CHAPTER - I
CHAPTER-I

ORISSA is a maritime state situated on the east coast of India between the states of West Bengal and Andhra Pradesh. It has a sea beach of 482 K.M. Its location is between 18° and 23° latitudes and 81° and 88° E longitudes and bounded by Andhra Pradesh on the south, Bay of Bengal on the east, Chatisgarh on the west and Jharkhand and West Bengal in the north.

Its geographic position had made it serve like a bridge between the northern and southern halves of India where the Vindhya type of mountain range did not raise its head to hinder the Pre-historic and Proto-historic migratory movements. But instead, the Plains of Coastal belt as well as river belts of diagonal direction, made the human contact easier. This led to an assimilation of Aryan and Dravidian way of life of Orissa.

The modern term Orissa is derived from the ancient 'odra' which represented very small part of the present day orissa. The region now known as Orissa has been referred in ancient times under various names, such as Kalinga, Utkala, Odra and South Kosala. The Political geography of this land included Odra, and Utkal in the central Orissa, Kaling in the South and South Kosala in the west. These names have found mention in ancient Sanskrit and pali literature which record the origin of these countries in mythological stories. But these legendary accounts do not enable us to have an exact idea about their historic origin. However, they suggested that Kalinga, Utkal, Odra and South Kosala were inhabited.
by the different stocks of people, but in course of time, they gradually became amalgamated though the distinct nomenclature of their territories continued to exist.

Leaving aside the pre-historic remnants, history of Orissa can be built up in fragments from the 6th century B.C. onwards. The first major political event in its history was the Ashokan conquest in 3rd century B.C. When Ashoka the monarch of Magadha, invaded Kalinga, the people offered heroic resistance and millions sacrificed their lives to save their sacred motherland. Kharvela the scion of Chidi Dynasty reigned Orissa only for a short spell of fourteen years. He encouraged and awakened the soldiers of Orissa to make unflinching sacrifice for the protection of their motherland. The Guptas had defeated various Orissan rulers. Orissa formed a part of Harshavardhan’s kingdom. She continued to be ruled by numerous independent and semi-independent dynasties right up to the Mughals. The followings dynasties are considered notable among them.

Andhra Satavahana Supremacy in Orissa commenced with the fall of Kharavela’s dynasty and ended in about third century A.D. When Somavansis became the rulers of Orissa, beginning from Janmajaya, down unto Karnadeva, they not only extended the territories but also built good many temples. The reign of Ganga dynasty, beginning from Devendra Varman-II, down unto Bhanudeva IV, in Orissa for more than five hundred years was replete with grandeur and glory. They extended the boundaries of Orissa on all sides with a series of conquests. The Gangas were succeeded by the Surya dynasty, the founder of which was said to be a
commoner – Kapilendra deva. The history of Orissa became powerful and eventful with his accession to the throne. The last king of Surya dynasty called Prataparudradya suffered great reverses at the hands of Krishna Dev Roy of Vizayanagar after which Orissa was compelled under the circumstances to pass through four centuries of Muslim, Maratha and British rule.

From 1568 to 1592, Orissa became a ground of continuous strife between the Afgans and the Muguls. Before the Afgans could consolidate their power, the Moguls entered the field and in 1592, Mansingh annexed Orissa to Akbar's empire. Mansingh remained as the Governor till the death of Imperial Master in 1605.

In 1633, Mutquad Khan, the Mughal Subedar of Orissa allowed the English merchants to carry on their trade in the province.

In 1687, by virtue of the order of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb, the control of Ganjam passed into the hands of the Subedar of Decan. It passed into the hands of the Marathas, consequent upon the decline of mughals.

However the Marathas did not maintain any civil administration but they exercised control over the administration of Orissa through their local chiefs.

Orissa was divided into two political divisions namely Garjat and Mughalbandi under the Marathas.
In 1803, the English took the districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore from the Marathas. But the district of Sambalpur which included the Oriya areas, still remained in the hands of Bhonsla Marathas of Nagpur unto 1869.

In 1753, the Subedar of Decan handed over Ganjam to the French. Subsequently, the British captured the French head quarters at Musalipatam and other key positions in the Northern circars in 1759.

Immediately after the British got the northern Sarkars, Edward Cotsford was appointed as the Residential Engineer of Ganjam which was included in the Madras Presidency. From 1768 onwards, Ganjam was kept under Madras as a part of Ichapur Taluk. In 1802, the country lying to the south of the Pundi river up to Chicacole, was added to the district of Ganjam.

Although the British Contact with Orissa began in the first half of the 17th country, Orissa came under British East India Company's rule in 1803, when finally the company's troops marched into Orissa to crash the Marathas.

The British took the plea that they had saved Orissa from the hands of Marathas, but their own administration created more problems in the State. In the early period of British rule, Orissa was subjected to administrative negligence, management, expensive taxation and oppression by corrupt officials.

British Administration which always took advantages from it's policy of divide and rule and caused the division of
the Oriya speaking tracts into three different parts namely, Bengal presidency, Madras presidency and the central provinces without any co-ordination of race, language and culture

In Orissa, as well as elsewhere in India in 19th century, social movements and the growth of national consciousness were facilitated mainly due to two factors. Firstly, the rise of middle class intelligentsia and secondly, the growth of mass media like press etc. The growth of railways, postal services and press, both native and English provided the required media for giving necessary fillip to the rise of national consciousness.

Territorial vivisection was followed by the displacement of Oriya language and culture. Consequent upon the dismemberment of the Oriya speaking areas before and during the early British rule, political Orissa was confined only to the three districts of Puri, Cuttack and Balasore. The neighbouring provinces tried best to impose their respective languages and culture in the displaced areas. The vast population of Oriyas living in such places were forced to remain under onslaught and general backwardness during the British rule. In the wake of language agitation in Orissa, those Oriyas living under three different governments, realised the evil consequences of dismemberment of their Oriya speaking tracts.

During the language agitation, for the first time the question of amalgamation of the Oriya speaking areas was widely discussed and seriously felt by the leaders like Fakirmohan Senapati, Gourishankar Roy, Bichitranaandada Das.
Madhusudan Das and many others\textsuperscript{34}. At this time there developed a new view-point that the integration of all the Oriya speaking areas was indispensable to keep the Oriya language living. Thus both the issues were closely associated\textsuperscript{35}.

In July 1877, an association called 'Utkal Sabha' was formed. The prominent members of this association were Madhusudan Das, Fakirmohan Senapati and Radhanath Roy. Utkal Sabha also passed a resolution to protest against the abolition of Oriya as a court language of Sambalpur. In this connection, Utkala Dipika published views of Madhusudan Das, Gokul Chandra Chaudhuri, Gouri Sankar Roy and Raja Padmanarva Narayan Dev. By 1882, many more associations were formed to take active part in the political affairs of Orissa\textsuperscript{36}. It was only after the great famine of 1866 that the struggle of the Oriya to preserve their mother-tongue from the designs of the non-Oriyas, found its echo in the movement for the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking territories into a single linguistic state\textsuperscript{37}.

The people of Ganjam took leading role in this movement. An association called 'the Ganjam-Utkal Hitabadini Sabha, was formed. A memorial was submitted by Raja Baikuntha Nath De of Balasore to Lord Curzon, Governor-General of India, on 15\textsuperscript{th} December 1902 pleading for uniting all the Oriya speaking areas under one administration for the good of the province and its people. Similarly, at the beginning of 1902, the Oriyas of Ganjam in a monster memorial to Lord Curzon, desired for administrative union of Ganjam with Orissa. On 10\textsuperscript{th} January 1904, in the premises of the Local High School of
Sambalpur, the permanent residents of the place held a meeting under the spokesmanship of Chandrasekhar Behera and decided the transfer of Sambalpur to Orissa Division. On the whole, as per the resolution of the Government, it was decided that the transfer of Sambalpur would be effective from 16th October 1905\textsuperscript{38}.

Politically, Oriyas had no recognized status or home nor any voice in the control of administration. They were treated as 'helots in their own land'. Most oppressed of all Oriyas were the people of Ganjam. Their suffering knew no bounds. Early in 1903, a small band of elites gathered at Rambha under the presidency of Raja of Khallikote and resolved to establish the Ganjam Jatiya Samiti (Ganjam National Conference). The first meeting of this conference was held at Berhampur in April 1903 under the Chairmanship of Shayamsundar Rajguru with Nilamani Bidyanatha as its secretary.

Besides others, six delegates from Cuttack, four from Puri, three from Balasore and two from Sambalpur, attended the meeting. This conference, regarded as the first national conference of the Oriya people, gave birth to the famous Utkal Sammilani, otherwise known as the Utkal Union Conference which hence forward took up a vital role for the integration of the Oriya speaking areas\textsuperscript{39}. On 25\textsuperscript{th} October 1903, the leading Public men of Cuttack set up a Reception-cum-Executive committee with the Raja of Kanika as the Chairman and Madhusudan Das as secretary to organize the first session of the proposed Utkal Union Conference in December 1903. In fact, the Cuttack session of the Utkal Sammilani was just an extension of Berhampur conference\textsuperscript{40}.
From 1905 to 1911, several delegations, representatives and memorials, both to the local and central governments, had been made without effect. On 1st August 1912, the new province of Bihar and Orissa was created without proper consultations. Lord Curzon, during the debate in the House of Lords on the Govt. of India Bill in 1911, observed “The interests of the Oriyas have been sacrificed without compunction”.

The session of Utkal Union Conference held at Balasore in 1916, appointed a sub-committee named Utkal Union Committee which gave a memorandum to Montagu Chelmsford for the unification of Oriya speaking territories in Orissa. In December, 1917, Madhusudan Das, Urged in the Bengal Legislative Council, for an united Orissa. In 1920, Sachidananda Sinha, moved a resolution in the imperial council to appoint a mixed committee of non-officials and officials to formulate a scheme for the amalgamation of the Oriya-speaking tracts.

The year 1921 is a turning point in the political development of Orissa. During this period, the provincial unit of the Indian National Congress, was constituted with the effort of Gopabandhu Das who was the president of provincial congress committee.

However, on 7th November, 1927, the British Prime Minister Stantey Baldwin declared in the House of Commons the names of seven persons who would constitute the Royal Commission on India reforms. Sir John Simon was appointed as the Chairman of that commission.
In the absence of any Indian member in the Commission, and also as a sequel to its resolution in the Madras session the Indian National Congress resorted to mass demonstration, hartal and total boycott of the commission at every stage in every form. But the Bihar and Orissa Legislative Council, after a full debate in August, 1928, passed a motion to constitute a provincial committee to cooperate with the commission in their investigations.

The Government submitted a Memorandum to the Commission stating, "The Oriya-speaking tracts now under four different provincial Governments, Bihar and Orissa, Madras, Bengal and central provinces, should be united under one Government." Further it stated that the Oriyas inhabiting in these four provinces wanted "United Orissa".

The Oriyas of Berhampur gave a memorandum to the Commission urging for the early formation of the separate province of Orissa. The Madras presidency Oriya Association, Berhampur, also submitted a Memorandum to the Commission on 30th May, 1928, vehemently demanding the inclusion of Ganjam in Orissa.

The members of the commission were so much convinced by the claim of Oriyas that they appointed a special sub-committee with Major Atlee as its chairman to look into the question. The Report of the Simon commission was published on 27th May, 1930. The Commission recommended that the making of separate province of Orissa be examined further and also they...
recommended for the establishment of a Boundary Committee for fixing the boundaries of Orissa.  

"Orissa Boundary Commission", was appointed with S.P Donnel, as the Chairman, to examine the question of a self administrative unit of Orissa, from financial and other aspect and to make recommendations regarding the adjustment of boundaries.

The white paper, which was prepared by the India office in March 1933 on the basis of Round Table Conference, included in the announcement of creating Orissa into a separate province, and indicated the proposed boundaries of the said province. But the publication of the 'white paper' perpetuated controversy and disappointed the Oriyas as the proposed province excluded Visakpatnam Agency and Parlakhemundi.

Finally, on November 22nd 1934, the joint select committee, under the chairmanship of the Morgues of Linlithgow, made the announcement that certain other areas should be added to the proposed new province in addition to those mentioned in 'white paper'.

On the basis of the above recommendation 'His majesty' issued the order on 3rd March 1936, titled as the Government of India (constitution of Orissa order 1936) that recommended the formation of a new province Orissa, and the order became effective from 1st April, 1936, marking a new phase in the history of Orissa.
South Orissa played an important and acknowledged role in the struggle for India's Independence. The excessive land revenue demand, exploitation of the peasants by the Zamindars, revenue Collectors and money lenders and almost complete neglect of social services like irrigation, communication and flood protective measures led to the growth of deep poverty of the people of South Orissa. Side by Side with the growth of poverty, spread of modern education generated sense of political consciousness in the minds of the small section of middle class people. They not only worked for the merger of Oriya speaking areas of Madras presidency with Orissa but also played a heroic rule in organizing freedom struggle in South Orissa.

In South Orissa, immediately after the introduction of the British rule, the rulers of Paralkhemundi, Ghumsur and Mohuri, refused to submit to the British power and offered stiff resistance supported by the people. The inherent dislike for the British rule and increasing miseries of the people caused by the new administrative measures led to a number of popular revolts in South Orissa in which both tribals and non-tribals participated.55

The Non-Cooperation Movement was launched on 1st August, 1920. The congress workers of Orissa were unanimous in accepting the principle of Non-Cooperation. Gopabandhu Das, A.V. Thakkar (a social activist of servants of India Society working in Orissa) and Jagabandhu Singh and Krupasindhu Mishra, Nilakantha Das and Harekrushna Mahatab attended the special congress in Calcutta on 4th September, 1920 as delegates and observers, respectively.56
It took a firm pledge for the attainment of Swaraj and adopted the policy of progressive non-violence, Non-Cooperation. On 30th October 1920, Gopabandhu Das wrote in Samaj about the powerful impact of the Non-Cooperation Movement upon the students and lawyers in different parts of the country and mentioned the names of nine persons who had decided to boycott the legislatures.

Gandhiji had been highly impressed with the sincerity and devotion of Gopandhu Das to the national cause. Gopabandhu and other Oriya leaders invited Gandhiji to Orissa to provide a momentum to Non-Cooperation Movement. Gandhiji accepted the invitation. With his wife Kastruba and youngest son Devdas, Gandhiji reached Cuttack in the morning of 23rd March, 1921.

In the same day afternoon Gandhi addressed a small meeting of women in Binod Bihari where some women donated their ornaments to him. In the evening, Gandhiji addressed a mammoth gathering in the Katjuri river bed to which 50,000 people attended. In his speech, he appealed to the people for Hindu-Muslim unity, to organize villages, enroll one lakhs of congress members, spread one lakh of Charkhas and collect three lakhs of rupees for Tilak Swaraj fund.

When the Non-cooperation movement was started by Gandhiji, South Orissa did not lag behind. As a matter of fact, the first two students in India who gave up their studies to join this movement were Nanda Kishore Mishra and Arjun Panigrahi of Ganjam. The beginning was made by collecting funds for Tilak Swaraj fund and enrolling
congress members for the movement. A Training Camp was opened by Niranjan Patnaik for training volunteers in propaganda work, for picketing, banning of foreign clothes, popularization of Khadi etc. In 1921, a District Congress Committee was formed in Ganjam with Sribasta Panda as its President and Jaya Mongal Rath as the Secretary.

The visit of Mahatma Gandhi to Berhampur in March 1921, created unprecedented enthusiasm among the masses facilitating the enrollment of congress members and workers and popularising the Non-Cooperation Movement. At the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi, several satyagrahis joined the programme of boycott and picketing.60

Gandhiji also addressed separate meetings of Marwaris and Gujuratis, Muslims, students and lawyers of Cuttack and appealed them to boycott foreign cloth and popularize spinning wheel. Addressing three meetings in Bhadrak he exhorted the people to boycott foreign cloth and institutions, establish national schools, arbitration courts, spread khadi, abjure alcohol and intoxicating drugs and such other things.

As a response to the call, about two-third of the students of Sambalpur Zilla School, deserted it on 3rd January 1921, under the student leaders, Jagannath Mishra, Laxmi Narayan Mishra and Nrusingha Guru. It is a matter of pride on the part of Orissa that Sambalpur became an example before Calcutta. At Cuttack, students like H. K. Mahatab, Nabakrushna Choudhury, Nityananda Kanungo, Jadumani Mangaraj and many others left their studies.61
In response to this call, Gopabandhu Das converted his pet institution - the Satyavadi School-into the first national school in Orissa under the charge of Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra.

In Orissa, as a response to the call for renunciation from all the posts of government, Gopabandhu Choudhury, then a Deputy Collector at Bargarh, tendered his resignation from the Government service.

The boycott of foreign goods was an important event of Non-Cooperation Movement. Gandhi stood for Swadeshi pure and simple. In his opinion ‘Swadeshi’ meant the increase in the production and use of ‘Khadi’. The production of khadi led to the revival of hand spinning and hand weaving for which Orissa was famous. Having obtained training, the Congress workers toured the rural areas to popularize the ‘Charkha’ and ‘Khadi’.

The quota for Orissa was to enlist 20,000 workers and raise 30,000 rupees for the Tilak Swaraj fund. The congress workers of Orissa worked with unflagging zeal to reach the quota. As reported in the Samaj, by 30 June 1921, the UPCC (Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee) had enrolled 39,000 Congress man raises Rs.21,000/- for the Tilak Swaraj Fund and distributed 16000 spinning wheels in Orissa.

The Congress activities in South Orissa mostly centred round organizational constructive work from 1923-28. The congress workers were entrusted with the different kinds of works like spread of Khadi and Charkha, organisation of village Panchayats, removal of untouchability, emancipation...
of women etc. Accordingly, the first Khadi center was opened at Kodala in Ganjam under Niranjan Patnaik. Subsequently, other Khadi centers were opened in other places in South Orissa.

In the meantime, Niranjan Patnaik started a daily news bulletin known as Satya Samachar to popularize the preaching and messages of Gandhi regarding the freedom struggle. In 1927, The ‘Asha’ paper was converted into daily news paper in Orissa. Subsequently, another English daily named ‘New Orissa’ was published under the editorship of Sashibhusan Rath. These newspapers became the mouth-piece of the congress movement spreading the ideas of nationalism and freedom.66

Towards the end of the February 1930 Gandhiji decided to launch Civil Disobedience Movement by breaking the law at Dandi. “Salt is necessary for life.” Said Gandhi, as air and water given by nature is essentially necessary” 67.

He considered the salt tax to be the most iniquitous of all from poor man’s stand point. Gandhi’s decision to break the salt law on the Gujurat sea-coast was received with much enthusiasm by the congress leaders of Orissa. “The UPCC resolved on 28 February 1930 to make effective arrangements to start organized Civil Disobedience in some particular area of the AICC. 68

Freedom movement had considerable impact in Orissa. South Orissa played an important role in the Civil Disobediences Movement. At that time both Oriyas and Telugus formed separate parties at Berhampur. Under the
auspices of the Utkal Pradesh Congress Committee, a batch of 15 Telugu Satya Grahis of Berhampur, led by Ramalingam Pantulu, Chairman, Berhampur, Municipal Council, started their campaign to manufacture salt at Kotabomale on 20th April, 1930, before the beginning of salt 'Satyagraha' in Ganjam. They were joined by the volunteers from Parlakhemundi and Chicacole.

The people of South Orissa actively participated in all the programmes of the Civil Disobedience Movement including picketing and boycotting. In 1932, leaders like Biswanath Das, Dibakar Patnaik, Kasi Patra, Janardan Behera, Laxmi Bai etc, participated in the individual Satyagraha programmes and were arrested. Training camps were organized at places like Balipada, Shergarh and Berhampur in order to train volunteers for picketing and boycott propaganda.

On 12th March 1930, Gandhiji with his 78 associates of Sabarmati Ashram started his historic Dandimarch. Motibas Das a Khadi student of Orissa was one among them. The first batch of 21 volunteers led by Gopabandhu Chaudhury and Acharya Harihara Das proceeded from Swaraj Ashram at Cuttack to Inchudi with all solemnity in the early morning on 6th April 1930, the day on which Gandhiji broke the salt law at Dandi. On 8th April Gopabandhu Chaudhury was arrested at Chandol on the charge of violating the prohibiting order and was imprisoned for seven days.

On 20th April 1930, the District Congress Committee resolved to start at once the salt Satyagraha in Ganjam. There upon, under the leadership of Niranjan Patnaik and
Biswanath Das, the Salt Satyagraha began in Ganjam. The Satyagrahis led by Patnaik broke the salt law at Ganjam in the presence of a gathering of four to five thousand people including a large number of women.

Such type of revolutionary activities of the leaders and the mass continued in the region till the beginning of the Quit India Movement in South Orissa. Gandhi’s clarion call once again vibrated in the veins of India in August 1942. Not only the British provinces responded it with full zeal and zest but also the princely states including those of Orissa. The political movement in Dhenkanal started simultaneously with August revolution of 1942 in the British provinces. As per the August revolution of the Congress Working Committee at Bombay, leaders of the congress all over India was arrested. Baishnab Charan Patnaik launched his political movement unbated. On 25th August, 1942, at night, he with his followers attacked and burnt the police station and sub-divisional offices at Murhi.

Such a grave situation compelled the Raja of Dhenkanal to seek help from the political agent, Orissa feudatory states. In the meantime Baishnaba Charan Patnaik’s head carried a reward of Rs.3,000 but he was not traced out. Towards the end 1942, Baishnab came back to Orissa after getting his medical check-up at Jamshedpur and made his sojourn in Dhabaleswar and Paschimeswar of Athagarh. In January 1943, he went to Berhampur to seek help from Gorachand Patnaik, Biswanath Das, the reputed congress leaders, and then went to Madhusudan Gramodyota Sangha to seek the advice of H. K. Mahatab.
The Quit India Movement also had its dynamic echo in the Princely state of Talcher. Pabitramohan Pradhan, the leader of the Talcher Prajamandal, joined the movement led by Baishnaba Charan Patnaik. Pradhan formed a parallel Govt. in Talcher de-recognising the administration of Raja.

The Prajamandals of Dhenkanal and Talcher combined programmes to attack the places of the Raja of the latter state. About 8,000 agitators moved towards the place. With limited resources the Raja faced the mob with guns, spears, axes and bows. But the Raja won the victory in the encounter. When necessity arose, machine guns were used to disperse the mob.

A reward of Rs.1,800 was declared for the capture of Pabitramohan Pradhan. Later on the amount was raised to Rs.10,000. As a result, he had to leave Orissa and joined the 'Azad Hind Fauz' of Subash Chandra Bose.

In quit India movement in the South Orissa, large number of aboriginal tribes participated in Koraput district. The disturbances caused by these tribals assumed alarming situation inviting the immediate attention of the Govt. They started looting Government Offices, raiding liquor shops, police stations, damaging bridges, telegraph lines, etc. In fact they threatened to demolish the functional institutions of the Government. Laxman Nayak, a prominent tribal leader, organized no-tax campaign in and around Mathili. He organized a private army of 200 tribals men equipped with weapons to fight against the British. His anti-British Propaganda and revolutionary activities roused the political consciousness of the people. He was imprisoned, prosecuted...
and finally hanged by the Government. The government, as a matter of fact, adopted all types of repressive measures to suppress the Quit India Movement in South Orissa. Despite their suffering, the people continued their struggle for freedom till the attainment of independence on 15th August, 1947.

The leaders of South Orissa actively participated in all phases of freedom movement. The activities of these leaders provided inspiration to Binayak Acharya who, in course of years, emerged as a front ranking leader by virtue of his own standing and achievements.

Binayak Acharya, famously known for his uncommon sobriety and simplicity, honesty and integrity, a teacher turned politician, an ex-chief minister of Orissa, popularly called as “Binayak Master” was born on 30th August, 1918 in Shankarpur street, in Berhampur, in Ganjam district.

His forefathers were from Allahabad. They were on a pilgrimage to Kanyakumari. On the way they took rest in Palkunda. They were Brahmins. During that period the Palkunda Raja was sick. No vaidya was able to cure him. Binayak Acharya’s forefathers started treating the Palkunda king and cured by giving him Kabiraj medicines. The King of Palkunda was so much pleased with them that he requested them to stay there permanently. When the East-India company started to rule our country Binayak Acharya’s forefather started to raise their voice against the Britishers. So due to the fear of the British authorities the Palkunda king had to send them to Orissa. The king had given land to them in Berhampur for their residence. During that period
Berhampur was under the Madras presidency. The forefathers of Binayak Acharya gladly accepted the decision of the Kings of Palkunda. But they did not change their attitudes towards the British people.83

After passing his primary education in Sankarpur street primary school and upper primary education in the Aska road Municipal Middle School, he joined the Khallikote Collegiate High School and passed from there in intermediate in Arts examination. After that he joined in Maharaja Krushna Chandra Gajapati College at Paralakhemundi as a degree student.

While studying there in B. A. class, he distinguished himself as a studious one and proved himself as a talented debater. He acquired debating skill by regularly taking part in debates and elocutions as a member of the local Nabatkala Seba Sangha. He was regarded as one among the great three debaters of the College of that time, the other two being Gouri Kumar Brahma, and Somnath Mahapatra.84

Although Binayak Acharya stood first in the university he took a break in the studies to involve himself in such movements concerning the cause of the country. After matriculation he took part in labour movement. And he could nicely lead the movements by giving heart touching speeches. His vibrant speeches could cast lasting influence on the minds of labourers and working men of those days.85

When he was very small, two important things exercised great impact which changed his life. One day in 1928, (when he was only ten) while he was playing with his
childhood friend Satyanarayan Patnaik, he heard some noises. He noticed that some people were running here and there with panic. On enquiry about the incident, he came to know that a freedom fighter was gunned down by the police while marching in a huge procession in the Bada Bazar Street of Berhampur protesting against the police atrocities on the Ganjam freedom fighters. The dead body was carried in a massive funeral procession to the cremation ground on the very night withstanding all the difficulties created by the police on the way. Although being a boy, Binayak was all along the procession and stood as a mute spectator in the cremation ground till Shyam Babu's body was fully consigned to the flames. Returning from the cremation ground, he spent the rest part of the night sleeping on the verandah of his school, and there itself, he along with his friend Satya Narayan Patnaik, vowed to fight to the last to end the shackles of British Raj on Indian soil. It was his first ever indoctrination into the cause of freedom movement when he was in his teens. From that time itself his political baptismation started.

Subsequently, he and his friends like Satya Narayan Patnaik and others organised a “SEVAK DAL” of young volunteers to distribute relief among the needy and poverty-stricken. They had collected relief from the generous public and to further the cause of national liberation in the best possible manner. Gradually, the number of his “Sevak Dal” increased in leaps and bounds, and that very fact aroused great awareness among the local public regarding the dangers of natural calamities like drought and famine and speeding up the process of national liberation from the colonial subjugation of the British.
The second incident was the death of the great literary luminary and academician Rama Chandra Acharya on the 7th January, 1934. The great lamented Rama Chandra Acharya died untimely at the age of 39. This came in as a great shock to the young Binayak who was only sixteen by then. A huge crowd went in a funeral procession carrying the dead body as a mark of their respect to the departed leader. The gathering of multitude of the people in the procession created much impact on the young Binayak. This impelled him to vow to make himself a meaningful personality. He wanted to groom himself in the line of late lamented Rama Chandra Acharya.

Binayak and the band of his friends and followers in the Sevak Dal, played remarkable role in 1942 Quit India Movement which was in full swing in the city of Berhampur. They promptly provided all possible help and relief to those who had become the victims of the police’s witch-hunts and atrocities. Simultaneously, they worked as messengers of the leaders in passing on information regarding the movement secretly from person to person. Even they used to pass information to and from the internees from Berhampur Central Jail. Surendra Nath Dwivedi was underground in the city inciting the youth to remain at the forefront of the movement. Binayak followed his footsteps and helped to maintain the tempo of the movement. As a result, his house was repeatedly searched by the police to find out the objectionable materials, if there were any. As no such materials could be found in his house, he could not be arrested.
In fact such materials, meant for inciting people to join the movement, were kept in the places of secret hideouts like Bali Dhakurani, Mohiri Rajbati, Mohuri Kalua etc. and such places normally escaped police searches.  

Binayak Acharya was a great supporter of Binoba Bhava Bhudan Movement. He believed in Sarvodaya Bhudan. He was very much influenced by Binoba's ideologies. He spread the message of Sarbodaya Bhudan among the school children. He attended all the functions of Bhudan Movements. He advised the students to keep a pot in the house to collect one handful of rice every day. He used to keep a big pot in the office room. He also advised the school children to add the handful of rice to the big pot. And the price obtained from the sale of rice was utilised for the sarvodya purpose.  

Binayak Acharya was very much influenced by the socialistic and Marxist attitude of Bijay Chandra Das a great leader of those days. During 1952 Bijay Chandra Das was a pioneer socialistic leader. He was assisted by Sashi Bhusan Pati, Rama Krushna Behera and Brahmananda Panda and others. During his school days, he was an ardent follower of Bijay Chandra Das who was an inspiration for his life. Most of the time, he used to discuss with Bijoy Chandra Das and Nabakrushna Chowdhury about some social problems and their eradication. Since his young age he was very much interested to involve himself in the social and patriotic activities.  

During the period of teacher-ship he had joined in communist party. With the inspiration of his political mentor great socialistic leader Bijay Chandra Das he had learned a
number of leftist literatures. He had acquired deep knowledge on International politics. He was very much sensitive towards the newly formed developing countries. He was hurt by the assassination of African freedom fighter Patris Lumumba so much so that he had fasted for two days. Most of the time he used to discuss socialistic ideologies with some of his friends like Brahmananda Panda, Manmohan Mishra, Chintamani Panigrahy Baishnaba Charan Patnaik, Baidyanath Ratha, Harihar Das, Sashi Bhusan Pati. At that time Binayak Acharya published a lot of articles in a communist magazine “Nua Duniya” with his disguise name “AGRA DEVA”.89

During 1942, some volunteers and leaders went to the jail by the clarion call of Mahatma Gandhi. During that time Berhampur was considered to be the training centre for the freedom fighters. The congress workers use to conduct the party meetings at Andhra Library in front of the Swaraj Ayurved Bhawan. The freedom fighters before going to jail, made the tilak procession there. The police used to arrest the freedom fighters whenever they went to the stage. Pandit Bhimsen Pathi Sharma had donated one building for the freedom fighters to organize the freedom activities. Although Binayak Babu and his political mentor belonged to the communist party they were not in different opinions as regards the freedom movement. Binayak Acharya always boosted them up morally, and convinced and encouraged them to fight for the freedom of the country.90
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