CHAPTER III

EDITORS OF THE SAMAJ: A PEEP INTO THEIR LIFE AND ACTIVITIES
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I. Gopabandhu Das:

3.1.(a) Birth and background:

Gopabandhu Das, popularly known as Utkalmani (the Jewel of Utkal - the State of Orissa) was born in a small village (Suando) in the district of Puri on 9, October, 1877. He was born into a Brahmin family of Puri. His father Daityari Das was a muktear (Legal Practitioner) at Puri and had a reasonable practice. He was a man of progressive views and had appreciation of western education and ideas. His paternal grandfather Bhagawan Das was a great devotee of Sarala, the goddess of learning in Orissa. "His devotion to the goddess was so blind that once he caught his tongue to propitiate Her and voluntarily courted death." Thus,

1. Brahmins in the district of Puri were the most highly respected people in the State of Orissa and, claiming their lineage to the worshippers of Jagannath Temple, these Brahmins are said to be an enlightened people.

one finds the seeds of deep devotion, keen insight and critical outlook in the family in which Gopabandhu bloomed and bore rich and excellent fruit. Gopabandhu was a regular student of the Oriya Bhagavat\(^3\) of Sri Jagannath Das. However, he subsequently switched over to Shrimad Bhagavat Gita\(^4\) which became his spiritual companion. The district of Puri has a place of pride among the Oriyas in particular and Hindus of India in general owing to the presence of Lord Jagannath\(^5\). Besides, it has the largest concentration of historical monuments, "reminiscent of the wonder that was Utkal Desh"\(^6\). A large portion of this district constituted what was once known as the kingdom of Khurda, which

3. It is a spiritual treatise. It makes a thorough and comprehensive study of the problems of man and provides a suitable spiritual remedy and enables the devotee to overcome the sufferings.

4. Shrimad Bhagavat Gita is one of the most outstanding spiritual texts available in the Hindu world. It is in the nature of a dialogue between Lord Krishna, the God-head and His disciple Arjun whom the former motivated to fight against injustice.

5. Jagannath "means the Nath of the Jagat or the Lord of the Universe. HE is the highest among the Lords of the Hindus, besides as Pandit Godavarish Mishra has rightly said "the guardian of Orissa Desh".

kept the dream of an independent and united Orissa alive through centuries till she was finally crossed by the British. The kingdom of Khurdha, however, before its fall offered a very powerful challenge to the British. The Khurdha challenge reverberated through the span of time and inspired the posterity in its effort at carving out a place of honour for itself. Gopabandhu sought to arouse the public passion and emotion to the spirit of freedom.

3.2.(b) Education:

Gopabandhu passed the Entrance Examination (equivalent to the school final examination) from the Puri Zilla School. In 1899, he joined the Ravenshaw College, Cuttack, where he read upto B.A. After passing the B.A. examination in 1904 from the Ravenshaw College, he joined the M.A. and the B.L. courses of the University of Calcutta. However, he discontinued the M.A. courses and concentrated on Law. He passed the B.L. examination in 1906. Thereafter, he practised law at Cuttack.
3.3.(c) **His sources of inspiration:**

During his school days at Puri he came in contact with Mukteer Ramachandra Das, a man of unimpeachable character and unquestioned patriotism, who inspired Gopabandhu to dedicate his life to public service. Gopabandhu regarded Ramachandra Das as his political Guru (preceptor). Both Ramachandra Das and Gopabandhu Das regarded Acharya Harihar Das as an erudite scholar. Archarya Harihar Das had an aspiration to bring large scale reforms in rigid orthodoxy of the Hindu Society through the spread of education among his country men and thus, help in the inauguration of a new social order. Education remained with Gopabandhu a great passion throughout his life and he made through it a number of educational experiments. Gopabandhu read, from Ramachandra Das, accounts of French and Italian revolutions and of the heroic deeds of Mazzini and Garibaldi. The Italian revolution and its apostle seemed to have a tremendous appeal to the Oriya nationalists because they found a lot of similarity in the conditions of Italy then and India in the early
20th century. It was in this background that Gopabandhu developed a keen awareness of political process in India and the political problems of Orissa.

3.4.(d) The situation that became an eye opener:

To spread Oriya nationalism among the people of the Oriya-speaking tracts of Bengal, Central Province, Madras and Bihar, Gopabandhu actively propagated and instilled courage in the hearts of the suppressed Oriyas and kept the fire of Oriya nationalism alive. Gopabandhu built public opinion in favour of reorganising and amalgamating Oriya-speaking tracts. Singhbhum in Bihar was the focal point in this direction. There was a famine in the district of Puri in 1919. The then Revenue Commissioner could not appreciate the extent of damage done and suffering faced by the people, besides failing to give an honest account of the situation to the imperial government. Gopabandhu generated consciousness in the minds of the public, and the government officials by publishing, through newspapers, untold sufferings of the masses.
He mobilised non-official relief on a wide scale. He even went to the extent of raising it on the floor of the legislative council which met on March, 13, 1920. He furnished an eye account of the miseries of the people and indicted the government. He produced the rice husks and leaves of wild plants which were part taken by the famine stricken people as food. He also distributed photographs of some of those affected people among the members of the House. His compassion for the people distressed by floods and famines was immense.

He was also crazy about the spread of education in Orissa. To suit his whim, he sought the spread of education on Satyabadi model. Gopabandhu had novel

7. After rice is removed from paddy, the remaining hard outer-cover of the paddy is called "husks". "Husks", normally are discarded by the villagers and used as waste materials or fuels in the villages.

8. This refers to accommodation pattern at Satyabadi. Gopabandhu realised that it was not necessary to have costly buildings in order to establish a modern school and he demonstrated it in the Grove School at Satyabadi. India is a land of villages and every village has groves of coconut and mango trees. In ancient times, the old Gurukulas (or preceptor's houses) were located in such natural surroundings and there is no reason why the same old practice should not be revived to-day.
ideas of education which he tried to implement through the Satyabadi High School. Gopabandhu also raised his voice against the poor economic conditions of the people of Orissa. He mobilised public opinion against the discontinuation of excise duty on salt manufacture, and as a right to be restored to Oriyas. The East India Company established their rule in Orissa, this right was withdrawn from the people and Government imposed an excise duty on salt production. Further, salt was an essential commodity of domestic consumption and imposition of an excise duty and Government monopoly of salt manufacture had raised the price of ordinary salt. This affected the common man.

Even since his college days, Gopabandhu displayed adequate interest in matters that promoted the welfare of the community. He was concerned over the sufferings of the people in rural Orissa. Fortunately, for him, he had a few sincere friends whose commitment to the cause of social welfare and promotion of nationalism was as strong as Gopabandhu's. In his anxiety to amalgamate the different Oriya-speaking
tracts to form an autonomous Orissa Desh, (autonomous Orissa Province), bringing about social, economic and political betterment of the Oriyas and establishing them as a proud people, Gopabandhu decided not to join any government service after completion of his studies.

3.5. (e) Gopabandhu and the Oriyas in Bengal:

He spent the last year of his legal studies in Calcutta. Here he saw the wretched and humiliating conditions under which the Oriya labourers lived in Bengal. "In Union lies strength" had been his guiding principles from his student days at Puri and,

9. For details see Pandit Nilakantha's *Atmakatha* (Auto-biography) 1963, Cuttack students' Store pp. 32-35. Writing on his intimate friendship with Gopabandhu, Nilakantha writes, these were difficult days. Epidemic was raging in the villages around. "Under the shadow of human misery and helplessness we discuss the future of our people and country and decided to swear a pledge that we would not enter government service. We should do something for our people and the country. We should die, leaving our country better than what she was at the time of her birth".

as such, he set about organising associations and societies among the Oriyas and establishing Night schools to teach them the rudimentary of learning.

The call of Orissa was perenially reverberating in his ears. Though away from the beloved motherland Orissa, he could not forget her problems. It was true that it was not possible for him to render personal help owing to residence 300 miles away from the scene of activities. However, the news of flood, an annual companion of Orissa made him feel restless. He went about with his friends and colleagues, then in Calcutta, for collecting funds to bring positive help to the distressed. Besides, these activities, he had alert eyes on the emerging youngmen of Orissa who had their education in Calcutta. He busied himself in discussing his plan of future Orissa with the probable workers.

Through his efforts later on, Oriyas became a self conscious political force and demonstrated their potentiality during the non-cooperation movement besides securing for them a position of respectability.
in Calcutta. The Swadeshi movement was then in full swing and Gopabandhu had the chance of acquainting himself with the revolutionary activities there. Terrorist activities did not seem to attract him though he appreciated its ideal. Gopabandhu was always poised to act for the welfare of the people. Service of humanity was his dharma (religious duty) and he was ever ready to respond to its call. During his whole life, whenever news of the suffering of people reached his ears, he even undertook miles on foot to reach them and to console them in their distress. His presence amidst them made a difference and he brought hope to the suffering millions living in the countryside. He established a living relationship between the common man and the national life and gave national life a new dynamism and consciousness.

11. Professor S.C. Dash writes "Gopabandhu had been acquainted with the patriotism and the revolutionary activities of the Bengali youths and his acquaintance with Khudiram and his association with Shasibhusan Raychoudhury, two of the erst while stalwarts of terrorism, made his a confirmed patriot. Therefore his eagerness for social service was supplemented by his thirst for national freedom" - S.C. Dash, pp. 19-20.
3.6.(f) Gopabandhu and his public career: birth of a journalist:

In 1909, he established his Satyabadi School which grew ultimately into a centre of new ideas and thought in Orissa and inspired the people with fierce nationalism. To find expression with the emergent idea of nationalism and to propogate its message among the masses, he brought out "The Satyabadi", a literary outburst in 1915 and "The Samaj" a weekly newspaper in 1919. Gopabandhu was elected to the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council and, on its floor, he championed the cause of the poor. He tried his best to impress upon the Government the problems of his unhappy people and secure benefits for them.

Thereafter, he joined the non-cooperation movement in 1920. He brought congress to Orissa and did his best to spread its message among the Oriyas. On his invitation Mahatma Gandhi visited Orissa in 1921 to further the cause of the non-cooperation movement. Both leaders had deep regard for one another. Gandhiji
was so impressed with the sincerity and devotion of Gopabandhu that he called him "the real leader of Orissa". Gopabandhu was a valiant fighter against the British rule. He was arrested for several times. He organised a Swaraj Volunteer's Crops and addressed its meeting in violation of existing laws and was sentenced to two years imprisonment. His relentless fight against the imperial government gave a new fillip to the cause of freedom-struggle and his forcible separation from his people brought forth from his poetic and patriotic soul a magnificent revolutionary immortal poem - "The Autobiography of A Prisoner" which has remained for all time a source of inspiration to the cause of revolution. He was preeminently the one who lived and died for the people of Orissa. In its wake, he gave away everything of his for the welfare of the down-trodden. Thus, he became a byword in the nook and corner of Orissa.


3.7. (g) Gopabandhu and the Samaj:

Gopabandhu also left his lasting impression with regard to highlighting the short comings of the Oriyas through news media. He initiated its embarkment in October, 1919. He shouldered the responsibility of its editorship while selecting Radhanath Rath as his first Manager. The "Samaj" which was primarily established with a view to highlighting the sufferings of the Oriyas and to give them an identity had to pass through several vicissitudes of its existence, even as a weekly newspaper. Gopabandhu had a high sense of his editorial responsibility. Gopabandhu felt that if

14. This refers to the issue of the 11th February, 1922. He appealed as follows in consonance with his responsibility as an editor. "A newspaper publishes the news of the country. The editor will very much appreciate if news is received from all parts. If real news is received, he gladly publishes it as part of his duty. But whether a particular news is to be published and if so when and what is the extent of responsibility involved in its publication are matters which none except the editor should decide. We know that news contributors are very much elated if their contributions are published in the newspapers and they are sorry if these are not published. Such contributors should know that the first arrow does not always, hit the target. The samaj is written for Orissa's rural folks."
the Samaj was to make headway and prosper, it must be published from Cuttack. Here he decided that the Satyabadi Press should be shifted from Puri to Cuttack.

The growing popularity of the Samaj as a newspaper had made Gopabandhu more courageous and he tried to render still better service to the people. For this, it not only became very popular but it had also invited troubles for itself. The Samaj made rapid strides under leaders like Pandit Nilakantha Das, Pandit Godavarish Mishra, Pandit Lingaraj Mishra and many other eminent sons of Orissa, whose birth was to serve for the betterment of the people of Orissa.

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15. In May, 1928, a news item dealing with police oppression in Parikud was published. The police authorities demanded the name of the correspondent from the editor so that action could be initiated. But true to his high editorial standards, Gopabandhu had turned down the request saying, "we are not obliged to disclose the name of the correspondent or produce his letter. This will affect the dignity of the editor and it will be an act of treachery to the correspondent."
By 1930, the civil disobedience movement was in full swing and the Indian press had lent its full support to this nationalist movement. Gopabandhu, the founder of the Samaj was the originator of this national movement in Orissa and so the Samaj did not lag behind in supporting the cause of Indian nationalism. The Samaj raised various issues of public concern through its columns. There was no end to Government repression of the Samaj, besides it has grown its full stature. By making rapid strides in its publication, it has come off age - a daily newspaper to meet the crying need of the Oriyas to get fresh news regarding the Civil Disobedience Movement.

The history of modern Orissa synchronises with that of the Samaj. The founder of the Samaj was really the architect of modern Utkal and the leader of the band of patriots who played a significant role in the development of this province.
The father of journalism in Orissa is Gopabandhu. The *Daily Asha* was published under his inspiring guidance, though its editor was Sashibhusan Rath. Gopabandhu wrote its editorial for six years. Gopabandhu possessed a high sense of journalistic ethics. As an editor, he never published untruths and exaggerated news. Gopabandhu had, an uncanny sense of journalistic language. He realised that his paper was meant to be read by the unlettered rural people. For this, he used a style and a diction which were easily intelligible to the common masses. The *Samaj* is an institution by itself to day and this could be attributed to its founder Gopabandhu Das.

Pandit Gopabandhu was uniquely fortunate in having a band of great followers who, in their own right, were very highly educated, enlightened, cultured
and great leaders. Significant among them were Pandit Nilakantha Das, Pandit Godavarish Mishra, Pandit Lingaraj Mishra, Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra, Acharya Harihar Das and Sri Ram Chandra Rath. Pandit Nilakantha, a literary genius was an outstanding teacher who left an indelible impression on the minds of those who came across him, particularly those who had the privilege of being his students. Committed to the cause of the country, he spurned all offers of lucrative jobs from Bengal and Orissa. Pandit Godavarish, a very good looking and a highly attractive personality, was as charming as he was exciting and infecting. A lover of tidiness in food, dress and heart Godavarish was allergic to any type of shabbiness. Born in a poor family, Godavarish knew what adversity meant and how it was destructive of creative impulses. He was the first M. A. in Economics from among the Driya people and jobs of highly attractive nature were offered to him, even before he passed his B. A.
The other disciple of Gopabandhu who was also a great stalwart in Gopabandhu's struggle against the sufferings of Oriyas was Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra. An M.A. in Philosophy, he could have as well secured a nice job according to his education as also intellectual equipment, Gopabandhu had cast a spell on his mind right from his student days. Gopabandhu assigned to him a specific duty. He made historical investigation into the ancient monuments and places of historical importance with the help of a band of research workers under his own leadership. Acharya Harihar Das who subsequently also joined the Bhoodan movement of Vinoba Bhave had a frail body with a bearded face. He had an ascetic look. A brilliant teacher in

16. In 1910 on the eve of his B.A. examination, Godavarish played a role in an English play and among the audience were the then high European dignitaries of the then Bihar-Orissa. They were so much charmed with his personality and pronunciation of English that they asked him to go to England on a State Scholarship to study Agriculture. His preceptor Gopabandhu said "do you know that instead of cultivating land you have to cultivate the minds of lakhas of Oriyas? You should not waste your intelligence and energy on a profession in which you are not rooted. Please do not forget your poor brothers of Oriyas who eagerly look for your service". This was enough to strengthen Godavarish's determination to work for the Oriyas.
the classroom and more brilliant and loving as a guardian in the hostel, Acharya Harihar was directly involved in building a generation committed to the cause of the motherland. Pandit Godavarish, Pandit Nilakantha, Pandit Krupasindhu, Pandit Lingaraj, Acharya Harihar and even Sri Ram Chandra Rath were all Brahmins, a people then said to be extremely orthodox. The Brahmins, then, were extremely rigid on their dresses, food habits and mannerism.

Interestingly, Gopabandhu and his followers started a tirade against this social obscurantism of the Brahmins and deliberately did things which were most un-Brahminic. Gopabandhu denounced the social system based on inequality, injustice and exploitation.

17. Because of his habit of mixing and dinning with non-Brahmins, Gopabandhu earned the wrath of the Brahmin stalwarts who debarred Gopabandhu's father from dinning in community lunch and dinner programmes. Pandit Nilakantha had long beard (then it was only the Muslims who could keep beards). He ridiculed the so-called Brahmin traditions and customs in his writings. Subsequently all his co-patriots had beards like him.
of man by man. He was against the prevalent untouchability and permanent degradation of a class society. He visualised throughout his life, the establishment of unity and harmony amongst different castes and communities in Orissa through his moral strength and leadership of an awakened Oriya nation.

3.11.(k) Gopabandhu: A fervent advocate of democracy:

Gopabandhu had great faith in the people and in the public opinion as a positive antidote to all sorts of injustice and oppression. A sound and strong public opinion, he believed, can alone keep the Government in right track and no administration can possibly be efficient and progressive without

18. Mayadhar Mansinha writes "A blue-bodied Brahmin, he had given up his caste, prejudices and adopted untouchable boys long before Gandhiji's Harijan movement was even heard of. He always had a non-Brahmin for his cook". He advocated equality of all men, championed the dignity of man, called for the establishment of society based on love and mutual respect.

19. "Let Lord Jagannath bless us. Let our endeavour succeed. Let us become one Great Indian Nation under His banner and blue disc". It was the humblest ambition of his life to bring about new hope and courage in the hearts of those who by some in the society, feel downgraded".
getting a free public opinion. Gopabandhu recognised the role and importance of the free press in creating and guiding an educated and alert public opinion. It also helps in establishing rapport with the Government and the people. He pleaded for all power to the people: for power can remain safe in their hands alone. He said "unrestrained power will generate corruption and lead to abuse of authority". He found political restraints in the development of a free press, recognition of certain inalienable rights of the individual, spread of education and autonomy of educational institutions, growth of associations and autonomy in their working, decentralisation of power and above all, a sound and articulate public opinion.

He called upon the people to remember their history and heritage and to take their destiny in their own hands. To free the society of its aubses, to live as men of dignity and self-respect, he conveyed this message to the people through his

20. The Samaj (Editorial) 17.4.1920.
writings in the Samaj on self-government and co-operative effort. Gopabandhu realised that, for the public opinion to be effective, there is need for unity, determination and courage among the people\textsuperscript{21}. The collective life and strength of the people and its purposeful realisation can best be promoted through group efforts. Gopabandhu accepted villages with their traditional Panchayat System – the rule of the consensus – as the basis of democracy in his state and contributed his might towards the unity and strength of the nation and the stability and healthy functioning of democracy. However, his view of ideal village – with its emphasis on social harmony, economic self-sufficiency, unity of purpose and democratic way of life had the nostalgic appeal of the ancient Indian conception of social life.

\textsuperscript{21} "Neither respect nor justice can one receive from others without cultivation and realisation of self-power. The power of the people alone tames the Government and can bring about change in its policy".
He felt that with proper education and organisation, people would be able to give a good account of themselves in the governance of their state. Gopabandhu was a believer on duty rather than on right and said "the idea of duty is the legacy of the Indian tradition". According to Gopabandhu no significance could be attached to rights without corresponding duties. Gopabandhu maintained a positive attitude towards the state. He rejected the view that Government was a necessary evil. According to him, the government was responsible for the welfare of the people. Failure of the government in its duty to the people, he considered, was a sin and all those who were connected with the very machinery of government in its discharge of responsibility were participants in such sin.22

Gopabandhu felt that social reform through state legislation may not lead to desirable end. He advocated practical approach to the whole problem of social change. No measure for social reform can be adequate and effective without accompanying changes in taste, outlook and opinion of these people. Where this is not forthcoming, individuals may be encouraged to follow their moral impulses and bring about necessary changes. On widow marriage, Gopabandhu wrote "there can not be one principle for men and another for women". He said that the Pandits of Utkal (Orissa) should interpret the scripture in the light of the time. Otherwise the public opinion shall take its inevitable course. Unless people develop natural aversion to injustice, how can they prevent people from sinful conduct through the fear of punishment? Gopabandhu said social and political leaders should set noble ideals before the society.
Social reforms to be effective should begin with the natural leaders of the society. Gopabandhu hoped to bring about social transformation through the spread of modern education. Gopabandhu wanted a society free from exploitation. He said that people should develop natural disinclination to live on the labour of their fellow-men. He believed education would go a long way in cultivating such an attitude of mind and hence his emphasis on vocational and manual activity as an integral part of education. He believed that education fulfilled itself in the realisation of the very essence of life achieved through the cultivation of a life of dedication to the service of man. Gopabandhu was also conscious of the moral basis of the society. Social purpose of education was evident where life was independent, cooperative, free from exploitation and actuated by moral values, human dignity and love of man.
Administration and, ultimately, the human civilisation benefit and enrich themselves from the quest of education. He urged the government to encourage and adequately finance education, as it is the key to social growth. Social changes and consequent changes in social institutions have to come through education of public opinion. Society should be ensured freedom and opportunity to develop its collective life through efforts from within and not through directives from the power that be.

Politically, Gopabandhu visualised that the role of education could go a long way. It aims at creating a self-supporting and democratic social order, free from exploitation and class or caste antagonism alike, based on the recognition of the dignity of labour, individual liberty and fraternal equality. Gopabandhu had deep love for society, its values and traditions. He wanted it to develop itself according to its inner rhythm.
He believes that the world evolves through conflict and the divine will fulfils itself in the process of world evolution. The march of human progress inevitably proceeds through alternate principles of peace and conflict to the final establishment of truth, justice and righteousness on earth. Gopabandhu believed in universal peace as object of his daily prayer. At the same time, he claimed the right to disturb peace that sought to preserve injustice, exploitation and infringement of human dignity. With such a faith, Gopabandhu emerges as a revolutionary with a conception of moral duty to revolt against authority, out of tune with the spirit of time and out of sympathy with the moral aspirations of the people. In his view of political obedience, Gopabandhu is in the great tradition of

23. Statement of Gopabandhu Das: The Samaj 1.7.1922, Cuttack, Orissa.
political philosophers who subordinated law and government, in the West, to Natural Law, and, in India, to the rule of Dharma. He believes in the existence of the moral order independent of and superior to political authority and affirms his faith in the moral will of the individual to take its decision in matters of obedience to authority.

Harold J. Laski of course, comes up with the similar conclusion in his theory of political obedience. Gopabandhu did not subscribe to the method of violence though at the same time, he nowhere

24. Laski writes, "Neither formal competence, then, nor political power can confer a just title to obedience. With what are we left? Only, I think, with the insistence that law to be ethically valid must conform to the requirements of the system of rights the purposes of which the state exists to maintain. And since law is a command seeking to control my behaviour in some particular way, I must judge that conformity for myself as the test of its ethical adequacy. The roots of valid law, that is, are and can only be, within the individual conscience. I make law legal, so to say, by giving to its operation the consent of my conscience". For details see Laski, H.J.; The State in Theory and Practice, London, George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1956, p.82.
denounced violence as immoral. What makes the struggle moral are the objectives which are pursued. Politics was not for him divorced from the larger question of morality and moral awareness was essential to give political struggle strength and purpose. The reform had also its economic implication. People must learn to depend on themselves as regards the needs of their day to day life. That would give them self-confidence and also make it possible for them to fight the superior foreign ruler in the inevitable prolonged struggle. Long before Mahatma Gandhi, Gopabandhu realised and propagated the view that if patriotism is to be infused among the people, social service must be the means and rural reconstruction must be the process of regeneration. He was opposed to revolutionary changes. "Traditionalism was every thing to him - a nationalism
which demanded change and, depending upon circumstances, even bloody revolution".

3.14.(n) Gopabandhu : A man of high qualities:

Gopabandhu was literally a prince among men. He was possessed of a deep religious faith of the extreme orthodox type and by his high personal

25. Gopabandhu wanted the historians to study the history and tradition of their nation and transmit to their people the message contained therein. For the message of the past awakens the slumbering nation of its own destiny and inspires it with faith and moral strength. The awareness of the national tradition on the part of the people is essential for the proper fulfilment of the national destiny. The progress of the nation can alone be possible by the people remaining true to their national tradition. A people can ignore its tradition at its own peril. A profound reverence for the past combined with a fixed belief in the eternal, unceasing, inevitable progress is the philosophy of Gopabandhu. For details see Professor S.C. Dash's Pandit Gopabandhu : A Biography, pp. 23-24.
character, he showed that what helped men to be good and pure was not a belief in creeds and doctrines. The Will he dictated on his death bed had a provision for the continuation of his family देव (God) worship. It was Mahatma Gandhi's non-cooperation movement that discovered the man: Even before, he had been devoting his time and money in the service of his people. The non-cooperation campaign found him ready to dedicate himself, solely and exclusively for the service of

26. Gopabandhu made proper utilisation of his time in Hazaribagh jail. Among his co-prisoners were celebrities of India like Jagadguru Sankaracharya and Bharatikrisna Tirtha Swami. Gopabandhu came under the influence of Swamiji and started reading and discussing sacred books in Sanskrit - Mahabharat and Shrimad Bhagvat. Gopabandhu during his sojourn in jail utilised time fully in studying and writing outstanding books. Among his literary work were 'Bandra Atmakatha' (Autobiography of a prisoner), 'Dharmapada' (The exemplary sacrifice of boy architect Dharmapada at Konark Temple). His noble life in jail had created an impression on every body's mind. He was all the while immersed in deep meditation and was observing Wednesday - (a day of silence).
He was released from the Hazaribagh jail on the 26th June, 1924. For details see Dash, S. C., Pandit Gopabandhu - A Biography, Gopabandhu Sahitya Mandir, Cuttack, Grissa, 1964, pp.139-143.
his people. He gave his all to his people - his body, his purse and his soul. With the exception of Mahatma Gandhi himself I have not come across another Indian leader who was so simply clad as Gopabandhu. The only two pieces of cloth he used were his dhoti (long cloth) and his chaddar (cloth sheet used to cover the upper part of body), hand-made and hand-woven, of course. He was pre-eminently one who lived as he professed-honest, truthful, frank, guileless, simple and unostentatious. Among his people, he wielded an influence which was unique. He was the uncrowned king of Orissa. He liked a youth ever willing to work at high pressure, to give himself

27. See Lalalajpat Rai edited "The people" a weekly magazine, 28 June, 1928 and Servants' of the people Society's preface.

28. Lala Lajpat Rai estimated Gopabandhu as worthy son of motherland. This feeling of appreciation was turned into mutual infatuation when Gopabandhu and Lalaji became co-workers in the People's Society. In a letter dated the 23rd December, 1927, Gopabandhu wrote to Lalaji "I am ever ready to do whatever work and render whatever service I can to the best of my ability. What does it matter if people donot know it?" I have joined the society because I have a faith that with your cooperation, I will be able to serve God and men better. For details see Dash, S.C. Pandit Gopabandhu - A Biography, Gopabandhu Sahitya Mandir, Cuttack, Orissa, 1964, pp.171-172.
away to the care of the people and to be in the forefront of the battle. Gopabandhu had tremendous faith in organised efforts and all throughout his life, he formed groups and organisation to push through his programme. Gopabandhu's craze for public service was so great that he broke no delay in joining the servants of the people society founded by Lalaji. Gopabandhu's reputation in the society was so high that at the Lahore Annual Meeting of the Society, April, 1928, he was elected as its Vice-President - a high position in an All India organisation which no Oriya before him had succeeded in securing. Once Gopabandhu wrote a pathetic letter on the death of his brother which moved Lalaji so greatly, he said "the letter showed the real man in Gopabandhu, religious, affectionate, dutiful and selfless". Gopabandhu fell shy of the camera - man in his life time. He was photographed at a time when he could offer no resistance (that was after his death). Gopabandhu was regarded Father-figure of Orissa. His name is a byword in the nook
and corner of Orissa. One of the most significant contributions of Gopabandhu has been the Samaj which is used as a synonym of newspaper. People in Orissa rely on it so much that they hold the Samaj to be the only newspaper disseminating knowledge. Some even use terms "Oriya Samaj" or "English Samaj" when they want to refer to "Oriya newspaper" or "English newspaper". This Samaj has devoted, so far, to causes Gopabandhu held so close to his heart, even after decades of Gopabandhu's death.

II. **Dr. Radhanath Rath**

3.15(a). Birth and background:

Sri Rath was born in a Brahmin family on 7 December, 1897 in the then Princely State of Athgarh (now in Cuttack district). His father Sri Jagannath Rath was a teacher of Sanskrit.

3.16(b). Education:

Sri Rath had education upto the school final level. He plunged into the freedom struggle and
thus, he discontinued his formal education at this stage. A voracious reader Sri Rath grew in his stature as an intellectual after he left the school. Literature on politics, economics and sociology of the contemporary period seemed to interest Rath thereafter and his intense involvement in the freedom struggle of India broadened the intellectual horizon of Rath. It is probably for this that Rath has been, throughout the decades, able to present facts in Orissa and India in appropriate ways, quoting sometimes from facts and situations in the contemporary world. He seems to have read eminent sociologists, economists and political scientists of the century and his writings been adequate evidence in this regard. Because of his immense contribution in the field of journalism and public life, Rath has been honoured by the Government of India with the Padma Bhusan award in 1968. The Berhampur University honoured itself in conferring on Sri Rath the degree of LL. D. (Honoris causa) in 1976. Rath has acquired in 1983 the distinction of being awarded the Critics Reward, the award meant for the best constructive journalist in the country.
3.17(c). Forces that influenced Rath:

Among the various forces and personalities that had impact on Radhanath Rath and his career, Pandit Gopabandhu Das was decidedly the most dominant one. Rath had, in his childhood, love for the society and the people he came across. At the age of 22 years, Rath had the privilege of coming in contact with Pandit Gopabandhu Das at Chaibasa in Singhbhum district. Gopabandhu was devoting his time and energy there in organising schools in that outlying oriya speaking tract which experienced gradual extinction of Oriya language and culture. Gopabandhu, in his anxiety to benefit the dying oriya race and Adivasis of Singhbhum organised schools and tried to create consciousness among the people of that place. The greatness of the personality of Gopabandhu as also his intense patriotism and loving personality inspired Rath to build himself as a disciple of that "love and kindness personified."

Rath tried to emulate this great hero who despite his greatness was so humble in his approach and prepared himself for an appropriate role in building Orissa.

The other factor which had its impact on Rath was the Indian National Movement. The leader of the Movement Mahatma Gandhi had also tremendous influence on the growing personality of Rath. He plunged into the freedom struggle in October, 1919 and took very active part in different phases of the freedom struggle. This gave him also the opportunity to come in contact with the eminent freedom fighters of India, their ideologies and attitudes. He courted arrest for several terms and was imprisoned in 1942 for his active involvement in the Quit India Movement.

3.18(d). Entry into public life:

Rath became a Member of the Orissa Legislative Assembly in 1952 and he continued to be so as a member of the congress Party till 1961 when he
chose to be an Independent Member because of his personal differences with the then leader of the Congress Party in Orissa. In 1967 and 1971, Rath again was elected as an Independent Member of the Orissa Legislative Assembly. He had retired from politics since 1977 though he keeps minute details about politics and political affairs even at this age of 93 years. During the period from 1952 to 1961 he became Minister of Finance, Education, Development and Relief. As a Minister in the State government Rath has carved out a place of honour for himself as a Minister uncontaminated by the evils of power. The commissions of enquiry appointed from time to time in Orissa have, almost always, been assisted by Rath in arriving at the truth. As a Minister, Legislator and prominent Social Worker, Rath has made significant contributions to the growth and development of Orissa. His activities are not confined to any particular field. He has worked in several fields. He has the distinction of establishing several educational institutions and public health facilities in his own constituency and in other areas. He was a Member of different Commissions and Committees.
that worked for public good in Orissa. He was a Member of Language Commission, Hindi Sahitya Sammilan, Prayag, Orissa Students Unrest Enquiry Committee, Civil Supplies Advisory Committee, State Level Gandhi Centenary Committee, All India Newspaper Editors Conference and such other committees of importance. He was also the President of the Banpur College and the Athgarh College, Chairman State Price Undertaking Committee, Servants of the People Society (Orissa Branch) and Treasurer, Utkal Relief Committee. Rath was also the State Chief Commissioner of the Bharat Scouts and Guides, Working President of Biplabi Mahanayak Rashbehari Basu Smarak Samiti. Rath's involvement in the Indian State people's Movement has been of great help to the people who struggled for freedom from the then native rulers of the Indian States.

As a Member of the Lok Sevak Mandal and the Chairman of its Orissa Branch, Rath has rendered immense service to the grief-striken people of Orissa in particular and India in general. Even at this age,
Rath and his representatives are the first few to be available to the victims of flood, cyclone and drought, etc. His dream of being a worthy disciple of "love and kindness personified" seems to have been realised.

3.19(e). Editor of the Samaj:

Apart from being the author of Saibya (an ideal heroine of Indian mythology), and Utkalmani Gopabandhu (both the works in Oriya), story of Freedom Movement in Orissa States (in English), Rath has contributed scores of articles to English Newspapers and periodical on various subjects relating to the society. His major area of contribution has been in the field of journalism. As the editor of the Samaj, the contributions of Rath for about half a century will always be remembered.