



NRUSINGHA GURU: GANDHI OF WESTERN ODISHA

Dr.Antaryami Behera

HOD and Lecturer,
Department of History,
Larambha College, Larambha
Dist- Bargarh (Odisha)
Pin-768102

Abstract:-

Nrusingha Guru was patriot. For this, early in his youth he got attracted to the national activity that was creeping over the nation and to the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. His cultivated discipline, dedication and devotion to the task in hand made him follow his leader with faith and conviction. His personal integrity, the sprit of service and sacrifice. He was class by himself. For the suitable and many sided contribution, he made during the pre and post independent period he will be remembered for generation to come. His impact on his contemporaries was second only to Gandhi. He made incessant effort for the economics uplift of the people, initiated literacy and educational drive for the down trodden to provide the basis for change and removal the traditional caste based limitations in the interest of social expansion. Nrusingha Guru stood for a progressive and rational social order. He was the most complete human being. He was a high souled man, the Gandhi of Western Odisha.

Keywords:-Anti- untouchability, Charkha, Journalism, Harijans, Khadi

1. Introduction :-

The Leader that made their influence felt during the course of the freedom movement in Sambalpur was of this make. The influence of the Indian Nationalism had its impact on them; they accepted and adopted the political ideas and practices. They contributed in diverse manner to the national main stream To them patriotism. The most distinguished amongst the distinguished leader of Sambalpur was Nrusingha Guru. He came from diverse background and his contribution has been varied and distinct in several fields. He was the man of high idealism, in all matters adopted a matter of facts approach. A true disciple of Mahatma Gandhi throughout life, Nrusingha wore loin cloth, walked bare footed and adhered to the principle of truth and non- violence. This ideals of simplicity and dedication commanded respects and regards from all quarters. He was known as the Gandhi of Western Odisha.

Nrusingha Guru worked on a well prepared ground. In fact he along with Chintamani Pujari, Laxmi Narayan Mishra, Bhagirathi Pattanaik and Dayananda Satpathy constituted the Five Comrades or "Panchasakha" of the Freedom Movement in Sambalpur.¹ Among the few, who adopted themselves in the practice of Gandhian ideals in their day to day life, Nrusingha Guru was not only one among them but also

a true representative of the Indian ideals of 'Bhumiputra' and 'Sakha'. He lived for the upliftment of the downtrodden and worked for the betterment of the masses. His life is a saga of suffering and sacrifices for the good of his fellowmen and the propagation of the messages – "Service is God".

2. Review of Related literature and Methodology

Very little work has so far been attempted on Socio- Cultural, Freedom Movement and the role of Nrusingha Guru in Western Odisha. But, till now to sincere work has been done by any scholar except some publication like Chittaranjan Mishra's work, Nrusingha Guru; The Freedom Fighter, (2002), Giridhari Prasad Guru's work, The Guru and Mahatma : A Biography of Nrusingha Guru (2008), Chittaranjan Mishra's work, Freedom Movement in Sambalpur (1827-1947), (1985), Siba Prasad Das's work, Sambalpur Itihasa (Odia) (1969), and few number of article has also published like Balakrushna kar's work, Illustrious sons of Sambalpur (1996) and Debanand Chopdar's work, Nrusingha Guru (1985). In their work they have not thrown much light on my study. Therefore it is sincerely felt that a historical investigation for preparing such a research paper care will be taken to review all the literature available on Socio- cultural and Freedom Movement of Sambalpur. This work will base on original records available from different sources i.e, Govt. Reports, District Gazetteer at Odisha state Archives, Sambalpur, periodical and officials publication will also be consulted for cross examination of the data. Out of the above, the present study based on historical research. The researcher has collected data both from primary and secondary source mainly from official reports, Gazetteers and books. It is based on Archival Study.

3. Family life of Nrusingha Guru

Nrusingha Guru was born of Ganesh Ram Guru and Laxmi Devi as Gurupali, a village near Sasan of Sambalpur on 24 march 1902 on the Full moon day of Falguna. The name of the village was given after the surname of Kasinath Guru, his grand-father, who had taken initiative for the first settlement of the village. When Nrusingha was in his mother's womb, wishing for male child his grand-father prayed to Nrusingha Nath, a famous deity of Western Odisha. Accordingly, the name of new- born baby was given after the name of the famous god.² Nrusingha Guru had his early education in the village elementary school (Chatasali). He was both brilliant and plodding and in a very short time he could finish the alphabet learning and writing.

After completing the initial primary education at Sasan than at Saranda primary with meritorious students got Scholarship.³ For further study, Nrusingha Guru joined the M.E. School of Pattanaikpara at Sambalpur. Here, he showed himself a hard working student. Nrusingha Guru to the expectation of the teachers could excel and was warded the scholarship for the third time.

Completing of his education in Pattanaikpara M.E. School he, joined the Zilla School at Sambalpur and stayed in the school hostel. During his stay in the hostel, he came in contact with Krushna Chandra Sengupta, the superintendent of the hostel. Being a nationalist he used to advise the hostelers for sacrificing their interest for the cause of the country. Nationalism was a way of life and the young boy was deeply influence. He could learn from him the use of Swadeshi and other elements of nationalism.⁴

The first spark of nationalism was fired in him in 1921. By that time the Utkal Union Conference in its Chandrasekhar session had accepted the aims and objects of the Indian National Congress and the non-Co-operation Movement had aroused great enthusiasm in Odisha, mainly on account of Gopabandhu's sincere efforts.

4. Participation in Freedom Movement

a. Non- Co-Operation Movement :-

Sambalpur did not remain outside the orbit of the Non-Co-operation Movement. In the evening of 2nd January, 1921 the students of Zilla School under the leadership of Laxinarayan Mishra organised a meeting at the feet of Budharaja hill.⁵ Nrusingha Guru was a student of class XI at that time. Along with Bhabani Shankar Mishra, Abdul Mazid, Nrusingha Guru invoked the students to boycott the classes.⁶ Next day it was found that about 200 out of 300 students had not attended the class. This created a sensation in the town of Sambalpur. From among the leading person like Chandra Sekhar Behera, Dasarathi Mishra, Rama Krishna Behera, Baikuntha Nath Behera and others lend their moral support and encouragement to the students. Nrusingha Guru in a group of students went round the town and called for a hartal. These development in Sambalpur were immediately sent in wire to the leaders like Mahatma Gandhi, Gopabandhu Das and others. In the evening of 17 January a meeting was organised at Balibandha. Which was attended by Gopabandhu Das, Nilakantha Das and Bhagirathi Mishra. There the leader called the students to boycott classes and join the National Movements.⁷ Immediately after the meeting was over the students left their hostel with bag and baggage. A National School was set up at Fraser's club of Sambalpur in 1921 and Pandit Nilakantha Dash joined the school as Headmaster.⁸ Nrusingha Guru along with other students enrolled his name in the National School. As a students, Nrusigha continued his study as well as activity participated in the National Movement. Nrusigha Guru, Jagannath Mishra, Md. Hussian, Abdul Mazid, Arun Das, Chandra Sekhar Panigrahi, BenimadhabaSupkar, Gauri Shankar Sahani were the pioneer among them.

The National School however took, very active part and the movement was launched at Bargarh, Jharsuguda, Talpatia, Rampella & several other parts. It was in course of the movement that Gopabandhu Choudhary who was the Deputy magistrate at Bargarh resigned his job in order to take leadership in the movement.

The strike of Sambalpur spread to other parts of the district like Jharsuguda, Bargarh, Attabira, Bheden, Padampur, etc. The leaders of the district made intensive tours to rural areas preaching to the people on spinning, withdrawal of students from schools and colleges, dissociation from law- courts etc. Nrusigha Guru was placed in- charge of Jharsuguda which was an important centre of the movement. He was also deputed to Chandrapur and Padampur for the propagation of the congress movement. As a result of these activities Sambalpur district was considered to be an important centre of Non- Co-operation Movement in Odisha in 1921.⁹

The social reconstruction programme of Nrusingha Guru included the destruction of social barrier. Along with it should be under taken the construction work in the midst of the masses. The social system, according to him depends upon mutual obligation upon ethical idea accepted by all people. Accordingly Nrusingha Guru along with a group of students used to tour the neighbouring villages for social services like helping the destitute, nursing the people suffering from cholera. The students with the association of Nrusingha Guru took keen interest in the vicinity of Sambalpur. For augmenting the congress creed the necessity of a paper of its own was felt very much by the National School. Besides the two regular weekly Utkala Sevaka and Sadhana another weekly 'Seva' was published from Mishra press of Sambalpur from 18th may, 1921. Nilakantha Das,, being the editor of the paper could establish contact with the remote placed, through this paper. Nrusingha Guru being deeply associated with paper could gain the initial ground for journalism which became his most prestigious profession in later life.

Consequent upon the difference of opinion between the Sambalpur District Congress committee and the members of Utkal Provincial Committee the Congress leaders of Sambalpur became firm and pleaded for an un-dependent recognition of the Sambalpur Unit. Nrusingh Guru worked unclosed co-operation with Laxmi Narayan Mishra, Chintamani Pujhari and Bhagirathi Patnaik. Subsequently Dayananda Satpathy joined them. The Big "Five" as they were known, spear headed Sambalpur in the

National movement.¹⁰ They formed parallel District Congress committee. They protested the apathetic attitude of provincial committee. Bhagirathi Patanaik was sent to attend the Belgaon Congress, December 1924 with a representation written in hand by Chintamani Pujhari. The representation was cyclostyled and was circulated among the leaders in the congress at Belgaon. Ultimately Gopabandhu Das intervened promised for a rapprochement. Bhagirathi Patanaik with drew the representation and Sambalpur was again in the main stream of National Movement.

Nrusingha Guru had the good fortune to get Mahatma Gandhi at a close quarter when the father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi visited Sambalpur on 23rd December 1928.¹¹ He was accompanied by Kastruba Gandhi and Devdas Gandhi. Gandhi was welcomed by all the section of people, he stayed with Chandra Sekhar Behera. Above all Nrusingha Guru was in charge of the food centre.

The women of Sambalpur organised a separate meeting to receive Mahatma Gandhi. He address the gathering and reminded them of the responsibility they owned for spinning Charkha. The women folk were very much encouraged and pledged to spin every day. They also donated for the Khadi Movement. The two daughters of Chandra Sekhar Behera initiated and donated their gold rings Gandhiji appreciated the spirit very much. Krishna Devi, who came on that occasion visited Bargarh where the women of that sub-division received her in a large public meeting. By that time a two storied building donated by Fakir Chandra Behera had become of Congress office and that was opened by Krishna Devi. A congress Committee with Kapileswar Prasad Nanda as president was formed. Dayananda Satpathy who resigned his teachership in Bamra became the secretary besides Rajiblochan, Arkhita Patel, Gopal Chandra Panigrahi, Dasarathi Naik. Chandra Sekhar Panigrahi from Bamanda and Prafulla Chandra Patanaik and his mother Jambubati Devi were taken as workers in the congress office.¹²

b. Civil Disobedience Movement

Nrusingha Guru was serving in Sambalpur Municipality resigned and joined the Civil Disobedience Movement.¹³ The Civil Disobedience Movement in Sambalpur under the leadership of Nrusingha Guru was carried on energetically. The Congressites restored to picketing before the Ganja and Liquor Shops; organized public meeting and toured the interior villages for spreading the Creed.

On 12th March, 1931 the "Dandi day" was observed in Sambalpur. At 9.00 P.M. on that day a number of congress workers and volunteers including Nrusingha Guru & Krishna Kumari moved round the town in a procession shouting national slogans. The procession was received by all classes of people at Gandhi Ghat with all enthusiasm and spirit. A mammoth meeting under the presidentship of Krishna Kumari was held at Gandhi Ghat. In the beginning of all the people had a silent prayer for two minutes for the success of Gandhiji. Laxmi Narayan Mishra explained the people about the significance of the day with an appeal to boycott the foreign clothes & wear Khaddar. The other leaders like Dayananda Satpathy, Sudhanshu Sekhar Gupta, Bhagirathi Patnaik delivered speeches emphasizing the need for the spread of Khadi, Prohibition drive etc. The meeting came to an end after the presidential speech by Krishna Kumari.

Pandit Nilakantha Das, for encouraging the Civil Disobedience Movement reached Sambalpur in 6th April 1931 and stayed with Chandra Sekhar Behera. He met almost all the leading persons and advised them to work vigorously. Gopabandhu Choudhary and Acharya Harihar Das also visited Sambalpur on 11th April, 1931.¹⁴ Gopabandhu Choudhary being received by Chandra Sekhar Behera and Nrusingha Guru was quite satisfied with the activities of the local students. After having a detail discussion with local leaders both of them agreed to depute Rama Devi, Uma Devi, Malati Devi to work for the congress at Sambalpur. Further, at the request of Nrusingha Guru, it was agreed and decided to open a training centre for the volunteers at Sambalpur. On 12th April 1931 the leaders left for Cuttack.

In May 1931, Nilakantha Das, Sasibhusan Rath, editor of Asha, Harekrushna Mahatab visited Sambalpur in connection with the annual session of the Congress to be held at Puri. It was proposed to enrol four thousand members for the Reception Committee of the Congress and some seven hundred

would be the share of Sambalpur. The membership fees was Rs.25/- . Accordingly the appeal was made in the Utkal Sevaka, Published on 25th June 1931 and the people readily responded. Accordingly a Committee for enrolling members was formed with Chandra Sekhar Behera, Nrusingha Guru, Dr. Janardan Pujhari, Dr. Ramachandra Mishra, Gokula Chandra Babu and Badhram Dube as members.

Nrusingha Guru also played a significant role in Sambalpur during the Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930. In 1932 he defied laws and courted arrest. Nrusingha Guru will be remembered in history as a social reformer. After this release from jail Guru took up constructive works and made all out efforts of Nrusingha Guru & Chandra Sekhar Behera that a committee for removal of untouchability was formed in 1929.¹⁵ Nrusingha Guru also organised the District Harijan Sangha and the advice of Chandra Sekhar Behera served as guidelines in this regards. Nrusingha Guru was invited by Gopabandhu Choudhury to attend the meeting at Cuttack for the formation of the Provincial Harijan Sangha. He attended the meeting where he was asked to remain in charge of the organisation in the district level. Accordingly the District Harijan Sangha was formed under the Presidentship of S.S. Gupta and Guru acted as secretary of the Sangha till his release from jail in 1944 he again became the secretary.¹⁶ The Harijan Movement aimed at cleaning Harijan Bustees, recruiting Harijan boys for school, digging wells, establishing schools and hostels and providing various amenities to Harijan Movement at the National level paid a visit to Sambalpur in 1933 and was deeply impressed by the achievements of Guru in this regards. Gandhi had to pay a short visit to Odisha in connection with the Harijan Movement. In the beginning Sambalpur had been excluded from the tour programme. But the strong argument of Guru convinced Thakkan Bapa to include Sambalpur in the tour programme of Gandhi. And Gandhi shorted his Orissa tour from Sambalpur itself. He addressed a public meeting at Balunkeswar Ghat. On this occasion a sum of Rs.998.50 had been collected from Jharsuguda and Sambalpur.¹⁷ It was decided to spend the money for the establishment of a hostel for the Harijan students and the decision was highly acclaimed and approved by the All India Harijan Sevaka Sangha.

Janardan Pujhari donated about for the purpose Guru was placed in charge of the management of the hostel. The Thakkan Bapa, Harihar Das, Nanda Kishor Das and Pandit Lingaraj Mishra had visited the Hostel and were impressed at the management of the hostel.

c. Quit India Movement

The Quit India Movement in Sambalpur was very intense and there was wide spread protest against the British Raj not only in big towns like Sambalpur, Bargarh and Jharsuguda but also in remote villages. Laxinarayan Mishra who had been to Bombay to attend the meeting of the All India Congress Committee was arrested on his way back to Sambalpur. Hartals were organised of Sambalpur and Jharsuguda in protest against the high handedness of the British Government. The students as usual took active part in the movement and organised strikes and mass demonstrations. Taking part in the movement Nrusingha Guru was arrested by India Defence Act.¹⁸

While in prison, his six year old daughter Dineswari expired, Nrusingha Guru was brought on parole for the ritual and was taken back on parole. It is well said that adversity is the touch stone in which the character of a man is tested. No doubt, it evokes a sentiment of devotion. Besides, large number of congress workers like Rama Rakshya Sukla, Durga Prasad Guru and Dayananda Satpathy were also arrested. But the police could not established the charges. Through they were released but were detained in Sambalpur. An attempt was made by the nationalist to burn the police station at Bijepur. Ramachandra Puri and his associates were arrested before they could set the station to fire. There was wide spread unrest in Barpali, Remunda, Pnimura, Badasambar, Padampur and the people in large number courted arrest with all this energised manifestation of nationalist temper, however the Quit India Movement in Sambalpur was only sporadic in its success. It could not be sustained due to the arrest of almost all the important leaders.

Gandhiji was released in early may,1944, it was hailed with enthusiasm by the congress workers as well as the public of the district.¹⁹ Accordingly the security prisoners of the Sambalpur district were released in phases from first half of July 1944. Nrusingha Guru and Durga Prasad Guru ere released in the first phase Durga Prasad Guru actively occupied himself infighting the cause of the Orient paper mills at Brajraj Nagar. At the time of his release a restriction was imposed on him not to enter Jharsuguda police station. He moved the Government either to waive the restriction or to detain him again. He was arrested again for violating the condition. But because of serious illness he was released soon. He went to Calcutta for treatment and inspite of all efforts by Dr. B.C. Ray, the surgeon, he expired at Calcutta. Subsequently Laxmi Narayan Mishra, Ghanashyam Panigrahi, Bihariram Tanti, Bhagirathi Pattanaik were released.

d. Charkha & Khadi

Connected with Charkha is khadi, the hand woven and spun cloth. Common use of it can noted "the beginning of economic freedom and equality of all the country." Gandhiji considered it to be the most important corollary of the principle of Swadeshi. It symbolized economics decentralization and the employment of masses. It was the symbol of "unity of Indian Humanity." He wanted, the educated to spin & and wear Khadi, not for more economic reasons but to " express their sympathy for the poor. Jawaharlal Nehru described it "the livery of Indian Freedom". Gandhiji made it the mission of his life to popularize the use of Khadi.

Nrusingha Guru, the true disciple of Gandhiji lived a life of intense activity. His activities were involved in practical politics. He evolved an approach to meet the immediate. Gandhiji's Idea of Khadi and Charkha immensely influenced him and as a man of conviction, idealism and practical approach he put all the efforts to support the Khadi andCharkha movement as an economics system that would readdress the economic poverty of the people. He induced the Khadi and Charkha movement as one of the schedules in the activities of the National school of Sambalpur in Launching the Non-Co-operation movement.

In 1922, Khadi and Charkha movement were organized and literacy and prohibition drive were made in many parts of the district of Sambalpur. Centre of Khadi industries were open. Laxminarayan Mishra, Bhagirathi Patnaik, Ghanashyam Panigrahi, Achyutananda Purohit, Chintamani Pujari and Nrusingha Guru made vigorous drive against the untouchables were convened and pledge to give up liquor and spin Charkha were taken.

Illiterate Harijans like Sukham Tanti, Kastaram Tanti and Kanaram Tanti joined Indian National Congress and suffered imprisonment.²⁰

Sambalpur in 1922 with the effects of Nrusingha Guru headed in Khadi and Charkha Movement. The district is noted for its "tie and dye" weaving in cotton and tassar silk bringing out the most artistic design from the loom like magic. There were four types of waves. Bhulia, Kasta, Harijan and kuli. Nrusingha Guru along with Ganesh Prasad Padhi and Jangil Mistri took up the cause of the movement and with their initiation the Khadi and Charkha centre was opened in Fraser club Sambalpur. Accordingly centres were opened in Bargarh, Remunda, Barpali, Jharsuguda, Talpatia and the people of the locality joined the movement with great enthusiasm. Mahavir Sing opened akhadi centre in Jharsuguda for that he had to borrow some money from the provincial congress committee like wised Nrusingha Guru also opened a centre in Sanasingha of Sasan. Both of them used to supply Khadi to Khadi and Charkha centre of Sambalpur. In the south also a centre was opened in Dulampur of Attabira. Brundaban Guru championed the movement in this locality. Further Krutartha Acharya and Mahadev Sathua in Remunda took up the cause and centres were duly opened there. Niranjana Patnaik and Harihar Patnaik from Ganjam and Gopabandhu Chaudhury from Cuttack visited Sambalpur in connection with the khadi movement. They were very much pleased and appreciated the sprit of Sambalpur. Shyam Sunder Chakravanti and Satis Chandra Dasgupta from West Bengal also visited Sambalpur in connection with Khadi Organization.²¹

The khadi and Charkha Movement also attracted many members of the depressed classes into its fold. About Six hundred 'Gandas'(Harijans) enrolled themselves as Congress members. All of them were moved by the spirit the kind and joined the organization with great enthusiasm. A Ganda, named Kastaram Tanti took very active part in organizing Khadi and Charkha in rural areas. He came in organising Khadi and Chakra in rural villages of the district and propagated the message of the congress and encouraged the people to take up the course of Khadi and Charkha. The Gandas (Harijans) who constituted the bulk of the depressed class in the district could find a respite of their self sufficiency through Charkha and Khadi. KastaramTanty, Sukhram Tanty and Kaidramtanty enhanced and encouraged the Charkha and Khadi movement, initiated by Nrusingha Guru and upheld the honour of the district.

Mahatma Gandhi visited Sambalpur on 23rd December 1928. He was accompanied by Kasturba Gandhi and Devdas Gandhi. Gandhiji being the enthusiastic about Khadi and Charkha visited Swadeshi Bastralaya of Dayasagar Bohidhar at Mohantypara. He was quite impressed with the activities of the Swadeshi Bastralaya and encourage the people for more efforts in the field of Khadi and Charkha. Gandhiji explained the people in a mass meeting organised in his honour about the ability of Khadi centres and to support the cause with all spirit. The people in a short time, donated a sum of Rs.1750/- for the causes Khadi and Charkha. Nityananda Behera son of Chandra Sekhar Behera donating his gold ring. It was very much appreciated by Gandhiji.

The khadi and Charkha movement in Sambalpur region came to stand still after 1930. Nrusingha Guru because of his preoccupation for the cause of Anti untouchable movement could not devote much time for the purpose. Possibly it could not devote much time for the purpose. Possibly it could not suit to his suitability. Through the leaders like Laxminarayan Mishra, DyanandaSatpathy and Chamure Behera of Panimura had their efforts for augmenting the causes of Charkha and Khadi movements they were sporadic in nature. Further the British Government put a number of restriction and created problems to suppress the handloom activities in India.

5. Anti- Untouchability Movement

All round improvement of Harijans is essential Gandhiji wanted temples to be thrown open to them. They should be accepted as self respecting citizen. They must be given Sajuare deals as human being. Gandhiji was confident that untouchability shall have to go. He wanted its removal in every sense, before the time spirit compelled to do things against our will. It will be no credit to the caste Hindus, if the untouchability is removed when " Harijans come into their own".

Nrusingha Guru one of the leading light in the annals of freedom fighters of Sambalpur worked for the down-trodden people of Sambalpur district. In order to put more life in the National Movement to he put relentless efforts through his Anti-untouchability movements carry the Gandhian creed of social order to the interior of the district. Nrusingha Guru was noted for his fearlessness, self-sacrifices and self respect. His stature in the freedom movement of Sambalpur remains intact. His contribution to the National movement was multi-dimensional, Being a true Gandhian, he was confident that untouchability shall have to go. He desired its removal in every sense.

The Anti-Untouchability Movement under the leadership of Nrusingha Guru assumed a new dimension towards the end of 1932. A "district Anti-Untouchability committee was formed in a public meeting on 20th November 1932 at Fraser Club, Sambalpur. The District Committee consisted of twenty one member. A Sadar Committee of the organization was also formed with fifteen members as its members. Anti-Untouchability meeting was held at Balibandha of the town on 4th December 1932 being president over by Chandra Sekhar Behera. A working committee of the organization consists of six members was formed in the said meeting. In a meeting held on 18th December 1932 at Sambalpur a resolution requesting Mahant of Gurubayar Temple of Madras Presidency to open the doors of the temple to the depressed classes was passed. A similar resolution was placed to admit the untouchables into the temples of Sambalpur district.²²

Gandhiji along with Laxminarayan Sahu and Raj Krushna Bose reached Jharsuguda at 5 A.M. on 5th May 1934. He was received by the people with cheers. Tulsi, the Harijans lady (Mother of Bihari Ram, the Harijans workers) garlanded him. It was a touching sight. A meeting was held at Jharsuguda where Gandhiji addressed the people and emphasized the need to remove untouchability from the society. An amount of Rs.405/- was collected for the welfare of the Harijans. Gandhiji reached Sambalpur at 9 A.M. and stayed with Dr Ramachandra Mishra. He was given a warm reception by the people. Sudhansu Sekhar Gupta with his wife garlanded him immediately he expressed his wish to visit the Harijans Bastee. He along with BenimadabSupkar, Nrusingha Guru and Amritlal V. Thakkar visited the Harijans Bastee at Thelkopara.²³

Nrusingha Guru, a true disciple of Gandhiji was himself firmly against untouchability and spear headed the Anti-Untouchability movement. He did not attack the Varna system and in this context he tried to draw a parallel between caste structure and the leaves of a tree; pointing out that leaves of a tree were not of the same shape and structure. He like Gandhiji had vociferously spoken against a separated electro rate.

6. Journalism

Nrusingha Guru kept himself away from political activities and accepted journalism as a mean for augmenting the Democracy. Everyday should be under service to the community. "No One Can" he emphasized "take away the blessed task a service to community- it is God given". It is all to our shame if we lose the natural rights of service and throw blame on others for the discharge of our duties. Once that realized than the objectives of Democracy is fulfilled. Nrusingha Guru felt that it was time to renew the life of the people, and they "learn to look after their own affairs". True Freedom is possible if there exists a perfect harmony of relationship". Nrusingha Guru was a men of faith. He accepted certain assumption as fundamental to his belief and action. He drew upon these for support sustenance and inspiration. With in his Idea, analysed them and followed the conclusion arrived at some ideas of these assumption is obviously primary to the proper understanding of his thought.

The name of Nrusingha Guru is remembered not only as a social reformer, saint and a gentle guide to the down trodden but also as a resurgent journalist. The frail yet him NrusinghaGuru spear headed journalism displaying his rare capacity to reflect his lofty ideals in the face of seemingly insurmountable adds. With courage in his conviction he spoke his mind freely and frankly on subjects ranging farming to the principle of underlaying a simple spartan did. Journalism was the best weapon he gave due prominence to India's cultural heritage.

Nrusingha Guru was also the agent for the Samaja. He used to make intensive tour in his bicycle to the nooks and corner of the district. He sent the packets through the Sub-agents to interiors of the district. He also appointed "Hawkers" and in case of anybody's absence personally distributed to the subscribers. Needless to say, Samaja was wide spread people were involved and Samaja and Nrusingha Guru became synonymous with each other. A new phase in Journalism was ushered. Nrusingha Guru had the credit to become the pioneer in journalism.

Being a silent worker, Nrusingha Guru shunned publicity. He with much reluctance attended the new year day celebration on 1.1.1984 organised by Journalist Association of Sambalpur at Kosala Bhawan. It was a coincidence that Nrusingha Guru could complete his 5th year in the field of Journalism and a grow ovation was accorded to him by lighting fifty candles in his honour. Nrusingha Guru being aggrieved expressed the desire to die rather than to experience the degeneration of journalism. No body in the function even conceive that the assemblage would be the last for the stalwart to be with them.

Some ritual at Sarangagarh, his father-in-law house, Nrusingha Guru left Sambalpur in the early morning 2nd January 1984.²⁴ It was providential, on the same day this illustrious son of Sambalpur passed away due to a sudden heart attack. He had the eternal sleep in the lap of his daughter Kumudini

Mahapatra – so providential it was possibly to Nrusingha Guru, his mother was manifested in the person of his beloved daughter and he started the last journey for the eternal adobe from her lap.

The fabulous bird phoenix burns itself it is said and believed, on a funeral pyre and rises again from its own ashes with renewed youth and beauty. Nrusingha Guru surpassed the phoenix. He had began the renovated life in the hearts of people of Sambalpur even before he was placed on funeral pyre. Rarely has the sprit of dedication and selflessness been so enshrined with in the person of a single individuals. He gave a spiritual dimension to the process of social changes.

7. Conclusion

Nrusingha Guru was born on the cross-road of our history. He made his mark as social worker, reformer, thinker and as the freedom fighter. The political guise in which he appeared before the people he did not own. He was religious humanist and the practical idealist. He accepted life in all its comprehensiveness. A keen individual of human affairs as he was , he expressed himself on problems that he and contemporary society contorted the most. In his postulation, he has drawn the ancient heritage and philosophy. To most of us for our ignorance of our heritage and for being conditional by the western thought and culture his ideas cause puzzlement. They had developed the ideas suitable to their conditions. Nrusingha Guru believed that some of the ancient ideas can still be helpful in resolving some of our problem. He had a mannerism of his own and his ideas and work has a distinct dimension. For all that he represented he appears to have come from among the stocks of ancient mythological personnel to awaken the soul. He was a 'rishi' in thought, word and deed. A true Gandhian as he was, he always strove to translate the ideals of Gandhi into realities. In fact, he was the visible embodiment of the Gandhian principle for which he was rightly called the "Gandhi of Western Odisha".

8. Notes & Reference

1. D. Chopdar, (1985), *Nrusingha Guru, NAHO*, Vol-IV, Sambalpur University, P-56
2. B.K. Kar, (1996), *Illustrious Sons of Sambalpur Bargarh*, P-60.
3. G.R. Nahak, (2013), *Paschima Odishara Baraputra*,Cuttack,P-201.
4. C.R.Mishra, (2002), *Nrusingha Guru : The Freedom Fighter*, Sambalpur University, Sambalpur, P.33
5. *Utkala Sevak*, dl.20th January 1921, Cuttack
6. D. Chopdar, *Op.Cit.* P.56
7. S.P.Padhi, (1973), *Akshya Taraka Chandra Sekhar*, (Odia), Sambalpur. P.66.
8. Kar, *Op.Cit.*P-51
9. Padhi, *Op.Cit.*, P.67
10. *Ibid*
11. Nahak, *Op.Cit.*P.203
12. Mishra, *Op. Cit.* P.57
13. Kar, *Op.Cit.*P.57
14. Mishra, *Op.Cit.*P.64
15. Padhi, *Op,Cit.*P.120
16. *Ibid*
17. Chopdar, *Op. Cit.*P.58
18. Nahak,*Op.Cit.*P.205
19. Mishra, *Op.Cit.*90
20. *Ibid*,P.93
21. Chopdar, *Op.Cit.*P.59
22. Mishra, *Op.Cit*,105
23. *Ibid*, P.112
24. Nahak, *Op.Cit.*P.207.