**

Name of the family	Biological name of the species
Geoemydidae	1) <i>Batagur baska</i> (Gray 1831)
	2) <i>Melanochelys trijuga indopeninsularis</i> (Anandale, 1913)
	3) <i>Melanochelys tricarinata</i> (Blyth, 1856)
	4) <i>Pangshura tecta</i> (Gray, 1831)
	5) <i>Pangshura tentoria</i> (Gray, 1834)
Cheloniidae	6) <i>Chelonia mydas</i> (Linnaeus, 1758)
	7) <i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i> (Linnaeus, 1766)
	8) <i>Lepidochelys olivacea</i> (Eschscholtz, 1829)
Dermochelyidae	9) <i>Dermochelys coriacea</i> (Vandelli, 1761)
Testudinidae	10) <i>Geochelone elegans</i> (Schoeff, 1795)
	11) <i>Indotestudo elongata</i> (Blyth, 1854)
Trionychidae	12) <i>Nilssonia gangetica</i> (Cuvier, 1825)
	13) <i>Nilssonia hurum</i> (Gray, 1831)
	14) <i>Nilssonia leithii</i> (Gray, 1872)
	15) <i>Pelochelys cantorii</i> (Gray, 1864)
	16) <i>Chitra indica</i> (Gray, 1831)
	17) <i>Lissemys punctata punctata</i> (Bonnaterre, 1789)
	18) <i>Lissemys punctata andersoni</i> (Webb, 1980)

### III. NOMENCLATURE OF OLIVE RIDLEY TURTLE

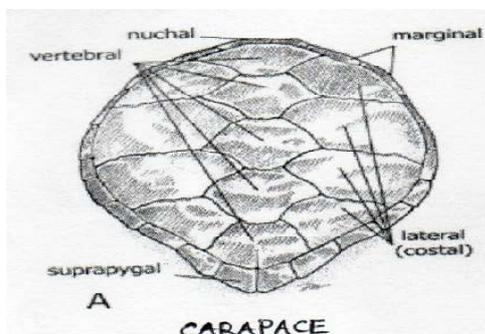
The Olive Ridley sea turtle (*Lepidochelys olivacea*), also known as the Pacific Ridley sea turtle, is a medium-sized species of sea turtle



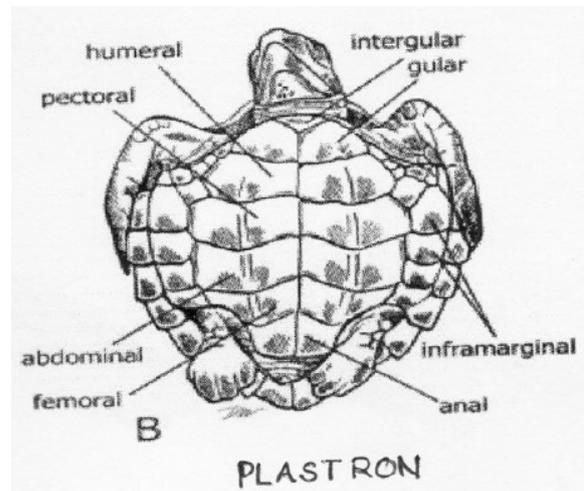
(Fig.1) found in warm and tropical waters, primarily in the Pacific and Indian oceans. Olive Ridley sea turtles were discovered by Henry Nicholas Ridley (a botanist, geologist, naturalist) on the Coast of Fernando De Noronha Island in Brazil, in the year 1887. It is also named Olive Ridley sea turtle due to its greenish olive carapace and skin and discoverer H.N. Ridley. Turtle is a vertebrate of reptilian group like snakes, lizards, crocodiles, sphendon and tortoises. These are reptiles, because of the characteristic feature such as presence of hard dorsal body covering called carapace (Fig. 2) and ventral covering called plastron (Fig. 3). These coverings are outer body covering (exoskeleton) which are modified hard scales. The second characteristic is creeping habit. The biological or zoological or scientific name of the Olive Ridley turtle is *Lepidochelys olivacea*.



**Fig.1 Structure of Olive Ridley sea turtle.**



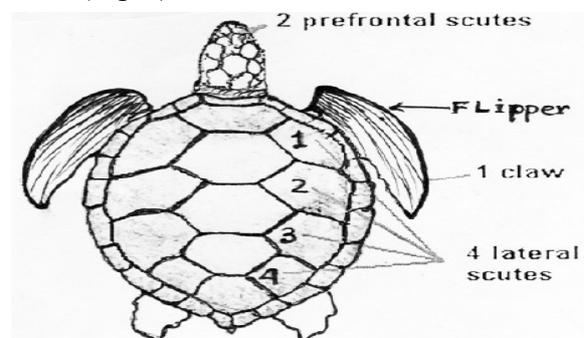
**Fig.2 Dorsal body covering of turtle (carapace).**



**Fig.3 Ventral body covering of turtle (plastron).**

#### IV. STRUCTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

1. **Weight:** It weighs 40-50 kg for average adults where as hatchlings weigh 28g.
2. **Length:** It measures about 55-80cm for nesting females and hatchlings are about 1.5 inch (4cm).
3. **Morphologically** it appears Olive or grayish-green, with a heart-shaped top shell (carapace) having 6-9 pairs of lateral scutes with 1-2 claws on their flippers (Fig. 4). Hatchlings emerge mostly black with a greenish hue on the sides (Fig. 5).



**Fig. 4 Limbs of the turtle called flipper.**



4. The exact life span is unknown, but sexual maturity occurs at about 15 years old.

5. The food consists of marine organisms such as algae, lobsters, crabs, tunicates, molluscs, shrimps, and fish.



**Fig.5 Hatchlings of Olive Ridley sea turtle at Gahirmatha.**

#### V. NESTING

Although commonly referred to as the Pacific Ridley, the Olive Ridley is not exclusively found in the Pacific Ocean. It is globally distributed in the tropical regions of the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. These live in sea, but on land they are seen during nesting period. They prefer to warmer latitudes, bays and lagoons, which are fairly shallow because that is where they spend time feeding and sunbathing. Vast majority of Olive Ridley turtles are seen in the beaches of Mexico and California. The Olive Ridley turtles prefer to a dry season for laying their eggs.

Odisha is significant with respect to Olive Ridley turtles because of three mass nesting rookeries namely Gahirmatha, Devi and Rusikulya situated along the coast of Odisha (480 kilometer which is 8% of the total Indian coast line) where the unique phenomenon of mass nesting occurs almost every year after mating between male and female in the sea (Fig.6). In fact, Gahirmatha is

recorded to be the largest nesting ground of the Olive Ridley turtles in the world. In Gahirmatha, they lay their eggs during December to April. At Gahirmatha, mass nesting occurs twice, once during January and February followed by second mass nesting during March. Gahirmatha of Odisha is the largest nesting ground of these turtles in the world because of virgin land (undisturbed) and congenial environment. They also lay eggs in the coasts of Odisha like Devi river and Rusikulya river, which are the sites of connecting link (river mouth) between river and sea (estuarine domain). The sand grains of these coastline offers suitable niche for excavation, retention of moisture, regulation of temperature and comfortable emergence of hatchlings.



**Fig.6 Mating pair of Olive Ridley sea turtle. Bottom is female and top is male.**

#### VI. NESTING GROUNDS

Olive Ridley turtles are best known for their behaviour of synchronized nesting in mass numbers, termed arribada (Fig.7). The term "arribada" is a Spanish term, the meaning of which is arrival. Some major nesting grounds are Gahirmatha in Odisha, scattered near Coromandel Coast and Sri Lanka, Tropical Eastern Pacific,

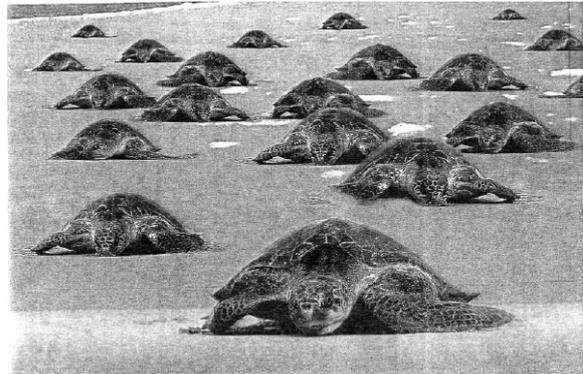


Central America and Mexico, and Playa Nancite beach in Costa Rica.

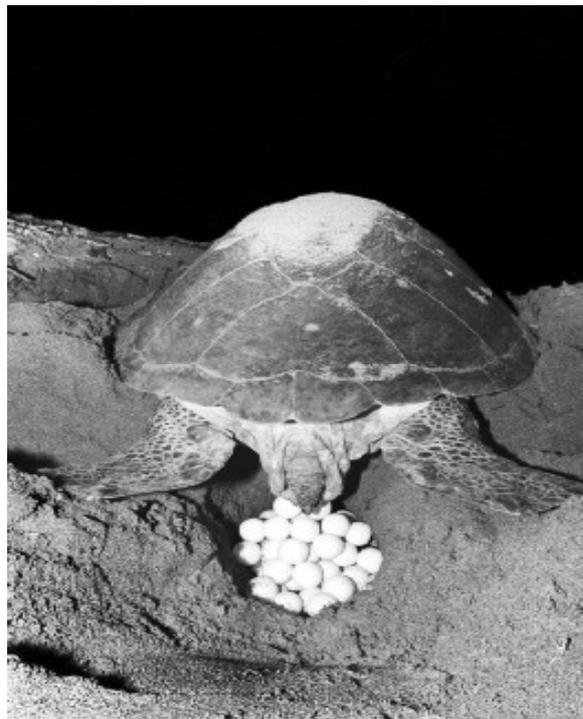
Olive Ridleys generally prefer to nest on small isolated almost virgin beaches. They like fine hard and larger sand grains with sufficient moisture and avoid the vegetation areas. Generally mass emergence takes place two hours after and before the high tide. Nesting takes place at night. Before emergence out of water, the turtle waits a while, lifts her head up and then crawls out. The crawl for site selection is not in a straight line. It moves in zigzag manner to find a suitable place for nesting. They always prefer to a high place for digging. Once the nest site is selected, the turtle moves around sweeping the sand by its fore flippers, with the hind flipper working in an alternating rhythm with the front flipper. She makes a shallow pit of 10-15 cm before digging the nest properly (Fig. 8).

After 3-5 minutes of nest preparation, hind flippers begin to scoop out the egg pit. The hind flippers continue dig the pit, which may be oval, flask shaped or cylindrical. Once the pit is complete, the turtle rests a while and then it lower its tail into cavity with the everted cloacal portion. The eggs may be extruded singly or two at a time (Fig. 9). Mucus (a slimy fluid) coating the eggs is frequently secreted between the egg extrusion. The shape of the eggs is spherical (Fig.10), the size of the normal eggs is 3.4 - 3.8 cm in diameter and weight is about 28-30g. Filling the nest cavity begins immediately after the last egg has been laid. The hind flippers then scoop sand alternately from the side of the pit and dump it on the opening. Filling the body pit and concealing the site: The hind flippers collect sand from the side and press it towards the centre and the animal compacts the nest by thumping by its plastron. It obliterates the nest by throwing sand by the fore flippers and

then they return to the sea. During the return, they throw the sand by flippers in such a way that no one can know the egg laying site, arrival and departure route.



**Fig.7 Mass nesting of Olive Ridley sea turtles (Arribada) at Gahirmatha, Odisha.**



**Fig.8 Egg-laying of Olive Ridley in a pit made in sand of the sea shore. Eggs are released from everted cloaca.**



**Fig. 9 Egg laying (two at a time or one) with mucus by Olive Ridley sea turtle in sand pit made by the female turtle at Gahirmatha sea coast.**



**Fig.10 Spherical shape of the egg laid by the female Olive Ridley in the sand pit of Gahirmatha.**

#### VII. MIGRATION OF OLIVE RIDLEY

After making their way above the high-tide line, the females lay their eggs and after nesting season, depending on the distance, this migration may take several months. When fully developed, hatchlings break through their eggshell (Fig.11), and slowly dig their way to the surface, typically en masse. This process can take a few days. Eggs incubated at temperature 31-32 degree Centigrade will produce only females, eggs incubated at 28 degree Centigrade or less will solely produce males. That means the sex of the hatchlings are temperature dependant. After

this period, the juvenile turtles move into highly productive feeding areas to finish growing, a process that can take as little as a few years and as long as a few decades. After acquiring sufficient resources, adult males and females migrate to breeding areas to mate and, in case of females to nest. Although a female typically only needs mating with one male to obtain enough sperm to fertilize all of her eggs in a season, multiple paternity is common in sea turtles. Like females, male turtles show natal homing, but visit broader areas and more sites than females do. Females stay near their nesting beach during the nesting season, which can last one to two months.



**Fig.11 Hatchling of Olive Ridley sea turtle emerging out by breaking of the egg.**

#### VIII. LONGEVITY: A BEAUTY OF TURTLES

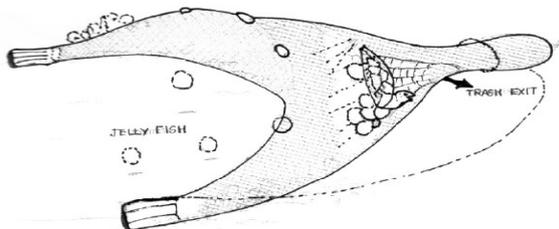
Turtles and tortoises are some of the most long lived members of the reptilian family. Even small species that are typically kept as pets, like box turtles and terrapins live between 30 and 40 years if they are kept healthy. Large species such as marine or sea turtles are estimated to live about 80 years. The giant tortoise, the largest of all land turtles, typically lives at least a century (100 years). Some have even been known to live for more than 200 years. One reason of turtles to have such



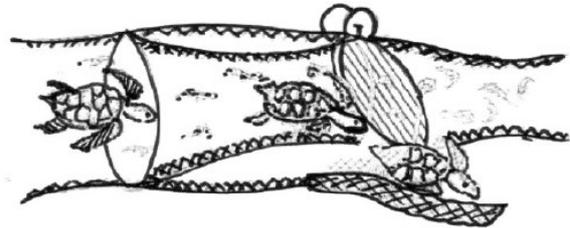
long life span is believed due to their slowness. Turtles continue to grow very slowly throughout their lives. This prevents them from aging in the same way birds and mammals do. Because of slow metabolism, they can survive for a longer period without food and water, which also gives them a greater chance of survival in harsh condition.

#### IX. TURTLE EXCLUDER DEVICE (TED)

It is a special device that allows a captured sea turtle to escape when caught in a fisherman's net. The use of device ideally allows by catch larger than 10cm to escape the nets unharmed (Fig. 12). This selectivity is achieved by metal grids integrated into the trawl net structure. The grids act as a barrier for large creatures such as turtles from passing through the bars into the back of the net. A small opening in the net is then available, either above or below the grid so that the creatures that are stopped by the TEDs are allowed to escape the net, (Fig. 13) relatively unharmed. Target species such as shrimp are, however, pushed back of the net. This device is inserted into shrimp trawl nets to reduce accidental bycatch of turtles. The first TED "Georgia Jumper" by name was invented by Sinkey Boone in the late 1960s. Recently, a TED named as CIFT-TED is designed by ICAR - Central Institute of Fisheries Technology (CIFT), Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh having its headquarters in Kochi, Kerala.



**Fig.12 Turtle excluder device (TED) to escape from the fisherman's net.**



**Fig.13 Escape of the Olive Ridley sea turtle from the TED.**

#### X. LEGAL MEASURES FOR SAFETY AND SECURITY OF POPULATION

The State Government is highly careful for the conservation of the endangered species of Olive Ridley turtles along with the coast of Odisha. State High Court of Odisha is serious about this matter which is evidenced from the directive of May 14, 1998. High Court directs that all trawlers operating in the area need to use TED to prevent sea turtles from getting entangled in the fishing nets. The direction was issued on the basis of suggestion by experts on turtle. On February 23, the High Court had registered a suo motu PIL on alarming death of Olive Ridley turtles and appointed an amicus curiae.

Subsequently, the High Court had constituted a three member panel to formulate measures for the protection of both the turtles and their habitats. Among other directions, the High Court had directed the committee to ascertain the status of implementation of the order of May 14, 1998. It is reported that during the last five years alone, 252 trawlers have been seized inside Gahirmatha marine wildlife sanctuary and in Rusikulya estuary, but not a single trawler had TED to prevent entanglement of ridleys. This is a matter of grave concern.

Realising the gravity of the use of TED, the Orissa High Court in March, 2021 asserted



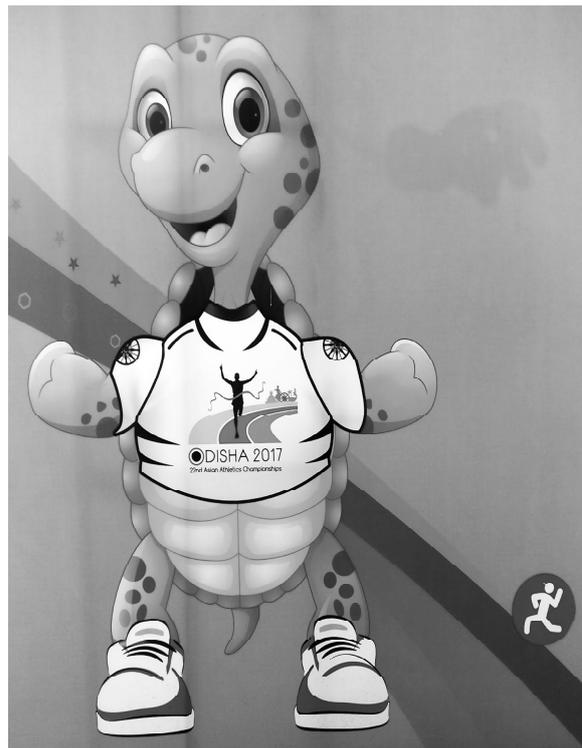
that there is an urgent need to ensure that patrolling is stepped up to have an effective check over illegal trawling activities at Gahirmatha, the world's largest rookery for Olive Ridley sea turtles. The court expected the patrolling to be made effective by providing the enforcement teams with adequate equipment and vehicles.

The assertion came after amicus curiae, Sri Mohit Agarwal, submitted a report on an alarming incident in which fishermen in illegally operating trawlers ganged up and attacked a patrolling boat at Gahirmatha coast, leaving the boat damaged and its patrolling staff got injured on March 15, 2021. Expressing concern over "The impunity with which the illegally operating trawlers are able to violate the law", the bench of Chief Justice S Muralidhar and Justice BP Routray directed the Regional Chief Conservator of Forest (RCCF), Bhubaneswar Circle, "to personally oversee the steps being taken and to ensure strict compliance with the directions issued by the court in coordination with the district administration".

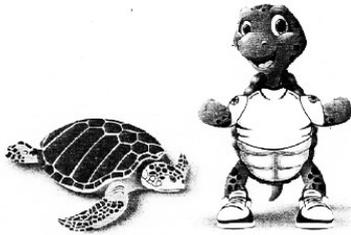
Strengthening the law and implement of the regulation is expected to protect and save the lives of these gigantic marine creatures. Remembering, respecting and realising the importance of Olive Ridley, the State Government of Odisha considered to place Olive Ridley as mascot or logo in 22<sup>nd</sup> edition of the Asian Athletics Championships held from 6 to 9 July, 2017 at Kalinga Stadium in Bhubaneswar, Odisha (Fig. 14). The name of the logo was "Olly" (Fig. 15), which was an attraction in Asian Athletics in Odisha. Our sports mascot OLLY representing the vulnerable Olive Ridley sea turtles was created to raise awareness about preserving the habitat of these migratory guests who coexist with us in this beautiful planet (Fig. 16).



**Fig. 14 Olive Ridley turtle as mascot in 22<sup>nd</sup> Asian Athletics Championships, Odisha held during 06<sup>th</sup> to 09<sup>th</sup> July, 2017 at Kalinga Stadium, Bhubaneswar, Odisha, India.**



**Fig. 15 Our sports mascot of 22<sup>nd</sup> Asian Athletics Championships, Olly to create awareness of conservation of Olive Ridley sea turtles worldwide.**



Our sports mascot OLLY representing the vulnerable Olive Ridley sea turtles is created to raise awareness about preserving the habitat of these migratory guests who co-exist with us in this beautiful planet.

Let's play perfect hosts to them every year.

**Fig.16 The role of the state government of Odisha to popularise and create awareness about Olive Ridley sea turtle through mascot OLLY in international level during Asian Athletics Championships, 2017 organized at Bhubaneswar, Odisha where around 560 athletes from 41 nations (countries) participated. Olly was moving in the playground and had been attracting the attention of players and viewers.**

## XI. CONSERVATION AND PROTECTION

In order to successfully conserve a species, one must have a clear idea of the factors contributing to its decline. While some onshore threats may be more visible, offshore factors such as fishery related mortality either at the breeding ground or along the migratory route may contribute much more significantly to the decline of the population. In 2002, a Turtle Interpretation Centre was set up in Bhubaneswar with the support of Ford India, to spread awareness about the need for turtle conservation activities. Further, to strengthen awareness and conservation, every year World Turtle Day or International Turtle Day is observed on 23<sup>rd</sup> May and World Sea Turtle Day on 16<sup>th</sup> June.

Because of the decline in their numbers, the law protects sea turtles, nationally and internationally. In India, all the sea turtles are listed in Scheduled I of Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. The Convention for International Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna (CITES) has listed all the sea turtles under Appendix I. The International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) has categorized Olive Ridley as "Endangered". The Wildlife Protection Society of India (WPSI) launched operation Kachhapa in 1998 in collaboration with the Odisha State Forest Department, the Wildlife Institute of India (WII), Dehradun and the Wildlife Society of Odisha to safeguard the future of Olive Ridley, the pride of Odisha as well as world.

**"A threat to any species of plant and animal life is a threat to man himself. "**

**- Mrs Indira Gandhi**

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## O Durga Maa

*Dr. Jashaswini Mishra*



The power of the feminine,  
an embodiment of Shakti,  
the quintessence of the universe,  
and the conqueror of evil forces,  
the triple-eyed Goddess,  
with the trident adorned  
in Your hand, You defeated  
the demon Mahishasura.

Since then, we have been paying  
obeisance before Your lotus feet,  
and Your resplendent idol,  
gloriously carrying on  
the vitality for millennia.

You are the Supreme Being,  
the very essence of motherhood,  
always bestowing upon us  
Your bountiful grace.

Hail Mother Goddess !  
May You keep pouring out  
Your divine blessings,  
and bring afresh peace and love  
across the globe.

---

Dr. Jashaswini Mishra, Qrs. No.- N/152,  
New L.I.C. Colony, Badambadi, Cuttack.





## The Truth and Vitality of Gandhism

*Er. Raghunath Patra*

British Policy is “Divide and Rule”  
Our diversity is in caste and religion  
went in favour of East India company.  
Engulfed entire nation without interruption.

Although they were few,  
but with Indians ruled over Indians.  
Because man is selfish.  
Indian Police tortured Indians as in Eram to  
please their European boss.  
How Foolish !!

If tide becomes satanic, Ebb tide is divine,  
yields fertility and when British Administration  
became Satanic Gandhiji preached  
Non-Violence, Ram Dhun.

Gandhiji initially an individual void of unity,  
arms and armaments and so preferred Ebb tide,  
wanted to provoke divinity in European’s  
satanic mind.

Gandhiji’s principle was if one slaps on one  
cheek, show other.  
Because man is built of divine  
and satanic attitudes.  
Divineness will be provoked within.

He Exhibited his divineness by  
observing truth, Non-Violence.  
Preached others alike  
Through honesty united all among diversities.  
Unity drove out British “Divide & Rule” satanic.

While begging, Buddha was misbehaved by a lady.  
He didn’t mind but lady repented.

When Buddha begged next morn,  
she offered, begged apology with regret.

Buddha replied, yesterday’s lady was different.  
I don’t carry praise or abuse.

Perform duty.  
One who harms today will show  
compassion tomorrow.  
Gandhiji provoked divinity.

Gandhiji preached all truth, Non-Violence  
without social prejudice, caste and religion.  
He was saint among politicians,  
engrossed in Ram Dhun,  
like politician among saints led the nation.

Lord Ram offered many chances to  
Ravan to return Sita, to avoid battle.  
But didn’t. 'Quit India',  
'Do or Die' was Gandhiji’s last toil.

Bhagavan Vishnu is armed with Sankha,  
Chakra, Gada, Padma to have proper  
administration and make the world run when  
Sankha, Gada, Padma fail, applies wheel.

He accorded sufficient opportunities to British.  
Helped in second world war.  
They didn’t Listen. Lastly declared “Quit India”,  
“Do or Die”. Patience is essence,  
endurance is fragrance, we learn !!

---

Er. Raghunath Patra, Brundaban Dham,  
Lokanath Road, (Patnahat Sahi Square), Puri - 752001.



## Birthplace of Gopabandhu

*Hansanath Muduli*

I had not seen Gopapur,  
I saw Gopapur  
That holy soil was  
Birthplace of our Gopabandhu.  
That village has become famous  
For the heavenly person  
Being born there.

He was not a man  
But took his incarnation  
For saving the downtrodden people.  
I touched my forehead to that soil today  
And made my life sublime.

The village where he spent his childhood  
And had ensoiled his body  
By playing on that ground,  
I took that soil on my forehead  
And made my life sublime.

Where the first fire was lighted  
On his birth,  
Though born as a human child  
He was really a heavenly messenger,  
The cot on which he slept  
When he was a child,  
Where he was engrossed in thinking  
For helping the poor and the helpless person,  
That Suando village  
Put a memory line on my heart's paper

From where he united his friends  
To go on his flight  
To dryout tears from the  
Eyes of innumerable affected people,  
Put a memory line on my heart's paper.  
I saw that village on the bank of Bhargabi  
and made my life sublime.

The house where the poet of  
The famous chanting  
'Let my body be mixed with this country's soil'  
was born,  
I touched my forehead to that soil  
And made my life sublime.

That was not at all a small house  
Be it called a great temple.

Let every people of the Country  
Visit his birthplace  
And make their lives sublime.  
It will be dishonoured  
To describe him as a man  
Since he was  
Really a heavenly person.

---

Hansanath Muduli, Khandagiri (Dumduma - A),  
Bhubaneswar - 751030.



## Parbati Giri the Fire Maiden of Odisha

*Dr. Bhubaneswar Pradhan*

Bargarh is noteworthy for so many reasons,  
The freedom fighting of women I do mention.  
In this movement peoples took active parts,  
Parbati Giri the fire maiden is counted first.

She was born at Samlaipadar nearby Bijepur,  
By her good deed brought enough glory to Bargarh sure.  
She followed footprints of Mahatma Gandhi,  
And displayed an ideal role and made strategy.

She revolted against the mighty Britishers,  
Nothing restricted her to raise the voice stronger.  
Malati Devi, Rama Devi, Jambubati of Bargarh,  
They were her predecessors to guide well enough.

Once she with her troop occupied Bargarh court,  
She gave verdict to the rulers in her clear throat.  
She was arrested and put then to imprisonment,  
She made no apology for her disobedience.

She was told Mother Teresa and the fire maiden,  
Who always raised voices for the downtrodden.  
After independence keeping away from politics,  
She started Nrusinghanath orphanage with bliss.

Phuljharan Bal Niketan is also her contribution,  
The entire life she sacrificed for only the nation.  
Being the fire maiden she took many measures,  
Educating orphans she is remembered for ever.

---

Dr. Bhubaneswar Pradhan, Asst. Teacher, Kangaon High School,  
Bargarh- 768033, E-mail : pradhanbhubaneswar@gmail.com



## Tokyo Victory In Hockey : An Odishan Noble Gesture

*Prabhudutt Dash*

The monumental victory, the remarkable achievement.  
 Outstanding performance, mesmerizing feat.  
 A milestone, a turning point in Odishan sports history.  
 A memorable event, an indomitable will against all odds.

Indian Men's Hockey Team's winning  
 Bronze medal in Tokyo Olympics  
 is an epoch making event in history.

After a wait of forty one years,  
 We achieved this prestigious victory.  
 Grit, determination, unwavering will and  
 painstaking attitude brought us fame and glory.  
 Insurmountable difficulties were disappeared before  
 Our indomitable will and courageous effort.

Odisha government's tacit support and passionate  
 devotion was a morale booster for the players.  
 It's sponsorship of Hockey when nobody was willing  
 to take the risk was a manna from heaven  
 for the untiring Hockey players.

The foresight, the vision, the proactive attitude,  
 the commitment and investment in  
 Hockey paid rich dividends.  
 Such patriotism is praiseworthy and adorable.

Our Odisha Hockey players brought laurels for our state.  
 Amit Rohidas and Virendra Lakra,  
 part of the winning Indian Hockey team  
 increased the stature and image of Odisha in the  
 international arena of games and sports.  
 It will be written in golden letters in the annals Odishan history.  
 Odisha salutes their selflessness and patriotic fervour.

---

Prabhudutt Dash, Plot No.307, Haladipadia, Sarala Nagar, Laxmisagar, Bhubaneswar-751006.



# Cappuccino

*Dr. Sonali Mohapatra*

We are all alone today  
 me and my cappuccino  
 it's speaking to me in urgent low whispers  
 suggesting random names of friends  
 i can call to ward off my ugly thoughts  
 we are all alone today  
 me and my cappuccino  
 my phone book is filled with a thousand  
 numbers  
 but i stare at them blankly  
 choosing one to call and then  
 cutting it off midway.

There's no one i trust not to laugh at me,  
 at my predicament  
 sitting all alone with my cappuccino  
 on this new year's day  
 in a café which is mercifully  
 empty of staring judging eyes  
 i persuade my cappuccino to be  
 low and sweet  
 i want to numb this indistinct mutter  
 in my head.

We are all alone today  
 me and my cappuccino  
 since i stormed off from my place  
 in a huff of something i can't seem  
 to figure out anymore  
 the only person i can call and  
 share my stupidity with  
 has his phone switched off  
 and so we are all alone today  
 me and my cappuccino  
 in this out of the way, deserted  
 coffeeshop.

---

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## Forms and Places of Worship at Colonial Cuttack

*Dr. Pramod Kumar Mohanty*

Culture was an important site of colonial hegemony. Cultural encounter in colonial India is a complex phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> Colonialism represents a systematic attempt to transform the culture of the subject nation by transforming latter's customs, traditions and social organizations, and by introducing new boundaries between peoples and erasing others through the institutionalization of racism and the creation of new ethnicities. Thus, colonial encounter remains one of the most contested terrains in human history, more so in Indian context of cultural diversity, and the uneven pace of colonising that varied from region to region and locality to locality, and even within the locality. Cities and towns were the points of intense cultural interaction and served as the principal nodes of introducing alien colonial culture into colonised society. They became the cultural crucibles and the major transformative agents in their regions, since new beliefs and practices frequently emerged from such centres and diffused outwards.

The paper examines the forms and the places of worship at colonial Cuttack that reflected its multicultural population professing different religions and belonging to different sects and castes, which were a composite of both old and new practices. In the process it elucidates

the larger historical context that framed and shaped neo-forms and places of worship engendered at Cuttack during the period.

### **Historiographical Tradition**

Colonialism, apart from being a political, was a cultural<sup>2</sup> encounter as well, between the colonising and colonized. The culture is used in this study neither as an unimportant adjunct of the material transformation of cities nor a purely symbolic realm for differentiating social roles. Culture used here is both dependent and variable having significant material consequences. In tune with the fashion of the cultural historians it mainly concerns itself with values and symbols, wherever these are found in the everyday life of ordinary people.<sup>3</sup>

### **Forms & Places of Worship at Colonial Cuttack**

Forms and the places of worship at colonial Cuttack reflected its multicultural population professing different religions and belonging to different sects and castes, which were a composite of both old and new practices. Its pantheon of gods and goddesses, and the rituals involving them were drawn from several sources: tribal, folk, Sanskritic, Saivite, Vaisnavite, Sakti, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Christian, Odia, Tamil,



Telugu, Bengali, etc. The worship of Nataraja, Narasimha, Naga, etc., pointed to its South Indian origin; and the Vedic gods to North India. The mysterious Sakti worship was a typical representative of East Indian variety. Names of different localities and the rituals specific to them were also reminiscent of the leading persons who founded them and the ways of life associated with people living there as well as the changes they have undergone in the course of their passage in history. Several legends & folk tales are associated with them, which probably carry the silent voices that need to be vocalised. Thus, Jhanjirimangala reminds us of the Sanskritisation of a tribal deity into the Hindu pantheon as the Sakti Goddess Sitala with all such ritual changes in the process.<sup>4</sup> Likewise, Meriabazar, going by its nomenclature, either points to an uncertain pedigree of the erstwhile practice of human sacrifice by the Kandh tribes who probably resided here in the ancient past, when it was full of jungles or to Mahurias, a lower caste people earning their livelihood by blowing *mahuri* (a kind of instrument blown with mouth) on auspicious occasions, as Ainslie's report of 1814 mentions a place called Mahooreabazar that in due course in all likelihood became Meriabazar. Thoriasahi probably reminds us of the packed bullocks used by the itinerant traders of the yore to carry their merchandise. Likewise, the stone embankment at Cuttack (now buried under ring road) carries legends romanticizing immortal acts of not only the royalty but also the common men in the city to protect it from the recurrent threats of the riverine floods.<sup>5</sup> The dam was not only a marvelous piece of engineering feat of the natives but also was an ideal platform of the popular culture, as the site was being daily frequented by people of different hues for chit-chat, gossip, conviviality, relishing the delicacies from the

swarming hawker/vendors (Cuttack was/is famous for such hawkers in umpteen numbers) as well as for solemn meditative and the creative literary thoughts. The place Ranihat was either a traditional *hat/bazaar* meant for queen's shopping or under the patronage of queen king during the royal days or was associated with the origin of a style of Odissi *Kirtan* (a chorus laity gathering), called Reniti/Ranihati.<sup>6</sup> Along with neighbouring Mangalabag, it was the centre of horn-works craft in the city and produced a wide range of products like comb, birds, konark wheel, hand stick, etc.; which had achieved wide popularity both within and outside Odisha. Trading importance of the place is evident from the fact that the Marwari trading communities mostly belonging to Digambar and Terapanthi sects of Jainism have had been living there and at the contiguous College Square. Deolasahi has been conjectured as the possible site of the famed (Purusottam) temple in past that was built by Anangabhima III and destroyed by Feroz Shah Tughluq, but no traces of it are found— a mystery that needs to be resolved. At present it houses Nrusinghanath Raghunath Jew Mandir. Gangamandir celebrates the worship of nature in the form of river by incarnating her as Goddess Gangamata (named after the sacred river the Ganga) in the Hindu pantheon and its association with the tradition of fishermen; who seemed to be along with milkmen, potter, carpenter, weaver and occasionally barber and washermen; the original inhabitants of Cuttack in the Mahanadi delta given its riverine topography that was dotted with numerous ponds and swamps swarming with fishes and crabs.<sup>7</sup> Many neighbourhoods in the city are named after such castes like Kumbharsahi, Tantisahi, Bhandarisahi, etc. Later with modern professions evolving; many doctors, lawyers, engineers, teachers, administrators et.al., started coming to and settling



down in the city. Killahpadia valorizes a rich cultural space with elements rooted in both royal and commoner, and secular and the religious traditions. It has had been the site of *Baliyatra* festival celebrating Chaitanya's association with the place and the maritime tradition of Odisha, as it was the point of arrival and departure of merchant ships in hoary past. As a site of popular culture, it was a site akin to a traditional periodic religious festivity centre combining elements of market (merchandise included a variety both native & foreign), merrymaking & enjoyment (watching *jatras*, *palas*, *baunsarani*, etc), thrills of shopping from clothing to daily utilities, (including such items as *sukhua* - dried fish), eating tasty food items (like *bada/dahibada* – *aludam*, *alugobi*, etc), sermonising, chanting *mantras* and organizing *kirtans*, etc. Jobra, apart from pointing to its tribal linkages, signifies its importance as the site of commerce and the modern industry and transport—the site of East India Irrigation & Canal Company (founded in 1869) and the hub of steamer transport. Barabatti fort, although dilapidated by the vandalism of the colonisers and had ceased to be a military and political power centre, came to acquire cultural power as a symbol of the glorious royal and military tradition of Odisha, as it was appropriated as one of the icons by the advocates of rising Odia identity vis-a-vis the hegemony both colonisers and their cohorts. Places like Bakharabad, Buxibazar, Alamchandbazar, Dewanbazar (named after Mughal Dewan, Mirza Zafar), Azamkhanbazar, Darghabazar, Kazibazar (named after *Kazi/Qazi*, who lived there), Lalbag, Chandinichowk, Mansinghpatana (named after the famous general of Akbar who defeated the Afghan rulers at Cuttack), etc., owe their origin to Muslim rule and retain distinct traces of the Islamic heritage and culture in the forms of monuments and their

nomenclature. Chandinichowk in particular was the integral part of the Mughal Township, where the citizens used to gather to have a royal glimpse, marketing, merrymaking & socializing. In colonial times it served the purposes of a mall road found in a typical colonial township. Subsequent town growth, however, radically restructured the physical and social demography of such places. A new composite culture in due course evolved in which the people of diverse religious, social, linguistic and economic background lived in harmony. Muslims coexisted with Hindus & Jains, a living example of which was the *satyapir* cult, jointly worshipped by both Hindus and Muslims. There were exchanges of titles like Buxi, used both by Hindus and Muslims. Religious precincts like Qadam-i-rasul at Darghabazar and other such sites associated with *sufis* were (are) worshipped by both Muslims and Hindus. The city represented a unique Hindu-Muslim cultural synthesis, which singled out it as the only place that witnessed no bloodshed and riot during the heyday of the communal frenzy in Indian subcontinent during the last days of freedom struggle in India. Telengabazar (ironically there is hardly a Telugu population at present), as per the oral tradition, reminds of the long association of the Telugu people with the place (from Bhaumakara days onwards, according to some); who came as soldiers, domestic servants, craftsmen (weavers, carpenters, barbers, ship builders, temple building masons et. al.), metal workers (gold, silver and copper), traders, intellectuals & administrators during pre-colonial period; and as traders and as both skilled & unskilled labourers during the colonial period.<sup>8</sup> It housed the Raghunathjew temple, where people used to gather for listening to *Ramcharitamanas* daily. Choudhurybazar (named after one Manjunath Choudhury who had come from



Nagpur during Maratha rule), apart from being the main trade centre in Odisha, also celebrates the cultural synthesis having deities of several religions and sects. Located here were the temples, *maths* (monasteries like Gopaljew) and *mandaps* (podiums where Durga idols were kept) of the Hindu deities like Gopal, Sri Radha and Durga, the images of the Jain saints in a Jain temple (jointly worshipped by Hindus and Jains) and a beautiful temple nearby belonging to the Nanakpanthis. Tulsipur alludes to its association with Hindu tradition and housed many *maths* and *ashrams* of the monks like Garib Das, Chaitanya, Maunibaba, Mastarambaba et. al. Kaligali, apart from being the residence of native notables, was also associated with tradition of Sakti worship in the form of ferocious looking Goddess Kali. Starting from this place the worship of Kali has become a mass festival in city. Chandichhak likewise celebrates the Sakti tradition in the form of Chandi worship, to whom people resort as their ultimate savour. In due course, it evolved as a prime centre of worship and community life among the Hindus, who gathered their daily for getting assurances and enter into new relationships. Satichoura reminiscences its association with the Hindu practices of *sati* of the yore. Dagarpara in particular reminds of the days of royalty in the hoary past as being the residence of kingly messengers, which subsequently acquired fame as the residence of craftsmen producing exquisite gold and silvery jewellery, and the world famous silver filigree works. Odiabazar probably carries the memories of Oriya weavers who lived there in hoary past, but its social demography have been radically changed owing to arrival of people from other communities like Muslims (predominantly) and Bengalis during the subsequent times. Kaflabazar (*kafila* in Arabic means pilgrim troupe) reminds

of convergence of the troupes of pilgrims en route to Jagannath Puri via Cuttack from the days of yore. So also was the Purighat through which pilgrims used to ferry in and out of Cuttack on its southern (Puri) side. Gadagadiaghat reminisces its association with Saivism in the form of the worship of Gadgadeswar Mahadev, Vaisnavism in the way of Chaitanya's visit to the city and the hoary maritime tradition of Odisha. The places like Firingibazar, Christiansahi, Societypur, Mission Road, Paetonsahi, Cantonment (the camp of British soldiers), Chakrachandbazar (present Station Bazaar and College Square area)/ Chakrachandmaidan (now the campus of Ravenshaw University) carry the Western names that speak eloquently of their European origin and carry its cultural vestiges.<sup>9</sup> Chakrachandmaidan or the associated bazaar came up to cater to the entertaining needs of the colonizers, who used to conduct horse races (particularly on special occasions like x-mass, new year, *darbar*, etc.) there frequently with collections both from them and the natives. It was a lush green grass field looked pleasing to eyes where thousands gathered to watch the pageantry of the horse race with riders putting on colourful dresses and with a hundred of police being deployed to keep the discipline. On signal the horse riders rode with the pace of wind. The horse that reached the specified spot in the circular field won the award to the restiveness of spectators who enjoyed every moment of that with cheer and eagerly cherished to watch the event again. Initially an all European affair, it came to involve the natives like *rajas* and *zamindars* from different regions in Odisha.<sup>10</sup> Kaliaboda connects the city to Sikh tradition, as the place was consecrated by Nanak and his father who halted there en route to Puri. The gurudwara, Datansahib, stands there celebrating such memory. Some connect



Kaliaboda etymologically to Kalu Bedi, the father of Nanak. Dolamundai speaks of its association with the worship of Radha-Krushna of Vaisnavite tradition. It was probably a site of *holi* celebration, where at present stands a Jagannath temple. Localities like Alamchandbazar, Azamkhanbazar, Tarachandpatana, Manisahuchhak, Madhupatana, Madhusudan Nagar, etc., were reminiscent of the leading personalities in different fields who flocked to the city. They either lived or had their concerns located at such places, i.e., the industrial estate, Madhupatana that was so named after the pioneer modern industry in Odisha, M. S. Das. Likewise, the name Madhusudan Nagar was given to the locality that house M. S. Das' tomb (at the Christian Cemetery, called Gorakabar), his statute, a library and a cultural institution named after him.

In the city as a whole there were practitioners of Vaisnavism, Saivism, Saktism, Mahima Dharma, local cults of different hues, remnants of the ancient animistic and magical practices, Sikhism, Jainism (of its sects like Svetambar, Digambar, Sthanakvasi, Terapanthi), Christianity, and Islam with its different sects like Sunni (predominantly), Shia (small in number) and the Sufis. People although subscribed to different religious practices hardly cherished a rancor against one another. Generally, a spirit of bonhomie and fellow-feeling undergirded their religious experiences. Thus, during the visit of a religious teacher (saint/*acharya*/dervish) the cross sections of people performed their rites and rituals with unfettered gaiety and in a spirit of bonhomie.<sup>11</sup> The worship of *Satya Pir* was one more bright example of such spirit, in which not only both Hindus and Muslims performed the rituals and gave offerings of banana, coconut, sugar, etc., but the language involved in such supplications were

also drawn from both Hinduism and Islam.<sup>12</sup> Overarching nature of the *sahi* (neighbourhood culture)/*bhaichara* (fraternal bond across the communities) had the enough sanitizing impact of hammering out a shared religious culture unique to Cuttack, where the religious celebrations had ceased to be an exclusive communitarian affair and had become a collective one involving people across the communities for a large part of the colonial rule. On its social side the special features of the *bhaichara* were to help both old and indigent *sahi* residents, carry the kids and the elders to hospital, lend a helping hand in marriage ceremonies, carry the dead bodies to cemeteries, assimilate a stranger to *sahi* community, enable the communities collectively enjoy the cultural events like *melody* (musical concerts) and *qawwali/mushaira*, encourage the communities to organise and learn together in the institutions of learning, inspire the communities and castes together elect their joint representatives to the ruling bodies, exemplary respect and protection provided to womenfolk, Muslims/Christians having expertise in Hindu scriptures and composing /singing devotional songs on Hindu deities and the vice versa, etc. Even the cemeteries in and around Cuttack reflect(ed) its cultural bonhomie and syncretism. There were several of them specific to communities and those shared by several communities.<sup>13</sup> They have had a unique place in culture as a place for cremating dead, a place for performing purifying rituals, remembering and paying homage to dead and respectful, and a place of pilgrimage as being the sites of sages and hermits, and the great men of culture. They had a great sanitising impact on society by being the place for disposal of dead and harmful, and maintained moral order in the society as an abode of ancestral spirits and the dreadful gods and goddesses like Siva & Kali,



who took active interest in seeing that moral order prevailed in the society otherwise they would physically intervene by purging the evils by even violent means. The youth cultural associations like Young Men's Christian Association, Muslim Youth Cultural Club and Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangh, even though propelled by separate ideals and working for specific communities, never opposed one another. It was the high profile communal politics of the 30s & 40s of twentieth century that tried to impinge markedly on the shared communitarian bond. But the *sahi/bhai cahara* culture ultimately triumphed in creating a livable bond across the communities and castes that preempted any religious and caste riots unlike in other cities in India.<sup>14</sup>

The encounter of eastern and western cultures that characterized the new age led to a new thinking in religion that threw up many new religious practices like *Brahmodharma* of Brahma Samaj, *Vedantism* of Arya Samaj, Vedantic Socialism of Ramkrishna Mission, Mahima Dharma, etc. All of which talked of the value of wisdom and the worship of truth/*brahmal sunya* (void) by shedding all exterior religious formalities and rituals, and the caste and idolatry. By advocating unity and love for the whole humanity, they put emphasis on developing human character by renouncing selfishness and cultivating love, purity and kindness. They were imbued with the nationalistic and patriotic spirit, and advocated pursuit of spirituality by eliminating self-interests. All these reflected the renaissance spirit and an urge on the part of people to create a more egalitarian social order. Such neo-religious practices became particularly fashionable with the educated class at Cuttack, as it became the central to such neo-religious movements in Odisha. *Brahmo* movement was the earliest of such

movements, which came to symbolize the collective identity of the English educated neo-rich, and became a passport to power, influence and the jobs. The movement was first brought to Cuttack by *Munsif* Mahendra Ray in 1849. Devendranath Tagore's visit to the city in 1850 led to founding of a branch of Adi-Brahmo Samaj in the house of Dy. Magistrate Jagamohan Ray at Odia bazar with the assistance of city's notables, which in due course contributed to the growth of its membership and the spread of its ideals in Odisha. The movement was subsequently carried forward by the Utkal Brahmo Samaj that was founded at Cuttack on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1869 by its Zillah School headmaster, Harnath Bhattacharya. He was instrumental to bring two most prominent members of the movement: M.S Rao and P.M. Acharya. It was situated on an acre of land the west side of the Gangamandir Pond with "*om bhamo krupa hi kevalam*," inscribed on it, where religious discourses used to take place every Sunday. The Samaj used to celebrate its establishment day on 24<sup>th</sup> January annually that coincided with the birthday of its founder, Raja Rammohan Roy. The celebration was accompanied by the house decorations, feasting, *kirtan* procession on the streets and the religious discourses for two days. Soon the Samaj had its newspaper, *Utkal Subhakari*, founded by one Bhagabati Charan Das.<sup>15</sup> The movement later drew a number of notable persons in the city, as it became the symbol of elite status and provided leverage to power and pelf.<sup>16</sup> A *Brahmo Mandir* (temple) was built in the centre of city at Odia bazar in 1871 with donations raised by Jagamohan Lala and the financial assistance from Devendranath Tagore. The division of Brahma Samaj into Adi Brahma Samaj under Devendranath Tagore and Bharatiya Brahma Samaj under Keshav Ch. Sen soon had its



repercussions at Cuttack. The members of Adi Brahma Samaj located at Odia bazar used to congregate at the temple every Wednesday and those of Utkal Brahma Samaj (a wing of Bharatiya Brahma Samaj) every Sunday, when several devotional songs composed by M.S. Rao were caroled. Many leading persons from Bengal like Devendra Nath Tagore, Kesav Ch. Sen, Sivanath Sastri, Devi Prasanna Choudhury et. al., used to come to Cuttack, delivered speeches, practiced its rites and organised religious discourses; which used to have significant impact at Cuttack.<sup>17</sup> The Samaj provided a useful forum where people from across the religious and social status used to congregate and interact, which included such native colonial officials like K.G. Gupta (Commissioner at Cuttack), B. L. Gupta (judge), S.C Sen (judge) and their family members. The wives of such officials had established a Mahila Samaj at Lalbag, the residence of Commissioner. It subsequently ran for sometime at Kaligali, where Reba Roy, the pioneer of women's progress movement in Odisha, had established under its aegis a Woman's School and a Sunday school for the Brahma boys, which ran for sometime before getting closed down. The Samaj rendered a yeomen's service to the cause of neo-synthetic culture of modern Odisha in the fields of the spread of education, women's education and liberation, publication of news journals, enrichment of literature and fighting for the eradication of social evils. Its impact reverberated in the sociocultural life of then Odisha. Madhusudan Rao's Victoria School and Pyarimohan Acharya's Cuttack Academy were the two pillars of education in Odisha. The noted leader of freedom struggle, Bipin Chandra Pal, was for sometime the headmaster of the Academy, and was Pyarimohan's disciple. Madhusudan Rao's writings in different fields of Odia literature

were its gems like *Barnabodha*, *Sahitya Prasanga*, *Sahitya Kusuma*, etc. His paper *Nava Sambad* enriched the cultural life of Odisha by its publications on politics, literature and social reforms. Pyarimohan Acharya was the pioneering historian and a leading social reformer of Odisha who founded Cuttack Youngmen's Literary Association. As a journalist he edited a weekly paper, *Utkal Putra*, which used to expose and criticise corruption in public places. He was a fire brand speaker both in Odia and Bengali, and could speak on anything from Odia literature to corruption in public life and drug addiction. People used to be spellbound people through his speech. Biswanath Kar was famed for his oratory, and was a leading literary critic and an essayist; who founded the famed literary Odia Journal, *Utkal Sahitya*, which became the leading literary mouthpiece in contemporary Odisha.<sup>18</sup> The movement also spread its ideals in the Christian missionary ways like denouncing idolatry among Hindus and undertaking religious discourses at public spaces like *hat/bazaars*. It adopted such techniques deliberately, as it was a social movement meant to attack the prejudicial social practices not meant to be practiced in private or in temples. Thus, it needed to blow its ideals at public spaces. The Christian missionaries also took satisfaction at the fact that the *Brahmos* by demolishing idolatry prepared ground for the spread of Christianity in Odisha that they considered as the 'garden of idolatry and superstitions.' It raised apprehensions and oppositions among the orthodox sections of people, who perceived acquiescence between two, although in reality there was antipathy between the two. The movement, however, declined in due course owing to a combination of factors, the most important being the internal schism and the opposition of conservative forces within the Hindu society.<sup>19</sup>



Like *Brahmo* movement, the *Vedantism* of Dayananda Saraswati also rested itself on the wisdom, knowledge and reason by denouncing casteism, idolatry, obscurantist ritualism and the superstitious practices that had crept into Hinduism by giving a call to go back to the Vedas. It soon developed a following for itself at Cuttack, particularly among the educated elite. Ramkrishna Mission carried such trends to still larger domains of nationalism and state building by advocating a socialism that sought to address the problems of the poor. There were also certain religious movements, which unlike those mentioned above came from below and outside the city confines, like the Mahima Dharma, which even though had rural beginning came to have roots at urban centres like Cuttack during the early part of twentieth century. The followers of the sect were of two types: the dedicated sannyasis and the *grihastas* who lived with their families. They hailed from diverse background: rich and poor, upper and lower castes; but the lower castes and class predominated among them. The founder of the sect was, as believed by its followers, was one mysterious Mahima Swami who had supernatural power. It was Bhima Bhoi (the prodigious blind poet) who fused a protean folk-tribal tradition into popular sectarian practice through his enthralling devotional poetical compositions.<sup>20</sup> The order was further consolidated by Viswanath Baba, a much revered saint of the order. Despite opposition by the elements and the progress of scientism that characterized the epoch, the folk-sprung religious form came to have a significant following event at Cuttack city, to which, it is believed, Mahima Gosain himself visited two times: once in 1838 and once more afterwards in order to preach his doctrine. Its simplicity, catholicity, genuineness and newness appealed the people most. Although it operated within the Hindu fold yet like the

aforesaid neo-religious movements it sought to set up a true Sanatana Dharma by a mix of mysticism, humanism and social activism. It venerated emptiness and an inseparable *purusha* (primeval man), and advocated welfare of all. It emphasized bhakti, *prema* (love), sacrifice, proper karma and *niti niyama* (daily actions). Its followers were sworn by truth, submitted to the direction of a guru, renounced luxury, forsook any medicine, were devoid of desire and attachment, stayed cool in all circumstances and ate only during the day. They were advised to lead a chaste life by shunning the company of kings, brahmins, *bhandaries* (barbers), *majhies* (fishermen) and women in order to achieve the ultimate principle, called '*brahma prapti*' in their parlance. In ideological terms the Mahima Dharma not only represented a revolt against the rigid, oppressive and offending caste rules and the ritualism of the prevalent religion but also a sharp reaction against the motivated campaign of the Christian missionaries. It sought to redeem downtrodden by vocalizing them and establish a genuine egalitarian social order. Because of some of its fanatical followers and unconventional ways, many conservative people became apprehensive that the sect was out to destroy traditional religious beliefs and the social order based on caste. In 19<sup>th</sup> century, it became quite popular (particularly) in Odisha, as evident in mushrooming growth of its associated institutions. Even at Cuttack, it had several *tungis*/Ashrams (houses of religious discourse, many of which were built during the post-independent period) such as at Chandinichowk, Alisha bazar, Chauliaganj, Machhuabazar, Khatbinsahi (1937), Kaflabazar, Bidanasi (1925, the oldest), Chahataghat, Nuabazar, Khannagar (1947), Darjisahi, Badambadi and Jobra; with that at Chandinichowk being the chief and the holiest *gadi*



(podium)/ *tungi* built during the early part of 20<sup>th</sup> century, as it was supposed to be visited by Mahima Gosain himself and the sect's chief pontiff Viswanath Baba was involved in its rebuilt after it was burnt by the miscreants. It was also the richest of the *tungis* in the city owing to hefty donations it received from its devotees. It was also on the efforts of Viswanath Baba that Mahima Dharma assumed a significant following at Cuttack among the cross sections of society irrespective of caste, creed and status. Those *tungies* were frequently visited by the monks of Mahima Order and people used to throng such places to partake in the religious gathering that was characterized by the religious discourses, burning of lamps and the singing of *bhajans* (chorous devotional songs) to the accompaniment of musical instruments like *khanjani* and *jhanja*. With the evening fall the ambience of the 'rur-ban' Cuttack was filled with the musical tones emanating from the *tungis* dotting the city landscape. *Magha Purnima* was the main festival of the followers of the sect that they celebrated with much gala. Such *tungis* have had played the vital role in the spread and the continued popularity of Mahima Dharma, and also in maintaining peace and social harmony in the city and the state of Odisha as people from all the ages, gender, levels, ranks, status, educational and professional achievements joined its ranks with equality and fellow feeling. Apart from such popular side of the Mahima Dharma, it had an intellectual side as well, as it in due course received patronage from the elites and intellectuals of the city, who were meeting frequently and discoursing on its tenets, thereby, further contributed to its growth and popularity. Their writing being published in the printing press accelerated the pace of its popularity and it came to occupy a special place in the society at Cuttack in particular and Odisha in general.<sup>21</sup> But owing

to lack of proper publicity it could not be as popular as other religious reform movements in contemporary India; even though it had potential to be so.<sup>22</sup> All such neo-religious movements, except the Mahima Dharma, remained essentially confined to the urban elites and could not spread beyond the urban confines owing to their discourses being in elitist languages like English, Bengali or at best literary Odia. What continued to exist were their vestigial relics in the form of a few followers, a few places of worship and a few book collections on such practices. They were both scions and pioneers of cultural renaissance and transformation in modern Odisha.

To conclude, the colonial Cuttack was the point of intense cultural interaction and served as the principal node of introducing alien colonial culture into contemporary Odishan society. It became a cultural crucible and the major transformative agent in the region, since new beliefs and practices frequently emerged from it and diffused outwards. The cultural encounter that raged there took rich and varied forms enveloping all the aspects of people's life and experience, including myriad forms and places of worship. Many new vistas of human experience were explored in all the aforesaid spheres that had lasting impact on the posterity. Forms and the places of worship at colonial Cuttack reflected its multicultural population professing different religions and belonging to different sects and castes, which were a composite of both old and new practices. Its pantheon of gods and goddesses, and the rituals involving them were drawn from several sources: tribal, folk, Sanskritic, Saivite, Vaisnavite, Sakti, Jain, Buddhist, Sikh, Christian, Odia, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali, etc. The encounter of eastern and western cultures that characterized the new age led to a



new thinking in religion that threw up many new religious practices like *Brahmodharma* of Brahma Samaj, *Vedantism* of Arya Samaj, Vedantic Socialism of Ramkrishna Mission, Mahima Dharma, etc. All of which talked of the value of wisdom and the worship of truth/*brahma/sunya* (void) by shedding all exterior religious formalities and rituals, and the caste and idolatry. By advocating unity and love for the whole humanity, they put emphasis on developing human character by renouncing selfishness and cultivating love, purity and kindness. They were imbued with the nationalistic and patriotic spirit, and advocated pursuit of spirituality by eliminating self-interests. All these reflected the renaissance spirit and an urge on the part of people to create a more egalitarian social order. Such neo-religious practices became particularly fashionable with the educated. All such neo-religious movements, except the Mahima Dharma, remained essentially confined to the urban elites and could not spread beyond the urban confines owing to their discourses being in elitist languages like English, Bengali or at best literary Odia. But they were both scions and pioneers of cultural renaissance and transformation in modern Odisha. In due course, it was the overarching nature of the *sahi* (neighbourhood culture)/*bhaichara* (fraternal bond across the communities) of Cuttack city that led the religious celebrations to become a collective one involving people across the communities for a large part of the colonial rule. Generally, a spirit of bonhomie and fellow-feeling undergirded their religious experiences as the syncretic culture of the city became triumphant.

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### Footnotes :

1. Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India*. Chatterji, *The Colonial Staged: Theatre in Colonial Calcutta*.
2. The term culture has been taken here in the anthropological sense of it, meaning the attributes and products of human society in all their plurality and diversity, and the values and symbolism they encode. Gold, & Gold, 'Culture and the City', pp.182-184.



3. Barker, 'On the problem of the Ideological Origins of the French Revolution', p.197.
4. Dhar, *Kataka Nagar*, p. 2. Ratha, *Cuttack Darshan*, p. 28. Das, *Kataka Nagar*, p.91.
5. Ref to Baimundi legend. Baimundi, who eked out a living by stone cutting, donated his savings to the King Marakat Kesari at Cuttack to build a stone embankment in order to protect the city from foods fury. The king appreciated the concern of Baimundi and built a stone embankment accordingly. There is another legend on its construction that it was built on donation of ill-gotten money by one Siddeswara Raut. The veracity of both the legends is doubtful. The embankment once built became the protecting shield of the city that was taken care by all the subsequent governments, including the British. Common people also contributed their mite by putting their labour and constantly invigilating on its safety during the floods and cyclones, as happened during the extremely high floods of 1855. Das, *Unnabinsa*, p. 64.
6. There are three styles of Odissi *kirtans* in Odisha: Manoharsahi, Ranihati and Garanahati. Dhar, *Kataka Nagar*, p. 14. Das, *Kataka Nagar*, p. 94.
7. Pattanaik, 'Katak Nagar Barasha Hazar', pp. vii-viii.
8. There were some 2500 Telugus at colonial Cuttack, according to some estimates, many of whom used to migrate to Cuttack city with their families in search of employment, i.e., used to work with the Irrigation Company. Das, *Unnabinsa Satabdira*, Odisha, p.72. Das, *Desha Kala Patra*, p. 63.
9. Dhar, *Katak Nagar*, p. 82. Das, *Kataka Nagar*, p. 84.
10. *Utkal Dipika*, 01-01-1869 & 04-09-1869. Ratha, *Cuttack Darshan*, p. 26-27.
11. On the occasion of the visit of Sankaracharya of Sringeri, people at Cuttack irrespective of caste, class and creed performed *puja*, *homa* (burning of sacrificial fire), etc. *Utkal Dipika*, 29-01-1903.
12. Important *Satya Pir/Sufi* centres at Cuttack, where both Hindus and Muslims congregate(d) for worship, were (are) the graves of Bukhari Shah at Barabati Fort, Malang Shah at Buxibazar and Bibi Alam at Firingibazar, etc. *Satya Pir* worship probably started during the *subedarship* of Dewan Alam Chand under the Nazim rule. Das, *Kataka Nagar*, p. 41, 85.
13. Notable such cemeteries were Sati Chaura, Kaliaboda (shows etymological association with Sikhs), Khannagar (shows etymological association with Muslims), Gora Kabar (of the Christians), etc.
14. Doctor Masud in a Muslim conference held at Syed Seminary at Cuttack in 1933 was stressing the need for communal harmony at Cuttack. *Utkal Dipika*, 18-02-1933.
15. *Utkal Dipika*, 05-06-1869. Mukherji, *History of Orissa*, p. 466. Das, *Desha Kala Patra*, p. 376. Mohapatra, 'Katakare Brahma Samaj', pp. 467-70.
16. The city notables who joined the *Brahmo* movement were Jagamohan Ray, Jagamohan Lala, Gourisankar Ray, Madhusudan Rao et.al; who carried it to other parts of Odisha, including *Garjats*. One unique trait of the Brahma followers of the period was that they used to converse and exchange letters in Bengali, including M.S. Das, as that was considered to be language of elite of the city dominated by Bengalis. Not only that many of the Brahma followers who were in critical sectors in government gave preference to Brahma followers in recruitment to several jobs. Das, *Desha Kala Patra*, pp. 282-3, 307, 379, 387.
17. Devi Prasanna Choudhury's long speech at Cuttack on 5th March 1889 on the character of *Brahmodharma* had notable influence at Cuttack. *Utkal Dipika*, 10-03-1889.
18. Another side of coin was that the newspapers became carriers of traditional religious and superstitious practices by taking up staple stories on the talismanic activities of saintly person, and the rumors on their *mahatmya* (divine glory) and



- their patron deities like Vishnu, Shiva, et.al., including their local manifestations. *Utkal Dipika*, 19.06.1869 & 29.05.1869.
19. A conservative Hindu association, called Bhagabat Bhakti Pradayani Sabha, protested strongly at the Brahmo activities of trying to convert the susceptible youth studying at educational institutions to the Brahmo ideals, which put the Hindu society and religion in jeopardy. They took strong umbrage to the involvement of government officials and teachers in such matter. It resolved to bring the attention of colonial government to such affairs. The lead in such matter was taken by the leaders like Ramsankar Ray, Govind Rath, Kapileswar Nandasarma, et. al. Das, *Desha Kala Patra*, pp. 376-9. *Utkal Dipika*, 18-12-1869. Mohapatra, 'Katakare Brahmo Samaj', p. 470.
20. Bhima Bhoi's notable devotional compositions were: *Srutichintamani*, *Bhajan Mala*, *Brahma Nirupan Gita*, *Ashok Vihari Gita*, *Chautisa Grantha Mala*, etc. Besides such texts and the oral tradition on that, there was no authentic text that existed on the sect. Therefore, an effort was made by the devotees at Chandinichowk Ashram to compile an authentic history of the sect. Viswanath Baba was given charge of it, who compiled it with the assistance of others like Ananta Baba, Pitambar Baba, Keshav Ch. Das et. al. Mohapatra, 'Katakare Mahima Dharma', p. 435, 443.
21. The leading figures of Cuttack who were associated with the Mahima movement were: Narayan Ray, Laxminarayan Sahu, Bichhanda Ch. Pattnaik, Braj Kishore Das, Ghansyam Das, Sashibhusan Ray, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Lingaraj Mishra, Pranakrushna Parija, Arta Ballabh Mohanty, Mayadhar Mansingh, Vinod Kanungo, et. al. They used to meet frequently at different venues and were discoursing on the tenets and the social dimension of the Dharma. A Satya Mahima Dharma Samiti was also formed to propagate the principle of Mahima Dharma. Viswanath Baba. Ibid. pp. 443-6.
22. M.S. Das disagreed with the opinion of others like G.S. Ray and argued that had such a movement took place in states like Maharastra, Bengal or Punjab; its founder Mahima Gosain would have been as popular as Dayananda Saraswati and Rammohan Ray. Das, *Desha Kala Patra*, p. 306.

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# Saktism during Bhaumakaras Period

(An Epigraphical Study)

*Bharati Pal*

The history of Odisha in 8<sup>th</sup> century AD marked the rise of a powerful dynasty known as Bhaumakaras. The Bhaumas ruled for nearly 2 centuries over Odisha. The rulers established a vast kingdom known as Toshali. The Kingdom was extended from Kongodamandala in the south to Dandabhuktmandala in the north. The entire Odisha including southwestern part of Midnapore district of West Bengal was under their sway. From the available copper plate grants of their family we came to know that six numbers of female members of this family ruled over Odisha.

The epigraphic records of the Bhaumakaras provide us with interesting pieces of information about their religious leanings. The inscription reveal that the rulers were votaries of different religious sects, viz, *Buddhism*, *Vaishnavism*, *Saivism* and *Saktism*. Under the patronage of the Bhauma monarch a large number of institution connected with different religions flourished in Odisha. The cardinal feature of the religious history of Bhaumakaras, that the member of same royal family were followers of different religious cults.

The rise of Bhaumakaras was a notable epoch in the history of *Mahayana Buddhism* in Odisha. Their rule also witnessed the evolution

of Buddhism from *Mahayana to Vajrayana*. The Bhauma who were mostly *Buddhist* in faith but eclectic to other *Brahminical* religions and introduced Tantrism and amalgamated the flow with *Saktism*, *Saivism* and *Buddhism* resulting the emergence of *Tantric* goddess and monuments with *Tantric* method of rituals and worship.

From the Bhauma copper plate grants we assume that *Saktism* touch the pinnacle of glory during this period. We have evidences that the capital *Viraja* (Jajpur) was a centre of *Sakti* worship during this time. *Viraja* is one of the traditional *Panchakshetra* in Odisha dedicated to *Brahminical Panchadevata*. The theoretical interpretation of the *Sakti* Cult inculcated in the *Vedas*, *Upanishadas*, *Purana* etc. found expression of mother goddess.

The peculiar feature of this period was the intimate relation between Siva and *Sakti* which reveals from the copper plate charter. The Baud grant of Tribhuvana mahadevi state that the queen granted the village Kottapura at the request of Sasilekha the queen of *Mahamandaladhipati* Mangalalalasa, in favour of the temple *Nannesvara* constructed by her. It is described that one share of the gift village said to have been granted for perpetual offering of ablution, sandal



paste, bali and charu to the deity *Uma-Mahesvara* installed in the said temple. This proves the intimate relation between Siva and Sakti during the period under discussion.

The Dhenkanal grant of Tribhuvanamahadevi alias Pruthivimahadevi speaks that she ascended the throne like goddess *Katyayani* whose lotus like feet were kissed by the heads of the feudatory chiefs bowed down with devoted loyalty.

The goddess *Katyayani*, we have presumed that the deity is no other than goddess *Viraja* in aspects of *Sakti*. According to *Bhakti Bhagavata* the Bhojas or the Bhaumas were devoted to *Viraja* and honored the Brahmanas who were *Sakti* Tantrikas. The *Kalika Purana* mentioned that lord *Jagannatha* and goddess *Katyayani* were the presiding deities of Odra. The goddess *Viraja* became a great celebrity deity long before lord *Jagannatha* of Puri and lord *Lingaraja* of Bhubaneswar came into prominence.

The Talteli plate of Dharmamahadevi describes that she was the female swan in the assembly of kings owing allegiance to her and as the goddess *Lakshmi* in the heavenly garden called *Nandana*.

A number of *Matruka* image belonging to 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century AD have been discovered at Jajpur and its environs. Of the *Matrukas*, *Chamunda* appears to have been in special favour of Bhauma age. One such image was installed in

a temple of Jajpur by the Bhauma queen *Vatsadevi*. An inscribed *Chamunda* image has tentatively assigned to 8<sup>th</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> century AD of Bhauma rule. The inscription records that the work of installation of the image of *Chamunda* is done by the queen *Vatsa Devi*. The inscription written as “*Siddham Rajni, Vatsadevayah Krittih*”.

So the Bhauma rulers from the beginning of their rule, professed a sort of mixed faith in which *Buddhism* and *Brahmanical* faith were strongly amalgamated. It was due to their strong patronization that the Buddhist as well as *Brahmanical* institution grew side by side during their supremacy. There was an attempt in the process of transformation, assimilation and integration of different religions during the period under discussion.

#### References:

1. B.Das - The Bhaumakaras and Their Times, P-155
2. H. Das - The Cultural Heritage of Jajpur, P-164
3. Epigraphica Indica Vol-XXIX, P-201
4. S.Tripathy, Inscriptions of Bhaumakaras, P-167
5. Ibid, P-216
6. Epi, Indica, Vol-XXVII-P- 184

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## Durga Puja in the Prominent Sakti Pithas of Odisha

*Jyoti Naik*

### Abstract

It is persistently presumed that there are about 33 crores of Gods and Goddesses in Hinduism. These Gods and Goddesses are broadly divided into three. They are Vaishnava, Saiva and Shakta. Among them Goddess Durga, belongs to the Shakta category. The Shakta cult got immense popularity during the ancient age commencing from the 6<sup>th</sup> Century B.C till the end of the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

So far as Odisha is concerned, worship of Goddess Durga is observed in all the undivided 13 districts. Here is given an account in detail about the worship of Goddess Durga in Odisha.

### 1. Durga Puja in the undivided Balasore District

Durga Puja is one of the most popular festivals of the district. It is celebrated in the bright fortnight in the month of Aswin (September-October). This colourful festival begins from Saptami (7<sup>th</sup> day) and ends on Dasami (10<sup>th</sup> days).

Clay Image of Goddess Durga is worshipped at many places in the district with great pomp and splendor of which mention may be made of the celebrations held at *Baleswar, Bhadrak, Nilagiri, Soro, Jaleswar and*

*Chandabali*. The 10<sup>th</sup> day of the festival is called Dussehra. On this day the images are taken out in procession for immersion in tanks or rivers. In some other places the images are immersed on the 11<sup>th</sup> day. Durga Puja is also celebrated at many Sakta Shrines in the district.

### 2. Durga Puja in the undivided Bolangir District

The village of Jarasingha situated 5 miles from Tusra and two miles from Deogan is famous for the Patkhanda Jatra which takes place in the month of Aswina from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> day of the bright fortnight. A man locally called 'Barua' becomes possessed by the spirit of Goddess "Patkhanda" and under that condition he is believed to bestow miraculous boons on devotees. People suffering from mental diseases are brought here for blessings and barren women also come here in large number in the hope of getting children by the blessing of Goddess Patkhanda.

### 3. Durga Puja in the undivided Boudh, Kandhamal District

The images of Goddess Durga are worshipped in a few places in the district of which celebrations held at Boudh deserve special mention. Durga Puja also celebrated at several Sakta shrines in the district of which the worship



of Goddess Bararaul at Bataskumpa in Khajuripada police station is important. The devotees offer rice, milk and sweetmeat to the Goddess. According to custom the tribal people of the district offer bhetis (presentations) to their hill-chiefs and Muth-heads as a token of respect during Dussehra.

Dussehra or Dasahara has a special significance to the warrior community. They worship their old weapons of war and exhibit martial art on the occasion. Their heroic forebears used to start on fresh military Expeditions during this season of the year.

#### 4. Durga Puja festival in the undivided Cuttack District

Sarbajanina Durga Puja is celebrated during the bright fortnight in the month of Aswina (September-October). Generally it continues for five days from Sasthi to Dasami. The celebration reaches the peak on Dasami which is called Vijaya Dasami. Clay idols of Goddess Durga and God (Lord) Mahadev are made and worshipped in many places in the district. Celebrations held at Cuttack city deserve special mention. Over 100 Durga and 60 Mahadev Medhas are there in Cuttack city. Durga Puja here is celebrated with great pomp and grandeur, lakhs of people visit the Medha's to have a darshan of the deities and enjoy the operas and melody nights held in front of the important Medhas in central places during these days. A big fair is held on the bank of the river on the day at Puri Ghat. This year the Durga puja of Cuttack will be celebrated with COVID-19 guidelines.

Durga Puja is also celebrated with pomp and ceremony at several Shakti Pithas in the district of which Sarala at Jhankada (Kanakpur), Cuttack Chandi at Cuttack, Gada Chandi at



Barabati Fort, Charchika at Banki, Mahuli Thakurani at Parsurampur in Athagarh, Prabala Thakurani at Jeypure in Narasinghapur, Rama Chandi Thakurani at Rangadipada in Badamba, Maa Bhatarika at Badamba and Biraja Thakurani at Jajpur are important.

#### 5. Durga Puja in the undivided Ganjam District.

Dasahara is celebrated throughout the district during the bright fortnight in the month of Aswina (September-October). Generally Durga Puja continues for four days from Saptami upto Dasami. The celebrations reach climax on Dasami which is called Vijaya Dasami. Clay idols of Goddess Durga are made and worshipped in many places in the district of which celebrations held at Brahmapur, Parlakhemundi, Hinjili and Rambha deserve special mention. Worshipping of the clay idol of Durga during Dasahara was first introduced by the Bengalee settlers in Brahmapur town of the district in the early part of forties of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.



Durga Puja is also celebrated at several Shakti Pithas in the district of which Goddess Narayani near Khallikote, Ramachandi of Chikiti, Mahisamardini of Rambha, Tara Tarini near Purusottampur, Thakurani Pitha of Purunapatna near Paralakhemundi, Byaghra Devi of Kulada and Bhairabi Pitha of Mantridi near Brahmapur are important.

#### **6. Durga Puja in the undivided Kalahandi District**

Goddess Manikeswari is the prominent deity of Kalahandi district. The temple of the Goddess is situated in the premises of the Ex-Maharaja's palace at Bhawanipatna. The Ex-Rulers of Kalahandi used to observe the Saradiya Puja of the Goddess known as Chhatra Yatra. The festival reaches its peak on the Mahastami day.

Besides Bhawanipatna, Dasahara also forms an important festival at Khariar Road, Khariar, Sinapali, Komna, Charabeda and Salia under Jonk police station, Jayapatna and Behera in Koksara police station and Dharamgarh.

The Khandabasa festival is observed during Dasahara in the temple of Goddess Lankeswari at Junagarh, the old capital of Kalahandi Ex.-State. The ruler of Kalahandi used to come to Junagarh on the Mahastami day to perform the Puja. The ruler observes fasting on the day and places a sword before the Goddess on an auspicious moment fixed by the astrologer. There is a widespread belief among the local people that if the sword placed by the ruler before the Goddess remains straight, villagers will not face any natural calamities like drought, epidemics etc. If the sword tilts, right or left then it indicates bad omen for the State.

The festival is observed for a day and a fair is held at the place on the occasion. The congregation actually lasts for about three days.

Folk performances like Ghumura dance and Ramalila are usually organized at night-for the entertainment of the people.

#### **7. Durga Puja in the undivided Keonjhar District**

People worship their vocational implements on these days. Images of Goddess Durga are worshipped in many places of the district of which the celebrations held at Keonjhar, Jhumpura, Joda, Barbil, Champua and Anandapur attract more people. Durga Puja is also celebrated at the Sakta Shrines at Siddhamata near Keonjhar and Tarini at Ghatagaon.

#### **8. Durga Puja in the undivided Koraput District**

The greatest festival of the district is Dasahara observed at Jeypore. This festival is held in honour of Kanaka Durga (Golden Durga) whose temple is situated within the palace. This festival lasts for sixteen days and a series of ceremonies are held throughout the period.

#### **9. Durga Puja festival in the undivided Mayurbhanj District**

Dasahara is the festival in which the Hindus, the Schedule Tribe and the Schedule Caste people are equally interested. It is observed with great pomp and splendor at Baripada, Betnati and Kaptipada. It begins on the eighth day of the bright fortnight of Aswin and continues for three days.

#### **10. Durga Puja festival in the undivided Puri District**

The Durga Puja continues for four days from Saptami up to Dasami. People also worship their vocational implements on these days and stop work in the workshop. Clay images of



Goddess Durga are worshipped at many places in the district of which mention may be made of the celebrations held at Puri, Bhubaneswar, Jatni, Khurda and Nayagarh. At Puri this festival is called gosani jata. The Gosani or Durga images constructed at Puri are of colossal size with distinctive iconographic features.

Durga Puja is also ceremoniously observed with due ceremony at several Sakta shrines in the district of which the worship of Mangala at Kakatpur, Bhagabati at Banpur and Bimala at Puri deserves special mention.

### 11. Durga Puja festival in the undivided Sundargarh District

The district with its alluring legend and history contains many temples and shrines where people of different faiths congregate on many religious and festive occasions.

Vedavyasa, a beauty spot near Rourkela, located at the confluence of the rivers Sankha and Koel, is a famous place of pilgrimage for the Hindus. Its sanctity is due to the location of the temple of Lord Siva. According to local tradition sage Vyasa, the celebrated author of "The Mahabharata" is said to have been born here.

The fairs and melas are common in the district and are held throughout the year. Some of these fairs have a religious or economic origin. On such festive occasions the people get scope to rejoice and also avail the opportunity of purchasing many articles from outside traders who come with their merchandise from distant places. Tribal dance, chhau dance, opera and magic shows, etc., are some of the usual features of these melas.

Most of the tribal festivals synchronise with their agricultural operations. They have also

adopted many Hindu festivals due to years of close cultural contact with their Hindu neighbours. Rourkela in the district is the main place for Durga Medhas.

### 12. Durga Puja festival in the undivided Dhenkanal District

The vital places of Durga Puja in the District are Dhenkanal, Angul, Kaniha, Talcher, Chhendipada, Kamakshanagar, Kapilas, Athamallik etc.

### 13. Durga Puja in the undivided Sambalpur District

The undivided Sambalpur district is the heart of cultural heritage of Western Odisha. The Durga Puja and Dasahara is celebrated in the Devi Pithas of Samaleswari and Ghanteswari.

It commences on the 1<sup>st</sup> day of the bright fortnight of the month of Aswin (September-October) and ends on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of the bright fortnight of the month of Aswin. Hence Durga Puja continues for 10 days in all the Devi Pithas of the district. It is the 2<sup>nd</sup> grand celebration in the district followed by "Nuakhai".

In Sambalpur Goddess Durga is considered as the "Samaleswari Durga". She is originally the Goddess of the "Aborigin Sauras" (Adivasi Saura Community). Initially the aborigin people were appointed in the service of the Goddess. Goddess Samalai (Samaleswari) is considered as the Goddess of antiquity or Adimapantee Devee.

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## National Wildlife Week

*Dr. Manas Ranjan Senapati*

The Wildlife Week is celebrated all over the country every year between 2nd October and 8th October in order to protect fauna means the animal life. It was first started in the year 1952 with the great vision of saving the life of the Indian animals by taking some critical steps. It involves the planning to save animal extinction of any species of India.

Wildlife plays an important role in balancing the environment. Wild life provides stability to different natural processes of nature. The importance of wildlife can be categorized as ecological importance, economic importance, investigatory importance, conservation of biological diversities etc. Many nations have established their tourism sector around their natural wildlife. South Africa has, for example, many opportunities for tourists to see the country's wildlife in its national parks, such as the Kruger Park. In South India, the Periar Wildlife Sanctuary, Bandipur National Park and Mudumalai Wildlife Sanctuary are situated around and in forests. India is home to many national parks and wildlife

sanctuaries showing the diversity of its wildlife, much of its unique fauna, and excels in the range. There are 89 national parks, 13 bio reserves and more than 400 wildlife sanctuaries across India which are the best places to go to see Bengal tigers, Asiatic lions, Indian elephants, Indian rhinoceroses, birds, and other wildlife which reflect the importance that the country places on nature and wildlife conservation.

India is home to a large number and variety of animals. It is a hot-spot for biodiversity with its various ecosystems ranging from the Himalayas in the north to the evergreen rain-forest of the south, the desert sands of the west to the marshy mangroves of the east. India, lying within





the Indomalaya ecozone, is home to about 7.6% of all mammalian, 14.7% of all amphibians, 6% of avian (bird), 6.2% of reptilian, and 6.0% of flowering plant species. The exploitation of land and forest resources by humans along with capturing and trapping for food and sport has led to the extinction of many species in India in recent times. These species include mammals such as the Asiatic cheetah, wild zebu, Indian Javan rhinoceros, and Northern Sumatran rhinoceros. Some species of birds have gone extinct in recent times. The Indian government has established eighteen biosphere reserves of India which protect larger areas of natural habitat and often include one or more national parks and/or preserves, along buffer zones that are open to some economic uses. Protection is granted not only to the flora and fauna of the protected region, but also to the human communities who inhabit these regions, and their ways of life. Need of the hour is sustainable wildlife management. Sustainable wildlife management refers to the sound management of wildlife species to sustain their populations and habitat over time, considering the socio-economic needs of human populations.

The planet earth has already seen five big extinctions; the sixth may be happening now because of human activities. The UN had already warned that one million species might disappear within the next few decades. The Living Planet Report has noted that the earth's wildlife population has declined by an average of 68% among monitored vertebrate species from 1970 to 2016. Since March, the extinction of wild animals may well have been amplified by the Corona virus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, the impact of which has not only been felt by humans but by mammals and reptiles in the wild. Ecology and economy of the world are imbalanced due to virus attack. More attention is needed to protect the wildlife during this pandemic period.

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## Scientific View of Indian Tantric Culture

*Dr. Ramakanta Kar*

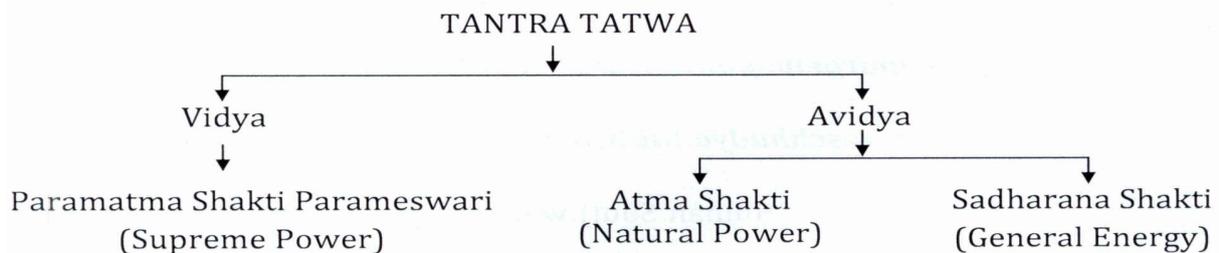
Science is nothing but investigation of Truth. Indians in past were expert scientists who have invented the proper communication between the self and the Supreme. They invented different types of idols made of stone, gold, brass and bronze etc metals to worship. Because idol worship is the main tradition of Indian devotees. Worship of Hindus are divided into two categories: Vedic and Tantric. Mantras used in worship are divided into these two categories. Veda is based on theory, which mantras are Vedic mantras and Tantric mantras are applied science (fully practical).

Tantric tradition deals with two objects Maya and Shakti. Maya is a thought of evils: Artha Bhairaba, Krodha Bhairaba, Unmata Bhairaba, Kapali Bhairaba and Bhisana Bhairaba. Shakti: Kali, Tara, Shodashi, Bhubaneswari, Bhairabi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumabati, Bagala, Matangi and Kamala. These ten Shaktis are called

as Dasha Mahavidya or Ten wisdom goddesses. The popular myth behind the genesis of Dasha Mahavidyas are found in the Devi Bhagabata Purana and Chamunda Tantra as :

*“Kali Tara Mahavidya Shodashi Bhubaneswari, Bhairabi Chhinnamasta cha Vidya Dhumavati tatha. Bagala Siddhavidya cha Matangi Kamalatmika, eta Dasha Mahavidya Siddhavidya Prakirtita.”*

That means Kali, Tara, Shodashi, Bhubaneswari, Bhairabi, Chhinnamasta, Dhumavati, Bagala, Matangi and Kamala are Dasha Mahavidyas or ten Divine mothers. Tantra is linked with Bhairabas (the names of Shiva) and Bhairabis (Names of Divine Mother). Tantra is a science by which one's knowledge expands or leads to liberation. So it is mostly described in Tantra Tatwa. The worship of Dasa Mahavidya is prevalent among the tantrics and especially the Shaktas worship 9 Mahavidyas along with their Bhairabas except Dhumabati (as a widow).





*“Tanoti bipulanar Than Tatwa,  
mantra Samanwitan,  
Tranam sa kurute yasmat  
Tantramityabhidhiyate.”*

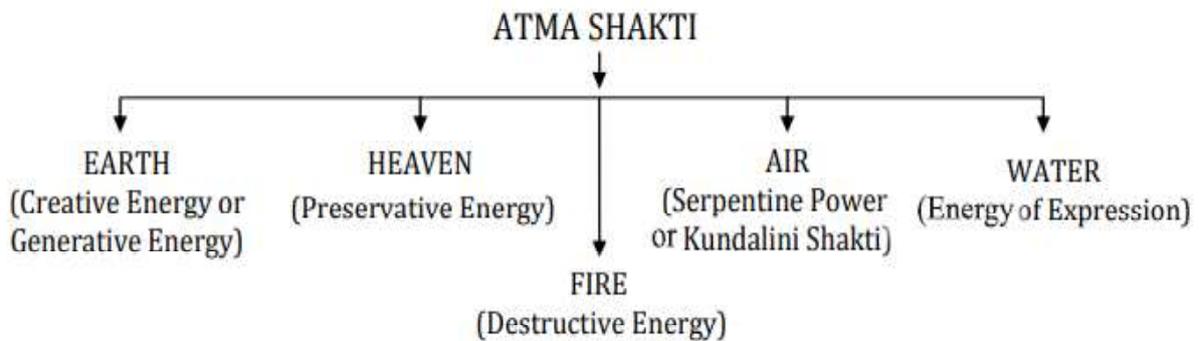
Natural power or self power is being controlled by the Supreme power or Paramatmashakti or Durga Shakti and General energy is created from natural power and controlled by natural and the Supreme Power. Natural power is called also as Panchamahabhuta Shakti.

Mainly inspite of these both Shakti, General energy works and creates various energies. Just as Magnetic Energy, Electric Energy, Sound Energy, Water Energy etc. Durga Shakti is called as Paramabrahma Swarupini. It creates all varieties of Shaktis and controls them.

is described in Hatha Yoga Pradipika—

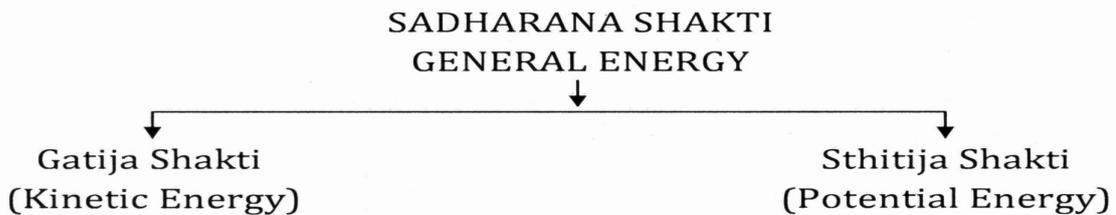
*“Jena margena gantabyam brahmasthanam  
Niramayam, Mukhenaschhadya taddwaram  
prasupta parameswari”.*

Atma Shakti (Human Soul) wants to get salvation, then he has to do some Shakti Sadhana or idol worship or meditation to reach the Parameswari. He has to face so many difficulties. That is called sadhana. At that time he has to wake up the Kundalini Shakti (Serpentine Power) in sleeping position at the gate of Brahma Sthanam. Kundalini Shakti on account of its spiral like energy working in the body of the Human being, develops the power gradually. It is the divine cosmic energy in bodies. Shakti is unseen, but to feel the presence of Shakti path is needed. Just as electric energy is unseen, but it goes when a



So once in a year we worship to the Supreme Power or Durga Shakti through the idol worship. When Atma Shakti goes to Brahma Space, he meets Paramatma, then the man gets salvation. It

media or electric wire is connected by the effort of human being. Like this if a Sadhaka wants to communicate his soul with the Supreme, a media or idol worship (Sadhana) is necessary for him,





and surely he can be able to feel the existence of the supreme power in the way to get salvation. Sadhana means to attain the goal of life. Atma Shakti is made by physical, mental and organizing power. When Atam Shakti raises, the body, mind, intellect and heart becomes developed. So the Atma Shakti is life. Without the existence of Atma Shakti, the heart of human being cannot feel the

self and he cannot be able to build his career. This is the proper time to save the nature as well as to worship Durga Shakti.

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Dr. Ramakanta Kar, Yoga Pallava, Yoga Niketana, Gudia Sahi, Puri-1.

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## To My Ganesha

*Elora Pradhan*

To the broken tusk and round belly,  
Hearing all our prayers and misery.

With a laddoo in hand, and a mouse on knees,  
There is absolutely nothing that you cant fix.

The gentleness in your eyes and  
high of your ears,  
Having a glimpse of your face  
brings success in all spheres.

How immensely divine and beautiful you look,  
Beyond any write ups, poetries and books.

You are my savior,  
my faith, my conscience.

The calm to my mind of ocean and  
everything divine.

I thank you for being constantly there,  
No wishes no demands, just as rare.

Your presence is enough, I feel it so.  
Till I am alive and many years to go !  
My support, Shree Ganesha.

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Srivihar Colony, Tulasipur, Cuttack-753008, E-mail :  
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## Myths, Facts and Controversies Associated with the Sun Temple of Konark

*Sudhansu Sekhar Rath*

*Analysing different texts appearing in journals, magazines, newspapers, books and epics, sculptural objects, visual references like old and new pictures, paintings, sketches, and the opinion of local residents of Konark and then applying personal judgement an effort has been made here through this article to clear the controversies, bust the myths, bring out the facts associated with the Sun Temple of Konark and also to differently define the two ruined temples located at the south-west corner of its compound.*

When an object, alive or dead, an event or something comes under the limelight and its perception to the common people goes beyond their intellect then usually it gets shrouded with many myths created by the people around. Gradually these myths cover up the facts tightly from all sides and then, after some time, the common man starts believing in those myths. The case with the world famous Sun Temple of Konark is not any different. Even after 743 years of its construction by the legendary King Langula Narasingha Deva many controversies and myths about it are still doing rounds in different media. The controversies and myths are mostly about (A) the existence of the River Chandrabhaga and its location, (B) who built the present Sun Temple

and when, (C) whether the Sun God was ever worshipped in the temple or the temple collapsed before its completion, (D) the various legends associated with it, (E) the supposed Buddhist origin of the temple and (F) identification of the two now-ruined temples at the south-west corner of the complex.

(A) The Sun Temple at Konark was built close to the sea at the mouth of the River Chandrabhaga after filling its gorge with heavy and huge stone blocks. However, some scholars say that, at Konark the River Chandrabhaga did not exist at all and if it ever did, there was no need for the King to so painstakingly fill it up to build the temple when so much vacant land was available nearby and at various other important towns in his kingdom. The controversy arises as the River Chandrabhaga has dried up completely and vanished since long having no trace of it, not even of its dried up bed. Today it is, people say, represented only by a small pond near the seacoast. The sea has also receded almost three kilometres from its original location at the temple site. Now let us analyse certain important opinions of scholars expressed at different times.

A1. Bishan Swarup, the engineer in-charge of restoration work of Konark Temple carried out by the British-India government says that, the



River Chandrabhaga flowing in Maitreya Vana (Maitreya Forest), where Shamba, the cursed son of Lord Krishna observed a penance praying the Sun God, was not located in Konark; rather, it was the River Chandrabhaga (Chenab) in the Punjab. He thinks so as Dwaraka, the home of Krishna is closer to Chenab, and since Konark is situated on the sea beach it would not have been possible for a huge and deep forest like Maitreya Vana to have grown at such a sandy location.<sup>1</sup>

A2. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra, citing the instances described in many epics of different ages, says that the episode of Shamba happened at the bank of the River Chandrabhaga located in Maitreya Vana which was, in fact, the ancient name of Konark.<sup>2</sup>

A3. Karuna Sagar Behera mentions that, though Shamba Purana, an important text on Sun worship, does not specifically mention Konark; it tells the traditional story of Shamba and about erection of the first Sun temple at Mitravana on the bank of Chandrabhaga (Chenab) in the Punjab. However, in the interpolated chapters 42-43, it mentions that Tapovana is located on the shore of the salt ocean.<sup>3</sup>

Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra says Bishan Swarup is as wrong as can be. In the ancient age distance was not a criterion for the saints to choose a place for observing penance; they rather depended on the sanctity and the suitability of the place for their purpose.<sup>4</sup> Again, Brahma Purana and other epics mention that Maitreya Vana was close to the sea. There is no seacoast in Punjab.<sup>5</sup> Referring to Bishan Swarup's opinion regarding impossibility of a dense forest growing in a sandy location, even today we find a moderate forest named Balukhanda, a reserved forest as declared by the government, present in the area extending from Konark to Puri running along the beach.

Near Konark at the present village of Golara once existed a dense forest of the same name with a fort named Golara Garh inside, where, in the medieval period, the soldiers were living in hiding and taking commando training. Pandit Mishra states, in fact, the deep forest of Maitreya Vana, over a period of 4000 years, starting from the days of Shamba, gradually transformed itself to the contemporary township of Konark.<sup>6</sup>

Shamba Upakhyaana states since the mythological period of Shamba, Sun worship is continuing at Maitreya Vana on the bank of River Chandrabhaga. This fact has been repeatedly stated, though under different names for the place, in Brahma Purana, Skandha Purana, Prachi Mahatmya, Bhabishya Purana, Shamba Purana, Kapila Samhita, Madala Panji, Sarala Mahabharata and in Baya Chakada, a 73-page palm leaf document dealing with construction activity of the present Sun Temple in detail and believed to be of its contemporary period. It is not possible for all these epics and documents belonging to many different periods totally go wrong. Hence, we may safely assume that a river named Chandrabhaga was once flowing in Konark, i.e. the Maitreya Vana of the mythological period. Konark has also been identified as a place in Odra country by various scholars like the Arab geographers Abul Faraj (9th century) and Gardizi (11th century), Albiruni (11th century), Mitaksar (1080-1199 A.D.) and by P.V. Kane, the famous Indologist.<sup>7</sup> Many legends point towards presence of large water bodies near the temple, like the legend about Dharmapada who jumped from the top of the temple into the sea to save the lives of 1200 craftsmen, about Goddess Ramachandi instructing Sibe Santara to fill up the gorge starting from the bank of the river, about the interaction of Kalapahada with Goddess Ramachandi and finally



the legend about the magnet placed atop the temple drawing towards it the ships sailing nearby. The visual evidences like the 1837 AD painting of James Fergusson,<sup>8</sup> a 1890 AD photograph taken by William Henry Cornish that is displayed in the British Gallery and a very old sketch drawn on nine palm leaves preserved in Bharat Kala Bhawan of Banaras Hindu University that show water body in the background of the temple.<sup>9</sup> Most importantly, apart from being described in epics, legends, literature, pictures and sketches, the existence of the River Chandrabhaga at Konark along with other water channels have also been recently established by applying scientific procedures like, remote sensing, satellite imagery, ground penetrating RADAR, GIS, etc. The research conducted by William Mahanty with his team from IIT, Kharagpur establishes the presence of the River Chandrabhaga, along with other water bodies near the Sun Temple of Konark.<sup>10</sup> More than a hundred years ago, in the year 1919, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra stated the same fact, that River Chandrabhaga, was flowing by the side of Konark Temple as a very large and turbulent river carrying a lot of water from the River Prachi through the River Kadua, and Kushabhadra (Liyakhia) and other tributaries to finally meet the sea. He also said that the last part of the River Kadua was known as Chandrabhaga and people used to call it Kadua Jhara meaning the stream of Kadua.<sup>11</sup>

Having proved the existence of the River Chandrabhaga some scholars disapprove the fact that the temple was built inside the river, on its gorge filled with stone blocks. Why was it necessary for Langula Narasingha Deva to so painstakingly fill up the gorge of such a large and turbulent river to build the temple against choosing any other location elsewhere or the vacant spots available nearby? To answer this question one

has to study the location a bit. The temple built by Narasingha Deva was not the first Sun Temple built at the site. In fact, he built a new temple just to replace the existing old dilapidated Sun Temple once built by Purandara Keshari at the same location.<sup>12</sup> Here we are not concerned about if he is Puranjaya or Purandara; we are only interested in the fact that a previous Sun Temple did exist there. Since ages, the place was already established as a sacred zone for Sun worship. Nobody knows which generation or version, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or 5th and so on, the present temple belongs to. As stated in the epics, after being cured of his cursed disease Shamba built a temple on the bank of River the Chandrabhaga inside Maitreya Vana and installed the image of Sun God there.<sup>13</sup> From that day it became a prime destination for the Sun worshippers. If we believe in this mythological story then it would be considered as the first Sun Temple at this location. After this event, knowing nothing about it, we come to the historical period of Purandara Keshari building a Sun Temple at the same spot in 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>14</sup> However, since Shamba's temple would not have survived for so long, till the days of Purandara, it is possible that with his new construction he also replaced an older Sun Temple built much later than that of Shamba. Hence, the present Sun Temple can be assumed at least as the fourth Sun Temple built at the site, Purandara's being the third, though it may be of a much later version. Again, either at the time of Purandara Keshari in 9<sup>th</sup> century or in 13<sup>th</sup> century when Langula Narasingha Deva started building the temple, Konark was not an isolated or deserted place inside the forest as it was at the time of Shamba. Over the years Maitreya Vana had already evolved to a bubbling township of Konark, taking the form of a prime religious destination, a famous maritime port, a residential



township and a trading centre. According to the Chinese visiting scholar Hiuen Tsang, even in 7<sup>th</sup> century AD the place had many towering structures. Wise and rich people of all faiths like the Hindus, the Buddhists and people of other religions and sects were living together in harmony.<sup>15</sup> The 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD Greek geographer Ptolemy refers to Konark as Kannagar, a famous maritime port. In some Indian texts it has been mentioned as Kainapara, a significant trading port existing since the ancient time. Man Mohan Ganguly says, “according to Prachi Mahatmya the banks of River Prachi had flourishing towns and villages having massive temples.”<sup>16</sup> There was a shipbuilding centre at Khalakathha and a major trading centre at Junei known as Daha-Upar.<sup>17</sup>

The above facts suggest, it was reasonable for Narasingha Deva not to move out of a prosperous and already established religious site for Sun worship for building the gigantic and the most beautiful Sun Temple of Odisha in particular and of Bharatvarsh in general.

King Narasingha Deva had a grand plan to build a gigantic and the most beautiful temple for the Sun God and convert it to a prime religious destination in Bharatvarsha. As planned it was built with huge blocks of various types of stone. For example, the stone blocks were so huge and heavy that after collapse of the temple, even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century it was not possible for the British Administration to move the dislocated Nabagraha Block even after slicing it to one third of its thickness, up to the seacoast to carry it further to the Indian Museum in Calcutta (now Kolkata) by ship. Now, think of the Amalaka Shila and the Gaja-Singha which weigh 200 and 45 tons, placed at heights of 200 feet and 170 feet respectively.<sup>18</sup> How did they carry it to the temple in 13<sup>th</sup> century and then raised them to such

heights to place atop the temple walls? None of the types of stone like, Chlorite, Laterite and Khondalite used in construction<sup>19</sup> were available nearby and had to be brought in from far off places. At the time to carry heavy and large objects waterway was the best option and the Odia sailors at the time were the masters of the sea and the rivers. In Utkal (ancient Odisha, also known as Kalinga) huge size ships and boats known as Hati Boita were available even to transport elephants along with a large number of passengers to distant lands.<sup>20</sup> Fa-Hien (399 – 411 AD) mentions that he travelled from Tamralipta down to Ceylon, then to Java and finally up to China in a merchant ship of Kalinga. The eastern sea was then named as Kalinga Sagar because of the dominance of Kalinga ships. Later it was named by the British as the Bay of Bengal after they established their centre in Bengal.<sup>21</sup> Hence, for easier transportation of heavy stone blocks, sculptural materials, equipment and iron beams to the temple site they were being made by the riverside or at the seacoast. Bullock carts, elephants and manpower were being used only to transport over short distances and also to move smaller blocks. Another water channel was also running as a tributary to Chandrabhaga, known by the locals as Pathara Buha Nala (stone carrying channel) starting from Tintiar near Bedpur to Junei.<sup>22</sup> The craftsmen lived along the bank of this Pathara Buha Nala for the entire period of construction of the temple and worked right there to carve the stone blocks and send the finished sculpture by rafts or boats right up to the temple site through this channel. The fact is supported by presence of the channel in small patches and many unfinished carved stone blocks found lying in its bed even now.<sup>23</sup> Sibi Santara was living at the upper end of Pathara Buha Nala at Bayalish Bati in Erbond, Gop, near the temple of



Gangeshwari.<sup>24</sup> The gorge of Chandrabhaga was filled-up with stone blocks can also be physically proved by drilling one hole at a safe distance from the temple inside the compound and another away from the compound at the east side and then comparing the soil samples collected in both cases from different similar depths, say from 100 to 200 feet.<sup>25</sup> Since the two now-ruined temples at south-west corner of the compound pre-existed the present Sun Temple, the filling of the gorge must have been started from the west progressing towards the east up to a certain point leaving a portion of the River Chandrabhaga still flowing into the sea.<sup>26</sup>

Hence, it is inferred that the Sun Temple was built in Konark near the old dilapidated Sun Temple after filling up the gorge of a large and turbulent river named Chandrabhaga.

**B.** The next major controversy is about who built the present temple and when. Though there are many evidences available to prove that the present Sun Temple at Konark was built in 13<sup>th</sup> century AD by Ganga King Langula Narasingha Deva many scholars at different times in the past have stated otherwise and do so even today.

B1. According to Madala Panji the temple of Konark was built in the year 1278 AD by Langula Narasingha Deva.

B2. Baya Chakada, a 73-leaf document written in old Odia Karani Script on palm leaves, carrying the details of the 12-year long construction period of the temple of Konark and supposed to be of the contemporary period, states that the temple was started in 1246 and completed in 1258 AD.

B3. Abul Fazl, the medieval historian in Emperor Akbar's Court, who visited Odisha in the year 1580 AD states in Ain-i-Akbari that the

temple at Konark was built by Narasingha Deva 730 years before his visit to Odisha,<sup>27</sup> i.e. in the year 850 AD.

B4. Andrew Stirling, the Persian Secretary to British - India Government visited Konark in 1820 AD. He mentions that Konark was built in 1241 AD by Langula Narasingha Deva. He says, "The present edifice, it is well known, was built by Raja Langora Narsingh Deo, A.D. 1241, under the superintendence of his minister Shibai Santra."<sup>28</sup>

B5. James Fergusson, a famous archaeologist visited Konark in 1837. Believing in Abul Fazl's statement, "Konark temple was built in 9<sup>th</sup> century," he agrees with Abul Fazl.<sup>29</sup>

B6. Rajendra Lal Mitra, a famous historian and archaeologist visited Konark in 1868. He, accepting the statement of Madala Panji says, Madala Panji "corroborates the copper plate inscriptions of the Ganga kings wherefrom we learnt that the temple of Konark was built in the 18<sup>th</sup> year of reign of Narasingha Deva."<sup>30</sup>

B7. Two years later, in 1870 W. W. Hunter visiting Konark states, the temple of Konark was "Built, according to the most trustworthy records, between 1237 and 1282 AD."<sup>31</sup>

B8. Then after a long gap, in 1910 Bishan Swarup says that, the main temple of Konark was built by Purandara Keshari in the first half of 9<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>32</sup>

B9. In 1912 Man Mohan Ganguly, taking the cue from Rajendra Lal Mitra that Konark was built in the 18th year of reign of Narasingha and studying the Ganga copper plate inscriptions, agrees with Madala Panji as he calculates it to be 1276 AD, which almost matches with Madala Panji's figure of 1278 AD.<sup>33</sup>



B10. In 1919, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra, going by Madala Panji, is of the opinion that Langula Narasingha Deva built the present Sun Temple in the year 1278 AD.<sup>34</sup>

B11. K. C. Panigrahi assumes that though the temple was built by Narasingha Deva I it was not in 1278 AD. Its construction started after his successful military expeditions against Muslim Bengal in 1243 AD to 1247 AD.

B12. In 2005 Karuna Sagar Behera writes, "The climax of Sun worship, however, was reached when king Narasimha-I, built the Sun Temple of Konark in the mid-thirteenth century." "He came to throne in 1238 AD."<sup>35</sup>

B13. Now in 2021, Sanjay Kumar Baral states in his book "The Real History of Konark" that Konark was not built in the 13<sup>th</sup> century by Langula Narasingha Deva; rather, it was built in 9<sup>th</sup> century, before 850 AD by a king belonging to the Buddhist Tantrayana.<sup>36</sup>

Now we have so many dates for one event and the right one is to be determined. I wish someone finds the correct one by using modern scientific methods to date the metals used in construction of the temple and the fossil trapped in between stone slabs.

Continuing with our analysis, out of all the names mentioned above only the statements made by Madala Panji, Baya Chakada and Abul Fazl can be considered as eyewitness statements of the golden days of Konark. However, unfortunately many scholars do not strictly assign any historical importance to Madala Panji, Baya Chakada is yet to be recognised as a historical document and Abul Fazl's statements are riddled with confusion as he personally did not visit the temple and depended on the statements of his local representatives.

As per Madala Panji, since the days of Shamba Sun worship is continuing in a temple on the bank of River Chandrabhaga. After a long gap of many ages, Purandara Keshari built a new temple there, installed the image of Sun God, and for continuation of worship, established eight Brahmin villages in Konark. Again after a long gap, Langula Narasingha Deva appointed his minister Sibei Santara to build a new temple to replace the dilapidated temple of Purandara. Madala Panji says, "After the rule of Anangabhima Deva his son Langula Narasingha Deva ruled for forty-five years up to Sakabda 1204 or 1282 AD. He built a temple at Arkakshetra (Konark) for Konark Deva (Sun God). It was written under the signature of the King that, the temple of Anshumali (the Sun) was built by the Master of the World Langula Narasingha Deva in Sakabda 1200 or the year 1278 AD." His wish was duly fulfilled, the new temple was built and the image of Suryanarayana (Sun God) from Purandara's old temple was reinstalled in the new temple.<sup>37</sup> Katarajavamsavali, a Sanskrit text also states the same facts. Then Abul Fazl, assimilating what he could from his agents' information, agrees to the fact that Narasingha Deva built the temple, but in the year 850 AD not in 1278 as mentioned in Madala Panji. He gave the right name of the builder but assigned him to a wrong period. Around 850 AD Purandara Keshari was ruling in Odisha, not Narasingha. It seems he got confused with the respective builders of the two temples, Purandar's and that of Narasingha Deva. He also made some very wrong statements regarding the measurement of the temple, Arun Pillar, compound wall, etc., that indicate he never visited the site. Perhaps he did not visit the sacred zone personally respecting the Hindu sentiment as the temple was live at the time. However, it is said that Tughan



Khan, the then Governor of Bengal invaded Narasimha Deva, the ruling King of Odisha in the middle of 13th century only to be defeated by him losing a huge amount of wealth, elephants and soldiers. Konark Temple was built to mark the triumph of Narasimha Deva over the Muslims. Hence, Abul Fazl's opinion regarding the builder is accepted but not its time. Accepting Narasingha Deva as the builder and contradicting Madala Panji regarding its time, Andrew Stirling mentions that the temple was built in 1241 AD by Langula Narasingha Deva. However, Stirling contradicts himself by mentioning that Narasingha Deva ascended the throne in 1236 AD implying that the temple at Konark was completed within five years which is absolutely impossible.<sup>38</sup> Hunter says, "Stirling, in his account of the temple, is less trustworthy than the other portions of his valuable essay."<sup>39</sup> Hence, it is also not accepted. Next comes James Fergusson, a great scholar and a famous archaeologist, who believed in Abul Fazl's statement regarding time only and writes that Konark Temple was built in the 9<sup>th</sup> century but not by Narasingha Deva. To justify his opinion he has depended on a wrongly conceptualised theory of development cycle of Odisha sculpture. While determining the time of construction Fergusson says, "After the erection of so degraded a specimen of the art as the temple of Puri (AD 1174) the style ever could have reverted to anything beautiful as this (Konark Temple)."<sup>40</sup> He considers Konark to have been built when the cultural skill cycle was at its peak and before the Puri Temple, which he considers an edifice of much lower craftsmanship. However, the theory of Fergusson has been strongly opposed by Rajendra Lal Mitra and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra. Reacting to Fergusson's comment about the lime paste covered Puri Temple Rajendra Lal Mitra says, "I shall say nothing about the absence

of grace as it is an intangible quantity dependent a good deal on fancy and I must in that respect yield to the learned archaeologist though it would not be amiss to ask how far that absence is due to the covering up the details, and how much to want of taste in the architect."<sup>41</sup> Man Mohan Ganguly says, "The slab recovered from Konark shows the image of Jagannatha which clearly indicates the temple of Konark was built after 12<sup>th</sup> century Puri temple was built."<sup>42</sup> Ganguly continues, "The argument of Fergusson seems to me fallacious; the abstract theory of evolution or involution has not a universal applicability without any consideration for circumstances."<sup>43</sup> Hence, Fergusson's assessment is also not accepted. Rajendra Lal Mitra agrees with Madala Panji and confirms that the Sun Temple was built on the 18<sup>th</sup> year of reign of Langula Narasingha Deva in around 1278 AD, and Hunter, agreeing with Madala Panji and Rajendra Lal Mitra, says that Konark Temple was built between 1237 and 1282 AD (during the reign of Narasingha Deva). Then comes Bishan Swarup who borrowing a string from Stirling and another strand from Abul Fazl and then giving it a twist applying Stirling's opinion states, "The temple of Konarka was built by Purandara Keshari in the latter half of 9<sup>th</sup> century though its Natamandir was constructed in 1241 AD by Raja (Nagroo) Narasinha Deva of the Gangetic dynasty."<sup>44</sup> He further states, "It may be noted that the date given in the seal (viz 1200 Saka or 1278 AD) which is quoted by Dr. Rajendra Lal Mitra and so much relied upon by him is utterly incorrect."<sup>45</sup> Man Mohan Ganguly in agreement with Mitra says, "I do not understand the cogency of the reason which has led Mr. Bishan Swarup to reject it as 'utterly incorrect'."<sup>46</sup> Swarup is of the opinion that Madala Panji cannot be trusted as it was rewritten whimsically and not with facts after it was burnt by Kalapahada who



attacked Puri temple in the second half of 16<sup>th</sup> century. However, according to Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra the Panji is not kept in the temple, it is kept in the house of Deula Karana, its writer, and there is no proof that it was burnt by Kalapahada. Man Mohan Ganguly says, "According to Babu M. M. Chakravarti, Nrisinha Deva I ascended the throne in 1160 Saka and reigned up to 1186 Saka, i.e. from 1238 AD to 1264 AD; hence the construction of the temple is dated in the year 1256 AD."<sup>47</sup> He further says that, according to Ganga copper plate inscription Narasingha Deva ascended the throne in 1258 AD and Rajendra Lal Mitra states that Konark was built on the 18<sup>th</sup> year of reign of Narasingha Deva, i.e. in 1276 AD (1258+18), that almost matches with the date (1278 AD) given in Madala Panji. Hence, he agrees with Madala Panji. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra, has devoted a complete chapter (Chapter IX) in his Odia book "Konarka" to analyse the dates given by Madala Panji, copper plate inscriptions and opinions of many scholars to finally infer that the Sun Temple at Konark was built by Langula Narasingha Deva in the year 1278 AD.

Very recently, in the year 2021 Sanjay Kumar Baral some way restates the opinion of Fergusson and that of Abul Fazl related to its time frame. He says that Narasingha ascended the throne at a very troublesome period. Hence, it would not have been possible for him to build such a huge temple as he was under constant threat from outside enemies, and was extremely busy in fighting battles and fortifying the defence system of his kingdom by strengthening certain border forts and arranging military power. So, Sanjay Kumar Baral is of the opinion that Konark was not built in 13<sup>th</sup> century and also not by Narasingha Deva. However, considering the

environment and policy of the time it is not right to say so. The day to day administration, maintenance of law and order and internal security in Utkala or ancient Odisha was fully decentralised being vested on a council of ministers under the leadership of an able person.<sup>48</sup> Though the king was heading the council he was usually always out on military expeditions either to expand the boundary of his kingdom or to subdue other kingdoms to collect wealth and valuables to fund philanthropic activities in his own kingdom. In 1244 AD and again in 1245 AD Langula Narasingha Deva attacked Bengal and looted a huge amount of wealth from there. Again between 1247 and 1258 AD the Sultan of Bengal attacked Odisha three times and was defeated every time by Narasingha Deva, losing a lot of wealth and a number of soldiers and elephants.<sup>49</sup> Hence, on the contrary to the opinion of S.K. Baral, the kings fought battles to construct temples. It was more visible during the Ganga and latter periods than that of the peace loving Kesharis. K.C. Panigrahi, regarding Narasingha Deva and Konark Temple, observes, "His victory over the Muslims of Bengal and his acquisition of the Southern districts of West Bengal must have enormously raised his prestige in the eyes of contemporary Hindu rulers, and augmented his resources which in all likelihood enabled him to undertake the construction of a stupendous structure like the temple of Konark, designed to exhibit his power, prestige, opulence, devotion and perhaps to commemorate his victory also."<sup>50</sup> Presuming, according to K. C. Panigrahi, that the construction of the temple to have started after Narasingha's final victory over the Muslims, as it took 12 years after that for completion and some more years must have been spent in pre-planning and preliminary work, brings the completion time closer to 1278 AD, the date given in Madala Panji.



Moreover Narasingha Deva's passion was to build temples. He built temples at Srikurmam, Varaha Narasimha temple at Simhachalam, Siva temple at Kapilas and Gopinatha temple at Remuna. Hence, in his lifetime he fought many battles to acquire funds, and to expand and establish his power in all three directions, north, south and west.

Therefore, it may be assumed that the temple construction was started after Narasingha Deva's final victory over the Muslims who did not dare to attack Odisha again within the next 200 years. The temple construction was completed around 1278 AD.

C. The next controversy about the Sun Temple at Konark is if Suryanarayana (Sun God) was ever worshipped there or the temple collapsed even before its completion.

C1. According to Madala Panji the temple was completed and worship of Suryanarayana continued there for many years.

C2. Abul Fazl has not mentioned anything in Ain-i-Akbari about the ruined condition of Konark Temple. Hence, it may be assumed that, in 1580 AD it was in good condition.

C3. M. H. Arnott believes that the temple collapsed while removing sand from inside the temple just after completion of construction. The temple was never consecrated or worship started.

C4. Rajendra Lal Mitra was initially of the opinion that the temple was never completed but changed his opinion later and said that worship was going on in the temple.

C5. Hunter following Rajendra Lal Mitra said that temple was never completed, but later changed his opinion and stated that the worship of Suryanarayana was going on there.

C6. Bishan Swarup, finding some wear and tear marks on the throne, believes that worship was going on in the temple for quite a long time.

C7. Man Mohan Ganguly believes that the temple was completed and consecrated.

C8. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra says that the temple was completed and Suryanarayana was being worshipped there for almost 300 years.

C9. Percy Brown finding some parts of the temple belonging to the top lying unscathed on the ground says temple was never completed as these parts were never raised to the top.

C10. Alice Boner says that the first worship in the temple was started on a specific Chandrabhaga Snana Yatra day that occurred on a Sunday.

C11. K. C. Panigrahi, disagreeing with M. H. Arnott and Percy Brown says that the temple was completed and Sun God was worshipped in the temple.

C12. Karuna Sagar Behera also believes that the temple was under worship.

Madala Panji describes in detail about the distribution of responsibilities and increased allotment of funds by the King for various daily rituals and festivals conducted in the Sun Temple and for the other sacred deities in and around it. Had the temple collapsed before its consecration the King would not have done so. In 1580 AD, while writing about Konark Temple in Ain-i-Akbari Abul Fazl has not mentioned anything regarding its damaged condition. Rather, from his description it seems that the temple along with other structures in and around the campus were in perfect condition, or if some part was damaged it did not hamper its general appearance or activity. Hence, it may be inferred that during Abul



Fazl's visit to Odisha the temple was alive, being under worship, for which, not to hurt the sentiment of the Hindus, Abul Fazl did not visit the temple personally. In 1568, twelve years before Abul Fazl's visit, Kalapahada had attacked the temple. Hence, as believed, Kalapahada did not carry away the Kalasha and the Dhwajapadma with him otherwise the worship would not be continuing then. With the weapons, tools and explosives of that age and at that height Kalapahada could not have removed the super heavy crowning parts of a huge temple like Konark. However, he could have inflicted severe injury there for the temple to have gradually shedding its stone blocks over time finally leading to its collapse. After 48 years of Abul Fazl's visit and 60 years of Kalapahada's attack, in 1628, when King Narasingha Deva (1622 – 1646 AD) visited the temple the Kalasha and the Dhwajapadma were missing from the top though the temple was still standing there with the image of Suryanarayana still around. He had to carry the idol to Puri temple as the temple was already abandoned. It seems, after continuing worship for almost 300 years the temple was finally abandoned and hence started to disintegrate rapidly towards the very end of 17<sup>th</sup> century.

M.H. Arnott thought that the temple was constructed with a heap of sand filled inside and it collapsed immediately after completion when the sand mass was removed. He states, "The weight above was not great enough to resist the inward tendency of the corbelling to fall in."<sup>51</sup> Like Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra, Bishan Swarup also does not agree with Arnott that sand filling was done to construct the temple. He thinks the use of levers, pulleys and simple machines to raise heavy material was known to them.<sup>52</sup> Bishan Swarup found some wear and tear marks on the throne which indicate the temple was in worship.

Observation of so many festivals like, Rath Yatra on Full Moon day in Phalguna (February–March) on Dola Purnima, Chaitra Yatra on the 8<sup>th</sup> day of the bright half of Chaitra (March–April), and Magha Saptami Chandrabhaga Snana Yatra in Magha (January–February) also prove that the temple was in worship.<sup>53</sup> Though Rajendra Lal Mitra, and being advised by him W. W. Hunter initially believed that the temple collapsed before worship started, later after further study they changed their opinion and supported continuation of worship. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra says, "Had the temple collapsed before completion then the throne would not have been inside under a heap of stone as was seen during renovation as it could not have been built inside the sand filled temple."<sup>54</sup> Karuna Sagar Behera says, "A plate inscribed with names of in-charge of stores recovered from Konark and now available at the Indian Museum, Kolkata," and "The Brahma Purana and other epics of the 13<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> and the 16<sup>th</sup> centuries describing either the procedure for Sun Worship or descriptions of the temple of Konark indicate its completion and continuation of worship."<sup>55</sup> He further states that the depressions on the throne at its eastern edge, the defaced lovely lotus petals on the topmost moulding, two small yupa or sacrificial pillars next to a small platform between Jagamohana and Natyamandapa and the construction of the Jagamohana and the Natyamandapa itself and that of so many subsidiary temples including the kitchen inside the campus indicate that the temple was in worship. "Reference made in Kenduli plates of Narasimha Deva IV of the Saka year 1305 (1384 A.D.) shows that at that time the monument was in a perfect state of preservation and the presiding deity was under worship."<sup>56</sup> According to Alice Boner the first worship of Suryanarayana at Konark was conducted on a



Magha Shukla Saptami (7<sup>th</sup> day in the Waxing Moon Period in the month of January-February), i.e. on the day of the Chandrabhaga Snana Yatra that happened on a Sunday.<sup>57</sup> However, Percy Brown believes that the temple collapsed before its completion as the heavy stone blocks atop the walls could not be properly put into position and the foundation began to give way. He says, “Its colossal grandeur outstripped the means of execution, for its materialisation was beyond the capacity of its builders, its scale was too great for their powers, and in the construction part they failed.” K. C. Panigrahi does not agree with Brown. Considering the opinions of scholars, engineers, archaeologists and some circumstantial evidences mentioned above, it seems, Percy Brown’s opinion does not hold steam.

Some hand drawn rough sketches and descriptions from the old diaries of sailors sailing by Puri and Konark coastline also indicate that the temple of Konark was standing tall during those days and served as a landmark for the navigators in the deep sea. In 1676 Sir Streynsham Master, Governor of Fort St. George, Madras saw Konark and Jagannatha temples while sailing past the coast and recorded it in his diary. In 1679 a sketch of the Black Pagoda in an unknown sailor’s diary shows the main tower and the porch. In 1680 the logbook of Captain Talbott of the ship ‘Berkley Castle’ shows two sketches of the Black Pagoda showing both the main temple and the Jagamohana with relative perspective. However, the topmost part must have been missing as it was not there in 1628 AD. In 1756 sailors gave similar descriptions of the temple. In 1764 a French map prepared by Croisey shows Konark as ‘Pagoda Noir.’ In 1780 Dunn wrote about Black Pagoda resembling like a large ship under sail. Probably with its survived portion of the fallen tower still standing, as seen by Fergusson in 1837, it looked

like that. All these references point to the fact that the temple of Konark, both the main temple and the Jagamohana, were standing tall almost till the end of the 17<sup>th</sup> century without much damage to the structures excepting the crowning parts at its top.

All the facts stated above proves that construction of the Sun Temple at Konark along with all the subsidiary temples inside and outside the campus were completed and worship of Suryanarayana, known as Biranchinarayana also, was going on there almost for 300 years.

**D.** Legends get associated with the subject in the form of folk tales, folk songs and folk plays when its phenomena or the acts go beyond the intellect of the common people. Though legends do not receive any importance from the historians, I believe, “Every story has a core of truth,” how thin be it may. Recognising its core definitely helps in discovering the history about the subject when no direct records are available.

**D1. The Legend about Shamba and Maitreya Vana:** According to Karuna Sagar Behera the legend about Shamba was originally associated with Mitravana located at Multan in the Punjab. However, the 15<sup>th</sup> century epic Kapila Samhita mentions about Shamba, Maitreya Vana and River Chandrabhaga<sup>58</sup> indicating that by 15<sup>th</sup> century the legend was gradually dissociated from the original Mitravana and got fully associated with Maitreya Vana at Konark. As the epics of different periods state that Maitreya Vana was located at the seacoast Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra and other scholars strongly believe that Maitreya Vana and River Chandrabhaga did exist at Konark. The wide practice of Sun worship in Odisha since the ancient times is also proved by a 6<sup>th</sup> century inscription, the Sun images present in temples of Parsurameshwara, Vaitala,



Mukteshwara and Lingaraja of 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> century respectively and some separated images found at various places. Though, initially there were five different sects of Hindus like, Saiva, Vaishnava, Soura, Shakta and Ganapatya, under the influence of Jagannatha cult except Saiva and Vaishnava all others have practically disappeared. Nevertheless, even today every Hindu, irrespective of his sect, worships the Sun everyday, signifying the popularity of Sun worship in Odisha. It being a mythological story there is no way to prove the legend as true than to depend on epics. True or not, the legend establishes the importance attached to Sun worship in Odisha and recognition of the Sun as a healer.

**D2. Legend about Ramachandi and Sibe Santara:** The beautiful story about Ramachandi appearing before Sibe Santara in a stormy night, offering him shelter for the night and dinner of hot porridge, and then instructing him to eat the hot dish from the side, not like Sibe Santara filling the gorge starting from the centre. Eating from the centre would burn his fingers. Goddess Ramachandi was located on the bank of River Chandrabhaga, a large and turbulent river. Sibe Santara was trying to fill up a portion of the gorge to build the temple of Konark on it. However, he was unsuccessful as the stone blocks dropped in to the river gorge at its centre were being washed away by its strong current. Since Goddess Ramachandi was seated at his worksite Sibe Santara used to pray her everyday for blessings to succeed in his project. One day, being worried of his failure in filling the gorge he was on his way to meet the king when a sudden rainstorm appeared from nowhere and he had to take shelter in a hut for the night. To save him from disappointment Ramachandi appeared as an old lady and instructed him on how to do his job.

The local people mention, what they heard from their seniors generation after generation, that Sibe Santara used to pray before two goddesses every day, one near his residence, i.e. Gangeshwari, and the other at his worksite, Ramachandi. Unless Ramachandi was near to his worksite Sibe Santara would not have prayed before her everyday. To pay his obeisance Sibe Santara built temples for both the goddesses on successful completion of his project. The legend implies that Ramachandi pre-existed the present Sun Temple on the bank of River Chandrabhaga and the temple of Konark was built after filling up its gorge under supervision of Sibe Santara.

**D3. Legend about Dharmapada:** A legend similar to that of Dharmapada or Dharama is also associated with the temple of Varaha Narasingha in Simanchalam though with a different name, says Karuna Sagar Behera. He further states that the name Dharmapada was assigned to the protagonist only recently by Pandit Gopabandhu. It is true that there was immense pressure on the craftsmen to complete the temple as the target date was advanced by the king to consecrate the temple on the Chandrabhaga Snana Yatra day that was occurring on a Sunday. For the sculptors it must have been very difficult and time consuming to lift the huge and heavy Amalaka Shila, Kalasha, etc. to the top and install there. When this stupendous task was completed after much difficulty guided by someone's skill and intellect somebody must have given it a dramatic touch and the legend evolved. The legend carries no truth. From the legend, apart from the fact that the temple was located by the side of a water body, we learn that 1200 craftsmen were working continuously for 12 years to complete the temple staying away from their homes and families for the entire period of construction.



**D4. Legend about Ramachandi and Kalapahada:** The story about Ramachandi making a fool of Kalapahada and escaping from his clutch on the plea of fetching some water from the river on promise to return to him, only to break her promise, is just a myth having no truth in it. Karuna Sagar Behera says that the same story with a different name for Kalapahada character has also been described in Odia Mahabharata of Sarala Das which precedes Kalapahada's story at least by a century. The legend indicates that the temple of Ramachandi was located inside Konark campus and was attacked by Kalapahada. It also suggests that a river was flowing nearby and Ramachandi, after her temple was destroyed, migrated from the compound of Konark to the present location at the mouth of River Kushabhadra.

**D5. Legend about the Magnet placed atop the temple:** It is said that a very powerful magnet in the form of a crowning stone (Kalasha) placed atop the temple was attracting ships sailing in the sea towards it and was disturbing their navigation equipment. Once some affected sailors came and took away the magnet after removing it from the top which later caused the temple to collapse. However, it is impossible for a stone-magnet or magnetite of that size and placed at that height of Konark temple to act in that way. Had it even the power of the strong modern rare-earth magnets it would not have been possible for it to attract the ships sailing in the high sea; it would not have affected even their magnetic navigation instruments. Had it been so, life of the people living nearby would have been miserable as the magnet would have snatched away all of their agricultural equipment, implements and weapons, etc. made of iron. Since at the time, the abandoned temple was overgrown with shrubs and trees and was infested with snakes, lizards

and wild animals, and the dreaded Portuguese pirates operating at the eastern coast made it their den, local people were scared to come near it. Every passing day the temple site was growing more and more mysterious for them. Hence, the people living nearby being curious, started to create stories in their minds. It is true that the temple was attacked many times by the Muslims which might have given an impression to the locals that some sailors arrived at the shore one day and took away the magnet from the temple-top that was bothering them. Man Mohan Ganguly says, "In 1825, Andrew Stirling mentioned the story of the Kumbha Pathar or loadstone, lodged on the summit of the temple. When it was removed in the Mughal times, by the crew of a ship, the priests, at the violation of the sanctity, removed the image of the god to Puri temple and from that time the temple became deserted and went rapidly to ruin."<sup>59</sup> However, the loadstone was missing even in 1628 AD and the idol was removed then. Though it is a myth the legend implies that the temple was close to the sea and curious sailors being attracted by its beauty from the distance often came sailing near the beach for a closer view of it and in the process sometimes got stuck in the shallow water.

**D6. The installed image of Suryanarayana was suspended in air:** It is said that the image of Suryanarayana was installed suspended and kept in equilibrium above the throne without any support from any side, floating in the air by a balanced magnetic force applied on the idol from all sides. It is just a myth having no truth in it. The idol of Suryanarayana was not made of any magnetic material and no magnets were placed around it. The idol was made of stone and is now installed along with Indra in Surya Temple, inside Jagannatha Temple compound in Puri. Again, the throne now available inside the



ruined main temple shows some wear and tear marks that suggest that the idol was placed on the throne, not floating above it. For portability, a Chalanti Pratima or the representative idol of much smaller size, made of Astadhatu or an alloy of eight metals is worshipped along with the main deity and taken out only on festival days. Astadhatu is not a strong magnetic material. Hence, it is just a myth originated to create mysticism around the Sun God. Suspended or seated on the throne, the legend proves that the idol of Suryanarayana or Sun God was being worshipped in the temple.

**E.** Is the Sun Temple at Konark of Buddhist origin? In 1910 AD Bishan Swarup explains that the Sun Temple has its origin in Buddhism. The concept has been strongly opposed by Rakhil Das Banerjee and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra [Konarka (Odia) –Chapter XI]. Pandit Mishra says, though adjacent to Konark was a Buddhist centre as described by Hiuen Tsang, Konark is not a Buddhist temple. His statement is proved after the excavation at Kuruma.

**E1.** To Bishan Swarup right from the origin, location, the temples, the sculpture, the festivals and rituals and even the idol of Suryanarayana of Konark appear to be of Buddhist origin. He says Maitreya is one of Buddha's different names and Maitreya Vana is named after him. The Arka Bata in Konark is imitated from Bodhidruma, a banyan tree under which Buddha was enlightened. According to Hiuen Tsang there were many Buddhist monasteries at Konark, hence Bishan Swarup says Konark temple is one of them. The festivals like Rath Yatra or car festival is imitated from Buddhists. He further says that the idol of Suryanarayana is Buddha and the temple at south-west corner of the compound is the temple of Maya Devi, Buddha's mother. The scenes

displayed on the temple walls are Buddhist and the use of elephants profusely in sculpture is a Buddhist tradition as elephant is one of the symbols of Buddhism. Strongly opposing Bishan Swarup Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra says that no scene in the temple wall is Buddhist in nature and elephants are also invariably used by the Hindus in religious drawings and decoration and even identified with certain gods and goddesses [Konarka (Odia) Ch. XI]. Rajendra Lal Mitra says that unlike Hindu temples the compound walls of Buddhist stupas are invariably beautifully decorated whereas no such decoration is found at Konark and other Hindu temples. Hindu temples are vertically divided into ten stages and have no openings at any stage unlike the Buddhist stupas which have ventilation windows at all stages. As per Bishan Swarup the worship at Konark was observed according to Buddhist practices. Here Bishan Swarup contradicts himself as he says the temple was built by a Saiva Keshari King. The Saivas were very strict about their religious practices. In fact Saivas aggressively eradicated Buddhism from India. Everything at Konark, as Bishan Swarup says, was not imitated from Buddhism. It was rather the other way. According to E. B. Havell and Rhys Davids Buddhism is not entirely a new concept in India; over the time it evolved out of Hinduism. Hence, Bishan Swarup is not right; Konark is definitely not a Buddhist temple.

**F.** Now to our last controversy, "Whom the two ruined temples, one brick temple and the other an exquisitely carved stone temple, located at the south-west corner of Sun Temple belong to?" As per Archaeological Survey of India the brick temple is a 10<sup>th</sup> century Vishnu temple and the other to Chhaya Devi, the consort of Sun God. I would like to humbly disagree and discuss about both the temples briefly to identify them differently.



**F1. Identification of the ruined stone temple:** The ruined stone temple located at south-west corner of the compound of Sun Temple is densely and very exquisitely carved with the same style as that of the Sun Temple. The temple is identified by (1) Bishan Swarup as the temple of Maya Devi, the mother of Buddha, by (2) Baya Chakada as that of Maha Gayatri Devi, as (3) the old Sun Temple of Purandara Keshari, (4) Chhaya Devi Temple by K. C. Panigrahi and Karuna Sagar Behera, (5) some say it is just a model built to pre-visualise the upcoming structure and finally as (6) Ramachandi Temple by Man Mohan Ganguly and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra.

Bishan Swarup identifies it as the temple of Buddha's mother Maya Devi as he is of the opinion that the Sun Temple at Konark is a Buddhist temple and hence an ancillary temple constructed inside the compound for Buddha's mother as the administrator of the complex seems quite logical. He is proved absolutely wrong by Man Mohan Ganguly, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra and others. The identification of it as Maha Gayatri Temple also is not accepted as there is no justification in bringing in Maha Gayatri to this location rather than other popular goddesses. According to K. C. Panigrahi and Karuna Sagar Behera it was the pre-existing sun temple of Purandara Keshari which was later converted to the temple of Chhaya Devi, the consort of Sun, after the idol of Sun God was transferred to the new temple. Karuna Sagar Behera further says that the style of sculpture in this temple differs from that of the new Sun Temple and rather matches with that of 11<sup>th</sup> century. Here we must remember that, Langula Narasingha Deva built the new Sun Temple as the old one was in dilapidated condition. Hence, this temple must have been also rebuilt by Narasingha as it was

included in the cluster inside the compound. So how the style could be different to be classified as belonging to a different age? The marginal difference observed might have been due to its construction by a different group of sculptors. Placing it in a different century would be like committing the same mistake again what Fergusson did while dating the Sun Temple. According to Vastu Shastra and Hindu tradition the wife is seated at left side of husband and hence we find the consort of the Presiding Deity of a temple complex is always located at left side corner of the Presiding Deity, like we find in Lingaraja and Jagannatha temples. Moreover the left side is mostly the north-west corner and according to Vastu it is designated for the subordinate and the south-west for the administrator.<sup>60</sup> So, only the Administrator Deity of the complex, like the temple of Goddess Vimala in Puri Temple, is located at the right side corner of the main deity. Hence, it just cannot be the old sun temple or the temple of the consort of Sun, Chhaya Devi. It could be the temple of Administrator of the complex Ramachandi. There may have been a temple dedicated to Chhaya Devi at the north-west corner which is not seen now like many other temples once existing inside the compound. Considering the other alternative, it seems too big and too elaborate for a model built for pre-visualisation and most importantly it was not built like a chariot. The last alternative, i.e., the temple of Ramachandi, as proposed by Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra and Man Mohan Ganguly seems to be right which is supported by the fact that Ramachandi pre-existed there. May be the Goddess was the guardian deity of the place and the idol was installed in a small temple or just under a tree or in the open against stone slabs as we see in some remote areas. Since Sibi Santara was offering prayers to the goddess and



also to Gangeshwari daily for smooth execution of his project he built temples for both the goddesses to show his obeisance. For the images of the Sun used as Parshwa Devatas or auxiliary deities on the temple walls, it can be said that Narasingha Deva, while rebuilding the temple, just to stay with the theme of the campus, used sun images as Parshwa Devatas like it has been done in Lingaraja Temple in Bhubaneswar, presenting all the major gods within the compound, like Vishwakarma, etc. as Lingams. The legend about Ramachandi and Kalapahada also supports the presence of Ramachandi inside the temple campus and migrating later to the river mouth of Kushabhadra.

**F2. Identification of the ruined brick temple:** The brick temple at south-west corner is referred to by Man Mohan Ganguly as “some unknown unfinished temple made of badly burnt bricks,” is identified as a 10<sup>th</sup> century Vishnu temple. I think it is partially true. The Hindus regard the Sun as the first avatar. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra says, “At first the Sun was considered as one and the only God. Then with progress of culture and development of knowledge the Sun was repositioned as one of the many gods worshipped then. The Sun was given the same status as that of Vishnu.”<sup>61</sup> Rajendra Lal Mitra says, “Vishnu was being considered the same as the Sun in the Vedas.”<sup>62</sup> According to R. D. Banerjee, “Some scholars think that Vishnu has been evolved out of the Sun-god, . . .”<sup>63</sup> Bishan Swarup says, “As preserver of earth Sun can be represented as Vishnu.”<sup>64</sup> Hence, the identification of the brick temple as a temple of Vishnu is partially true because it could also be classified as a Sun temple, Vishnu being an avatar of the Sun and artefacts of both types of temples being the same. So, I presume it to be a Sun Temple,

the Sun Temple of Purandara Keshari. Had it been just another Vishnu temple Narasingha Deva, who was so concerned with the design, architecture and beauty of the campus must have had rebuilt the temple with beautifully carved stone blocks as he did with the other temples both inside and outside the compound. Why did he not rebuild the ruined temple belonging to so important god? The reason is, it is the old Sun temple of Purandara Keshari which he replaced with the new temple. Hence there was no need to rebuild the old one. Therefore, I would rather reasonably identify it as the old Sun temple of 9<sup>th</sup> century built by Purandara Keshari and not just a Vishnu temple of 10<sup>th</sup> century.

Myths, facts and controversies may have enveloped the Sun Temple; irrespective of that we have to conserve whatever of it exists today for the posterity. We definitely do not want to see the beautifully ornamented and profusely sculpted temple to be renovated with plain and polished stone blocks. In such case, may be after five decades, we will get to see a plain and shiny Konark Temple standing there without any grace. In Odisha the legacy of fine stone carving is still continuing and we have craftsmen who can do the job of replacing the damaged original blocks. To maintain transparency and be honest to the original 1200 craftsmen, Sibe Santara and Langula Narasingha Deva a huge display board indicating the replaced sections may be placed at the site. Just think, if a painting of Van Gogh, Picasso or Leonardo da Vinci gets somehow damaged should we mend it with a big plain white patch or use the best technology and skill available to fix it to look like almost the original? However, it is neither easy nor the responsibility of only the Odias or the Indians. It is the responsibility of all



who have the fascination and the resources to take initiative and make it happen.

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## Goddess Biraja and Her Chariot Festival

*Subhashree Mishra*

Devi Biraja's temple at Jajpur established on 13<sup>th</sup> century by Chandihar Jajati II. From *Skanda purana*, *Vayu purana*, *Brahmanda purana*, *Brahma purana* and from *Mahabharat* we came to know about Devi Girija or Biraja and about Jajpur the famous shakti pitha of Odisha. Mythologically Devi Sati's naval portion fell here, so this exact area known as "*Navigaya*" where people offer "*pinda*" for their ancestors. Here Devi Biraja worshipped as "*Mahisha marddini*". According to "*Birajakshetra Mahatmya*", after Devi Sati's naval fell here *Brahma* performed a *Yajna* at the bank of river Vaitarani from where Devi Biraja came out. So that place named as *Biraja kshetra* or *Biraja Pitha*.

Devi Biraja worshipped and decorated as *Sabitri*, *Gayatri* and *Sarawati* (some scholars mentioned her as *Maha Laxmi*, *Maha Kali* and *Maha Saraswati*) which together called as Devi Biraja. She is worshipped with her two arms: in her left hand she is holding the tail of the demon Mahishasur and in right hand she kills him by a trident. It is a rare two handed Durga idol of that time. The most beautiful iconography of Devi



Biraja is her crown. Her crown consists of mini Ganesha statue, Vashuki, Shivalinga and Moon. All these symbolically recognises her as Adi Shakti or Aadi para Shakti.

Like Puri Jagannath temple's "Madala panji" Biraja temple also maintains "Biraja Madala panji" from which we can get much knowledge on the rituals, trends and other activities of this *Pitha*. Like "Jagannath Panji", "Biraja panji" is used by the people of Jajpur to know the date, time and days of rituals which are observed every year. She is the only Goddess of Odisha who have her own chariot festival or Ratha yatra. In this Pitha behind all the festivals of Goddess Biraja, Shakta tantric rituals are basic principle but all are conducted as Brahmanical type of worship.

### **Rath yatra or Navaratri of Goddess Biraja:**

The Somavamshis added this Rath Yatra festival for Goddess Biraja. On Bhadrab shukla dwadashi (*SUNIA*) **Banajaga Jatra** or procession to find trees for the chariot is performed. This procession is known as *Bilwa Barani*. At *Pratistha Mandap* during Mulastami



a ceremony is performed to build up the chariot. After the chariot work is completed the main festival of Sarada Durga puja or Ratha Yatra begins. The next day of **MAHALAYA** on *Pratipada tithi* Ratha yatra is begins. As it is impossible to move the performed of Devi Biraja, a small idol of Devi Biraja represent her during the chariot festivals. During this Navaratri the chariot of goddess move around the entire compound once in a day for nine days. On 9<sup>th</sup> day of her Yatra **Aparajita puja** is performed. After this puja Devi Biraja kills the demon Mahisasura then move towards **Lakhabindha Ground** for another puja purpose at the mid night of the same day where she is worshipped as “Mahamari”. Here Goddess named Lakseshwari at the lakhabindha ground worshipped and offered a special drink. After the Puja is over the priest throws arrows to four directions as the representative of Devi Biraja. After all these rituals Devi Biraja returns to her temple.

#### Details of the Chariot:

The chariot of Devi Biraja is known as “**Singhadhwaja (flag bearing a lion) Ratha**”. It is decorated with red, white and black clothes



as the symbol of Mahalaxmi, Maha Saraswati and Maha Kali. In this chariot **Chaturmukha Brahma** is on the place of *Sarathi*. The chariot is 45 hands in height and consists of 12 wheels. Each wheel having 8 number of spokes or Ara. Devi Saraswati is the protector, Brahmacharini is the power and Kushavadra, Mandakini, Bruddha, Ganga and Yamuna were the dwarapalika of this chariot. Five horses named as Asti, Bhaanti, Priya, Naama and Rupa and two snakes (Swarnachuda and Shankhachuda) are attached to this chariot. Maha Vishnu and Narasihma are the rakshak or ratha rakshak. 24 parswadevatas and 9 parswadevis are also there in this chariot. The Dhvajachakra of this chariot is named as Parama Vaishnavi. As Gandharba-Chitrasena and as head of chariot Brahmabarta attached with this chariot. It is believed that Maha Tripura Sundari lives in the flag of this chariot. Sambhabi vidya, Hati vidya, Kadi vidya, Sadi vidya and Rahasya vidya are the names of the vidyas present on the chariot. Some weapons like Dunduvi, Tunira, Bow and Arrow, Hunter, Pharsa, Katari, Sword and some medicines are also carried as war equipments in this chariot also.

People believe that whoever witnesses Devi Biraja on chariot must get moksha and their successor gets protection from the power of evils and from dangerous situations. Peoples from near and far areas come here to enjoy this festival and to get blessings of Goddess Biraja. From all these activities of this Ratha yatra we get much ideas on the Shaktism of Odisha and on the importance of Goddess Biraja as Aadi shakti. It is a unique festival of Odisha where mother goddess have her own chariot festival. It is also a beautiful example of Shakti culture of Jajpur.

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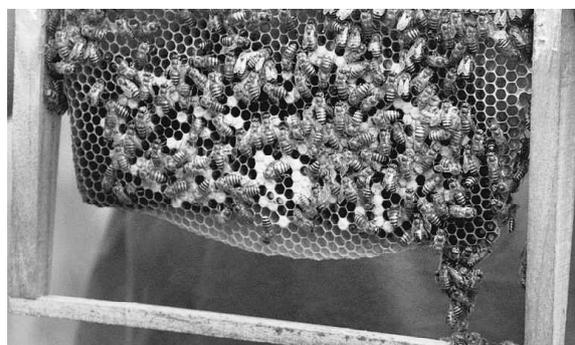


## Progress of Bee Keeping in Odisha

*Prof. Bishnu Charan Jena*

Honey bee is a social insect. It remains in the group. It is also called as a productive insect due to its contribution in preparation of honey. Honey is used in 'Panchamruta' which is being utilized in ritual festivals. It is used as an ingredient in preparation of different medicines to cure the diseases. Beekeeping is an age-old tradition in India. From the Puranic age it has been continuing till date. Honey bees are good pollinators for cross-pollinated crops.

Odisha is a land of agriculture covering 155.7 lakh hectares. Its 85% of peoples remain in rural areas. Due to its diversified agro ecological situation coupled with large number fauna and flora species and presence of natural resources that is rocks, mountains, lakes, streams, river and forest land. Mahatma Gandhi in 1936-37 gave priority to beekeeping as a small scale industry. But in 1936 bee keeping was started near 'Bari', presently in Jajpur district. The State Khadi and Village Industry Board (KVIB) took the responsibility in 1956-57 to spread bee keeping in different districts of Odisha as agro-based industry. Basing on recommendation of National Commission on Agriculture in 1976, ICAR launched the all India Coordinated Project on Honey bee Research and Training (AICRP on Honey bee Research and Training) in 1980-81 in



six different centres. In 1983 a centre was sanctioned by the council to operate in Odisha. Since that period the project is operating in the Department of Entomology, College of Agriculture, Odisha University of Agriculture and Technology (O.U.A.T), Bhubaneswar for promotion of bee keeping in state with objectives to utilize honey bees for pollination in cross-pollinated field crops, to undertake research on bee breeding for disease resistance and high yielding strains, to conduct location specific research on Honey bees diseases, enemies and their management, to conduct multi-location trials in different agro-climatic zones on the management of bees for higher hive products, organize and impart training on several aspects of bee keeping especially for mass queen rearing and production of organic honey. During 11<sup>th</sup> plan period (2007-2012) the project was renamed as



“All India Coordinated Research Project on Honey bees and Pollinators” due to other bees as pollinators of the crops. The objective formulated earlier was modified. The modified objectives were to undertake research on honey bees, bees and non pestiferous pollinators and generate technologies for their conservation, augmentation and utilization for pollination of different crops and trees in various agro-climatic zones, to conduct research on bee breeding for disease resistance and high yielding strains to boost production of hive products, to begin location specific research on management of honey bees, bees and other pollinators and their diseases, enemies and their management, to prepare data base relative abundance of different native insect pollinators on several crops in different agro-climatic regions and to organize and impart “trainers training” on bee pollinators and scientific bee keeping.

**Honey bees in Odisha:** There are five species of honey bees which are prevalent in Odisha. (*Apis cerana indica*), Indian hive bee, stingless bee (*Trigona iridipennis*), Italian bee (*Apis mellifera*), Rock bee (*Apis dorsata*) and little bee (*Apis florea*).

### **Suitable ecological condition of bee keeping in Odisha**

Odisha is an agrarian state of India with 155.7 lakh hectares of land. Its 85% people come under rural population. Its agro-ecological condition is very diversified with mountains, rocks, rivers, and waterfalls and many species of fauna and flora. The honey bees collect pollen and nectar from flowers like Niger, mustard, sesamum, sun flower, safflower, jowar, bajara, maize, ragi, green gram, black gram, Bengal gram,

arahar, cowpea, horse gram, bean, pea, coriander, chilies, beverages, cucumber, muskmelon, watermelon, cucurbites, brinjal, ladies finger, tomato, pointed gourd, ridge gourd, snake gourd, radish, cabbage, cauliflower, onion, coconut, mango, guava, litchi, sapeta, lemon, orange, banana, moringa, papaya, tamarind, mahua, eucalyptus, jaman, amla, karanja, neem, arjuna, asana, kusum, sal, piasal and kadamba. Besides the honey bees visit the flowers of creepers, various thorny, medicinal, onnament and fodder plants.

### **Period of Bee activities in Odisha**

The activities of honey bee has been observed in Cuttack, Jagatsinghpur, Jajpur, Kendrapara, Bhadrak, Balasore, Puri and Ganjam districts of Odisha due to availability of foraging plants species. Bee activities commence from October onwards due to prevalence of congenial environment.

### **Enemies of Honey bee**

Different species of wasp, spiders, lizard, cockroaches, black dermestid beetles. Bee hunter, assassin black and white banded ants’ Lepismatid and *Apanteles galleriae* are found by the scientists and some of the post graduate students.

Basing on the importance of beekeeping in India Randhawa Committee in 1992 recommended to include beekeeping in course programme of final year of B. Sc.(Ag) under the title, Rural Agricultural Work Experience Programme (RAWEP). Some of the students choose the course as elective. Besides, the Apiculture is being taught to the B. Sc. (Ag) students regularly.



**Research findings:** The scientists of the project and some post graduate students of Department of Entomology, College of Agriculture, Bhubaneswar conducted several research trails in different aspects of honeybee basing on farmers need of the state. Some of the research findings are explained for adoption of farmers of the state. Keeping bee colonies @3-5Per acre of mustard, sesamum, Niger, sunflower and safflower crop increased the seed yield to the extent of 10.6, 25, 33.0, 79 and 64% respectively. Similarly in litchi orchard the fruit yield was increased to the tune of 10.3 per cent. In tribal areas the provision of sugar solution with Niger flowers attracted honeybees for pollination of crops. Among the three species of honeybees viz; *A. cerena indica*, *A. dorsata* and *A. florea*, *A. cerena indica* is found to be most predominant forager. Bee pollination increased 25% seed yield of coriander and oil content in mustard and sesamum. Queen mating was found to be most successful in March and December of the year. The diets like parched gram flour, corn, flour, skimmed milk powder and sugar solution (35:15) in 20:20:10:50 proportion are most preferred for beekeeping.

**Training on beekeeping:** One of the aspect of the objective is to train the tribal's and other farmers interested for beekeeping in potential areas of the state, the project, AICRP on honeybees and pollinators under O.U.A.T, Bhubaneswar center organized training on various aspects of beekeeping to farmers of KVKS, ATMA, NRCWA, NGOS, Self help groups and KVIP. During the period from 1984 to 2011 - 2012, 11366 beneficiaries of the state have been trained through 141 training programmes.

### Technology generated and transferred to the farmers community

The technologies which are to be adopted by the Farming communities of Odisha are as follows: To maintain the healthy colonies several bee management practices have been suggested. Periodic inspection of colonies, cleaning of bottom board, removal of old combs, drone management and swarm control for *A.c. indica* have also been transferred. The safest pesticides particularly the botanicals are advised to control crop pests and pollinators. The introduction of the Italian honey bee in the tribal areas and their management for higher production of honey to increase the financial status of tribal's is the outcome of the research of the project.

It has been revealed from the study that keeping 10 boxes with 10 colonies in tribal districts of Odisha viz Koraput, Kandhamal, Sundargarh, Mayurbhanja and Keonjhar the initial expenditure is estimated to be Rs.33100.00. In the closing of the first year the income out of selling of honey in market is about Rs.15,000.00. In the third year onwards the profit is around Rs.31250.00. The production goes on years after year. Therefore, it is a profitable enterprise with involvement of less initial expenditure and less annual maintenance cost.

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## Salute to Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan

*Dr. Bidya Bhusan Mohanty*

‘It would be my proud privilege if September 5<sup>th</sup> is observed as “Teachers Day”. Such was the humble reply of a gentleman sitting over the highest chair of Constitutional power and position, when some of his friends and students requested him to allow them for celebrating 5<sup>th</sup> September as his birthday every year. On another occasion, when a student of Oxford University asked this gentleman holding the post of Professor by that time, ‘What is the difference between a station master and a school master?’, he coolly replied, ‘a station master minds the train and a school master trains the mind’. Further we pay our salute to this gentleman at the apex of political power for accepting Rs.2,500 out of Rs.10,000 salary and donating the rest of the amount to the Prime Minister’s National Relief Fund every month.

The gentleman we are taking about is none other than our beloved and revered president of

the past Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan. Let’s now make a glance over his early life and family, his education, his career as a teacher, his political career, his views on contemporary religion, philosophy and education.

A prominent academician and philosopher, a promising politician and statesman, a prolific writer and scholar—all rolled in one—being wonderfully blended to find a time-tested and lively expression in Radhakrishnan.



Born to Sarvepalli Veeraswami, a sub-ordinate revenue official under British raj and Sarvepalli Sitamma, a housewife in a modest but poor Telugu-speaking Niyogi Brahmin family of thiruttani, Madras Presidency, British India (Now Tamil Nadu, India) on 5<sup>th</sup> September 1888, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan was destined to become the

first vice president of India (1952-62) and second president of India (1962-67). He had his primary, secondary and higher secondary education at



Thiruttani's K.V. High School, Tiruvallur's Gowdie School, Tirupati's Hermannsburg Evangelical Lutheran Mission School, Walajapet's Government Higher Secondary School and Vellore's Voorhees College. He enrolled himself in the most prestigious Madras Christian College where he graduated with philosophy Hons. and did his post-graduation in Philosophy (1906-08). Throughout his students' career, he was awarded several scholarships which considerably helped him to continue his higher studies without break. His Bachelor's Degree thesis entitled. 'The Ethics of the Vedanta and its Metaphysical Presuppositions' vehemently battled against the accusation that the Vedanta scheme did not have any quarter for ethics. But being highly appreciated by two of his professors Rev. William Meston and Dr. Alfred George Hogg, the thesis was published when he was 20 years of age.

He was married to Sivakamuamma, his distant cousin at the age of 16, got blessed with five daughters and one son and spent a happy married life for about 51 years. His son Dr. S. Gopal emerged as a promising Indian historian credited with the authorship of biographies of Dr. Radhakrishnan and Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru.

After the completion of higher education, Radhakrishnan started his teaching career as a Lecturer of Philosophy at Madras Presidency College, Madras in April 1909 and successfully got through the screening test of L.T. training to qualify for the permanent post of Assistant Professor and Professor in the same college. In 1916, he was appointed to the Department of Philosophy of Government Arts College, Rajamundry (A.P.) as Professor. In 1918, he was appointed as Professor of Philosophy at the University of Mysore where he was privileged to teach the students at Maharaja's College, Mysore

and to write several useful articles for the prestigious journals such as 'The International Journals of Ethics', 'The Quest' and 'The Journals of Philosophy' for three years. In 1921, he was selected for appointment to the post of Professor of Philosophy at the University of Calcutta where he held the highly distinguished King George V Chair of Mental and Moral Science. It is pertinent to mention here that while on move to take up his new assignment at the University of Calcutta, some of his loving students of Mysore University took their much adored and admired Professor to the station in a carriage decorated with beautiful flowers. In June 1926, he represented the University of Calcutta at the British Empire Universities Congress and in September 1926, he made his intellectual presence felt at the International Congress of Philosophy at Harvard University. That year he accepted Upton Lecture at Manchester College where he made a significant mark of his intellectual excellence.

In 1929, on an invitation, he assumed the office of the Principal, Manchester College, Oxford after J. Estlin Carpenter and brilliantly delivered Hibbert Lecture on 'The ideals of Life' which was later on published in an outstanding book form "An Idealist view of Life". In 1930, he was appointed as Haskell Lecturer in Comparative Religion at the University of Chicago. In 1931, he held the most dignified office of the Vice-Chancellor, Andhra University (A.P.) and continued in that position for five years. He was then fortunate enough to become the first Indian to hold a Professorial chair at the Oxford University, London where he served as a well-known Spalding Professor of Eastern Religion and Ethics in 1936. In 1938, he was elected as a fellow of All Souls college and that of British Academy. In 1939, he was invited to succeed



Pt. Madan Mohan Malavya as the Vice-Chancellor of Banaras Hindu University where he continued for 9 years. He also chaired the University Education Commission in 1948, and initiated several significant measures for the promotion of education all over the country as per the country's need. His teaching career in several distinguished positions spanned over a length of time stretching from 1909 to 1952. He held the respectable position of being the Chancellor of the University of Delhi from 1953 to 1962 and focused on the remarkable development of Higher Studies and Research.

In his life and extensive writing career, Radhakrishnan proved himself to be a very prominent, powerful and influential writer of extraordinary scholarship. He is said to have been credited with a wide range of Literary works in form of books and articles of utmost philosophic rigour and spiritual fervour. Some of his highly distinguished books are Philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore (1918), Indian Philosophy 2 Vols (1923), An idealist view of life (1929), Eastern Religion and Western Thought (1939), Religion and Society (1947), The Bhagavad Gita (1948), The Dhammapada (1950), The Philosophy of Upanishads (1953), Recovery of Faith (1956), The Brahmasutra (1959), Religion, Science & Culture (1968), The Reign of Religion in Contemporary Philosophy, Religion in a Changing World, East and West in Religion, East and West: Some Reflections, The Hindu view of life, The Philosophy of spiritual life, living with a purpose, The pursuit of Truth, The Heart of Hindustan: A Collection of Seven Essays & many more. Tagore's Philosophy, he claimed was 'the genuine expression of the Indian spirit'.

In most of his published books, write-ups and lectures, Radhakrishnan has earnestly

endeavoured to describe, defend and propagate his faith which he referred to in various terms- 'Hinduism', 'Vedanta', 'religion of the spirit' against all possible what he termed as 'Uninformed Western Criticism'. With a string religious conviction, he tried to establish that Hinduism, as reflected in Vedanta, was philosophically sound and ethically valuable. His philosophy was deeply rooted in Advaita Vedanta and he powerfully reinterpreted it in terms of its direct intuitive experience and inner realization to shape the understanding of Hinduism both in India and the West. In him, we find Vedanta getting an access to the west where it satiated the spiritual hunger of the Europeans and Americans with proper nourishment in the early decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century. All his rich ideas and powerful writings enormously contributed to the formation of India as 'a nation-state' as well as to the hegemonic status of Vedanta as the 'essential world view of Hinduism'. Further, his extensive knowledge of the eastern and western philosophical traditions brought him the glory of being a 'bridge-maker' between India and the west. To him, the truth and diversity of human nature as grounded in the absolute should have proper recognition in theology and creeds that rested upon intellectual formulations and religious experience.

Radhakrishnan defines education as an 'instrument for social, economic and cultural change'. Apart from providing extensive knowledge, information, skill and training, it instills into human mind a sense of discipline, moral values, creativity and critical thinking power to sort out many issues in life. It makes a man physically, mentally and spiritually complete and teaches him the art of living through refinement of heart and mind. It generates an opportunity for formation of character, development of



personality, training of leadership, development of secular and scientific attitude, cultivation of social, moral, spiritual and democratic values; preservation, enrichment and transmission of culture and finally development of nationalism and international understanding.

Radhakrishnan was honoured with several outstanding awards such as “Knighthood” in 1931, Bharat Ratna, India’s highest Civilian Award in 1954, German ‘Order pour le Merite’ in 1954, The Peace Prize of the German Book Trade in 1961, Institution of Teacher’s Day on 5<sup>th</sup> Sept. every year in honour of Radhakrishnan’s Birthday, Honorary membership of the British Royal Order of Merit in 1963, Sahitya Academy Fellowship in 1968, The Templeton Prize in 1975, Institution of the Scholarship renamed as Radhakrishnan Chevening Scholarship and Radhakrishnan Memorial Award by Oxford University in 1989.

It deserves a special mention here that Radhakrishnan was the first person to be honoured with the highest honour of Sahitya Academy Fellowship for his rich contribution to literature. From the honour of being ‘Knight hood’ till India’s attainment of freedom, he was addressed as “Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan” but in the post-independence period he became widely known as “Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan”. He was awarded Templeton Prize, a few months before his demise for advocating ‘non-aggression’ and conveying ‘a universal reality of God that embraced love and wisdom for all people’. With a commitment to the cause of education, he donated the entire amount of the Templeton Prize to the Oxford University. From 1933 onwards, he was nominated 16 times for the Nobel Prize for Literature and 11 times for Nobel Peace Prize. He was one of the founder members of Helpage

India, a premier non-profit organization committedly working for the well-being of the elderly underprivileged in India.

After a promising academic career, Radhakrishnan joined politics in the later part of his life. By virtue of his pervasive knowledge and intellectual brilliance, he could have an abiding influence in Indian politics as well as in foreign affairs in post-independence period. He made his presence strongly felt in the Andhra Mahasabha of 1928 where he advocated the idea of renaming the ceded Districts Division of Madras Presidency Royalaseema. In 1931, being appointed to the League of Nations Committee for Intellectual Co-operation, he held an identity among the intellectuals as a Hindu expert on Indian Ideas. In 1946, he was elected to the Indian Constituent Assembly for two years and then in 1948-49, he headed the Indian delegation to the newly formed UNESCO. He initially served as an active sitting member of the Executive Board of UNESCO and subsequently became its elected Chairman and then India’s ambassador to UNESCO. In 1949, he was appointed India’s ambassador to Moscow by the then Prime Minister Pt. Jawaharlal Nehru and continued that dignified office till 1952. On his return to India, he was elected as first Vice-President of India (1952-62), first Chairman of Rajya Sabha and then was elected as the second President of India (1962-67) after Dr. Rajendra Prasad. In 1959, he was accompanied by Pt. Nehru on a foreign tour and his gradual influence in political circle raised to new heights.

During his tenure as Vice President and President of India, the political scenario was overshadowed with numerous global crises like the Korean war, Indo-China political conflict, Indo-Pak hostilities and the cold war split between East and West. In such a grave situation of political



instability, Radhakrishnan wonderfully managed to bring his philosophical and political beliefs into motion. He resented over the divisive ability and dominant character of what he witnessed as 'the self-proclaimed' international organization like the League of Nations. Realizing the growing need for world peace and universal fellowship, he advocated for the promotion of an innovative Internationalism based on integral experiences of metaphysical foundations and political ideology. Through such a vision, he emphasized, 'mutual understanding and tolerance can be effectively encouraged between cultures and nations.

The demise of Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan on 17<sup>th</sup> April 1975 was an irreparable loss for our country. From a humble origin to the apogee of political power and position, the journey was undoubtedly incredible and amazing. But history is replete with instances of many people attaining stride of success as a colossus. This is exactly what has happened to Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan in his life. The span of his life covering a period of about 87 years was quite eventful in many ways. His significant and influential role in the domain of academics, politics and philosophy has earned him 'a place of all time remembrance' by his dear countrymen.

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## Management of Major Diseases and Insect Pest Complex in Arhar

*Dr. N. Ranasingh*

*Dr. U.K. Behera*

Pigeon pea, *Cajanus cajan* (L.), is the second important pulse crop in India. Arhar (Pigeon Pea) / Toor dal is a perennial legume that belongs to the Fabaceae family, which is also known as pigeon pea or split pigeon pea, arhar dal or red gram dal. It Helps in Maintaining Blood Pressure. Arhar dal is rich in potassium content; potassium is known to act as a vasodilator, which assists in reducing blood pressure and blood constriction. May Promote Weight Loss. Boosts Digestive Health. Toor dal is widely grown in tropical and semitropical regions across the world, India accounts for 72% of major production of pigeon pea i.e. with production of 3.68 million tonnes from an area of 4.42 million hectares with productivity of 832 (kg/ha) (AICRP on Pigeon pea, Annual report -2018-19), from an area of 4.42 Million ha. It is a drought-resistant plant and can be cultivated in regions with minimal rainfall. Toor dal is cultivated solely as a crop or merged with cereals such as sorghum, pearl millet or maize or with other legumes such as peanuts. Pigeon pea is capable of symbiosis with Rhizobia, the bacteria linked with toor dal nurtures soils through symbiotic nitrogen fixation.

This arhar crop is cultivated by the Indian farmers taking popular Arhar varieties i.e BRG-5, GJP-1, BRG-17, Phuletu-12 and Pusa Arhar-16, Pusa 991 and Pusa 992 with a spacing of 60x20 and 90x30cm for early and medium duration varieties respectively with a fertilizer dose of 20:40:20NPK kg /ha with a spray of NPK 19:19:19 @1.0% and Boron ( Di Sodium Octa borate Tetra hydrate) @2.0% at flower bud ignition stage. But in Odisha condition improved arhar varieties like BRG-5, GJP-1, BRG-17 and old roll model varieties like Asha, Laxmi and Parbati still gives good yield i.e 14-15Q/ha with an expenditure of 35,000-37,000/ha.

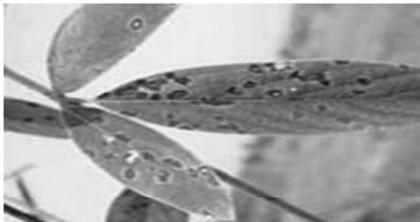
Although good number of varieties are available with sound management practices still production of Arhar is declining like anything due to major pest and disease attack. The major constraint in the production of pigeon pea is the damage caused by diseases and insect pests attack with preventable losses up to 60-78%. So a scientific write up is given next page for smooth management of major pest and disease to get a sustainable yield for the farmers of Odisha.



### INTEGRATED DISEASE MANAGEMENT IN Arhar (Pigeon pea)

SL. NO.	DISEASE	CAUSAL ORGANISM	DAMAGE SYMPTOMS	MANAGEMENT
1.	Wilt	<i>Fusarium oxysporum f.sp. udum</i>	Yellow or faded leaves Sudden yellowing, withering, drying of leaves followed by wilting of entire plants Blackening of root & stem Dark streak on stem base of the wilted plants The affected stem exhibits vascular browning indicating xylem plugging with mycelia.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crop rotation with Deep summer ploughing with Growing resistant/tolerant varieties like Maruthi, Asha, Vishaka etc.</li> <li>• Mixed cropping with jowar, sorghum along with Seed treatment with talc formulation of <i>T. viride</i> @ 4g or <i>Ps. fluorescens</i> @ 10 g/kg or Carbendazim + Mancozeb @ 2.0g/kg of seed</li> <li>• Basal soil application of Neem oil cake @ 150 kg/ha</li> <li>• Soil application of <i>Ps. fluorescens</i> or <i>T. viride</i> @ 2.5 kg + 250 kg of FYM /ha at 30 days after</li> </ul>
2.	Phytophthora blight	<i>Phytophthora drechsleri f.sp. cajani</i>	It resembles damping-off disease as the seedlings die suddenly. Infected plants have water-soaked lesions on their leaves. Brown to black, slightly sunken lesions on the basal portion of stems and petioles. Lesions girdle the main stems or branches which break at this point by wind Yellowing of tip and margin of leaf lamina	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid planting in the land prone to water logging with deep summer ploughing</li> <li>• Seed treatment with talc formulation of <i>T. viride</i> @ 4g or <i>P. fluorescens</i> @ 10 g/kg or Metalaxyl/Cymoxanil + Mancozeb @ 2.0g/kg of seed</li> </ul>
3.	Dry root rot	<i>Macrophoma phaseolina</i>	Initially, lesions with grey centre and dark brown margins on stem. In later stage, lesions coalesce and girdle the stem Premature death of plant Dead plants when uprooted, their roots are rotten and died.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Seed treatment with talc formulation of <i>T. viride</i> @ 4g or <i>Ps. fluorescens</i> @ 10 g/kg or Carbendazim + Mancozeb @ 2.0g/kg of seed Soil.</li> <li>• Application of <i>Ps. fluorescens</i> or <i>T. viride</i> @ 2.5 kg + 250 kg of FYM /ha at 30 days after sowing</li> </ul>
4.	Powdery mildew	<i>Oidiopsis taurica</i>	Powdery patches on lower surface of leaves with yellowing on upper surface. Premature defoliation. Stunting of younger plants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select field away from perennial pigeon pea affected with diseases</li> <li>• Spray Wettable sulphur @2g /lt or Thiophanate methyl@ 1gm/ lit of water</li> </ul>
5.	Cercospora leaf spot	<i>Cercospora cajani</i>	Initially, minute water soaked lesions with dark centres & yellow halo Lesions coalesce to form blotches.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select well-drained field and Spray Carbendazim + Mancozeb @ 2 gm/lit of water</li> </ul>
6.	Sterility mosaic	<i>Sterility mosaic virus</i>	Bushy and pale green plants. Excessive vegetative growth, stunting. Cessation of flowering leading to sterility.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Remove infected plants</li> <li>• Spray acaricides soon after disease appears as it spreads by Eriophyid mite.</li> </ul>
7.	Alternaria Leaf spot	<i>Alternaria Solani</i>	Small, circular necrotic spots with concentric rings on leaves. Later spots coalesce and cause blighting of leaves. On stems, spots are sunken with concentric rings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Select seed from healthy crops</li> <li>• Uprooting and proper disposal of infected plants</li> <li>• Apply Carbendazim + Mancozeb 2g /litre of water</li> </ul>



NAME OF MAJOR DISEASES WITH DAMAGED SYMPTOM IN PICTORIAL FORM			
Sl. No.	DISEASE SYMPTOM	Sl. No.	DISEASE SYMPTOM
1. Wilt		2. <u>Phytophthora</u> <u>blight</u>	
3. Dry root rot		4. Powdery mildew	
5. <u>Cercospora</u> leaf spot		6. Sterility mosaic	
7. <u>Alternaria</u> Leaf spot			

### Management of insect pest complex in Arhar

The crop is attacked by more than 250 insect pests but the damage caused by pod borer complex viz., *Helicoverpa armigera*, *Melanagromyza obtusa*, *Maruca vitrata* and *Etiella zinckenelia* and pod sucking bug

*Clavigralla gibbosa* results in major reduction to grain yield. Insects feed on all parts of the pigeon pea plant. The most serious pests, and the primary focus of pigeon pea pest management research, are those that attack reproductive structures, including buds, flowers, and pods.



The key pests of pigeon pea can be grouped into three categories: flower- and pod-feeding Lepidoptera, pod-sucking Hemiptera, and seed-feeding Diptera and Hymenoptera.

### 1. *Helicoverpa armigera*

Among the lepidopteran pod borers, *Helicoverpa armigera* is the most dreaded and polyphagous pest of pigeon pea worldwide. It is one of the predominant species in the pod borer complex causing damage to both flowers and pods. Moths prefer to oviposit on plants in the reproductive growth stage and are attracted to flowering crops. More than 80% of eggs are laid on calyxes and pods. The larvae enter its head and part of the body into the pod and feed on the seeds. A single larva can damage several pods during its life time.

### 2. *Maruca vitrata*

The spotted pod borer, *Maruca vitrata* is serious pest causing extensive damage to floral buds, flowers and pods. They webbed together the flowers, buds, pods and leaves and fed from within. They also damaged the seeds by boring into the pods. This concealed feeding complicates control as pesticides and natural enemies have difficulty penetrating the shelter to reach the larvae.

### 3. *Melanagromyza obtusa*

The pod fly, *Melanagromyza obtusa* oviposits in the tender pods. The maggots feed on the seeds and pupate inside the pods. It is one of the most serious pests of pigeon pea in many parts of the country causing the grain damage ranging from 10 to 80 per cent. Blister beetle (*Mylabris pustulata*) reported to be the serious

pest of pigeon pea. It infests by feeding the flowers and developing pods cause reduction in yield.

### 4. *Clavigralla gibbosa*

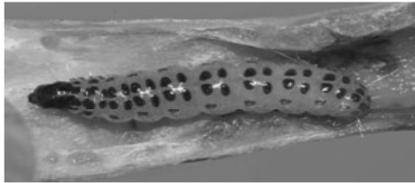
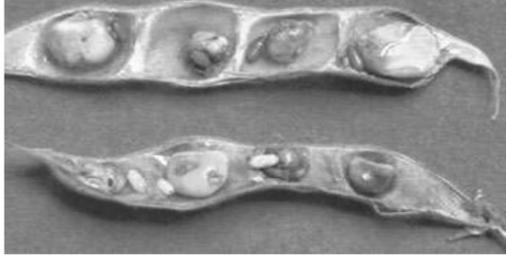
Both adults and nymphs of pod-sucking Hemipteran bug *Clavigralla gibbosa* feed on pigeon pea by piercing the pod wall and extracting nutrients from the developing seeds. Damaged seeds are dark and shriveled, and they are difficult to distinguish from those damaged by drought. Damaged seeds do not germinate and are lose marketability.

### 5. *Etiella zinckenella*

**The Spiny Lepidopteran pod borer,** *Etiella zinckenella* larva bores within the green pods and feeds on seeds. The newly emerged larvae feed on floral parts and causing many of them to drop. The pod formation gets reduced. Fecal pellets are seen inside the damaged pods.

Pigeonpea pest management is complicated by several factors because the crop is attacked by different pest groups with different biologies. However, improved cultivation practices along with location specific Integrated Insect Pest Management approach could enhance the productivity as well as yield. Impact of the climate changes viz., changes in temperature and rainfall pattern may affect the components of Insect Pest Management. Another impediment in pigeonpea pest management is that pigeonpea has been considered a marginal crop and being neglected in a mixed cropping system and hence, given less attention by farmers. Proper implementation of IPM strategies in larger areas and timely intervention of different tactics are quite essential for the effective management of major insect pests to enhance the productivity.



Sl. No.	NAME OF INSECT PESTS WITH DAMAGED SYMPTOM IN PICTORIAL FORM	
1.	<p><i>Helicoverpa armigera</i></p> 	<p>2. <i>Maruca vitrata</i></p> 
3.	<p><i>Melanagromyza obtusa</i></p> 	<p>4. <i>Clavigralla gibbosa</i></p> 
5.	<p><i>Etiella zinckenella</i></p> 	

## Integrated Pest Management in Arhar

### A. Cultural methods

1. Follow deep summer ploughing at every alternate season to destroy soil inhabiting eggs, larvae and pupae of various pests.
2. Major insect pest population of arhar can also be suppressed to some extent by eradication of alternate weed host by following clean cultivation.
3. Early sowing crop and increased seed rate can escape the first two broods of

stem fly as well as compensate the damage due to stem fly.

4. Physically collect and destroy egg masses and pupae.
5. Use of short duration varieties escapes from the attack of pod borer.

### B. Mechanical methods

1. Set up light trap to monitor, attract and kill the pod borer moths.
2. The population of pod borer can be regulated by installing pheromone traps.



3. Set up pheromone traps with helilure @ 20 nos./ha to reduce gram pod borer, *Helicoverpa armigera* incidence.
4. In cases of heavy infestation of pod borers, physical shaking of pigeon pea plants to dislodge larvae and collect and destroy manually.
5. Bird perches @ 20-30 nos. per ha placed just above the crop canopy will also help to reduce the population of the pest.

### C. Biocontrol methods

1. Early instar larvae and early season sucking pests can be managed to below the threshold level by applying 5 % NSKE.
2. Release egg parasite *Trichogrammaspp* and egg larval parasite *Chelonus blackburni* for the control of *H. armigera* @ 1.5 lakh per hectare at fortnightly 4-6 times at the initiation of pod borer infestation monitored through pheromone trap.
3. Conserve natural enemies like *Microbraconsp*, *Cotesiasp*, *Bracon hebetor* and *Apantelessp*. parasitizes the caterpillar pests.
4. Apply NPV @ 500 LE/ha to control *H. armigera*.

### D. Chemical methods

1. For management of pod borer complex during the time of flowering spray neem bio-Insecticide (1500ppm) @ 1.5 liter per hectare.
2. Conventional insecticides like Chlorpyrifos 20 EC (1000 ml/ ha), Profenophos 50EC (1000 ml/ ha), Thiodicarb 75 WP (750 g/ha) to be sprayed when the pest population reaches the threshold limit.
3. The novel Insecticides like spinosad 45 SC (200 ml/ha), Indoxacarb 14.5 SC(500 ml/h a), Emamectine benzoate 5 SG(250 g/ ha), Flubendiamide 39.35 SC (250 g/ ha) etc should be used alternatively at 50 % flowering stage.

Insect growth regulator viz., Diflubenzuron 25 WP (250g/ ha), Novaluron 10 EC (375 g/ha) can also be recommended to spray.

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