

Amar Shaheed Veer Budhu Bhagat A Rebellion, A Freedom Fighter, A Divine Being

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ABSTRACT

Some of the names of the brave martyrs who sacrificed their lives in the Indian freedom struggle are inscribed in golden letters in the pages of Indian history, but most of the names have merged into the pit of oblivion. Among these anonymous martyrs, there are some names whose sacrifice has been more valuable and important than those names, which get a place in history. There are mentions of many such heroes in the history of Jharkhand, whose valour, the story of whose place and sacrifice is very thrilling and acts as a guide for future generations. In these lines an attempt has been made to bring such a great soul to light from the forgotten darkness of history. He is the great son of Jharkhand, the hero of Kol-Rebellion, the immortal martyr Veer Budhu Bhagat. He not only attained martyrdom by fighting a fierce battle against the British army, but also raised the name of his nation, his society and his caste. The generals of the English army and others had great difficulty in confronting Budhu Bhagat of Silagai in the suppression of the entire Kol-rebellion. It has been discussed many times in "Bengal Hurkaru" (a famous magazine of Bengal).

Keywords: History, Freedom, Sacrifice, Rebellion, Budhu Bhagat, British Army, Nation, Caste.

INTRODUCTION

Even before this famous Kol movement, after the entry of the British into Chotanagpur, there were movements in 1805, 1807 and 1819-20 and they were against the British and their pithus. These movements were suppressed as a result of the agreements made with the British rulers and the constant tension against the agitators. But it was a superficial peace. Their problems were neither solved by the British government, nor the Raja, Jagirdar or Zamindars of Chotanagpur. The result of this was the Kol movement of 1831-32. Munda, Ho, Oraon and other tribes were given an opportunity of movement - Chhotanagpur's Raja Chhote Kunwar Harnath Shahi. The Raja of Chotanagpur gave Sonpur pargana of Singhbhum in Khorposh to his younger brother Kunwar Harnath Shahi. Kunwar Harnath Shahi in a partisan manner took away the land of the Mundas without their opinion from certain Sikhs, Muslims and gave it to other outsiders. Many other indecent things happened. Ho and Oraon also joined this movement with the Mundas. His movement was horrific and brutal. The Kol movement had taken a widespread form. Its expansion was against the British government, outside tenants, jagirdars and zamindars in the areas of Ranchi, Singhbhum, Panchpargana, Lohardaga and Gumla etc. But in reality, the policy of the British and their business intelligence was the reason behind the fire of the movement. The British rulers made each other fight among themselves. The British were successful in fighting the organized residents of Chotanagpur by creating a divide among them.

Budhu Bhagat

Budhu Bhagat, a mass hero of this great movement, was born in an Oraon farmer family on February 17, 1792 in a village named Silagai, located on the banks of the Koel river under Chanho block of Ranchi district. Bubhu Bhagat was very lethargic in his childhood. He did not feel like doing any work. He used to graze the goats in the jungles and mountains of the village, but he had a regular rule that he would sit on a special stone on the banks of the Koel river and take a bath. It was his daily work to shoot arrows and play hunting when he came home only after bathing. Budhu Bhagat did not tolerate any kind of injustice.

It is said that one day when he had taken a bath after sitting on a certain stone for bath, he felt some strange power. After taking a bath, he did not go towards the house and took an arrow and bow with him and walked towards Barka Tongri. He stopped at a point and looking at Tongri, he fired an arrow. The arrow hit Tongri and a gush of water broke out from there. Even today the torrent of water is coming out, which people call "Veer Pani". People believe that divine power was

transmitted in Budhu Bhagat. He could go wherever he wanted and according to his wish. Budhu Bhagat had not started wearing Janeu. For the first time, there was a difference of opinion with Bhunu Singh of the Zamindar family of Choreya on the question of wearing the thread. After this incident, Budhu Bhagat assumed a fierce form had done

Due to Budhu Bhagat's growth, efficiency, his organizational ability and his popularity, superstition had started to arise in the villagers that Buddha Bhagat has divine power, he can be seen in many places at the same time. They can change form and fly in the air. He has incarnated for the annihilation of the whites etc. Budhu Bhagat had said to see only one enemy with equanimity. Under the leadership of the devotee, thousands of tribes and people of the original caste, who originally belonged to the Oraon caste, waged a struggle against the British rule and the sycophantic zamindars of the British. Budhu Bhagat was also a skilled horseman.

As soon as the news of the revolt was received, the army started coming from all around. The army of Ramgarh was useless, as there was no cavalry in it. Therefore Captain Wilkinson was unable to do anything due to lack of cavalry. Captain Maltavi, in his letter dated February 5, 1932, expressed concern by clearly mentioning that the English army did not have the courage to approach the rebel army. The rebel army moves fast. The situation did not change even after the arrival of the cavalrymen. The then Joint Commissioner of Chotanagpur, in his letter dated February 8, 1832, while discussing in detail the wide influence of Budhu Bhagat and his efficient leadership, wrote that the villages within about 20 miles from Chorega, Nagdi, Tiko, Silagai and Pithoriya There is influence of Budhu Bhagat in dense population. Due to this dense population and the widespread influence of Bhagat, the British army is proving completely unsuccessful in capturing him. In this way the popularity of Budhu Bhagat and his influence was accepted by the British officials.

The tribal leader Budhu Bhagat was continuously getting success in harassing the English army. When the 50th Native Infantry arrived in Sherghati, it was ordered to march. The 3rd Light Cavalry at Sasaram was instructed to move towards Tiko; the English army was advancing among the thick forest mountains to know a map or a way. Budhu Bhagat's army hiding in the forests, raining arrows on them, they became invisible in moments. Somehow on February 10, 1832, Captain Impey's army reached Tiko, where 4,000 rebels fought back. But in front of the ammunition of the English army, arrows, swords and daggers could not stand, a large number of rebels were martyred, many surrendered. Earlier in mid-January 1832, Captain Bilkinson with some troops entered the plateau. Encounters took place with the English army and rebels on February 1, 1832 at Pithoria, on February 2 and 10 at Tiko, Budh, Tamar and Adki Ghat of Sonpur. In the middle of February there was a fierce battle between the army and the rebels in Nagri.

The military base of Martyr Veer Budhu Bhagat was situated on the top of Chogari mountain in the middle of dense forests. Their meetings were held in the Dugadugia mountain near Gudgudiya near the village of Kullu Beyanasi, where there was a thick forest. Strategies for war were made at this place.

In the course of research, it was learned that the first encounter with British soldiers was fought at Sisobari place in the border of Maradi, Jido and Dobba villages of Kudu Bana. The British soldiers kept pushing back. The British soldiers went to the camp. The soldiers' camp in Manatu village of Chandwa (was a bunker) was demolished by the agitators of Budhu Bhagat.

Later, the British army started a horrific vandalism of destruction in Tiko, thousands of villagers were taken prisoner amidst massacre, arson and artanad. Taking all the prisoners, the British army left for Pithoriya through thick forests, mountains, rivers and zig-zag valleys. The women and children of the village were mourning seeing their relatives being taken away as prisoners. The prisoners were walking in the compelled forests and valleys. There was an outcry all around. Suddenly the sky became cloudy and a fierce storm and rain started. Taking advantage of this storm, all the prisoners made their way to their villages through the familiar forest-mountain route. it's a divine miracle the same can be said. Captain Impey was left with a bewildered kink.

The British army officers became very angry after this incident. The British failed to capture Budhu Bhagat. The British officers put all their might in apprehending Bhagat. Budhu Bhagat was the first agitator of Jharkhand, for whose head the British government had announced a reward of one thousand rupees. If the British officials had ever received information that Budhu Bhagat had been seen in Choreya, it would have been immediately known that he was with the people in Tiko village. Sometimes Budhu Bhagat was reported to be seen in two places at the same time. On the basis of the information, the English army could reach the designated place with all its might and surround them, before that the Bhagat used to do his work and disappeared in the dense forests. This secret was incomprehensible to anyone. The British would have assumed that Budhu Bhagat had good knowledge of the area, forests, mountains, rivers and roads and was also a good horseman. In fact, Bhagat had public support, so he had everyone's support. No one had even imagined to get him caught in

the greed of money, how strong his popularity was, it can be gauged from this that when surrounded by soldiers armed with guns from all four sides, about three hundred people came to the rescue of their leader Budhu Bhagat. The followers laid siege from all sides. Ghera was cast to protect Bhagat from gunfire. The followers were falling due to bullets and it was a competition to sacrifice their lives for Budhu Bhagat.

Veer Budhu Bhagat had witnessed the destruction of Tiko. Jannayak Budhu Bhagat had lost hundreds of allies including his two beloved sons Harghar and Girdhar and Udaykaran and two daughters Runia and Jhuniya in the battle of Tiko. Still, along with his relatives and companions, he had a desire to liberate his society and nation.

There is a folk song prevalent among the Oraons regarding the Tiko war.

“Hardel girdel both re bhai
lereka pariya jiya hoon kera.

Tiko ka dhaade fight bhela
lareka pariya jiya hoon kera.
Runia jhuniya both re sister
lereka pariya jiya hoon kera.”

The family members have a clear opinion that the issue of Harghar-Girdhar is still there in Tiku Tand. Their graves in Masna have been identified. Budhu Bhagat knew that the British army would come to Silagai. So he alerted his friends and supporters. His guess turned out to be correct. On February 13, 1832, under the leadership of Captain Impey, 5 companies, in which a company of cavalry, surrounded Silagai from all sides. The soldiers had also crossed the Koel river, the soldiers were gradually encircling the village. In relation to this war, John Bull, the correspondent of the magazine "Bengal Hurkaru", wrote - "We find here a group of very different people from Tiko's friends."

The rebels displayed such valor which can be compared to the great fanciful battles. Major Sutherland also sent his report to the government praising the perseverance and fighting skill, valor and fighting ability of the followers of Budhu Bhagat. He also wrote that in front of our guns and pistols, what was the use of the arrows and axes of the koalas? Budhu Bhagat was sacrificed on February 14, 1832.

Major Thomas Wilkinson's military camp was established at Pithoraia at that time and most of the military operations and administrative arrangements were controlled from there. They severed the head of Budhu Bhagat, his younger brother and nephew was placed in front of the commissioner in the Pithoriya camp. Thousands of people were present for the last darshan of this great hero. This gruesome scene was strongly criticized in the issue of the Bengal Hurkaru on February 29, 1832.

In connection with the battle of Silagai village in the issue of 2 March 1832 of Bengal Hurkaru Patrika was published- "The Silagai village was in the evening the bodies were strewn with bodies and scattered in the fire of the burning hut presenting heart-wrenching scenes. But even more heart-wrenching was the sight that naked children with little hands and feet were searching for their mother, their father, crying among the corpses. The mourning women were searching for their sweetheart among the dead bodies.

According to government reports, 226 Hindus, 78 Muslims were killed in this rebellion. 4,086 houses were burnt, 17,058 livestock were confiscated and 8,22,992 maund of grain were burnt. The sons of Sonpur and Tamad, Oraon and Munda were friendly together. This friendship of Kol and Oraon was an unforgettable event of the 19th century.

The rebel leaders included Bindrai Manki, Singhrail's brother and Suraja surrendered in February, 1832.

The descendants of Budhu Bhagat firmly believe that after beheading Bhagat, he flew away and fell in a corner of his house. Where people worship before every new work, considering the head of the Bhagat, because they consider it a holy place.

Budhu Bhagat's eldest son Haldhar's only son was rescued by a friend from the village and taken elsewhere. Later, when the situation returned to normal, the boy was brought up in the village itself. At present the eighth generation of Budhu Bhagat is present in the village.

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