

Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 in Jharkhand

Beginning Of 1857 Revolt In Jharkhand-

The Sepoy Mutiny in Jharkhand was started in Rohini village of the then Santal Parganas district. Today this place is situated on the bank of Ajay river near Jasidih in Deoghar district. This was done on 12 June 1857 by some soldiers of the 5th native irregular cavalry. The 32nd Regiment had its headquarters at Rohini. The Commanding Officer of this regiment was MacDonald. Major Macdonald was having tea in his verandah in the evening when Lieutenant Sir Norman Leslie and Assistant Surgeon Mr. Grant were attacked by three soldiers, killing Norman Leslie on the spot and injuring Grant and Macdonald.

The three constables Salamat Ali, Amanat Ali, Haroon Sheikh were sentenced to death by court martial. All three were hanged on the branch of a tree after being mounted on an elephant. Imam Khan had testified against these three rebels; this incident sparked outrage among the entire soldiers and on 9 October 1857 the

sepoys revolted. This rebellion was suppressed by MacDonald.

When this rebellion broke out, the people of the Santhal community started looting the cells of the British. A detachment of 300 Santal people was formed to stop this looting. This contingent was deployed in Deoghar and Pakur.

Due to this rebellion, the headquarters of the 32nd Regiment was shifted from Ranchi to Bhagalpur.

Spread of rebellion in Hazaribagh

On July 25, 1857, the soldiers of Danapur Cantt revolted against the British, which had a direct impact on Ramgarh Cantt. On 30 July 1857, the soldiers of Ramgarh Cantt revolted. This was the second incident of sepoy mutiny in Jharkhand after Rohini. At that time the Deputy Commissioner or Chief Assistant Commissioner of Hazaribagh and Chatra was Major Simpson. As soon as the rebellion started, all the British officers including Simpson, Hazaribagh's military commander, Assistant Surgeon Dalprint, fled to Calcutta.

The rebels looted the bungalows, government offices of British officers. Freed the prisoners from the jail and looted the treasures. The Raja of Ramgarh, loyal to the British, conveyed the information about the looting being carried out by the rebels to the then Governor General Canning from Bagodar telegraph house.

The rebel soldiers freed the famous freedom fighters of Sambhalpur Surendra Shahi and Udayant Shahi, who were lodged in Hazaribagh jail. And the rebels marched towards Ranchi under the leadership of Surendra Shahi. Dalton, the then commissioner of Chotanagpur, sent Lieutenant Graham with a troop to suppress the rebels of Hazaribagh. Jamadar Madhav Singh, Subedar Nadir Ali Khan and Jaimangal Pandey were part of this military contingent.

When this contingent reached Ramgarh, all three opened a front against Graham. Lieutenant Graham had to flee for his life. On the other hand, the Santals also started looting under the guise of this rebellion, many villages and the British looted the property of the landlords. The zamindar of Jharpo, who was a relative of Ramgarh Raja, his kothi was destroyed by the Santals. This group of

Santals was dispersed by Lieutenant Graham. Many Santals were arrested. The arrested Santals had given a statement that they looted at the behest of Rupu Manjhi. Apart from Santals in Hazaribagh, Bhuyan, Kurmi, Chuad, Tikait societies were also active during the rebellion. These people were fighting to get back the land grabbed by the moneylenders.

The rebels marched towards Ranchi via Pithoria under the leadership of Surendra Shahi. Jagatpal Singh, the landlord of Pithoria, who was a sycophant of the British, stationed his soldiers in the valley of Pithoria so that the rebels could not reach Ranchi. Because of this the rebels changed their path, now they set out towards Lohardagga via Omidanda. In this sequence, Surendra joined the rebels of Shahi Tributary Mahal and his active contribution in the rebellion of Jharkhand region ended.

Revolt spread in Ranchi

To suppress the rebellion in Ramgarh, Commissioner Dalton sent a detachment of Doranda Cantonment of Ranchi under the leadership of Lieutenant Graham. But on reaching Ramgarh, the soldiers of this detachment

refused to fire on the rebel soldiers of Ramgarh. Jamadar Madhav Singh, Subedar Nadir Ali and Subedar Jaimangal Pandey of this detachment led this rebellion. Lieutenant Graham escaped to Hazaribagh with the help of his loyalist Amadar Khan. The rebels looted the entire cantonment of ammunition, 2 cannons, four elephants, horses, money. These rebel soldiers marched towards Ranchi. On the other hand, the landlord Umrao Singh and his brother Ghasi Singh and their Diwan Sheikh Bhikhari of 12 villages living in Khatanga Patar, declared an armed rebellion against the British and sealed the Chutupalu valley so that no military contingent could enter Ranchi. In such a situation, Commissioner Dalton and Army Officer of Doranda Cantonment, Robbins fled from Ranchi to Hazaribagh via Pithoria. The way to Pithoria Valley Jagatpal Singh (an ally of the British) had saved this valley from the capture of the soldiers.

The rebels reached Ranchi and set fire to the homes of Deputy Commissioner Oaks and Captain Mancrife. Weapons and money present in the kothi were looted. Shells were fired at Gossner Church on the main road. All the priests fled to Hazaribagh.

After this these rebels reached Doranda Cantonment. On August 2, Madhav Singh, Nadir Ali and Jaimangal Pandey captured Doranda Cantonment. During this, all the soldiers stationed in the cantonment supported the rebel soldiers.

On the other hand, reaching Hazaribagh, Dalton started making plans to suppress the rebels. Dalton allied himself with the local landlords and kings with the lure of reward and adornment. Dalton took advantage of the mistake the rebels had committed by looting the general public. The prisoners who were released from the Hazaribagh Jail were again put in jail. Opened the markets and again normalized life in Hazaribagh. This instilled confidence in the public against the government and hatred against the rebels. The rebels of Ranchi and Hazaribagh did not mix with the rebels of Sambalpur, so Dalton requested the lieutenant governor to get two units from Cuttack and stationed at Sambalpur. After that Dalton imposed martial law in the whole of Chotanagpur. During this, the rebels planned to meet Babu Kunwar Singh via Bagodar, Chatra, Sherghati. The rebels were looking for a leader. When the rebel soldiers were

wandering in the absence of a powerful leadership. At that time, Ganpat Roy made the rebel soldiers meet Vishwanath Shahdev. Vishwanath Shahdev established the Mukti vahini army with these 600 soldiers. Ganpat Rai was appointed the chief commander of this Mukti vahini army. The Mukti vahini army captured Doranda Cantonment on 1 August 1857. On August 2, the Mukti Vahini army had a temporary right over the whole of Ranchi.

Most of the landlords supported the British, despite this, the British rule came to an end from the whole of Ranchi. During this looting and setting fire to all the British cells located in Doranda. Throwing the papers in the well after setting fire to the court. robbed the treasure By breaking the lock of the jail, all the prisoners were freed. During this, Ramroop Singh of Ratanjia, Jagannath Shahi of Sulgi and Sheikh Pehalwan of Jaspur supported all of them.

Battle of Chatra

After the capture of Ranchi city, the rebels left for Sherghati on 11 September via Chatra to meet Babu Kunwar Singh. On hearing this news, Dalton reached Barhi. From there he made a plan to attack the rebels by gathering loyal vassals. On September 14, the rebels reached Ramgarh Ghat, where the loyal vassal of the British, Bhola Singh, along with his soldiers, blocked the way of the rebels and informed Dalton that he would send troops here.

On the other hand, Major English had captured Doranda Cantonment but the soldiers had already left from there. Dalton sent Major English with the army to help Bhola Singh. But Bhola Singh could not stop the way of the rebels for long. Reached Balumath on 21st September and left for Chatra after staying there for three days and reached Chatra city on 30th September. On the other hand, the English army also reached Chatra under the leadership of Major Inglis.

On 2 October, a fierce battle took place between the rebels and the British army, which is called the Battle of Chatra. In this battle, Nadir Ali was injured while wielding

a cannon. Madhav Singh had to flee from the battle site. The British placed a reward of Rs 1K on Madhav Singh. The rebels were weakened by the escape of Madhav Singh. Vishwanath Shahdev and Jaimangal Pandey also had to flee from this war. Nadir Ali and Jaimangal Pandey were caught on 3 October. On 4 October, Simpson hanged Nadir Ali and Jaimangal Pandey from a mango tree in Chatra.

Many British officers were killed in this battle such as: - William Callan, Patrick Burke, John Ryan, James Ryan, John Charles and Dinean. In the Battle of Chatra, the English army was led by Major English, besides Major Simpson, Lieutenant Earl, Lieutenant Daunt, Sergeant Dinean.

The Sikh army was used in the battle of Chatra. A total of 77 rebels were killed during the war. There were many reasons for the defeat of the rebels in the battle of Chatra. Jaimangal Pandey and Vishwanath Shahdev, as expected, could neither send 1000 soldiers nor essential goods to the battlefield. Madhav Singh fled on the spot with his troop. the rebels. The rebels had received information on 1 October that Major English was about

to reach Chatra with a Sikh troop, but instead of paying attention to it, he focused only on looting in Chatra city. Because of the looting, the rebels lost the confidence of the local people. The Sikh soldiers had an Enfield rifle with a range of 825 metres.

The spread of rebellion in Singhbhum

The beginning of the Singhbhum area Sepoy Mutiny started on 3 September 1857 AD. On this day the sepoys under the leadership of two soldiers Bhagwan Singh and Ramnath Singh revolted against the Company government in the Chaibasa Sainik Cantonment. Here two soldiers who were loyal to the British, Subedar Harnath Singh and Jamadar Harsh Narayan Singh made every effort to stop the rebellion. The Principal Assistant Commissioner of Chaibasa, Shishmore fled to Kolkata on 5 August due to the news before the rebellion. Before fleeing, Shishmore handed over the responsibility of Chaibasa to Raja Chakradhar Singh of Seraikela. The rebel soldiers looted 20 thousand rupees from the government treasury, took weapons in their possession. Breaking the lock of the jail, all the prisoners were freed.

All the rebels left for Ranchi to meet the rebels of Ranchi. On the way to Ranchi, he tried to cross the Sanjay river at Dumri Chatti, but the river was in spate due to which the rebels could not move forward. On the other hand, the two hangers of the British, Raja Chakradhar Singh of Seraikela and Raja Hari Singh of Kharswan did not stop the soldiers from moving forward. Both of them used two cannons and 300 fighters to block the way of the rebels. In this difficult time, Arjun Singh sent his Dewan Jaggu along with two elephants to help the soldiers. with the help of elephantThe rebels crossed the Sanjay River on 7 September 1857 from Babu Ghat in Chainpur. Jaggu Diwan proposed to the rebels to join the service of King Arjun Singh by moving to Chakradharpur. The rebels accepted this proposal. Arjun Singh vowed not to betray Pauri Devi as a witness. The rebels handed over the looted treasure and weapons to Arjun Singh. The salary of the soldiers was fixed at Rs.5 per month.

On the other hand, as Shishmore fled to Kolkata, Lieutenant Governor Halliday appointed RC Burch, who was then the sub-divisional officer of Palamu, as the

District Collector of Singhbhum. Captain Oaks was sent to assist RC Burch with a contingent of Sikh soldiers. Captain Oaks asked Arjun Singh to surrender at Chaibasa, taking treasure and weapons along with the rebels. If he did not do so, he threatened to hang him. But on 17 September 1857, Arjun Singh declared himself the king of Singhbhum by thrashing Dugdugi. Birch placed a reward of Rs 1000 on Arjun Singh. Due to Birch's harsh treatment, the situation turned against Arjun Singh.

Arjun Singh went to Ranchi and decided to surrender before the Commissioner of Chotanagpur, Dalton. On reaching Ranchi on 17 October 1857, with the help of Madrasi soldiers, the rebels were arrested. In a very short time, the rebels were sentenced by court martial. The death sentence of 20 soldiers, rigorous imprisonment for 14 soldiers and the sentence of the rest of the soldiers were postponed till the arrival of Harnath Singh and Harsh Narayan Singh from Chaibasa to Ranchi. The rebels who were hanged were hanged on 20 October 1857. The place where he was hanged is today called "Shahid Chowk".

Arjun Singh was shocked by this incident. At the same time his son died prematurely. This happened because of not obeying the oath of Pauri Devi, so he started thinking. After reaching Chaibasa, he started making ammunition against the British. This campaign against the British continued from November 1857 to February 1859.

On 20 November 1857, Captain Hale captured Chakradharpur with Sikh troops. Jaggu Diwan was caught and hanged on the same day on 20 November 1857. On 21 November 1857, RC Birch captured the Porhat palace and set it on fire. But Arjun Singh ran away from the palace.

After leaving the palace, Arjun Singh met the Munda-Mankios of the Ho tribe. In a meeting in Ajodhiya village, the Munda-Mankis promised to support Arjun Singh. As a symbol of rebellion, arrows were moved from village to village. Apart from this, all the castes of Singhbhum gradually got along with Arjun Singh. The rebels killed a government employee named Sukhna Tanti.

Baidyanath Singh and his Diwan Raghudev plundered the house of the Thakur of Kera, who was a supporter

of the British, and the Keera market. The rebels killed Raja Chakradhar Singh of Seraikela staying at Chakradharpur and 200 of his soldiers, during which some Sikh soldiers were also killed. Asking the rebels to punish the Sikh soldier to death, the company's army marched towards Jayantgarh, while crossing a creek on the way, the rebels suddenly attacked this troop. Captain Hale was wounded, RC Burch was shot in the arm. Special Commissioner Lusington and English officer Hedge were also injured.

After the British situation in Singhbhum worsened, Colonel Faster was sent to control the situation. Colonel Faster reached Chaibasa from Raniganj on 17 January 1858 with Shekhawati Battalion. The rebellion began to weaken after Faster's military action. Arjun Singh surrendered to the Chotanagpur commissioner Dalton on 15 February 1859, following the intervention of his father-in-law, who was the Raja of Mayurbhanj. Arjun Singh was sent to Banaras Jail. After his release from jail, when the kingdom was returned, he did not return to Singhbhum, it was better to choose death in Banaras itself.

Spread of rebellion in Manbhum

The Sepoy Mutiny of Santal Parganas, Hazaribagh and Ranchi had taken a very serious form. When the news of this came to Purulia's Principal Assistant Commissioner GN Oaks, he sought military assistance from Chotanagpur Commissioner Dalton as there were only a few soldiers in Manbhum who were engaged in other works. Even before the arrival of military aid, the soldiers here revolted in Purulia on 5 August 1857. All the big British officers including Oaks fled to Raniganj. The rebels took prisoners out of prison, looted the treasury, set government documents on fire. There was a lot of looting in the city of Purulia and the rebel soldiers left for Ranchi.

A month after the rebellion, the Oaks returned to Purulia. On 16 September 1857, Oaks sent Dalton a list of raja/zamindars who would help the company. These included Raja Mukunda Narayan Dev of Manbhum, Raja Shatrughan Dutt of Patkum, Raja Radhanath Singh of Baghmundi, Zamindars of Raipur and Kashipur. . The Raja of Jhalda, who was freed from the prison by the

rebels, supported the British by not supporting the rebels, in return the British assured him of acquittal.

On the other hand, the Oaks sought help from Raja Nilamani Singh of Panchet to deal with the rebels. But Neelmani Singh himself turned against the British.

The Santal community actively participated in this rebellion of Manbhum. A large crowd of Santals held a meeting in Siddhi village. The Santals, after looting the nearby village, attacked the palace of the Raja of Jaipur, looted the property of the king and also looted the Jaipur market. Santal took Ramgarh They looted from Gola to Manbhum district. Neelmani Singh was in direct contact with the Santals and kept encouraging the Santals. Oakes eventually sent Captain Mount Gomri along with Sikh troops to control the Santalo. Mount Gomery, along with English officers Perry and Dez, controlled the Santals. Leaving the Jaipur area, the Santals went towards Hazaribagh. Gradually the situation became normal in Jaipur and Purulia. Captain Mount Gomri arrested Neelmani Singh in November 1857 and was sent to Alipore Jail (Calcutta). In this way the rebellion in Manbhum was pacified.

The spread of rebellion in Palamu

The Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 AD in Jharkhand started and lastly in Palamu area on 26 September 1857. Apart from this, the last Sepoy Mutiny ended in April 1859 in Palamu area. The main leadership of this rebellion in Palamu was done by two Bhogta brothers Nilambar Shahi and Pitambar Shahi. Bhogta is a branch of Kherwar caste. Nilambar-Pitamber's father Chemo Kherwar was a Bhogta chief and was against the policies of the British. His father had died due to torture in prison. Both the brothers were planning to avenge their father. Meanwhile, on 26 September, the Chero people of Palamu, under the leadership of Bhavani Baksh Rai of Chakala, declared a rebellion. The coming together of Chero and Kherwar communities increased the power of the rebels.

On 21 October 1857 AD, the rebels attacked Shahpur Fort. With this attack, the last Chero king snatched 4 guns from the widowed wife of Chudaman Rai. On this day Shahpur police station was attacked and one Barkandaz was killed. All the papers of the police station were burnt. On the same day, the zamindar of Chainpur, the hanger of the British, Raghuvar Dayal Singh was

attacked and money was looted. One of its soldiers, a servant, was killed. But Raghuvar Dayal Singh escaped.

On 22 October 1857 AD, the rebels attacked Leslienganj. The inspector, tehsildar, constable all ran away from Leslienganj police station. The rebels set fire to the police station, the Tehsil court, the excise office, and the residences of the British. The rebels also looted the police stations of Manika and Chhatarpur.

When the whole Palamu was burnt in the fire of rebellion, then Lieutenant Graham, 5 November 1857 reached Leslienganj with a troop. The rebels fled to Chainpur. Graham reached Chainpur on 7 November. There the rebels took Graham hostage at Chainpurgarh.

Meanwhile, many rebels from Shahabad (Bihar) entered Palamu under the leadership of Bhanu Pratap Singh. The rebels of Jharkhand and the rebels of Bihar together set fire to the reserves of Kishan Dayal Singh, the Zamindar of Rankagarh, who was an ally of the British. On 27 November 1857, the rebels set fire to the Rajhara coal mine of the Bengal Coal Company. The machines of the mine were picked up and taken away. After setting fire to the Rajhara coal mine, most of the rebels remained

in Chainpur and some moved towards Palamu Fort and took possession of Palamu Fort to stop the troops coming from Ranchi.

On the other hand, Major Katar reached Shahpur from Sasaram on 8 December with a troop to help the helpless Lieutenant Graham. Major Cater arrested Devi Baksh Rai. Some local vassals/zamindars were made in his favor by Lieutenant Graham. With the arrival of the army of the local vassal/zamindar and the army of Major Cater, now the army of Lieutenant Graham became large. Seeing this, many Chero vassals withdrew from the rebellion. to support. Lieutenant Graham captured Kunda's vassal Parmanand, who was an ally of the rebels. Nilambar-Pitamber, the supreme leader of the rebellion, was still out of reach of the British.

Dalton, the commissioner of Chotanagpur, sent Major MacDonald with the Madrasi army to assist Lieutenant Graham in January 1858. On January 21, Major Macdonald reached Manika. With the help of the Madrasi army, Graham rescued the fort of Palamu from the rebels. The heavy British army could not control the rebels. Dalton finally had to come to Leslieganj on 3

February 1858. Dalton returned to Ranchi on 6 February after making a complete plan to suppress the rebellion.

On February 10, Graham drove the rebels out of the village of Harinamand. On February 13, the village of Nilambar-Pitamber was captured by Graham on Chemo and on February 14, Sanaya. The rebels at Shahpur and Baghmara Ghat were also dispersed. But still the leader of the rebels Nilambar-Pitamber did not come into the hands of the rebels.

The Bhogta brothers now took help from the rebels of Shahabad, the rebels of Shahabad also needed a place to hide. In July, 150 rebels of Shahabad came to Palamu, which gradually increased to 1100 by November. These rebels were led by Sidha Singh and Ram Bahadur Singh. Kunwar Singh's brother Amar Singh also reached Kharoundhi (Majhingao, Garhwa) on 24 November 1858.

With the arrival of these rebels in Palamu, by January 1859, the whole of Palamu was under control of the rebels.

In January 1859, Captain Nation was dispatched and together with Graham began to take action against the rebels. Under the policy of divide and rule, the Chero

jagirdars were instigated against the exploiters. Due to which the Chero now started fighting against the rebels on behalf of the British. In this way the power of Nilambar-Pitamber was reduced. Within 2 weeks, the power of the enjoyers was shattered. Dalton announced a reward and a jagir for those who caught Nilambar-Pitamber. Nilambar and Pitamber were eventually arrested. After a brief trial, he was hanged on a mango tree in Leslienganj in April 1859.

Important facts of 1857 rebellion

1. In the rebellion of 1857 AD, the most formidable form was taken in Singhbhum.

2. The sequence of the start of the revolt of 1857 in Jharkhand:-

Santal Pargana (Deoghar) → Hazaribagh → Ranchi → Manbhum → Singhbhum → Palamu

3. At the time of revolt of 1857 AD, the headquarters of Ramgarh Battalion was in Ranchi. This battalion consisted of infantry, cavalry and artillery. Two-thirds of the soldiers of this battalion were Jharkhandi, the number

of outside soldiers was less. The number of tribal soldiers was also very less as recruitment was restricted even after being qualified due to the habit of drinking alcohol.

4. During the rebellion, there were units of the 8th Native Infantry in Doranda, Chaibasa, Purulia and Hazaribagh in Jharkhand.

5. Santals played an active role in the revolt of 1857. People who supported the British were looted in Gola, Jharpo, Mander and Gomia. The entire Santal community of Khadagadiha (Giridih) remained active in this rebellion.

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