CHAPTER-7

POLITICAL RESURGENCE IN KEONJHAR
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Twice during British Rule Keonjhar lost its peace and tranquillity. The subjects of the State rose in rebellion on two different occasions i.e., in 1868 AD. and again in 1891 AD. These two uprisings involved primarily tribal people. The leaders of these two uprising were Ratna Naik and Dharanidhar Naik, of the Bhuyan community. The causes which led to the two uprisings as well as their aftermath are the subject matter of the pages that follow.

Uprising of 1868

The Maharaja Gadadhara Narayan Bhanja breathed his last at Tribeni near Calcutta (presently known as Kolkata) on the 22nd March 1861, three years after receiving the title of Maharaja. His two queens survived him. His Chief queen or 'Pata Rani' Bishnupriya Patta Mahadei had no issue (Child). While the younger Rani, who was a phul-bibahi or a common law wife had two sons named Dhanurjaya and Chandrasekhara\(^1\). When the Raja, Gadadhara Narayana Bhanja died the question of succession became a vital issue in the State of Keonjhar. The Superintendent, Tributary Mahal received three reports from Tribeni having reference to the Raja. The first report stated the Raja's wish for succession. After his death the eldest son

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\(^1\) Jagabandhu Singh, Prachina Utkala, P.377.
Dhanurjaya or failing him the younger son Chandrasekhara would succeed to the Gadi. The second report was from the Bebartha, who made no mention about the succession. The third report was from the attendants of the Maharaja, which stated that they had seen the Raja sign the report in regard to succession. Following the death of the Raja, the Dewan or the Bebartha or the Chief Minister of the State announced on the third April 1861 that Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja had been placed on the gadi with the consent of the Rani. But on the 9th April of the same year, Brindaban Bhanja the grandson of the Raja of Mayurbhanja was sent to Keonjhar for installation there. He claimed that he had been adopted by the Raja of Keonjhar. Further the Raja of Mayurbhanja claimed that the Raja when passing through on his way to the Ganges, adopted his grandson Brindaban as son. Subsequently Brindaban Bhanja was secretly installed by the widowed Rani Bishnupriya with the help of some important leaders of the State. Again the Rani declined to accept the installation of Dhanurjaya Bhanja. She claimed that Dhanurjaya Bhanja was not the son of a phulbibahi concubine but of a mere slave girl. The question before the Superintendent was: "which of the claimants both of whom are minors have the prima facie might to be recognised as Raja". R.N.Shore closely examined the issue of the succession

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2 BGP (Political) Proceedings of the Court of the Superintendent of Tributary Mahal 19 March, 1862.
3 Ibid.
4 Feudatory State Gazetteers, P.216.
5 Ibid.
6 BGP (Political) Proceedings of the Court of the Superintendent of Tributary Mahal 19 March, 1862.
in Keonjhar. He examined the matter in accordance with the established rules as laid down by regulation 'XI' of IE 16 under which all claims of succession in the state were decided and his decision went in favour of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja. Again according to the answer to question number twelve of "Pachis Sawal", a Phulbibahi's son could succeed in default of a legitimate issue or near relation. The Superintendent was satisfied that Dhanurjaya Bhanja was the son of a Phulbibahi not of a common slave woman. In May 1862 Rani Bishnupriya on behalf of her adopted son Brindaban Bhanja made an appeal to the Lieutenant Governor of Bengal against the Superintendent Tributary Mahal. The Lieutenant Governor decided to interfere with the orders of the Superintendent. Rani Bishnupriya who felt aggrieved by the decision, went up to the High Court at Calcutta and instituted a case. The High Court upheld the decision of Mr. Shore. Then she went to appeal to the Privy-Council in England. The Privy Council too rejected the appeal. The Government of Bengal confirmed the decision of Superintendent Tributary Mahal, Cuttack and recognised Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja as the successor of the Late Maharaja Gadadhara Narayana Bhanja. The Rani was only

7 Questionnaire to the Rajas., P.12.
8 Bd. proc. (Political)(OSA Acc. No.20) F.Goldbury to Govt. of Bengal 22 June 1862.
9 Ibid (OSA Acc. No. 23) Govt. of Bengal to F.Goldbury No. 721, 13 June 1862.
10BGP (Political) November 1867 No. 20, Resolution by the Lieutenant of the Governor of Bengal 8 November 1867.
11Ibid.
12Ibid
-Feudatory State Gazetteers, P.216.
13 Ibid.
informed that Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja was recognised as the Raja of Keonjhar. At this time Dhanurjaya Bhanja was a minor and so the management of the State was vested in the hands of a Tahasildar and the Dewan\textsuperscript{14}. The Raja continued his studies at Cuttack. When he attained the majority Mr. T.E. Ravenshaw the then Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals, handed over the reins of the State to him and installed him formally on the Gadi\textsuperscript{15}. The Rani made an appeal to the Privy Council to stop the installation up to the end of the final decision\textsuperscript{16}. In the beginning Dhanurjaya Bhanja did not get the support of the tribal people. It was only later very few Bhuyan Sardars who had no support previously towards him; came to Cuttack and extended their support to the succession. It was an age old tradition that the Raja of Keonjhar had to be installed only by the people of the Bhuyan Community of the State. After the submission of these tribal leaders Mr. T.E. Ravenshaw, Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals, Cuttack expected that there would be no problem in the succession of Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja. Mr. Ravenshaw was also optimistic that the Rani would withdraw her petition filed before privy council by extending her support to the young Raja. Therefore Mr Ravenshaw assumed that the gulf between two groups had been bridged and it was unnecessary for him to accompany the young Dhanurjaya Bhanja upto Keonjhargarh. As a result he sent his

\textsuperscript{14} Feudatory State Gazetteers, P.216.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, P.217.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid.
assistant upto Anandapur along with the young Raja. They were also escorted with eight-hundred hill men upto Keonjhangarh\(^1\). But the Superintendent soon found that every thing was not as rosy as he had imagined. The Rani was actively hostile and vehemently opposed the succession of Dhanurjaya Narayara Bhanja\(^1\). The Rani claimed that both the Raj families descended from a common ancestor. It had always been the practice of the two families that in the default of a legitimate issue or near legitimate relations or one side, to acknowledge this relationship by adopting some younger members of the family on the other side. However the Superintendent said, "If that be clearly proved, unquestionable Brindaban was the rightful heir. If not the phoolbibahi's son have succeeded in similar cases in other killahs\(^1\). After the close examinations all the verdicts went in favour of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja. In the March 1862 it was declared that Dhanurjaya Bhanja the offspring of a phoolbibahi, was in the absence of legitimate heir was entitled to succeed according to the 'Pachis Sawal' of the Tributary Rajas of Orissa and by which the succession in those State was Governed\(^2\). Then Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanjha was allowed to take charge of Keonjhar when he came of age\(^2\).

\(^{17}\)Feudatory State Gazetteers, P.217.

\(^{18}\)Ibid.

\(^{19}\)BGP (Political) Proceedings of the Court of the Superintendent Tributary Mahal 19th March 1862.

\(^{20}\)Ibid, -Questionnaire to the Rajas.No.10, P.19.

\(^{21}\)BGP (Political) No.16 Govt. of Bengal to Superintendent Tributary Mahal 15th February, 1867.
In November 1867 Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja was placed in possession of Keonjhar\textsuperscript{22}.

All the activities of the Government made Bishnupriya furious. She moved by a spirit of retaliation rather than one of the reconciliation. She was on the lookout for other alternatives to turn her dream into reality. Towards November 1867 she established secret relations with the hill tribes of Keonjhar with a view to instigating them against the succession of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja\textsuperscript{23}. The tribal people who became the instrument of the Rani were mainly the Bhuyans and the Juangas who lived in the hill tracts of Upper Keonjhar\textsuperscript{24}. They were only induced formally to accept Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja as their Chief\textsuperscript{25}. The tribal leader who extended the support to the Rani was a Bhuyan young man named Ratna Naik\textsuperscript{26}.

The Bhuyan leader Ratna Naik had the extraordinary influence over the hill people. He advised the Rani to leave the palace and take up her residence at another place. This would give him and his men greater freedom of action. The Superintendent apprehended that disturbances would occur if the Rani quit the Palace. So T.E.Ravenshaw, Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals directed his Assistant to proceed to

\textsuperscript{22}BGP (Political) No.20 Resolution of the Lieutnant Governor of Bengal 8 November 1867.

\textsuperscript{23}RAB 1867-68, pp 257-259.

\textsuperscript{24}Ibid.

\textsuperscript{25}BGP (Political) T.E.Ravenshaw to Government of Bengal No. 375, 14th October 1868.

\textsuperscript{26}C.E.Buckland, Bengal under the Lt. Governors, Vol.I,(Calcutta 1902) P.421.
Keonjhar and deliver a letter to the Rani and also to explain to her that the Raja was desirous that the Rani should live in the family house. However this mission was failed and the Rani was firm in her decision.

The number of the Rani’s supporters began to grow. With the help of the Bhuyan leaders she wanted to make the installation stop. One group of the supporters of the Rani went up to Calcutta to appeal the Lieutenant Governor. But the Lieutenant Governor was of the opinion that the British Government would not do anything unless the decision of the Privy Council went in favour of Brindaban Bhanja. So Ravenshaw installed Dhanurjaya Bhanja formally on the Gadi in December 1867. The Bhuyans were very resentful of this incident. They thought that the British had interfered in their traditional rights and privileges by installing Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja on the Gadi of Keonjhar on their own accord.

The installation ceremony of Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja was attained Chiefly by the Juangs not Bhuyans. After the departure of Ravenshaw, from Keonjhar, Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja reported that none in the State except the Rani and her few supporters had only grievances against him. In the month of the December 1867, Ravenshaw made a journey through Keonjhar. He crossed the hills and established direct contact.

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27Feudatory States Gazetteers, P.218.
28Ibid.
29Ibid.
with the people. The Superintendent could feel that the subjects warmly supported the cause of Rani Bishnupriya and were hostile to Dhanurjaya. Rani Bishnupriya tried her best to have her desire fulfilled. On 16th January 1868, she proceeded to Basantapur, a village several miles away from Keonjharh. At Basantapur she consulted the Bhuyans and the Juangas and forced them to be hostile to Dhanurjaya Bhanja. The Superintendent Cuttack Tributary Mahals along with the Commissioner of Chhotanagpur keep up their support to Dhanurjaya against the will of the Rani and the hill men. The Bhuyan leader Ratna Naik who was the Chief supporter of the Rani could not reconcile himself in the installation of Dhanurjaya Bhanja. On 17th February 1868 in the presence of the Rani the final ceremony of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja was completed.

It is proper to shed little light here on the life of Ratna Naik, the hero of the insurrection of 1868. But it was to be mentioned at the outset that not many details of his life are available. A Study of the contemporary works mention that Ratna Naik was born in the village of Tarapur in or about 1820 AD. Right from his childhood he was honest, truthful and judicious. He always had a revolutionary bent of mind. In

30 Feudatoiy State Gazetteers, P.218
31 Ibid
32 Ibid.
33 Ibid. PP.218-20.
34 The Prajatantra (Saptahiki) Cuttack, April (7-13) 1991, P.40.
a hill State like Keonjhar the Bhuyans were said to be the King-maker\textsuperscript{35}. After the British occupation of Orissa they did not recognise the rights of the Bhuyans. On the contrary they were inclined to look upon them with disfavour with the influence of the Amalas\textsuperscript{36}. Restrictions were imposed even upon the meeting of the subjects with the Raja\textsuperscript{37}. The Amalas and Paikas often tortured physically to the subjects of the Bhuyan community. The fellows of the oppressed group who raised their voice for justice were severely punished\textsuperscript{38}. Even Ratna Naik was imprisoned for three days on such a charge\textsuperscript{39}. He had since then been looking for a suitable opportunity to hit-back at the system which oppressed his people. His opportunity came when Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja was installed on the Gadi with the help of T.E.Ravenshaw. Ratna Naik now upheld the cause of Brindaban Bhanja and joined the hands with the Rani. The two of them now had the common goal, a similar frustration to vent. Ultimately about the end of April 1868 the Bhuyans under the leadership of Ratna Naik rose in open rebellion\textsuperscript{40}. The Rani was the brain of the Rebellion while Ratna Naik was its active agent.

The installation of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja as the Raja of Keonjhar with the help of the British was anti

\textsuperscript{35}\textit{The Samaja 7th July, 1991.}
\textsuperscript{36}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{37}\textit{The Prajatantra Saptahiki, April (7-13), 1991, P.40.}
\textsuperscript{38}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{39}\textit{Ibid.}
\textsuperscript{40}\textit{Utkal Deepika a May 1868.}
traditional. The Bhuyan regarded themselves as "Bhumiputra" or the son of the soil. According to tradition, long years ago they had stolen a boy from the royal house of Mayurbhanja and had installed him as their Raja in conforming with their own customs and traditions. They thought that they had given them the right to install every new Raja of the State. So the interference of the British went very much against their tradition. Again it is also customary that if either of the two royal houses of Mayurbhanja or Keonjhar lacked natural heir one has to adopt a son only from the other royal house. When Gadadhara Bhanja died without a natural heir the tradition demanded the successor was to be adopted from Mayurbhanja and he was to be installed by the Bhuyans only according to their usual customs and traditions. They were mentally prepared to install Bribndaban Bhanja of Mayurbhanja on the gadi of Keonjhar as per their customs and traditions. But the interference of the British in the affairs of the installation was something which went against their basic rights and traditions, as the Bhuyans claimed the right of installing the Raja of Keonjhar. Thus it deeply affected the sentiment of the people of the Bhuyan Community.

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41E.T.Dalton, Descriptive Ethnology of Bengal (Calcutta 1872) P.144.
42Ibid
43Ibid.
44ODG Keonjhar, P.21
45Ibid.
46HFMO, P.131
To this certain economic and administrative causes were added which aggrieved the tribal people. The Bhuyans had crowned Joti Bhanja (1128 AD. to 1158 AD.) the first ruler of Keonjhar with a definite purpose, it being that they should remain the sole owner of the land. But the tradition changed. Particularly during the British rule, when the Raja came under the influence of the Amalas, Karanas, Sardars and Garhnaiks. The Bhuyans and the Juangs were exploited by the Amalas and other officials of the Raja. Garhnaiks and Paikas were appointed for the collections of taxes. They collected it according to their own will. They were also ruthless to the point of torturing the subjects to collect revenue. However they were corrupt and oppressive to a large extent. The authority to punish the evil doers belonged to the Raja alone. Yet the Paikas sometimes went to the extent of killing. Justice was a dream before the Bhuyan subjects. Again the Bhuyans as has been pointed out occupied a special position, but in land revenue administration at least they were treated at par with others and sometimes below par.

After the occupation of Keonjhar by the East India Company, the Raja and his official like the Dewans Bebartha, Vakil Garhnaiks Amins and Sarbarakaras became oppressor of the
subjects. The first settlement of the revenue was conducted during the rule of Janardan Bhanja (1792 AD to 1831 AD). In that settlement the subjects of the State were severely taxed. In addition to different taxes like plough tax and the house tax etc. there grew the system of 'Bethi' and 'Bheti'. In 1819 the Bhuyans raised their voice against Guni Patnaik, the Bebartha of the State as he imposed illegal taxes on them. The Bebartha grew oppressive day by day. Further the Bhuyans were not allowed to meet the Raja to tell him their grievances. The Bebartha and other officials became the brain of the Raja. The Raja imposed certain illegal taxes on the advise of the Bebartha. He even imprisoned some Bhuyan Chiefs who raise their voice against the injustice done towards them. In 1825 the subjects protested the Raja and his people for the harassment caused to them by the Raja and his officials. In 1814 the subjects also rebelled against the oppression of some Amalas. There were some amalas who went so far as to whip the Bhuyans severely. They sometimes forced the Bhuyans to lift weights from one maund to four maunds. However, this was not within their power. A.J.M.Mills the then Superintendent Tributary Mahals, Cuttack informed the Government of Bengal about the oppression of the Raja and his people. He wrote 'It

SRKS, P.22.
Ibid.
OJR (OSA Acc. No. 583), W.B. Bayley to T.Ravenshaw 11 May 1825.
Ibid.
Bd. proc. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 79), AJM Mills to the Govt. of Bengal No. 1876 (Date not mentioned).
is a practice of those people to extract compulsory labour from their subjects or to take a percentage of the earning to furnish supplies to the Rajas, officers or the Government servants". The Commissioner of Chhotanagpur had doubts regarding the cause of the disturbances, yet he thought that some impolitic action and maladministration of the Bebartha or the Chief Minister of the State was the root cause of the insurrection. Due to the activities of oppression and injustice Ratna Naik, one of the important Bhuyan leaders raised his voice for justice and against exploitation. So he was sent to the prison even though he was released after three days.

The negative attitude of the Raja and his officials compelled the Bhuyans to raise their voice against prevalent situation. Under the leadership of Ratna Naik, they at last rose in an open rebellion against the Raja, Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja towards April 1868.

As the ring leader Ratna Naik controlled and guided the rebellion, with the help of the Kols, the Juangs and the Bhuyans. Firstly they challenged the authority of the Raja. They collectively decided to go against the Raja and disobey

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56Bd. proc. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 79), AJM Mills to the Govt. of Bengal No. 1876 (Date not mentioned).
58Bd. proc. (Rev) OSA ACC. No. 612S), J.Johnstone to T.E.Ravenshaw, 1st April 1870.
his orders. They preferred to see Brindaban Bhanja of Mayurbhanja on the Gadi of Keonjhar. They further decided that if any person was sent by Dhanurjaya Bhanja for negotiation, he would either be arrested or detained. Thus Ratna Naik launched his open rebellion on 21st April 1868. He received support from other sections of the people like Kol-Juanga and a certain number of non-tribal people.

The open rebellion under the leadership of Ratna Naik was marching to the climax. The insurgents rushed into the Keonjhar Bazaar and went on looting and violence. They carried off the Dewan or the Chief Minister. The Saunties, one of the important sections of the community extended their support to the Raja. The rebels carried off the 'Berrah Jal' the leaders of the Saunties as he was a staunch supporter of the Raja. Afterwards they killed him. In the meantime when the insurrection was marching ahead the Raja declared the Military action against the hill men. In that encounter the insurgents disarmed twenty constables and dismounted some of the Raja's men. They plundered and burnt many villages and invited the oppressed sections of the people of Keonjhar to join hands with them. The insurgents also burnt the houses of the officers. They regarded the Bebartha with great distrust as the main instrument through whom the popular design of

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61 Ibid.
62 W.W. Hunter, Orissa, P.207.
obtaining Brindaban as Raja had been frustrated⁶³. A number of officials on one hand supported the insurgents.

The peace and tranquillity of Upper Keonjhar was completely shattered. The number of the insurgents gradually touched twenty thousand. They burnt down the houses defied the authority and violated the laws of the state⁶⁴. The insurgents who were armed with swords and bows and arrows grew more violent as time passed⁶⁵. Then the insurgents in an organised manner proceeded to the Garh. They over powered the Police, Guards, and rushed into the Raja’s palace, looted and engaged in violence. A number of Police Officers and Raja’s men were carried away as captive to the hills. Most of them were detained and the Bebartha was assassinated⁶⁶. The situation soon became out of control.

The situation of the State took a new turn. The insurgents set up a provisional Government and commenced the management of affairs on their own accord⁶⁷. Gradually the rebellious Bhuyan became furious and the Raja found himself unable to meet the situations created by the insurgents. Here he sought help from the Government⁶⁸.

⁶⁴Bd. proc. (Rev) (OSA ACC. No. 612S, J.Johnstone to T.E.Ravenshaw (Date not mentioned).
⁶⁵Ibid
⁶⁶Ibid. -Utkal Deepika, 5 May, 1868.
⁶⁷Ibid.
⁶⁸Ibid. Bd. Procd. (Political) (OSA Acc. No. 375) T.E.Ravenshaw to Govt. of Bengal 14th October 1868.
⁶⁹Utkal Deepka 9 May 1868.
On the request of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja the British Government extended Military aid. The Government was very quick in its response and Military operation soon started. T.E. Ravenshaw, the Commissioner of Cuttack, Dr. W. Hayes the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum and the Commissioner of Chhotanagpur combined their efforts against the insurrection. They sent force to march upon Keonjhar from different direction. Ravenshaw wrote a letter of warning to the Raja of Mayurbhanja, Rani Bishnupriya and other tribals not to participate in or instigate any insurrection. Any one who broke the parwana, he assumed, would be severely dealt with.

The situation in the State was grave. Dr. W. Hayes the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum marched to Keonjhar with a body of troops, with a view to suppressing the rebellion. He reached Jaintigarh on 1st May 1868 and Keonjhar six days after. Colonel E.T. Dalton had previously informed the Government of Bengal that the condition in Keonjhar was quite serious.

Police presence was strengthened by the induction of additional personnel. The Police force at Balasore was directed to remain ready.

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69Utkal Deepka 9 May 1868.
73Utkal Deepika, 16 May 1868.
Dr. W. Hayes, Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum, had some knowledge of the land and the people and also had some influence over them. He reached Keonjhar on 7th May 1868. He found extensive opposition to the Raja from the insurgents. But he also found that the whole disturbance was basically against the Bebartha. Soon after his arrival at Keonjhar, he started the military operation. The insurgents had already kidnapped the Bebartha and fifty other adherents of the Raja and kept under confinement. Dr. Hays first ensured the security of the Raja from the insurgents and directed them to release Bebartha and others. However, he was not successful in saving Bebartha. On 9th May 1868, with the co-operation of Chainbas Police, he started the military operation as a result of which a number of Melias or insurgents fled from their camps. Dr. W. Hayes was successful in saving the Raja from a similar fate by disarming the insurgents and turning them out of the Garh. Dr. Hayes proceeded to the village Tarapur, the native village of Ratna Naik. He destroyed the village by setting it on fire. Still, they did not get any information about the Dewan and other captives. From there, he went to Bethipara and made an enquiry. The inhabitants of Bethipara

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76 Ibid., P.423.
77 C.E. Buckland, PP.420-426.
78 Ibid., P.423.
79 Bd. Proc(Political)(OSA Acc. No. 48) T.E. Ravenshaw to Govt. of Bengal 4th May 1868.
did not extend any co-operation and gave him no information about the rebels.

Dr. Hayes then changed his methods to one of conciliation. On reaching Keonjhar he found a hostile atmosphere which did not help him in any way. He faced strong resistance at Janardanpur, three miles away from Keonjhar. The insurgents resisted him with their traditional arms like bows and arrows, as a result of which, the British opened fire. A large number of Bhuyan rebels were dislodged from their strongholds and disarmed. But the rising leader Ratna Naik and his companions like Nanda Naik, Nanda Pradhan, Babu Naik, Dasarathi Kuanr, Padu Naik and Tuni Pradhan did not surrender. They had taken a vow earlier that they would go on with the rebellion until the coronation of Brindaban Bhanja on the Gadi of Keonjhar.

Dr. Hays now applied a new strategy. He requisitioned more troops. Very soon the Government of Bengal directed the Commissioner of Cuttack and Chhotanagpur to depute more troops. Accordingly, troops were despatched from Cuttack and Chhotanagpur. Mr. Poole, Assistant Superintendent of Garhjat Police with a party of forty constables proceeded to Anandapur with special instructions to keep open the line of

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82Ibid.
84J.Patniak, Biplabi Dharanidhar (ATDC Bhubaneswar, 1992) P.,10
85Utkal Deepika 16th May 1868.
communication between Anandapur and Keonjhar^86. He was, however, not successful. Mr. Risdale was sent with a force to enter Keonjhar through Dhenkanal. Babu Harekrishna Das, Assistant Superintendent of the Tributary Mahal was also deputed to Keonjhar^97. After their arrival Dr. Hays started another expedition against the insurgents^88. He also applied the principle of 'divide and rule'. He wanted to break the alliance between the subjects of lower Keonjhar and the Bhuyans. So he advised the subjects of lower Keonjhar not to participate in the insurrection. He also stationed strong guards and armed Paikas in that region to ensure safety and security. Some of the Policemen were engaged in keeping open postal communication with Keonjhar. Nearly 1134 officers were employed for the suppression of the disturbance of 1868 in Keonjhar. The Bhuyans did not lose their patience. They cut off postal communication with Cuttack, and Chainbasa by plundering the mail on transit^89. Mr. Ritchie attacked the Bhuyans with a group of fifty police personnel. About two thousand Bhuyans countered the British force. He then opened fire^90. The whole of Upper Keonjhar was full of Military personnel. The Commissioner of Cuttack directed the Assistant Magistrate, Bhadrak to supply rice and foodstuffs for the

^87Utkal Deepika 30th May 1868.
^89C.E. Bucklard Op.cit P.244.
^90Ibid.
reserve police at Anandapur. A large number of zamindars were also directed to provide assistance to the Army.

On the 19th. May 1868 T.E. Ravenshaw made declaration that the Governor General-in-Council had bestowed the Authority of Keonjhar on Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja and asked the people to support him without hesitation. All opponents of the Raja who favoured the insurgents or aided them, were to be punished. Further, he issued a notification which stated that Dr. Hayes, the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum had been entrusted with the duty and responsibility of a sub-judge in the state of Keonjhar. However, Dr. Hayes was placed under the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals Cuttack.

At this time the insurgents had to face a setback which gave a new turn to their activities. In the midst of the rebellion Krishna Chandra Bhanja, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanja who had extended his support to Rani Bishnupriya, changed his mind and withdrew his support to her. The Raja was induced by the British Government to do so. He now supported the British Government. By the order of the Government, dated the 21st. May 1868 Brindaban Bhanja was kept under confinement at

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91 Bd. proc. (Jud) (OSA Acc. No. 341B) T.E. Ravenshaw to Assistant Magistrate Bhadra: 14 May 1868.
93 Ibid
94 Ibid, 30 May 1868.
95 Ibid, 30 May 1868.
Balasore. Ravenshaw ordered the Assistant Superintendent of Balasore to detain Brindaban Bhanja there.

The Bhuyans continued their rebellion without losing heart. They plundered the British camps and disrupted all communications and connections of Keonjhar with the outside world. The Government of Bengal ordered troops to advance up to Keonjhar from all directions with immediate effect. Col. Dalton of Chhotanagpur proceeded towards Keonjhar from the north-eastern side. Ravenshaw reached Anandapur with huge detachment. In the month of May there were skirmishes between the troops and the rebels. Assistant Magistrate of Bhadrak also sent a detachment of troops to Anandapur. Ravenshaw reached Keonjhar on 7th July 1868. Thus, the total number of officers in Keonjhar were 1134.

About two thousand armed Police reached Keonjhar within July of the same year. They were supplied from Chainbasa, Midnapur, Balasore, and Cuttack. After the arrival of Col. Dalton in Keonjhar towards June of the same year; operations were launched against the insurgents. He started his operations from the north-eastern directions of Keonjhar and

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95Bd. proc. (Political) (OSA Acc. No. 10) Inspector of Mayurbhanj to T.E. Ravenshaw, 28 May 1868.
96Ibid., Ravenshaw to Govt. of Bengal No. 375 14 October 1868.
97Utkal Deepika 6th June 1868.
98HFMO Vol.II P.104.
100Utkal Deepika 1 July 1868.
102Utkal Deepika, 11 July 1868.
compelled some of the insurgents to surrender\textsuperscript{103}. Col. Dalton burnt down some villages which mostly supplied the ranks of insurgents. Afterwards some insurgents surrendered to him. But a large number of insurgents fled into inaccessible forests. At the same time Lieutenant Hunter succeeded in the finding and rescuing a party of constables from confinement at a village which was the headquarters of Ratna Naik. A large number of Bhuyan leaders surrendered at this place. But prominent leaders like Ratna Naik, Nanda Naik and Tuni Rana did not surrender\textsuperscript{104}. Government announced rewards for the capture of the rebels\textsuperscript{105}. Subsequently a number of Bhuyan rebels were captured\textsuperscript{106}. Other chiefs and Rajas extended active help to the British Government. Raja Bindheswari Prasad Singdeo of Udayapur and the Raja of Chhotanagpur extended their strong support to the Government. Even the Raja of Mayurbhanja extended help and co-operation to the Government\textsuperscript{107}.

The insurgents could not counter the British strategy. The rebels lost heart. The Bhuyan headmen tendered submission and a number of leaders were captured. Lastly the Raja of Pal-lahara made all efforts to capture Ratna Naik, who was believed to have fled into that State. He succeeded in his

\textsuperscript{103}Utkal Deepika, 11 July 1868.
\textsuperscript{-C.E.Buckland, Op.Cit, P.424.}
\textsuperscript{104}Ibid
\textsuperscript{105}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{106}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{107}Ibid, pp.424-426 
\textsuperscript{-Feudatory State Fazetteers, P.222.
efforts and the Ratna Naik was captured. Nanda Naik was subsequently captured by the Raja of Bonai. Towards August 1868 the atmosphere of Keonjhar was brought back to normal. A number of people were rescued from confinement. But no trace of the Bebartha was found. Later on, his death in the hands of the insurgents was confirmed. By the end of the same month the work of pacification had progressed so far that the troops could be gradually withdrawn.

With the capture of the rebels the political climate which had become hot began to cool down. Col. Dalton returned to Ranchi, Ravenshaw returned to Cuttack with the captured rebels. Ratna Naik and other rebels were confined at Cuttack Jail for trial. Ravenshaw did not show any generosity or leniency to the insurgents. He then arranged a judicial enquiry into the offences of the prisoners. Along with the common charges of waging war against the Raja they were changed with plunder, dacoity and kidnapping of the Bebartha etc. One hundred and eighty three persons were sent for trial. Among the prisoners Ratna Naik, Nanda Naik, Ramia Kol, Tuni Naik, Dasarathi Kuanr, Pada Naik were sentenced for

109Utkal Deepika 5th September 1868.
111Bd. Procd. (Gen) (OSA Acc. No. 8k),T.E.Ravenshaw to Govt. of Bengal No. 126T 30 August 1868.
112Utkal Deepika 5 Sept, 1868
113Ibid, 10th October 1868.
114Feudatory State Gazetteers. P.222
death. Twenty seven captured insurgents including Banamali Rana and Gangadhara Mohapatra were sentenced to transportation for life. Thirteen persons were sentenced to transportation for twelve years and above, and eleven persons to transportation or imprisonment for ten years. Besides these thirty persons were sentenced to imprisonment for seven years and fifty one persons were imprisoned for less than seven years. Rewards were announced for the apprehension of the absconders. For the proper maintenance of peace and security two hundred armed policemen were stationed at Keonjhar under one Assistant Superintendent of Police. Lieutenant J.Johnstone was empowered with the powers of a subordinate Judge. He was posted at Keonjhar to advise the Raja at least for a period of three years.

The trial was held at Cuttack. After making a thorough enquiry, punishment was awarded to the insurgents. Six rebels including Ratna Naik were awarded death sentences. Ratna Naik and his fellow friends were, however, executed on 30th November 1868 in the Cuttack Jail. It is believed that a severe, but necessary, example was made as a warning against similar outbreaks in future.

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115C.E.Buckland, Op.Cit, P.426
116Ibid.
117Vide Appendix No.F Judgment of the Trial
118Utkal Deepika 15th August 1868.
A sum of Rs.1,303/- was spent for the suppression of the rebellion\textsuperscript{119}. Half of the expenditure was collected from the Raja of Mayurbhanja as he was involved in suppressing the rebellion. One-fourth of the burden was borne by Keonjhar, and the rest was taken by British Government\textsuperscript{120}.

The effort of Ratna Naik ended in failure. There were many causes which contributed to his failure. The Raja of Mayurbhanja betrayed the rebellious Bhuyans by withdrawing his support from them at the crucial hour. Had the Raja of Mayurbhanja withdrawn his support, or the neighbouring Rajas would not support the British, Ratna Naik could have been successful in his effort. Another cause of his failure was that he lacked the co-operation of the people of lower Keonjhar. The people of lower Keonjhar were indifferent to the rebellion. Most of the people of Upper Keonjhar were tribals, whereas the people of Anandapur were not tribals. Therefore, it is considered that they did not have much sympathy for a rebellion of the Bhuyans. Thirdly, the British applied the principle of "divide and rule" and it was successful. As a result of this a crack appeared in the organisation of the insurgents. The Raja of Mayurbhanja detached from the mainstream. Lastly, good strategic position and organisation, as well as, communication of the British foredoomed the Bhuyan rebellion to failure.

\textsuperscript{119}Utka Deepika 31st October 1868.
\textsuperscript{120}H.K. Mahatab, \textit{Odissa Itihasa} (Cuttack 1948) P.375.
Harekrushna Mahatab writes "The Keonjhar tribal was a savage precaution in which justice was sacrificed for the sake of the political motive\textsuperscript{121}, when the Bhuyans in Keonjhar demanded their birthright and tried to defend it. On the other hand the British Government applied the principle of 'might is right' only to save its interest. When the Bhuyans were in a state of nature they enjoyed complete independence in selecting their Raja. But the interference of the British in selecting the Raja after the death of Gadadhara Bhanja, humiliated the Bhuyans. The customary right of the Bhuyans to choose their king was affected and the vested interests of the British were protected. "If the British own victory it would be an infamous victory\textsuperscript{122}".

"Ratna Naik the leader of the Bhuyans stood for the human rights\textsuperscript{123}. In the true sense of the term Ratna Naik stood against oppression and economic exploitation of the Raja and his men. He never surrendered before the British. He was captured and after a mockery of a trial, was hanged. The widow Rani went to Cuttack, and finally, to Puri. Nothing was known about her last days. The long drama was completed. Very soon the situation of Keonjhar State changed due to the able administration of J. Johnstone\textsuperscript{124}.

\textsuperscript{121}HFMO Vol.II, P.405.
\textsuperscript{122}Quoted in Utkal Deepika 25th July 1868.
\textsuperscript{123}B.Das, Bhanjabhumi Kendujhari Barbil 1991 P. 391.
\textsuperscript{124}RAB 1870-71, PP.77-80.
All through the history of Keonjhar during the British rule, Ratna Naik stood as a hero. Though hanged, he became one of the illustrious examples for future generations to emulate. His execution encouraged the Second Rising in 1891, and his guiding spirit created another hero. He was none else other than Dharanidhar Naik, also belonging to the Bhuyan community.

As long as twenty-three years had gone by since the Bhuyan rebellion that has come to be known as Ratna’s uprising. Feudal oppression continued unabated in Keonjhar. The prevalent administrative system remained insensitive to the feelings of the people. When the situation became intolerable, the people raised their voice again. Tribals such as the Bhuyans, Kols, Juangas and Mundas took part in the rebellion that ensued. The vital role as in the earlier rebellion, however, was played by the Bhuyans.

**Uprising of Dharanidhar Naik, 1891**:

After the great rising of 1868 in Keonjhar, Raja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja Deo was secure on the Gadi. This time he tried his best to bridge the gulf between the Durbar and the tribal communities. But the past hostilities between the Raja and the tribals, in particular the Bhuyans, was not to be easily forgotten. The Bhuyans were still apprehensive of the oppression and exploitation of the Raja and his officials. So Capt. J. Johnstone, Special Assistant to the Superintendent
of the Tributary Mahals, took over the charge of Keonjhar. He extended help and guidance to the Raja in the field of administration and management of the State.

The question of 'tax collection' in the Bhuyan Pirh and Juanga Pirh became an important issue in course of time. Taxes in these Pirhs were usually collected by the Sardars. These Sardars naturally had a tremendous influence in the hilly areas of Upper Keonjhar. Along with the tribute to the Raj, there were a number of 'Maharaja's demands' which Mr. Wylly calls 'bethi' as an organised institution. The term betni means unpaid labour. Of course the practice of service to the Raja without any payment had been in vogue since long. This is traced back to the times when Joti Bhanja, was stolen by the Bhuyans of Keonjhar from the Royal house of Mayurbhanja. But towards the last decade of the 19th century this practice of 'Bethi' became more rampant and acute. The most to suffer from this were the Bhuyan and the Juanga tribes. They had to render different types of unpaid service to the Raja. The system which was voluntary to begin with, became a claim of

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126Ibid.
127SRKS, P.41
128Ibid.
130Ibid
131K.M. Mishra, Kendujhara Itihasa (Cuttack 1930), P.10.
132Fakir Mohan Atmarcharita (Cuttack 1948) P.187.
the Raja with the passage of time. The following is a list of the free services which the Raja claimed as a matter of right.\textsuperscript{133}

1. The Bhuyans were liable to supply ropes and timber, and all labour required for the \textit{Ratha Yatra} (Car festival) and other religious occasions. This was known as \textit{Ratho}\textsuperscript{134}.

2. They were also liable to supply labour for all Government Officers touring the \textit{BhuyanPirhs}, as well as such rasad as is obtainable, being paid for all labour and supplies thus furnished at current price\textsuperscript{135}.

3. They were also required to supply labour for carrying the Maharaja's luggage whenever he travelled, not only in the \textit{Bhuyanpirh}, but in other parts of the State, and even outside it. In return for the services, the porters received their daily food but no wages from him\textsuperscript{136}.

4. They were liable to supply rasad to Maharaja when he travels in \textit{Bhuyanpirh} at prevalent prices. These three classes of \textit{bethi} are known as 'Gohma'\textsuperscript{137}.

\textsuperscript{133}Bd. Procld. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 617S), Resolution No. 1064P 19th March 1894.
\textsuperscript{134}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{136}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{137}Ibid., Letter to M.Das 19th Nov. 1894.
5. They were also required to thatch the Maharaja's house and to provide all materials therefor, without charge. This was known as 'kanto'.

6. By custom they were to pay a proportionate rent in kind on terms favourable to the Maharaja. This is known as 'Kiran'.

7. The supply of a certain number of goats from each pirh at the Parban Puja (Dussera festival) free of cost.

8. They were further required to render certain offerings of fruits and vegetables to the Maharaja, the Senior Maharani, the heir-apparent, and the bebartha, the pradhans of each village every year, after the harvest season, in return for a piece of tussar (a variety of silk) cloth from the Maharaja and the others, as also something as khuraki (food).

These feudal claims were known as the 'Bethi' system. Mr. Wylly called it 'bethi' as a recognised institution. The Raja and his officials became opportunists in course of time. Gradually they converted the voluntary offerings into their claim. The Bhuyans tried to meet these demands as best as they

139Ibid.
140Ibid.
141Ibid.
142Ibid.
could, according to their capacity, but never satisfied the Raja, who went on adding to his demands. The demands were often exorbitant and exceeded the capacity of the Bhuyans to meet. The Lt. Governor found that the claim for the supply of ropes and timber and all the labour required for the Rathayatra (Car festival) was admitted by the Bhuyans themselves. In case of the *bethi* known as 'gohma', the Bhuyans were to supply labour as porters only within their territory, whenever the Maharaja travelled in those parts. The Superintendent declared, "Even if that were conceded, it is possible that a claim theoretically sound might be pushed in practice to excess." The Bhuyans had represented, as one of their chief grievances the fact that, the Maharaja had taken a large number of them, for long periods, away from their homes and hills, to which they were devotedly attached, to carry his luggage to and from Patna. The *Kanto* was another type of *bethi* under which the Bhuyans were to supply all materials as well as free labour. Here the Bhuyans also had a grievance that the Maharaja, instead of calling upon the *Juangs* or the inhabitants of Bhuyan villages nearer to the Garh, enforced such service from those who lived in distant *pirhs*; and kept them away a long time from their homes and fields. There was another grievance of the Bhuyans about the supply of goats for

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145 Ibid
146 Ibid.
the Parbana Puja. The Bhuyans were to supply goats for the Puja. The Raja and his officials demanded more and more goats, and it was beyond the capacity of the Bhuyans to meet the growing demand. The irregular appointment and frequent removal of the Sardars in the Bhuyanpirhs, agitated the Bhuyans. According to the feudal custom the appointment of the Sardars was vested in the Raja. Mr. Cooke records, "The post of Sardar is one that is the gift of the Maharaja......". Ravenshaw had ordered twenty one years earlier i.e., in 1873, that "no pir Sardars shall be ousted by the Maharaja from his post except for misconduct proved to the Superintendent's satisfaction and with his approval, and a clause to this effect should be inserted in the new leases". Since the appointment of Pir Sardars depended solely on the Raja, they were obliged to do his bidding. These Sardars were often oppressive beyond words. So the people were in no mood to accept them.

Like the Bhuyans, the Juangs also became victims of the system of bethi as employed by the Raja and his officials. They also had to supply labour to the Raja, without the benefit of payment. They had to act as porters in transporting the luggage of the Raja gratis. Hence, along with the Bhuyans, the Juangs too, were displeased with the Raja and disgusted with the feudal system.

147Bc. Procd (Rev) (OSA Acc No. 617S) Resolution No. 1064P 19th Nov.1894.
148Ibid.
149Ibid.
As has been seen Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja came to the Gadi of Keonjhar after the Rebellion of 1868, with the help of the British. The Bhuyans, who had been humbled, apprehended that the Raja would be vengeful in his dealings with them. They expressed this foreboding in a meeting held on the 11th May, 1869. They further apprehended that the oppression would be greater in the absence of British interference. Following the suppression of the Rebellion of 1868, Captain J. Johnstone, Special Assistant of the Tributary Mahals, remained in charge of the affairs of Keonjhar and the whole administrative system went on smoothly under his supervision. He tried his best to establish cordial relationship between the Chief and the tribal people. He submitted a proposal to Mr. T. E. Ravenshaw, Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals, to add upper Keonjhar to the Chhotanagpur Division. Only Lower Keonjhar or Anandapur was to be retained by Raja Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja. Ravenshaw, however, did not approve of the suggestion made by Capt. Johnstone. On the contrary, the Raja of Keonjhar was vested with greater powers and responsibility in the management of the State. In 1871 Capt. J. Johnstone was replaced by William W. Hunter, who continued in the post upto 1877. He was not as efficient and cool-headed as Johnstone, nor as considerate of

150 Be. Procd (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 612S) J. Johnstone to T. E. Ravenshaw 1st April 1870.
151 Ibid.
152 Ibid.
153 Ibid.
the subjects. The Raja and his officials took full advantage of his deficiencies\(^{154}\). In slow degrees they increased their demands on the people. The resentment of the people grew as the burden on them increased. This resentment turned into opposition over the years. It found expression at last in a Rebellion in 1891, led by Dharanidhar Nayak.

There is no record of the birth and early life of Dharanidhar, the hero of the Bhuyan rebellion of 1891. The Bhuyans of Keonjhar in the mid-nineteenth century did not have much to do with records. The matter is further complicated by the absence of any other authentic source of information. On a study of other contemporary works, Prof. Jagannath Patnaik, fixes the date of Dharanidhar’s birth as 5th. May, 1864\(^{155}\). He was born in a small village named Kusumita that lay snug at the foot of the Gandhamardan hill in the Gandibeda Dandapat, about 13 Kms. from Keonjhangarh. He was born and brought up in a poor Hill Bhuyan family. His father was Laxman Nayak and his mother, Bayani Debi. Dharanidhara was the seventh and youngest child of his parents. His other brother and sisters were Gopala, Tara, Tuni, Asala, Amapa and Madhumati\(^{156}\).

Dharanidhar Nayak had a tremendous aptitude for study right from his childhood. He completed his early education in

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- The Prajatantra Saptahiki (Cuttack 21-27 April 1991) P.42.

\(^{156}\) J.Patnaik, Op.-Cit, P.12
his own village. Then he went to Keonjhargarh for middle school education. He was able to secure a scholarship from the Raja of Keonjhar and proceeded to Cuttack where he was admitted into the Cuttack Survey Training School\(^{157}\). While at Cuttack, he put up at the palace of the Raja of Keonjhar at Tulasipur\(^{158}\). He was an intelligent and clever boy. He completed his study of survey at the age of twenty three in 1887. Then he worked for 19 years as a Surveyor in the Keonjhar State, without any payment\(^{159}\). He gave up his job at the end of this period and went to Mayurbhanj probably because he thought he had worked long enough without payment for the scholarship he had obtained. He spent four years in Mayurbhanj and then returned to his native village.

Dharanidhar was a simple man, polite in his behaviour and honest in his dealings. He was an excellent and sincere worker, devoted to his work. His work as a Surveyor in Keonjhar endeared him to the people. But he was himself dissatisfied with the treatment meted out to him. When he came to join as a Surveyor at the Court of the Raja, no seat was provided to him. He had to sit on a carpet on the floor. On the other hand, there were seats provided for the Amalas and others. Dharanidhar felt humiliated, though he concealed his feelings from others.

\(^{157}\)Fakir Mohan Atmacharita (Cuttack, 1963) P.159
\(^{158}\)Ibid.
\(^{159}\)Ibid.

-The Prajatantra Saptahiki (21st April to 27th April 1991) P.43.
Babu Bichitrananda Das, Assistant Manager of the State, could not tolerate Dharanidhara. The reason for his dislike was that Bichitrananda Das was less educated than Dharanidhara. So every moment he planned to oust Dharanidhara and bring him to disrepute. However, Bichitrananda did not possess a good background. Prior to his appointment as Assistant Manager he was a Peshkar at Anandapur. Before that, he was an 'Amla' in the Collectorate at Cuttack. He was dismissed when a case of stamp robbery came to light at the Cuttack Collectorate. Then Bichitrananda came to Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja, confessed his involvement in the stamp robbery and pleaded for mercy. The Maharaja was moved by his pleas and appointed him as a peshkar at Anandapur. He was so negligent in his duties that a mar engaged on bethi under his supervision was killed. He was found responsible in the matter and was penalised with a fine of Rs.30.

By the order of the Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja, Dharanidhar Nayak was deputed to the Keonjhar-Singhbhum border to survey the boundary line. There was at that time a boundary dispute between Keonjhar and Singhbhum. With a view to settling the disputed land, he went to the village of Lungikuda and Godhuli in the Champua subdivision. He sent

160Fakir Mohan Atmcharita (Cuttack 1963) P.159.
161Ibid.
162Ibid, P.163.
daily reports of the survey by a 'dauda-paika' or runner to the Maharaja. Bichitrananda Das contrived to acquire the papers and put them before the Raja as his own performance. His second opportunity came when Dharanidhara went to his sister's house at Padmapur on the Champua-Keonjhar road. Bichitrananda Das painted the absence of Dharanidhar as 'negligence and deceit in the performance of duty'. Thus Bichitrananda defamed Dharanidhar before the Raja and correspondingly inveigled himself into his good books.

Bichitrananda Das presented all papers comprising survey reports before the Raja, and painted Dharanidhar as a man who was bent upon setting the subjects up against him. The Raja fell into the trap and dismissed Dharanidhar from service. Dharanidhar then went away to Mayurbhanja where he found work as a Surveyor. The Raja of Keonjhar later felt that he had lost an efficient man. He recalled Dharanidhara to Keonjhar.

Along with the political and administrative causes the economic factor also prompted the insurrection. Before the disturbance of 1868, the inhabitants of the Bhuyanpirh, paid certain tributes in kind and rendered personal service. But the services were not clearly specified. Captain J. Johnstone made a settlement in Upper Keonjhar. In a report dated 1st. April, 1870 he wrote, "I am happy to state that the Bhuyan Chiefs have formally accepted my terms and agreed to pay a

plough tax of eight annas in lieu of service and of all other
dues in kind. Men who have not got ploughs will pay a poll tax
of 4 annas, and each house will in addition pay a school cess
of one anna per annum"\textsuperscript{165}. He imposed rent on the *jagir*\textsuperscript{166} and
*paikali* land. He also concluded a settlement of the *Dan* or
gift lands usually in the possession of the Brahmins. This was
not, of course, to their liking\textsuperscript{167}.

Captain Johnstone also paid attention to Lower Keonjhar
or Anandapur. Here also he assessed the *paikali* land (land
belonging to *paikas*), the *dan* or gift land, the *jagir* land,
etc. The land revenue was increased by two annas per *Mana* or
acre. The total amount of revenue, thus, increased to
Rs.46,330-8 annas 4 pahulas (Rupees Forty Six Thousand three
hundred thirty and eight annas four pahulas)\textsuperscript{168}. In January
1873, Mr.T.E.Ravenshaw went on a tour through Keonjhar. He
expressed great satisfaction with the settlement of Johnstone.
With regard to the settlement in the Juangpirh, he wrote "In
the Juangpirh the people have by preference adhered to the
old-established custom; they pay no money rents, but
contribute a small tribute in kind, consisting of pulse and
vegetables. The villages are close behind the hills adjoining
Keonjhargarh, and the Juangs provide firewood and thatch for

\textsuperscript{165}Bd. Procd. (Rev)(OSA Acc No. 617), Resolution No. 1964 P, 19th March 1894.
\textsuperscript{166}SRKS, P.41
\textsuperscript{167}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{168}Bd. Procd(Rev)(OSA Acc No. 617S), Report on Disturbances in Keonjhar 19th March
1894.
the Raja's premises, and give labour during repairs, and when
the Raja goes into camp the men accompany him and carry his
baggage. For the services rendered the Juangs are paid in
money if they wish it, but more generally in cloth and rice.
The people prefer this system, and are very averse to any sort
of money or fixed payments\textsuperscript{169}.

There was little interference by the British in the
settlement of the Maharaja in 1881 and 1890. In his
settlements he increased the revenue. He also made greater
feudal claims upon the Bhuyanpirh and the Juangpirh which
added to their burden\textsuperscript{170}. His settlement revitalised the system
of bethi and begari, turning these into regular institutions.
The subjects were, thus, exploited economically and this
became a cause of the insurrection.

It was 1891, the year which marked a turning point in the
history of the State. That year the people of the Bhuyan
community rose in a rebellion against the Maharaja and his
officers. Work at the Machhakandana Jora provided the
immediate cause for the Bhuyans to rise. The Jora, which
started from the Bararaon Pahar, south of Keonjhar, flowed
in a northerly direction. Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhan-
\textsuperscript{\textsuperscript{a}} desired to construct a barrage to share the water of the
stream which could then be carried to Keonjhar through a

\textsuperscript{169}Bd. Procd (Rev) (OSA Acc No. 617S) Report on Disturbances in Keopjhar, 19th March
1894.

\textsuperscript{170}Ibid.
channel. This would provide irrigation to a drought prone region as also water to the town in plenty.

The excavation of the canal was without doubt, a good idea. Fakirmohan Senapati, the then Manager of the State, prepared an estimate of the expenses which amounted to ten thousand rupees\textsuperscript{171}. The responsibility for the excavation of the canal was assigned to Babu Bichitrnananda Das, the Assistant Manager\textsuperscript{172}. His high handiness and oppression in the execution of the project ultimately gave rise to great discontentment.

Bichitrnananda Das wanted to engage the Bhuyans and the Juangs in \textit{bethi} in excavating the canal\textsuperscript{173}. The Bhuyans of the nearby pirhs had to come in turns to dig the canal through hard rocks. To cut the hard rock with a stout iron crow bar was no doubt a difficult task. Each worker had to work from morning till evening\textsuperscript{174}. Towards midday he had a few hours for rest\textsuperscript{175}. Fakirmohan Senapati has given a vivid picture of this in his autobiography. The 'Bethia' or labourer who had brought rice with him had to cook his own meal and eat. Anyone who had not brought his food had to starve\textsuperscript{176}. Any negligence in the

\textsuperscript{172}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{173}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{174}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{175}Ibid.
\textsuperscript{176}Ibid.
work called for severe punishment by Bichitrananda Das\textsuperscript{177}. All through the summer days these workers had to work, many of them with empty stomachs. This inhuman treatment meted out to them by Bichitrananda Das and Narayan Poi, the head constable, made their lives miserable and made them resent the Maharaja and his officials. It rose to a boiling point. They planned to kill Bichitrananda Das. He managed to flee to safety, and thus, escape their immediate wrath\textsuperscript{178}. The Bhuyans held meetings at Rimuli and Handibhanga against Bethi\textsuperscript{179}. Bichitrananda Das and Narayan Poi made a surprise visit. He had seventy Bhuyans arrested. Of these ten were later executed\textsuperscript{180}. Such inhuman exploitation of the tribals by the Raja and his officials filled the heart of Dharanidhar with revulsion. He felt in his innermost being that this had to be resisted. So he set about organising the Bhuyans.

By this time Dharanidhar had already returned from Mayurbhanja to his native village Kusumita\textsuperscript{181}. This time too, Maharaja Dhanurjaya appointed him as a Surveyor to work on the boundary dispute along the Keonjhar-Singhbhum border. While there he came to learn that his brother Gopala Nayak and

\textsuperscript{177}Bd. Procd (Rev) (OSA Acc No. 617S) Report on Disturbances in Keonjhar, 19th March 1894.
\textsuperscript{178}Ibid
\textsuperscript{179}J. Patnaik, Op.Cit., P.16
\textsuperscript{180}Odiya O Nabasambada 11 July 1891.
\textsuperscript{181}Bd. Procd (Rev) (OSA ACC No. 612S) Report of J. Johnstone on Keonjhar Disturbances. 1st April, 1870.
twenty other Bhuyans had been imprisoned by the Raja’s men, i.e., Bichitrananda Das and his close associates.

The arrest of his brother and the other Bhuyans had a profound influence on the life of Dharanidhar. He took up their cause in all seriousness. His mind slowly moved towards bringing about an end to the system of oppression. He soon quit the job and decided to lead his fellow Bhuyans against Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanj and his men.\(^{182}\)

Dharanidhar Nayak wrote an application to the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals highlighting the oppression of the Bhuyans by the Raja and his people.\(^{183}\) He forwarded the copy of the application to the Manager of the Mayurbhanja State.\(^ {184}\) But his effort bore no fruit. He then took to the extreme path. He proclaimed himself to be the adopted child of the Chief Queen (Maharani ka Putra)\(^ {185}\) and began to hold court where he tried cases and dispensed justice. He created public opinion against the feudal oppression and exploitation. He convened a meeting at Handibhanga under the leadership of Bhuban Palai. The next meeting was arranged at Rimuli. On the advice of Dharanidhar, the Bhuyans set up a Working Committee with Bhuban Palai as President, Dama Nayak as Secretary, and Kukuria Pradhan,\(^ {182}\)Odiya O Nabasambada 11th July 1891.

\(^ {183}\)Bd. Procd. (Pel) (OSA Acc No. 613) A letter of Dharanidhar to Commissioner of Cuttack 26th May 1891.

\(^ {184}\)ibid.

\(^ {185}\)ibid.
Krushna Charan Nayak, Manindra Sena, Raghu Bada Nayak, Krushna Nayak as members. In the meeting they decided not to go against the Raja, but only against his corrupt officials. They decided to inform the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals about the exploitation of the officials of the Raja. But the Government turned a deaf ear to all their pleas and protests.

Dharanidhara Nayak activated his leadership by convening a meeting of the Bhuyans in the village of Pawari to discuss future plan of action of the Bhuyans against oppression. Delegates of different tribal communities like Bhuyans, Juangas, Bathudis, Sauntis etc. participated in meetings. All these revolutionary activities came to the knowledge of the Raja. Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja along with his Assistant Manager Bichitrnananda Das and Head Constable Narayana Poi, who came to that particular village and arrested many persons. Dharanidhara Nayak, however, escaped from the police dragnet.

Dharanidhara started his rebellion from the Gandibeca Dandapat and spread the revolutionary message all through the Bhuyanpirh. Gradually people of different sections assembled under his banner. Inhabitants of Juangapirh, Hunda Dandapat, Nayakot Dandapat, Nayagada Dandapat and Kalikaprasad Dandapat assembled there. Gradually the congregation became vast and took the form of a 'Melee'. On the 2nd. May about 1200

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186 Bd. Procd. (Pel) (OSA Acc No. 613) Deputy Superintendent of Police to Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum 11 May 1891.

187 Ibid.
insurgents from different regions assembled at Chamakpur Dandapat, attacked the constables and paikas and inflicted injuries on them. Bhuyan leaders from outside the State extended their co-operation to Dharanidhara. The important leaders who assembled under his banner were Danai Sardar of Jointigarth, Jagannath Sardar, Sukadev Naik, Bareswara Naik, Surendra Sena Naik, Moni Mohapatra, Dinabandhu Mahapatra and Kalia Naik. Narendra Mohapatra of Singhbhum joined him at Kalikaprasad. Narendra Mohapatra who was the brother-in-law of Dharanidhara and an intelligent man from Singhbhum, helped from the Bhuyans in legal matters.

The number of Melias or insurgents rapidly increased. Now they began to take the law matter into their own hands. They engaged in violent activities. They cut off the lines of communication between Keonjhargarh and the rest of the State. They disrupted postal services and looted mail bags. The atmosphere grew very tense. Not finding any other way the Maharaja and his Assistant Manager Bichitrinanda Das fled to Anandapur about 85 Km. from Keonjhargarh on 7th May 1891. Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja fled to Anandapur in order to get...

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188Bd. Procd (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 613S) (Disturbances in Keonjhar) Maharaja of Keonjhar to the Supereintendent Tributary Mahals (Date not mentioned).
189Ibid.
190Fakirmohan Atmcharita Cuttack 1963, P.156.
191M.Ratha, Utkal Sahitya 22 Bhaga No. 5.
192Bd. Procd. (rev)(OSA Acc No. 612S) Manager of Anandapur to the Superintendent Tributary Mahal, Cuttack (date not mentioned).
193Fakirmohan Atmcharita (Ed), (Cuttack 1963), P.149.
the help of the Manager, Fakir Mohan Senapati. In course of time the insurrection grew in intensity. People belonging to different sections of the society joined the insurgents whose number rose to five thousand. The insurgents marched towards the palace and attacked it. At Anandapur, Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja, Fakirmohan Senapati and a few other people formulated possible plans to counter the insurgency. They decided that the Maharaja should continue to stay at Aanandapur and that Fakirmohan Senapati should go to G.Toynbee, the Supreintendent of the Tributary Mahals, Cuttack, to tell him about the insurrection. Fakir Mohan reached Cuttack on 12th. May, 1891 and apprised Rai Bahadur Nanda Kishor Das, Assistant Superintendent of the insurgency. He also met G.Toynbee, and gave him a vivid picture of the situation and begged him to send a police force for their protection. Fakirmohan blamed the Bhuyans before Toynbee by calling them 'indisciplined' 'naughty' 'handia-drinkers' and 'aboriginals'. Initially, however, G.Toynbee was angry with the attitude of the Maharaja. Fakirmohan had to use all his persuasive powers to convince him that the Raja was not to blame and that help should be sent to him without delay. Then he went back to Anandapur.

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193Fakirmohan Atmacharita (Ed), (Cuttack 1963), P.149.
196Ibid, PP.151-152.
197Ibid.
Meanwhile the Maharaja was on his way to Cuttack. The two met at Tangi, and Fakir Mohan came back to Cuttack again with the Maharaja. At Cuttack the Maharaja had a meeting with Nanda Kishore Das and decided to meet the Superintendent. He appealed for the security of the palace and undertook to bear all the expenses incurred for the suppression of the insurgency. The Government then decided to intervene in the affairs of Keonjhar. They decided to appoint H. Downs, Deputy Commissioner, Chainbasa, as Assistant Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals to suppress the insurrection. Charles Willington, Deputy Commissioner of Forest, was also appointed to assist Downs.

The news of the British decision to interfere in the affairs of Keonjhar reached the Bhuyan pirs and Juanga Pirs very soon. The insurgents were more than ever incensed, and looted the palace as well as the houses of the Amlas who supported the Raja. The rebellion spreads like a wild fire. The insurgents looted several villages and then proceeded to Keonjhargarh. On May 16th they tried to enter the palace, but failed in their efforts because of the able resistance of Kshetribara Singh. The failure, however, did not dampen their spirits. On the contrary, it seemed to put new vigour into their activities. They accelerated the insurrection. They soon

198 Fakir Mohan Atmacherita (Ed. Cuttack, 1963, PP. 151-152.
Cuttack to Government of Bengal No. 1634(P) 13th May 1891.
200 Ibid. Government of Bengal to George Toynbee 15th May 1891.
stopped any kind of communication between Keonjhar and Pal-lahara. Towards 24th May 1891 the number of the insurgents reached about twenty thousand. A good number of paikas of the Raja and a number of zamindars also extended their co-operation to the insurrection. They attacked and broke open the prison and set all prisoners free. They also looted the Government treasury. The whole of Keonjhar was, thus, in a state of anarchy and confusion.

Dharanidhar now proclaimed himself to be the 'Tikayet' of the State. He established his court or Durbar at a village called Raisuan, three Kms. away from Keonjhar on the road to Chainbasa. The mango grove on the outskirts of the village served his purpose as court admirably. An increasing number of paikas and zamindars joined his camp. From Raisuan he issued parwanas. He appealed to the British Government to hand over the charge of the administration of Keonjhar to him. The Bhuyan insurgents were always alert with their swords and bows and arrows.

Fakirmohan Senapati, the manager of the State, gives a vivid account of his experience and the insurrection in his autobiography. The Maharaja along with Fakir Mohan reached Ghatgaon on 13th May 1891. There they learnt that the Bhuyan insurgents had already tried to attack the palace. At this


* The First Son of the Raja of Keonjhar.
news Fakir Mohan advised the Maharaja to return to Anandapur, proposing that he would himself go to the palace. On the eve of his journey, he got a written permission that he could fire upon the insurgents if any one of them attacked him. He reached Basantapur, a few Km. from Keonjhar, with his paikas towards the evening of the same day.

The news of the arrival of Fakirmohan Senapati reached Raisuan in due course. In a dramatic manner, Fakir Mohan was captured by the Bhuyans. They took him to Dharanidhara at Raisuan. Gopal Nayak the elder brother of Dharanidhara was also with him. On the way the insurgents used terms like 'Husiar' and 'Tafat' as their symbolic language. Fakir Mohan was brought to Raisuan by his Bhuyan captors in the afternoon of the 15th May 1891. At Raisuan Dharanidhara directed him to touch his feet. However, Fakirmohan politely saluted Dharanidhara and cunningly saved his life. Dharanidhara appointed him as his Manager signing the letter of appointment as "Tikayat Dharanidhar Bhuyan".

It is obvious that the stock of Fakir Mohan with Dharanidhar and his men was high. Due honour was shown by the unmarried girls of the Bhuyan Community to him. In all

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202 Fakir Mohan Atmacharita (Ed) (Cutack 1963) P.164.
203 Jagabandhu Singh, Utkal Sahitya, P.40.
204 Fakirmohan Atmcharita (Ed) (Cutack 1963), P.167.
205 Ibid.
206 Ibid.e

*Appendix No. I, Letter of Fakirmohan from Raisuan 16 May 1891.
important matters Dharanidhar consulted him with due honour. However, Fakir Mohan himself embarked upon playing a double role. On the one hand he instigated the Bhuyan Sardars to attack the palace of the Raja in order to acquire wealth while on the other hand he established secret communications with Bhadrak for military operations against the insurgents.

Fakir Mohan Senapati took recourse to a ruse when he wrote a letter\(^{206}\) with a double meaning to mobilise forces against the Bhuyans\(^*\). The letter was addressed to Bholanath Dey, a Surveyer at Anandapur whom it referred to as "Bholanath Khamaria"\(^{207}\). Dharanidhar allowed him to write about betel leaves, betel-nuts, sugarcane field which, however, referred to sepoys, bullets and the palace respectively in their second meaning. However Madhusudan Das was able to decipher the second meaning. He thought that the situation needed immediate relief by a police force marching from either the north-east or from the Chainbasa side of Keonjhargarh\(^{208}\). The letter was an appeal to the Government to extend military help for the safety of the Maharaja and his palace\(^{209}\). This helped the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals to mobilise the army against the rebels.

\(^{207}\) Ibid, P.173.
\(^{208}\) Ibid.
\(^{209}\) Ibid.
On the eighth day of his imprisonment, Fakir Mohan sent a secret message to the Government to dispatch a well-equipped military force. The force, under Captain Dowson, reached Jaintigada on 21st May 1891. The goal of Dowson was to capture the rebels and he made all arrangements to achieve his objective. At Jaintigarh he learnt that a good number of Bhuyan insurgents were prepared with canons to demolish the walls of the palace. Captain Dowson took the first step of dispatching Sasibhusan Ray, Sub-Inspector of Police, and Bhagaban Sendha to Dharanidhara. They were directed to study the mood of the rebels and also to influence Dharanidhara to surrender to the Government. On 19th May 1891 Captain Dowson marched towards Keonjharhargh to capture the rebels.

In the camp of the rebels at Raisuan, Fakir Mohan played upon the vanity of Dharanidhar by pointing out that one of his duties was to greet British Officers as the Tikayat or the son of the Rani. In his autobiography he gives a clear account of the journey of Dharanidhara to meet the British Officers. He wore a gorgeous turban and a fine dhoti. He held a gigantic sword and was surrounded by a number of armed Bhuyans when he rode his horse to greet those he regarded as visitors to his court.

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210 Bd. Proc (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 612S) H. Dowson to G. Toynbee, Superintendent Tributary Mahal, 1st June 1891.
211 Ibid.
212 Ibid.
Fakir Mohan Secretly passed this information on to Dowson. Dharanidhara, on his march to greet the British Officers, came upon them between the villages of Putulia and Ruchiri, Captain Dowson was accompanied by hundreds of soldiers as well as Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja. Fakir Mohan, however, had secretly advised the British not to have the Maharaja with them. Dharanidhara saw that a number of British Military Officers were coming towards him. So he got down from the horse to greet Dowson. As soon as he did so, he found himself surrounded by five to six armed police men who arrested him. When Dharanidhara had been captured, Fakir Mohan, as well as, the other prisoners were released. All the sheds at Raisuan built for Dharanidhara and the other rebels were also set on fire.

The next duty of the British force was to capture the other insurgents. The news of the capture of Dharanidhara spread quickly in the Bhuyan Pirs. Some Bhuyan rebels resisted the British force. In this encounter the British force opened fire. Some Bhuyan rebels sustained injuries and a number of them fled to the forest and to the neighbouring States. They opposed the progress of Mr. Guise who was escorting Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja to Keonjhar. He countered the opposition put up by the insurgents on his way and reached Keonjhargarh the same day. Six to seven rebels were killed in

\[21\text{Bd. proc.d.(Rev)OSA Acc. No. 612S) H.Dowson to George Toynbee, Supreintendant of Tributory Mahals, 1st June 1891.}\]
the said encounter\textsuperscript{214}. Captain Dowson felt further military operation to be unnecessary. He stationed only fifty armed men at Palaspanga and Baliband and left Keonjhar\textsuperscript{215}.

George Toynbee, Superintendent, Tributary Mahals, reached Keonjhar on 16th June 1891. He came from Cuttack by steamer up to Chandabali, and then to Calcutta. He travelled from Calcutta up to Chakradharpur by train and from Chakradharpur up to Keonjhar by an elephant. He did not appreciate the presence of Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja in the State and sent him away to Cuttack\textsuperscript{216}. He appointed H.P.Wylly, an efficient officer who was the Manager of Mayurbhanja, as Manager of Keonjhar in addition to his charge of Mayurbhanja, on the 17th July 1891\textsuperscript{217}.

The fire of rebellion still smouldered amongst the Bhuyans. One Balaram Singh, emerged as the leader of the insurgents. About one hundred insurgents under his leadership created fresh disturbances in Kalikaprasad and Pallahara. The British, therefore, continued their military presence to counter the rebellion. A number of insurgents were arrested in Pallahara. They were all sent to Cuttack for trial. A number of Bhuyans went into hiding in the thick forests, and engaged in acts of insurgency in Bonai and Jaintigarh. The Deputy

\textsuperscript{214}Fakir Mohan Atmacharita (Ed) (Cuttack 1963) P.178.
\textsuperscript{215}Bd. Procd. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 612S) H.Dowson to G.Toynbee 1st June 1891.
\textsuperscript{216}Ibid, G.Toynbee to Government of Bengal 16 June 1891.
\textsuperscript{217}Ibid, H.P.Wylly to George Toynbee 25 July 1891.
Commissioner of Chainbasa was able to collect information about their movements from secret sources\(^{218}\).

H.P. Willy, Manager of Mayurbhanja, took over the charge of Keonjhar as Political Agent with an additional honorarium\(^{219}\). He continued the military operations in Keonjhar in order to suppress the insurgents. The Managers of Dhenkanal and Pallahara co-operated with him in this matter. The Raja of Talcher also extended his help for the suppression of the insurrection\(^{220}\). This time two prominent supporters of Dharanidhara Nayak, Balaram Singh and Narendra Mohapatra, were captured\(^{221}\). Narendra Mohapatra was sent to Dhenkanal Jail. The Magistrate of Balasore was vested with the powers of a Sessions Judge to try cases against the insurgents of Keonjhar. He held his court at Baripada\(^{222}\). Willy was especially directed to take measures to bring about a change of heart in the subjects.

Under the directions of George Toynbee, the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals, Mayurbhanja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja continued to live in Cuttack\(^{223}\). He engaged the

\(^{218}\)Bd. Procd. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 612S) Commissioner of Chainbasa to the Commissioner of Cuttack 10th July 1891.

\(^{219}\)Ibid, G. Toynbee to H.P. Wylly 9th July 1891.

\(^{220}\)Ibid, Manager Talcher to the Superintendent Tributary Mahal (Date not mentioned).

\(^{221}\)Ibid (OSA Acc. No. 613S) Deputy Inspector of Police to Maharaja Keonjhar 16th Sept. 1891.

\(^{222}\)Ibid, Secretary to Government of Bengal to the Superintendent Tributary Mahal, 2 Sept. 1891.

\(^{223}\)Ibid. (OSA Acc. No. 613S) Superintendent Tributary Mahal to Maharaja of Keonjhar, 31st August 1891.
services of Madhusudan Das, the most prominent lawyer of the time with a national repute, to represent his interests. The Maharaja wanted to go back to Keonjhar. When Toynbee rejected his plea, Madhusudan Das went to Calcutta. He pleaded in the Court of Charles Elliot, the Lt.Governor of Bengal on behalf of Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja. By his strong and bold arguments Madhusudan Das tried to prove Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja to be innocence and involvement in any type of oppression. The Lieutenant Governor was, however, not convinced and went on a tour of enquiry to Cuttack.

C.Eliot, the Lt. Governor of Bengal made his visit towards February 1892. At Bhadrak he had a long discussion with Fakir Mohan about the affairs of Keonjhar, the Bhuyan tribe and the latter's own imprisonment. He had talks with George Toynbee, H.P.Wylly, Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja and a large number of hillmen. Mr. Toynbee was not in favour of the return of the Maharaja to the State. But on considering all the views the Lieutenant Governor thought it better to restore the Raja to his Gadi. Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja was allowed to retain his State in lieu of paying a lavish sum of money.

He was also saddled with the presence of a Political Agent,

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224 Fakirmohan Atmcharita (Ed) (Cuttack 1963) P.183.
225 Ibid.
226 Ibid.
227 Fakir Mohan Atmcharita (Ed.) (Cuttack 1963 P.183.
228 Ibid.
229 Bd. proc. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 614S) Govt. of Bengal to Govt. of India, No. 792 14 Sept. 1892.
230 Ibid.
who was to supervise the day-to-day administration. According to this arrangement, Rai Bahadur Nanda Kishore Das was appointed as the Political Agent of Keonjhar. All important measures had to be implemented only after the approval of the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals at Cuttack. A number of advisers of the Maharaja were dismissed. H.P. Wylly, the Manager of Mayurbhanja, was also withdrawn from Keonjhar.

The relations between the Maharaja and Fakir Mohan gradually soured. Fakir Mohan traces the difference to various causes in his autobiography. When the Maharaja was away from the state, H.P. Wylly carried on the administration with the help of Fakir Mohan and Debananda Dhal, the son of Chandrasekhara Dhala who had been killed by the Bhuyans during the insurrection. Later on Debananda Dhal was dismissed by H.P. Wylly. The Maharaja thought that Fakir Mohan was responsible for this. He had a special kind of feeling for the 'Dhala family' after the death of Chandra Sekhar. The other cause according to Fakir Mohan was that when the Maharaja was in Cuttack a number of petitions against him reached the offices of the Superintendent and the Lieutenant Governor. The Maharaja suspected that Fakir Mohan was the brain behind these petitions. As soon as Fakir Mohan was aware of the Maharaja's

232Fakirmohan Atmcharita (Ed) (Cuttack 1963) P.185.
233Ibid.
changed feelings towards him, he decided to leave Keonjhar. His post was filled up by Babu Durgadas Mukherjee.

Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja reached Anandapur in March, 1892 in the company of Rai Bahadur Nanda Kishore Das and Madhusudan Das\(^{234}\). They reached Keonjhar in the same month\(^{235}\). The arrival of the Maharaja in Keonjhar changed the situation. The Bhuyans very soon demanded the release of their beloved leader Dharanidhara. Rai Bahadur Nanda Kishore Das vehemently opposed the demand of the Bhuyans. Again, the Bhuyans and Kols resolved not to pay any kind of tribute. Rai Bahadur Nanda Kishore Das issued notifications advising them to abide by the orders of the Government, failing which all crops in the Bhuyan pirs would be destroyed\(^{236}\).

The attitude of Nanda Kishore Das agitated the Bhuyan Sardars. As a result of this they proceeded to meet the Lt. Governor in Calcutta. They appealed to him for the release of Dharanidhar. But the Lieutenant Governor did not accede to the request of the Bhuyans. This was also another cause which aggravated their resentment further\(^{237}\). The insurrection broke out again in a vigorous form. The Government felt the need of military operations. In January, 1893, the Superintendent of Cuttack and the Assistant Superintendent of Police, Ranchi,

\(^{234}\)Fakirmohan *Atmacherita* (Ed) (Cuttack 1963) P.185.
\(^{235}\)Utkal Deepika 10th December, 1892.
\(^{236}\)HFMO, VolII, P.131.
\(^{237}\)Utkal Deepika 10th December 1892
marched to Keonjhar\textsuperscript{238} for military operations against the insurgents. They were successful in putting down the rebellion at a very early stage. During the military operations, a number of Bhuyan insurgents hid themselves in the thick forest tracts while many of them were arrested. A number of villages of the insurgents were burnt by the police\textsuperscript{239}. Even then some important leaders of the insurrection were not to be found. The Government announced a reward for the capture of the insurgents\textsuperscript{240}. Six of them were arrested and sent to Dhenkanal Jail. All the six were school teachers\textsuperscript{241}.

A number of insurgents quit Keonjhar and set up camps in the neighbouring States like Pallahara, Bonai, Singhbhum and Mayurbhanja. Nearly 17,000 Bhuyans shifted to Mayurbhanja and took shelter near the Similipal hills. Again the military operation started in Keonjhar. Towards the 20th. May, 1893 more troops came from Cuttack for the purpose of military operations\textsuperscript{242}. In the midst of the rainy season, the operation started. Mr. Walker and Mr. Dandes divided the army into two contingents and marched in different directions\textsuperscript{243}. The Government constables and the 'dagara constables' worked to restore communications. Mr. Kiddle of Mayurbhanja was stationed at Jotipur. Mr. Macmillan and the Government Agent,

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{list}{\textsuperscript{\arabic{enumi}}}{\usecounter{enumi}}
\item Utkal Deepika 10th December 1892, 7th January 1893.
\item Ibid.
\item Ibid, 21 January 1893.
\item Bd. proc (Rev) (OSA A. cc No. 615S) Maharaja to H.P.Wyly, 7th September 1893.
\item Utkal Deepika 20th May 1893.
\item Ibid, 10th June 1893.
\end{list}
\end{footnotesize}
Rai Nanda Kishore Das, were stationed at Keonjharga244. In the month of July 1893 Nanda Kishore Das was transferred and H.P.Wylly was again appointed in Keonjhar. He applied a conciliatory policy towards the insurgents. His wise moves and well-thought out measures were able to restore peace in the State to a large extent and Dhanurjaya Narayana Bhanja was recognised as the Maharaja of Keonjhar245.

As has been said, Dharanidhar had been captured by the British. Leaders like Dasa Naik, Bhaiga Naik and Manu Naik were captured in the month of January 1893246. Mukunda Mahanaik, Kalia Naik and Bulu Naik were arrested by the Government police. Gopal Naik, the brother of Dharanidhar, was killed in an encounter in August 1894247. Ranju Pradhan was killed, but his friend Tikana Naik was captured.

A number of insurgents were arrested and sent up for trial. Dharanidhar along with his four close aides were alleged to have in two cases, i.e., rebelled against a state friendly to the Government and arresting the topmost official of the State. Fakir Mohan Senapati prepared the charge sheet in which he alleged that Dharanidhara was ‘mad and rebellious’. This was, of course, an exaggeration. George

244Utkal Deepika 10th June 1893
245Bd. Proc (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 617S) Govt. of Bengal to the Superintendent Mahal Cuttack 8, June 1894.
Toynbee the Superintendent was not one to take such an allegation on its face value. On the contrary, he took exception to such an extent that he had Fakir Mohan convicted for exaggeration. The trial ended and Dharanidhar Nayak was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for seven years in the Cuttack Jail. He was convicted under Sections 125, 127, and 340 of the Indian Penal Code. Some insurgents were sentenced to transportation for life under different sections of the Indian Penal Code. They were Chintamani Singh, Bhikari Dehuri, Jogendra Porial and Banamali Mahanaik. Boni Behera was sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for life. Khandayet Naik under Sections 1, 5, and 6 Chotia Baidi under section 12, Sandhu Mallik under Section 10, Goma Pradhan under Section 11, Udia Naik under Section 15, Bipra Naik under sections 16 and 17, Natha Naik under Sections 18 and 19 of the Indian Penal Code were convicted and sentenced to 15 years of rigorous imprisonment. Fifteen of the other insurgents were each sentenced to 15 years of rigorous imprisonment. They were Bida Behera concerned with case No.7 Tera Bhuyan concerned with case No.10. Kalia Pohan with 11, Bachu Kol with 12, Kanhu Kol with 13, Mithu Katai with 14, Panchu Behera with 16, Nanda

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248 Fakir Mohan Atmcharita (ed) (Cuttack 1963) P.179.
249 Bd. Procd. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 617S) HJS Cotton Chief Secretary to Govt. of Bengal to the Superintendent Tributary Mahals Orissa, 18th February 1895.
250 Ibid.
251 Ibid.
Naik with 16, Dobai Kol with 18 and Looli Kol with 19 and Dimba Naik with 16252.

After a long time of conciliatory measures in Keonjhar, H.P.Wylly left the State and the post of the 'Political Agent' lapsed. Maharaja Dhanurjaya Narayan Bhanja was entrusted with all authority in the State253.

**Last days of Dharanidhar**

Dharanidhara Nayak was convicted and sentenced to seven years of rigorous imprisonment. He spent these years in the Cuttack Jail and was released in 1897. He was ordered to remain at Cuttack on a pension of Rs.8/- per month. He was also ordered not to go Keonjhar, except once a month to receive his pension. His movement was strictly watched254.

The last part of his life is shrouded in mystery. When he was released from jail he appeared to have acquired different personality. There soon appeared an ultimate change in his life. From Cuttack he went to Puri where he received 'Sanyasa' became a Sanyasi255. At Puri he observed silence for a long period. Pundit Gopabandhu Das and Pundit Nilakantha Mishra once met him and asked for his advice when he was in meditation. They asked him "When will India get Independence".

252Bd. Procd. (Rev) (OSA Acc. No. 617S) HJS Cotton Chief Secretary to Govt. of Bengal to the Superintendent Tributary Mahals Orissa, 18th February 1895.
253Utkal Deepika 20th July 1895.
254Ibid, 6thOctober 1897.
Sanyasi Dharanidhara broke his silence and answered with the trace of a smile, "When you become humans".\(^{256}\)

Dharanidhara is a legendary figure in Orissa. It is known from the legend that Sanyasi Dharanidhara went to Ali in the then Cuttack district.\(^{257}\) It is also known from legends that the Raja of Ali had a Circus party of his own.\(^{258}\) Dharanidhara had acquired the "Tarinee Mantra" and so he could mesmerise the tigers in the circus party.\(^{259}\) The Raja was grateful to him and built a Matha for him in his territory. Dharanidhar is reputed to have lived in this monastery for the rest of his life.

There is no authentic information about the death of Dharanidhara and historians are divided in their opinions. As far as can be ascertained, he breathed his last on 16th. May, 1944 on a full moon night.\(^{260}\)

Thus there came an end to the life of a great hero of the soil of Keonjhar who shed his blood and sweat, for the liberation of the Bhuyan community in the last part of the 20th Century.

\(^{257}\) Ibid.
\(^{258}\) Ibid.
\(^{259}\) Ibid.
\(^{260}\) Ibid.