

MODERN ODISHA

Kandha Rising under Chakra Bisoi

By **Brajabandhu Mahanta** • July 21, 2017 • Updated September 20, 2022 • 5 min read



After Dora's imprisonment and death, the Kandha rebellion continued. Chakra Bisoi, his nephew, took Dora's place and vowed to avenge his uncle's imprisonment and death. He posed a serious threat to the British government.

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Causes of Kandha Rebellion

The Kandhas were incited to revolt against the British Raj by Chakra Bisoi. The following factors contributed to this uprising.

- Dora Bisoi's death had left a scar on Chakra's mind. He desired vengeance for his uncle Dora Bisoi's death.
- S.C. Macpherson's actions as the Meriah Agent greatly disturbed the Kandhas because he interfered with their religion. He rescued Meriahs and warned Kandhas who violated the law regarding Meriah of dire consequences. Additionally, he was ruthless in his punishment of the Kandhas.
- In 1846, Captain Macpherson was humiliated in his Bisipara camp. He was compelled to surrender the Meriahs he had rescued from the Kandha area by the Kandha revolutionaries. Otherwise, he would have been assassinated by the Kandhas. The Kandhas became courageous as a result of their accomplishments under Chakra's leadership.
- Finally, the Kandhas installed Pitambar, Dhananjay Bhanja's minor son, as king of Ghumsur. This emboldened them, and they looted the British camp, buoyed by enthusiasm. The foregoing factors compelled the British Government to devise a plan to quell the Kandha rebellion led by Chakra Bisoi.

Events of Kandha Rebellion

In light of the foregoing, Macpherson did not pursue an appeasement policy with the Kandhas. The British Government recognised that his presence as a Meriah agent jeopardised the British administration's ability to function normally at Ghumsur. To restore order, the Madras Presidency appointed Lt. Col. Campbell as the Meriah Agent in place of Macpherson. Campbell, on the other hand, was a man of a different disposition. He pursued a persuasive policy in an attempt to win over the Kandhas of Ghumsur. As a result, the Kandhas made a commitment to abstain from Meriah sacrifice. This trial was conducted in order to persuade the Kandhas and alienate Chakra Bisoi.

Somnath Singh's role in the rebellion

Campbell's strategy convinced the majority of the Kandhas to join his cause. However, Chakra Bisoi remained independent of the British authorities. He organised Kandha rebellions against the British forces. Chakra Bisoi and Nabghan Konhoro were allegedly aided by Somnath Singh, the King of Angul. Following this, the British government adopted a new approach to the rebellion. He pardoned Chakra and Nabghan to put an end to the rebellion. Nabghan surrendered as a result of the policy. Dora, on the other hand, did not submit to British authority. This made the British authorities suspicious of Somnath Singh and motivated them to take severe measures against Angul's Somanath Singh. As a result, Somnath resumed his conflict with the British in 1846. He took possession of a Hindol village by force. He was fined Rs. 3,000/- for that offence. The King attempted to protest but was unsuccessful. Lt. Col. Campbell, on the other hand, was authorised to march towards Angul in order to subdue Somnath Singh. Angul was confiscated in 1848, and Somnath Singh was sent to the Hazaribagh Jail as a prisoner. He paid a high price for assisting Chakra Bisoi in his rebellion against the British.

British attempt to Capture Chakra

The British then made numerous attempts to apprehend Chakra Bisoi. The capture of Rendo Majhi, the leader of the Borikiya Kandhas of Kalahandi, and the subsequent attack on the camp of A.C. Mac Neill, Campbell's successor as Meriah Agent, led the British to conclude that Chakra Bisoi was responsible for the attack. Meanwhile, G.F. Cockburn, the Superintendent of the Tributary Mahals who succeeded Samuells, desired to take action against Chakra. Meanwhile, the Madanpur Zamindar was accused of providing shelter to Chakra. As a result, he was expelled from his zamindary. Although R.M. Macdonald dispatched troops to apprehend Dharam Singh Mandhata of Athagaon for sheltering Chakra, he was apprehended.

The strategy of Chakra

Chakra's mission against the British never ceased, despite the British forces' strategy. He might have been aware that the Savaras of Parlakhemundi were rising up against the British, led by Dandasena of Gaiba. Chakra took advantage of this opportunity to unite the Savaras and Kandhas and incite them to set fire to and plunder those villages that opposed Dandasena. Captain Wilson intervened to put an end to the rebellion and captured and hanged Dandasena. Chakra then relocated from Parlakhemundi to the Tel valley area. Faced with the threat of British authority, the king of Patna was powerless to assist Chakra Bisoi. Thus, Chakra entered the forests of Kandhamal in order to save himself. After learning of Baud's connection, the Bengal government ordered the annexation of Kandhamal into British territory in 1855. Since then, little is known about Chakra Bisoi. He was never apprehended. He passed away in 1856. However, in 1857, G.F. Cockburn, the Commissioner of Odisha, wrote to the Government, expressing concern about Chakra's possible abandonment of the country. For a decade, from 1846 to 1856, Chakra's activities posed a serious headache for the British authorities.

Significance of Kandha Rebellion

The Kandha rebellion led by Dora Bisoi and Chakra Bisoi is significant in Odisha's and India's history. Dora Bisoi and Chakra Bisoi both played significant roles in this Tribal uprising. Despite their efforts, the British were unable to apprehend Chakra Bisoi. Nevertheless, there is no doubt that this tribal rebellion led by Dora Bisoi and Chakra Bisoi posed a serious challenge to the British authority during the early years of the British administration in Odisha. Although the rebellion was unsuccessful, it did shake the British authority in Odisha.

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Source: <https://historyofodisha.in/kandha-rising-under-chakra-bisoi/>

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