In nineteenth century there occurred a number of sparodic peasant protest movements, known as tribal unrests in the Garjat (fortressed) states at the periphery of the Mughalbandi (revenue paying) region of Orissa. The Garjat consisting of a group of twenty four feudatory states between 22°34' and 19°22' N and 82°32' and 87°11' E, with a population of 31,73,395 people (1901 census) covering an area of 28,125 square miles had the upper caste hatua (marketers) of the Hindu land-holders and at the lower stratum of the rural society had the Kalapithia (black skinned) tribal labourers. They preferred to stay in the vastness of forests and hills, practised Jhum and podu (shifting) cultivation on the unsettled lands and were hired as labourers by the upper caste landholder Kulta cultivators for seasonal cultivation on settled lands. Among the tribals, Kendhs were predominantly found at Baud, Duspullah, Angul and Nayagarh, the Savaras in Dhenkanal, Keonjhar and Pal-lahara and Santhals mainly inhabited in Mayurbhanj. The Gonds from the Central Provinces migrated to Patna and Kalahandi, the Bhuiyans were largely confined to Gangpur, Bonai, Keonjhar only, the Oraons of Chhotanagpur were found in Gangpur and Bonai and the Kayas and Kissans lived in Sambalpur and Gangpur areas. The multiplicity of tribal groups had no bond of union with
others within and outside Orissa but in course of state formation developed a sense of identity with the land they inhabited.

The present study reveals that the resistance unrests of the peasantised tribals were in fact protests against the colonial market economy for regaining their golden past where no taxation or oppressive state machinery was existent. This idea developed a detestation against the dikus as organic agents for change in their imperceptible social dynamics. The millenial dream for the revival of the rural heaven land was, however, common in every agricultural society during the transition from feudalism to capitalism. The revolts are the vocal expressions of defense mechanism through protest unrests against a superimposed state machinery which brought immediate economic misery, threatened position of the tribal chiefs. These unrests in fact seemed against the process of modernisation of life style threatening traditional values.

But the peasant movements also failed to achieve any lasting effects on the agrarian economy due to its inherent contradictions. First, the movements remained largely localised and unstable in nature because of the middle class with their leaning towards western values did not support them. They denounced the tribal religious rites, wanted to reform in the British line to revive the golden
past of the greater Orissa as depicted in the literature on the new elite section. Second, in many cases the traditional tribal Sardars, Muthadars, and Besoi (village head men) supported the British rule to stop anarchy and invasion of neighbours on their cultivable lands. They participated in the survey and settlement operations aiming at systematisation and enhancement of land rents. Third, many traditional leaders wanted new agricultural activities after the famine years for which excessive taxations were imposed but they felt the pinch when modernisation could not bring sufficient return. Fourth, some rulers supported the tribal leaders for fear of being ostracised by their tribal milieu while some introduced reform measures to save the surplus income in the shape of further investible capital in their estates, but they attempted to revive feudal privileges for a crude form of capital formation, through usury, taxation and unequal trade collaborations, spent on non-productive socio-religious sites. They had no clear-cut vision for revival of the mythical golden past of agricultural prosperity of the kingdom. Peasant movements have been divided into two chapters. One chapter deals with the peasant movements in general and the other chapter deals exclusively with the peasantised tribal movements in western Orissa.
1. Resistance Movements of Bhuiyas of Keonjhar

Keonjhar is located in the northern part of Orissa between 20°1' N and 22°11' N latitude and between 85°11' E and 86°22' E longitude. It extends over an area of 3216.5 square miles and is protected by a range of hills. Sixty percent of its inhabitants are Bhuiyas, Juang and other aboriginal tribes. Most of them speak either Mundari or Santhal dialects. In 1868 and 1891 two sanguinary revolts of the Bhuiyas occurred. The first upsurge, it is believed, was triggered by the failure of the Commissioner of Orissa to take the consent of the Sardars or headmen at the time of the King's coronation, a time-honoured tribal custom. The Bhuiyas regarded themselves as the kingmakers and claimed prescriptive right to approve or reject the administration of the king enthroned by them. The second movement was an organised and protracted revolt of the Bhuiyas against the king's oppressive land settlements, his interference in the traditional tribal customs; it was also partly due to the negligence of the British Raj. This revolt was in the nature of a military skirmish to overthrow the king's government. Some historians have given scrappy descriptions of the resistance movements of the Bhuiyas merely on the basis of the reports appearing in contemporary newspapers like Utkal Deepika, while others writing on the revenue history of the 19th century Orissa, on the basis of unpublished archival sources, neglected to pay any
attention to the protests from the tribal peasantry which British revenue settlements evoked among them. A perusal of the records at the archives together with contemporary reports and literature clearly testifies to the fact that the Bhuiyas resented the violation by an intruding political economy of their social customs and values, their traditional property relations and tribal economic system. This precapitalist social formation felt the impact of the British Raj in the 19th century. The king, assisted by the British officials and the native revenue officials educated at Cuttack, possibly acted as a catalytic agent to this forced metamorphosis of the tribal society into postfeudal but precapitalist agrarian society. The tribals vehemently resisted the modernising measures of the king's officials, appointed from the coastal belt of Orissa, hated as outsiders, who exploited the king's misrule and taxed heavily the aboriginals injuring the impregnable shell of their tribal society\(^9\). This paper is concerned with an examination of the changing pattern of agrarian relation of the Bhuiyas with the Keonjhar state and the intensification of socio-economic exploitation of the king from 1866 to 1891, leading to the pauperisation of the tribesmen. In fact, the tragedy of Keonjhar revolt was an integral chapter of the decline of the agrarian economy of Orissa in the nineteenth century.
I. Background of the revolt

Keonjhar, formerly a part of Mayurbhanj state, was predominantly established by the Bhuiyas as they found it difficult to go to Mayurbhanj to deposit their feudal dues to the king. A brother of Mayurbhanj king was enthroned as the king of Keonjhar in the 11th century A.D. by the Bhuiya Sardars. Narsingh Bhanja, was the first ruler of Keonjhar to be defeated by the Marhattas. After his death in 1764, his son Balabhadra Bhanja asserted the independence of the state. By the treaty of Deogaon in 1803, George Nercourt and Melville made negotiation with the ruler of Keonjhar, which became a tributary state of British Orissa. Throughout the first part of the 19th century, Keonjhar maintained cordial relations with the British Raj. Its Raja was elevated to the rank of Maharaja and his tribute was reduced from Rs.2976/- to Rs.1710/-.

The British government constantly interfered in the administration of the state, attempted to modernise the aboriginal peasantry by introducing improved methods of cultivation and enhancing exportation of forest produce. They tried to Christianise the tribal Juangs, who were regarded by W.W. Hunter as "Leaf bearers of Orissa". By a subsidiary alliance, the Raj usually controlled the means of communication, coinage and security aspects of the state. The British interference threatened the solidarity of the aboriginals and their expression of resistance required the constant vigilance of the British troops within Keonjhar.
For administrative convenience, Keonjhar was chiefly divided into two parts; upper and lower Keonjhar. The Upper Keonjhar is covered with lofty hills and dense jungles where the aboriginals lived reclaiming waste and forest lands on temporary leases, often termed as toila cultivation. The lower Keonjhar was plain and fertile where improved cultivation could be undertaken.13

TABLE 32

List of Hill Bhuiyas of Keonjhar

1. Jharkhand Peer - 16 Bhuiya villages
2. Charigoan Peer - 18 Bhuiya villages
3. Sun Kund Peer - 14 Bhuiya villages
4. Sirkand Peer - 9 Bhuiya villages
5. Panchapada Peer - 10 Bhuiya villages
6. Asta Peer - 18 Bhuiya villages

85 Bhuiya villages

(Source: Progs. Foreign Dept., June, 1892, No. 230)

Each peer was entrusted to one headman or sardar by the king on the common consent of the Bhuiyas as the liaison officer between the king and the Bhuiyas.

II. The First Spark

In 1861, Maharaja Gadadhar Bhanja's demise created a serious apprehension among the Bhuiyas. The late Maharaja
was without a legal heir and his illegitimate son Dhanurjoy won over Ravenshaw, the Commissioner of Orissa and the Superintendent of Tributary Mahals, who recognised him as king. But it was not acceptable to the dowager Queen who played a trick by declaring that the late Maharaja had adopted Brundaban, the grandson of Raja of Mayurbhanj. All her attempts to install Brundaban failed because her petitions to Lt. Governor and to the Privy Council (the House of Lords, England) did not get favourable response. Dhanurjoy, who was in 1861 a minor, attained majority in 1867 and Ravenshaw arranged his coronation. It was vehemently opposed by the Queen. She tried her best to instigate the Bhuiya sardars whose prior consent had not been taken for the coronation, to raise a standard of rebellion. This marked the beginning of the first Bhuiya revolt under the leadership of Ratna Naik, a Bhuiya Sardar, against the alleged British violation of their prerogatives. The restive Bhuiyas plundered the market, retreated to the forest and boycotted the king's administration as a sign of protest. The revolt was finally suppressed in April 1868, with the help of the British force. The Bhuiya villages were burnt down. The severity of military operation was such that Keonjhar which supplied rice to famine-sticken tracts of Orissa in 1866, faced an acute scarcity of food and Bhuiyas were found starving during the rainy season of 1868. The leaders like Ratna Naik were hanged. The trial was savage
In which justice was sacrificed to political expediency. In order to ameliorate the condition of the Bhuiyas, the Lt. Governor of Bengal appointed Captain J. Johnstone for a new settlement with the Bhuiyas and to enquire into the causes of their grievances. Captain Johnstone's settlement was declared in 1870 which was to continue for ten years. This settlement was made not on individual holdings of land but on the basis of ploughs they maintained in the absence of any fixity of tenure, and proper measurement of waste and forest lands brought under temporary cultivation following introduction of improved means of cultivation and revenue collection. The traditional lump sum feudal dues were now replaced by land rent in cash and all produce rents were merged with the money rents. The following figures represent the settlement made by Captain Johnstone:

**TABLE 33**

Land settlement in Keonjhar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1700 ploughs 8 annas per plough</td>
<td>Rs.850.0-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>889 houses of non-cultivator 4 annas per house</td>
<td>Rs.222-4-0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2185 house assessed for school cess at 1 anna per house</td>
<td>Rs.136-8-0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rs.1208-12 annas

Source: Orissa Archives Records ACC.No.6175, pp.22-25.
But after Captain Johnstone's departure Keonjhar witnessed various acts of injustice and maladministration till 1891. Dhanurjoy wanted to gain quick money disregarding the paying capacity of his aboriginal tenants. The holdings of tenants are said to be based on detailed measurement but no lease was taken from the tenants or any patta made over to them. The headmen of the villages were responsible for the collection of land rent. They were also not supplied with any detailed demand statement of the tenants, the area of their holdings and there was no fixity of rent.19 Both the Sardars and the Bhuiyas were left to the mercy of the Karens, Amins and Talukdars of the Raja. Johnstone's settlement merged all abwabs and produce rents into money rents. But the Raja with the help of his retinue of officials, the so called outsider diku, began to collect multifarious feudal dues not authorised by the British Raj. The tenants were to support the Raja's elephants, horses and his attendants, by supplying rice, pulses and other food crops at cheap rate considerably lower than the market rate.20

In the year 1889 the following villages supplied rice to the Raja at the rates given in Table 34. The table indicates that 587 mds and 17 seers of rice was collected by the Raja for Rs.417-17, the market value of supply being over Rs.1300. State officials also collected
TABLE 34

Estimate Rice supply to the Raja

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Villages</th>
<th>Quantity</th>
<th>Rajas rate per rupee</th>
<th>Market rate per rupee</th>
<th>in seers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Md — S</td>
<td>Md — S in seers</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jotteepur</td>
<td>104 - 26</td>
<td>1 - 16</td>
<td>16 to 18</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oriyachagan</td>
<td>70 - 0</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaliahatta</td>
<td>49 - 0</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Udayapur</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kalikaprasad</td>
<td>70 - 0</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayagarh</td>
<td>21 - 0</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rajnagar</td>
<td>74 - 29</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nayakote</td>
<td>16 - 32</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chankipur</td>
<td>40 - 0</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panchatola</td>
<td>26 - 10</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gourdesh</td>
<td>52 - 32</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Raghunathpur</td>
<td>4 - 8</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
<td>do</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total —587 Mds — 17 seers


520 mds and 32 seers of biri worth more than Rs.104/- for which the Raja paid Rs.444/-. The Raja even ran his own retail shop in the Bhuiya tract where he sold 2 seers of salt for 16 seers of rice in exchange. The available market price of 2 seers of salt was 4 annas, whereas 16
seers of rice was one rupee. The state also controlled the monopoly trade in salt and other consumer commodities. At the harvesting season, the Raja used to purchase the following food crops at his dictated rate, for his own establishment and for selling outside the market.

**TABLE 35**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Commodity</th>
<th>Raja's rate per rupee</th>
<th>Market rate per rupee</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moog</td>
<td>20 seers</td>
<td>8 seers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Molasses</td>
<td>12 seers</td>
<td>8 seers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>32 seers</td>
<td>12 seers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Castor oil</td>
<td>5 seers</td>
<td>$2 \frac{1}{2}$ seers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oil seed</td>
<td>32 seers</td>
<td>21 seers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: *ibid.*

The interests of the Bhuiyas were sacrificed in the name of welfare measures. The British officers who toured Keonjhar during this period failed to notice the resentment of the Bhuiyas against the rule of the king and the dikus. These officers went to the extent of praising the Raja as the leader among the kings of Orissa.22 The Raja, in course of time, developed an aversion towards the Bhuiyas who were against his accession in 1867. Besides feudal dues, free service was also demanded from the
labourers without wage. The king's aim was to maximise profit from the villages by maximum utilisation of labour with minimum expense. In order to build a new road and dig a canal to divert a hill stream to the capital the king forced the Bhuiyas to work hard without wages and food. When the Bhuiyas complained to the Superintendent of the Tributary mahals at Cuttack, the Raja was forced to pay wages at the following rate.23

**TABLE 36**

Estimate of wages

- 2 annas per day for able-bodied Bhuiyas for stone quarry
- 7 pie per day for able-bodied Bhuiyas for excavating earth
- 6 pie per day for able-bodied Bhuiya lads for excavating earth.


The Bhuiyas were also ordered to supply logs and firewood for the king's household. They had to render free service and materials to thatch the roof of the palace and the residence of the dikus. They were also required to supply materials free for the construction of a Jagannath Temple at Keonjhar, thought to be a symbol of the coastal culture of Orissa. Sometimes the Raja's retainers wanted to purchase grain after the harvesting season was over from the Bhuiyas at the lowest possible price. Rendering free labour...
to bring Raja’s grain bags to his capital and to work as porters of the officials of state, were compulsory. Though there was no school in the upper Keonjhar, the Bhuiyas were required to pay a school tax. In 1881 the Raja declared a fresh settlement for the Bhuiyas, considerably increasing the house tax and plough tax. The settlement was as follows:

TABLE 37

Land settlement

1610 1/2 ploughs at 13 annas per plough = Rs.1308-8-6
976 houses of non-cultivators 6 1/2 annas = Rs. 394-14-6
per house
School cess for 2523 houses at 2 annas = Rs. 315-8-0
per house

Rs.2018-12-6

Source: OSA, Ac.No.6125, pp.140-142.

The spark of the second resistance movement.

The Bhuiyas in despair started migrating to the adjoining states. In 1889, an entire village of 300 cultivators migrated to Mayurbhanj.25 So the Raja to keep the flow of revenue steady, undertook a fresh settlement in 1890, without reducing the incidence of rent. The settlement was as follows:
According to Census report, the Bhuiya population in 1881 was 18481 persons but it came down to 13615 persons in 1891 partly due to migration and partly due to increase in death rate.\(^{27}\)

The resistance movement of the Bhuiyas took the form of Chartist agitations. They began to send petitions to the Superintendent of Tributary Mahals, Cuttack in December, 1890.\(^{28}\) The king in rage arrested some Bhuiya leaders and kept them in confinement in the newly constructed jail at his capital.\(^{29}\) Due to physical torture, seven Bhuiya sardars died. It provided the spark. The Bhuiyas in January-February, 1891, began to organise themselves under the leadership of Dharani Naik who worked as the surveyor of the state to resist the new revenue settlement of the king. At first they carried away Bichitrananda Das, the oppressive Dewan with the adherents of the Raja. They looted the market and surrounded the palace to force the king to abdicate in favour of Dharanidhar. The panicstricken king

\begin{table}
\centering
\begin{tabular}{l l}
\textbf{TABLE 38} & \\
1046 1/2 plough @ 3 annas per plough & = Rs.250-4-6 \\
725 houses of non-cultivators 6 1/2 = Rs.229-8-6 & annas per house \\
School cess for 1782 houses at 2 annas per house & = Rs.222-12-0 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textbf{Source: ibid}
fled to Cuttack. They robbed arms and ammunitions from the king’s stores and retreated to nearby hills, when resisted by the palace guards. Dharanidhar organised the tribal militia and arrested Fakir Mohan Senapati, the manager of the state. This famous Oriya writer in his autobiography gave a graphic description of this tribal revolt (meli) against the outsider (dikus). Dalton, the Commissioner of Chotanagpur, conducted the operation. Hayes, the Deputy Commissioner of Singhbhum, was appointed commander of the troops. The military operations started to crush the revolt before it could spread to the adjoining tracts. Sardar Dharanidhar Naik surrendered to Dalton hoping that the British troops would overthrow the oppressive Bhanja ruler and his hated associates, the outsider dikus, from Keonjhar. It was the turning point of the revolt. The Bhuiyas considered the British troops as their ‘deliverer’ from the tyranny of the king.

Several Bhuiya leaders were arrested, and after judicial enquiry were sent to jail. Thus the aspirations of the Bhuiyas remained an unfulfilled dream. Dhanurjoy was reinstalled as the king and the Bhuiya sardars were forced to pay their allegiance to him. Toynbee, the Superintendent, Wylle, the newly appointed manager of the Keonjhar state, did not favour the return of Dhanurjoy to the throne. But it was the policy of the Raj to keep the native kings of India in good humour in order to get their support in times
of adversity. Wylie, the Manager of the state, devoted most of his time, investigating the real grievances of the aboriginals. He even started the construction of a road to link Keonjhar with Singhbhum and Cuttack. In spite of the best efforts of the government, many Bhuiyas migrated to the neighbouring estates apprehending Raja’s reprisals.33 The Bhuiyas suffered hard as they lost their reserve produce and even cattle.34 They had no other means but to borrow money from the money lenders which ultimately turned them to be landless paupers and wage-earning labour class, migrating to the neighbouring tracts. Thus the Bhuiyas who were being slowly transformed from the status of reclamer of forest and waste lands into peasant cultivators, from the position of non-revenue paying serfs to land rent paying peasantry, found the colonial land relation oppressive.

2. Bamanghatty disturbances 1833-1881.

Bamanghatty, an integral part of Mayurbhanj state became a battle ground due to strained relations between the surbarakar of Bamanghatty and the Raja of Mayurbhanj. The underfined authority over Bamanghatty between Commissioner of Tributory Mahals and Governor General’s agent of South West Frontier, also caused for the rift too.35 The situation became tense when the peasantised tribals defied frequent imposition of leases and the settlement of land revenue by waging battle against the non-tribal cultivators who had penetrated into their once exclusive and free society.
Bamanghatty pargannah was given as a lakhiraj tenure to the ancestor of Madhab Das Mahapatra by the rulers of Mayurbhanj. Mahapatra recognised the authority of the Raja, paid visits twice a year to the capital to meet the ruler and to worship the goddess Kichingeswari during the Dushera festival and the Sravana Purnima day. After the death of Mahapatra, the heir to the zamindary visited the Raja and after paying 700 rupees, he got the Raja's clearance to enjoy the rent of the pargannah.

The relation between Mahapatra and the Maharaja was cordial till 1818 when the Raja expressed his intention to resume and assess all land held rent free by the Sardar and Paiks of Bamanghatty. The Raja wanted an annual tribute from the Mahapatra. The reluctance of the Mahapatra to pay annual tribute and a share from his revenue led to animosity. When the Raja remained firm on his decision, the Mahapatra with the help of the Kol Sardars used religious and ethnic background to organise the tribals to unfurl the flag of rebellion. The tribals responded to the call for revolt in 1832, 1866 and 1881 as a sign of protest to new capitalist property relation and British interference in their tract.

I. First Revolt of 1832 - 1836

In 1821 the revolt of the Larka kols of Singhbhum spread to Kol tracts of Thua peer, Barbaria peer, Oala peer and Lallgarh peer of Bamanghatty. Major Roughsedge
brought about tranquility after a punitive expedition. He issued a proclamation on 7 May 1821, by which the Larka Kol Sardars agreed to acknowledge British authority and to pay regularly a rent of eight annas per plough for five years and to pay rupee one rent per plough after expiry of five years. They also promised not to disturb the outsiders (Diku) who had settled down in their peer. It was the first attempt of the Raj to bring the disaffected Kols of Bamanghatty to subjection and to change their lawless habit by placing them under superior authority of the state.

To keep the strict vigilance over the activities of the larkas and for safety of the Dak conveyance Major Roughsedge recommended to place his four Kol Peers under the general superintendence of Governor General's agent of South West Frontier. But W.Blunt, the then commissioner of Orissa, opposed it. However, he planned to keep these Kol peers under the direct supervision of Magistrate of Balasore by connecting this tract by a road. Finally the Bengal government with a view not to change the existing arrangement, accepted the suggestion of Blunt. It also entrusted the joint magistrate of Balasore with extra judicial power to check the frequent robbery by the so-called tribal bandits.

Meanwhile, the zamindar of Bamanghatty, to escape from the extra imposition of Raja of Mayurbhanj, in October
1822 and on 6 February 1826 applied to Magistrate of Jungle Mahals with a request to attach his zamindaree within the district of Jungle Mahals. But the British Government maintained again a dignified silence. It also did not try to investigate the real grievances of the Mahapatra.43

Narendra Mahapatra, the zamindar in the Jeth (May-June, 1826) of 1233 umlee died and his son Madhab Das Mahapatra claimed himself as the new zamindar. The Raja summoned Madhab to the capital for presentation of ceremonial Chata (umbrella) and Pataka (royal flag as insignia). When Madhab Das was detained at Baripada, the Raja sent his own men to collect taxes from the Kols. Madhab fled from Baripada and complained to the Governor-General's agent to south west frontier Agency against Raja's men.

The agent arranged a meeting between Madhab Das and the Raja at Balasore, where it was decided that Madhab Das should pay rupees five hundred per annum as tribute to the Raja. It was also decided that Raja should present ceremonial Chata and Pataka to Mahapatra.45 The Raja, encouraged at this, invited fresh trouble when he claimed arrear tribute of ten years and declared him as the lord of four peers and three hundred villages of Bamanghatty. Madhab Das petitioned against this declaration to Stockwell, the commissioner of Orissa. But Stockwell did not support the stand of Mahapatra and informed the government of Bengal.
that zamindar was recalcitrant and government should help the Maharaja to suppress him. This instigated Mahapatra to start a fresh outrage. It started on April 3, 1832 with the loot of *Dak* (postal bags) and plunder of grain and cattle from the neighbouring tracts. It became so severe that the Maharaja expressed his inability to check the depredation. As a result Stockwell marched to Bamanghattty in the last part of April to settle the differences by peaceful adjustment.

While Stockwell was busy in military operations to check the plunder, the Bengal government instructed captain Wilkinson, the Governor-General's agent, to explore the possibilities of keeping the four *Kol* peers separate from Bamanghatty. Wilkinson, after enquiry on the spot, found the Larka *Kols* of Lalgarh and Oala peer supporting the zamindar and *Kols* of Thua peer and Barberia peer supporting the Maharaja. So he requested Bengal Government to order the Maharaja to withdraw his agent provocateur from Bamanghattty and to instruct the Mahapatra to pay the annual tribute of 500 rupees to Maharaja by collecting not more than eight annas per plough fixed. Unaware of this, Stockwell with Lt. Devonson ordered the army to burn the Kol villages and was able to occupy strategic places and ghats. Then he suggested to the Bengal Government the direct management of the four *Kol* tracts.
Now Madhab, finding Wilkinson friendly to his cause, submitted before him. So Wilkinson expecting an amicable settlement, again requested the Bengal government to discontinue the military operations to save the tribals from devastation and pillage. But Stockwell, on the other hand, did not like to suspend the military operations and recommended for the imprisonment of Madhab Das.

The Bengal government desirous of peaceful adjustment did not accept Stockwell's suggestion for direct management of Kol peers apprehending that it will be an expensive proposition. This decision was too much to bear on the part of Stockwell. Hence he resigned from his post. This resignation of Stockwell brought to the forefront a problem before the Company government to define the respective authorities of the commissioner of Cuttack and Governor-General's agent over Bamanghatty. But the Governor failed to decide it which led to another tragedy.

At the supervision of Wilkinson, the military operation was suspended and arrangements were made to restore plundered property, to make the dak (postal bags) conveyance safe and to effect the return of disaffected Kols to their villages. The Mahapatra even came forward to help the government troops to check the incursions of rebels to Bamanghatty during Ganga Narain Hangama. Meanwhile, the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, finding Wilkinson and
Mahapatra busy, again sent his agent to provoke the loyal Kols of Thua peer and Barbaria peer to petition against Mahapatra accusing him for collecting illegal rent and cesses. W.R. Hunter, the Magistrate of Balasore, proceeded to enquire into the grievances. The Maharaja created another confusion placing his right to dismiss Madhab Das from Sarbarakarship. Even the Maharaja sent his agent to Thua and Barbaria peer to instigate the Kols against Mahapatra.

But the Bengal Government to settle the differences, instructed both Rickett and Wilkinson to arrange a meeting between the Raja and Mahapatra. Finally Narasinghpur of Dhalbhum was selected as the meeting place. In the meeting on 1 April, 1833, it decided that Mahapatra should pay annual revenue to Mayurbhanj state at the following rate for the entire pargunnah of Bamanghatty.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Revenue in Rupees</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1834</td>
<td>800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1835</td>
<td>1200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>1600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1837</td>
<td>2200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1838 and hereafter</td>
<td>3000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Relevant revenue settlement papers: BRP.
In addition to this, the Surbarakar agreed to pay a sum of 101 per annum for the possession of Khas desh and Khorda desh. The Governor-General-in-Council sanctioned this measure and accepted the subordinate tenureship of Surbarakar. It also instructed both the agent and the commissioner to restrict the Maharaja of Mayurbhanj from interfering in the affairs of Bamanghatty as long as Mahapatra was paying the revenue. Later Wilkinson arranged an assembly of Kol Sardars who took an oath not to revolt again and to submit the plundered property.

The Raja of Mayurbhanj was not satisfied over this arrangement which he considered favourable to Mahapatra. The Raja to excite the Kols of four peers against the Surbarakar made a false promise of free-rent tenureship, made to them through his agent. The Kols of peers with a view to save them from the burden of rent and cess began to organise themselves. Now their aim was to drive Mahapatra from Bamanghatty. They failed to realise the political and acquisitive character of the Maharaja. The symbol of disaffection, an arrow, was sent to different villages of peers to the adjoining tracts of Singhbhum. Finally on 28 April 1834, loot of Dak, plundering of the property of peasants settled in Bamanghatty, and burning of houses of Kols loyal to Mahapatra began. Madhab Das to check the depreciation, organised his tribesmen and loyal Kols but succeeded in giving a feeble resistance to them.
The rebellions Kols with the help of Maharaja's soldiers swept away many villages settled by peasants of the plains. After killing principal adherents of Madhab Das they began to harness the idea to free them even from the rule of Maharaja and to close their tract for the Dikus by reviving the rule of their Sardars. In August 1834 they stormed the fort of Mahapatra who fled out of Bamanghatty. Then they began to plunder and defied command of the soldiers of Mayurbhanj. Finding the Kols worse than useless to him, Maharaja appealed to the government of Bengal for an operation of the Company's Government's troop. The Bengal Government, apprehending the spread of the disaffection to the Kol tracts of Singhbhum, Sareikella and Bankura, on the advice of Wilkinson, appointed colonel Richard as the commander of the military operation. The Ramgarh Battalion took part in the action.

The operation started on 3 December 1835 and continued to 12 February 1836, when the British troops completely established their hold over the whole of Bamanghatty. Wilkinson in order to check future rising of the Kols and to bring them into intimate contact with British civil and judicial administration, suggested direct management of Bamanghatty to the Government of Bengal. He estimated the total expenses at Rs.30,400 out of which, deducting possible receipt of 8 annas per plough, the Company's Government would have to spend Rupees 22,000 to 24,400 per annum from its own income.
The Bengal Government not only accepted the suggestion of Wilkinson but also decided to create the Kolhan by keeping the Kol population of Bamanghattty, Singhbhum, Sareikella, and Kharsuan under its direct management. The Court of Directors on 13 May 1837 approved the creation of Kolhan placing it under general administration of Governor-General's agent. The following Kol peers formed the Kolhan.

**TABLE 40**

List of revenue paying taluks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mayurbhanj (Bamanghattty)</th>
<th>Saraikella</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thua Peer</td>
<td>Raja basa Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barbaria Peer</td>
<td>Onchela Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lalgarh Peer</td>
<td>Pulang Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oola Peer</td>
<td>Abrasideo Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lote Peer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singhbhum</th>
<th>Kharswan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bar Peer</td>
<td>Burye Peer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kauthgarh Peer</td>
<td>Jhubam Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jamada Peer</td>
<td>Chercha Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Chenai Peer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Goomla Peer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Imda Peer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Kols village of Chyna Peer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burkeda Peer</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjounde Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Gopinath Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nuthea Peer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kuldea Peer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rungra Peer</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Relevant revenue papers.
To assist Wilkinson in the administration of Kolhan, Lt. Tickel was appointed as the assistant of Wilkinson who demarcated the peers and subdivided them. Each sub-division was kept under a Kol Manki (Sardar). The Mankis were entrusted with police duties and power to collect rent from the Kols. The Larka Kols acquainted with their lawless spirit were now forced to obey the Mankis. Schools were established to eradicate social evils like belief in witchcraft, spirits of the dead, selling of brides and female infanticides. Weekly markets were established in various parts of the district to encourage the disposal of country produce. This resulted in tribal intercourse with the Hindus and popularised the use of consumer goods.

After secession of Kol peers from Bamanghatty the disaffection of kols was suppressed with an iron hand. The five ring leaders were hanged publicly and ninety nine rebels were sentenced to rigorous imprisonment. The Doorwas tribe and their leader the former Surbrakar Madhab Das Mahapatra were not allowed to return to Bamanghatty apprehending a fresh outrage. Madhab Das who was allowed to have a pension of 3000 rupees per annum finally died in 1843. But Maharaja, after the elimination of his enemies, however, failed to control the Kols of Bamanghatty. These Kols got constant support from their brother Kols of former four Kole Peers of Bamanghatty now in Kolhan and reorganised.
themselves under Bhim Singh, a sardar, to the Umlah and
Amins of Raja and usurious money-lenders and rapacious
traders of the plain who had penetrated to their tracks.
So the Bengal Government finally kept Bamanghatty under
the direct supervision of Assistant Commissioner of Chain-
basar by temporarily suspending the Raja's rule. 71

II. Second Revolt of 1866

After the restoration of tranquility in the Kolhan,
the British Raj winded it up, finding it costly to keep
under direct management. Thus Bamanghatty with its four
Kol peers were restored to the Raja of Mayurbhanj who tried
to establish his hold firmly in the Kol tracts forcing the
aboriginals to pay rent, cesses, fudal dues and to provide
free labour (bethi) to the state. This became unbearable
to the Kols. They finally united under the leadership of
Baghwan Das and Boorda Bhumij in 1864 and succeeded in
raising a bloody upsurge in 1866 taking both the Maharaja
and the British surprise.

In this universal discontent against the Maharaja's
rule the tribal peasants were involved and were committed to
their aspiration to end the oppressive rule. The ideas and
the logical driving force of this movement were religious.
The Raja's attempt in 1863 to introduce a settlement to
assess and measure the cultivable land of the peasantized
tribals was distasteful to them. They found their old custom
of payment on the rock. 72 This ill-feeling was further
aggravated when the Amins, being bribed by the Maharaja started falsification of measurement taking advantage of the illiteracy of Kols. Even the Raja's man denied receipt of rent paid by them. The Raja frequently introduced new awabs (extra imposts) and made many of them permanent, causing the rise of miscellaneous demands and leaving the peasants with a bare subsistence. The Maharaja gave the assignment (tunkee) of rent collection to his personal servants and corrupted umlahs, who in addition to rent, collected paddy for maintenance of the Rajas elephants and horses.

Another cause of exasperation of these Kols, who spent their days in the commune like villages was the usurious money lending of the Sudra community. The Sudras of Bamanghatty were prosperous people who came to settle there and in a few years, due to their superior cultivation, were able to amass huge fortunes to establish themselves as Mahajans. They slowly supplanted the tribal peasants from their holdings and reduced them to misery. According to popular belief which prevailed among the tribals they were exclusive owners of forest land which served as a link between them and their ancestors. So the loss of land to the outsiders inflamed their inner passion. The settlement of 1854, introduced by the British Government in Kolhan, led to fixation of rent of rupee one instead of 8 annas per plough. It entitled the tribal ryots to receive pottah (a deed of lease) for 12 years with the understanding
that until the expiry of that period no enquiry of any kind should be made in their villages. The agent and officials were instructed by the British Government to remain vigilant to check the abuse of power of Mankis and Mundas.

This change marked the expansion of cultivable land but proved detrimental to the interests of Sudras. Meanwhile, the restoration of Bamanghatty to Mayurbhanj led to revival of rent free Tenure like Jageers, Debottars, Brahmuttars. These rent free lands were given to the Raja's agent and paik by snatching away the best lands from the peasantised tribals. The expiry of settlement leading to fresh measurement and falsification by amins in 1866 encouraged the tribal peasants to unite under the leadership of Bhagwan Das, a kith and kin of the former Surbarkars and Booda Bhumij, a displaced Sardar. They petitioned against the King's rule to Lt Governor of Bengal. Bands of Kols, large and small, proceeded from village to village of the Kols to defy the king's rule. When the Raja sent his paiks and police force to Bamanghatty, the Kols retaliated by killing umlahs and by cutting the line of communication of the troops.

The movement soon spread all over Bamanghatty, causing great panic to Sudras, traders, Mahajans and umlahs. The rebels broke out of Bamanghatty. Bhagwan Das, the guide and philosopher of this movement, remembering the past
humiliation of the Doorwaas tried to bring them to Baman-
ghatty. He also amassed a huge fortune by collecting a
part of the plunder from the rebels. The other leader
Boorda Bhumij, true to his martial spirit, organised the
Deslog (Kol: the original tiller of the soil) by carry­
ing an arrow from place to place, to which Punja was
offered. He successfully secured the alligiance of 'deslog'
(aboriginals) against the Hatua (outsider) and developed
distinction between 'we group' and 'they group'. All sar­
dars except Kasi Sardar of upperbhag (highlands) took part
in the revolt. So his house was set on fire and systemati­
cally plundered.

Finding the inefficiency of the Maharaja's troop
to suppress the movement the British troops joined the ope­
ration on 17 April, 1886 and within a short period they
suppressed by arresting Bhagwan Das and a large number of
disaffected deslogs. During the course of operation
Hayes, the commander of British troops, found universal
hatred against the rule of the Raja. On his recommendation,
Government of Bengal again temporarily suspended Maharaja's
authority over Bamanghatty. The British agent Hayes
brought back many Sudras who had fled Bamanghatty by giving
assurance of security to their life and property. Under
his supervision settlement of villages were made and
pattahs were given to the peasants. The village headmen
were made responsible for the collection of rent in four
Kists (instalments). The system of tunkee was abolished and schools and police stations were established at different parts of Bamanghatty. III. Third Rising

In 1881, another serious disturbance of Larka Kols broke out in Bamanghatty threatening the rule of the Raja of Mayurbhanj, who had been restored to the possession of the tract in 1878. The movement of deslog was against the administrative changes introduced by the Maharaja and the imposition of illegal cesses on them.

After 1866 the representative of Maharaja of Mayurbhanj, Krishna Chandra Bhanj, managed the affair of Bamanghatty and four Kol peers under the able guidance of Hayes, the district collector of Singhbhum. During these 12 years of direct management of Krishna Chandra with his assistant Nandq Coomar Chakravarti constructed roads and established schools at different parts of Bamanghatty. There was proper administration of justice. The expenditure of the pargunah was kept within the income. But after restoration of Bamanghatty the Maharaja started a fresh measurement of land by declaring a settlement. The invalid pen grants were revived and given to his agent. The new jungle lands brought under cultivation were assessed and the rate was fixed which varied from Rs.1-8 to Rs.1-1 per acre. The deslog with their Sardars declined to pay their rent which marked an increase of rupee one per acre. When
Raja's men forced them to pay the new rent they started combining. Leaving aside this immediate cause there were various other causes which contributed generously for creating dissatisfaction in the hearts of the deslog. One of them was school cess. A school cess of 10½ pie per rupee of rent had been collected from the deslog. The total income from the school cess was Rs.10000 per annum, which was sufficient to meet the expenditure of education of Bamanghatty. But the Raja, except a few schools, did not bother to open new schools. The monopoly at forest dues was also another source of discontent among the deslog. Maharaja started the practice of giving monopoly to contractors to purchase forest produce on payment of a fixed amount. These contractors dictated their own price to the Kols who had no other market choice. This led to protest of the peasantised tribals to the right of contractors to buy against the proceeds of the seller's labour purchasing price. The deslogs were also highly agrieved when the Maharaja imposed taxes on Handia (liquor) which was brewed for home consumption by the Kols of Bamanghatty.

Now the larkas assembled under the leadership of Kasi Sardar to revolt against the authority of Maharaja to raise the rent and to impose different cesses. Kasi Sardar during the revolt of 1866, was a supporter of the Maharaja. But later he became the greatest hater of the king's rule.
finding the arbitrary imposition of taxes and cesses on the tribals. Under his leadership the tribals revolted from December 1880 to February 1881. This time the tribals adopted a new method for sending the news of disaffection to different tribal villages. They sent a round knot of rope to each sardar attaching a piece of charcoal to it which devoted that if they refuse to join them then their house would be burnt like the charcoal. The Sardars were instructed to send the same knot to the nearby people. Thus within a short period the authority of the Maharaja was set at naught.

Under the leadership of Kasi, the deslog established their own administration by ostracizing the agents of the Maharaja. The council of village headmen was formed and Kasi became its head. This rule of Sardar was short-lived. When disaffection was spreading the Raja was on a tour to Bengal. After hearing the outbreak, he hurried back to Baripada and invited the council of Sardars for an amicable settlement. But the proposals of Sardars were not acceptable to the Maharaja. He immediately sent his troops to Bamanghatty where the British troops joined them. The disturbance before becoming violent was suppressed when rebel leaders were arrested and sent to jail.

After the suppression of the movement, N.K. Das, the Assistant Superintendent of Tributary Mahals was assigned to enquire into the real grievances of the Kols. He brought
about certain far-reaching changes like, abolition of school cess, Handia cess, fixation of rate of forest produce and rate of 4 annas per plough. On his recommendation a contingent of police force was kept at Bamanghatty to look after the law and order problem of the tracts. The revolt of 1831 naturally invites comparison with the earlier movement of tribal peasants in 1832-36 and 1866. Speaking generally it may be concluded that the first movement was directed against the British interference in the Kol tracts and was an outcome of contest of power between the Maharaja and his Surbarkar. The second revolt was against the outsiders (Hatooah), and the third against the arbitrary imposition of illegal cesses and rents on the deslog. All these factors in the nineteenth century combined, threatened to destroy the tribal identify customs and property relations. From the east and coastal Orissa a peep into the peasant unrests towards Orissa's western coast line may be made.

3. Ghumsur Rising

Ghumsur was an important Zamindary in Ganjam. It was enjoying freedom from paying revenue even during the time of the Gajapati and the Muslim sovereigns. Soon after assuming power in Ganjam the British rulers sought the submission of the Bhanja Raja of Ghumsur finding his refractory nature. But Srikara Bhanja, the ruler did not pay any heed to this threat and fortified his country with
the support of the zamindars of Pratapgiri and Vijayanagar. From 1803 to 1835 the Company's Government took vigorous measures to drive out the Bhanja ruler who defied the British force, exploiting the geographical advantage of his country. The contest for power had a devastating effect on the poor tribal peasantry who formed the bulk of the population of Ghumsur.

Ghumsur as the oldest hill zamindary of the Ganjam district lies between 20°4' to 20°25' North and between 80°10' to 85°5' of East. It covers a total area of 1360 square miles out of which 500 square miles were covered by forests and hills, forming a formidable barrier to enemy's progress and making the climate of the country salubrious. The central and southern part of the zamindary was full of fertile valley, where paddy and sugarcane were extensively cultivated. In 1788 according to the estimate of Circuit Committee, the gross revenue of the zamindary was Rs.164,174 which was, no doubt, a high estimate. The zamindary had some independent district like Chaukpohd, Pensora and the Khond tracts of Woodiaghery, Huzzoguda, Tentala, Guddee. The petty chieftains who possessed these tracts were the subjects of the zamindar of Ghumsur but paid nothing as rent or tribute. The zamindary was bounded on the north by Duspallah, on east by Nayagarh and on the north-west by Baud. All these neighbouring states were khond tracts. This zamindary comprised 18 muthas in the
plain and 24 muthas in the hills. Most lands of the muthas of the plain were held by military class either on rent-free tenure or on light assessment. The hill muthas were entirely held by the Khond chiefs who paid no regular tribute but cess in kind. They also assisted the Raja during war time against another state. The khond chiefs of the muthas, munds (heads) were nominally appointed by the Raja. They served as the middlemen between the Raja and his tribal subjects. Besides, among the Khond chiefs the Raja appointed a leader and conferred on him the title of Dora Bisoi who was to assist the Raja on all affairs of the Khonds. The Raja maintained good relationship with the Khond chiefs despite their frequent predatory character during the harvest season.

In 1776-77 Ghumsur came under the British rule as a part of Ganjam district. Cartford, the first Resident of Ganjam, had considerable difficulties in bringing Krishna Bhanja, the then ruler of Ghumsur, to agree for giving annual tribute to the British. Finally he apprised the Raja in 1767 to pay a sum of Rs.3001 as the annual tribute to the British Government. However, in 1768, Krishna Bhanja withheld the tribute as a result of which the British troops marched into his state. In 1771, his tribute was enhanced giving rise to conflict till his death in December 1773. After the demise of Krishna Bhanja there arose a quarrel between his two sons Lakhman and Vikram over succession.
The British Government intervened and made Vikram Bhanja, the younger the Raja by violating the local custom of primogeniture when Vikram agreed to pay 5,000 rupees as annual tribute. But soon Vikram became defaulter and in 1778 he fled to the hills at the sight of the government troops, sent for collection of arrear dues. When the British Government was on the verge of deposing him, with some loyal khond chiefs he appealed to the Madras Council. The council gave its decision in favour of Vikram in December 1779, restoring him to the throne. But Vikram found it difficult to pay the tribute regularly. In 1782 he again became defaulter and was taken as a prisoner.

After his brother Lakhman paid the arrear revenue by borrowing money from the Mahajans he was allowed to become the Raja. He died in 1783 leaving the throne an empty treasury to his son, Srikara, who, out of disgust and to escape from the grip of money-lenders, left for pilgrimage. Returning from pilgrimage he took over the administration from his son Dhanurjoy but could not find an alternative to save the monarchy from penury. He tried to raise a commotion of the khonds by organising the hill chiefs against the British rule. His attempts proved abortive and the Madras government made his son Dhanurjoy the ruler of Ghumsur in 1801. Dhanurjoy paid his tribute regularly from 1802 to 1815. He tried to manage the state by collecting different taxes from the peasants and the peasantised tribals resulting in protest against his rule. Meanwhile, Srikara
Bhanja took full advantage of the mounting discontent of the peasantry and falsely accused Dhanurjoy as the murderer of his mother. When the British government summoned Dhanurjoy for trial, he absconded. The British troops marched to Ghumsur and attached it to the Company's rule. Later Dhanurjoy was arrested and sentenced to single imprisonment.

Soon after the annexation of Ghumsur the Company's Government arranged to assess all lands held rent free by peasants and tribals to impose various on them which were to be paid in cash. This led to the spread of disaffection among the peasantised tribals who organised themselves under Dora Bisoi demanding the return of Bhanja dynasty. They proclaimed Balabhadra Bhanja, son of Dhanurjoy as the new Raja of Ghumsur. Srikara Bhanja, anxious to ascend the Gaddi declared Balbhadra pretender. The mounting anarchy of the state, heavy expenses on military operation and salubrious climate forced the Company's Government to restore the throne to Srikara on 3 May, 1819. Srikara ruled the state till 1831 when he again became defaulter paving the way for his son Dhanurjoy who had been released from the prison. Between 1831-1835 Dhanurjoy managed the state but was forced to defy the British rule being unable to pay tribute in 1835. In November of 1835 he fled to Kullada hills with his family when the British army marched to Ghumsur.
Dhanurjoy began to organise the Khonds for a fight against the invading British army. The peasant tribals anticipating oppressive alien rule with a new scale of taxation made up their mind to the British army. Dhanurjoy died on 31 December, 1835 leaving his son of thirteen years old to organise the resistance movement with Besoi and Jagannath Bhanja. To put an end to the resistance the Government of Madras appointed G.E.Russell, a man of considerable military experience to conduct an expedition against the rebel with 48 and 49 Madras Native Infantry.

Russell arrived at Ghumsur on 11 January 1836. His first object was to effect the surrender of the rebel leaders and the family members of Dhanurjoy. To check the incursion of the rebel Khonds the rulers of contiguous native states were requested to extend active support to the British troops and the government headed by Russell. Then he marched with the troops to Gallery and Kullada, the places of rebel strongholds to encounter the Khonds led by Dora Besoi, succeeded to capture Brandaban Bhanja and the member of the royal family at Udayagiri. He also won over Sam Besoi, a Khond leader and got his assistance to undertake the campaign effectively in the jungle tracts unknown to him.

The vigorous expedition forced the rebels to flee. Russell with the help of Sam Besoi convened conferences of the Khonds to convince them to lay down their arms. He also made Sam the chief Besoi, replacing refractory Dora
Besoi who had escaped to the forest of Duspullah. The displaced Dora Besoi, finding the expedition suspended during June to November 1836 due to rain, got time to hatch a fresh conspiracy. He influenced the khonds again to resist the government troops with a view to abolish the British rule which imposed on them various types of taxes, introduced cash payment of rent, and brought the coastal Oriya traders, money-lenders, and forest contractors to their home land. But in November 1836 Russell foiled his attempts to organise a fresh upsurge by arresting the tribal sardars and destroying the newly built fortifications. He also successfully pushed Dora Besoi to the jungle of Baud. The demoralised Khonds were successfully persuaded by Sam Besoi to reconcile with the British Raj.

After the end of the military operations Ghumsur witnessed a period of remorseless tyranny unleashed by the British army to strike terror in the hearts of the Khonds. The rebel leaders were publicly executed. The family of the deposed king was removed to Vellore on pension and rebel khonds were publicly whipped and sent to prison. The army was stationed at different parts to maintain law and order. The touring British officials resumed the rent free lands of the Khonds. Markets and fairs were set up to promote internal trade, to bring the Khonds of the hills into intimate contact with the people of the plain.
The aftermath of the revolt was very tragic. The Khonds who had joined the rebellion without reserve grain had to suffer due to bad harvest in 1838. They began to attribute the crop failure to British interference to suppress the Meriah sacrifice given to earth goddess for good harvest. This human sacrifice to Dharanipenu by the Khonds was discovered by Russell during the course of military expedition in the khond tracts. When he informed the Government of St. Fort George about this tribal rite, Captain John Campbell was immediately appointed to persuade the khonds to give up the rite. It had little effect on the khonds. So the Government of India in 1845 passed Act XXI which established a special Mariah Agency to suppress the practice of human sacrifice in the khond tract of Ghumsur, Baud and Duspullah through persuasion. The first Mariah Agent Captain Macpherson finding of difficult to persuade the khonds to give up the rite, followed coercive measures by burning the khond villages, arresting Khond sardars and by effecting rescue of the Mariah victims. This provided spark for another upsurge of the khonds under the leadership of Chakra Besoi, the nephew of the displaced chief sardar Dora Besoi and Nebaghana Kuanr, the chief khond sardars of Baud. Throughout 1846-47 the government machinery was paralysed by the rebel khonds of Ghumsur, Baud and Duspullah.

By early 1847, Brigadier General Dyce was appointed to suppress the rising. He was given sufficient power to
bring about speedy and amicable termination of the disturbances. He was taken a back to find the whole khond tract ravaged by the British troops kept under. Meriah agent captain Macpherson. In a bid to suppress the disturbances without arson and plunder he recommended the dismissal of Captain Macpherson. It was acceptable to the Government of India who immediately appointed Captain John Campbell as the new Meriah agent. Dyce and Campbell worked harmoniously to suppress the commotion and were able to bring about tranquility in the disturbed tracts by winning over the khond sardars and by destroying rebel strongholds.

Chakra Besoi, the rebel-leaders, without losing hope to raise a fresh commotion of the Khonds in Chumsur and Baud in future fled to the inaccessible forests of Angul. But Nabaghana Knuar of Baud for fear of losing his post of chief Sardar reconciled with the British authority, to apprehend Chakra. When British Government asked Raja Somanath Singh of Angul his help he showed his cold shoulder. Later Somanath Singh was deposed on the ground of his alleged complicity with the rebel Khonds and disobedience.

Chakra Besoi did not submit. Instead he played hide and seek with the British Raj carrying a big sum on his head. He made two attempts to excite the Khonds against the British rule. But the deposition of Raja of Angul,
desertion of the Khond sardars creation of the Khond Mahals and the superior British armed forces prevented the rebel Khonds from rising again. Chakra made an appearance again in December 1855 when he attacked the camp of Lt. Macneil, the agent of hill tracts of Orissa at Orladance with a group of armed Khonds. But the Agent was miraculously saved due to the timely arrival of Dinabandhu Pattanaik, the tahsildar of the Khond Mahals to the camp with a body of Sebundy. After this abortive attack chakra shrewdly evaded arrest at Rampur from where he proceeded to the jungle of Jaypur and then went into the oblivion.

The end of Meriah war marked the beginning of a period of anarchy. The violence and plunder of property had caused disruption of existing political and social institutions of the tribals. The British rule forced the Khonds to pay revenue and there was penetration of non-tribals within the tribal society money-lenders, traders and forest contractors to purchase lands, to force the tribals to sell their produce and labour at the price dictated by them. As there was a close link between Christianity and colonialism, evangelisation went on full swing in Ghumsur. The Oriya population of eastern coastal Orissa penetrated into the Khond tracts as instruments of the British Raj and through them the new machine made consumer goods were imported. With the disappearance of
Chakra Besoi this khond identity of the country lost its forceful appeal of tribal exclusiveness submitted to the overwinning prosperity of the British Raj.

4. Rising and Annexation of Angul State (1846-1848)

The native state of Angul was the first victim in Orissa, of the policy of annexation of Lord Dalhousie. In its resolution of 4 November, 1847, the Governor-General-in-Council decided to depose Raja Somnath Singh for his negligence to preserve order and for violating the British judicial system. The confiscation of Angul was a warning to the kings of the native state of British India who were required to pay respect to the proclamation of the British government and to preserve tranquility in their respective territories.

The British recognised the strategic importance of the Angul state whose geographical position made her a link between Moghulbendi and Garjat Orissa. It lies between $20^\circ 10'55''$ and $20^\circ 10'5''$ north latitude and between $84^\circ 18'10''$ and $85^\circ 42'45''$ East Longitude. It was bounded on the North by the States of Rairakhol and Bemra, on the East Talcher and Hindol, on the South by Narasinghpur, Duspullah and the Mahanadi rivers and on the West by Athmallick. The state was largely inhabited by the Khond population who had direct relationship with the Khonds of Baud and Ghumsur.
In the first half of the nineteenth century, the Angul state was constantly involved in internal strife and external dissension and became a source of great vexation to the British rulers. After its Raja, Joysingh, was assassinated in 1814 the British troops marched to Angul to suppress the disorder. A special commissioner was appointed by the government of Bengal who selected Somnath Singh, the nephew of the deceased, as the new king. As a freedom loving monarch Somnath Singh was most respected and became an enigma to his contemporaries. Somnath was regarded by the British civilians as eccentric, proud, headstrong and refractory. He was the first ruler to support the Khonds against British interference in their age-old culture and religion. He earned the ill feeling of the authority when he established a chowky post at the Tikarpara to collect custom duty from the riverine merchandise passing through the river 'Mahanadi'.

The subsequent military operations against the Khond rebels of Ghumsur, Baud and Duspullah could not suppress the movement. It rather fanned depredation by the brother khonds of Athmallick and Angul states. When the military operations were undertaken the disaffected khonds found safe refuge in Angul state as Somnath Singh was sympathetic to this movement and did not allow the British troop to conduct a military operation. Thus, Somnath Singh became a source of exasperation to the British ruler.
The murder of six persons in Angul in 1837 opened a fresh controversy over the jurisdiction of the British rule over judicial matters in the native states. The superintendent of Tributary Mahals finding criminals un­punished, ordered Somnath to submit them before him at Cuttack. But he remained stubborn and defied the orders. Meanwhile, the superintendent also suspected the Raja's involvement in the depredation of Khonds of Duspullah and Baud whose leaders took shelter in Angul when military operation was conducted in that part. So again he issued a parwanah to the Raja warning him that military action would be taken against his estate if he remained callous.

Finally, Somnath agreed to submit the criminals and to pay the fine for the burning and plundering of some part of the territories of Duspullah and Hindol by his paiks. He also executed a bond promising not to give any assistance to rebellious Khonds.

But soon Somnath forgot the terms of the agreement with the help of rebellious peasant leaders of his state like Sindhu Garnaik, Govind Naik, and Balkrisna Das he secretly planned to excite the Khonds for a fresh upsurge and provided them arms and ammunition. Even the family of Chakra Beso and Nabaghama Knuar were granted asylum in his state to enable these Khond leaders to devote their energies to organise tribal unrest. The elaborate military operations and the declaration of reward of Rs.3000
on the head of Chakra Besoi made no impact on the rebellious Khonds.\textsuperscript{145}

An act was passed in 1844 by which all Khond tracts of Baud known as Khond Mahals was declared Hill tracts of Orissa and it was kept under an agent who was entrusted with vast power to suppress human sacrifice, to look after general administration of khond lands, and to bring the contumacious Khonds into subjection. The first agent of the Hill tracts of Orissa, captain Macpherson soon earned a bad name because of his coercive measures like burning and plundering of khond village and punishment of the tribal sardars without evidence against them. In order to check the reign of terror, Bira Knuar, the son of Nabaghana, with a group of armed Khonds attacked the camp of Macpherson who escaped unhurt. After this abortive midnight attack Macpherson accused Somnath Singh of his complicity in this attempt to assassinate him.\textsuperscript{146}

Meanwhile, a dispute between Somnath Singh and Raja of Hindol over the possession of a village called Kurumitha provided opportunity to the Company's Government to declare him a refractory monarch. This dispute led to military skirmish between the two states and led to the occupation of the said villages by the paiks of Angul. So Superintendent Mill, sent Sheikh Was Mahammad, a veteran of many a settlements, to bring about an amicable settlement between the two monarchs. The arbiter Was Mahammad
after enquiry found strong evidences of Somnath’s purchasing of the village yet he did not inform it to the superintendent in order to fan the displeasure of the government against Somnath Singh. He was successful in his attempt when Mill fined Somnath Singh with Rs.3000/- for his disrespect to the authority and for taking law into his own hand.

Again the peaceful gesture of Somnath Singh was disregarded by the government when Bira, who was sent to Macpherson for a settlement, was arrested. The rebel Khonds retaliated by attacking the British force at Kusumgarh. Now Macpherson openly denounced Somnath Singh and accused him for exciting the Khonds for such an attack. On his recommendation Mill sent purwanah to Somnath to explain his conduct. Unperturbed by this, he cleared him from all the charges and explained that maltreatment of Khonds and arrest of Bira led to such an attack in which he had no hand.

This explanation failed to satisfy Superintendent Mill who strongly reported the President-in-Council against Somnath Singh. But the President-in-Council, finding the frailty of evidences against Somnath Singh, asked the Bengal Government to adduce evidences of his intimate connection with the rebels.
At this critical period on 27 February, 1847, two villages Kuthari and Marada of Duspullah were plundered. It provided fuel to the efforts of Agent Macpherson to prove Somnath Singh's misconduct. His collection of depositions of some eye witnesses of affected villagers established the fact that Angul Paiks were involved in the plundering. But Somnath in his arzee (plaint) of 8 March, 1847 defended himself against all the charges. But at that time his involvement in a plunder conducted by refractory Sardar Bala Biswal of Athmallick had been proved. It was suspected that the Raja in collusion with Bala Biswal, Chakra, Besoi, and Nabaghana Knuar wanted to stage an insurrection of the Khonds against the British rule.

Now the dye was cast. The circle was closing against Somnath Singh whose attempt to stage a combination of the peasantised tribals against the British authority was crumbling to pieces because of the lack of coordination among the tribal leaders and the prompt military action of the British Government. However, his liaison with the rebel Khonds could not be proved. So the new Superintendent F. Gouldbury reopened the judicial controversy of 1837 in the last part of 1847. Inspite of the favourable recommendation of Brig. General Dyce, who cleared Somnath Singh from his complicity with the rebel, the British Government was determined to depose him.
General Dyce who suppressed insurrection of the Khonds of Ghumsur attributed the Khond insurrection of Baud of 1847 to the coercive measures followed by Captain Macpherson. At his recommendation Captain Macpherson was replaced by Captain Campbell. He also suggested a pacific settlement with Raja Somnath Singh which was not acceptable to Gouldbury.  

Gouldbury, expecting the order for a military operation against Angul state, ordered Captain Campbell to keep his force ready in the borders of Angul. He even went to the extent of deputing Karim Baux to make private enquiry at the neighbourhood of Angul to assess the military power of Somnath Singh. But Bengal Government was not in favour of a prompt military action. It sent J.P. Grant, a senior Civil servant to make further enquiry. On reaching Cuttack Grant ordered Somnath Singh to attend him with eight witnesses of the murder case of 1837. But Somnath Singh remained stubborn and expressed his inability to go to Cuttack personally and at the same time refused to send the witnesses. So Grant strongly recommended against Somnath Singh and accepted the view of Gouldbury that the Raja was organising his peasant militia to resist the British troops. In the meeting of 25 October, 1847 the President-in-Council decided to depose Raja Somnath Singh of Angul in case he failed to produce the eight witnesses before Grant, before 7 December 1847. The fixed deadline was communicated to Somnath Singh. Gouldbury
expecting Raja's acceptance of the purwanah secretly planned to dismantle the fortifications of Angul during Raja's absence. But the Raja, to his surprise expressed his inability to proceed to Cuttack to meet Grant with eight witnesses.

Gouldbury, after the expiry of the deadline, fixed for the submission of eight witnesses, informed Bengal Government about Somnath Singh's failure to comply with the demand of the government. At the same time he informed overseer of Cuttack Hartoon to draw a line of route through with the force would march to Angul. He also advised Captain Campbell to check the incursion of the Khonds of Baud to join the peasant militia of Somnath. On 18 December, 1847, Raja Somnath Singh was deposed. They ordered Superintendent of Tributary Mahals to declare Angul as Khas Mahal and to establish direct rule in the state. The Governor-General by deposing Somnath Singh thought that it would serve as an exemplary punishment to any king who would become recalcitrant.

The annexation of Angul, subsequent deterrent punishments to rebels, and the imprisonment of Somnath Singh served as a warning to the Rajas of Garjat Mahals who were required to pay respect to the authority of the alien Government of India. The deposition of Somnath Singh revealed the annexationist motive of Lord Dalhousie whose policy of "Doctrine of Lapse" was on the anvil.
5. Nayagarh Commotion (1851)

The peasants of the native state of Nayagarh in 1851 raised a commotion protest against the arbitrary taxation and exaction of illegal cess imposed on them by the king.

Nayagarh state situated between 19°3' and 20°20' N and between 84°8' and 85°15' E was a small state with a total area of 588 square miles. But the state was thickly populated and about half of the total area of the state was under cultivation. Out of the total cultivated area about 68% was devoted to the cultivation of paddy which was the only exportable commodity of the state. The agriculturist class Chasa composed of 80.7% of the total population.

In January 1851 an organised movement of peasants broke out to protest against the maximisation of rent, payment of illegal cess and forced labour, under the leadership of Kamal Lochan Samantarai. The movement, however, localised and was quickly suppressed by the British force invited by the king to bring about tranquility.

The quarrel between the Raja and the tenants dated back to 1843 when peasants complained against arbitrary taxes and enhancement of rent before the Superintendent of tributary Mahals. But the superintendent paid a deaf ear to the petition finding the rent of the state of law. But he led to notice the different cess imposed by the state.
on peasants and the agricultural products supplied by them to the king free of charge. Again in 1849 the peasants, under the leadership of Hari Gajendra Singh sent a petition directly to the Lt. Governor of Bengal protesting against the declaration of a revenue settlement by the Raja. They apprehended enhancement of rent. In spite of these complaints, the settlement work continued to the dismay of the peasants. They found that the amin and settlement officials were bribed by the Raja with the understanding that they would increase the total rent collection by using false measuring rods. The Raja did this with a view to answer increased revenue burdens and to meet his heavy burden of debt.

The dismissal of two servants of the King, Kamal Lochan Paikrai and Hari Gajendra Singh in 1851 became the immediate cause of the rebellion. They came forward to organise the already excited peasant against the King's misrule. The rebellious peasants were strengthened when paiks, who apprehended imposition of rent on their rent free Khorakee lands joined them. Some aboriginal khonds who were dissatisfied at the recent British military operations against their fellow tribesmen of Baud also extended their helping hands. The disaffection started with the murder of Bhootoo Singh, a supporter of the Raja, on 7 December, 1850. The Raja immediately reported the matter to Gouldbury along with a request to arrest the ring leaders.
Gouldbury proceeded to Nayagarh but found the situation quite calm. The rebel ryots were thinking that after enquiry Gouldbury would remonstrate against the Raja for his misrule and take over his charge. But the Superintendent returned to Cuttack without taking action against the Raja. This put the smouldering fire in them to flames. They started plundering the Khamar villages of Goomghar and Sonamaree. On 19 January 1851, panic stricken the Raja again requested the Superintendent for military aid and communicated the false news of complicity of Ghumsur Khonds with the rebels of Nayagarh. Immediately after receiving the request, Gouldbury sent Captain Findlay with a contingent of 30th M.N.I. Stationed at Cuttack to suppress the disturbances with the assistance of A. Ponslow, the agent of St. Fort George at Ganjam.

From 1 February to 13 February, Captain Findlay carried on an elaborate operation and brought the situation under control. Gouldbury arrived at Nayagarh on 22 February 1851 and declared temporary attachment of the state. The king and his family were removed to Cuttack on monthly pension.

The Assistant to the Superintendent of Tributary Mahals was appointed as the Manager of the state. He announced that a settlement of the state would be made at moderate rate for a period of five years during which the administration of the state would remain in the hands of Government officer.
It had a magic effect on the peasants. Tranquility was soon restored in the state. Harimohan Ray, who was incharge of settlement work, was now declared Tahsildar of the state. He made enquiries into the grievances of peasants against the Rajah. The deposition of Hari Gajendra Singh, Baloi Pattnaik, Narasingh Paikrai, Bhagwan Bahubalendra, Chakra Dalbehera revealed clearly the system of exaction of the Rajah. On his recommendation the Deputy Governor of Bengal granted amnesty to the arrested peasant rebels to restore tranquility permanently.

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