INTRODUCTION
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Orissa is a glorious land of rich cultural traditions and heritage. In the past, at different periods, it was known by different names such as Kalinga, Utkal and Odra. The name Odisa (Orissa) became popular from the early medieval period. Kalinga is mentioned in our national epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata. The importance of Orissa is also great due to some remarkable features. Orissa's river is called the Mahanadi or the Great River, Orissa's sea is Mahodadhi or the Great Sea, Orissa's hill is Mahendra or the Great Mountain, Orissa's tree is Kalpabata or the Tree of Fulfillment, Orissa's Lord is Jagannath or the Lord of the Universe and Orissa's cremation ground is the Swargadwar or the Gate to Heaven. The Oriya visualizes greatness all around.

The cultural development of this land has been shaped by its geographical situation and history. Situated on the eastern coast of India and in a sense linking both the north and the South, its destiny was linked up with the rest of India. It was open to cultural influences from all sides, and in course of history it could achieve a remarkable synthesis in her own culture. The known history of Orissa begins with Asoka. In the famous Kalinga war as many as 1,50,000 people were deported and 1,00,000 killed. The suffering of the people of Kalinga changed Chandasoka to Dharmasoka and opened up a new chapter in the history of India. In the first century B.C. Kharavela, the greatest ruler of ancient Kalinga revived the glory of Kalinga by placing it in the political map of India through his successful military campaigns. In the subsequent period, dynasties such as Bhaumas, Somavamsis, Gangas and the Suryavamsi Gajapatis ruled over the land. Orissa could preserve its
independence till 1568. Hence it could develop along its own lines retaining an identity of its own. Due to its location on the Bay of Bengal, the sailors and merchants of Kalinga could maintain contact with the outside world. So great was the fame of ancient Kalinga as a maritime power that Kalidasa refers, to the king of Kalinga as the 'Lord of the Sea'.

Kalinga maintained contact with Simhala from very early times. According to Ceylonese traditions, the Tooth relic of the Buddha was taken from Dantapura of Kalinga to Simhala. Cultural link between Kalinga and China goes back to at least seventh century. In A.D. 639 Hiuan Tsang, the famous Buddhist Pilgrim from China visited Orissa. The sailors of Kalinga also reached the lands of South-east Asia. The inscriptions of Java also prove Kalinga's important role in the establishment of commercial and cultural links with Java. Orissa has been a meeting place of different religions. The outstanding contribution of Orissa in the field of religion is the cult of Purusottama Jagannatha. For millions of people in India Orissa is the land of Jagannath. Orissa occupies a distinct place in Indian art history because of her great monuments and sculptures.

Politically and culturally the traditional Orissa covered a wide area. During the Ganga and Suryavamsi rules, the territory from the Ganges to the Godavari almost constantly remained under the sovereignty of the Orissan rulers. With the death of Mukundadeva in 1568, Orissa entered into an era of political chaos. Nominally, hereafter, Orissa came under the suzerainty of Sulaiman Karrani, the Afghan sultan of Bengal. But practically, the feudatory chiefs of Orissa became independent. At this stage Ramchandra Deva, the son of Janardan
Vidyadhar founded the independent rule of the Bhoi dynasty at Khurda. In 1571, Ibrahim Qutab Shah, the sultan of Golkonda occupied the territory of Orissa to the south of the Chilka lake. The Afghans failed to establish a well-ordered administration in Orissa. But after the establishment of the Afghan hegemony the political destiny of Orissa continued to be determined for some time by the relationship between the Afghan rulers of Bengal and the Mughal emperor Akbar. In 1572 Sulaiman Karrani, the sultan of Bengal died. Then his successor Sultan Daud was defeated by the Mughals in 1575 and administered as a vassal of the Mughal emperor Akbar. In 1576 another Mughal expedition was sent against Daud, because he tried to re-establish his hold over Bengal and the Afghans were defeated. Sultan Daud was imprisoned and beheaded. Lastly, the Afghans were defeated by the Mughals in 1590. Then Orissa was directly ruled by the Mughals as part of the suba of Bengal. Till the end of Akbar's reign, Raja Mansingh governed Orissa as the subadar of Bengal.

In 1633 the East India Company established its factory at Hariharpur in Orissa. Afterwards other factories were opened at Pipli and Balasore. But the English shifted the centre of their activity to Calcutta in the 18th century. After the Mughal supremacy, Orissa passed into the hands of the Marathas in 1751. In 1757 East India Company's forces defeated Siraj-ud-Daulah, the Nawab of Bengal in the battle of Plassey. It made the British the virtual masters of Bengal. In 1765 the Company got the diwani of Bengal, Bihar and Orissa from Shah Alam II, the titular head of the Mughal Empire. Thereafter, the British decided to consolidate their position by securing Orissa proper
which had been a barrier between their possessions in Bengal and Madras.

From Clive to Cornwallis, the East India Company tried to get Orissa but it failed. In 1798 Lord Wellesley came to India and he conquered Orissa. On 14th October, the Fort of Barabati, the Maratha stronghold was captured by the British. In all thirteen Indian soldiers were killed, while the English lost two men. The victory was relatively easy as the Marathas had not adequate troops to face the enemy. By the treaty of Deogaon, concluded on 17 December, 1803, the Maratha Chief Raghuji Bhonsle had to cede to the Company in perpetual sovereignty, the province of Cuttack, including the port and district of Balasore.

The British then turned their attention towards the feudatory chiefs. Many of the chiefs soon acknowledged the British authority and agreed to pay annual tributes. In course of time the British did not hesitate to annex the tributary mahals. For example the confiscation of Banki occurred in 1840. Later in 1848 Angul was confiscated and its ruler was sent to the Hazaribagh Jail. In 1849 Sambalpur was annexed under the Doctrine of Lapse. By 1858, the entire Orissa had been brought under the authority of the British crown. In the 19th century British Orissa consisted of three coastal districts Balasore, Cuttack and Puri and 18 tributary Mahals. The coastal districts were ruled directly by the British and the rest by native rulers under the control of the paramount power Orissa formed a part of the presidency of Bengal.

The administrative and economic policies of the British did not contribute to the rapid economic development of Orissa. In 1804, a year after their occupation, the British introduced
salt monopoly in Orissa. The finest salt was manufactured in the coastal areas of Orissa and salt monopoly was an important source of revenue. But due to this, there was a sudden rise in the price of this simple necessary of life. There was considerable decline in trade and commerce. Cloth imported from Europe was sold in the market. On the whole Orissa remained isolated and neglected. Poverty, social backwardness, cultural stagnation tended to sap the vitality of Orissa. The disastrous famine of 1866 came as culmination of the official apathy and imperialist exploitation. Nearly one million people, one third of the population, died during this calamity.

In Orissa, as in other parts of India, the introduction of British rule created conditions of suffering which led to revolts against the British Raj. The rebellion of the Raja of Khurda started soon after the British conquest of Orissa under the leadership of Jayi Rajguru who managed the affairs of Khurda and he was hanged for abetting the rebellion. So he became the first martyr who was put to death for boldly resisting the Feringhees.

In 1817 a general rebellion followed in Khurda under the leadership of Bakshi Jagabandhu who was the commander of the Raja of Khurda. In 1835, rebellion broke out in Ghumsar under the leadership of Dora Bisoyee. This rebellion continued till 1856. The impact of the great uprising of 1857 was also felt in Orissa. Surendra Sai of Sambalpur, Ramkrushna Samant Sinhar, the ex-Zamindar of Balia, Raja Arjun Singh of Singhbhum took part in anti-British activities during the revolt. The Government took steps to prevent disturbances in Orissa. Chakhi Khuntia, a sepoy, Panda of Puri, was suspected as a
rebel. By 1859 the Revolt had disappeared elsewhere in India but disturbances continued in Orissa.

A new awakening was marked in Orissa after 1866. Growth of education, development of communication, increase in the volume of trade and commerce gradually diminished the economic and intellectual backwardness of the people. Establishment of printing press, publication of periodical, journals and setting up of different cultural institutions helped general consciousness to grow. All these factors gave rise to a powerful, conscious, educated class in Orissa.

The educated middle class that emerged in Orissa in the post-famine period like its counter-part elsewhere, expressed its ideas, views and aspirations through the press, meetings and associations. A number of socio-political associations, having different objectives such as the development of Oriya language and literature, protection of the interests of Oriyas, social reform, promotion of education and intellectual and literary discussions were formed in the post-famine period. The lead in this field was taken by some Englishmen who formed at Cuttack an association, called Mutual Improvement Society in 1859. These Englishmen used to discuss social issues. Subsequently the following associations were formed - Utkal Bhasa Unnati Bidhayini Sabha (Association for the promotion of Oriya language), Balasore, 1867; Utkal Bhasa Uddipani Samaj (Association for Oriya linguistic Awakening), Cuttack, 1867; Utkalollasini Sabha (Association for awakening the Oriyas), Cuttack, 1868; Cuttack Debating Club, 1868; Cuttack Youngmen's Association, 1869; Utkal Brahmo Samaj, 1869; Puri Society, 1870; Ganjam Utkal Hitabadini Sabha (Ganjam Association for the promotion of welfare of Orissa), Berhampur, 1872; Bhadrak Desha
Hitaiishini Sabha (Bhadrak Association for the welfare of the country), 1874; Ganjam Nisha Nishedhini Sabha (Ganjam Association for Prohibition), 1875; Utkal Sabha Cuttack, 1877; Balasore National Society, 1878; Madak Seban Nibarini Sabha (Association for the Prohibition of Wine drinking), 1879; Shiksha Bidhyini Sabha (Association for the promotion of Education), 1881; Orissa People's Association, 1882; Anti-corruption and Prohibition Sabha, Cuttack, 1884; Orissa Graduate and Undergraduate Association, 1888; Utkal Sahitya Sammilani (Oriya Literary Association), Cuttack, 1886; Balasore Zilla School Reading Club, 1896; and Alochana Sabha of Cuttack Secondary Training School, 1893. There were some communal and caste-based associations, such as Karan Sabha, Orissa Islam Association, 1875; and Orissa Christian Association, Cuttack, 1896. The educated elite of Orissa like the elite elsewhere in India, sought to reform the social life through such measures as promotion of education and upliftment and emancipation of women. They were also influenced and inspired by social reform movements in other parts of India.

The political consciousness of the new Oriya elite manifested itself in two ways, Firstly, it took up the cause of safeguarding the interests of Oriyas who were scattered in different provinces, and finally agitated for the merger of Oriya-speaking areas, Secondly, it partook of national political consciousness over such matters as controversy regarding vernacular press Act, introduction of Local Self Government and the formation of the Indian National Congress.

Late Gopal Krushna Gokhale, the famous leader of Maharashtra had founded an organization combining the Eastern and the Western ideals. This organization is known as the Servants
of India Society. Highly educated, dedicated public servants were enrolled as its members. Their aim was not to earn money. They took the vow of leading a simple life with self-restraint and to serve the country and to work for the all-round development of the country at all times. Like the 'Gurus' of the hermitages of the past, they took the vow of selfless public service. Their ideology had a great impact on the country. The members of this organization were life-members and they were experts in their own spheres. The educational policy of this organization being founded on the sacrifice and dedication of the East and liberalism of the West was able to remove ignorance and superstition.

A sincere worker and patriot can not remain unstirred under the impact of these events. Coming under its influence Utkalmani Gopabandhu, the guide and philosopher of the Satyabadi Group had already founded certain institutions and devoted himself to the service of the people and the country. The personal and collective efforts of Gopabandhu are responsible for emergence of a group of firm, sincere, dedicated, nationalist public servants at later stage. Some of Gopabandhu's personal and collective efforts and their results can be cited as such: formation of 'Utkal Taruna Sangha' at Cuttack for the service of the poor, formation of the Karmi Sangha in 1906-1907 in the pattern of the Rama Krushna Mission for serving the nation, taking of the vow with Nilakantha and others in 1906 on the bank of the river Bhargavi for serving the country, vow taken with fifty students for adopting qualities for serving the motherland, formation of the reformist Hindu Samaj, at Calcutta by Godavaris during his student career there. The truth that was hidden in the background of this atmosphere
surfaced itself getting the co-operation of real workers. The political atmosphere of Orissa sought development of the country, of mother-tongue and fellow-countrymen by the fine blend of work and thought. That awakening manifested itself through the pen of the writers. The result was the creation of 'Satyabadi Literature' or 'National Literature'.

The Satyabadi School automatically comes to mind in the context of the discussion about the Satyabadi Literature. Because the Satyabadi literature developed centering the Satyabadi School, the place which Bhakta Kavi Madhusudan Rao contemplated to have the possibility of developing into the 'Temple of Learning' and expressed his view on that at the Puri District Educational Conference over which he presided, became in fact the best and most-beloved institution of Orissa. The leaders, teachers and the sincere workers of the Satyabadi School constitute an epoch-making period in the history of modern Orissa. The period from 1909 to 1928 is known as the 'Satyabadi Era' or 'Satyabadi Epoch' or 'Satyabadi Movement' and the leaders of the Satyabadi epoch are combinedly known as the Satyabadi Group or the Satyabadi Gosthi.

The word 'Satyabadi' is not understood as the Vana Vidyalaya. In the view of the Oriya people Satyabadi stands for a glaring example of idealism, sacrifice, sadhana and sincerity, an image for creation of a new future taking up social service, removing grievances of others and untarnished idealism of the past traditions.

The Bakul, Tamal and Chhuriana surrounded evergreen Vakul Vana of Satyabadi situated near Sakhigopal in Puri district is a sacred land of the Oriya race. Sakhigopal, the Gupta Brundaban of Lord Sakhigopal, was the place where Pandit
Gopabandhu Dash, the founder of the Satyabadi epoch spent his childhood. This beautiful Vakul Vana which is called the Nalanda of Orissa has turned into a sacred place of pilgrimage due to Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya and as the place of origin of the Satyabadi period. Many years back the 'Pancha Sakha' - Balaram, Jagannath, Achyutananda, Ananta and Jasobant were born when Orissa was passing through a critical period to inspire the Oriya race later. During a critical period of the Oriya race, another group of Pancha Sakhas - the Satyabadi group have been united in the Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya. Their meeting or union at this Vidyalaya has inspired fiery patriotism and given birth to revolutionary Satyabadi literatures. The Satyabadi Vana Vidyalaya or the Satyabadi School founded with high idealism, patriotism and future progress of the nation by the leaders of the Satyabadi era was accepted as a noble institution by the people of Orissa.

The disciplined life of the students who lived at Satyabadi school with the teachers, the training imparted, the atmosphere and the idealism and earnestness that animated those who were connected with the institution soon attracted the attention of the biggest in the land. Dignity of labour permeated the entire institution and instruction was imparted through play and work. Pandit Gopabandhu helped the institution not only by his labour but in money. Gopabandhu’s idea was to establish a network of such institutions throughout the country and through these institutions to preach the message of nationalism and train up a generation of patriotic and selfless youngmen who would free the country from bondage.

Modern Orissa in all spheres bears the impress of Gopabandhu who literally dedicated his life in the service of
the poor, the distressed and the downtrodden and for the freedom of the country. In the field of social reform and removal of untouchability he did pioneering work. The efforts of the Satyabadi leaders and their anxiety for keeping alive Oriya language and Oriya culture in the outlying Oriya-speaking areas are not to be forgotten in Orissa. Their contribution to the Freedom Movement of Orissa is also memorable.

So, what had happened during a decade in the Bakula Chhuriana grove generally does not occur in the history of a nation during a century. The leadership of Gopabandhu etc. may be limited to a certain period or Age. But it had many things to influence and inspire the future leadership which have not ceased though leaders have departed one after another. Their feelings are still vibrating in the minds of the Oriya people even now.