The dominant political discourse which characterised the PCC's exercise in 1941 was Individual Satyagraha coupled with the stress on Gandhian constructive activities. Besides, we have also focused on the organisation of youth leagues and the strengthening of Kisan Sabha activities by the left-wingers, basically communists. However, with the suspension of the limited satyagraha in December 1941, the broad anti-war campaign of the PCC shifted to a specific drive for evolving mass preparedness meeting the war situation.

The Congress meetings organised to welcome the released Satyagrahis around early part of 1942 mostly discussed the war situation and advised people about their course of action. The meetings were largely attended. The other notable feature of these meetings was the sharp tone of the critique of colonial rule. For instance, Pranakrushna Padihary, while welcoming the satyagrahis in a meeting at Cuttack on 7 December 1941 and asking them to repeat satyagraha once again pointed out that "British rule was rather hundred times condemnable than German rule". In another meeting organised by the socialists (held at Salepur on 6 January attended by nearly 4,000) Malati Chaudhury talked about the urgency to hold meetings in every thana to educate popular opinion in regard to the approach to the "present

1. WWCC, ACC 52, Report on Congress-cum-Labour Meeting (7.12.41) by the D.M., Dt.10.1.42.
2. Ibid.
international situation arising out of the war". She stated that the war was the creation of the capitalists for profiteering and exploitation and not to the advantage of peasants and workers. With reference to the war situation, her advice to the people was to store foodstuffs for "at least a year" and "to organise (themselves) to save the country from anarchy and goondaism" in the context of a chaotic state which might be brought in by the war. She further stressed the formation of volunteer corps at village level to undertake both Gandhian constructive activities along with monitoring the security of the villages. While talking of the "new society" prevailing in Russia, she asked the zamindars and moneylenders to give up their old policy and live harmoniously in their villages. While deploring the fact that British imperialism had kept the Indians demilitarised for so long, she pointed out that it was due to the Congress that people had become fearless and developed a "non-violent and combatant spirit" vis-a-vis the government, police and moneylenders.

Naba Krushna Chaudhury, who also addressed the meeting, wondered how the British government, who demilitarised the Indians for so long, could now ask the same Indians to fight; reminding the people that the British sought the help of Indians when they were being beaten by Germany. He further pointed out that British soldiers were "now famous for their historic retreats" and "the present English statesmanship" known for their "bankruptcy". He went on to describe Hitler as an offspring of British imperialism as England initiated the policy of colonialisation which ultimately resulted in the treaty of Versailles giving birth to Hitler. He said that unless India became independent, neither Gandhi nor Nehru would be able to induce the masses to help the war efforts. Stressing on the need to stand by the dictates of Congress and Gandhian 13 points regarding constructive programme, he appealed to the people to store
up foodstuff, grow cotton, spin, weave and thereby transform "each village into an invincible fort". This, he suggested was the means to maintain peace in the village in case of the emergence of chaos associated with war. He further warned the zamindars and the capitalists to mend their ways (in line with Gandhian instructions) and realise that "greater disaster awaited them at the hands of people when there would be no police or government to protect them." Gouranga Charan Das, another CSPite, warned the audience about a political upheaval where leaders might not meet the people nor police be able to control. Thus, he justified the raising of a volunteer corps by the Congress as a means of forging a link with the people during a period of crisis. All the speakers punctuated their speeches with downright attacks on the existing coalition ministry, which in their perception, served the interests of imperialism.

It is noteworthy that such meetings were organised in the rural areas at a time when they had become hotbeds of "wild alarming rumours". Moreover, the overall texture of the speeches sought to project the impression the near-total collapse of the British authority and the death of imperialism - a trend which the officials believed was gaining momentum "since the release of the satyagrahis". This trend of mobilisation and orientation popular perception that imperialism, which was at the root of all evils including the war, was nearing its death and almost "gone" remained vigorous as late as July 1942. Such views by the speakers often were associated with emphasis on organisation of people on a non-violent basis, taking up Gandhian constructive programme to face the war crisis.

3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. See, for example, HPD, Report of SP to DM, Puri, 12.1.42 (ACC-2094).
During the Independence Day celebration, Karunkar Panigrahi at Balasore spoke of the possible defeat of Britain. However, he pointed out that even though Japan, Germany or British might win the war, it was essential to remain away from them as each of them was the enemy of the Indians.  

By the end of February what one finds, was the initiate the Congress leadership started to organise a volunteer corps in Balasore. Mahatab took the lead. Volunteers from every village were raised, and upon their sending written applications to Balasore DCC, the later registered their names. The volunteers were divided into various sections. A section of volunteers was asked to guard their respective villages and another section was kept ready to move into the village on the indication of a "symbolical sound", if that village got troubled by anti-social elements in the context of civil disorder due to war. It was also decided to open up a full-fledged office at Balasore to monitor such activities; and subscriptions raised from businessmen and willing citizens to finance the scheme. This trend of raising volunteer groups became much easier, given the fact that substantive part of PCC's exercise in the year 1941 had been devoted to constructive activities in villages, raising of Shanti Sena and also organisation of youth leagues. The drive for raising volunteer squads became a marked affair by February. The Cuttack DCC decided to divide the entire district into various sections, placing experienced 'officers' as head of sections. The objective was to forge link with the masses and to raise a volunteer corps to maintain


order and allay panic caused by the course of the war. Volunteers were also instructed to prevent the export of rice, paddy and other necessities. It was also decided to establish price control committees in the rural areas.\(^8\) Such schemes, often seen as "parallel organisations", created considerable apprehension to the colonial authorities. The Chief Secretary asked the district magistrates to prevent such organisations and "not to allow them to grow into big organisations".\(^9\)

The important development of May was the visit of Mira Ben, to Orissa as Gandhi's emissary on the request of Mahatma.\(^10\) She addressed many public meetings during her long tour at Cuttack, Puri, Berhampur, Bhadrak, etc., and explained Gandhi's position vis-à-vis the war to the people in general, as well as Congress activists, merchants, etc. In Chaudwar, she advised the villagers to evacuate the airdrome area while explaining Gandhi's instructions on self-protection and self-sufficiency. But she suggested that the evacuees need to be compensated. She appealed to the doctors to take charge of Congress sponsored medical units. In all her speeches, she projected the impression that Orissa would very probably be invaded by the Japanese and would not be defended by the military. In consequence, she appealed to all, specifically government-servants, to dispel the thoughts of surrendering before the enemy and to rather concentrate on the constructive programme of Gandhi and practice self-sufficiency. Moreover, she emphasised that local defence organisations should be set up in defiance of government orders, as well as all-out protest launched against any move to remove country boats from danger zone.

\(^8\) Ibid.

\(^9\) HPD, FNR, Balasore 17.3.42 (ACC-2112).

\(^10\) HPD, Report on Mira Ben's activities, June 1942 (ACC-2323).
and the draining of canals as part of war-measure. She also pointed out that restrictions over the manufacture of salt should be removed in view of its scarcity. The overall impression she sought to create among the people was that Congress would build a system of administration in the eventuality of occupation of the country by the invaders.

In a public meeting at Cuttack on 26 May, she sought to explain the Gandhian position.11 In answering Ramkrushna Pati's (a youthful communist) query as to which was the greater enemy Britain or Japan and how to fight both of them, she put forward Gandhi's idea:

"the wretchedness of power in the present Raj is so terrible and increasing that sorched earth policy is not applicable to this country.... Gandhi says that it is his religion to resist that route even at the expense of assisting Japanese.... Fight against Japanese is not in Gandhi's agenda, at least fight in the sense of violence. Gandhi's programme works up in non-violence and non-co-operation. If we begin to fight violently, Gandhi says we will bring chaos and confusion. But, if we non-co-operate and non-violently fight with Japanese, we will serve our purpose. Gandhi has absolute faith on that."

Answering another question regarding the validity of non-co-operation as a movement in such a violent political situation as the war and in view of the fact that Lord Willingdon was able to crush the movement of 1930-32 so easily, she observed that Gandhi was sure of dealing with the thrust of the Japanese, adding that struggle to remove British domination would have a great psycho-moral effect on non-co-operation with the Japanese. She repeatedly asserted that by resisting one imperialism, i.e., the British, Gandhi was also resisting all sorts of other imperialisms like that of Japan etc.

Mira Ben was used to be accompanied by the top leader of the PCC and DCC during her campaign such as Mahatab, Biswanath Das, Laxmi Narayan Mishra, who equally explained to the people about the war and PCC's efforts to meet the situation. Her meetings also attracted large crowds. The visit of Mira Ben touching different parts of Orissa became

11. Ibid.
a serious exercise on the part of the PCC to build up mass preparedness for the war while infusing an anti-imperialist spirit among the people.

The dominant form of the PCC to evolve mass preparedness in the context of the war crisis, was to concentrate on constructive activities and propagate Gandhian values. Mira Ben's visit was part of that exercise. Mahatab started editing a newspaper called Rachana right since Feb. 1942 with the avowed objective of popularising Gandhian views on khadi, spinning, Harijan, cultivation of grain, raising of volunteer corps, etc. Besides the fact that Mahatab's articles on the war were filled with intense anti-British spirit he advised people to grow more crops and not to store food crops at one place but to store them by distributing equally in different parts either through lending or selling. He also advised people to resist any attempt at exporting food crops outside the province. He asserted that an acute economic crisis was emerging due to the war as Orissa labourers working in Burma, Rangoon and Calcutta were returning to Orissa, adding to problem of unemployment. He equally resented the move by the Zamindars of Jalleswar to sell their paddy due to the declaration by Nilagiri state prohibiting the possession of paddy beyond 20 mounds per family. He warned both the zamindars and the Government that selling of paddy was a sin, when Orissa did not have enough stock of it. Rachana also regularly protested against other war measures like boat and light restrictions.\(^{12}\)

In May, June and July too constructive activities to be organised under Congress initiatives. Congress activists toured rural areas, organising meetings, emphasising constructive activities and preaching Congress doctrines. In

\(^{12}\) The Rachana, 4.5.42.
Bhadrak, twentytwo centres\textsuperscript{13} were opened up to popularise the constructive activities under the initiative of Rabindra Mohan Das. Village reconstruction remained a major part of the activities of such centres alongwith the preaching of Congress doctrine, Campaign against war restrictions such as removal of boats were also undertaken. Centres were also opened for civil defence purposes in Bhadrak.\textsuperscript{14} These activities assumed greater momentum in the wake of the visit of Mira Ben. In Sambalpur, Laxmi Narayan Mishra who had associated himself with the tour of Mira Ben propogated Gandhian views including raising of Congress volunteers for night patrolling as well as campaigning against war restrictions.\textsuperscript{15}

From the above developments, what emerges is the fact that the leadership tendertook consistent efforts to mobilise popular opinion and generate a mass preparedness for war while projecting the vision of collapse of British imperialism. This collapse was sought to be compensated by another vision of self-reliant India. We must note here that, as early as Jan. 42, the UPCC resolved to initiate mass contact programmes through organisation of volunteer corps to work in rural areas as a National Defence Brigade in order to protect people from war dangers which involved activities like night patrol to prevent cases of hooliganism and crime.\textsuperscript{16} But by the end of April when troop movement and naval action had taken place in Orissa, the nature of mass contact campaign by the leadership became one of improving the morale of the people in the face of enemy attacks, by organising resistance to external aggression, however small,

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} WWCC (ACC-76), BIS, FNR, 28.6.42 & 27.7.42.
\item \textsuperscript{14} WWCC (ACC-76), BIS, FNR, 28.5.42.
\item \textsuperscript{15} HPD, Public meeting at Jharsuguda, 24.7.42 (ACC-2282).
\item \textsuperscript{16} HPD, OPAI, Vol.VII, 23.1.42. WWCC, ACC-30.
\end{itemize}
and hampering the invader by a policy of denial.\textsuperscript{17} As against this, the policy of coalition ministry remained one of help to the government in the war with men and materials.

Our evidence suggests that, by March' 42, several volunteer organisation had sprung up mostly in the rural areas. For example, Youth leagues, Peace Brigades (\textit{Shanti Sena}), and "Helping Committees" having four to five villages under their supervisions were operating. So also, village defence committees were organised to monitor the defence activities in the areas and supervise law and order during external invasion. So also, "watch-and-ward" committees organised in villages were meant for night patrolling and help in the evacuation of people from coastal tracts during enemy raids.\textsuperscript{18} We come across evidence suggesting the formation of 7 training camps in Cutack to train volunteers.\textsuperscript{19} In this regard, Bari congress Gandhi Ashram under Gopabandhu Chaudhury did tremendous job. Many of the volunteers underwent training at Bari centre and afterwards supervised the activities of Swavalambhi khadi centres as well as volunteer centres in their respective villages. Several khadi centres with at least 4 villages under its supervision started functioning. These centres alongwith "Helping Committees", and we have been repeatedly stating, acted as nodal agencies to preach congress and Gandhi ideology during the period of war crisis. It is interesting to note that a zonal committee called "Eastern Zone Central Committee" was formed with its headquarters at Bhadrak to popularise congress doctrine alongwith the emphasis on Grama Sangathana (village reconstruction) and other constructive

\textsuperscript{17} HPD, OPAI, vol.VII, 15.4.42. WWCC, ACC-30.

\textsuperscript{18} AICC Papers, F.No.22 (Part-1), PCC to AICC regarding volunteer organisations, 15.3.42.

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid.
activities. This at least indicates how a full-fledged structure had evolved to reconstruct villages with Congress campaign. We come across reference to the functioning of 42 constructive centres in Balasore by June. A 'Swayam Sevak Sangha' came up in Bargash around March, 1942 to organize night patrolling to check crime along with enrolling volunteers for such activities. L.N. Mishra was active in organizing volunteer organisations in Sambalpur district. As has been noted in the context of 1940-41, the organisation of 'Shanti Sena' under the initiative of Mahatab, came to discharge effectively, the functions of watching law and order while popularising congress ideology in 1942. Near about 24 sub-committees functioned in Balasore to assist Santi-Sena volunteers in their activities.

The nationalist press had its share in the arousing strong popular feelings against war-measures. For instance, the Samaja, the Nababharat and the Rachana continued to plead for full exemption of boats from removal in the coastal tracts during the rainy months of July and August. Resenting the troop movement in Orissa, Rachana continued to advise people not to be scared by such moves. So also, the Samaja was equally harsh over the naval action undertaken in coastal tract of Orissa (in Jagatsingpur area) in April, holding the British Govt. responsible for inculcating a lack

20. WWCC, ACC-30, 22.6.42.
21. Ibid.
22. WWCC (ACC-30), 21.3.42.
23. WWCC (ACC-30), 7.4.42.
24. WWCC (ACC-30), 1.3.42.
of moral courage and weakness on the part of people. The Samaja commenting an air-raids on Rangoon, deplored the fact that people were blamed for not behaving properly in such a crisis which resulted in the death of so many persons. It went on to suggest that Rangoon experience might be repeated in Orissa, and warned the "foreign Govt." not to come up with the explanation that people did not behave properly and thus they were taught a good lesson. Finally it advanced a strong plea for sponsoring adequate govt. measures in advance for the protection of the people to withstand such an eventually. It also continued to focus on the problems of unemployment obtaining in the context of Oriya labourers returning from Rangoon, Burma and Calcutta due to air-raids. The Samaja also condemned the coalition Ministry and described Godabarisha Mishra of displaying the mentality that of imperialist Churchill and Amery.

The by-election in Balliguda constituency in which the Congress candidate defeated the member of coalition ministry was projected in the Press as a victory for the Congress not only in Orissa but also in India. The Samaja continued to voice opposition to the arrest of Congress leaders by the coalition ministry.

Nature of Communist Leadership

We may also take a brief look at politics of the Communists in Orissa of communist leadership. A weekly newspaper titled 'Shramika' (Labourer) was started in March 6, under the editorship of Ram Krishna Pati.

27. Ibid, 15.4.42 (ACC-2089).
31. The Samaja, 20.1.42/3.2.42.
In its maiden editorial it observed that, "if today the people and the labourers destroy the fascist Germany, Italy and Japan, then imperialism will crumble along with it before the mighty force of the masses." It thus emphasised the need to fight the fascist force first and declared the war to be a People's War. Orissa Trade Union Conference was organised around March. Ram Krishna Pati, who was the joint secretary of the Provincial Kishan Sabha, along with Durga Charan Mohanty (AISF) were active in the organisation of Kisan Sabhas and the students. Durga Prasad Guru, who used to mobilize the workers of Orient Paper Mill of Sambalpur way back in 1940, again appeared to be active in the period. He put all his revolutionary compositions (which he used to pen and which were sung by the workers during strikes) in the shape of a booklet titled *Biplaba Jhankar*. Adressing a Kisan Sabha meeting at Sarpada, Bhandaripookhari (Cuttack), Pati sought to explain the difference between the Congress and the Kisan Sabha saying that the real swaraj, aimed at by Kisan Sabha, was that of the Russian type, to be achieved through a revolution by the peasants and labourers. Whereas, he explained, there would be no gain if British imperialism was replaced by the Birlas -- apparently the Congress type of swaraj. He further pointed out that the rich and zamindars were the greatest thieves, sucking the blood of the poor for which they must be totally destroyed as there could not be any relation between the eater and eaten. This was what the kisan sangha wanted. With reference to the war, he described the Japans as tigers and English as wolves. Going further, he stated that, "as


the power of the British has gradually gone down; So we will first join the wolf and kill the tiger. Then it will not be difficult to finish the wolf after the war by giving necessary blows". He criticised Congress which was insisting on the driving out British imperialism at a juncture when a bigger fascist enemy was threatening the country. His overall appeal to the audience was to get rid of the more powerful enemy and then cow kill the small one. The speakers also made forceful pleas for the release of leaders with anti-Japanese convictions to step up the campaign against the Japanese.

Yet in another students meeting\(^35\) organised by the communists at Cuttack on 11 July, Man Mohan Mishra spelt out the necessity of joining the war efforts particularly air raid precautions so as to forge links with the Indian soldiers by inspiring them with the idea of independence. This would ultimately make the Indian soldiers help the masses as the Russian soldiers did during the time of revolution. The two prominent members of All Utkal Students Federation (the communist faction), viz., Baidyanath Rath and Durga Charan Mohanty, were in touch with Bengal communist civilian volunteers who were trying to promote better understanding between civil population and the troops in areas where necessary military undertakings caused some inconvenience to the life of the people.\(^36\) Durga Mohanty alongwith Ram Krishna Pati sought financial assistance from the Govt. to attend the guerilla training camp organised in Punjab by the Punjab Provincial Students Federation.\(^37\) Moreover, these youth under the banner of communist students federation stepped up their activities of anti-Japanese and anti-fascist campaign

35. *HPD*, Report on the meeting at Town Hall, 12.7.42 (ACC-2327).


following the visit of Mira Ben with a view to counter the effects of her propaganda.\(^{38}\) It is interesting to note that a section of the communists who got released from jail by promising support to the war effort started denouncing war-efforts of the coalition ministry and in fact tried to strengthen secretly the anti-British campaign, once out off jail.\(^{39}\) In fact as late as July, certain sections of the communists were convinced of the fact that in case the Congress started an anti-imperialist movement under Gandhi, they could hardly oppose it. This was precisely because, they knew that such a position would send wrong signals to people in so far as they would be accused of indirectly opposing a peoples' movement.\(^{40}\)

As regards CSP, what was important was the visit of Ram Nandan Mishra (Secy, AICSP) on 22 July.\(^ {41}\) During his visit, he appealed for support to Gandhi's new move - this activated the socialists groups in Orissa to locate their position alongwith the Gandhians as against the communists. As far as Forward Bloc's activities was concerned, its chief organiser Asok Das (son of Nilakantha Das and a student activist), though opposed to the Congress and supportive of the Coalition ministry, tried hard to consolidate Forward Bloc's position in the province. He campaigned by circulating pamphlets such a Biplasi Subhas and Bidrohi. The latter document advocated an armed revolution for the overthrow of the British Govt. under Subash Bose and finally to enthrone

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38. HPD, Secret letter (No.3303/42, 23.6.42), of Ch: Secy. to Govt. of India (ACC-2158).


41. WWCC (ACC-30), Report of S.P., Cuttack, 23.7.42.
him as the dictator of Free India. 42

LOCATING POPULAR PERCEPTION:

Here, it is equally important to examine the understanding of the war as it was grasped at popular levels. We have attempted to delineate the notion of the collapse of British rule, often hinted at by the leadership in its efforts at popular mobilisation. This, along with stringent war measures in terms of restrictions on lighting and boat movements, as also drying of canals or army/naval deployment and exercises and the return of evacuees, mostly Oriya labourers, from Rangoon, Burma, and Calcutta to the province with attendant civilian problems of law and order and unemployment, created an intense climate for war discussions and rumours.

As early as March, 1942, we have references to sweepers under the leadership of Gourhari Naik setting fire in many streets of Puri town. 43 The objectives for such actions were to discredit the local administration and police supervision; while highlighting the grievances of the sweepers. In other words, the intention was to make people lose faith in the police and administration. Besides, a section of the Congress leadership opposed to the coalition ministry and Godabarisha Mishra (Finance Minister and a person from Puri district) were active in backing such activities. The sweepers had been actively, demanding increase in wages to meet the war-time inflation along with other facilities like P.F., sick leave, maternity leave, and provision for holidays right since 1940, faced as they were with the prospect of air-raids and naval exercise along with attendant calamities due to war (most seriously apprehended in Puri, being nearest to sea) by 1942. This, perhaps, made them take to

42. Board of Revenue Records, A.D.M. Cuttack to Revenu Commissioner, 28.6.42, Sl.No.486.

this type of protest to focus their grievances. However, a section of other leaders mostly communists also lent support to such activities. It is in this background that one has to see why Mahatab kept emphasising Harijan reform in his writings in Rachana, which he edited. His articles in Rachana often projected the prospect of a social revolution arising out of the Harijan problems, unless reforms of the social structure were undertaken.  

The war situation often helped create a climate of wild rumours. As places like Rangoon and Calcutta, had sizeable Oriya labour settlements, popular reaction to the air bombings in those areas led to the rise of a variety of rumours. These rumours, born out of popular discontent over war, sought to strengthen the notion of British collapse and the inevitable overthrown of British imperialism. In the otherwise atmosphere of war depression, the rumours often helped considerably to reinforce the impression of Indian victory, thereby offering potential thrust to the anti-imperialist struggle. Secondly, popular discontent often enhanced through rumours, surfaced in response to the deployment of war measures like the movement and camping of army contingents, naval exercises, restrictions over lighting, and boat movement, building of 'war zones', surveillance done through low-flying aeroplanes, etc. Popular perception of such developments displayed deep-seated anger against the colonial army and navy and by extension an outright rejection of colonial hegemony.

First, let's try to map the response of the Oriya labourers mostly settled in Calcutta and Rangoon to the signs and reality of war. In fact, these were the people who evacuated Calcutta and Rangoon in the face of air-bombings in Assam-Burma border as well as Calcutta and rushed

44. See for reference Rachana, 26.1.42/4.5.42.
back to Orissa through overcrowded trains. Along with them, they brought back their perceptions of war-happenings. As per official estimate, nearly 70,810 Oriya evacuees had left for home from Calcutta, Rangoon, and Assam through Calcutta by the 1st week of June. The bombings not only resulted in the death of many Oriyas but also unleashed a spree of looting. For instance, with repeated Japanese bombings in Assam-Burma border as well as Manipur, the Oriya evacuees were looted by the tribals of the areas. Along with such distress, problems regarding transportation and food were acute.

Some of the evacuees from Burma carried back with them "Burma notes" without having patience to wait for encashment and such facilities rarely and not easily available during war time, added to the financial problems back home. Many of the evacuees suffered from cholera, dysentry and other ailments during their home-bound journey. The evacuees, mostly labourers from Calcutta, left for Orissa without caring for their wages. No amount of persuasion in terms of wage hike or supply of cheap food provision through grain shops by the authorities could make them continue work there. The panic in the industrial belt of Calcutta was further heightened by pamphlets and cartoons dropped by

45. HPD, An appeal by Godabarish Mishra, a pamphlet entitled "Oriyas in Calcutta" (1941, date not mentioned), ACC-2012.
46. HPD, Extracts from Lala N.K. Roy, Liaison Officer, to Govt. of Orissa and Calcutta, dt. 7.6.42, ACC-2326.
47. HPD, Extracts of Lala N.K. Roy..., op. cit., Dt.21.5.42, ACC-2324.
48. Ibid., Dt.15.6.42.
49. Ibid., Dt.28.7.42.
50. Ibid., Dt.25.12.42. Also Ibid., dt.21, 24 and 25.12.42.
Japanese planes during air raids. One such pamphlets written both in Hindi and Bengali dropped near labour settlements of Calcutta, under the title Hartal,\textsuperscript{51} read:

*From Thursday (24 December) the tortured, insulted and starving employees and labourers have struck work with their wives and children as a protest against cruel treatment of the moneyed and heartless landlords. The corporation has left the employees and labourers in the midst of bombs, but they have not anything for the hungry souls. Moreover, they would quiten us by shoeing (sic). They would not listen to government direction regarding dearness allowance....*

A cartoon, pictured in the pamphlet with a message also read: *All associations are marching on the path of the victory; come on: let's break the chains of slavery and carry on the fight for independence....*  

What is crucial to note is that the continuing state of distress and panic only contributed to strengthen the popular disillusionment with British rule. Rumours of various sorts, which often circulated among the labourers, reinforced the notion of the doom of the British Raj. The overtone of collapse of British imperialism was rich in almost all the rumours. A rumour which spread in Calcutta around May was that due to heavy fighting in Balasore the DM and the SP (who apparently got defeated) had taken refuge in Mayurbhanjha state.\textsuperscript{52} According to another rumour viewed nearly 300 had been killed in a fight between Indian and European soldiers.\textsuperscript{53} Yet another rumour in August suggested that Japanese planes which came over to Cuttack succeeded in killing the Raja of Mayurbhanja.\textsuperscript{54}

Yet in another incident,\textsuperscript{55} an Oriya cook named Chintamanis, who underwent remarkable spiritual transformation and claimed sainthood got printed several copies of Malika (Malika is a form of old Oriya literature which depicts events and happenings of the world of the far distant future). The text

\textsuperscript{51.} Ibid., Dt.30.12.42.  
\textsuperscript{52.} Ibid., Dt.21.5.42.  
\textsuperscript{53.} Ibid., Dt.17.5.42.  
\textsuperscript{54.} Ibid., Dt.10.8.42.  
\textsuperscript{55.} Ibid., Dt.22.5.42/30.9.42/29.12.42.
of the booklet suggested that there would be nothing left (probably in the universe) except Biraja Mandal (referring to Jajpur area, the domain of Goddess Biraja), and King Padmanav would reign. This was suggestive of the end of British imperialism and the dawn of a new era in terms of Padmanava's swaraj. Interestingly, Padmanava was a member of Jajpur local board who was evading arrest in Orissa and had subsequently kept himself active among the Oriya labourers in Calcutta right since May. He used to shuttle between Calcutta and coastal tracts of Orissa covering Cuttack and Balasore district secretly. Thus, he became a linkage for Oriya labourers in Calcutta, who in turn kept themselves abreast of political developments back home through Pada's preachings. The Oriya labourers in Calcutta, mostly hailing from the interior pockets of coastal Orissa particularly, Cuttack, Balasore districts and Dhenkanal and Mayurbhanja states, had also their distinct political identity. For example, a section of Oriya labourers who belonged to Bhadrak region, who claimed themselves as the followers of Mahatab (who also belonged to Bhadrak) organised a death squad (Marana Samiti) under the leadership of Ram Beuria and Akuli (both from Balasore). This squad remained an ardent supporter of Pada Jena, in te latter's bid for the realisation of Biraja Mandal. A section of the Oriya labourers in Calcutta and Kharagpur, who hailed from different state pockets like Dhenkanal and Mayurbhanja and were often frequented by Prajamandal leaders like Baisahnaba Patnaik (Dhenkanal) met in secret rendezvous, discussing political developments, and chalking out their course of action.56 Besides, we have references to Dibakar Patnaik and Sriharsha Mishra (both from Ganjam) who visited and kept in touch with the "Ganjam evacuees".57 In fact, we come across

56. Ibid., 18.9.42.
57. Ibid., 5.9.42.
evidence where a "crowd" mostly comprising these labourers collected together and rescued an "youngman" from police custody who was arrested on charge of a dacoity case. The two policemen were assaulted severly. The connection of the above-said death-squad in this incident appears almost certain.

It is noteworthy that letters which kept pouring among the Oriya labourers and employees in Calcutta, were filled with details about the daring activities of Jagannath Das, Pada Jena, Goura Das, and Keshaba Jena - local Congress activists in the coastal districts of Orissa - during the peak of anti-British struggle in 1942. The details in the letters highlighted facts regarding the destruction of colonial symbols like post-offices, courts, attack on landlords and use of arson and violence collectively by the people. So also, how "one man from each house" was being demanded to join the struggle at the threat of burning the house in case of non-compliance, or, how the "members of the Bimla Club (a youth league) in Sunderpada, (Bhubaneswar)" were bent on wire cutting. Such news and views often encouraged them to adopt different forms of struggle current in 1942. For example, handbills asking people to cut down wires were given to petty shopkeepers who in turn would sell the articles packing them with those hand bills - an idea also probably carried back to Orissa.

The objective for focusing these developments in Calcutta, mainly among the Oriya labourers and going beyond the prescribed time limit (of January-July phase) is to broadly point out the patterns of response to war emerging at popular levels. Thus, it may be stressed that the large-scale return

58. Ibid., 16.10.42.
59. Ibid., 28.8.42 and 18.9.42.
60. Ibid., 19.12.42.
of evacuees to Orissa had its repercussion in terms of exerting additional pressure on the not so stable agrarian economy. Besides, the remittances of the evacuees, which were a source of financial sustenance for many rural families, now ceased, created acute financial stress.61 Also the overall impact was the growth of massive unemployment.

At this stage, we will attempt to see the emerging popular perception of defence measures deployed by the imperialist government, with the possibility of Japanese invasion appearing certain around early 1942. By March, 1942, the bay of Bengal coastline including the unprotected coast of Orissa became quite vulnerable to enemy attack. As early as February, the colonial authorities lamented the fact that Orissa lacked any army command at the disposal of the provincial administration and hastened to add that the provincial government might surrender without muchy resistance in the eventuality of enemy attack.62 This state of affairs naturally sent panic signals to the people of coastal Orissa. Besides, the fall of Singapore and the return of evacuees to Orissa with their tales of agony and also about the Japanese success only helped to strengthen the notion of the defeat of British and the inevitable occupation of Orissa by the Japanese forces. Along with it, the restrictions over lighting and the seizing of boats, bicycles and buses within twenty miles of the coast, with a view to delay the possible enemy movement, the drying of canals and the hovering of low-flying aeroplanes (for surveillance purpose) as well as the order by the authorities to shift the paddy stocks off the "war zones" of coastal tract, the construction of 'war-zone' in itself and finally the movement and stationing of military contingent, substan-

61. *AICC Papers*, F.No. P.22 (Part-1), 15.3.42, PCC to AICC.
62. *LC*, No.84, Dt.26.2.42, Governor to the Viceroy.
tially added to popular discontentment. 63 These measures which were meant to instill confidence in the people and build up war-preparedness were marked by widespread resentment at popular levels. We have noted earlier how the leadership as well as the nationalist press unleashed a relentless campaign against such measures.

In this context, when panic and scare were mounting, as many as six British naval ships were sunk near the Kujanga coast in April, by the Japanese, resulting in an explosion and heavy firing. 64 The demoralising incident shock waves throughout. Following the incident, a rumour gained ground that Japanese had already landed as few of the survivors were mistaken for Japanese. 65 The weight of the rumour was such that one-third of the population of Cuttack district evacuated and left for secured places in the adjoining rural pockets. The subordinate government officials as well as local traders and businessmen joined the exodus with their families to safer interior. 66 The popular perception saw the crisis as an ominous signal and symbolic of God's wrath. 67 The colonial administration geared itself to meet the situation arising out of Kujanga incident through rigorous enforcement of war-time restrictions on the use of lights, boats, and buses. Besides, it sought to strengthen the 'war zones' as well as air defence system, by shifting food stuffs, conveyances and even people

63. *HPD*, *FNR*, 18.1.42, 18.3.42, 18.4.42 and *LC*, No.84, 14.3.42, Governor to the Viceroy.

64. *LC*, No.84, 8.4.42, Governor to the Viceroy.

65. *Ibid*.


at certain places in the coastal belt to inland areas. Such orders were almost forced upon the people under the threat of destruction in case of non-compliance. The colonial administration's move in shifting the secretariat from Cuttack to Sambalpur strengthened the popular impression that the government was poorly equipped to resist the Japanese onslaught as it could hardly save its own offices. This not only bred helplessness on the part of people but also generated loss of faith in British rule, which was seen as nearing the end. Popular discontentment also surfaced with the policy of commandeering of boats and drying of canals, which caused great hardships to the poor agriculturists and the rural folk. As has been brought out earlier, these policies were bitterly critiqued by Mira Ben, Mahatab and other leaders through meetings and also by the press.

Popular faith in the viability of British rule was fast waning, reaching demoralisingly low limits. As a result, by April one notices heavy withdrawals from the savings banks or post offices and encashment of government securities. For instance, immediately after Kujanga incident (6 April), the daily withdrawals from post offices in Balasore ran to the tune of Rs.8,000/-. The presence of military contingent in the 'war zones' adjoining civilian areas often irked people resulting in violent clashes. For example, the people of Jobra locality in Cuttack town seriously assaulted military sepoys. The sepoys, who used to come to Mahanadi to take their bath,

68. *HPD*, FNR 18.4.42.
69. *LC*, No.84, 26.2.42, Governor to Viceroy.
bathed naked and often made 'passes' at womenfolk, who also used to take their bath in the nearby ghats. The local people had been resenting such activities of the sepoys for a long time and demanding that no military personnel should be allowed to bathe in the Mahandi ghats. In fact, a rumour spread that posting of army contingent meant molestation of women and harassing of civilian population. 73 Similarly, there was resistance to the construction of a wireless system at Jagatsingpur by the people under the belief that a military station was being planned during September. 74 Considerable popular resentment also found expression when labourers belonging to Hyderabad, Travancore, Cochin and Gorakhpur, procured for the construction of 'war zone' at Choudwar (Cuttack) were quartered in the nearby villages, almost three miles off from the work site. These labourers were supplied country liquor by opening shops in the civilian locality, which caused nuisance. These labourers often indulged in fights among themselves, mainly engineered by 'habitual offenders' among them. On one such occasion, these labourers indulged in arson, loot and large-scale violence in the following a fight among themselves. 75 The extent of property and asset lost due to the loot and violence was valued at Rs.25,000. This caused considerable panic among the local populace. Congress leaders such as Mahatab and Mira Ben visited the site and arranged relief work for the affected villagers. They also demanded recruitment of local labourers in the site along with a wage at par with the coolies brought from outside. The nationalist newspapers like the Samaja focused on the issue to a great extent.

The ever mounting popular antipathy as well as the

73. HPD, FNR 18.1.42.
74. WWCC, ACC No.53, Sept. 1942.
75. The Samaja, 17.6.42, 18.6.42.
strengthening of the notion of collapse of British imperialism, drew added momentum through circulation of large scale rumours, as brought out earlier.

People surfaced in an attempt to meet the crisis in terms of air raids tended to rely more and more on the Congress. For example, an evacuee from Burma hoisted a Congress flag in his house, under the conviction that this device could save his house from air attacks of Japanese.76 In fact, this notion was widespread. For example, the flying of Congress flags was perceived as the reason for avoiding air-raids (given the fact that aeroplanes kept hovering around low-flying zone) by the people in Jeypore estate.77 At a popular level, the perceived threats of bombs and the resultant destruction was sought to be overcome through a deeper identification with the Congress. This also implied the undermining of imperialist hegemony as well as coming to terms with the Congress swaraj.

We also need to stress the fact that during the crisis of the war British bureaucracy suffered an erosion of loyalty. Many officials and members of the subordinate staff started supporting the Congress activities and became indifferent and even hostile to the British government. For example, a subdivisional officer in Bhadrak supported the cause of the Congress by passing lenient sentence on the Congress satyagrahis in 1941 and secretly associated himself with the Congress leadership around early 1942.78 So also, with the shifting of secretariat from Cuttack to Sambalpur, many subordinate officials with pro-Congress leanings openly jumped into the struggle against British. One such person was Bhirab Chandra

76. *HPD*, FNR 18.3.42.
77. *WWCC*, ACC-85.
Mohanty who went underground in August and organised anti-British activities afterwards.

II. POST-9 AUGUST DEVELOPMENTS

Orissa reacted as strongly to the arrest of Congress leaders on 9 August as other parts of the country. In order to bring out the narrative of the Quit India movement in 1942 in a manageable form, I will take it up district by district. I will first discuss the post-9 August development in Cuttack.

Popular reaction to the arrest of the top leadership of Congress including Gandhi and the banning of Congress organisation on 9 August 1942 instantly emerged through the protests of the students. With a tradition of fairly intense nationalist and Communist politics right since 1938, Ravenshaw students sought to transform the initial shock of British repression into a broad-based popular protest. On 9 August itself, they demanded permission of the principal to hold a meeting in the College campus to condemn the action of the government in arresting Congress leaders - a permission which was, however, refused. The very next day, a meeting was organised which passed a resolution protesting the "mean repressive policy of British Government" and appealing to the students to "further the national fight" against it. Bhagirathi Mishra, a student union leader of the college, explained the urgency to protest the suppression by British Government, as "each starving man and woman" was looking at them (students) with the hope that they would offer the people a correct lead. Upendra Mohanty in the past the Congress leaders used to issue statements calling for boycott of schools and colleges by students and teachers; this time "we shall all go back to our villages and make Congress propaganda" and "violate all rules and regula-

79. History of Freedom Movement Unit Papers Region I (hereafter HFM), F.No.46/3, 13.8.42.
tions and that it will be possible to frame a national Government having units of four or five villages.... " He also suggested that students should campaign for inducing Government servants to resign and join the people in their "fight for the Congress". The organisers exhorted the students to join the hartal, by boycotting classes, and then advised that in case students were rusticated or expelled, they should go back to their villages and start educating the masses on "the lines indicated by the recent speeches and statements of Gandhi". The hartal on 11 August was followed by a mass meeting of students on 12 August. The Communist activists like Biren Mitra, Narasingha Tripathy, Durga Mohanty, Manmohan Mishra, in fact, took the lead in organising the movement.80 The students' strike assumed a militant form on 15 August. After asking the principal and faculty members to resign as a protest against government's repression, the students rushed inside the college office and the principal's chamber.81 They destroyed the official records, damaged the furniture, took away cash from the cashier, and set fire to the records. This phase of students' activities continued till 18 August. By then the students of Victoria, Mission and Academy schools also had started boycotting classes.82 The mounting tension in the Cuttack town and the mobilisation of public opinion by the students were further hastened with the resignation of two subordinate government officials. Bhairaba Charan Mohanty (an Assistant of the Orissa Secretariat) alongwith Lokanath Mohapatra (a clerk of Ravenshaw Girls School) submitted their resignation in protest against the arrest of Congress

80. Ibid.

81. HPD, Copy of F.I.R. by Ravenshaw College Head Clerk, 15.8.42 (ACC-2380).

82. HPD, Communique regarding C.D.M. in Orissa F.No.521/1942 (ACC-2399).
leadership. 83

The focus of the movement shifted to the rural pockets of Jajpur, Jagatsinghpur and Kendrapara by the third week of August. We can take a very brief look at these developments. On 16 August, the Congress Ashram at Bari, already seized by colonial administration, was 'invaded' by a 'mob'. The 'mob' then set fire to Congress property removed from the Ashram and kept in the nearby PWD building for safe custody. So also, records of Kaipara post office were burnt. 84 On 17 August, the local Congress activists persuaded people gathered in the Hariharpur hat to observe a hartal. The police who tried to resist their activities were, in turn, scolded. Parmananda Mohanty exhorted the gathering to 'rise' against the police as they were "hired" and assured the public that "if we pull them out and bring to our fold; we will achieve swaraj". The advice was enough for the gathering who, then mercilessly stoned the police. Their uniforms, red pugris ( turban), haversacks, and Parwanas (warrant) were snatched away. The 'crowd' also built an effigy in straw and attached a placard saying "British Sarkar Dhwansa Hau (Down with British Government) and set it on fire to it. 85

The teachers and students of the Basic Training School and M.E. School at Bari, joined by local Congress activists attacked the Rampa Inspection Bungalow (Binjhapur P.S.) and burnt the articles therein. 86 They renamed the bungalow as Swaraj Ashram and wrote anti-British slogans on the bunga-

83. WWCC, ACC-30, 17.8.42.
84. WWCC, ACC-30, 24.8.42.
86. HPD, Spl. Report 43/42 22.8.42 (ACC-2375); and HPD, Petition by Villagers regarding collective fine (ACC-2202).
low's wall. This was followed by the burning of the post-office at Balliapal, 2 miles off the Rampa village. On 18 August, nearly 150 students of Jajpur High School led by two local Congress activists entered the school and destroyed its furniture.\(^87\) The school students at Jagatsingpur, Salepur, Ahiyas also resorted to mass strikes, boycotting classes and organising meetings in August. In Jajpur, students led by Yusuf Ali Khan and Golak Chandra Mohanty entered the Court compound and gave a written appeal to the S.D.O. to resign. Back in Ravenshaw, students set fire to the room of a boy in the hostel, who did not support the struggle. Schools like Academy, Victoria and Mission continued to remain restive and organised processions and the trend continued with large scale absence of students from the school till the end of the month.\(^88\)

On 19 August there was again an attempt to 'raid' Gopalpur Inspection Bungalow by the local activists who 'carried away' the signboard of the bungalow, after failing to enter the bungalow due to the opposition of the chaukidar. They repeated the 'raid' again on 21st August, coming in a larger group of 500 people, carrying Congress flags and shouting Congress slogans. This time, they succeeded in hanging up the new signboard titled "Swaraj Bhaban Gopalpur". Few of the activists also stayed in the bungalow for two days and destroyed all government properties of the bungalow.\(^89\)

The local Congress activists in Jajpur had already resolved to burn down all the police stations and damage the government properties. Till about 19 August, no arrests had been effected by the administration though by 18 August

\(^87\) WWCC, ACC-55, 20.8.42.

\(^88\) WWCC, ACC-97, 17.8.42.

\(^89\) HPD, P.S. Case No.20 of 1942, 21.12.42 (ACC-2202).
extra contingent of police force had been pumped into Rampa, Bari, and Kaipara areas - the emerging zone of militancy - to deal with the situation.\(^90\) A campaign to boycott police, by refusing to sell anything to them, also picked up in Bari when police camped there to arrest some of the local activists and mostly the Bari Gandhian Ashramites (who had reoccupied the Ashram).\(^91\) On 21 August, seven local Congress workers including Parsuram Mohanty (who had organised assault on police in Hariharpur hat) were arrested in Balipal hat. But, the arrest of leadership only brought in considerable popular support. A crowd of 1000 followed the arrested leaders and amidst anti-British slogans demanded their release.\(^92\) When the police reached Bari, the crowd had swelled to 3,000 with some five hundred carrying lathis. Once the police were gone, another batch of Ashramites and local activists took possession of the Bari Ashram. They set fire to the 'house' of Gokhei Jena, a fellow villager, who had disobeyed the collective decision of the villagers to boycott the police and not to sell any articles to them. Gokhei was seriously assaulted and his property looted for the twin crimes of helping the police and not joining the anti-police demonstration. Gobardhan Puhan, a zamindar, was active in this action.

Similar incident occurred in Kaipara (Binjharpur P.S.) on 26 August\(^93\) which resulted in the killing of at least 5 people. Kaipara had already emerged as the centre of popular militancy. A police force was despatched there on 25 August to arrest a few of the local leaders in connection with a post-poffice arson case. The police force was greet-

\(^{90}\) WWCC, ACC-55, 20.8.42.

\(^{91}\) HPD, Spl. Report, 66/42, 29.8.42 (ACC-2447).

\(^{92}\) WWCC, ACC-55, 28.8.42.

\(^{93}\) WWCC, ACC-55, 28.8.42.
ed in the village with massive popular boycott. Rations were refused to them. Even a plan was hatched by the villagers to burn the building, where the police camped. On 26 August, batches of 'Congress' workers arrived in Kaipara crossing the adjoining river Baitarani. Nearly, 400 people had gathered in the river ghat, and the 'volunteers' from the opposite side of the river, were joining them. The police reached the ghat in an apparent bid to disperse the gathering and asked the boatmen to ferry them to the other side of the ghat to obstruct the movement of the outsiders into the village. But, the police were refused ferry service by the boatmen. The police issued a warning to the gathering to disperse and swung into arresting eleven leaders. The 'mob' without being frightened followed the arrested who were being taken to Jajpur under police protection. By that time, nearly 3,000 people had already gathered. The warning by the police to disperse only brought in fresh waves of the surging crowd who, armed with lathis, started attacking the police force - including the D.S.P. The police then fired 28 rounds killing one and injuring twelve. Later on 4 more died. Notwithstanding the firing, the crowd kept waiting at a 'safe distance' and police left the place without even carrying the dead body. A "Congress bulletin"94 released and widely circulated on the Kaipara incident described the DSP, Laxman Mishra who ordered the firing as "murderer".

The Kaipara firing had an instant repercussion the very next day. Nearly 10,000 people from different parts of Jajpur sub-division reached Jajpur town in 10 batches with the proclaimed objective of attacking public offices, looting the sub-treasury and setting fire to the houses of

94. WWCC, ACC-97, Congress bulletin No.9.
Government officials and the armed police. The marchers shouted anti-British slogans and invited the public to join them by beat of drums and reached the SDO's office. At a distance of 50 yards from the office, they were ordered to wait by the armed force, which they obeyed. Then, three Congressites garlanded the SDO and Deputy Superintendent and revealed that they had organised the march to prevail over them from resigning their jobs. The marchers had been carrying lathis. In order to terrorise and disperse the crowd, the authorities had arranged massive police deployment. Before reaching the S.D.O.'s office, some marchers had already looted two liquor shops and attempted to enter inside the police station. On the way back from Jajpur, a section of the crowd set fire to a post office at Rambag after looting it. The postal official who tried to resist the attempt was threatened that he would be thrown into the fire.

One again finds an attempt at rescuing the arrested Congress workers from police custody at Tirtol P.S. Some 500 men of Balipatna Guda village (populated mostly by weavers' community) armed with lathis, attacked the police force comprising a constable and a few choukidars, who were escorting under arrest, a local activist, Brundaban Nayak. The police were scolded in abusive language: "catch hold of sala (an Oriya slang), red Pagadiwalla (the red turban) and blackheaded bitches" and thus followed a brutal attack by the crowd encircling the police force. In the midst of cheers for victory to Gandhi, the arrested leader was released from the police custody; and the crowd snatched away the lathis, uniforms and pagadis of the police.

There were numerous attacks on colonial symbols like


Dakbungalows, police stations, Revenue offices, and post offices in the rural belt of Cuttack during August. In all such cases people in large numbers armed with lathis burnt such symbols, 'loot' the properties therein, and threaten the choukidars, peons, etc. if they protested against or resisted such attempts. The following is an enumeration of these attempts in tabular form in official language. 97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Nature of Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>17 Aug.</td>
<td>Paipara</td>
<td>Post office burnt. Post cards burnt as well as distributed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19 Aug.</td>
<td>Kaipada ghat</td>
<td>Attack on a peon of Munsif court when he refused to hand over the official papers, he was carrying. The papers, along with the haversack, parvana of the peon were burnt by &quot;Congressmen&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Aug.</td>
<td>Neulpur (Dharmasala)</td>
<td>Burning of Canal Revenue Collection office at Neulpur (Dharmasala P.S.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 Aug.</td>
<td>Jenapur</td>
<td>'Military special' train derailed between Mandala and Baruva</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Aug.</td>
<td>Rambag (Jajpur)</td>
<td>Postal runner, Kanhai Jena robbed of his cash worth Rs.400/- by a group of &quot;Congress workers&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 Aug.</td>
<td>Cuttack town &amp; 24 Aug.</td>
<td>Security and political prisoners adopted obstructive attitude and violated jail regulations to &quot;undermine the authority and incite the convicts to commit acts of indiscipline&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Aug.</td>
<td>Balichandrapur</td>
<td>Attack on Tahsil office. Records burnt to ashes. Balichandrapur Post office with its records burnt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Aug.</td>
<td>Jobra (Cuttack town)</td>
<td>Telegraph wire cutting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22 Aug.</td>
<td>Kuangular (Maharga)</td>
<td>Post office burnt and records destroyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Aug.</td>
<td>Ahiyas (Jajpur)</td>
<td>Attack on Dak Bungalow by 300 people under local leadership like Padmanav Roy, and Bhagaban Sahu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Aug.</td>
<td>Jaintara (Jajpur)</td>
<td>Police beat house with the records burnt by nearly 1000 people, armed with lathis, crowbars, axes, knives. The crowd kept saying that police/government officials should be killed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Aug.</td>
<td>Dasarathpur</td>
<td>Inspection Bungalow, Government training school/canal revenue office burnt</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26 Aug. Jajpur Attack on irrigation rest house
27 Aug. Mundarkhand Tahsil office burnt
30 Aug. Jenapur UP-Madras Mail was obstructed; its lookout glass broken, fireman attacked
31 Aug. Muapara (Jagatsingpur) Canal Revenue office burnt
31 Aug. Jagatsingpur 'Arrested' leaders rescued from police custody. Telegraph wire cutting
Aug. Akarpura, Andola Peasants cut the distributary bank without seeking permission of P.W.D. authorities
Aug. Bari Postal gauge removed and thrown into water
Aug. Sukinda Road mileage posts as well as signboards indicating names of places thrown away to the jungles
Aug. Barada, Kharagpur Choukidars were stripped and left naked; people forced inside the house of choukidars to collect uniforms
Aug. Kumuda Records of opium shops along with pound house burnt
Aug. Kumapal Constables stripped of their uniforms and the uniforms were burnt
Aug. Kendrapara town 7 'Congressmen' of Jajpur entered Kendrapara town and instigated students to carry on subversive activities. Also, created trouble in the civil court by destroying papers in the Peshkars table.
Aug. Ahiyas Attack on Ahiyas School - the composite of the police - and attempt to burn it. Gokulananda Mohanty who had arranged shelter for the police and supplied rations to them despite the boycott of police by the villagers, was criticised. The local activists under Padmanav Roy had planned to burn the school building to harass the police. But, a Gokulananda by the help of 1000 Muslims attacked the "Congress activists" by lathis.

In fact, by the end of August itself, the report on disturbances in Jajpur subdivision indicated the following number of cases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nature of Occurrence</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Burning of Choukidari uniforms</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Burning of Canal Revenue offices and PWD Bungalows</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Burning of Post offices</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Burning and looting of Excise shops</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Burning of zamindari kutcheries</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Mail robbery</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Dacoity</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Looting of granaries</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kosala (Chenndipada P.S., Angul) during the celebration of a local festival Ramachandi Mela, there was an
attempt at setting fire to the police beat house. Here, the local Congress activists comprising Dibakar Mishra, Anda Sahoo, Dibakar Pradhan, Loknath Pradhan, Bhagban Behera led the people and organised large scale destructions of Government property. They cut down the wooden bricks on public roads, uprooted road signals, removed the cut trees kept on the public road. On 27 August a meeting was organised coinciding with the celebration of Mela. Dibakar Mishra told the audience that:

"We have obtained swaraj from the date of arrest of Gandhi, Nehru.... The British are in the verge of being ruined. Government should be removed and we will establish our new Government. Don't go to British courts but decide cases by forming village Panchayats."

He was arrested soon after his speech. Thereupon, nearly 100 people pounced upon the police, severely assaulting them with lathis and bricks and rescued Dibakar Mishra from the police. The "armed mob" then set fire to Kosala forest beat house, assaulted the forest guard, burnt his uniforms, and damaged his cycle!

Though Jajpur remained, by and large, the most active militant zone, by September the movement came to be experienced more intensely in the rural pockets of other subdivisions with attacks on colonial symbols multiplying. We can get a glimpse of the intensity of popular militancy, if we look into the incident at Erasama on 6 September. Here, nearly 700 people armed with various kinds of 'weapons' drawn from various villages approached the Erasama police station. The S.I. and A.S.I. 'requested' the mob to refrain from violence but this only infuriated the 'crowd'. The "crowd seized the sub-inspector" and kept him under confinement. The other police personnel were forced to remain silent "on pain of being put to death" while the crowd started its work of "wanton destruction" of the furniture along with the records of police station and burnt them. They also proceeded to constables' barrack, destroyed the

furniture there, along with their 'kits'. Finally, the crowd proceeded to the post office which was set on fire. This was climaxied by a virtual "looting" of a Ganja and opium shop. The crowd all along shouted slogans like "Gandhi/Swaraj Ki Jai" and "British Government should go away from India".99

The intensity of attack on symbols of colonial authority during September till the end of 1942 is visible from the following table.100

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
<th>Nature of Occurrence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Sept.</td>
<td>Jagatsingpur</td>
<td>People resisted the attempt at constructing a wireless and signalling station by picketing the proposed site. They also prevented coolies to work in the site. Their contention was that establishment of military station meant harassment and molestation of civil population by the military personnel.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Sept.</td>
<td>Jagatsingpur</td>
<td>F.W.D. rest house, quarters of Canal Revenue Tahsildar, Canal Revenue Tahsil office and the patrol at Sahuria village of Nuapada (Tirtol) were burnt.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Sept.</td>
<td>Merasundali-Talcher</td>
<td>Five rails removed from the railway track causing derailment of the engine of a goods train. Nine telegraph posts pulled down at the same spot.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd half Marshaghai of Sept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd half Kendrapara of Sept.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd half Dampur (Kendra- of Sept. para)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd half Kujanga of Sept.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2nd half Tikhidi (Kendra- Records of Tikhidi U.P. school burnt down by the pupils under the advice of of Sept. para) 'Congressmen'</td>
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2 Oct. Cuttack town  "Glass splinters, gramophone needles, broken razor blades" strewn all over the football field in killa-maidan to spoil a football match played between Cuttack XI and B.N. Rly team.

4 Oct. Salepur  Canal Revenue office burnt at Dharmagatpur.


10 Oct. Cuttack Rly Station  Prisoners taken to Berhampur jail under police custody shouted slogans and jeered at R.A.F. military staff who were also waiting in the station to go to Chharbatia. The latter, under provocation, shot two rounds of fire in the air to terrify them. But, the prisoners, continued shouting slogans, undeterred.

12-13 Angul  Dibaker Mishra led a group of people and took possession of Angul Congress Ashram, seized by the police.

14 Oct. Cuttack town  Posters addressed to Hackney carriage and Rickshaw drivers appeared in the carriage stand at Chaudhry Bazar. It contained threats to drivers of violent consequences, if they continued to carry Europeans.

Mid Oct. Kosalal (Angul Sub-division)  Villages burnt down by Ganeshwar Sahoo, apparently at the instance of some underground agitators.

16, 20 & Marshaghai  Telephone line between light house and Marshaghai were cut down by villagers of Chadeiguan, Janra and Kachla.


Nov. Napang (Binjharpur)  'Congress workers' entered the room of Tahsildars and took away cash worth Rs.700/-. 

Nov. Salepur  'Congress workers' entered the office of sub-register Salepur and asked him to resign his post. Telegraph wires cut down in different places.

Nov. Baliapal (Jajpur)  Villagers of Baliapal and Bainsaria marched in a procession to the postoffice at Bainsiria. Seven Congress workers entered the post-office, destroyed the records. The postmaster and peon who could have easily resisted did not do so. Instead "indirectly" helped the "Congress workers".

Nov. Jajpur  Inspection bungalow at Chhatrapur with its furniture burnt to ashes by the "Congress workers" with the help of villagers of Chasakhanda, Chhatrapur, Chadakpara, Keruna, Radhaballavpur, Banlang, Madhupur also. The said villagers were "never helpful to police in detection of political cases but helped the rioters."

5 Nov. Kissennagar (Binjharpur P.S.)  A vaccinator was attacked by 'Congressmen'. His registers snatched away and burnt down. The village Krishnanagar was referred as "the worst village in Binjharpur, where everybody is active" in the report of S.F.

11 Nov. Gobindapur (Cuttack)  42 telegraph posts were uprooted and wires cut down canal lock office at Somepur (Kissennagar) was burnt. 'Raid' on police station and picketing of excise shops. Considerable agitation for burning of police uniforms, assault on police.

In September, the students agitation in Cuttack town continued at a high pitch, paralysing academic activities. Nearly 300 students of Ravenshaw College including girls took out a procession and 'raided' the Cuttack General Hospital compound. The students were protesting over 6 girls students of Ravenshaw, who used to reside in the Medi-
cal School girls hostel, being turned out ot the hostel. The crowd mobbed the professor-superintendent. The girls led the 'crowd' and attempted forcibly to enter the nursing home and the "men followed the lead of women". The students prevailed upon the students of the Nursing hostel to join them. The police resorted to a "mild lathi charge" as the boys refused to disperse. This incident was followed by another when few students of Ravenshaw College wrongfully restrained and manhandled a constable in the college compound.

The students also unleashed a virtual poster campaign throughout Cuttack town, containing an appeal to the police officers in the name of Gandhi to resign their posts and thereby help the Congress movement. The activities in the Ravenshaw College, had its effect in other schools of the town. The school students attempted demonstrations, dropped their classes, and shouted anti-British slogans. The Engineering School also joined the strike, leading to its closure sine die. So also Ravenshaw was declared closed for a month from 19 September. This dampened the movement in the town to a certain extent. The authorities again had to experience a tough time in quelling student unrest when the college reopened on 30 November. The Principal had demanded a deposit of Rs.20/- from each hosteller. This again incensed the students and they petitioned the Managing Committee challenging the rationale of such an action. They also demanded for the unconditional readmission of students, already rusticated, and the release of the "imprisoned" and 'detained' students in connection with "political offences".

THE ANTI-FEUDAL THRUST OF THE MOVEMENT:

The attack on colonial symbols and the attendant popular militancy also at times took the shape of anti-zamindar manifestations in certain areas and particularly in some of the estates of the district. For instance on 17 August, in
Tigiria\textsuperscript{101} two local Congress activists, Krishna Mohan Rout and Brindaban Tripathy, in the course of a meeting at Kharaqpur \textit{hat} (largely attended by villagers of Kolengiri, Pallipur, Balipadia and Ramdaspur) exhorted the audience not to obey the zamindars, nor to pay chaukidar tax. They also asked the people to challenge the authority of the British Government and not to "allow British officials to cross the river" by refusing their services in ferry ghats. People were also told to set fire to the kutcheries of zamindars and destroy their property. The crowd instantly responded by rushing to the police present in the \textit{hat}, and forcibly removed their uniforms and set them on fire. Again on 25 August, led by Alekha Prasad Das and Krushna Mohan Rout (ex-members of Cuttack District Board and Jajpur Local Board respective), a group of persons of Kalkala estate marched in a procession to village Samia, beating drums and shouting anti-war slogans. Upon reaching the village, the leaders made violent speeches followed by a 'raid' on Kalkala kutchery (court). They also burnt down the \textit{khamar} department of the estate.\textsuperscript{102} The estate staffs cooperated enthusiastically. The clerk, Balram, directed the invading crowd to burn specific "bundles of old paper".

We have reference regarding the circulation of cyclostyled leaflets in estate like Madhupur contemplating action against the Raja of the estate.\textsuperscript{103} These leaflets were widely circulated in Cuttack town - even thrown into the compound of Godabarish Mishra - a minister in the coalition Ministry headed by the Raja of Parlakhemundi. We have yet


\textsuperscript{102}. \textit{HPD, Petition of A.P. Das to Godabarisha Mishra} (ACC-2395); and \textit{HPD, Report of S.D.M., Jajpur to D.M., Cuttack}, 7.12.42 (ACC-2395).

\textsuperscript{103}. \textit{HPD, Report of C.S.,} 29.8.42, ACC-2394.

The leaflets were issued by Hrudananda Satpathy, a teacher of the local Board school. Unfortunately, the leaflets are not available.
another reference to an attack on the kutchery of Darpan and Madhupur estates in August.\textsuperscript{104}

This was, of course, also a consequence of prolonged peasant mobilisation in the earlier years. In the rest of Orissa, too, by November, Congress workers were touring the interior instigating people to withhold the payment of land revenue and to form village panchayats.\textsuperscript{105}

By September, Erasama, Jagatsingpur emerged as another area of intense anti-British activities. In the meetings organised in the villages of Erasama and Jagatsingpur areas, around September, people were exhorted to kill "all the police officers", burn Government buildings, cut telegraph lines, and indulge in such similar acts which would force the British to leave the country. Besides, people were also asked to burn the houses and kutcheries of the local zamindars.\textsuperscript{106}

At Balikuda, a local level activist, Khetra Mohan Biswal, in different meetings and through pamphlets during October, advised the people not to pay rent and taxes to Government, to disobey law and burn Government offices.\textsuperscript{107} Another local leader of Mahakalpada, Ramchandra Swain, collected men and money for Congress propaganda work and also tried to circulate "lithographed pamphlets".\textsuperscript{108} A Yubak Sangha formed in Kerkera village of Tirtol, took up the campaign to refuse payment of Chaukidari tax.\textsuperscript{109} A batch of youngmen of village Bhagalpur trained themselves in lathi

\textsuperscript{104} WWCC, ACC-98, 27.8.42.
\textsuperscript{105} WWCC, ACC-30, 2.11.42.
\textsuperscript{106} WWCC, ACC-97, 11.9.42, 17.9.42.
\textsuperscript{107} HPD, SP Report, Cuttack, 24.9.43 (ACC-2481).
\textsuperscript{108} HPD, Spl. Report, 13.10.43 (ACC-2481).
\textsuperscript{109} WWCCD, ACC-30, 6.10.42.
exercise to fight with police in case any Congressmen was arrested at Bagalpur. So also, an association called Rakta Bahini (Blood Sacrificer), mostly organised by the youth, came up in Batimura, with the objectives of cutting telegraph wires and dig up roads.110

The social basis of the anti-imperialist front also broadened with people at the bottom of social ladder joining the movement. In Kujdnga, the fishermen, and in Tirtol, the weavers, actively participated in violent anti-British acts.111

BALASORE:

The anti-British campaign in Balasore began in a rather militant form. The movement was inaugurated with Hartals in different parts of the district. The markets of Duggadebi, Garuda, Remuna and Balasore town remained closed down on 14th, 15th, 16th and 18th of August. On 23 August, 1942 Congress workers picketed the Excise shops in Balasore town. The students launched strikes in many places and took out street processions to draw public attention to the movement. They, in fact, became the mainstay for picketing Government offices, excise shops, and courts. Telegraph wires were cut in Chandabali region.112 The Congress leaders soon withdrew to the rural belt to avoid arrest. The Bhandari Pokhari Police Station was burnt on 17 August113 and the police attacked. For a meeting in the village Kahanra Pokhari (under Bhandari Polchari P.S.) processions from neighbouring villages Palda, Bahadalpur, etc., assembled at Kahanra Pok-

110. Ibid.


112. WWCC (ACC-30), S.P. Report (Balasore), 22.8.42.

hari and the people together marched on to Bhandari Pokhari in a procession carrying mashals (fire torches made of bamboo). The crowd told the police that they would hold the meeting in Kahanra Pokhari after returning from Bhandari Pokhari. In Bhandari Pokhari, however, a crowd of 500, forcibly entered the police station, and set fire to the thana, burnt the houses of S.I./A.S.I. and constables and destroyed all they could lay hands on. The S.I., who rushed to the spot from Kahana Pokhari and found the thana burning, was "seized" by a leader of the crowd Baishnab Charan Nayak. Baishnaba ordered him to say "Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai". But, as the S.I. remained silent, he was stripped naked and assaulted with a lathi. So also, the constable and daftadar were stripped naked, and made to shout Gandhi ki jai. The crowd also attempted to attack P.W.D. officer but he had escaped. The crowd had also dismantled the wooden bridge passage for Bhandari Pokhari earlier to block any movement of police force into the area. Afterwards, they also cut down the telegraph wire between Akhuapada and Manjuri road. The postal peon who attempted to go to Bhadrak to inform the authorities regarding the incident was assaulted near the bridge. The mob also set fire to the post office.

It is however important to note that the attack on the police thana at Bhandari Pokhari was preceded by active mobilisation of people by the local leadership. A local leader, Bhaishnaba Nayak, was active in the locality for over a month before the incident took place, carrying on anti-British campaign and popularising constructive activities. He had also formed a youth league. On 16 August, people were asked to attend a meeting at Kahanara Pokhari by beat of drum. They were advised to hold meetings in different villages and observe Hartal by taking out processions and to carry mashals while marching in procession to violate

114. Ibid.
and disobey the light restrictions. They were also advised not to pay rent, water tax, and chaukidari tax.\footnote{Ibid.} At Bhandari Pokhari, the postmaster as well as the local school teachers and rural police and the postal peon lent support to the action of the mob in different ways. For instance, the postmaster had gone on leave on the day of the occurrence of the incident. The Headmaster of the local school organised a drill of the pupils on that day and asked them to sing \textit{Bande Mataram}. Another teacher who was in charge of the post office on account of the leave of the postmaster was instructed by the headmaster to return to the school immediately keeping the postal 'cash' in the police station. Besides, the choukidar, who knew about the plan for the attack on the police station, had not divulged the informations to the authorities. The students of the schools were also instructed by the teachers not only to join the procession but also not to "listen" when they were called back. Besides, the dismantling of the bridge and the cutting of Akhupada telegraph lines were planned much in advance by the local leaders who were in touch with the underground leadership of the district.

Following this incident, the anti-British campaign picked up through the organisations of hartals and meetings. By September, Dhamnagar had emerged as another centre of intense campaign for various acts of "lawlessness". The S.P. with armed guard visited the area on 2 September.\footnote{WWCC, ACC-98, 15.9.42.} He was greeted by a 'crowd' of nearly 2,000 people who asked the police to leave the place and resign their jobs. The armed guard succeeded in dispersing the crowd with a show of force. The Chairman of Balasore Municipality resigned as a protest over the issue. The local leaders of Dhamnagar led
the people in burning the uniforms of chaukidars and their accounts papers.\textsuperscript{117} Under the leadership of Muralidhar Panda, some people 'extorted' and 'looted' the paddy of the Mahajans in the Dhamnagar area particularly in Srijanga (a well-known site for violent struggle during the salt satyagraha) and Katsahi villages. 350 maunds of paddy were "extorted" from a local landholder of Bhadrak on 18 September. The paddy was distributed among the people on the list prepared by "Congress agitatos".\textsuperscript{118} The police which went to Panda's village at Katsahi on 22 September were greeted with blowing of conches and the beat of drums. Nearly 3,000 villagers gathered including people from neighbouring villages. Panda asked the 'crowd' to attack the police force. The S.I. was assaulted, pushed, his hat were shirt were torn and his rifle snatched. Besides, the 'mob' encircled the police force from all sides. The police opened 35 rounds of fire in the killing of at least 6 and the injuring of another 5. The police then left the village. Muralidhar Panda, who accompanied the injured and the dead to Bhadrak hospital, the next day was arrested.\textsuperscript{119}

In Khaira, (Soro P.S.) the campaign for boycotting police and burning chaukidars' uniforms assumed serious proportions. On 22 September, a police party reached Tudugadia hat to arrest a local leader, Baidyanath Rout (a college student) and the principal organiser of the struggle in that area. But while Baidyanath was in police custody, nearly 500 villagers from the neighbouring villages of Chatra, Ranpur, Khunta, Dalang, Harekrishnapur, Khairadia and Panisiali, attacked the police with lathis and 'rescued' Baidyanath from police custody. The 'crowd' then proceeded

\textsuperscript{117} WWCC, ACC-62, D.M.'s Report to C.S. 23.9.42.
\textsuperscript{118} WWCC, ACC-30, SP's (Balasore) Report, 22.9.42.
\textsuperscript{119} HPD, D.M. (Balasore) to C.S., 6.10.42 (ACC-2202).
to loot a shop, where the S.I. was staying.\textsuperscript{120} Again on 25th, another police party went to Khairadiha to arrest the leaders connected with the incident. But nearly 300 to 400 people assembled immediately and started blowing conches. Responding to the blowing of conches, neighbouring villagers, armed with lathis, rushed to the spot. The crowd attempted to encircle the police. The police opened 9 rounds of fire. However, nobody was killed. The police felt helpless and withdrew without arresting any body. Probably the constables who opened fire did not deliberately aim properly.\textsuperscript{121} The police party again approached Kahairadhi on 28 September to make the arrests, with a new contingent of armed force brought from Cuttack. This time, the police conducted a house-to-house search to trace Baidyanath. Suspecting that he was hiding in a particular house, they broke open the house. Once the police entered the house, people set fire to the house from outside and raised an alarm to attack the police party. Upon this call, people with lathis, katuris, bows and arrows marched to encircle the police force. The police again opened fire, killing two persons and injuring one. As a result, the 'crowd' dispersed and the police returned to the camp in the village carrying the deadbodies. On the evening nearly 100 people gheraoed the police camp with the objective of taking away the dead bodies. This led to a few arrests being made by the police. But this only led to a begger crowd armed with lathis, katuri, bows and arrows and shouting that police should be killed. This led to another round of firing. This time a santhal tribal of Nilagiri was killed and 19 people

\textsuperscript{120} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{121} WWCC, ACC-62, 25.9.42; and HPD, F.No.521/1942, Issue of Communique regrding C.D.M. in Orissa (ACC-2399).
were arrested. 122

Towards the end of September, Eram (in Basudebpur P.S.) emerged as a militant pocket of popular mobilisation. We can get a glimpse of the pattern of developments in Eram from the report of Enquiry Committee which was instituted to probe the police firing which took place in Eram on 28 September. 123 The local leadership comprising Anirudha Mohanty, Kamalakanta Kar, and Gouranga Charan Mohanty were actively involved in mobilising people of Basudebpur. In fact, Anirudha Mohanty, who was the committed follower of Jagannath Das (ex-Congress M.L.A. who was arrested in the wake of Bhandaripokhari incident), had left for Basudebpur from Dhamnagar, leaving Muralidhar Panda there to lead the movement. Being a resident of Eram, Anirudha, made Eram the headquarters of the movement. He along with his co-workers organised a large number of meetings in various places of Basudebpur. They went round villages asking people to put pressure on chaukidars and daffadars to resign their jobs. They also advocated non-payment of taxes, seizure of paddy from the zamindars and social boycott of recalcitrants. In the meetings, people were told that Swaraja would be achieved in a week's time. They also further held out the hope that there would be no need to pay taxes under a swaraj Government and the paddy of the rich would be available to the poor.

In the whole of Basudebpur, villages grouped under their respective headquarters such as Eram, Sankharo-Padhuan and Suan-Sadeipada were relatively and the leadership was able to establish a virtual "parallel authority". It succeeded in establishing swaraj panchayats in 12 villages and

122. WWCC, ACC-62, 9.10.42; WWCC, ACC-98, 30.9.42.

enrolled nearly two hundred and fifty volunteers in a group called Marana Sena (Death Squad). They also proclaimed by beat of drums at the village hats and on the public roads that taxes were no more to be paid and fishermen could fish without taking a lease. Claims regarding the existence of a Congress jail at Eram were also made. The leadership enforced a highly organised system of intelligence. For instance, signals passed from village to village by conch-blowing meant the arrival of Government forces; and any move by police in the villages was immediately conveyed to the leaders. The underground leadership operating at the provincial level from Cuttack town sent circulars and directives and, in turn, got the regular feed back from Eram. So also, Mukunda Prasad Das (Ex-Speaker of Assembly), Bichitraranda Das (ex-MLA), Nanda Kishore Das, (ex-Deputy Speaker, resident of Soro, Balasore), Loknath Mishra (ex-Congress MLA) kept in touch with the developments at Eram through secret correspondence under pen-names. The linkage of the local leadership of Eram with the Congress Ashram at Bari was yet another feature.

We may also briefly touch upon the version of activities by the leadership at Eram as presented in a nationalist account. According to this account, the leadership at Eram comprised of Laxmi Narayan Padhi, Sapan Pradhan, Nisakar Dalei, Banchanidhi Agasti, Bhagirathi Pati and Arjun Biswal. The leadership in fact had organised four Karmee Sammelani (activists conference) at Iram, Suan, Baranda and

Bichitrand Das was called under the name of Swamijee and Dwivedi described under the name of Babajee.


Guda. The leadership organised picketings before Governments, meetings and processions and advocated boycott of educational institutions and also gave a call to the people to refuse taxes and rent. Mass meetings were organised in different places of Basudebpur. The leadership declared the area between Kansabausa and Gomei as an independent zone - far away from the control of British Government. The area was named as Swadhina Banchanidhi Chakala, after the famous nationalist poet and stage artist of Orissa-Banchanidhi Mohanty. However, this area, as pointed out above, remained an inaccessible tract during the monsoons, with all communications disrupted. Thus it provided an ideal political climate to sustain the hopes of having a 'parallel Government' structure with an administrative council, secretariat, courts and jails. In this "independent zone" all Government authority disappeared. A local activist Basu Tarai (Basudebpur) campaigned against the Government's restrictions on the use of boats. A 'Santi-Sena' was formed to mobilise people politically and raise subscriptions for the Congress and also to recruit volunteers.

The leadership stepped up its anti-British campaign in the whole of September not only through meetings, processions but also through various forms of direct actions. For example, a 'raid' was organised at the coastal watching stations on 20 September, its staff was assaulted by pickaxes and crow bars and driven out.\(^{127}\) Most of the people refused to pay chaukidari tax. On 17 September, Choukidars and daftdars were asked to hand over the uniforms and when they refused, they were abused as slaves by a "large crowd".\(^{128}\) The leadership particularly Anirudha Mohanty, Kamlakanta Kar and Gouranga Charan Mohanty exhorted people

127. WWCC, ACC No.59, 28.9.42; and RJEE, pp.1-2.

128. RJEE, pp.1-2.
in a mass meeting at Basudebpur (on 18 September) to attack the police station on 22 September. 129 Incidentally, the police force came to camp in Basudebpur on 18 September. On 19 September, three activists were arrested in Eram by the police, who could not however, arrest the leaders. But when the police was returning with the arrested, a 'large crowd' garlanded the arrested activists but otherwise the incident passed off without an encounter. 130 In fact, for at least three weeks, the Government control was reduced to naught in the areas of Swadhina Banchanidhi Chakala. Colonial authorities took a serious view of the developments at Eram. On 18 September, a police camp was opened in Basudebpur to deal with the situation in the area and particularly in Chakala. The police party faced stiff boycott by the boatmen while crossing the river to reach the village. 131 The police camped at the zamindar Radhakanta Padhi's residence. Once in the area, the police swung into action by seizing the Sudeipada Satyagraha ashram (one of the headquarters of anti-British struggle) and arrested a few prominent leaders like Banchanidhi Agasti and Arjuna Biswal. Protest meetings and hartals were organised in the hats of Basudebpur, Bedhada, Iram, Padampur and Brahmana Gaon. On 28 September another batch of armed contingent moved to Eram to arrest the principal leaders including Anirudha Mohanty and his associates and to prevent the holding of a meeting. The entry of police to the village was strongly opposed. In

129. Ibid.
The 'attack' did not, however, materialise on 22 September.

130. Ibid.
This probably suggests the Inspector was kidnapped by the people or deliberately absent himself.

this context, the Enquiry Committee report observed: "In the Milanpada, they encountered a crowd about 3,000 strong. It is clear from evidence that this crowd was in a very excited and determined mood. They were carrying lathis and were shouting Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai, Angreji Rajya Dhwans Heu, Bharat Mata Ki Jai. The Inspector was sent a few yards ahead by the DSP to order the crowd to disperse and return the kit and release the chaukidars and to warn them that if they did not obey, fire would be opened...." However, as the crowd continued to advance and encircle the force, police opened 142 rounds of fire in the near-total darkness of the evening for nearly half an hour. This led to the killing of 26 people, while 46 sustained serious injuries. The 26 people who were killed in the firing comprised villagers of at least 12 villages. The dead included both people of higher castes and lower castes as well as tribals.

Commenting on the nature of struggle in Eram, the report pointed out:

"The people who took part in the disturbances were mostly men of the landless class and belonged to the poorer sections of the public. They were attracted by the free distribution of paddy extorted from their more prosperous neighbours and there is no doubt that the ringleaders played freely upon their economic difficulties." It is fairly evident that the so-called 'parallel authority' which lasted in Eram for at best 3 weeks could only be possible in the overall context of the breakdown of authority in the beginning of the Quit India movement. The 'inaccessibility' of the region was another important factor, which went into the making of such a reality possible. However, once the

132. RJEE, p.2.
133. Ibid., p.2 and WWCC, ACC.62.
134. WWCC, ACC-62.
The list of dead included 3 tribals from Kumarpur village, 4 Scheduled Castes, 10 lower castes and 9 higher castes. The dead also included a woman Pari Bewa (Eram).
135. RJEE, pp.4-6.
colonial crack down began, the 'parallel authority' hardly withstood it. The killing of many helped to demobilise the peasantry and the people at large by dampening the morale of the people. In the context of the long-term hegemonic war (as the Indian national struggle was), an attempt to build up a mass movement based on violence, could have only helped the colonial authorities to break the movement by more effective violence. And in that situation, the popular struggle instead of scoring a victory in terms of extending its hegemonic space only loses it and allows the colonial state to assert its own concentrated hegemony.

We have also references to the formation of a "National Government" in the Gurpal area of Balasore. 136 Here also, a strong local level campaign existed to boycott police and to force the rural police to resign. In the meeting organised in this area during September/October, people were advised to paralyse the existing administration by refusing to pay taxes. However, this was part of the overall campaign, (existing in many parts of the district during September/October) which advised people to non-co-operate with "all forms of law and order" and not to pay chaukidari taxes and other Government revenues. 137

We also see various attempts to destroy colonial symbols and properties in other parts of the district during September. In Sora, the offices of the sub-registrar and Sub-Divisional Officer, were attacked and documents and records torn up. Students entered the room of the Deputy Magistrate, and after 'garlanding' him they asked him to resign and tore up some of the records. 138 In October, Balasore was swept

136. WWCC, ACC-30, S.P.'s (Balasore) Report, 8.10.42. However, we do not have much details on this specific development.
137. WWCC, ACC-30, 8.10.42.
138. WWCC, ACC-98.
over by a severe cyclone. This in fact, aggravated the misery of the people of the district who had not yet recovered from the spell of successive floods in the preceding Monsoon. As a result, shortages, starvations increased and nearly 2000 people rendered homeless in the whole of the district. In this context, we again come up with evidence of looting of rice mill in Lakhmannath Road (Jallesore P.S.). Police action led to the death of one person.\textsuperscript{139}

The leader Atal Bihari Mohanty had in fact, associated himself with the "revolutionary suspects" of Calcutta like Mahendra Nath Das, Harendra Nath Ghose, Kishori Mohan Ghose, Satish Chandra Das and Kalipada Das right since 1930.\textsuperscript{140}

An interesting feature of the movement in Balasore was the increasing participation of teachers and doctors of various local boards in the struggle.\textsuperscript{141} They lent all sorts of support to the leadership in stepping up the struggle. This is at least observed very clearly in the Lakhmannath area, where many doctors became active associates of Atala Mohanty.

At Bhandaripokhari a lady Congress activist, Kumbharia tried to reoccupy the already seized Congress ashram of Bhandaripokhari by entering to the Ashram it forcibly. She was arrested. So also, an attempt was made to burn down the sub-post office of Balasore town.\textsuperscript{142}

In the context of the struggle assuming violent proportions and resulting in massive deaths of people in different parts of the district, the Congress leadership, organised a conference of activists around December.\textsuperscript{143} In the meeting,


\textsuperscript{140} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{141} WWCC, ACC-61, 29.10.42.

\textsuperscript{142} WWCC, ACC-98.

\textsuperscript{143} HPD, Congress Meeting at Khaira, 28.12.42, ACC-2076.
held at Khaira, 150 activists from 20 villages participated. Nilambar Das who presided over the meeting, emphasised the need to enrol volunteers for Santi-Sena to guard the villages. He warned the zamindars/rich that they would be ruined if they failed to help the poor neighbours during the crisis. Simultaneously, he advised the "poor" to protect the "rich" when they were faced with any danger of lawlessness. He then went on to stress the need for constructive work. He requested the villagers to send some men for khadi work training at Soro and advised the collection of paddy for maintaining the Soro centre. In response to his appeal, twenty people were named by villagers for khadi work. He also asked the volunteers to monitor law and order of the villages. This position by the Congress leadership was meant to re-inspire the people and provide a new thrust to the movement which had declined after the massive crackdown by the colonial administration.

In any case, by the end of September, and particularly after the Eram incident, the movement on the whole, seemed to peter out except sporadic incidents in different parts of the district.

Before winding up our survey on 1942 struggle in Balasore district, let us briefly look at the local leadership's campaign and organisation for the movement. As noted earlier, the Congress activists mostly withdrew to the rural areas around August to carry on the movement and to avoid arrest. The "Congress bulletin" and 'True new' were posted at selected places in Bhadrak, right since the third week of August.\textsuperscript{144} 'Congress bulletins' prepared in the light of news "heard" from Tokyo were drafted and circulated in October. Such bulletins advocated the use of violence and

\textsuperscript{144} WWCC (ACC-30), S.P.'s (Balasore) Report, 22.8.42.
We also come across a pamphlet detailing Congress programme, distributed by the Chandabali M.E. School to the public in August. The pamphlet carried instructions to the people; viz. (a) to plunder salt stocks, (b) not to furnish any information to government servants, (c) no servants to work under the government officials, (d) not to supply boat, motor and other conveyance, (e) to compel merchants not to withhold the supply of food stuffs to Government servants, (f) to induce government servants to resign their jobs, (g) to stop communication, (h) to observe hartal in factories, mills and close down schools and college, (i) to cut telegraph lines, to break and loot post boxes, to stop communication of postal papers, (j) to keep food stuffs in villages and to form swaraj panchayats.

By September, the struggle was mostly carried on by the local leaders and often supported by the underground Congress organisation. In fact, several "villages appeared in the role of leaders of groups of villages". In the rural areas, this leadership evolved its own methods of mobilisation of the people. One of the novel methods of resistance to the police, administration and officials which got evolved was the blowing of conches and beating of drums at the approach of the government forces in the villages. This method was meant to signal the people of the nearby villages to group together with "any weapons" they possessed to resist the entry of the police and officials. Side by side, the campaign was on to boycott rural police and mobilise people to "ignore government" in reporting criminal cases. People were advised to take to Swaraj Panchayats to iron out their differences. In Balasore district there were fewer

145. WWCC (ACC-30), S.P.'s (Balasore) Report, 8.10.42.
146. WWCC (ACC-30), S.P.'s (Balasore) Report, 22.8.42.
147. WWCC (ACC-30), S.P.'s (Balasore) Report, 15.9.42.
cases of the burning of police station and post offices compared to other districts. The reason was that the "agitators" did not endorse such plans as they thought the buildings like post offices and police stations would be useful to "Congress bodies" in future (probably after the "last struggle"!)

Again local level pamphlets, addressed to police and jail officials, were reported. Such pamphlets urged them to disobey their officers on the issue of taking action against political agitators. In Jalleswar, an effigy of the police was burnt and, before burning it, people slapped it and twisted its ears - a symbolic expression of popular anger against colonial authorities. In response to the brutal killing of people through police firings in different parts of the district during September, lawyers and the local leaders came out in open condemnation of the repressive policy of the Government. Nanda Kishore Das (Ex-Deputy Speaker during the Congress Ministry) circulated pamphlets appealing to the Government officials to express their disapproval of the government measures by refusing to become parties to these measures. Balasore District Board denounced the repression of the district police and administration. We have earlier indicated how the movement came to be increasingly supported by doctors and teachers.

What is equally important, the campaign regarding no tax and rent picked up seriously in September. People particularly in Bhadrak, Dhamnagar, Eram, Bhograi and Jalleswar areas refused to pay chaukidari tax as a result of the campaign. As noticed earlier, attempts at looting of rice mills and extortion of paddy from zamindars formed

149. Ibid.
150. WWCC, ACC-30, Dt.2.10.42.
another significant feature of the movement in the district, though only for a short while. There was also a certain violent orientation of the movement in the district. This was partly also due to the campaign through pamphlets right since the third week of August. For example, we come across a pamphlet titled 'Do or Die' circulated in Balasore. 151 The pamphlet supposedly originating from a "Bengal revolutionary" was probably re-drafted by the local level underground leadership of North Balasore. The inflammatory pamphlet urged:

Mahatma Gandhi started this movement and dared to bring a revolution depending entirely on you. This is the golden opportunity for you. Another important factor is that in spite of proper payment, paddy, rice, dal, oil and other such commodities are not available and for this all are much excited. If you incite them against the British they will be yours and join you. They will not be afraid of death. Hold meetings daily in every village and in every hamlet and excite the mass to the extreme as a result of which the blood in them will boil simultaneously, they will be thirsty for British blood. Let Hindus/Mohammedans, males and females all take to this work. Try your best to persuade the police, the Indian Army, the A.R.P., coolies and the Railway employees to go on strike. The Rice mills and Mission Technical School should be closed and looted. I enumerate below the various ways which we should adopt to cause loss: following the non-violent principles of Mr. Gandhi: (1) to destroy the Railway lines, (2) burn the stations and loot them, (3) loot the goods trains and throw away the things carried in them, (4) to burn and loot post offices, courts, residences of the Europeans and the Electric Power Houses, (5) churches to be demolished and attempts to be made to kill the Europeans at first sight. First we will tamper the railway communications so that the movement of troops and sending of arms and ammunitions would not be possible. Cause extensive damage to the O.T. Road making its repair impossible so that no conveyance can move. We have issued another true and secret bulletin. It is mentioned in that Japanese have bombed Madras and Bombay at mid-day. Again Japanese are helping the provinces of Madras, Bombay, U.P. and C.P. by supplying weapons through their submarines and have said, "Try your best, we are at your back." The Indian Congress and Congress leaders now in Japan have said that, "we will finish everything by 15 September." So I say be not afraid of death or jail and try to keep up the prestige of the Congress. If this movement ends in failure, the whole world will laugh and spit at us. On Monday, another bulletin was issued. It says poison has been administered to Jawaharlal with his food and his dear daughter has been shot dead. The Britishers are killing the leaders of our country and you are still indifferent. Take the vow of "To Do or Die" and make strenuous efforts to plunge yourself in the blood of foreigners. Vengeance.... The Britishers kept you so long as tame insignificant dogs. Now make them forget that."

However, the intensity of the movement tended to slow down around October due to the massive arrest of local leaders as well as the seizure of the underground organisation. The political prisoners in the jail attempted to guide the movement by sending out instructions. 152

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151. WWCC (ACC-57).
"Do or Die" (pamphlet, undated, but sent from Calcutta, issued by Harlal Bandhan, Kansijora Lane, Calcutta).

152. WWCC, Acc-30.
The anti-feudal trend was also evident in Konika estate. Here, peasants under the leadership of Chakradhar Behera, a Congress MLA, looted the houses of Mahajans. They "forcibly" took away cattle, ploughs, agricultural implements from the fields, even "uprooted" and threw the paddy plants and seedlings into the river. They carried on to carry away everything of value including rice and paddy from the houses of Mahajans.

In fact, the report of Sub-Deputy Magistrate who conducted an enquiry into the "lawlessness and disorder" in Chandabali area, makes very interesting reading. Holding Chakradhar Behera, responsible for the lawlessness in Chandabali area, the report noted:

"... He (Chakradhar Behera) fought for the general cause, or at least, pretends to do so and he has thereby commanded the respect and confidence of the masses. His election to the Legislative Assembly has added another feather to his cap.... He does not stir out from his house, does not hold meetings in public places, nor does he encourage people to burn police station or to do similar acts of violence against Government. But, he has successfully dissuaded people from coming to the police or to the law courts of Kanika Raja for redress of any grievances. People run to him for settling disputes. He imposes fines and realises them. Things have come to such a state that 50 to 60 people gather at his place at Haldia daily and practically he acts as the ruler. When the number of cases get heavy, he engages some Bhadraloks to try a few of them; and if the parties are still dissatisfied they come to him again for a retrial; but from his decisions, there can be no appeal. If he wishes to raise any subscription, he does it. If anybody does not abide by his decisions, refuses to pay fines or subscriptions, challenges his authority, connivance against him, deposes in any case against him, or any person in whom he is interested, he has his own way of dealing with him."

The report also further pointed out that Chakradhar Behera "plundered" the property of the person (who opposed him) in broad daylight, or initiated social boycott on him whereby services of washerman, barbers and others were denied to him. Moreover, his field with standing crops could be damaged by driving a herd of buffaloes into it; his cattle if any, impounded with the help of "goondas"; and his "plough-

153. HPD, Petition by Banamali Khilan of Vinipur and others against Chakradhar Behera (M.L.A.), ACC-2403. The petition referred to an incident on 31 August when the houses at Vinipur village were looted.

ing of fields" obstructed. Thus, the report summed up that: "willingly or otherwise, all are under his thumb". Other reports also suggest that an attempt towards running an almost parallel Government in Kanika area and the virtual breakdown of authority therein. 155

KORAPUT

Biswa Roy who attended the AICC session in Bombay had sent the Congress bulletins and Gandhi's message to the DCC leadership of Koraput by the second week of August. The message was widely circulated in the whole of the district by the leaders and the message was immediately grasped and practised. However, all the three top leaders of the district were put under D.I.R., along with the seizure of all Congress organisations.

The wave of struggle was signalled when two boys carrying Congress flags marched the streets of Jeypore, reading out the Gandhi's message sent from Bombay. 156 People were goaded to action when the leaders interpreted the Congress message as to mean that 'swaraj' had already been attained and British were no more ruling and nobody should just sit down until Gandhi was released from the jail. With the seizure of Congress offices and arrest of leaders, the Congress activists immediately slipped into the interior pockets. Two of the local level leaders like Phagunu Bhadra and Dhana Disari organised many meetings in the villages of Nowrangpur area. 157 Dhana Disari explained to the people in the meetings organised in Pharasaguda and Kodinga that:

*British Government has ceased to exist from now. Gandhi Sarkar will now be formed. You will

155. HPD, Petition by Circle Officer, Matto, 18.9.42; Petition by Tahsildar, Ghanteswar, 14.9.42, Reports by D.M., Baleswar, 17.11.42, and 20.12.42, ACC-2401.

156. WWCC, ACC-30, 21.8.42.


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They also asked the audience at Kodinga and Pharsaguda meetings to feed Congress workers. In some of the meetings in the areas, they addressed the crowd by holding guns and spears.

The movement in a way took off, alongwith the protest against the seizure of Congress office. On 13 August, when Congress office was seized by the police at Nawrangpur, the President of the unit, G. Aunajirao declared to the people who had assembled there that `swaraj' had been achieved right since 9 August with the arrest of Gandhi. In hastily arranged meeting in the nearby public road, he advised people not to pay revenue to the Government nor rent to the Jeypore estate. This was followed by a procession with nearly 150 people participating. The enthusiastic 'crowd' marched through the streets, shouting Congress slogans and asking people to disobey British Government and their officers.158 But soon after, the message of the movement sought to be propagated in the village shandies (markets), by picketing and holding meetings. Nilakantha Patra, a member of Koraput D.C.C.; and President of Ghumsar (Ganjam) Primary Congress Committee advised the people in Boipariguda P.S. to use shandies as centres for preaching Civil Disobedience. He exhorted to a gathering of people on 14 August that: "Go to the shandies and tell the people that the sarkar has gone and that they should not pay any sort of tax or rent to the authorities". As per his advice, a group of Congress activists moved on to the shandies at Tharaput village the next day, and preached Civil Disobedience.159

In Nandapur, nearly 700 "Congress workers" under the


leadership of Bhagban Kimudu organised a meeting near the P.W.D. Inspection Bungalow on 14 August. The police arrested the leaders, and took them to the police station. But, the 'crowd' followed them. On the way, the people attacked the arrack (liquor) shop, its depot, destroyed the liquor, and set fire to the records of the shop. This was followed by an attack on the cattle pound, situated nearby. They destroyed the doors and furniture of the cattle pound and released the impounded ram. 160

On 15 August, the Pukili hat 161 (Pottangi) was attacked by a group of "Congress workers" (nearly 100). They came in a procession, carrying congress flags and lathis. Entering the shandy, they shouted: Mahatma Gandhi ki jai, Congress ki jai, Swadhinata miligala, kehi loka govt. ku sistu diana, Raja ku sistu Diana, Govt. Bhangigala, Ae sarkar Bandar bala hoigala [Victory to Gandhi, congress; we have achieved swaraj; Don't pay rent to the govt; Don't pay rent to the Raja/Mahajans; the Govt. is gone; This Govt. is worth the hair of the private organ of the body expressed in the obscene Oriya version)]. Slogans like kehi hata panu diana; yara police ku darana (let body pay hat taxes; Don't be afraid of the police). Followed by these slogan-shouting, the 'crowd' then instructed all shop keepers to close down their shops and leave the shandy. The shopkeepers who refused to close down the shops were pushed, chased out of the shandy by the processionists, wielding lathis. The grocery and eatery shops were attacked, taking away coconuts and eating away sweets. A pottery shop was 'looted' of the cash worth Rs.2/- The kerosine oil kept for sale in the hat was


used to burn down mill made clothes. Importantly, the money and receipt books of one sahukar (moneylender) who was also the shandy contractor, was taken possession of under the show of force. On 16 August Pukili shandy was also attacked. In the same evening, the workers convened a meeting and decided to destroy the Pattangi police thana, and Pukli Raj palace shortly. In the meanwhile, the Pattangi taluk office had already been attacked and destroyed on 16 Aug. Here, under the leadership of Malu Samanta, Asanda Kartik, Dhanu Santara, Hantal Jaybandhu, K. Boloram, Mongolu and Pangi Asu (all members of Koraput DCC) held a meeting near the Taluk office. Nearly 1000 people, coming from different parts of Pattangi, and carrying congress flags and lathis had assembled for the meeting. The objective of the meeting was to launch an attack on the nearby police station and the taluk office. The police who persuaded the crowd to disperse failed, as people refused to go away. Then the police arrested 6 of the leaders but only to find that more people in large groups joining the gathering. And also, the crowd insisted that they should be arrested along with the leaders. Thus when a group of people were detained by the police and kept at a distance from the swelling crowd and subsequently shifted to a more spacious ground in front of the taluk office under armed custody; another group of people tried to join the arrested crowd. They blocked the entrance of the police station and prepared to settle down for the night at the place. Two of the leaders, who were not yet arrested (Malu Samanta and Asanda Kartik) exhorted these people that: "Bharat is now independent, we must release Mahatma Gandhi at any cost from jail. The Government is removed in Bombay and Allahabad. Don't pay Sistu (land revenue) any more". Thereupon, the people burst into the Taluk office, damaging

162. HPD, Spl. Report 16/42, Case No.33, ACC-2037; WWCC, ACC-30, 29.8.42.
it; violently. This was however, followed by a lathi charge. Some of the people despite injuries, insisted on remaining at the spot. What is important to observe is that the people offered themselves to be arrested en masse and police had to disperse them by undertaking lathi charge. On 17 Aug., nearly 200 "Congressmen" again assembled at semibiliguda revenue rest shed.

The attack on colonial symbols co-existed with the attack on shandies. For instance, a group of people returning from Jeypore (who had gone to attend a meeting at Tardiput on 17 August and where the 'Congress policy' regarding shandies were announced by one Gora Dalapati) got divided into two groups. A group led by Gopi Kirsani, Mangala Kirsani, Kodria Mangala, Udukudia Pambia and Kona Khoda etc. took charge of the attack on shandies in Lambadaput - Gunai-pada - Badigoda muth (Padwa region); and the other group under Gora Dalpati entrusted with the attack on Redangi shandy. Thus, on 18 August the former group, attacked the Gunaipada Shandy. Carrying flags and sticks and shouting slogans saying victory to Gandhi, they first of all beat and chased the constable and the shandy contractor, Mangala Ratan. The contractor who was collecting the hat fees by issuing stamped receipts was mobbed and asked as to how he could dare disobey the mandate of the congress. His receipt books were snatched away. Then the "crowd" asked the people not to pay shandy tolls as Independence had been achieved. Ther., they proceeded to attack shops selling mill cloth and yarn and used the kerosine stored in the shops to burn down the articles. This was followed by a loot of the eatery shops. One more interesting feature was that the tribals also mercilessly assaulted the dombs (the low caste) present in the hat, saying that these people were police-informers.

After attacking and looting the shandies, the crowd

then instantly decided in a meeting that they would visit the nearby villages and 'extort' rice and rations from the rich and hold a feast.\textsuperscript{164} Thereupon they went to Deolpara and raised subscription of rice, dal and plantain from a 'rich' man there named Pangiguru and organised the party. They also damaged the roads, removed the mile stones in Badigoda area. This extortion/raising of subscription continued for next couple of days till 20 August. Finally, when they were hunted down by the police, the group crossed over to Madras region, crossing the border across Machkund river. Out of the twenty tribals who were mostly involved in organising these acts 3 belonged to Mathili area and the rest to Padwa region. They were backed, guided by the DCC leaders, operating from underground in Jeypore.

On 20 August nearly two hundred khonds under the leadership of Lima Santa attempted to raid the police station at Lachhipur.\textsuperscript{165} The crowd proclaimed that Lachhipur police station was abolished from that day. They raised slogans saying \textit{British Rajatwa Uttigala, Congress Rajatwa Hoigala} (British Government is gone and Congress Government is established). Lima also instructed the people not to go to police station to report anything, nor to obey Samasthanam and forest officials. He further stated that the dongers (hill forest) should be cut off and govt. officials would go away, and that no rent be paid. The crowd present there threatened the officials with foul language. They openly asked the Thana officer to resign and leave the Thana building to their occupation. Similar incident occurred in Dasmanthpur P.S. when a large 'mob' assembled at the thana on 18 August and demanded that the thana be handed over to

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item 164. \textit{Ibid.}
  \item 165. \textit{HPD, Spl. Report, 12/42, case no.43, ACC-2240; HPD, Report of Koraput Magistrate, 19.9.42, ACC-2477.}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
them. So also the excise shops, courts and Government institutions in the Gunpur area were picketed.166

Again on the same day, the Padwa shandy was approached by a huge group of congressmen. Their intention was to conduct raid on the police station, and attack the arrack shops as well as the cattle pound. The crowd moved into the Thana in many batches. They were determined to either "die or demolish" the police stations. However, the police made these batches sit in the ground under the threat of guns and seized their Gandhi caps and Congress flags and sticks. The police advised the mob to represent their grievances in a peaceful manner, so that their grievances would be looked into by the authorities. Upon this, the crowd stood up and complained that shandy taxes on headloads should be exempted and they should be permitted to take up podu cultivation.167

Attacks on wooden road bridges and sleepers which were supplied by a British company (H. Dear and Co.) for the district were taken up in many parts. The labourers who were engaged in the company for sawing work were threatened, and the sleepers lying in the company's depot were damaged.168 In fact, in Dabugam, Mydalpur and Papadahandi areas, the campaign for destruction of reserved forest picked up. And sleepers and wooden bridges worth Rs. 800/- were destroyed on the Ampani ghat (Koraput-Kalahandi border).169

Apart from Nawrangpur, Mathili remained another pocket of intense mobilisation during the Quit India struggle. Lakhman Naik as discussed earlier, had been very active in the area right since 1938 preaching congress ideology and

166. WWCC, ACC-30, 21.8.42.
167. History of Freedom Movement Papers, (hereafter, HFM), F.No.46/3, NAI.
168. Ibid.
169. WWCC, ACC-30, 21.8.42.
thus mobilising the tribals. After 16 August, he had in fact sneaked into Ghumar, a village in the interior to avoid arrest by police. He stayed with his friend Nilakantha Patro (a local congress leader of the area) at Ghumar.\textsuperscript{170} It seems probable that under Laxman's leadership a large crowd coming from different parts of Keraput had assembled at Jeypore for a meeting. After the meeting, warrant was issued against Lakhman. Let us here, briefly chart out the developments obtaining in Mathili area.\textsuperscript{171} On 16 August, the opium shop at Badhigar (owned by Sadasiva Choudhury) was approached by the "Congress" activists. They demanded that the opium stock should be handed over to them or else they would 'loot' the shop. These activities included villagers of both Mathili and Padwa areas. As usual, they were carrying sticks and Congress flags. The owner of the shop, under pressure of such threat gave away opium (nearly ten tolas) along with his weights and measure. The seized opium immediately afterwards, were distributed among the crowd. This supposed action was meant to protest against the government's policy of collecting revenue from excise articles. Then the crowd proceeded to the house of one Kesabo Patro, the Mustajar of Badhigar. Patro had gained the notoriety in popular perception of being very repressive so far as collection of cist (on behalf of Jeypore estate) from the local ryots was concerned. The 'crowd' who included dominantly the ryots of Patro thought it the right opportunity to threaten him. However, Patro was away at Govindapally (a neighbouring village) to attend to his property matters. The crowd had to return disappointed. But, again marched on to Khogan (3 miles off Badhigar). At Khogan, they picketed


\textsuperscript{171} The entire narrative on the developments at Mathili is based on the File on Laxman Naik, available at Mathili Police Station, Koraput.
the liquor shop of Padma Bisoi and forced him to close down the shop.\textsuperscript{172} They even removed the sign board of the shop. The procession of the `crowd' culminated in Badhigar \textit{hat}. In the \textit{hat} again, they destroyed some of the articles, kept for sale.

On 17 August, we however notice, "Congress workers" under Lakhman Naiko's leadership conducted an `attack' on liquor shop at Kongrabeda.\textsuperscript{173} They destroyed the liquor jars as well as the liquor. This was followed by a similar attack on the liquor shop at Kuntipalli on the same day. Here also, the jars containing fermented \textit{mohwa} and the distillation materials were destroyed. The people who followed Lakhman Naiko and conducted the attack on liquor shops included both tribals and non-tribals (like Gaudas) and they carried sticks and Congress flags. On 18 August, another `raid' on liquor shop was conducted at Sindhabeda.\textsuperscript{174} Followed by this, the opium shop at Salimi (8 miles away from Sindhabeda) was attacked. Interestingly, Lakhman Naiko had entrusted the responsibility of the raid at Salimi to one of his deputies named Padlam Naiko. Padlom Naiko led his `party of soldiers' to Salimi opium shop owned by one S. Chandrasekhar Pattnaik. The `crowd' then destroyed the 38 tolas of opium. Another person Bhimo Naiko, tore up the accounts book of the shop. This led to a fight between the owner of the shop and Bhima. We equally come across a reference regarding an attack on liquor shop at Pushapalli under the leadership of Moti Singh (the Naiko of Tonguguda, Malkangiri) on 19 August. Here the Sahukar, Dayanidhi was instructed to close down his shop for ever, as the British rule was no more and \textit{swaraj} had been established which meant

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{172} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{173} \textit{Ibid.}
\item \textsuperscript{174} \textit{Ibid.}
\end{itemize}
that no tax and revenue would be paid. The 'crowd' then moved on to destroy the distillation materials and liquor jars. The cash box of the shop was also taken away. Dayanidhi who tried to resist the attempt was thrown out by Moti Singh. Moti Singh had enrolled himself as a Congress member in 1940 and had raised himself to the status of a local leader in Tonguguda. He was, in fact, known to the people of Tonguguda as Lal Raja. It seems that Lakhman Naiko had a discussion with the Lal Raja at the Damapalli Shandy on 19 August and he was asked to conduct the 'attack' on liquor shop at Pushpalli.

On 23 August, at Nuagaon, (Mathili P.S.) a 'Congress crowd' of 200 demanded food from Gangadhar Guru of Nuagaon. Guru had a 'food store' there. The 'crowd' threatened Guru that his store would be burnt down, if he failed to provide them food. Guru had to concede to the demand. Guru complained to the police that his valuables worth Rs.200/- had been taken away by the "intruders". One also comes across a reference to an order served by 'Congressmen' to a person at Malipara (Nuagaon) to make arrangements of food for two hundred 'Congressmen'. The person to whom the 'chit' was sent was a Mali by caste and a richman of the locality. Nearly 150 people attended the feast. The gathering which included both tribals and non-tribals (incidentally 5 out of the 10 leaders leading the people, were Mali by caste) insisted that the host should join them in the feast. But as the host hesitated to join them on grounds of caste, the gathering threatened "to break the caste barrier".

On 21st August, at Mathili nearly 1000 people, carrying lathis and shouting slogans went round in a procession under
the leadership of Lakhman Naik. They 'raided' the opium shop and destroyed the opium. Then, they marched into the Revenue Inspector's office and destroyed the furniture there. And finally, they moved on to the police station. But being obstructed by the police, they sang Ramdhun and raised the slogans saying that government was no more and they would take possession of the police station. However they came back to the nearby Shandy, to hold a meeting and chalk out a plan of action. In the hat, a "procession with music" was organised followed by a speech of Lakhman Naiko. He exhorted the audience that: "we are warriors. The British Government is gone and Mahatma Gandhi is our king. Maharaj of Jeypore is dead. Proceed on. Let us first loot and burn the police station. Let's kill the government officials and then proceed to Malkangiri and loot the treasury". The 'crowd' threatened the agent of shandy contractor of the hat and forbade him to raise hat tax by issuing tickets to the sellers. The crowd also resolved to 'loot' the Samasthanam office and destroy its records. As per the decision, the 'crowd' again came back to the Thana shouting that they were warriors and would 'murder' all government servants and burn the Thana. Thereupon, they assaulted the police, magistrate, excise sub-inspector, local compounding. A forest guard of Jeypore estate was surrounded and he was beaten to death. Nearly 15 officials sustained injuries. This situation led to 18 rounds of police firing. The mob though dispersed after the firing, did not appear to be very panicky due to the firing. However, 4 people were killed and 3 injured in the firing. The huge crowd was determined to attack all the government offices as well as the office


of the Jeypore Estate located in Mathili. The other interesting feature was that many willingly courted arrest, thus overcrowding the jails.

It is crucial to observe that the official version of the incident characterised the gathering crowd as a "violent mob" intending to "kill officials" and "burn" the police station and loot the treasury. Besides it also inserted "violent" speech to the mouth of Lakhman Naiko, which was highly improbable. Rather the 'crowd' under Lakhman's guidance remained peaceful. The crowd however wanted to defy the orders of authority by holding a meeting and hoist the Congress flag in the police station as a symbol of defiance and to court arrest. In fact, many willingly courted arrest and overcrowded the jail. Besides, it was the police firing that killed Ramayya, the forest guard and another 10 demonstrators. Even, Lakhman fell down in a nearby drain and lay unconscious, receiving bayonet-injury. Ramaiya also fell down in the same drain. The Mathili incident had in fact, sent panicky signals to the authorities. In fact, a brutal repression was inaugurated hereafter to crush the movement. The apprehensions of the authorities emerged more from the fact that Mathili had turned out to be the pocket of intense mobilisation. And it had naturally, influenced other pockets of Malkangiri and Jeypore Taluk (like Ambaguda and Udoyogiri). Such activities in Mathili were also expected to whip up the enthusiasm of the Bondas (a war-like tribe).

178. This version of the incident is immensely testified by the following sources. Balabhadra Pujari, Saheed Bira Laxman Naik (Oriya, Bhubaneswar), p.20; Nityananda Das, op. cit., p.25. Sanganna, op. cit., p.252. Radhakrishna Biswasroi, Orissa Rajniti Ebon Eka Nua Pradeshara Parikalpana (Oriya, 1973), p.25-28. Also interviews with Man Mohan Choudhry (Gandhian) and Sarat Patnaik (Communist).

179. ibid.
In the Nowrangpur sub-division, the pattern of mobilisation was intensely militant and it climaxed towards the end of August with police firing, killing as many as 15 and injuring many more. Let's look at the development briefly. The Congress bulletins sent from Bombay reached Nowrangpur in the early weeks of August. The local leadership secretly ensured the wide circulation of the bulletins in the interiors explaining to the people that there was no government anymore; tax, rent should be refused and these would only be paid if Mr. Gandhi became the ruler. Further people were instructed to damage highway bridges, cut telegraph wires, destroy reserve forests, set fire to police thanas, government buildings and that people should not fear to die while carrying on such activities.

The important leader of the area Sadasiva Tripathy was arrested on 11 August, followed by seizure of Congress office on 13 August. However, new local leadership under Gundabrola Amjirao started teaching the meaning of the leaflets to the tribals in the villages and thus helped generate a mentality of unrest. Meetings were organised and the Congress messages were read and explained to the people. Plans were chalked out as to how to demolish the Thana and cut down the reserved forests. A special emphasis was put on damaging bridges and telegraph wires, to disrupt communications so that any attack could be successfully materialized without risking arrests by the police. On 14/16 August, slippers of Messrs H. Deer and Company stored at Bkamba, Chargam, Benugada Chacheraguda were damaged by a group under the leadership of Sonu Majhi. On 17 August, a threat to damage the Nowrangpur P.S. was also held out. On the same day another group under Mira Ghori damaged the

180. HPD, Spl. Report 70/42, ACC-2369; Papadahondi firing. The entire developments in the Nowrangpur area are based on the above report.
Khadakajodi bridge linking Koraput-Kalahandi. On 17/19 August, an attempt was made on Maidalpur thana. However, the bridges at Maidalpur and Jatabal were damaged. Similarly, an attack on Dasugaon was planned. Trees of Taragan, Chikili forests were massively felled. A proposal was mooted to damage the bridge near Papadahandi on 19 August. On 21 August, in a meeting organised at Semola village, a scheme for destroying Maidalpur thana was chalked out. However, all such efforts to attack the thanas could not materialise due to heavy police arrangements. Again on 23 August, the lorry of Mr. Smart was attacked but he escaped by firing in the air. It is really important to note that, the leaders could mobilise the tribals in the interior by undertaking a massive campaign based on leaflets, bearing the signature of Gandhi. Thus not a single day passed without having one or the other form of activities being organised.

In this state of affairs, a plan had already been mooted to demolish the Papadhandi P.S. on 24 August. Nearly 4 to 5 thousand people came in a procession to the Papadhandi Thana. They were carrying lathis, axes, spears, bows and arrows and guns. The persuasion of the police to desist from marching on to the Thana failed. Rather the 'crowd' surrounded the police and started assaulting them severely. Constable was hit with an axe and the 'mob' almost went mad in attempting to kill the police. They shouted Hana, Mara, lachha (kill, beat and whip). The mob had almost overwhelmed the police force. This led to police firing killing at least 15 and injuring as many as 100. In connection with the incident, 149 people were arrested. That such a huge gathering could be possible on the day of

181. Ibid.
182. Ibid.
the incident goes to prove that the leaders had mobilised the tribals to a great extent. In fact, with the arrest of Sadasiva Tripathy and G. Amaji Rao (President Nowrangpur Primary Congress Committee), the mantle of leadership was taken up by one Lakshmi Chandra Das (Member, Primary Congress Committee) and he kept on sending the Congress bulletins to Siba Santa and Madhab Padhani for wider circulation in the interiors of Nowrangpur. Even Lakshmi Chandra Das had been to Dabugaon on 20 August to 'broadcast' the plan of attack. Under Madhab Padhani's overall leadership massive felling of sal trees occurred in Ummekote-Jeypore region. The intensity of militancy had reached a high peak by the end of August.

After Papadhandi incident, the administration had to seize all the muzzle loading guns and also the gun powder from the licensed shops in a bid to prevent violent attacks on police and officials. The A.P.R. flag marches were also conducted to terrorise the people of the area. A government scheme was launched to carry out propaganda in order to counter the work of "Congress" agitators. Besides, troops were requisitioned from the adjoining state of Bastar to strengthen the police deployment in the district. Apart from arresting numerous local level leaders, (including women), canings and rapes were practiced to terrorise people and crush the movement. And certainly in its bid to awe the people, Lakhman Naiko was also finally hanged by the authorities on 29 March 1943, after a hastily conducted trial.

183. For details on Government measures adopted to repress the movement refer: WWCC, ACC-30, 24.8.42/3.9.42; Mahatab (ed.), Vol.IV, op. cit., p.90; Biswasroi, op. cit., p.26; Sahai, op. cit., p.347; Sahai mentions how 12 women were raped, and 3 people tied in the trees mercilessly beaten. Besides, canings at a large scale were resorted to apart from 24 cases of lathi charges. The other forms of punishment such as the confiscation of property and imposition of fines were also adopted profusely.
Besides, 30 people got life imprisonment in connection with Mathili incident. However, the militant phase of the movement fizzled out completely after Mathili and Papadahandi incident and in the context of a massive crack down resorted to by the authorities to break the movement. Yet, sporadic events took place in the shape of attempts to burn down schools at Nowrangpur and Jeypore areas in September. In October it seems, there was 'tension' in the Kujindri village of Gunpur and in connection with the incident 16 savara men and women were arrested.184 And again in December, a large band of savaras cut down unripe paddy which led to the arrest of one Saura Pattnaik. In any case, by September, the movement had slowed down and in October, it was almost non-existent.

After surveying the developments at Koraput, what is really important is to locate the nature and composition of so-called "crowds", an oft-repeated category, used by the colonial authorities. The people arrested185 in connection with Mathili police station incident reveals that they

185. Dasarathi Nanda, op. cit., pp.118-120.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribals</th>
<th>Caste</th>
<th>Occupation</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bhumiyas - 36</td>
<td>Gaudas - 3</td>
<td>Naikos - 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Khonds - 5</td>
<td>Paikas/Ranas - 2</td>
<td>Cultivators comprising Naikos - 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Outcastes - 3</td>
<td>Agricultural and non-agricultural labourers - 8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Others - 5</td>
<td>Teacher - 1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

File on Laxman Naiko, Mathili P.S.
Nature of participation of tribals and non-tribals in the meetings at Mathili region:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tribals and of outcaste</th>
<th>Non-tribals</th>
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<tr>
<td>16.8.42 Badhigar</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>17.8.42 Kuntipally</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.8.42 Salimi</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.8.42 Pushpalli</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

426
included both tribals, caste and outcastes. Profession­wise, they also included both cultivators, agricultural and non-agricultural labourers, as well as rural intelligen­tsia like teachers and the rural rich like Naikos. This shows that the 'crowd' predominantly composed of tribals (Koraput being a tribal tract) and included as well, ouastes and non­tribals. The other aspect was the unity between mustajars and tenants as well as agricultural and non-agricultural labourers. This brings the fact clearly that the Quit India struggle was characterised by broad unity among various castes and classes at the social plane to a large extent.

However, the acts of destruction resorted to by the people, the attack on specific targets like burning of the mill cloth and yarn, attack in the shandies, bridges and milestones, and attack on constables reveals the sheer anti­imperialist fury. However, the attack on shandy contractor and burning of receipt books and refusal to pay shandy tolls and proclamation to refuse rent/revenue points to the subtle anti-feudal current which the struggle contained. But this current remained marginal and muted in the face of violent anti-imperialist current. Afterall, as examined earlier it was the very mobilisation of the tribals by the Congress leadership of the district vigorously right since 1937, which explains the manifestation of this trend. Moreover, the roots of this anti-feudal dimension lay in the popular interpretation of Gandhi and Congress Ministry during 1937­39 phase.

PURI

The movement in this district began when the students took to the streets and organised strikes after the arrest of the DCC leadership, including socialist like Prananath Patnaik. The students in the schools at Puri town, Nimapara, Khurda, Olasingh and Banpur and the students of Puri Sanskrit College came up with picketing, strikes and organi­sation of processions, boycotting their classes during the
whole of August. Many of the students were arrested. A Banara Sena was organised in Gop area of Puri. The squad, carried on activities like burning of police uniforms and attempted attacks on police stations. The massive protests organised by students also received impetus from the activities of communists like Bhagabati Charan Panighrahi and Satyendra Nath Guha (an ex-deteneue of Bengal) who had settled down in Puri. Satyendra's place in Puri, Mangu Math, and Bhagabat's residence housed many young enthusiastic participants of the struggle with revolutionary dreams. However, this leadership got arrested by the end of August. The students protest did not confine itself only to boycott of classes but, at times, included activities like disruption of telecommunication and the railways and attacks on the police.

The Puri DCC kept functioning from Delanga. So also the underground leadership of the district used it as headquarters of the movement. However as elsewhere, the intensity of the movement became more marked in the rural belt. The local leadership of Nimapara area called for a meeting on 16 September. The top leaders of the area such as represented by Mohan Das (ex-Congress M.L.A. and Socialist) had been put behind bars. The Gandhian roots of the area had been firmly established with a Congress Ashram at Hansapada. So also the wife of the zamindar of Manijang village was a sympathiser of the national movement. She was popularly known as "Sanatani" (real name being Sulakshna Mali Jema). With the seizure of Hansapada Congress Ashram, the headquarters of the movement shifted to the house of

186. WWCC, ACC-98.
188. S.N. Patnaik, Odisare Swadhinata Andolan (Oriya), Cuttack, 1972, pp.175-177.
Sanatani, where underground local leaders chalked out their course of action. Interestingly, Padma Charan Samantasinghar, son of Sanatani, along with a host of students and youth activists, constituted the leadership of the area and preached the Quit India message in the area and convened the Nimapara meeting on 16 September. Villagers of Hansapada, Bhatbanda, Chandrapara, Manijang, Andhia, Dihasahi and Villagram attended the meeting. The participants also included the Bauris (outcastes) of Dihabari. In the meeting, Lakhan Barik (Chandrapara village) asked the audience not to give rent and revenue to zamindars and Government. The meeting also resolved to 'persuade' the police to non-cooperate with British Government by resigning their jobs. Just after the meeting, 5000 people proceeded to the police station carrying the National Flag. Reaching the thana, they garlanded a Sub Inspector and asked him to resign his job. A section of the people forcibly entered the thana and fell flat on the ground, obstructing the entry of the police. The people attempted to enter the thana and tried to fly the tri-colour, despite warning by the police. The 'crowd' pelted stones to the police. The processionists were also joined by other groups of people including students. The police arrested nearly 10 leaders. This action provoked the people who intensified the pelting of stones and brickbats. This resulted in police firing, killing one and injuring 16 others. The 'crowd' dispersed from the spot but attempted to burn the P.W.D. bungalow and the post-office. The administration imposed a collective fine of Rs.1500/- on the villagers of Manijannga, Chandrapada and Hansapada, who had taken the leading part in the incident.

The educational institutions continued to be paralysed


by strikes in September. The attempts at disrupting telegraph lines also continued. The intensity of this form of activity was such that a collective fine of Rs.1000/- was imposed on the villagers of Ankoi for their involvement in the cutting of telegraph lines. The cutting of wires was widespread in Bhubaneswar and Delanga areas in September. 191

The local level underground leaders organised many secret meetings in the Ankoi-Delanga area and organised massive cutting of telegraph and railway control wires on the railway line nearing Ankoi. A massive attempt at the cutting of wires was undertaken on 16 September and the telecommunications were entirely paralysed. 192

As elsewhere, the underground leaders mobilised people in the rural areas by circulating bulletins and leaflets. A booklet, Congress Gitika, 193 authored by Raghunath Mishra was widely circulated in the rural belt. A local level leader, Biswanath Parida, who was in touch with the underground organisation of Dwivedi in Cuttack, did a lot to fan out leaflets and literature and messages to the different parts of the district.

We have a reference to an assembly of 400 weavers at Bolgarh. The weavers, mostly coming from Nayagarh state, demanded the release of Dighri Khadi Centre. But, they dispersed when positive assurance to look into their grievances was offered by the authorities. However, the leaders organising the protest were arrested. 194 In November, the prisoners of Nimapara incident gave a hard time to the jail authorities and the administration. They offered "obstruc-

191. WWCC, ACC-98; WWCC, ACC-30, 27.9.42.
193. HPD, Orissa Gazette extraordinary, 1.8.42, ACC-2174.
194. WWCC, ACC-98; WWCC, ACC-30, 6.10.42.
tion and objectionable demonstration" on their way to and from the jail. In the course of the trial, they gheraoed the jailer and the superintendent and threatened them. Other political prisoners had also joined them in causing this obstruction. This obstruction by the political prisoners continued throughout November. The pace of the movement had totally slowed down by the end of September.

GANJAM

Ganjam also witnessed students protests in the opening weeks of Quit India struggle. Students in Aska, Berhampur and Russelkonda, Nuapada went on strike. Since the Ganjam DCC was under the control of Nilakantha Das-Dibakar Patnaik group, supporters of coalition ministry; it had a negative approach to the movement. Dibakar Patnaik addressed an appeal to the students of the district to desist from taking part in "lawlessness". However, hartals and closing down of shops continued to characterise the developments in the district throughout August. At Nuapada, students went round in a procession and asked the shopkeepers and weavers to observe hartal on 20 August. They also organised meetings on the same day and explained to the people that Subash Bose would come to liberate India through Japanese help. Hartals were also observed in Kullenda, Bellagunta with shops remaining closed. At Bellagunta, a lady, Champa Devi, took the lead in organising the hartal.

Towards the end of August, a virtual campaign for tree felling emerged in Russelkonda circle of Ganjam. Villagers were organised into a "united body" and conducted encroach-

195. WWCC, ACC-98.


197. WWCC, ACC-30, 3.9.42.

198. WWCC, ACC-30, 31.8.42.
ment on reserve forest, felling down trees. The entire Ghumsur taluk experienced massive tree-felling in the reserved forest in September. The Koradabadi Congress Ashram organised this campaign.

The campaign against arrack (liquor) shop and threatening of 'Government officials' as well as the cutting of telegraph wires continued throughout October. Posters were pasted in Berhampur town urging people to 'paralyse' the administration by a policy of non-co-operation. They also asked the people to disrupt communications, and 'burn' post offices and police stations. They also appealed to the people to rob banks.

On 10/11th October, a 'mob' mostly from Ganjam district, carrying lathis burnt down several schools, dak bungalows and other offices of the Nayagarh state, the neighbouring state. They also attacked Nuagam police Thana. The police had to open fire to disperse the people.

The political prisoners kept in Berhampur jail unleashed a virtual movement from their cells by resisting the authority's attempt to enforce 'discipline' and threatened the jail staff with violence. The protest climaxed with the burning down of a shed of the Public Works Department housed in the jail compound. The political prisoners of Russelkonda sub-jail also assaulted the jail officials. Numerous instances of burning down of rest sheds and school houses at Koinpur, Arsiling Kinchiling, and Lavanyakota of Ganjam were

199. WWCC, ACC-30, 7.9.42.
200. WWCC, ACC-98.
201. Ibid.
202. WWCC, ACC-30, 8.10.42.
203. WWCC, ACC-30, 1.11.42.
204. WWCC, ACC-30, 1.11.42; WWCC, ACC-98.
reported in November. Some of the prisoners from Berhampur jail escaped taking advantage of the collapse of the outer wall of the jail. November also saw the continuance of the picketing of opium shops.

The pace of the movement in Ganjam was relatively slow compared to the other districts. Yet the movement, however, assumed militancy after September though in a limited scale. There was also a plan to attack the Ganjam salt factory and the factory at Sumadi. The authorities made heavy police arrangements to protect the factories in October. Attempts were also made to organize the ryots of the Khallikote estate. The attempts failed with the arrest of the prominent leaders of the estate in August.

We have reference to a training camp at Aska, opened under the leadership of Satrughna Behera and Maguni Das. This camp offered training as to how to undertake "subversive" activities. The trainees of the camp disrupted communication links by cutting telegraph wires (between Aska and Nalaganta).

SAMBALPUR:

Soon after the arrest of DCC leaders of Sambalpur, the students of Sambalpur, Jharsuguda and Bargarh went on a strike and organised demonstrations. Bhairab Mohanty, who was working as an assistant in the Orissa Secretariat (the Secretariat Base Office had shifted to Sambalpur in view of the war), resigned his job. He along with Sibanarayan Padhi constituted the underground leadership for the district.

205. WWCC, ACC-30, 17.11.42.
208. WWCC, ACC-98.
209. WWCC, ACC-98.
Bhairab Mohanty secretly took away some of the confidential files from the Base office, burnt them and then went underground. Mohanty used to stay with Siba Narayan Padhi and Prahlad Ray Lath, who used to receive the secret Congress bulletins and messages from the Cuttack underground headquarters managed by Dwivedi. In return, the funds collected from Sambalpur, (to finance the movement at the provincial level) as well as letters were sent through the mail bags of the Secretariat to Cuttack. The men in-charge at two points of Cuttack and Sambalpur to receive the dak were acquainted with the symbols indicated by the underground leaders and delivered the articles at the right destination.

Bhairab Mohanty did a great deal to mobilise the Secretariat staff and helped generate in them a strong support for the Quit India Movement. Both Padhy and Mohanty established contact with the jail prisoners by managing to appoint a cook (who had served Mohanty earlier) as the warden of the jail. Padhy was also keeping contact with the underground leaders of Padmapur and Bargarh, who were mostly involved in propagating khadi activities after the seizure of the Congress office. Prahalad Roy Lath, the committed Gandhian, provided financial support for the sustenance of the movement in the district. Lath, hailing from a Marwari business community, had joined the struggle in 1930 and raised himself to the stature of an important leader of Sambalpur.

We have reference to forcible entry of workers to the


211. Interview with Siba P. Padhy, Sambalpur, 27.10.88; Interview with Prahalad Roy Lath: Cuttack, 25.10.88. He revealed how he used to feed the Congress activists of the District in his house. His brothers who were in big trading business, supported him financially; he himself being involved in Gandhian politics. He claimed that he managed the DCC entirely, contributed substantially to the PCC and Kasturba Fund. The latter was given a contribution of Rs.75,000/-, He also said how they approached the cloth traders and asked them to part with a certain proportion of cloth. This, he said, prevented the possibility of any shop being 'looted' or 'burnt'. The cloth, collected from the merchants, was burnt afterwards on the river sands.
S.D.O's office and asking the SDO to resign his job in August. In September, there was an attempt to open a training institute to train the youths in using lathis and other weapons, apart from imparting drill exercises. But the organisers were immediately arrested. Circulation of pamphlets (in Oriya, English and Hindi) picked up in September. Under the secret guidance of Fakir Behera and Rajendra Panda (DCC leadership), the records of the George High School (Bargarh) were burnt. When the two leaders were arrested, there was widespread protest in Bargarh town. A huge procession which included 500 'low caste' people was taken to the police Thana. The police arrested 18 persons and persuaded the mob to disperse. The leaders who were arrested in connection with the burning of the school office were prominent local leaders of Bargarh such as Fakir Behera, Rajendra Panda, Ram Puri, Mangalu Pradhan (a peasant leader), Rama Satpathy and Lakhman Pujary (the last two being communists). The Gandhian leaders like Rajendra Panda had supplied petrol for the burning.\(^{212}\) The arrest of leaders created strong popular tension. The procession to the S.D.O's office which included nearly 10-15 thousand people was joined by peasants, agricultural labourers and landless labourers.\(^ {213}\)

The whole of October was marked by sporadic events in terms of attempt at burning down school buildings. One such attempt occurred at Sambalpur Zilla School. In November, boys carrying Congress flags shouting slogans in Gandhi's names entered the Sadr police station of Sambalpur and asked

\(^{212}\) Interview with L.P. Mishra, Sambalpur, 28.10.88.

\(^{213}\) Ibid.

Mishra's views should be taken as providing a participant's perspective. He also said that the landlords though not overtly but tacitly supported the movement. He went on to add that as Quit India was not an 'economic movement' it did not affect the 'classes'. He emphasized the fact that the participation of intelligentsia and students was a significant feature of the struggle.
the Sub-Inspector to resign. Similar incident took place in Bargarh. We have reference to an interesting incident in Bargarh. Here Parvati Giri (Sambalipadar village) organised the women. Under Giri's leadership a procession of women was organised at Pradhan Pada and a meeting at Hatapada. Giri being a graduate from Gandhi Ashram at Bari, had continued to campaign against casteism for several years. During the Quit India struggle, she along with few others led a procession to Bargarh and "overpowered" B. Mukherjee; the S.D.O. of Bargarh. After tying the S.D.O. with a rope; Giri took the chair of the S.D.O. and ordered the arrest of the S.D.O. after a 'mock' trial. The drama was enacted before the public to its utter jubilation. However, this led to her arrest along with a host of other leaders. Prabhabati Devi and Jambubati Devi were two other women leaders of the district. The former with her Gandhi Ashram Orientation mobilised people in Bargarh. The latter, wife of the nationalist Bhagirathi Pattnaik of Barapalli, along with Prema Devi led a procession of students from Ghormara training school to Tumuka in Bihar.

The intensity of the movement can be gauged when we see the arrest of 35 villagers from a small village of Panimora. With the beginning of the movement in the 2nd

214. Orissa District Gazetteer, Sambalpur, p.81.

215. Interviews with: on 30.10.88, at Panimora

<table>
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<th>Education</th>
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<tr>
<td>Chandrabhanu Parida</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chamru Parida</td>
<td>5th class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaitanya Sahu</td>
<td>2nd class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dibyasunder Sahu</td>
<td>4th class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phulser Pradhan</td>
<td>7th class</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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These villagers, interestingly said that, the call of 'Swaraj' attracted them to the movement rather than the existing economic exploitation. Gandhi, for them, was the God, Paremeswar (the Supreme God). They also revealed that all classes of people joined the movement including the brothers and sons of the Gountias (landlords). The 32 villagers who got arrested during the Quit India were all poor agriculturists including low castes.
week of August, the villagers of Panimora decided that each house should at least contribute one worker for the movement. In the process, 42 workers were recruited. The villagers organised a meeting in the village on the 2nd week of August. But they could not decide how to go about the movement. Thus, a local leader Chamru Parida went to Sambalpur to meet Bhagirathi Patnaik (the DCC leader). Upon his request, Bhagirathi Patnaik came down to Panimora and a secret plan was chalked out about their course of action. The workers were divided into three groups. A particular group led by Chamru Parida went to Bargarh and the other group took to anti-British campaign in other villages. The group of Chamru Parida picketed the court and S.D.O.'s office. They also attempted to re-capture the seized Congress office. Chamru Parida's group entered the court room in a dramatic fashion. Chamru entered the room, took up a chair and sat down declaring to the audience that the court session was on. When the magistrate intervened and asked Chamru about his identity; Chamru shot back by saying: "I am the S.D.O. of Gandhi Raj". Thereupon, the records of the court office were torn by his followers. However, they were arrested and put inside jail. Once in jail, Chamru stepped up his campaign by persuading the fellow prisoners, (who were being asked to join the war by the authorities, for which, they were promised monthly salary as well as remission of their tenure in jail). This yielded result when nearly 25 youths of the jail refused to join the war as per the proposed agreement.

PRINCELY STATES:

We cannot have a comprehensive understanding of the nature of the Quit India movement, without having a reference to the patterns emerging in the princely states during the same period. We will briefly touch upon the develop-
ments in the three princely states of Nilagiri, Dhenkanal and Talcher.

**Nilagiri:**

With the beginning of the Quit India movement, the Prajamandal in Nilagiri chalked out its course of action. This included the setting of fire to police Thana at Brahmapur, stopping the ferry service in the river Suno, burning of the uniforms of the police, destruction of bridges, and thereby the disruption of the communication system. There was also violation of prohibitory orders of the Government by holding meetings and protest against the arrest of leaders and attacks on the police in case of any arrest of the activists. Besides making appeals to state officials to join the struggle, boycott of officials and burning of their uniforms to register protest against the arrest of leaders was also initiated. 217

A meeting under the presidentship of Kailash Chandra Mohanty (President, Prajamandal) was organised. The meeting was also joined in by the participants from Soro and Bhdrak, the neighbouring areas of Balasore district. It was resolved in the meeting that the Prajamandal activists would go underground to evade police arrest. However on 12 August the prominent Prajamandal leaders including Mohanty were arrested. However, Banamali Das (Secretary, Prajamandal) went underground and thus avoided arrest. However, the repression of the state was stepped up. Even attacks from planes were made on processionists and participants of the meetings in areas like Chandipur, Gopinathpur, Kanthapada and Ayodhya. At Brahmapur, on a pre-arranged plan, people gheraced the police force. This led to a firing, and 3

persons were killed. Similar attempt were made at Iswarpur Thana. However, popular protest over the arrest of the leaders was so intense that 11 leaders were released. But the released leaders continued to campaign often hiding themselves beyond the state border. Areas like Panchakhanda and Athakhunt remained active pockets of protest against fines and taxes imposed by the state administration. Despite brutal repression in terms of collective fines, looting, rapes, caning, etc., the ruler of Nilagiri had to remain away from the state and stayed at Ranchi from November 1942 to 1946. The ruler was also forced to reduce the amount of collective fines. This was felt as a victory for the people. As elsewhere, the participation of both tribals and low castes was significant in the movement in Nilagiri.

**Dhenkanal:**

The prominent Prajamandal leaders of Dhenkanal were arrested by 19 August. But Baishnaba Pattnaik, one of the leading activists of the preceding years, went underground to avoid arrest. He had also established links with the provincial underground headquarters of the movement based at Cuttack. He kept moving in the areas of Murhi and Parjanga and mobilised the villagers. He also circulated leaflets and sent secret information to the villagers in these areas.


219. *Annual Administration Report, 1942-43, Nilagiri State*. But, the released leaders perhaps were mainly communists.

220. *Annual Administration Report, 1942-43, Nilagiri State*. NPARI, pp.106-120. Mahatab (ed.), *op. cit.*, Vol.IV, p.145. The collective fine was reduced from (Rs.78 to Rs.154) per village to (Rs.35 to Rs.123).

Ably supported by Debaraj Patra of Manikarma, he could recruit 31 local level leaders from villages such as Baligofada, Khatakura, Mota, Bangursingha, Kandarsingha, Kuanlu, Pitani, Palasuni and Pangatira. These volunteers were grouped into a Marana Sena (suicide squad). At this point of time, Baishnaba operated from his secret hideout at Rangathali jungle.\footnote{Dhenkanal Disturbances of 1942, Manuscripts of Raghu-ram Dehrury, Sampadi Sahu, Nasagahan Behera, Bhagirathi Sahu cited in B. Rath, Quit India Movement in Orissa, (Cuttack, 1995), pp.94-100.}

After a few abortive attempts at capturing police stations in places like Parjang on 26 August, the Marana Sena under Baishnaba succeeded in virtually taking over the police station at Murhi. They locked up the armed guards and chaukidars in the hazat. They also looted the armoury and took away 4 rifles and 200 cartridges, along with cash to the tune of Rs.1000/-.\footnote{The Jataru, 15 August 1985.} They also fired a few blanks, and raised slogans in the name of Gandhi and Prajamandal. By the noon of 26 August, the offices of Revenue, Forest, S.D.O. and the Government quarters for the employees and the Thana had been burnt down. So also all the Government records, files and furniture. However, school buildings and hospitals were spared and employees were given time to take out their personal belonging before the houses were set on fire. So also, the police locked up in the hazat were released before the Thana was put on fire. These events took place in quick succession and before the eyes of the cheering villagers. In the afternoon a public meeting was organised to chalk out the next course of action. Nearly 5-10 thousand people participated in it. Afterwards, this squad led a group of 500 people to Malapara village. The Debottar granary of Malapara was looted and the paddy distributed among the people. The records of the Sahukars

\section*{References}

\footnote{Dhenkanal Disturbances of 1942, Manuscripts of Raghu-ram Dehrury, Sampadi Sahu, Nasagahan Behera, Bhagirathi Sahu cited in B. Rath, Quit India Movement in Orissa, (Cuttack, 1995), pp.94-100.}

\footnote{The Jataru, 15 August 1985.}
containing the names of the indebted were burnt/destroyed. However, the *Marana Sena* had excellently utilised the favourable circumstances available in Muri for such a 'raid'. The region being not easily accessible from Dhenkanal and under the impact of floods of Brahmani river during August, provided right opportunity to them. Raja had remained uninformed of the incident till the event had taken place.224

The *Marana Sena*'s success at Murhi emboldened it. Thus, again on 2 September, the Chandpur Police *Thana* and *Tehsil* office were burnt down.225 But the administration at Chandpur had taken precautionary measure earlier by shifting the arms and ammunitions from the *Thana* as well as the Government records to safe spots. Meanwhile, Baishnaba and his squad were moving from village to village; carrying Congress flags and beating drums to mobilise people. Baishnaba issued a leaflet during this time, wherein he had asked the villagers of the Dhenkanal state to send one man from every family with all possible weapons like guns, axes, bows and arrows to raid police station at Parjang. It also seems that the *Marana Sena* was seriously planning to raid the state headquarters at Dhenkanal. But in response to the activities of *Marana Sena*, the state administration had also been gearing itself and taking precautions.226

On 4 September again, the squad conducted a 'raid' at Parajang Police *Thana*. The squad divided into two groups approached Parjang, covering various villages en route. The strategy was to raise people to accompany them in their mission to attack Parjang. The *Marana Sena* reached Parjang, carrying guns and other weapons along with the chanting of nationalistic songs and slogans. They were accompanied by a


large following of people. The Marana Sena's march climaxed in a clash of police force at Janhapara. Nearly 1,000 people got into the encounter with the police under the overall guidance of the squad. In the resulting firing, two activists, Bira Sahu and Benu Sahu, died on the spot. Baishnab himself, sustained a bullet injury; but he escaped to Cuttack and stayed at Dwivedi's hide out there. After wards, he left for Calcutta and stayed there till 1946. The incident at Janhapara was followed by the burning of the police outpost and Forest Department beat house at Gangutia on 5 September under another activist and a close associate of Baishab, Debaraj Patra. Debaraj's party of 42 workers carried on their stray activists, remaining underground in the Manikarma forest till November. For example, they attacked a revenue camp on 5 October at Kandhar. And again, towards the end of November, raided the villages of Kushia, Pathargarh, and Badasahi. The objective of the 'raid' on the villages was to punish those villagers who had helped the administration in the arrest of four prominent associates of Baishnab, namely Musa Mallick, Ananda Swain, Anukul Sahu and Baidhar Swain.

As elsewhere, the state administration came down heavily on the people of the state by imposing collective fines and arresting leaders once violent incidents took place. Cash rewards were awarded to the people who provided information about the leaders.

**Talcher:**

We have earlier discussed in the context of 1940-41, how the Talcher Prajamandal under Pabitra Mohan Pradhan's leadership continued to voice the popular grievances against

228. The A.B. Patrika, October 1942.
the state and thus tried to keep the people sufficiently mobilised. In the meanwhile Pabitra Mohan Pradhan who had been arrested in November 1940, released in January 1942 and again arrested in March. But he escaped from the State Jail on 31 August. To evade arrest, he fled into the far off interior jungle of Tisimali in Dhenkanal beyond the border of Talcher. However, his escape to the jungle was so secretive that none of the Prajamandal leaders knew about it. This resulted in a rumour that Pradhan was rearrested to be killed inside the jail.

It was in this context that the new leadership of Talcher Prajamandal convened an emergency meeting on 2 September at Paniola (Angul subdivision). In the meeting, the decision was reached to liberate Talcher by initiating direct action against both the state and British rule. Bichhanda Chandra Pradhan was appointed as the dictator for the purpose. The direct action was to be launched by conducting a raid on Talcher Raja's palace on 6 September and breaking of the state jail. The decision of the meeting was further endorsed by the Prajamandal leadership in a meeting at Kumunda on 3rd September. It was also further decided that a Chasi-Mulia (peasant worker) raj would be established. This was somewhat like the idea of a parallel Government.

After his escape, Pradhan who was hiding in the Tisima-

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233. TPRI, op. cit., p.49.

li jungle of Dhenkanal got into touch with the Prajamandal leaders. A few leaders met him on 5 September.\(^{235}\) Though Pradhan was not very supportive of the already planned out course of action by the Prajamandal, he had to silently abide by the decision of the Prajamandal.\(^{236}\) He was against any hasty action against the state. Rather he was thinking of waging guerilla warfare against the state on a date after 15 September after making adequate arrangement.\(^{237}\) However, it is important to note that the functioning leadership of Prajamandal had struck upon the idea of 'Chasi Mulia' raj in sheer response to the Quit India resolution. The people of Talcher had interpreted it to mean that Gandhi had allowed the use of violence ("use of lathi") to establish a Paraja raija (peoples Government/Swaraj).\(^{238}\)

As per the plans of Prajamandal, Prajamandal units kept functioning at village, block, Pragana and sub-divisional level, under the overall supervision of the apex Prajamandal authority operating for the entire Talcher state. The village headmen, choukidars, school teachers, block officers of the police, excise and revenue departments either surrendered voluntary to the locally constituted Prajamandal authorities or were made to surrender under pressure of threats.\(^{239}\) The Garhnaik (headman) of the Seepur village was murdered for his defiance of the authority of Prajamandal. At places, the Government offices and the residential quarters of the offices were attacked and set on fire. The uniforms and records of the state officials were also de-

\(^{235}\) TPRI, op. cit., p.50.

\(^{236}\) Ibid.

\(^{237}\) Pradhan, op. cit., p.129.

\(^{238}\) Pabitra Mohan Pradhan, op. cit., pp.120-128; TPRI, op. cit., pp.49-50.

\(^{239}\) P. Pradhan, op. cit., p.135.
destroyed. Arms were also procured by seizing state officials. The schools, courts and offices were virtually closed down. The popular anger was not only aimed against the state's authority and ruler's family but equally intended to drive out any vestige of British authority from the state. As an alternative, the Gandhi inspired notion of village panchayats remained a popular idea. 

To stall the movement of troops to the state, all communication network was disrupted by cutting off telegraphic and telephone lines. The Cuttack-Talcher railway track was damaged running over several miles. The three rural police stations of Kania were captured. Thus, except Talcher Town (the headquarters of the State and Palace of the Ruler), the entire state seemed to be taken over by the Prajamandal's authority. And Chasi Mulia Government seemed to have been established except in the four square miles of Talcher Town. The Prajamandal also toyed with the idea of taking over collieries from the control of foreign companies and also advocated increase of wages for the labourers. The other welfare measures were provisions for reduction of rent, generation of employment opportunities, emphasis on education, health, water supply and the overall objective of providing food, shelter and cloth to all.

By 4 September, the state administration had requisitioned the services of British Air Force and military to counter the dangerous developments. However, the Chasi Mulia government had constituted its administrative structure. It raised a volunteer army and called it Krisak Sena (peasant militia). The peasant militia were provided with crude arms and implements arranged from the villagers. The

240. Ibid., pp.133-136; AISPC Papers, F.No.164, p.2.
241. Ibid.
gun powder, dynamite were procured from the local collieries. The peasant militia was raised by recruiting all able-bodied male members (except one son) from each family. Bichhanda Pradhan was appointed as the Commander of the militia and two deputies served under him. As per the scheduled scheme, the people under Prajamandal leadership marched on to the Talcher town carrying all possible crude weaponry from country made guns to lathis, kerosene, petrol, jute-rags. They also carried with them dry food like rice, sag and mudhi, for at least 3 days. People also gave them food when they marched through the villages. At the same time, the people before setting on the march had resolved not to use arms and get violent unless and until they were attacked by the enemy. The processionists raised slogans like Bharat Chhada (Quit India), Kara ba Mara (Do or die), Karibu Maribu (Will do or die), Bharat ru Tadibu (to drive out from India), Talcherru Tadibu (to drive out from Talcher). Besides, slogans like Raja ku Maribu (will beat/kill the Raja); and Chasi Mulia Sarkar Gadhibu (will bring about peasant worker government) rent the air. Besides, the beating of drums and blowing of war-pipes by the processionists seemed to drawn the rattling of the aeroplanes, which kept moving in the air to terrorise the people.

Due to heavy rain and floods, the proposed aim of taking over Talcher did not materialise on 6 September. On the next day (7 September) nearly 10,000 people surrounded the town in a semi-circle by encamping in a mango grove in the outskirts of the Talcher township. But by that time, the state administration with the assistance of political department had deployed a heavy military force. In the

243. AISPC Papers, F.No.164.
244. AISPC Papers, F.No.164, p.4; P. Pradhan, op. cit., pp.133-134.
beginning, the leaders of the peasant-militia as well as some of the officials on behalf of the state administration initiated negotiations. The leadership agreed to negotiate with the Ruler for transferring power to the newly constituted peoples' body, with the Ruler himself acting as a constitutional head. But, the crucial condition it imposed was that the ruler had to sever its linkage with British imperialism - a condition which the ruler could have hardly accepted. Thus, once the negotiation failed, the peasant militia marched ahead to capture Nijgarh (the seat of the Ruler) by crossing over the enemy line. As a result, the armed contingent of the state triggered volleys of bullets on the people. The people were also machine gunned from the air, while gas shells were dropped on them to create a smoke wall. Thus being machine gunned, bombarded, fired and chased for miles, the people had fled. As a result of firing 4 people died and 100 people sustained severe injuries.

After the 7 September incident, the state authorities stepped up its repression by continuously dropping gas shells and pamphlets from the air sending warning to the people. Collective fines to the tune of Rs.25,000/- were imposed on 35 villages, which were most active in the functioning of peasant militia. The minimum amount of the fine was equal to a peasant's annual land rent. There was also unauthorised collections of fines. Though, officially, 35 villages were earmarked for collective fines, yet nearly 118 villages paid fine to the tune of nearly Rs.80,000/-. People were beaten mercilessly and individual fines were imposed.

245. AISPC Papers, F.No.164; P. Pradhan, op. cit., p.137.
246. AISPC Papers, F.No.164, p.4.
247. TPRI, pp.64-65.
248. AISPC Papers, F.No.164; B.C. Rath, op. cit., p.115.
imposed. The properties of the Prajamandal activists were confiscated. After the incident, Pabitra Pradhan who had remained underground, took up the initiative in raising a secret armed squad with a view to offer protection to the helpless subjects of the state against the state's terror and repression. He however, soon gave up the idea of direct action against the armed forces of the state. But, all the leading activists of the Prajamandal were advised to abscond. Even, Pradhan left his underground hide out in the state for Bihar and Bengal. The guerrilla squad under the leadership of Maheswar Pradhan and Padia Behera was finally nabbed and liquidated in May 1943.

III. LEADERSHIP AND AGITATION

In this section, we can briefly discuss agitational activities of the underground leadership which sought to offer a direction to the movement in the absence of the dominant leadership. Under the overall initiative of Suren-dranath Dwivedi, the socialist, an underground leadership operated in the entire province. However, Dwivedi was arrested in October. Dwivedi, in fact, co-ordinated the agitational and organizational aspect of the movement by drafting, cyclostyleing and circulating various kinds of 'Congress bulletins' including A.I.C.C. leaflets in different districts. After attending the AICC session at Bombay in August, he had gone underground. But, he kept himself in touch with the leaders of the other provinces. The headquarters of secret Congress organisation was housed in Cuttack in the residence of Nandi Sahu, another nationalist activist. The activities and developments in different districts were sought to be co-ordinated from Cuttack head-

249. AISPC Papers, P.No.164, pp.7-10; P. Pradhan, op. cit., pp.142-158.
quarters by sending regular instructions and also receiving the feedbacks. To avoid any seizure of correspondence between Dwivedi and local level leaders, the former had styled himself as C.O. (Chief Organiser) and the latter as (Branch Assistants). Dwivedi had also assumed the pseudo name of Babajee. At the district level, a few leaders were selected to supervise the pace of struggle by receiving and circulating Congress bulletins and sending informations for the concerned districts.251 By the time Dwivedi was arrested in October, he had already drafted seventeen bulletins.252

251. HPD, Spl. Report 102/42 (I to V); Case against S.N. Dwivedi and others for organising illegal conspiracy, 12.10.42, 3.11.42, ACC-2443. The leaders selected for different districts remained as follows:

Cuttack: Narayan Prasad Mohanty (Tirtol), Padma Charan Mohanty (Govindapur), Jaykrishna Mohanty (Raghunath-pur), Ram Jena (Bari), Bipin Bihari Mohanty (Tiran), Nilamani Biswal (Tirtol), Gouranga Charan Das, Nishomuni Khuntia, Loknath Rai, Govinda Ch. Mohanty Narasingha Mohanty, Loknath Mishra (MLA), Anil Kumar Ghose, Banka Bihari Das, Bhairaba Mohanty (ex-Assistants of Orissa Secretariat).

Balasore: Gour Ch. Das, Pyari Mohan Das, Dukhishyam Parhi, Nityananda Mohapatra, Sura Mohanty, Gokulananda Mohanty, Santilata Dash (Barbatii), Upendra Nath Behera (Motiganj).

Ganjam: Aparna Patra (Berhampur), Ghanashyam Patnaik, Puddi-Peddi Krishna Murty (Berhampur), Y. Sanneya, Pratap Ch. Patnaik.


Sambalpur: Lakshminarayan Babu.

Calcutta: Sailendranath Sen, Biren Ray, Harekrishna.

Cuttack town: Udayanath Rath, Raj Nishore Das (student of Engineering school), Sachidananda Mishra (teacher, Town Victoria School), Sura Mohanty (B.A. student of Ravenshaw College), Gadadhar Das, Dukhishyam Mohanty (member of Cuttack District Board). Besides, Loknath Rai, Narottam Mohanty and Khetra Mohan Biswal operated as leaders in Jagatsingpur.

Also, the quota of Congress bulletins for different parts of the province stood as follows: 

Jaypur - 100, Bari - 100, Binjharpur - 100, Kendrapara - 100, Salepur - 100, Tirtol - 150 (all in Cuttack District); Cuttack town - 500, Bari - 100, Balasore - 200, Sambalpur - 100. The bulletins contained the instructions that people should read out a particular bulletin to at least 10 persons and write out 10 copies for distribution.

The bulletins, while relating incidents and developments at various places of the province in connection with the struggle, exhorted people to burn police stations, dak bungalows, railway stations, schools, colleges, Sub-Registrar Offices and even Secretariat building, etc. - the symbols of colonialism. The bulletins also contained appeals to the people to 'loot' the properties of the rich and zamindars, if they did not part with their wealth. They appealed to the Government servants to resign their jobs.

A bulletin titled: Instructions from the Congress - Don't Pay Fine,²⁵³ congratulating the villagers of Tirtol, Erasama and Nimapada for their "daring acts, in accordance with the instructions of Congress" observed:

"You are the forces of the Congress. Congress is your panchayat in your country. You have only obeyed the mandate of Congress. The propaganda by those that this is not the desire of either Gandhi or the Congress is false. They want to perpetuate the Government. They want to perpetuate the systems of zamindary and money-lending to exploit us as before. These cannot prolong any longer. The British Government is at the verge of death. At such a time don't you be timid (sic). Don't pay tax. Don't bid call in auction sale. Establish panchayats in villages and obey its instructions. If the police or any hakim visit your area to realise fine, surround and disarm them. Don't allow them to touch your fire or water. Let not anyone help them. If they oppress more, arrest them. Don't pay tax or revenue till the establishment of an independent government. Unite your neighbours. This is the desire of Gandhi. Have courage. You will see that victory is yours. Repression will go during the Supreme crisis. Peasants will be all in all. Administration will remain in your hands. The zulum of zamindars and moneylenders will stop. The foreign government will be put to an end. A new era will emerge. Then you will enjoy your own country. If you abandon this golden opportunity, your misery will be age-long!"

So also, students were advised to treat the schools and colleges as "fortresses" of the enemy and asked to indulge in "lawlessness" till the authorities were compelled to use "force and open fire" on them. The police and jail authorities were also requested not to arrest and detain nor use force against Congress workers, by pointing out that British Imperialism was at an end and they should join the movement in their own interests. A bulletin, referring to the developments at Bari (Cuttack) mentioned that British Government had been replaced by Swaraj Panchayats in Bari and asked "everyman to consider himself independent" and thus "para-

lyse" the British Government.²⁵⁴

Yet another bulletin titled Congress Message,²⁵⁵ sharply reacting to the method of collecting collective fine from Bari villagers, condemned the police brutalities. It noted:

"The Additional District Magistrate of Cuttack (Musahib Khan) at the point of gun, and with the help of Muhammadan Goondas forcibly took out ornaments from the women of Bari, Kanthapol, Aurangabad and Malisahi and realised the collective fine of Rs.5,000/-. He has broken the houses of persons where nothing was available. He had demolished the Seva house, Khadi store, and many other houses at Bari. Many poor people have fled out due to the atrocities committed by these men."

Another bulletin²⁵⁶ however went on to caution: "The A.D.M. after causing destruction at Bari, is moving to the Erasama P.S. He is the incarnation of oppression. He is true to the British salt. He is our brother. Arrest him for his safety, intern him in the Azad Jail." Similar threat was held out against the D.S.P., Lakhman Mishra, who had ordered firing at Kaipara. Another bulletin advised people to take revenge against the S.P., Cuttack, for his ill-treatment of the political prisoners. It also pointed out that Indian Army had already been "gained over" and added that British Government was using the British Army in suppressing the movement. A bulletin issued on the eve of Gandhi Jayanti on 2nd October asked the people of Cuttack to observe complete Hartal and advised people not to accept currency paper notes, which, it stated were merely paper without having any value. Another bulletin under the caption What to be done on Gandhiji's Birthday on October 2²⁵⁷ opened with the statement:

"You are living on greens and roots for last two months. What is the benefit of living like cows and bullocks. Dedicate your lives. Carry out the words of Gandhi - obey the instructions of Congress and come forward to put an end to the Government."

"Better start sabotaging railway communication on which paddy and rice are being transported."

²⁵⁴ HPD, Spl. Report, 102/42 (I to V), 12.10.42, ACC-2443.
²⁵⁵ WWCC, ACC-97, Bulletin No.9, 10.9.42.
²⁵⁶ WWCC, ACC-97, Bulletin No.11, 17.9.42.
²⁵⁷ HPD, 3/31/42, Pamphlet: What to be done on Gandhiji's Birthday on October 2nd, Friday, undated.

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BULLETINS CONTAINING MESSAGE FOR THE MERCHANTS, MARWARS OF THE COUNTRY ALSO APPEARED. AN APPEAL MADE TO THE MERCHANTS ASKED THEM NOT TO SUBSCRIBE TO THE WARFUNDS NOR TO SELL COMMODITIES TO GOVERNMENT. SO ALSO, A BULLETIN WORDS FOR POLICE OFFICERS REMINDED THEM OF THE CERTAINTY OF THE RETREAT BY THE BRITISHERS IN THE FACE OF JAPANESE INVASION; AND GAVE A CALL TO THE PEOPLE TO TAKE REVENGE ON POLICE MEN BY "EXTERMINATING" THEM.258 ANOTHER BULLETIN INSTRUCTED PEOPLE TO TAKE POSSESSION OF POLICE STATIONS BY "RAIDING" THEM DURING THE SOLITARY HOURS OF NIGHT. IT ALSO ASKED PEOPLE TO DISARM THE "POLICE OFFICERS", BURN THE RECORDS AND TO "ARREST" THOSE POLICE OFFICERS WHO WERE NOT WILLING TO JOIN THE MOVEMENT. SO, ALSO BULLETINS APPEALING TO THE MUSLIM BROTHERS TO JOIN THE STRUGGLE WERE BROUGHT OUT.

CERTAIN BULLETINS CONTAINED REFERENCE TO THE COALITION MINISTRY OF ORISSA, CHARACTERISING IT AS "UNLAWFUL" AND ITS MEMBERS AS "5TH COLUMNISTS" FOR THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT. IT ASKED PEOPLE TO "BOYCOTT, INSULT AND ARREST" THESE MEMBERS.259 A BULLETIN DRAFTED AND RELEASED BY DWIVEDI IN OCTOBER TITLED: DEVI ARADHANA (PRAYER TO GODDESS DURGA),260 DESCRIBING IMPERIALISM, FASCISM AND NAZISM AS "DEMONS", STATED THAT:

"THESE DEVILS ARE EXPLOITING OUR PROPERTIES, MINDS AND LIVES. THESE POWERS HAVE GAINED CONSIDERABLE STRENGTH AND HAVE APPEARED IN ENGLAND, GERMANY AND JAPAN. THEY HAVE BEEN BEWILDERED IN VANITY AND ARE FIGHTING AMONG THEMSELVES.... PEOPLE EVER ROTTING IN STARVATION AND OPPRESSION ARE BEING PREYED IN THIS WAR. THERE HAS BEEN LAMENTATION IN LAKHS OF HOUSES. ALL ARE ANXIOUS TO SECURE THE PATH OF SALVATION. AT SUCH A TIME, THE GODDESS OF INDEPENDENCE HAS APPEARED AT OUR DOOR. IN ORDER TO ENCOURAGE US THE GODDESS HAS ASKED US, OH, MEN! ESTABLISH YOUR RIGHT DURING THIS SUPREME CRISIS. THE DEMONS HAVE BECOME WEAK BY WAR AND BLOODSHED. THEY ARE MUTILATING THEIR HEELS IN THEIR OWN HANDS. BETTER HAVE RISINGS NOW, AWAKE! EXHIBIT YOUR LION'S STRENGTH. INHABITANTS OF INDIA! BETTER LOOK UP ONCE HOW THE BARBAROUS GERMANY IS SHAKING AT THE ASSAULT OF


259. Ibid.

18 crores of people of Soviet Russia... (now) the Imperialist Japan is fighting against the union of 45 Chinese powers.... But, you will have to fight an important fiendish power the British. 40 crores of people will have to combat 4 crores of robber administrators.... Set now yourself free from the grasp of this demon. Let all unite. Let all combine and come forward. The mother wants destruction. Salvation lies in destruction. Take the charm of destruction, be warlike and reduce the administrative camp of enemy British to ashes. Drive away this power from the country wipe out all symbols and colour. Let a stream of blood flow by your bloodshed. Play a 'blood' holi. The real worship of the Mother (Durga) will be performed by human blood hibiscus. She will be satisfied by the offer of independence. In this great crisis the fiendish power will be destroyed.... Out of this crisis will emerge truth, salvation and the age of happiness....

Dwivedi was, in fact, arrested while drafting this bulletin on 11 October.

Several instructions, pamphlets released by A.I.C.C., Harijan pamphlets issued by Kaka Kalelkar and bulletins of other provinces were also sent to different areas of the province from the headquarters at Cuttack under Dwivedi's supervision after translating them into Oriya.261 We also come across pamphlets issued by Balasore D.C.C. exhorting the students to take to anti-British campaign and the "police-brothers" to resign their jobs and join the struggle.262

Another leaflet issued to police263 by Balasore DCC pointed out:

"The movement that has been started this time is, according to Mahatma Gandhi, the last fight. The country wants your action. How will you show your face in independent India? Don't pollute your hands by firing and lathi-charge on your countrymen under orders of higher officers. The Congress has started this movement (as to) how your sons and daughters will live happily. Please join us in this. If you combine and disobey Government orders, the white people can't do anything in this country. Better resign and come away. Or else, combine and start a mutiny against the white people. Those who will court imprisonment, will at the very beginning be welcomed by independent India. It is no good fearing anyone. We will ourselves govern our country...."

To the detective police, another pamphlet264 under the title Country and Duty said:

"Brother detectives! Try to resign at the call of the country. He who can't resign may retain service and embarrass the Government through service. Don't submit any secret information which is to the advantage of countrymen; to the British Goonda Government. Try to cause its ruination. Oust it from India. Don't be the enemy of this country neglecting this golden opportunity of

261. HPD, 3/31/42; HPD Spl. Report 102/42, (I to V), op. cit.; For instance, A.I.C.C. issued pamphlets like Last message of Gandhi, India's March for Independence and Last Struggle Commences etc. were circulated.

262. HPD, 3/31/42, Let one Read and Pass on to Another: Awake Sleeping Lion, issued by Balasore, D.C.C.

263. Ibid., To Police Brothers issued by Balasore DCC.

264. Ibid., Country and Duty, issued by Balasore DCC.
Similar appeals were also made to the Government servants. Yet, another Notification originating from Calcutta titled National Government ordinance was also circulated. The Notification declared British Government (as) unlawful and imposed punishment for those Government servants who supported the said Government in terms of social boycott, stoppage of food and water supply, including basic amenities of life, forfeiture of property and finally "death".265

There is some evidence that the post-9 August movement was being planned earlier, before August. Referring to the underground campaign of the leadership, a police report observed that Ramnandan Mishra (the CSPite of Bihar, who visited Cuttack) was in possession of the then secret Congress programme before 27 July (the date of his coming to Cuttack) and that he passed it on to certain selected helpers. It seems most likely that, the visit of Mishra to Orissa and his subsequent meetings with the Congress leadership and particularly Congress socialists perhaps helped in sketching out a blueprint for the oncoming movement, if at all, the leadership got arrested. The meticulous underground organisation under Dwivedi's initiative also partly explained the secret planning and programme done much before August.266 This report lseems to be borne out by some evidence which suggests the appointment of a new provincial organiser taking charge of subversive activities in Orissa around April. The organiser, however, was 'controlled' by a person in Calcutta. In fact, a person in Calcutta remitted Rs.500/- to meet the expenditure for such activities.267 The correspondence and literature seized from the underground headquarters of Dwivedi (in Cuttack) which

266. HPD, 3/31/42, Report of S.P.
revealed his connection with Calcutta goes to prove that in all probability he, along with the socialists, was planning underground activities right since April. However, AICC instructions and Gandhi's message were sent from Bombay by Biswasrai (President UPCC). Malati Choudhury and Sargangadhar Das (both AICC members) and carried over to Orissa by Mahatab much before the meeting of the AICC. These documents were then passed over to Nabakrushna Choudhry, "who purposefully did not attend the AICC meeting... to be in readiness in Orissa to lead the campaign as soon as it was decided to start it".268

The Congress Ashrams and Ashramites also played a crucial role in the furtherance of the anti-British struggle. We have seen how despite the ban on Congress Ashrams, the Ashramites of Bari, Jagatsingpur, Kendupatna and many other centres in Cuttack district remained very active participants of the struggle. Defying the seizure of Ashrams, the Ashrams were sought to be "reoccupied". At certain places, the Ashrams functioned secretly. For example, under Loknath Rai's secret leadership, Alaka Ashram of Jagatsingpur kept functioning - even a new house was constructed and functioned under the name of Yuvak Sangha to guide the anti-British campaign.269 Throughout August, Gopabandhu Choudhury and Harihar Das (organisers of All India Spinning Association) were busy in preparing the list of volunteers to further the movement in Orissa. Funds of AISA were used for the movement, given the fact that Congress organisations had been put under ban. Krupasindhu Panda, of Kendupatna Spinning Centre, actively organised the movement in the Kendupatna area in Cuttack district. So also members of Harijan Sevak Sangha270 also

268. Ibid.
270. WWCC, ACC-30, 5.11.42.
made vigorous efforts in stepping up the campaign. The Sangha's President (Orissa Branch), Nanda Kishore Das (the ex-Deputy Speaker of Legislative Assembly), was arrested for circulating appeals to Government servants to resign their jobs. Three other members of the Sangha including Harihara Das were also prosecuted for their anti-British activities.

We can have a look at the nature of local level leadership in some of the areas of Cuttack who principally guided the course of Quit India movement.271

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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<tr>
<td>Purna Chandra Tripathy</td>
<td>Barchana, Cuttack</td>
<td>Surveyed the developments in Barchana and submitted reports to Kruhna Mohan Routray, under whom he operated. Enrolled as a member of 'Death Squad' to revive the movement in August 1943.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trilochan Senapati</td>
<td>Barchana, Cuttack</td>
<td>Formed an underground organisation towards the end of 1942; drafted and circulated Congress bulletins, enrolled members for a Marana Sena (death squad).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rangadhar Rasik Roy</td>
<td>Rajnagar, Cuttack</td>
<td>Propagated no-tax, no-revenue campaign. As result, people withheld the payment of chaukidari tax and land revenue to zamindars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Phani Pal</td>
<td>Sukinda, Cuttack</td>
<td>Kishan leader; collected men from Sukinda and Dharmaasa to indulge in &quot;acts of lawlessness&quot;.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gouranga Charan Das</td>
<td>Bagalpur, Cuttack</td>
<td>Mobilised people to attack colonial symbols. Organised meetings. Under his guidance, Bagalpur became a hot bed of Congress work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobinda Chandra Mohanty</td>
<td>Jagatsingpur, Cuttack</td>
<td>Organised meetings. Mobilised people to attack colonial symbols; took up the leadership of underground organisations after Dwivedi's arrest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anil Chandra Ghose</td>
<td>Cuttack district</td>
<td>Preparation and circulation of Congress leaflets, mobilising students to &quot;acts of lawlessness&quot;. Intermediary between underground leadership and local leadership of various areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bhagirathi Mahapatra</td>
<td>Jagatsingpur and Cuttack town</td>
<td>Considerable influence over the people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mayadhar Mohanty</td>
<td>Tirtol, Cuttack</td>
<td>Private Secy. of Mahatab; considerable influence over people in his area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hrusikesh Tripathy</td>
<td>Angul, Cuttack</td>
<td>Mobilised people to attack colonial symbols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smt. Uttara Choudhry</td>
<td>Cuttack town</td>
<td>Acted as intermediary between underground leaders and local level leadership.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biraja Prasad Roy</td>
<td>Mahanga, Cuttack</td>
<td>Called the Gandhi of Mahanga. Along with Sachidananda Jena mobilised people to attack colonial symbols.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dr. Brajanath Mishra</td>
<td>Jajpur, Cuttack</td>
<td>Mobilised people to attack colonial symbols.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

271. WWCC, ACC-49, 15.6.45.
We can also have an understanding of the class character of the movement by analysing the financial standing of a cross section of the local leadership in Cuttack district.272

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Area</th>
<th>Financial Position/Family Position</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Srinath Mohanty</td>
<td>Tirtol</td>
<td>Only 8 acres of landed property old mother, wife, two minor sons.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rusinath Sahoo</td>
<td>Tirtol</td>
<td>Only one acre of landed property. Also, served in Calcutta in a monthly salary of Rs.10/-, wife and a minor son.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gobinda Kasta</td>
<td>Tirtol</td>
<td>No landed property; Daily wage labourer, old mother, brother, wife and minor son</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sridhar Das</td>
<td>Tirtol</td>
<td>No landed property, a priest who worshipped the deity and also begged. No family.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daitari Mishra</td>
<td>Tirtol</td>
<td>4 acres of landed property, brother, wife and minor child; brother served in Calcutta.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Pranakrishna Nath     | Tirtol  | No landed property. Had his parents, wife and brother; served in Calcutta for a monthly pay of Rs.10/-.
| Dibakar Pradhan       | Tirtol  | 4 acres of landed property, full-time Congress worker, parents and 4 brothers.                   |
| Puri Kasta            | Tirtol  | No landed property, earned nothing, son, daughter-in-law and grandnorn.                          |
| Mayadhar Mohanty      | Tirtol  | 10 acres of landed property; parents, two brothers.                                              |
| Sachidananda Jena     | Mahanga | 10 acres of landed property. District Board member; earned T.A. of about Rs.15/- a month. Wife/two daughters and son. |
| Anan Charan Das       | Binjharpur | Served as a cook on Rs.10/- per month. acres of landed property; Mother, wife.               |
| Dambaruudhar Rai      | Binjharpur | No landed property. Maintained on the income (by selling rice) of his elder brother's wife; wife and elder brother's wife and a minor daughter. |
| Rasanaanda Sukla      | Binjharpur | Lived on the parent’s income. Father, mother, two brothers.                                        |
| Bipin Bihari Mohanty  | Binjharpur | Member of the Dist. Board; earned T.A. to meet his expenses; wife, daughter and his mother.     |

272. WWCC, ACC-49, 15.5.44.
Sudarshan Nayak
Dharmasala
acres of landed property; sons cultivated the lands and maintained
the family; wife, 2 sons, 2 daughters-in-law, 3 grand daughters.

Indramani Tripathy
Binjharpur
Cultivated others' land and his own land. Mother, 2 younger brothers.

Bibhuti Bhusan
Govindpur
1 1/3 acres of land. Primary school teacher (drawing Rs.5/- p.m.),
mother, brother (6 years), sister (10 years).

Bhagat Samal
Govindpur
No income of his own, lived on the produce of his
land. Wife, child, 2 young brothers.

Brundaban Sarangi
Maharga
Wife, 3 sons, one daughter, earned about Rs.15/- from Congress office.

Balakrushna Sukla
Binjharpur
own landed property. Wife, mother, 2 younger brothers.

Benudhar Samal
Binjharpur
own landed property, brother was also in jail for burning
chaukidari uniform, wife, mother, younger brother.

Muralidhar Roy
Binjharpur
own landed property. Two minor daughters.

IV

The Quit India movement was the climax of the mass
movements against British Imperialism which had been
launched right since 1920. In terms of territorial reach,
the movement expanded both quantitatively and qualitatively.
What had gone into the making of this intensely powerful
anti-imperialist movement was not only two earlier phases of
the mass movements like NCO and CDM, but the consistent
ideological campaign built nearly over two decades in Oris­
sa. Various ideological strands in the Congress - Gandhi­
ans, socialists, communists - had shared in the propagation
of this ideological discourse. In particularly, after the
formation of Congress Ministry (1937-39) a rich anti-imperi­
alist political climate took shape. The Ministry also
helped create the space for progressive peasant mobilisa­
tions. The Kisan Sanghas, during this period dominantly
under Congress socialist and to some extent under communist
leadership, scaled new heights in terms of popular asser­
tions of rights vis-a-vis the landed interests and the
Government. What is also important was the conceptualisa­
tion of "Swaraj" at popular level - a process which the
ministry from the day one kept enhancing through its "limit­
ed" legislative and extra-legislative positions. After all,
the feeling that the people were having "their" Government
vis-a-vis British rule had emboldened them and bred a strong anti-imperialist sentiment. Afterwards as we have seen, the shifting positions of the Congress in terms of anti-war campaigns, and the rehearsal in the pre-Quit India phase in the form of Individual Satyagraha along with the necessary organisational preparedness, all combined, had really generated the psychological push at popular levels to drive the British out of India. Of course, as has been brought out in my treatment of the January-July 1942 Phase, the notion at popular plans of the collapse of British imperialism had hastened the above process. In a way, the masses at local level had been so considerably ideologically trained over the years and had in fact expected a crisis in terms of end of world imperialism and the attendant dawn of Swaraj that they were prepared to carry on the struggle in the absence of the established leadership. Besides, the open-ended character of Gandhian message in connection with Quit India, was enough for them to try all sorts of innovations at all levels to keep the movement going. As we have seen, the anti-feudal current inside Quit India but remained muted in the face of powerful anti-imperialist current. The peasants had afterall, been drawn into the struggle to liberate the country first. The innumerable instances of attacks/raids/looting organised around colonial symbols bring out this aspect. Whatever anti-feudal currents and anti-zamindar violence emerged during the course of the movement were primarily in those areas where the roots of Kisan Sangha had been strengthened in post-1937 phase (particularly coastal Orissa, Koraput) and were directed mainly at grain seizure because of shortage of foodgrains during the war or were the result of the concerned zamindars' pro-government and anti-movement stand. As we have clearly noted, the attempts to form 'parallel Government', and 'liberated zone' and to adopt methods of 'guerrilla warfare' for the purpose could take place in the context of
the virtual breakdown of authority or the inaccessibility of the tract in terms of flooded region or jungles. These were, however, short-lived phenomenon which vanished in the face of the all out colonial repression. But these developments do point to the depth of 'Quit India' feelings in those areas. Particularly, in some of the princely pockets, where both colonialism and the Raja were bracketed together as sources of oppression and exploitation, the popular response to any scheme which was evolved by the leadership was momentous.

The movement was marked by the participation of all classes except very big landlords.273 However, with the progress of the movement, many of the small landlords positioned themselves neutrally and, in certain cases, few of them supported the movement, both financially and in other ways. We have also seen how a zamindar joined the people in the attack against the police in Bari. As has been observed, on several occasions, there was large scale erosion of loyalty in the subordinate levels of British bureaucracy. The clerks, peons, choukidars and even the Police Inspector, not to mention teachers and doctors and lawyers and people from all walks of life came under the spell of the Quit India spirit. The instance of a constable firing in the air instead into the 'crowd' in Khaira or the indifference of the police to arrest local leaders in Eram and the Inspector/Post Master going on leave knowingly on the day of the burning of the Thana and the post office in Bhandari Pokhari were clear indicators of the extent to which they had been swayed by the nationalist fervour. Students, of course, often gave the lead for the movement in many areas. The


The Landholders Conference (14.2.42) had taken up the position of fighting any move calculated to turn out British from India. It urged the Viceroy to desist from all negotiations with the Congress until the end of war.
Congress Ashramites played a vital role in organising the movement in different areas in the absence of top leaders. The wide participation of women was another notable feature of the Quit India Movement in Orissa. We have brought out about Parbati Giri's daring acts in Sambalpur. A host of other women activists also sprang up including Nandini Satpathy. We have shown how, in Nimapara, the wife of the zamindar and her son helped in the burning of police Thana.

The movement was joined both by high castes and low outcaste, tribals and non-tribals, and peasants and agricultural labourers/wage earners. More importantly, the notion existing at popular level that the dawn of independence was round the corner made peasants join the struggle. Peasants actions in terms of 'paddy extortion', stealing of paddy from shops/houses of paddy hoarders, cutting of trees in jungles, non-payment of revenue, burning of accounts books of Sahukars, attacks on liquor vendors, 'looting' of rice mills, 'eating away' of sweetmeats, 'stealing' of cash and opium, "ordering" the rural rich to organise feasts for the tribal 'crowd' and insisting on the host (a non-tribal caste) to join the tribals in the same feast, and looting of hats, were various forms which co-existed with the usual forms of struggle. However, broadly these forms of protest had already surfaced in these areas earlier in the 1937-39 phase - mostly due to the impulse generated by the Congress Ministry, as has been examined in the concerned chapter. In fact, during 1937-39 the notion of Swaraj came to be conceptualised in a multi-hued manner at popular levels on the basis of the assurances and expectations drawn from the very fact that it was the Congress - the saviour - which was ruling the people and not the British Government. Also, the mobilisation of peasants and tribals in these pockets/regions, during 1937-39 by the Congress leaders and especially by the Congress socialists had helped strengthen the notion. Consequently, the manifestations of nationalism at popular
levels during the course of the Quit India movement should not be seen as primarily spontaneous expressions but rather as attempts to grasp the already imbibed notion of Swaraj by the peasants - a phenomenon reinforced by the call for 'Quit India'. To be more precise, the long-term ideological orientation imparted in the course of anti-imperialist movement by the Congress had shaped the popular perception of Swaraj in varied forms.