

ଗାନ୍ଧିଜୀଙ୍କ ପଟ୍ଟଶିଷ୍ୟ

ନୃସିଂହ ଗୁରୁ

Nrusingha Guru
The Gandhi of Sambalpur

ଅବିର୍ଭାବ	୨୪/୦୩/୧୯୦୨
Birth	24/03/1902
ତିରୋଧାନ	୦୨/୦୧/୧୯୮୪
Death	02/01/1984

ପିତା	ଗଣେଶରାମ ଗୁରୁ
Father	Ganeshram Guru
ମାତା	ଲକ୍ଷ୍ମୀ ଦେବୀ
Mother	Laxmi Devi

ସହଧର୍ମିଣୀ	ପ୍ରିୟବତୀ ଦେବୀ
Wife	Priyabati Devi
ପୁତ୍ର	ଭବାନୀ ଶଙ୍କର, ତାରାକାନ୍ତ
Son	Bhabani, Tarakanta
କନ୍ୟା	କୁମୁଦିନୀ, ପ୍ରେମଲତା
Daughter	Kumudini, Premalata

ଜେଲଦଣ୍ଡ	୨ ବର୍ଷ ୧ ମାସ
Jail	2 years 1 month



ନୃସିଂହ ଗୁରୁ
NRUSINGHA GURU

As a true disciple of Mahatma Gandhi throughout life Nrusingha wore loin cloth, walked bare-footed and adhered to the principles of truth and non-violence. His ideals of simplicity and dedication commanded respect and regards from all quarters. He was known as Sambalpuri Gandhi. Chandra Sekhar Behera used to call him *Gutarange Gandhi* or the Complete Gandhi.

Nrusingh was born at Gurupali, a village in the undivided revenue district of Sambalpur in 1902 on the full-moon day of Falguna (24/03/1902). The name of the village was given after the surname of Kashinath Guru, his grand-father, who had taken initiative for the first settlement of the village. When Nrusingha was in his mother's womb, wishing for a male child his grand-father prayed to Lord Nrusingha Nath, a famous deity of Western Orissa. Accordingly, the name of the new born baby was given. He began his education at his village Chatsali (primary school). His father Ganesh Ram, admitted him to Sambalpur Zilla School for his higher education. The National Movement exerted an impact on Nrusingh who closely watched the progress of agitation and activities of the local and national leaders.

A resolution for launching non-cooperation movement was passed by the All India Congress Committee. In response to that the whole country flared up. Nrusingh left the school with other students and joined the movement. The activities of the students got the moral support of the local leaders. A complete hartal was called for. State level leaders Gopabandhu Das, Nilakantha Dash and others came to Sambalpur and applauded the decision of the students. A National School was set up at Fraser's Club, Sambalpur and Pandit Nilakantha Dash joined

the school as headmaster. Nrusingh alongwith other students enrolled his name in the National School. As a student, Nrusingh continued his study as well as actively participated in the National Movement. He remained incharge of Jharsuguda and Laikera area for organisational work. People were encouraged to enrol themselves as primary members of the Indian National Congress. In these areas a particular class of people, Agharia by caste, were habituated to wear dhoti and saree woven by hand-spun thread. The policy of National Congress to boycott foreign goods encouraged the people to produce more khadi cloth.

In 1922, when Manpur village in Sambalpur District was infected with cholera, Nrusingh Guru visited the affected area and provided relief to the people alongwith Pandit Nilakantha Dash and others. In December, 1928 Gandhiji paid a visit to Sambalpur and stayed at the residence of Chandra Sekhar Behera. On that occasion Nrusingh Guru was incharge of the kitchen and entertained the guests and the assembled congress workers. Since purdah system was not in vogue in Sambalpur many women attended the meeting wearing handloom sarees. Gandhiji expressed great pleasure when he saw this. Nrusingh Guru came in close contact with Gandhiji and Kasturba and accepted the principle of 'simple living and high thinking'.

Nrusingh Guru who was serving in Sambalpur Municipality resigned and joined the Civil Disobedience Movement. He was quoted arrest in 1932. On release he kept himself busy with the upliftment of Harijans and removal of untouchability. In the meanwhile, District Harijan Sevak Sangh was formed. Chandra Sekhar Behera and Nrusingh Guru acted as President and Secretary respectively. The

programmes taken up for the improvement of Harijans were to promote cleanliness and hygiene, to improve the methods of their unclean occupations, to advise them for giving up intoxicating liquors, to induce the parents to send their children to school and to abolish untouchability among themselves and others. He strained every nerve for amelioration of the depressed classes by removing the stigma of untouchability. Janardan Supakar donated a house to use as Harijan hostel. Nrusingh Guru took up its responsibility as Superintendent. Leaders like Acharya Harihar Dash, Thakkar Bapa visited the hostel and highly appreciated the same.

In August, 1942, a historic resolution 'Quit India' was passed in the All India Congress Committee at Bombay. In response to that there was widespread protest against British Government in Sambalpur. Strikes and mass demonstration were organised. Taking part in the movement Sri Guru was arrested under India Defence Act. He was later released as the charges levelled against him by the police could not be established. Further, Nrusingh Guru was detained upto July, 1944.

He breathed his last on the new-moon day of Pausa, 1984 (2nd Jan 1984) when he was on a visit to his in-laws at Sarangagad to attend a funeral ceremony. He is remembered for his simplicity, patriotism and straight-forwardness.

