

SAMBALPURI GANDHI

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I had the good fortune to see our father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi. His very appearance commanded respect, regard and esteem from millions of our countrymen.

We see many people in our country claiming to be the followers of Mahatma Gandhi. Do we have the same regard, esteem and respect towards such followers?. The answer will be definitely No. But I found during my lifetime a man at Sambalpur resembling Gandhiji. He was 'Nrusingha Guru' who commanded respect and regard not only from me but from many others in Orissa and particularly at Sambalpur. Why?

He not only took active part in the freedom struggle of our country but also followed Mahatma Gandhi truly and faithfully unlike others.

Although he was a journalist but he never stooped to yellow journalism and blackmailing. His reporting to press was based on actual facts and truth. He bore malice towards none. He never hesitated to call a spade – a - spade despite pressure from various influential quarters and circles. Fearlessness was his quality.

His life was very very simple like Gandhiji. He always wore Khadi and that too like Gandhiji with loincloth and carried always a small Khadi bag, which was a necessity for a journalist.

I have also seen him distributing 'Samaj' newspaper personally to the subscribers in the

absence of the regular distributor. This shows he had no ego

His manner of talk was extremely polite and mild. Anybody could approach him and talk to him like a child. He will listen to every body whatever one says. He was never harsh and rude to any body. But he was bold enough simultaneously to speak out the truth and contradict if something wrong and untrue was told to him.

His food habits were also very very simple. As journalist and reporter he was invited to join many tea parties and dinners. But very often he refused to eat and if pressed he would take a little just to oblige the host. He attended such parties only to note down the discussions and deliberations as a journalist for reporting, otherwise such parties never attracted him.

I had an occasion to go to his house at Mudipara, Sambalpur where he lived. I found the standard of living in his house to be very very simple and ordinary which indicated that he had no proper income to spend.

Narasingha Guru to me was a Sambalpur Gandhi. He was a real Karmayogi of Geeta.

I am extremely delighted to learn that a Souvenir is being brought out in his memory. Sambalpur unfortunately is quite loathsome in remembering his great sons. I pay my respectful regards to the said Sambalpur Gandhi.

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