

## **Project Name : 'BIDROHER LOKA-GAAN'**

**(Folk Song of Rebellion, 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

**By Tamas Ranjan Banerjee**

### **BLUE PRINT**

#### **1. Introduction :**

Folk songs are not merely the songs of entertainment. The folk songs of any region reveal the socio-economic structure as well as the religious belief and rituals of the common people of such region. It is, however, to be mentioned that the folk song of any particular region can be classified into two main branches, viz. (i) Religious and (ii) Secular. The religious type deals with the common beliefs, the rituals and the enumeration of achievements of the deities, whereas the secular type deals with various aspects of life such as pain, pathos, passion, profession, or familiar affairs of day to day life and of course, the struggle; the struggle for existence, struggle for reunion and refinement of the society.

The present project deals with a few folk songs that were the parts of various movements against the ruthless British rulers during the 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century and also the folk songs that reveal protest against the biased policies of the Government in post - independent period. The tribal community, the villagers and the peasants did not remain silent against the tyrants and as a result, a number of rebellions took place in different parts of Bengal. The village poets composed songs in this connection to instigate protest and to unite the people.

This project is a humble attempt to bring such songs under the light to focus on historical significance and importance.

#### **2. Objectives of the research, data creation or documentation of the project :**

One of the basic characteristics of folk song is oral transmission from generation to generation. Besides, Folk Songs are always movable objects, especially the secular type of songs. The songs which were composed or come out from a particular community long long ago, are thus required to be preserved carefully as they carry the evidences of society and life of a particular community in a particular period of time. Songs related to various movements and intensity of such movements and thus, become historical evidences. These songs gradually lose their relevance as time goes on and so, they go under soil. The chief object of the present project is to rescue the songs and to preserve them for the future generation as well as for the enhancement of regional history and culture of people of a particular area. These songs, no doubt, are the valuable treasures and need serious concern for safeguarding before they become extinct permanently.

#### **3. Implementation of the project :**

The implementation of the project has undergone the following stages :

- (a) Collection of data in respect of various protest movements in different regions of Bengal.
- (b) Collection of songs related to such movements through vast field surveys in remote areas of several districts of Bengal.
- (c) Interviews of eminent folk singers, researchers and historians.
- (d) Verification and interpretation of data.
- (e) Collection of study materials and extensive library works.

#### **4. Time Frame of the project :**

As the project deals with both history and culture of a period of more than two hundred years, it requires a minimum six months of time for the completion of the entire project.

#### **5. Specific areas of the respective state in which the art form (s) is practiced – Geographical, Typographical and other related aspects that the project may cover :**

The project deals with folk songs of the entire Bengal. Folk song is primarily known as song of soil as the regional tune or 'Dhun' is directly related to the characteristics of soil as well as the topographical features of that particular region. That is exactly why the tune or 'Dhun' varies widely from region to region. As the project deals with regional folk songs, it will certainly bring this variations under the light and the differences in 'Dhun' or tune between hilly region of Bengal (Northern part) and the river-oriented plain region (eastern part) will be understood distinctly.

Besides, the regional dialects, accents and also, more importantly, the styles of the folk songs of such regions will be revealed through the project.

#### **6. Photos (Preliminary level) related to the project / art form :**

As the project is based on field works at an extensive level, photographs related to the interviewed is submitted along with the copies of acknowledgement by the eminent personalities. The list of researchers and performers interviews till the date is

- (i) Dr. Susnata Das (Researcher and professor, Dept. of History, Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata).
- (ii) Sri Arya Chowdhury (Eminent performer and researcher).
- (iii) Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee (Eminent performer and researcher).
- (iv) Dr. Jaladhar Karmakar (Researcher of tribal community and culture, Jadavpur University, Kolkata).
- (v) Sri Mihir Lal Singh Deo (Eminent performer of folk song, recipient of state awards).
- (vi) Sri Mantu Barai (Researcher and asstt. Professor, J.K. College, Purulia).
- (vii) Sri Bidyadhar Karmakar (Renowned performer and collector of folk song, Purulia).

#### **7. Conclusion of the project, as envisioned :**

The project, as envisioned, will be concluded through the following steps :

- (i) **Collection of songs and the relevant historical information** in connection with the Songs.
- (ii) Audio recording by a group led by the proposer and **preparation of CD.**
- (iii) **Arrangement for a seminar** through which the purpose of the project will be revealed after valuable lectures on related topics by distinguished persons.
- (iv) **Publication of a journal** containing contributors by researchers and eminent people;
- (v) **Publication of the CD;**
- (vi) **Public performance;**
- (vii) **Submission of papers** along with documents to the authority, Sangeet Natak Akademi, New Delhi.



For item no. : F

### **SUMMARY OF THE PROJECT**

**B**engal is a land of diversity in respect of soil, climate and topography. The soil and atmosphere vary from place to place as one travels through from North to south or from East to West. Folk song, that has been regarded as the song of soil by the scholars, varies also widely in respect to that. Such a huge variation of folk songs has not yet been found in any other parts of the world, as opined by Rabindranath Tagore in his Precious book "Sangit Chinta".<sup>1</sup>

Folk songs are never composed or originated for mere entertainment, rather they are popularly used to construct or re-construct a community and to form an integrated society throughout the ages. The folk songs of any region reveals the socio-economic structure as well as religious belief and rituals of the common people of such region. They move proportionately with the movement of the society and its people and thus, they are evergreen and become traditional forever. "A folk song is neither new nor old because it is continually taking on new life; it is an individual flowering on a common stem."<sup>2</sup>

It is, however, to be mentioned that the folk song of any particular region can be classified into two main branches, viz., (1) RELIGIOUS and (2) SECULAR. The religious type reveals the common beliefs, the rituals and the enumeration of achievements of the deities. Whereas the secular type deals with various aspects of life such as pain, pathos, profession, passion, desire or familiar affairs of day to day life and of course, the struggle; the struggle for existence, struggle for reunion and refinement of the society.

The present project deals with a few folk songs that were the parts of various movements against the ruthless rulers in Bengal in the 18th - 20th century. India was under the British rule for a long period of two hundred years and Bengal was the Headquarter of the then foreign administrators for a long period. Most of the tyrant landlords got united with the British for the sake of their own interests and offered unleashed torture over the common and helpless villagers who ultimately, on finding no other alternatives, revolted strongly. we have gone through the forms, features and significances of a number of such rebellion or mutiny such as "CHUAR BIDROHO" (1767), "SANTHAL BIDROHO" (1855-57), "TEBHAGA ANDOLAN" (1946), etc. but we are merely concerned with the songs composed by the village poets in order to unite and inspire the people. It is, however, not to be forgotten that the village poets did not remain silent even in the post-independence period. They instigated protest in social revolutionary movements such as

EMERGENCY PERIOD (1975), Reformation period of the Provinces (1956), etc. and more importantly they had adopted the traditional tune and rhythm of the region as a means of protest.

This project is a humble attempt to bring such songs under the light to focus on historical significance and importance.

The songs, associated with several regional rebellions, have been collected through field surveys and now they are given below with their historical significances :

### **Song 1. "Ki Holo re jaan ...." (related to palashi war, 1757)**

কি হলরে জান —  
পলাশী ময়দানে ওড়ে কোম্পানী নিশান।।  
তীর পড়ে ঝাঁকে ঝাঁকে গুলি পড়ে রহে  
একেলা মীরমদন বলো কত লিবে সহে  
ছোট ছোট তেলেঙ্গারা লাল কুর্তা গায়।।  
হাঁটু গেড়ে মারছে যে তীর মীরমদনের পায়।।  
মীরজাফরের দাগাবাজি নবাব ধরতে পারল মনে,  
মোহনলালের সঙ্গে নবাব ভঙ্গ দিল রণে,  
নবাব কান্দে সিপুই কান্দে আর কান্দে হাতি  
মোকসুদাবাদ কান্দে রে-ভাই কান্দে ভাগীরথী।।  
ঢোল-শহরৎ জানান দিল দ্যাশের প্রতি ঘরে ঘরে,  
নবাবকে খুন করল যাতক রাজমহালের চরে।  
বিদেশ-বিভুই হল্যঁ হায়রে দ্যাশের মাটি  
গোবিন্দপুর কান্দে রে ভাই কান্দে সুতানুটি।।  
জনে জনে পুছে মানুষ কি হবে আরতি-আজান্  
ক্যামন্ করে বাঁচব হামরা হিন্দু- মুসলমান।  
গুলবাগে ম'ল নবাব খোশবাগে মাটি  
চান্দোয়া টাঙায়ে কান্দে মোহনলালের বিটি।।<sup>3</sup>

The song reveals the unfortunate and sorrowful scenerio of the Palashi ground where the British defeated the Nawab and his regiments and took over the power. Another very interesting as well as notabla thing is, though the song is composed following the tune of "Jaari", (song of lamentation), There are a few places where style of 'Kirtana' is found. This clearly suggests that the struggle against the British was a combined effort of both the communities, the Hindus and the Muslims. Thus, it had became a very popular song among the rural people is the later half of the 18th century.

### **Song 2 : "Vikramji't Raja Vel" [related to Chuar rebellion, (1798)]**

বিক্রমজিৎ রাজা ভেল্ কলিত পড়ি গেল  
 ছাতা পথরি রাজার ঘড়া ডুবি গেল।।  
 লক্ক লক্ লকই রে, লক্ আসছে লুকাও রে  
 ছাতা পথরি রাজার ঘড়া ডুবি গেল।।  
 ব্যাপারিক টাড়ারে বাবুরাম সিঙ্গুলেনা  
 নবীনাকা টাড়ারে সিঙ্গুলেকা টাড়ারে  
 বাবুরাম জাপালেনা।।  
 মিছা হলেও বলবে রে নিষ্ঠা হলেও বলবে রে  
 লক্ আসছে লুকাওরে আও।।

আঙু দিগেও ভালবে রে পেছু দিগেও ভালবে রে, লক্ আসছে লুকাও রে আও।।<sup>4</sup>

"The Great Chuar Rebellion"<sup>5</sup> was organised in the western part of Bengal and adjacent areas when 'Jangal Mahal' was separated from the Midnapore District (1805) by the British and the inhabitants of such areas become land-less. The various tribal groups as well as less-privileged communities used to live their livelihood on working on the 'Paikan land' which they were given by the landlords or zamindars against their services as soldiers or "Paiks". The fire of Chuar Rebellion actually got a flame when the East India company decided to send regiments to the Northern part and Western part of the Midnapore District in order to bring the zamindars under their control and force them to pay revenues (1766).<sup>6</sup> The song here was actually a warning song which the members of the groups or communities would sing aloud on seeing the British regiment marching towards the "Jangal Mahal". By singing the song, they would ask their fellow-soldiers to take position behind the trees and hills and be prepared with native weapons.

### **Song 3: "Saraollah kore Gol" [Related to wahabi movement (1831)]**

সারওল্লা করে গোল পার হল সাঁড়াপোল  
 বার ঘরেতে ঘোড়া দিল ছেড়ে।  
 লাঠি সব করে ঘাড়ে লাইলাহা কলমা পড়ে  
 জমা হল নারিকেল বেড়ে।।  
 উপরে বেঁধেছে ছেল্লা বাঁশ দিয়ে ঘেরেছে কেল্লা  
 তার মধ্যে সব জমা হয়ে র'ল।  
 উত্তর-দক্ষিণ সোনা পূর্ব-পশ্চিম পুকুর কোনা  
 চারিদিকে আটপহারা প'ল।।  
 বারাসাতের মেজেন্দ্রেট হুকুম দেছে পল্টনে  
 পুরছে তারা টোটাতে বারন্দ।  
 পায়জামা পিন্দিলা তায়, লাল কুর্তি টুপি মাথায়  
 খাড়া হইল যেন যমের দূত।।  
 পল্টন আর চৌকিদার পুড়োর ঘাট হইল পার  
 দারোগা আর জমিদার লুটে।  
 সেপাই চলিল আগে বায়ালি চলিল পিছে  
 সাহেব চলিল ঘোড়ায় উঠে।।  
 লাল কুর্তি টোপি মাথায় সরাওল্লা দেখে তায়

কোমর বেঁধে হইল মত্ততাত  
 গোলাম মাসুম হুকুম দিল লাঠি সব হাতে নিল  
 ইট পাটকেল ধরিল মোনাজাত।।  
 মেহের আলি চাঁদের ছটা তিনি ছয়েদের ব্যাটা  
 দিনের অন্তে দিয়েছেন জাহান।  
 দুই হাতে ধরিব পাছাড় শানেতে মারিব আছাড়  
 দেখাব আজা ঘুগ্‌রো বান।।  
 কত সেপাই দিল পেড়ে বন্দুক সব নিল কেড়ে  
 পিপাসাতে পানি চা'লে খাতি।  
 উত্তর-দক্ষিণ তোর দু'তরফ বাজি ডোর  
 সাবাশ মদ গোলামের ছাতি।।  
 তিন লড়াই হল জিত সরাওল্লা আনন্দিত  
 নারকেল বেড়ে হইল কারবালা।  
 বেদে পোতায় প'ল রোত লহতে পড়িল স্রোত  
 তামাসা দেখিল খোদাতাল্লাহ।।  
 সেপাই সব ক্রোধ করে একমূর্তি সারে সারে  
 ফায়ার করিল একবার।  
 একবার আওয়াজ হ'ল সারাওল্লা ঝাঁপিয়ে প'ল  
 ধোমাতে হইল অন্ধকার।।<sup>7</sup>

The song here brings out a brief description of the battle between Titumir, one of the fore fathers of the "Wahabi Movement" in Bengal, and the British who unleashed ruthless tortures against innocent farmers of Bengal in the then period. The "Wahabi Movement" was actually introduced in India by Syed Ahammad of Rai Bereili.<sup>8</sup> Titumir came closer to him while travelling in muqqa and got inspired deeply with this ism. Later he came back to India and built a fort with bamboos, popularly known as "Bansher Kella", at Barasat in Bengal and proclaimed rebellion against the British. Sajan Gazi, one of the members of Titumir's team, noted down the descriptions of war vivily in poetic metre. This song is an abridged version of such description.

#### **Song 4: "Joan Bajal Gorur Bagaal"** **[Related to the Santhal Rebellion (1855-1857)]**

Villagers : জোয়ান বাজাল্ গরুর বাগাল্ মাঠে মাঠে ঘুরে।  
 পুলিশ কেনে পরায় বেড়ি লে যায় কেনে ধরে।।

Baajal (Chowbay) : দোষ করিনি খেলে বেড়াই মাঠে মাঠে ঘুরে।  
 পুলিশ কেনে পরায় বেড়ি লে যায় কেনে ধরে।।

Villagers : সত্যি করে বলতো বাজাল কার হুকুমেতে  
 রূপ সিং তামুলি কে মারলি নিজ হাতে?।।

Baajal : সিধুর হুকুমে বীর কানহর হুকুমে।  
রূপ সিং তাম্বুলিকে দিলেম সঁপে যমে।।

Villagers : হাতে বেড়ি গলায় দড়ি শিকল পায়েতে  
ফাঁসির তরে লে যায় ধরে সিউড়ি হাজতে।।

Baajal : হাতের শিকল নয় গো ওটা বাঁশের বাঁশরি।  
পায়ের বেড়ি কেনেই বা তা নূপুর ভারি ভারি।।  
গলায় মালা লাচ্তে যেছি সিউড়ি মেলাতে।  
আসব ফিরে আবার দেখো এই না গাঁয়েতে।<sup>9</sup>

This unique song was composed in a conversational manner between the villagers and "Baajal" (Cowby) who had killed Rup Singh Tambuli, a tyrant landlord under the leadership of Sidu and Kanu, two great leaders of the Santhal Mutiny. The Santhal Mutiny was undoubtedly a very significant rebellion just before the Sipahi Mutiny (1857). The Santhals who were being tortured by both the tyrant zamindars and the British, assembled in a meeting in the Bhagnadihi village on 30th June, 1855 under the leadership of Sidu and Kanu and took oath to root out the British Raj. Thousands of them were killed by the British army brutally but none of them left bow and arrow till death.

#### **Song 5 : "Laal Suta Neel Suta" [Related to Indigo Revolution]**

লাল সূতা নীল সূতা চরখায় কাটিলাম সূতা  
বুনাইলম্ লীল গামছা  
সে গামছা হারালি কোথায় সজনি  
।।রং।। ওগো নীলমণি - গামছা ধরিয়ে করে টানাটানি ।।রং।।  
ত্রিগুনে বেগুনের বাড়ি বেগুন বিকে নিলম শাড়ি  
সে শাড়ি হারালি কোথায় সজনি .....।।রং।।  
পাহাড় ধারে করি চাষ ভাবনা তোর বার মাস  
বিদেশী ময়ূরে খাল্য ধান সজনি.....।।রং।।  
চাষ করিলাম সোনা হরিল বিদেশী ময়না  
তখন চামু বলে ত্যজিব পরানী .....।।রং।।<sup>10</sup>

The Indigo Revolution was probably the greatest peasant revolution which actually flamed in the ending part of the 18th century. The protest got the intensity from 1830 throughout the entire Bengal.

The British owners set up incredible examples of greed and tyranny against the cultivators. They not only forced them to cultivate, but also compelled them to take loans at a higher rate of interest and to sell the product at a lower rate.<sup>11</sup>

The above song was composed by Chamu Karmakar, a very renowned

village poet of the western part of Bengal in the then period. In this song, one can easily find out the farmer who, at last, thinks of committing suicide finding no other alternatives to carry on living.

**Song 6 : "Hami Bulbo ki arr Aakhar chai"  
[Related to Indigo Revolution]**

হামি বুলব কি আর আখার ছাই  
তুমহার দেখি শরম ভরম নাই।  
তুমি লালমুখ্যা ঐ নীলবাঁদরের নানা হে  
দালালি খাও শুনতে পাই।।

পিনহা ডোরাঁকাটা বাঘের ছাল  
মাথায় ব্যান্হাছো জটীর জাল  
তুমি কুহঁরা কর্যা নীলকুঠি ছুর্যা  
বুলি ভরো কান্ধায় দেখতে পাই।।

ভাঙ্ আর ধুতরা কর্যাছয়ে সার  
নেশায় বঁদ তুমি সিদ্ধি গাঁজার  
তুমি নীলকরের টাকায় ভেল্‌কি দ্যাখাও  
(ভ্যালা) চোখে কি সুঝে না প্যাটে দানা নাই।।

লালমুখা বিটিছেল্যার তালে পোড়্যা  
জাত-জমি দিল্যা সব নীলে বাঁজা কর্যা  
কোদো - চিন্‌হা- কাউনির নাইহে দাউনি  
ভুখা প্যাটে তাও গস্তীরা গাই।।

নীলকুঠি ভাঙ্তে রংরেজ বাজারে  
জুয়ান মরদ সব হৌকর্যাছে ঘরে  
বিনা-দানা পানিতে শুথিয়্যা মরছি  
নীল বাঁদরদের খতম যে চাই।।

শুনো ওহে নানা মহেশ্বর  
কিছু অ্যাখ্‌না উপায় কর  
নীলচাষ হটাও, রংরেজ ভাগাও  
জান দিয়্যা বরিনে চাষ বাড়াই।।<sup>12</sup>

The song belonged to 'Gambhira', the most popular folk theatre of Maldaha district in the northan part of Bengal. The unbelievable condition of the farmers is revealed through the lines. The most significant feature is that the song ends with a strong desire to find out the way to get rid of the British and to drive them out from our country.

**Song 7 : "Rane Saajilo re" [Song of Tebhaga Mutiny (1946-47)]**



রং।। রণে সাজিল রে  
রণ যায় রণডঙ্কা বাজিল রে।। রং।।  
একে একে বলে যাই  
শোনেন বন্ধুগণ।  
খাঁপুর যুদ্ধের কথা করিব বর্ণন।।  
তেরোশ তিপান্ন সালে মাঘ মাসের শেষে  
তেভাগার রণে কৃষক কুদিল সাহসে।।

ভালকা বাঁশের ধনুক নিল হস্তেতে তুলিয়া  
চোখা চোখা তীর নিল পৃষ্ঠেতে বাঁধিয়া  
দলে দলে কৃষক সাজে বলে মার মার  
কোমর বান্ধিয়া সবে হইল তৈয়ার।।

ঘুটঘুটি আন্ধার রাতে ম্যাঘের ঝরে পানি  
জালিমে এই রাতে বুঝি করিবে দুশমনি  
পৃষ্ঠে বান্ধি ধনুক তীর চোঙ লৈয়া করে  
ভ্যালান্টি পাহারা দেয় পতিরাম মোড়ে।।

এমন সময় দেখে দূরে দেখা যায়  
মটর গাড়ির বাতি মিটিমিটি চায়  
মিলিটারির গাড়ি আসে ভেলান্টি ভাবিল  
হুশিয়ার বলি মর্দ চোঙে ফুঁক দিল।।

না ঢুকে সৈন্যের গাড়ি রড্ দিল রণে  
পতিরাম ঢুকিয়া মোড় নিল ডানে  
কতক দূর হইতে গাড়ি কতক দূরে যায়  
বড় রাস্তা ছাড়ি গাড়ি গাঁয়ের পথে যায়।।

একধারে উঁচা পাহাড় একধারে বাড়ি  
শুনশুনি পথে মোটর যায় গুড়গুড়ি  
সন্মুখে ফাঁকা জায়গায় মোটর গাড়ি থুইয়া  
নামিল কতক সৈন্য বন্দুক কাঁধে লইয়া।।

আন্ধার রাতে চুপেচুপে বাড়িতে ঢুকিল  
গোপেশ ডাক্তারের সাথে পাঁচজনকে ধরিল  
গ্রামের মহিলা যত খেপিয়া উঠিল  
ঝাঁটা-বারণ হস্তে মোটর ঘেরিল।।

নারীগণ সৈন্যে কয় শোন রে গোলাম  
সবারে ছাড়িয়া দাও করিয়া সেলাম  
নারী ভলান্টিয়ার সাথে মরদ আসে জুটি

পৃষ্ঠে বান্ধি ধনুক তীর হস্তে মোটা লাঠি।।

সৈন্যের গাড়ির পিছে দেখা নাহি যায়  
দ্রৌপদী খোঁড়ে কতক বীর গেরিলা কায়দায়  
সন্মুখে জনতা দেখি সৈন্যের কাঁপে হিয়া  
নিজ নিজ ঘরে সব যায় রে ফিরিয়া।।

প্রমাদ গনিল সৈন্য জান বুঝি গেল  
সন্মুখে তীরের ফালা পিছনেতে গাল  
ফায়ার ফায়ার বলি কাপতান্ ডুকরিয়া উঠিল  
অঙ্গ কাঁপে ঘন মুতে প্যান্ট ভিজে গেল।।

ডিং ডিং ডিং ডিং তাং ধিতাং নাগরা মাদল রবে  
সাজিল কৃষক সৈন্য ভয়ঙ্কর সবে  
ঝাঁকে ঝাঁকে তীর ছোটো লাঠি বনবনে  
জীবন মৃত্যু পায়ের ভৃত্য ভয় নাহি মনে।।

ছুটিল চিয়ার সাই হস্তে মোটা লাঠি  
জোয়ান মর্দ বাপের ব্যাটা আটত্রিশ ইঞ্চি ছাতি  
দোহাতিয়া বাড়ি মারে সৈন্যের মাথায়  
বাপ ডাক ছাড়ি সৈন্য টলে পরে পরে যায়।।

আর এক গুলি চিয়ার সাই -এর বুকো ছোটো  
আন্ধার হইল দুনিয়াদারি চেতন গেল টুটে  
বেহুঁশ হৈল মর্দ রক্ত ছেড়ে দিল  
অভিমনে মায়ের বুকো আছাড়ি পড়িল।।

চিয়ার সাই প'ল দেখে খেপিল সকলে  
দিশা নাই হুঁশ নাই মার মার বলে  
তীর-ধনুক শাবল লাঠি হালুয়া কুঠার  
মারিছে সবাই দেখ যা ছিল যাহার।।

বন্ধুকের গুলি মুখে টিকিতে না পারে  
একে একে বীর গণ ঢলে ঢলে পড়ে  
তিনখানি ট্রকের মধ্যে অচল করল দুই  
শহীদের রক্তে রাঙা হয়ে গেল ভুঁই।।

একে একে একুশ বীর জান ছেড়ে দিল  
শহীদের রক্তে রাঙা লাল ঝান্ডা হল  
যুগ যুগের রক্ত রাগ এই মত করে  
ফাটিয়া পড়িল ভাই ওই না খাঁপুরে।।<sup>13</sup>



The term "Tebhaga" implies one third proportion. The Tebhaga movement (1946-47) was the last larger movement by the farmers of the undivided Bengal before the Independence (1947). The movement, though originated in Bengal, gradually spread through the vast areas of the country where the farmers proclaimed war against the British as well as their loyal landlords. The farmers who were being deprived of receiving minimum return to their efforts, demanded to pay only one- third proportion of crops cultivated to the land-lords who did not put up any effort but enjoyed the maximum.

The present song was composed by Kali Sarkar in 1949 when he, being a true servant of the movement, was put behind the bars by the British. The song reveals how the peasants and their families revolted at Khanpur village of the undivided Dinajpur district of Bengal under the leadership of Chirai Sai Sekh, a land-labourer. The song is composed following the tune of 'Jang Gaan', one of the traditional folk songs of Dinajpur district.

### **Song 8 :- "Amar Bangla Bhasa Praner Bhasa" [Related to 'Tusu Satyagraha' movement (1956)]**

আমার বাংলা ভাষা প্রাণের ভাষা রে  
(ও ভাই) মারবি তোরা কি তারে।।  
এই ভাষাতেই কাজ চলেছে সাত পুরুষের আমলে  
এই ভাষাতেই মায়ের কোলে মুখ ফুটেছে মা বলে।।  
এই ভাষাতেই পরচাঁর রেকর্ড এই ভাষাতেই চেক কাটা  
এই ভাষাতেই দলিল নথি সাতপুরুষের হকপাটা।।  
দেশের মানুষ ছাড়িস যদি ভাগ্যের চির অধিকার  
দেশের শাসন অচল করে ঘটবে দেশে অনাচার।।<sup>14</sup>

'Tusu Satyagraha' movement (1956) was actually a movement based on language and culture. In 1956 when Reconstruction period of provinces was in progress, Purulia was almost captured by the government of Bihar (Now Jharkhand). But people protested strongly against such decision and demanded Purulia to be a part of Bengal as most of people live on Bengali language and culture. This movement is known as 'Tusu Satyagraha' because Tusu is the most popular harvest festival in Puruliya which is observed through out the month "Pous" (December-January). This festival is all about songs and the leaders took the help of "Tusu songs" to instigate the protest. Thousands of people walked through the roads to Kolkata on 6th May, 1956 and ultimately succeeded in their mission at last.

The present song was composed by Bhajahari Mahadta, one of the organisers of the movement. The Bengali language is highly acclaimed in the song.

### **Song 9 :- " Murkha Geedal Humragula" [Related to Emergency Rule (1975)]**

মূৰ্খ্য গীদাল হামরাগুলা ভাওয়াইয়া গান গাই  
হাল বাড়ীর কামাই সারি দূতারা ডাঙাই  
সুখ দুঃখের কথা যেলায় মনতে পড়িল  
চটকা সুরে দূতারা ডাং, বাজিয়ারে উঠিল।।  
স্বাধীন হইনু ঘর হারাইনু নাই আর ভিটামাটি  
পরার ভূঁইয়ত ঘর বান্ধিয়া পরার ভূঁইয়ত খাটি  
দিনমনে সেই আড়াই টাকা মজুরী পাইয়া  
মাইয়া ছাওয়ায় রুটি চাবাই আন্ধারত বসিয়া।।  
হামি হয়ত মরি যাইম ভাই না বাঁচিম্ বেশীদিন  
ডাগদারবাবু কইছেন হৃদরোগ বড়ই কঠিন  
গান কবিতা বন্ধ হইল্ মোর আসর করা মানা  
কেমন করি গান করি ভাই হইলরে ভাবনা।।  
ভাবিনু না হয় ছাপি দিম্ মুই গান দু'চারখানা  
সেন্সারে কাটিয়া গানের ভাবে রাখিল না  
মনের আগুন চোখের জলে নিভানর কথাখানা  
সেন্সারে কয় আগুন শব্দ বলারে চলিবে না।।  
আগুন বাদ দিয়া শুধু জাল দিয়া কি করে গান গাই  
ভাবে বুঝিনু দুঃখ পাইলেও বলিবার উপায় নাই  
হামার গান তোমরা ভাইরে সাজ ধরি নিও  
সময় এলে আগুনে গান হাজার কণ্ঠত গাহিও।।<sup>15</sup>

The song reveals a strong protest by late Nivaran Pandit, an outstanding composer and reformer of "Bhaoaiaa" (the chief folk song of North Bengal), against the Bureaucracy during the Emergency Rule (1975) declared by the then congress Government . One of the renowned artist was driven out from the All India Radio Centre, Kolkata as a punishment for singing out the Tagore's song "Byartha Praner Abarjona Puriye Phela Aagun Jwalo" meaning light the fire and burn out all the dirt of mind and soul. On hearing this, Nivaran Pandit, who was on his death bed, composed the song bringing out the truth how poor and less privileged people are being deprived of their basic needs in the post independent period. At the last stanza, he raises his voice and asks to sing out the fiery songs aloud.

The present project is a humble attempt to perform and preserve such songs for future generation. The songs carry a deep historical significance though, they have almost gone down the deep water. The field survey is still in progress and hopefully a few more songs can be rescued. It is, however, to be mentioned that preservation of songs means not only preservation of lyrics only which have been collected and noted down in a few books. Rather, it means recovery and preservation of both lyric, tune and rhythm in order to be sung out through the ages. That is why Production of CD and public performances are aimed at.

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- 3) Song Collected from Sri Arya Choudhury, the Ambassador of Folk Song of Bengal, Kolkata.
- 4) Song Collected from Sri Jaladhar Karmakar (Purulia), researcher of tribal culture of West Bengal, Jadavpur University, Kolkata.
- 5) The term originally introduced by J.C.Price in his book " The Chuar Rebellion of 1799" (1874).
- 6) Jogesh Chandra Basu, "Medinipuer Itihass", Ist Edn., kolkata, P-237.
- 7) Song Collected from Sir Kankan Bhattacharjee, Author and researcher of Folk song of Bengal, Kolkata.
- 8) Suprakash Roy : "Bharater Krishak Bidroha O Ganatantrik Sangram", Ist Reprint, (2012), Radical Impression, Kolkata, P-263.
- 9) Collected from Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee, Kolkata, The Song was originally composed in Tribal language. Sri Bhattacharjee obtained it from Late Sri Arun Chaudhury, a very keen observer of the Santhal culture who translated the song into Bengali.
- 10) Collected from Sri Mihir lal Singh Deo, The legendary performer of Jhumur song (Purulia, West Bengal)
- 11) "Muktir Sangrame Bharat", Ist Edn., Ministry of Information and Culture, Govt. of W.B., Kolkata, 1930,P-33
- 12) Song collected from Sri Arya choudhury, the Ambassador of Folk Song of Bengal, Kolkata.
- 13) Song collected from Sri Manabesh choudhury, Author & former district Secretary of the Communist Party of India, South Dinajpur district, West Bengal.
- 14) Song collected from Sri Bidyadhar Karmakar, An eminent performer of "Jhumur and 'Tusu' song of the contemporary period.
- 15) Obtained from "Nibaran Panditer Gaan", West Bengal state music Akademi, Ministry of Culture, W.B., P-101

## ANNEXURE II

**For item no. : M**

**The threats to the element / cultural tradition related to its practice, visibility and future longevity. Give facts and relevant reasons based on the current scenario :**

The practice, visibility and future longevity of songs related to rebellions, in respect of the cultural tradition, have been facing serious threats due to the following reasons :

Firstly, folk-lore and especially the folk songs all over the country are probably the worst affected areas because of globalization. In Bengal, the story does not reveal a different picture. The styles, the tunes, the language needs serious concern in order to save them from decay.

Secondly, and more importantly, folk song is transmitted orally from generation to generation. Thus the secular type of songs that convey the pictures of life and society, gradually lose their significance as time goes on because new songs come out to replace the old songs as life and society vary from age to age. Thus, the secular type songs gradually walk on the path of extinction.

Thirdly, In most cases, it is found that the researchers, scholars and authors collect merely the lyrics. They do not provide any concrete information about the tune and rhythm which is essential for musical research and documentation for future generation.

Fourthly, The songs of rebellion are not merely related with performance. Rather they act as historical evidences. In other words, the songs themselves become history as they were composed in order to serve particular purposes at particular points of time.

Lastly, Music is the mirror of a society and its history. The bravery of soldiers or fighters gradually fades out and get place in printed letters in books with the advancement of time. Only songs and rhythm can bring forth the glory and intensity of their struggle before the people of the present age and can make them

### ANNEXURE-III

#### ● For item no. : R

#### Principal published references or documentation available on the element / cultural tradition :

Music is a performing art and any idea or concept related to music should be established through practice and performance. No major works has yet been done in respect of preservation of folk songs of rebellions. No audio-visual references is found till the date. Only a few books are there that contain healthy information about the nature and historical significance of major regional rebellions of Bengal. These books, however, provide us some lyrics that the authors collected through field works.

The names of a few books on such subject are given below :

- (i) Akademi, West Bengal state music: "Nivaran Panditer Gaan", 1st print, Ministry of Information and Culture, Govt. of W.B., 1986.
- (ii) Chattopadhyay, Bimal chandra : "Pratibadi Bangla Loka Sangit, 1st Edn., Lokasanskriti O Adibasi Sanskriti Kendra, Govt. of W.B., Kolkata, 2010.
- (iii) Chowdhury, Manabesh: "Tebhagar Path Dhore", 1st Print, National Book Agency, Kolkata, 2015.
- (iv) Das, Dr. Susnata : "Jukto Bange Neelchaas O Neel Bidroher Itihas", 1st Edn., Nakshatra, Kolkata, 2014.
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- (vii) Jana, Debaprasad (Editor) : "Ahalyabhumi Puraliya", 1st reprint, Deep Prakashan, Kolkata, 2006.
- (viii) Ray, supraksh : "Bharater Krishak Bidroha O Ganatantrik Sangram", 1st Radical Edn. Radicl Impression, Kolkata, 2012.



**SANGEET NATAK AKADEMI  
(NEW DELHI)**

**Scheme for "Safeguarding the Intangible  
Cultural Heritage and Diverse Cultural  
Traditions of India" (2014-2015)**

**FINAL REPORT**

*Title of the Project :*

**BIDROHER LOKA-GAAN  
(Folk songs of Rebellion, 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> Century)**

**Reference No: 28-6/ICH-Scheme/130/2014-15/113884**

**Date : February 5, 2015**

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**2019**

देबश्री चौधरी  
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### MESSAGE

*Dear Tamas Ranjan Banerjee,*

*I am delighted to learn that you have taken the task of a project entitled "BIDROHER LOKGAAN (THE FOLK SONGS OF REVELLION, 18<sup>th</sup> -20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY)" which is under I.C.H. Scheme (2014-15) of the SANGEET NATAK ACADEMI, New Delhi. which involved restoration and preservation of songs of various munities of the undivided Bengal during British period and post-independence period, is really a commendable work done by you. The songs which you have collected through your vast field surveys over the span of last 4 years and compiled them in one Compact Disc containing the songs is going to be released.*

*I am sure that you will continue your works for upliftment and restoration of rich history of Lokgaan of Bengal through your skill and vivid visuals.*

*I wish every success in your life.*

**Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee.**  
Assistant Teacher,  
Kaliyaganj Parbati Sundari High School.  
At Kaliyaganj,  
Dist. Uttar Dinajpur,  
West Bengal.

Debasree Chaudhuri  
21 09.2019

(देबश्री चौधरी/DEBASREE CHAUDHURI)  
राज्य मंत्री  
महिला एवं बाल विकास मंत्रालय  
Minister of State  
Ministry of Women & Child Dev.  
भारत सरकार/Govt. of India  
नई दिल्ली/New Delhi

Debanjan Roy, W.B.C.S.(Exe.)  
Sub-Divisional Magistrate &  
Sub-Divisional Officer  
Gangarampur at Buniadpur  
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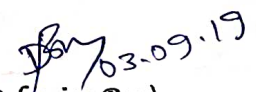
D.O. No. 5276

Dated. 3<sup>rd</sup> September, 2019

## MESSAGE

I am glad to know that Dr. Tamas Ranjan Bandopadhyay has taken up a project on "Bidroher Lokagaan" (Folk songs of rebellion, 18<sup>th</sup>-28<sup>th</sup> century). It has been informed that the project is approved by the Sangeet Natak Academy under the ICH scheme, 2014-15. The general people of Dinajpur inherit a long historic tradition. Right from the pre-historic mythological days, important episodes of history have been played at this soil during Guptas, Mauryans, Palas and Sultanates. During British rule, villagers of this locality have raised their voice time to time against the oppression of foreign rulers. Chuar mutiny, Santal mutiny, Sepoy mutiny, Indigo mutiny and Tusu satyagraha are few significant events of protest where the people of this locality took part. The voices of these rebellions and mutinies, the songs and folks practiced during that time, songs on the days of Tebhaga movement bear testimony of such historical events. This research work will certainly attempt to restore and preserve songs and cultural ethos of that period. A CD is also being published with their original tune to save these songs from permanent extinction. I hope that the effort will be appreciated by critics and academicians. It will be able to encourage young generation to learn these historical events and to inculcate the spirit of this land mingled with cultural excellence.

I wish every success of the project.

  
(Debanjan Roy)  
Sub-Divisional Magistrate &  
Sub-Divisional Officer  
Gangarampur at Buniadpur  
Dakshin Dinajpur



Dr. Pradip Kumar Ghosh

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Date .....

To whom it may concern

We have been taught, since our boyhood, under British Indian colonial education system that the term 'civilisation' refers to urban civilisation, built up by the merchant class only. This artificial concept of civilisation was turned down by the researcher Dr. Bimas Ranjan Banerjee since his student life. Rather accepting the root of human civilisation from the tribal and rural culture, he has probed deep to find out the truth of his subject.

The 'Sādhana' of Sangit is the another part of his research, which is gracefully accepted and honoured by Sangit Natak Academy. His research, in one hand, traces the real history of movements and revolts, on the other hand, he has recorded some valuable songs of this subject in C.D.

I deeply pray for his success in life.

Pradip Kumar Ghosh  
15.09.19.

Dr. KANKANA MITRA (Roychowdhury)  
Associate Professor (Vocal Music)  
Rabindra Bharati University  
Kolkata-50

'BIDROHER LOKAGAAN' (Folk songs of Rebellion, 18th to 20th Century) is a very mentionable topic on which a project has been approved by Sangeet Natak Academy under ICH scheme 2014-15. The principle Investigator is Dr. Tamas Ranjan Bandyopadhyay. This project aims at restoration and preservation of songs concerned with various Mutinies of Rebellions of Bengal during the said period.

The gradual decline of the Mughal Empire led to quasi-independent states under the Nawabs of Bengal, subsequent Maratha expeditions in Bengal, and finally the conquest by the British East India Company. The British took control of the region from the late 18th century. The Company consolidated their hold on the region following the Battle of Palassey in 1757 and Battle of Buxar in 1764 and by 1793 took complete control of the region.

Just after the Battle of Palassey there occurred several mutiny in Bengal. Chuar Revolt was started in the year 1768, which was a tribal revolt against British. The cause of the revolt was excess revenue demand and other economic distress. The most effected area of Bengal were Bankura and Midnapore. Santhal Rebellion is commonly known as Santhal Hool which was occurred in 1855 at the present-day Jharkhand, in eastern India against both the British Colonial authority and Zamindari System by the Santhal people. There were many other mutinies like Sepoy Mutiny of 1857, Indigo Revolt of 1859, upto Emergency Rule of 1975 occurred within 18th to 20th Century. Number of motivational Folk songs were composed on the theme of the revolts to awake the mass at that time. At the present-day preservation and documentation of the songs are very much needed to acquaint with the next generation.

Tamas Ranjan Bandyopadhyay have done a good research on the above subject. I am applauding him for his endeavour and wishing his success on this field.

Kamkanallitra.





RABINDRA  
BHARATI  
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Date : 15/09/19

### Few Words

It's a great pleasure to see the pertinent research project entitled 'Bidroher Lokogaan' (Folk Songs of Rebellion, during the 18-20th Century) has finally appeared in a publishable form, which was indeed a need of the day. The present work is a valuable part of the entire ICH scheme launched by the Ministry of Culture, Govt of India in 2014-15 session. I believe, this outstanding project is finally going to rescue a number of versatile documents of our cultural history formulated through the overall collective protests and demand of the suppressed folk of colonial India.

I wish to congratulate Dr Tamas Ranjan Bandyopadhyaya, a well-known scholar in the field of folk songs of Bengal, for his sincere efforts to bring the lost songs back under the limelight of cultural awareness and incorporating them in the larger collection of nation's preserved heritage. Dr Bandyopadhyaya has noticed the unawareness of people about those forgotten songs of rebellion, which can incorporate many new proud stories to the folk life of India. He decided to take the initiative and continued the project through a painstaking search and commitment for finally making it happen. His work will undoubtedly generate new interests among the general readers, performers and scholars of many diverse fields to move further to cultivate new knowledge in this way. Today, I would also wish a great success of this research as a published document in near future to fill-up the long existing shortage of comprehensive research publications on the history of Indian folk culture.

Looking forward to seeing the successful circulation of this endeavor.

Warm wishes.

Bisakha Goswami Poske

*Assistant Professor-in-Charge,*

*Department of Musicology,*

*Rabindra Bharati University*

&

*Research Associate, South Asia Institute, SOAS,*

*University of London.*

## FOREWORD

**Bidroher Loka-gaan** (Folk songs of Rebellion, 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century) is a project approved by the **Sangeet Natak Akademi** under **I.C.H** scheme, **2014-15**. The project aims at **restoration and preservation of songs of various rebellions of Bengal during 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century with their original tunes.**

Bengal was the headquarter of the British for a long period, i.e., from 1757 to 1911. Their ruthless torture on the common folk had caused a great number of mutinies. Besides, the native Zaminders and land-lords also set up remarkable examples of tyranny and autocracy which resulted deeper agitations and revolts. The historians have drafted the intensity and consequences of such rebellions in the pages of history. The folklorists have collected some lyrics and have analyzed their impact on political and social life for their researches. But, it is very unfortunate that **neither the folklorists nor the researchers of folk music have made any attempt to preserve the songs with their original tunes.** Since one of the features of folk song is Oral transmission, the tunes were lost with the passage of time, because the songs were composed following a particular event at a particular point of time and thus, their necessity became diminished gradually after the event was over.

The project has been conducted through three major steps. **1) Collection and compilation of data of various mutinies and songs with their original tunes through field survey, 2) Writing down the brief history of the mutinies and the songs with faithful translation into English so that scholars of other parts of the**



country may be able to understand the themes of the songs with their original tunes; 3) Seminar and publication of CD and also the public performance with power point presentation.

We have obtained 11 songs altogether with their original tunes. While making translation, the important words or phrases of the colloquial languages have been kept in their original pronunciation and the meaning or significance of such words have been given in the reference portion after the Conclusion chapter. Besides, a few songs have also been collected and given in the Annexure-I following the transliteration method. These songs have lost their original tunes permanently and hence they are entitled as 'The lost Tunes' (Annexure-I)

A complete report of the seminar that was held on **September 18, 2019** at **Rabindra Bhavan, Baranagar** has also been enclosed herewith in **Annexure II**.

Two separate DVDs containing the videos of seminar and the public performance with power point presentation have been sent with the Final report along with the CD published. **Photographs of seminar, performance and field works have been attached at the end of the final report.**

I am grateful to **Smt. Debasree Chaudhuri, the hon'ble Minister of State, Government of India** and to the scholars and administrators of West Bengal who have sent their messages accomplishing the project. Their messages have also been tagged at the very outset of the project

Finally, no words of gratitude is enough for the authority of the **Sangeet Natak Akademi** as well as the **expert committee of the**

I.C.H scheme as they have approved the project and extended full support, financially and psychologically, to save significant documents of history from extinction.

Kolkata, W.B.

Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee

Durgastami, October 6, 2019

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

**Smt. Debasree Chaudhuri**, Hon'ble Minister of State, Ministry of Women & Child Development, Govt. of India.

**Sri Debanjan Roy**, Sub-divisional magistrate and Sub-Divisional Officer, Gangarampur Sub-division, Dakshin Dinajpur, Govt. of West Bengal.

**Prof. Dr. Kankana Mitra**, Associate professor and former HOD, Dept. of Vocal Music, Rabindra Bharati University.

**Prof. Dr. Kakali Dhara Mondal**, HOD, Dept. of Folklore, Kalyani University.

**Dr. Pradip Kumar Ghosh**, Musicologist and Author, former chief editor, W.B. State Music Akademi, Kolkata.

**Dr. Jaladhar Karmakar**, Researcher of tribal culture, Author, Asstt. Teacher of P.C. High School, Purulia.

**Prof. Dr. Susnata Das**, Professor and former HOD, Dept. of History, Rabindra Bharati University.

**Prof. Dr. Bisakha Goswami**, Asstt. Professor and HOD, Dept. of Musicology, Rabindra Bharati University.

**Late Mihir Lal Singh Deo**, outstanding performer, recipient of National and State awards, Rajnowagarh, Purulia.

**Late Sri Arun Chowdhury**, Researcher and author, former headmaster of Naguri High School, Suri, Birbhum.

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**Sri Manabesh Chowdhury**, Social worker and admirer of Folklore of North Bengal, Mustafanagar, Phoolbari, Dakshin Dinajpur.

**Sri Sarat Chandra Mardi**, Retired teacher and preacher of tribal culture, Chhatna, Bankura.

**Sri Nabin Besra**, promoter of tribal language and culture, Kushbana, Shushunia, Bankura.

**Sri Arya Chowdhury**, outstanding performer and Author, Malda and Kolkata.

**Sri Gandhiram Mahato**, performer and trainer, Royal Chau Akademi, Purulia.

**Sri Bidyadhar karmakar**, performer of Jhumur, Bhadu and Tusu, Karadih, Purulia.

**Smt. Ashalata Hansda**, teacher at Govt. School and admirer of Folklore, Balarampur Mission, Purulia.

**Sri Tarani Biswas**, performer and trainer of Bhaoaia and other folk songs of North Bengal, Kashibati, Raiganj.

**Sri Salil Acharya**, admirer of folklore and social worker, Raikatpara, Jalpaiguri.

**Sri Dipesh Kumar Saha**, proprietor, Art Printers, Kaliyaganj, Uttar Dinajpur.



&

The Librarian and staffs, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of culture, Golpark, Kolkata.

The Librarian and Staffs, State Central Library, Rabindra Bharati University.

The Librarian, Sushil Chandra Town Library, Kalyaganj, Uttar Dinajpur.

# THE MOMENT



CD on '*Bidroher Lokagaan*' published

From the left : Dr. Tapan Banjan Banerjee (Project Investigator),

Sri Biswajit Sarkar (Music Arranger), Dr. Pradip Kr. Ghosh (Musicologist and author),

Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee (Folk music researcher and author),

Dr. Kakali Dhara Mondal (HOD, Department of Folklore, Kalyani University)

and Smt. Mandira Bhattacharjee (Eminent performer of folk songs of Bengal).



## THE MOMENT



### CD on '**Bidroher Lokagaan**' published

From the left : Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee (Project Investigator),

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## INTRODUCTION

To start any discussion about Folk Music or Folk Song, it is essential to clarify the term 'Folk' at the very beginning. "Though the term 'Folk' may be applied to humanity in general, it is always used to denote the illiterate people of the villages and rural areas."<sup>1</sup>

So, an integrated society or community that develops and spreads through a rural area and holds a specific dialect and culture, is commonly known as 'folk'. In case of folk music, therefore, collectivity emerges as one of the most important features. "In folk music, collectivity has far reaching consequences. It is the controlling agent in conception, performance, propagation and communication of the emotional content as well."<sup>2</sup>

Folk songs, which are composed at different contexts 'are perfectly suited only for those occasions for which they are composed',<sup>3</sup> is 'always regarded as the most dominant component of folk music and its multiple roles have been widely recognized'.<sup>4</sup>

Bengal is a land of diversity in respect of soil, climate and topography. The soil and atmosphere vary from place to place as one travels through from North to South or from East to West. Folk song that has been regarded as the song of soil by the scholars, varies also widely in respect to that. Such a huge

variation of folk songs has not yet been found in other parts of the world, as opined by Rabindranath Tagore in his precious book "*Sangeet chinta*."<sup>5</sup>

Folk songs are never composed for mere entertainment, rather, they are popularly used to construct or re-construct a community and to form an integrated society through the ages. The folk songs of any region reveal the socio-economic structure as well as the religious beliefs and rituals, the pain, sorrow, joy and loss of the common people of the contemporary period of such region. They move proportionately with the movement of the society and its people and thus, they become traditional and evergreen. "A folk song is neither new or old because it is continually taking on new life; it is an individual flowering on a common stem."<sup>6</sup>

It is, however, to be mentioned that the folk song of any particular region can be classified into two main branches, viz., **(1) Religious** and **(2) Secular**. The Religious type reveals the common beliefs, rituals and enumeration of achievements of the deities, whereas, the Secular type deals with various aspects of life such as pain, pathos, profession, passion, desire or familiar affairs of day to day life and of course, the struggle for existence, struggle for reunion and refinement of the society.

The present project is unique in nature as it deals with a few folk songs that were the parts of various movements against the ruthless rulers of Bengal during the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century. India was under the British rule for a long period of nearly two hundred years and Bengal was the headquarter of the then foreign administrators for a long period, till 1911. Most of the tyrant land

lords got united with the British for the sake of their own interests, and offered unleashed torture over the common and helpless villagers or peasants who ultimately, on finding no other alternatives, revolted strongly. We, in the pages of history, have gone through the forms, features and significances of a number of such rebellions or mutinies namely 'Chuar Mutiny' (1798), 'Santhal Mutiny' (1855-57), 'Sepoy Mutiny' (1857), 'Indigo Revolution' (1859-60), 'Tebhaga Movement' (1946-47) etc., but we are merely concerned with the songs composed by the village poets in order to unite and inspire the people during such rebellions.

It is, however, not to be forgotten that the village poets did not remain silent even in the post independence period. They instigated protest in social or political revolutionary movements such as movement during the 'Reformation period of provinces' (1956) on the basis of linguistics and the period of the Emergency Rule (1975-77) etc., and more importantly, they had adopted the traditional tunes and rhythms of the popular regional folk songs as a means of protest.

This project is a humble attempt to bring such songs under the light to focus on historical significance and importance. The songs that have immense importance and significance in respect of ethnomusicology as well as history, have gone deep under the sea. No serious efforts have yet been seen to restore and to preserve these songs with their original tunes. The project aims at preservation of such songs as they would serve as evidences of history and glorious heritage of the country for ever.



## **II**

### **THE THREATS TO THE ELEMENT / CULTURAL TRADITION RELATED TO ITS PRACTICE, VISIBILITY AND FUTURE LONGEVITY**

The practice, visibility and future longevity of songs related to rebellions, in respect of the cultural tradition, have been facing serious threats due to the following reasons:

Firstly, folk-lore and especially the folk songs all over the country are probably the worst affected areas because of globalization. In Bengal, the story does not reveal a different picture. The styles, the tunes, the language needs serious concern in order to save them from decay.

Secondly, and more importantly, folk song is transmitted orally from generation to generation. Thus the secular type of songs that convey the pictures of life and society, gradually lose their significance as time goes on because new songs come out to replace the old songs as life and society vary from age to age. Thus, the secular type songs gradually walk on the path of extinction.

Thirdly, In most cases, it is found that the researchers, scholars and authors collect merely the lyrics. They do not provide any concrete information about the tune and rhythm which is essential for musical research and documentation for



future generation.

Fourthly, The songs of rebellion are not merely related with performance, rather, they act as historical evidences. In other words, the songs themselves become history as they were composed in order to serve particular purposes at particular points of time.

Lastly, Music is the mirror of a society and its history. The bravery of soldiers or fighters gradually fades out and get place in printed letters in books with the advancement of time. Only songs and rhythm can bring forth the glory and intensity of their struggle before the people of the present age and can make them feel about the past.

Considering the threats mentioned above, it is firmly believed that preservation and publication of such songs have become an urgent need for the country today.

The more a nation preserves, the more the nation prospers.

### III

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

In recent time, it has been seen that the folk songs are becoming popular more and more because of their unique styles and rhythms and thus, have become elements of entertainment. It is really unfortunate that only a handful scholars or researchers or enthusiasts take it as a subject of special study. Some very popular folk songs are being sung so frequently by most of the performers who pay no attention to restoration and preservation of songs that carry special significances, as they were composed and were spread orally at particular points of time, following particular events or incidents.

Keeping in view the above mentioned situation of folk songs of Bengal, this project, i.e., "Bidroher Lokagaan" (Folk songs of Rebellion, 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century) aims at:

- i) Restoration and permanent preservation of the folk songs that bear special significance and historical importance as those were composed on several mutinies in undivided Bengal during the British rule and also on various protest movements of the state of West Bengal after independence.
- ii) Contribution and enhancement to the study of Ethnomusicology that primarily starts with the study of folk music and folk song.
- iii) Revival of the glorious history of struggle of the common

folk against the oppression of foreign rulers and land lords and also the contribution of common people towards national freedom movements.

iv) Focusing the role of folk songs and folk tunes that have enormous power to unite people and society, beside entertainment.

v) Inculcating the spirit of this land mingled with cultural excellence and diverse cultural heritage.

## IV

### PRINCIPAL PUBLISHED REFERENCES OR DOCUMENTATION AVAILABLE ON THE ELEMENT/CULTURAL TRADITION

Music is a performing art and any idea or concept related to music should be established through practice and performance. No major work has yet been done in respect of preservation of folk songs of rebellions. No audio-visual references are found till the date. Only a few books are there that contain healthy information about the nature and historical significance of major regional rebellions of Bengal. These books, however, provide us some lyrics that the authors collected through fieldworks.

The names of a few books on such subject are given below:

- (i) Bhattacharya, Dr. Asutosh, ***Bangiya Lokasangeet Ratnakar***, (Vol-1), Reprint of 1<sup>st</sup> Edn., A. Mukherjee and Co. Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, 1977.
- (ii) Bhattacharya, Dr. Asutosh, ***Bangiya Loka Sangeet Ratnakar*** (Vol-III), 1<sup>st</sup> Edn., A. Mukherjee and Co. Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, 1960.
- (iii) Chattopadhyay, Bimal Chandra : ***Prativadi Bangla Loka Sangeet***, 1<sup>st</sup> Edn. Lokasanskriti O Adivasi Sanskriti Kendra, Govt. of W.B., Kolkata, 2010.
- (iv) Chowdhury Ramashankar, ***Lokasangeet Prasange***, 1<sup>st</sup> Edn., Kolkata, 1991
- (v) Dev, Chittaranjan, ***Banglaar Palligeeti***, 2<sup>nd</sup> Print, National Book Agency Pvt. Ltd., Kolkata, 1998



# V

## FOLK SONGS OF VARIOUS MOVEMENTS / MUTINIES OF BENGAL WITH BRIEF HISTORICAL BACKGROUNDS (18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> CENTURY)

### 1. SONG ON PALASHI BATTLE (1757) :-

June 23, 1757 is perhaps the worst and the blackest day in the history of modern India as the East India Company took over the power of India defeating the *Nawab Siraj-ud-daullah*. *Robert Clive*, the British General, became one of the richest person of England overnight as he paved the way for *Mirjafar* towards the throne of kingship and thus, was rewarded by the latter with huge amount of money and wealth. Not only the common people, but also the *zaminders* and land lords got panic stricken with the ruthless tortures of the British administrators who employed the most notorious robbers as '*najims*' to collect revenues from them. Md. Reza Khan, the *najim* of Bengal, was so furious and aggressive that the great famine, Known as '**famine of 76**' took place in Bengal causing death of thousands of people.

The following song pictures the *palashi* battle and worries and sorrows of the common people in the post battle period as they had become freedomless. The song was composed adopting the tune of "*Jaari*", a special type of folk song. The word '*jaari*' means lamentation. This very song is sung, even today seldom as a preface to '*Alkapa*', a very popular folk song of *Murshidabad* district of west Bengal.

কি হলরে জান-

পলাশী ময়দানে ওড়ে কোম্পানীর নিশান।।

তীর পড়ে ঝাঁকে ঝাঁকে গুলি পড়ে রহেঁ

একেলা মীরমদন বলো কত লিবে সহৈ

ছোড ছোড তেলেঙ্গারা লাল কুর্তা গায়।

হাঁটু গেড়ে মারছে যে তীর মীরমদনের পায়।।

মীরজাফরের দাগাবাজি নবাব ধরতে পারল মনে,

মোহনলালের সঙ্গে নবাব ভঙ্গ দিল রণে,

নবাব কান্দে সিপুই কান্দে আর কান্দে হাতি

মোকসুদাবাদ কান্দে রে-ভাই কান্দে ভাগীরথী।।

ঢোল-শহরৎ জানান দিল দ্যাশের প্রতি ঘরে ঘরে,

নবাবকে খুন করল ঘাতক রাজমাহালের চরে।

বিদেশ-বিভুই হল্যঁ হায়রে দ্যাশের মাটি

গোবিন্দপুর কান্দে রে ভাই কান্দে সুতানুটি।।

জনে জনে পুছে মানুষ কি হবে আরতি-আজান্

ক্যামন্ করে বাঁচব হামরা হিন্দু-মুসলমান।

গুলবাগে মল নবাব খোশবাগে মাটি

চান্দোয়া টাঙায়ে কান্দে মোহনলালের বিটি।।<sup>৭</sup>

### Translation:-

Oh dear ! how it happened-

The company's<sup>8</sup> flag flies high at the *palashi* ground.

The arrows came in number, and the bullets too,

how bold and tolerant *Mirmadan*<sup>9</sup> was, to receive them alone,

The British soldiers, wearing red aprons,

squatting on the ground, throwing arrows.

The *Nawab* understood that *Mirjafar*<sup>10</sup> had betrayed,

and so he, along with *Mohanlal*<sup>11</sup>, was ultimately defeated,

The *Nawab* cries, so does his elephant and soldiers,

the entire *Murshidabad* cries with *Bhagirathi*<sup>12</sup> and other rivers.

The drums of victory sounded everywhere

that your king died, they made it clear.

We seem to be intruders in our own land,

*Gobindapur*<sup>13</sup>, and the *Sutanuti*<sup>14</sup> also weep.

Everyone asks, will we be able to keep our religions?

we, the two communities, the Hindus and the Mohammedans,

The *Nawab* died at *Gulbagh*<sup>15</sup> and buried at *Khoshbagh*<sup>16</sup>.

*Mohanlal*'s daughter cries, hanging *chandoa*<sup>17</sup> over.



## 2. SONG ON 'CHUAR REBELLION' (1798-99) :

The Bengali word 'CHUAR' actually suggests mischievous people or people of the less privileged society. "The Great *Chuar* Rebellion"<sup>18</sup> took place in the western part of Bengal, especially in the districts of Midnapore and Bankura in 1798-99 when the East India company sent regiments in this area in order to bring the '*Zaminders*' and land-lords under their control and force them to pay huge amount of revenues. The various tribal groups as well as the people of the marginal society living in this part became the worst affected people as they would earn their livelihood by working hard on their small pieces of lands. Later the '*Paikaans*', who were actually supposed to be the policemen during the *Mughal* period, joined this movement and made the revolt huge and stronger. They did so because their lives were at stake also, as they would earn their livelihood on agricultural fields, they were given by the *Zaminders* free from all taxes and revenues against their duties. The British became absolutely reluctant and restless to curb the situation. Finally they solved the issue by dividing the Midnapore district and creating a new district namely "*Jangal Mahal*" (1805) and by appointing a separate administrator for the area.

The following song that makes us feel about the intensity and essence of *Chuar* Rebellion, is actually a warning song which the members of the rebel-groups would sing aloud on seeing the British soldiers marching towards the forests or their dens. By singing it, they would ask their mates to take position, to hide



themselves behind trees and hills and be prepared with weapons.  
The song was composed with the regional dialect.

বিক্রমজিৎ রাজা ভেল্ কলিত পড়ি গেল্  
ছাতা পখরি রাজার ঘড়া ডুবি গেল্।।  
লক লক লকই রে, লক আসছে লুকাও রে  
ছাতা পখরি রাজার ঘড়া ডুবি গেল্।।  
ব্যাপারিক টাড়ারে বাবুরাম সিঙ্গুলেনা  
নবীনাকা টাড়ারে সিঙ্গুলেকা টাড়ারে  
বাবুরাম জাপালেনা।।  
মিছা হলেও বলবে রে নিষ্ঠা হলেও বলবে রে  
লক আসছে লুকাওরে আও।।  
আগু দিগেও ভালবে রে পেছু দিগেও ভালবে রে,  
লক আসছে লুকাওরে আও।।<sup>19</sup>

#### Translation :

King *Vikramjit*<sup>20</sup> is great and gets place in poetry  
How his horse sinks in *Chhatapukur*<sup>21</sup> is a mystery.  
The strangers are coming in number, hide yourself  
How his horse sinks in *Chhatapukur* is a mystery.  
They have come for business only, they have managed *Baburam*,  
They have managed some greedy fellows to uproot us,  
Cry aloud if it is false,  
Cry aloud if it is true,  
They are coming in number, hide yourself.

Be careful while going forward,  
Be careful while moving backward  
The strangers are coming, and coming in number  
Get yourself hidden quickly, oh dear!

### **3. SONG ON WAHABI MOVEMENT (1830-31) :**

The *wahabi* movement was a religious movement flamed by Syed Ahamed Khan. Its flame spread in Bengal when Syed Mir Nisar Ali, popularly known as Titumir, became a keen follower of Syed Ahamed Khan and started working in his native land, the then undivided 24 parganas districts of Bengal. This movement, though started with the religious background, became a class-fight gradually between the tyrant *zaminders* who were backed up by the British indigo-planters and the deprived farmers and thus, the movement gained importance, politically and economically. Titumir had become so powerful that not only the British, but also some tyrant *Zaminders* felt the urgent necessity to blow him off in order to *persu* their own interest.

Titumir and his fellow soldiers outplayed the British Regiment at their first encounter on November 15, 1830. Alexander, the then Magistrate of Barasat<sup>22</sup> who led the British soldiers, ultimately saved his life by fleeing away while trying to break into the village



**SYED MIR NISAR ALI (TITUMIR)**



of *Narkelberia*<sup>23</sup> in order to arrest Titumir and other mutineers. Titumir and his chief commander Golam Masum<sup>24</sup> felt the urgent need to build up a castle. This was the story behind building up the "*Bansher kella*", i.e., *the castle made of bamboos*. It was a unique structure where huge amount of food and varieties number of weapons were stored in separate cells.

A British cornel, accompanied by one hundred British soldiers, three hundred native *Sipahis* and a good number of armed coolies, reached the *Narkelberiya* village on 13<sup>th</sup> November, 1831 in the evening. The next day, i.e., 14<sup>th</sup> November, 1831, people of the surrounding areas witnessed an unforgettable battle between the two sides. The British finally won the battle by blowing off the castle with several blows through their canons. Titumir died on spot and Golam Masum was hanged in front of the ruins of the castle a few days later.

The song that has been obtained during the course of field work, actually reveals the live commentary of the battle. The song was discovered from an abandoned steel trunk from a police station of the Deganga<sup>25</sup> Police Station during the devastating flood that had hit West Bengal in 1978. It was composed by *Saajan Gaaji*, Who was in the group of the mutineers and wrote down the entire episode of battle in a long ballad format following the tune of *Gaajir Gaan*<sup>26</sup>. The song is presented in an abridged version here.

সরাগুলা করে গোল                      পার হল সাঁড়াপোল  
বারঘরেতে ঘোড়া দিল ছেড়ে।  
লাঠি সব করে ঘাড়ে                      লাইলাহা কলমা পড়ে  
জমা হল নারিকেল বেড়ে।।  
উপরে বেঁধেছে ছেল্লা                      বাঁশ দিয়ে ঘেরেছে কেল্লা



তার মধ্যে সব জমা হয়ে র ল।  
উত্তর-দক্ষিণ সোনা পূর্ব-পশ্চিম পুকুর কোনা  
চারিদিকে আটপহরী প'ল।।  
বারাসাতের মেজেস্টেট হুকুম দিছে পল্টনে  
পুরছে তারা টোটাতে বারুদ।  
পায়জামা পিন্দিলা তায়, লাল কুর্তি টুপি মাথায়  
খাড়া হইল যেন যমের দূত।।  
পল্টন আর চৌকিদার পুড়োর ঘাট হইল পার  
দারোগা আর জমিদার জুটে।  
সেপাই চলিল আগে বায়ালি চলিল পিছে  
সাহেব চলিল ঘোড়ায় উঠে।।  
লাল কুর্তি টুপি মাথায় সরাওল্লা দেখে তায়  
কোমর বেঁধে হইল মচ্তাত্  
গোলাম মাসুম হুকুম দিল লাঠি সব হাতে নিল  
ইট পাটকেল ধরিল মোনাজাত্।।  
মেহের আলি চাঁদের ছটা তিনি ছয়েদের ব্যাটা  
দিনের অস্তে দিয়েছেন জাহান্।  
দুই হাতে ধরিব পাছাড় শানেতে মারিব আছাড়  
দেখাব আজ ঘুগরো বান।।  
কত সেপাই দিল পেড়ে বন্দুক সব নিল কেড়ে  
পিপাসাতে পানি চা'লে খাতি।  
উত্তর-দক্ষিণ ভোর দু' তরফ বাজি ভোর  
সাবাস মদ গোলামের ছাতি।।  
তিন লড়াই হল জিত সরাওল্লা আনন্দিত  
নারকেল বেড়ে হইল কারবালা।  
বেদে পোতায় প'ল রোত লহতে পড়িল শ্রোত  
তামাসা দেখিল খোদাতাল্লাহ।।  
সেপাই সব ক্রোধ করে একযুতি সারে সারে

ফায়ার করিল একবার।  
একবার আওয়াজ হ'ল                      সরাওল্লা বাঁপিয়ে প'ল  
ধোমাতে হইল অন্ধকার।<sup>27</sup>

Translation :

*Saraullah*<sup>28</sup> makes the whip and crosses *Sarapole*<sup>29</sup>

And the horses are unfastened,

Everybody takes club in shoulder, reads the *kalmaa*

And then assembles in *Narikelbere*.

A huge canopy is hanged over, and the fort is fenced with  
bamboos

And all have assembled inside,

From the north to the south, and from the east to west

Every side and corner is protected day and night.

The magistrate of Barasat has ordered the soldiers

And they are loading their guns,

They dress up with red aprons, put on caps on head

And they stand like death messengers.

The soldiers and the *chowkidaar* have crossed *puro-ghat*<sup>30</sup>

The *daroga* and the *Zaminder*<sup>31</sup> are together,

The *sepoys* are ahead, followed by the coolies

And the *sahib* moves riding his horse.

*Saraullah* watches the enemy wearing red aprons and cap

And gets prepared fastening his waist.

Golam Masum commands, and everybody stands up

With clubs, stones and bricks in hand.

Meher Ali<sup>32</sup> radiates ray of the moon, he's a holy personage

He gives a beckon call at the end of the day,

That the enemies are to be gripped tightly and damned,

And they will be broken into pieces of clay.

The enemy-soldiers have given in, their guns are ceased

They are pleading for some water to drink,

The attacks coming from all directions, from every side

Brave Golam Masum leads from front, and stands heroically.

Three phases of the battle are won, *Saraullah* is glad

As *Narkelbere* is turned into the ground of *Karbaala*,  
The ground gets wet with huge amount of enemy blood,  
And the scene witnessed by the Almighty, the Allah.

Now the *sepoys* get furious and lined up with irresistible rage,  
They load the canon and fire it up,  
A huge sound of explosion, *Saraullah* falls down,  
black and dense smoke covers up the whole.

#### **4. SONG ON THE SANTHAL REBELLION (1855-57) :**

The 'Santhal Rebellion' (1855-57) was one of the most important and significant movements as it took place just before the 'Sepoy Mutiny' (1857-59) and jerked the British Empire heavily. The *Santhals*, the largest tribal group living in the hilly region covered by forests in the extremely western part of Bengal and adjacent areas of Jharkhand, commonly known as the '*Santhal parganas*' the then period, assembled in a meeting at the '*Bhagnadihi* village under the leadership of Sidhu Murmu and Kanhu Murmu along with their other two brothers Chand Murmu and Bhairav Murmu in order to get rid of the despotic British Revenue system and the *tyranny* of the *zaminders* and also the usury practice on June 30, 1855. The two leaders, Sidhu and Kanhu, accompanied by thousand of *santhals*, decided to March towards Kolkata, the then





**THE SANTHALS ARE BEING TAKEN TO JAIL**

British headquarter. When they had reached the '*Panchkhetiya*'<sup>33</sup> market, The officer-in-charge of the then '*Dighi*' Police station, Mahesh Lal Dutta, blocked their way with armed forces with an intention to arrest Sidhu and Kanhu and to prevent further proceedings. The entire group of the rebels burst out in anger and immediately encountered the police forces and defeated them. Sidhu Murmu Killed Mahesh Lal Dutta on spot and proclaimed the '*Hul*'<sup>34</sup>. The *santhali* word '*Hul*' suggests Rebellion or Mutiny. This is why June 30 is marked as the '*Hul Day*' in the pages of history.

On July 16, 1855, Major *Baroge*, a British General, tried to block the way of the rebels marching towards Bhagalpur with thousands of armed soldiers and hundreds of elephants. But his efforts were all in vain as the *santhals* outplayed the British regiment and made them run away for their lives. The British administrators, on finding no other alternatives, ultimately proclaimed the Martial Law and curbed the rebels brutally. The *Santhal* Rebellion ended, but it tended up the flame for a greater mutiny.

The following song is a unique one as it was composed in a conversational manner between '*Baajaal*', a teenage cowboy and the villagers. *Baajaal*, being inspired by Sidhu and Kanhu, killed Rup Singh *Tambuli*, a tyrant land lord and was arrested by the police. The song reveals the time when he was being taken to the *Suri*<sup>35</sup> Jail through the village way. He considers himself to be very lucky and just and promises to come back during the village fair.

Villagers : জোয়ান বাজাল্ গরুর বাগাল্ মাঠে মাঠে ঘোরে।

পুলিশ কেনে পরায় বেড়ি নে যায় কেনে ধরে।।

Baajal (Cowboy) : দোষ করিনি খেলে বেড়াই মাঠে মাঠে ঘুরে।

পুলিশ কেনে পরায় বেড়ি নে যায় কেনে ধরে।।

Villagers : সত্যি করে বলতো বাজাল্ কার হুকুমেতে  
রূপ সিং তাম্বুলি কে মারলি নিজ হাতে?

Baajal : সিধুর হুকুমে বীর কানছর হুকুমে।  
রূপ সিং তাম্বুলিকে দিলাম সঁপে যমে।।

Villagers : হাতে বেড়ি গলায় দড়ি শিকল পায়েতে  
ফাঁসির তরে নে যায় ধরে সিউড়ি হাজতে।।

Baajal : হাতের শিকল নয় গো ওটা বাঁশের বাঁশরি,  
পায়ের বেড়ি কেনেই বা তা নুপূর ভারি ভারি।  
গলায় মালা লাচুতে যেছি সিউড়ি মেলাতে।  
আসব ফিরে আবার দেখো এই না গাঁয়েতে।।<sup>36</sup>

### Translation :

Villagers : Young *Baajaal*<sup>37</sup>, you tend the flock  
And roams about in the field  
Why are you being taken away by police,  
Chained and arrested?

Baajaal : I have done no wrong  
I roam about freely in the fields



I do not know why I have been chained  
And why I am being taken to jail?

Villagers : Oh dear *Baajaal*, tell us the truth  
Who ordered you actually  
to kill Rup Singh Tamuli?  
And did you do it with your own hands?

Baajaal : It was the order from Sidhu  
And from Kanhu, the brave  
And so I did not hesitate any more  
And sent Rup Singh Tamuli into grave.

Villagers : You have been fastened with chain  
everywhere; hand, neck and feet,  
And you are being taken to the *Suri* Jail,  
Will you be hanged there? Who knows?

Baajaal : The chain in hand seems flute to me,  
And the chain in feet seems heavy jingling anklet,



I am going to dance in the village fair, wearing garland,  
I promise that I would come back one day to my native land.

##### 5. SONG ON 'SEPOY MUTINY' (1857-1859) :

The 'Sepoy Mutiny' or the first great war for the independence was actually the gradual outcome of accumulated agitations against the British over the years. During the reign of Lord Dalhausie, the then Governor-general of India (1848-56), a process of westernization of the Indian society, and the initiatives by the Missionaries towards the spread of Christianity had made the Indians, irrespective of the Hindus and the Muslims, extremely angry and agitated. To add insult to injury, the British introduced a new technique called the "**Doctrine of Lapse**"<sup>38</sup> in order to occupy the small estates.

The agitations of the common people got a flame and spread among the soldiers working under British regiment with the introduction of the new "**Enfield Rifle**". The news spread rapidly and rumourously that the soldiers would have to bite off cartridges to load the rifle and the grease used to lubricate the cartridges was prepared with the lards of both pigs and cows. This news, though without any concrete or conclusive evidence, made the *sepoys* furious. It all started on March 29, 1857 when Mangal Panday, a *sepoy* or soldier at the Military garrison at Barrackpore<sup>39</sup> Under the **Bengal Presidency**<sup>40</sup>, attacked the British officers so furiously. Later he was arrested and executed in April. This incident fanned the flame of Mutiny all over the country. The



**MANGAL PANDEY**



troopers in the Meerut cantonment refused to bite off the cartridges and were imprisoned immediately. This very step of the British incensed all the *sepoy* troopers in general. They proclaimed the revolt against the British, shot their British officers on May 10 and Marched towards Delhi. On reaching there, they proclaimed **Bahadur Shah II** to be the emperor of India. By doing this, the mutineers provided a focus and increased the intensity of the Mutiny throughout the northern India. It was unfortunate that the mutiny, though massive, did not attain success due to the indifferent attitude of most of the Indian kings or Princes except Nana Sahib, the adopted son of the deposed Maratha *peshwa* and Rani Laxmibai, the queen of Jhansi and a handful other contributors. The *Sepoy* Mutiny, however, had caused a great change to the Indian Administration. The British took over the direct charge of the country abolishing the East India company after peace had been declared officially on July 8, 1859.

The following song reveals the background of the *Sepoy* Mutiny and its intensity with the role of contributors and ends with a remorseful tone as the mutiny failed to uproot the British empire. The song, composed by Radhanath Bairagi of 24 parganas,<sup>41</sup> became very popular, and thus, was spread through a vast area of Bengal.

কি সন্মোনেশে কথা যাদু বলি গো তোমায়,

কলিযুগের মাহিত্যম্ দোষ দিও না আমায়।

নবাব বাদশা গেল তল, উর্দি পরা চ্যাংড়া বলে কত জল,

হায় হায় রে, যাদু বলি গো তোমায়

ফাঁসিকাঠে মরণ হইল পান্ডা মহাশয়  
বেরিলিতে দাঙ্গা হইল ফৈজাবাদে আটক রয়  
যতসব রাজপুরুষ, মেম আর সাহেব মহাশয়।।  
দেশে দেশে লাগল খান্দা হিন্দু আর মুসলমান  
জাতির পতিত অতি গর্হিত, এই দুঃখে সব করে বিহিত।  
হিন্দুর অখাদ্য খাদ্য গোমাংস  
মুসলমানের হারাম শূকর মাংস  
দুইয়ে মিলে টোটা বানায় সাদা চামড়ায় গুলি চালায়।।  
আরো আছে মজার কথা কইতে লাগে ডর্  
কোম্পানীর ফৌজ আসি কান্ধে করবে ভর  
এইসব হল আঅগ্নানি বহুদিনের ব্যাধি  
দুইভয়েতে একসাথেতে উঠল এবার মাতি।।  
ঝাঁসির রানী লক্ষ্মীবাই তুঙ্গ ঘোড়ায় চড়ে  
বীরদর্পে শত্রু চালায় ইংরেজ মাঝারে।  
ও তার মূর্তি দেখে ভিরমি লাগে চক্ষু ছোটো বজ্রপাত  
শত্রুসেনা কেটো চলে সঙ্গে নিয়ে দশটা হাত।।  
মাগো তোমায় গড় করি গো সঙ্গে নিয়ে বরাভয়  
শত্রুসেনা ধ্বংস করি এসো তুমি এ বাঙ্গালায়।  
হায়গো মোদের আশা ভরসা সব বুঝি ফুরাল  
কোম্পানিরই জয় হল আশার প্রদীপ নিভল।।



মরল যত গুলি খেয়ে দেশের বড় নেতা  
তাই না দেখে দেশবাসীর ধরেছে আজ মাথা।  
অধম রাধানাথে বলে শেষে ধরি দুটি হাত  
একস্র হইও ভাই, না করিও বিসম্বাদ।<sup>42</sup>

**Translation :**

What a disastrous news! listen oh dear,  
this is the trick of *Kaliyuga*, so do not blame on me.  
The *Nawabs* and the *Badshahs* were all in Vain,  
now the simple soldiers have become insane.

Alas! Oh dear, listen to the story  
Mr. panda<sup>43</sup> is hanged, accepting the death of glory.  
The revolt broke out at Berili<sup>44</sup>, and at Faizabad<sup>45</sup>  
all English men and women got captive, a news not bad.

The revolt spread from state to state  
it spread among the Hindus, and the Muslims  
that the matter is actually a fall from religion  
this has hurt them, and their bravery has come out of debris.

The beef is restricted to the Hindus  
the pork is restricted to the Muslims  
and so they load their guns unitedly  
and keep on firing to the *white skinned men*<sup>46</sup>.

There are more stories that I fear to speak  
the company's army will harass, if it does leak.  
All these are the issues of self-esteem, prevailing over the ages  
So the two brothers burst out togetherly, with angry faces.

Laxhmiby, the queen of *Jhaansi*, riding on her horse  
explores bravely among the British regiment, with sword in hand  
lightning from her eyes makes them stunned,  
and they are disbursed and, she seems to have ten hands.

Oh mother? We plead you to invade our Bengal  
and blow off the enemy, that we want and that is all.

Alas! All our hopes have gone in vain

The company wins at last, our misfortune sustain.

All big leaders accepted bullet, and died

The countymen have become hopeless, frustrated

Poor Radhanath says, folding his two hands

You brothers must remain united, never fight between yourselves.

#### 6. SONGS ON INDIGO REBELLION (1859-60) :-

The 'Indigo Rebellion' (1859-60) was the first organized and successful rebellion by the peasants of Bengal against the British, though the first planter of indigo was Louis Bonnard, a French businessman who set up the first indigo bungalow or *Neelkuthi* at Chandannagar<sup>47</sup> in 1777. The British businessman, on seeing a huge margin of profit, soon stepped into the business of indigo plantation as indigo had become highly demandful in the clothes producing factories in England, since the level of production in such factories had reached the optimum point as a consequence of the Industrial-Revolution in Europe in 1789. The British indigo planters used to pay only Rs.- 1.25/- per pound to the Bengali peasants and they would sell it in English markets at Rs. 5 – Rs. 7 per pound<sup>48</sup>. The way they had tortured the Bengali farmers was indescribable in words, that even some of the British people also shivered with the intensity of their torture. One of such men even remarked that "not a chest of Indigo reached England without being stained with human blood."<sup>49</sup> It is, however, not that the Indigo Revolt, was a placial revolt, rather, it was so Massive that the farmers in several districts of the undivided Bengal, such as Bankura, Birbhum, Murshidabad, Hoogly, Burdwan, Pabna, Khulna, Jessore etc. came unitedly and broke out into loud

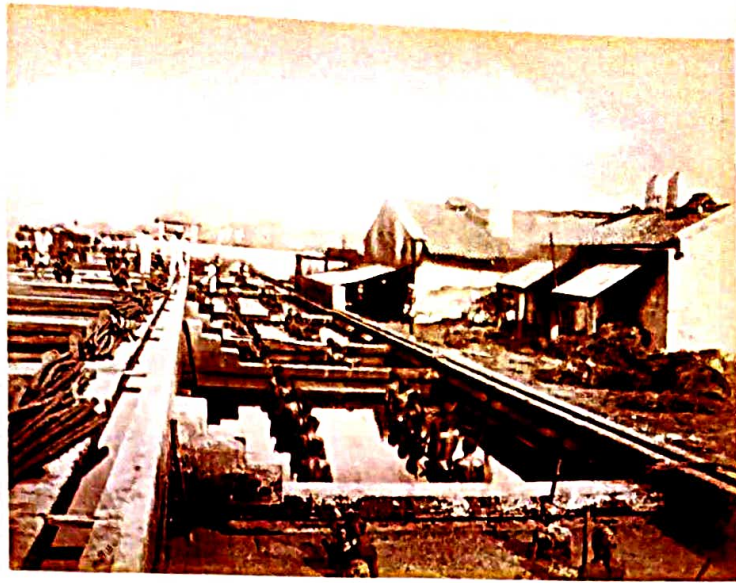


protest. They did so because they, being insolvent, had become absolutely impatient with the British indigo planters, the British government favouring the planters and the *zaminders* backing up the planters. The two Biswas brothers of 'Chougacha'<sup>50</sup> village, Bishnucharan Biswas and Digambar Biswas who were accepted as the most faithful leaders by the peasants, brought two very skillful club-men from *Barisha*<sup>51</sup> to train up the ordinary peasants so that they might be able to face powerful club-men appointed by the *zaminders* or by the British planters. The farmers would set up a drum at the entrance of the villages. On seeing the enemy-side at night, anyone of the villagers would hammer the drum aloud and the rest of the villagers would come out with clubs in hand and pranked upon the opposition side<sup>52</sup>.

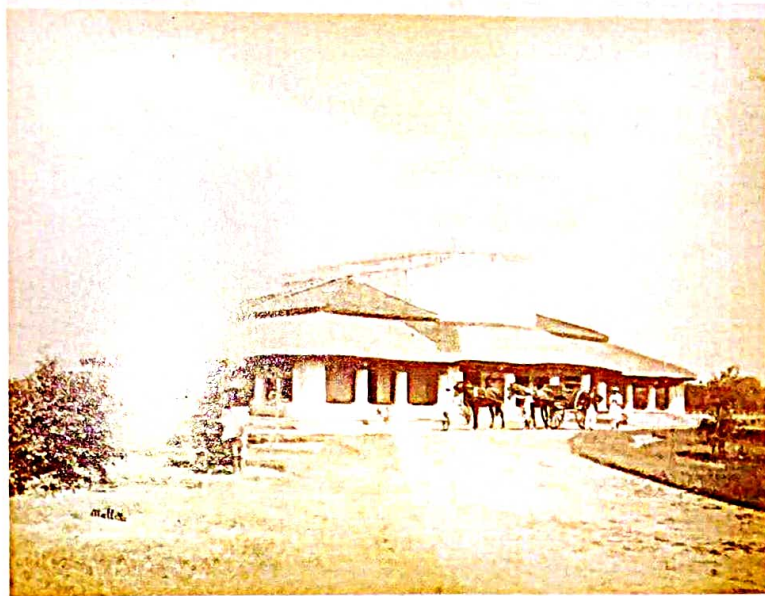
The revolution, with its rising intensity, had deeply influenced the culture and literature of the contemporary period. Harishchandra Mukherjee, the editor of '**The Hindu Patriot**', published articles in his paper frequently supporting the mutineers. But the climax came at the time when the drama '**Neeldarpan**' by Dinabandhu Mitra was translated by Madhusudan Dutta<sup>53</sup>, under the supervision of Reverend Long<sup>54</sup> and got published. The people of Europe responded to this play intensely. The British planters altogether filed a petition against Rev. Long at the Supreme court. The supreme court verdicted for one month imprisonment and a cash fine worth rupees one thousand against Rev. Long. Kaliprasanna Singha<sup>55</sup> Paid up the fine on spot for Rev. Long.

The Indigo Rebellion had a great impact on the British government as this was the first rebellion that forced the British administrators to let their heads down before the farmers of Bengal. On finding





**INDIGO FACTORY** (beating the Vats)



**NEELKUTHI** (Planter's Bungalow)

no way, the British set up 'The Indigo commission' on March 31, 1860 which clearly reported against the British planters and suggested for an immediate prohibition against forceful indigo cultivation. By passing a Law, the British administrators ultimately approved the report of the Indigo commission.

In our field survey, we have obtained two very significant songs composed on the Indigo Rebellion. These two are collected from two different parts of Bengal, i.e., one from the western part and other from the Northern part. This proves how the revolution emerged vastly and shook the entire Bengal. The songs with their themes are given below.

SONG (i) : The song was composed by Chamu Karmakar, a very renowned village poet and unique performer of *Baithaki Jhumur*<sup>56</sup>. The song depicts the plight of the indigo farmers who, being severally oppressed, even thought of committing suicide as it was becoming more and more difficult to carry on living.

লাল সূতা নীল সূতা চরখায় কাটিলম্ সূতা

বুনাইলম্ নীল গামছা

সে গামছা হারালি কোথায় সজনী

॥রং॥ ওগো নীলমণি-

গামছা ধরিয়ে করে টানাটানি ॥রং॥

ত্রিগুণে বেগুনের বাড়ি, বেগুন বিকে নিলম শাড়ি

সে শাড়ি হারালি কোথায় সজনী ॥রং॥

পাহাড় ধারে করি চাষ ভাবনা তোর বার মাস

বিদেশী ময়ূরে খাল্য ধান সজ্জনী ।।২২।।

চাষ করিলাম সোনা হরিল বিদেশী ময়না

তখন চামু বলে ত্যাজিব পরানী ।।২৩।।<sup>57</sup>

**Translation :**

The red yarn, the blue yarn

We cut the yarn on charcoal

And weave the blue towel

Oh beloved! Where have you lost the towel?

Oh dear! Oh *Nilmoni*<sup>58</sup>!

There is always a tug-of-war with the towel.

They<sup>59</sup> take away two – third

And leave the remainder,

I bought *saree* for you by selling that

And you have lost the *saree*, oh dear!

We make farming at the foothills

And suffer with anxiety throughout the year;

The foreign-cocks<sup>60</sup> come in time

and gobble up the crops, oh dear!



We produce gold on fields  
And the foreign birds take that away;  
Chamu says, better I commit suicide  
As the hopeless mind finds no other way.

SONG (ii) : This song became so popular once as it was composed following the tune and structure of '*Gambhira*', one of the most popular forms of folk-theatre of Maldaha district that comes under the jurisdiction of the northern part of Bengal. The most striking feature of this song is that it ends with a strong desire to drive away the British from the country in order to bring peace and prosperity in agricultural environment.

হামি বুলব কি আর আখার ছাই  
তুমহার দেখি শরম্ ভরম্ নাই।  
তুমি লালমুখ্যা ঐ নীলবাঁদরের (নানা হে)  
দালালি খাও শুনতে পাই।।  
পিন্হা ডোরাকাটা বাঘের ছাল্  
মাথায় ব্যান্হাছো জটার জাল্  
তুমি কুহঁরা কর্যা নীলকুঠি ছুর্যা  
ঝুলি ভরো কান্কায়ে দেখতে পাই।।



ভাঙ্ আর ধুতরা কর্যাছ যে সার  
নেশায় বঁদ তুমি সিদ্ধি গাঁজার  
তুমি নীলকরের টাকায় ভেল্কি দেখাও  
(ভালা) চোখে কি সুখে না প্যাটে দানা নাই।।

লালমুখা বিটিছেল্যার তালে পোড়্যা  
জাত-জমি দিল্যা সব নীলে বাঁজা কর্যা  
কোদো-চিন্হা-কাউনির নাইহে দাউনি  
ভুখা প্যাটে তাও গস্তীরা গাই।।

নীলকুঠি ভাঙতে রংরেজ বাজারে  
জুয়ান মরদ সব হোঁকর্যাছে ঘরে  
বিনা-দানা পানিতে শুথিয়া মরছি  
নীল বাঁদরদের খতম যে চাই।।

শুনো ওহে নানা মহেশ্বর  
কিছু অ্যাখনা উপায় কর  
নীলচাষ হটাও, রংরেজ ভাগাও  
জান দিয়্যা বরিনে চাষ বাঢ়াই।।<sup>61</sup>

**Translation :**

What nonsense do I say of you  
You seem to have lost all shame,  
Oh Nana<sup>62</sup>! You have become agent of red-faced indigo-monkeys  
And get commission, playing with us foul game.

You put on striped skin of the tiger  
And become cluttered with head  
You pretend to leave the *Neelkuthi*<sup>63</sup>  
With filled up sack slung on shoulder, all said.

*Bhaang*<sup>64</sup> and *dhutra*<sup>65</sup> are the life to you  
also you are addicted to *siddhi*<sup>66</sup> and *gaanja*<sup>67</sup>  
You show off false dignity with planter's money  
Though your stomach is empty.

That red-faced lady has made you insane  
And so you make our fields infertile planting indigo  
Now not a trace of *chinha*<sup>68</sup> left in our homes  
Yet we sing *Gambhira* overcoming hunger.

All the youth are grumbling in anger  
Getting united to blow off the *Neelkuthi* at *Rangrejbaazar*<sup>69</sup>  
We are being dried up in hunger  
We desire to kill the indigo-planter.

Listen oh nana *Maheshwara*!  
Let you show us the way  
Cease the indigo cultivation and drive away the English  
Let we enhance farming, let we be happy and gay.

#### **7. SONG ON TEBHAGA MUTINY (1946-47) :**

The *Tebhaga* Mutiny was the last largest peasant movement before independence (1947). Moreover , people of the country had never witnessed such a massive, intense and organized movement by the farmers of Bengal after the Indigo Mutiny (1859-60).

The term '*Tebhaga*' refers to 'one-third proportion'. The traditional custom against sharing of crops was that the *zaminders* or the '*Jotdaar*'<sup>70</sup> would get half of the crops produced and the '*Bhagchashi*' or the sharecropper would get the remaining half. That is why the share-cropper was often called '*aadhiyar*' i.e., the owner for '*aadha*' or half. Besides, the settlements were done or



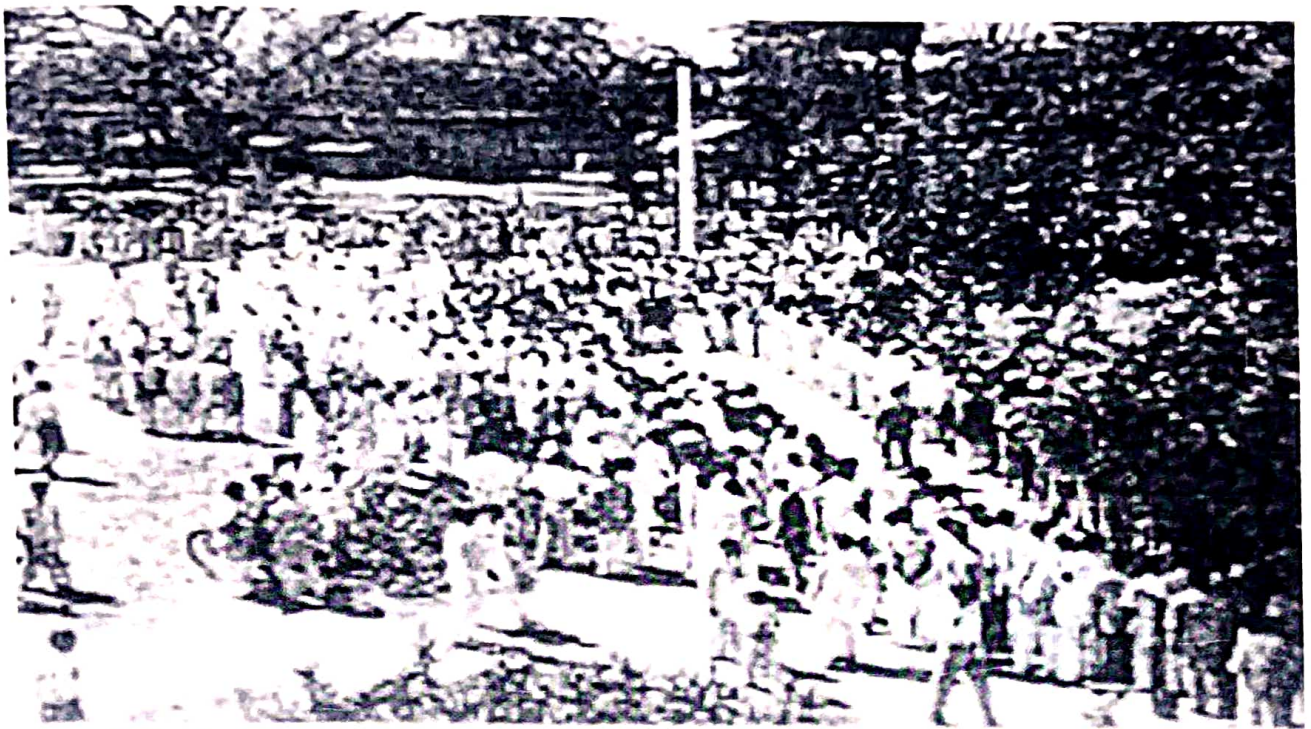
the share croppers would get their shares only after the crops had been put into the store house of the *zaminder* or the '*Jotdaar*' though the share croppers had to bear all the expenses towards the cultivation of crops. So the farmers, being deprived of their natural rights, burst out into protest against that prevailing custom of settlement. They demanded two-third proportion of crops produced and intended to give one-third proportion to the landlords instead of half. Thus, the *Tebhaga* Mutiny got the momentum.

The researchers or the scholars, however, were also of the opinion that not only the settlement issue, but also the dreadful famine hitting Bengal in 1943, had paved the way for the Mutiny.

The *Tebhaga* Mutiny rapidly spread over 24 districts out of 26 in the then undivided Bengal. The intensity was very high in Jalpaiguri, Dinajpur and Rangpur districts in northern part, Maimansingha, Jessore and Khulna districts in the eastern part, Midnapore district in the western part and adjacent areas of the Sunderbans of 24parganas in the southern part. The mutiny continued even after independence as ruthless steps were being adopted by the landlords and the administrators to decline the demand of the farmers and to curb the mutiny brutally. More than one hundred farmers died, nearly ten thousand became badly injured, almost three thousand farmers were imprisoned<sup>71</sup>.

The song that we have obtained through the field survey, reveals the live picture of battle between the farmers of the '*Khanpur*' village of the Balurghat<sup>72</sup> sub-division and the gang of clubmen sent by the *zamindars*, backed up by armed police forces, in the darkness of night on February 20, 1947. 21 farmers were killed on





Tebhaga Movement in Balurghat,  
West Bengal

spot accepting the bullets fired by policemen. The song was composed by Kali Sarkar<sup>73</sup>, following the tune and rhythm of the 'Jang gaan'<sup>74</sup>.

রং।। রণে সাজিল রে

রণ যায় রণডঙ্কা বাজিল রে।। রং।।

একে একে বলে যাই শোনে বন্ধুগণ।

খাঁপুর যুদ্ধের কথা করিব বর্ণন।

তেরোশ তিপ্পান্ন সালে মাঘ মাসের শেষে

তেভাগার রণে কৃষক কুদ্দিল সাহসে।।

ভালকা বাঁশের ধনুক নিল হস্তেতে তুলিয়া

চোখা চোখা তীর নিল পৃষ্ঠেতে বাঁধিয়া

দলে দলে কৃষক সাজে বলে মার মার

কোমর বান্ধিয়া সবে হইল তৈয়ার।।

ঘুটঘুটি আন্ধার রাতে ম্যাঘের ঝরে পানি

জালিমে এই রাতে বুঝি করিবে দুশমনি

পৃষ্ঠে বাঙ্কি ধনুক তীর চোঙ লৈয়া করে  
ভ্যালান্টি পাহারা দেয় পতিরাম মোড়ে।।

এমনসময় দেখ দূরে দেখা যায়  
মটর গাড়ির বাতি মিটিমিটি চায়  
মিলিটারির গাড়ি আসে ভেলান্টি ভাবিল  
হুঁশিয়ার বলি মর্দ চোঙে ফুঁক দিল।।

না ঢুকে সৈন্যের গাড়ি রড্ দিল রণে  
পতিরাম ঢুকিয়া মোড় নিল ডানে  
কতক দূর হইতে গাড়ি কতক দূরে যায়  
বড় রাস্তা ছাড়ি গাড়ি গাঁয়ের পথে যায়।।

একধারে উঁচা পাহাড় একধারে বাড়ি  
গুনগুনি পথে মোটর যায় গুড়গুড়ি  
সম্মুখে ফাঁকা জায়গায় মোটর গাড়ি থুইয়া  
নামিল কতক সৈন্য বন্দুক কাঁধে লইয়া।।

আন্ধার রাতে চুপেচুপে বাড়িতে ঢুকিল

গোপেশ ডাক্তারের সাথে পাঁচজনকে ধরিল  
গ্রামের মহিলা যত খেপিয়া উঠিল  
ঝাঁটা-বারণ হস্তে মোটর ঘেরিল।।

নারীগণ সৈন্যে কয় শোন রে গোলাম  
সবারে ছাড়িয়া দাও করিয়া সেলাম  
নারী ভলান্তিয়ার সাথে মরদ আসে জুটি  
পৃষ্ঠে বান্ধি ধনুক তীর হস্তে মোটা লাঠি।।  
সৈন্যের গাড়ির পিছে দেখা নাহি যায়  
দ্রুত খোঁড়ে কতক বীর গেরিলা কায়দায়  
সম্মুখে জনতা দেখি সৈন্যের কাঁপে হিয়া  
নিজ নিজ ঘরে সব যায় রে ফিরিয়া।।

প্রমাদ গণিল সৈন্য জান্ বুঝি গেল্  
সম্মুখে তীরের ফালা পিছনেতে গাল্  
ফায়ার ফায়ার বলি কাপতান্ ডুকরিয়া উঠিল  
অঙ্গ কাঁপে ঘন মুতে প্যান্ট ভিজে গেল।।

ডিং ডিং ডিং ডিং তাং ধিতাং নাগরা মাদল রবে



সাজিল কৃষক সৈন্য ভয়ঙ্কর সবে  
ঝাঁকে ঝাঁকে তীর ছোট লাঠি বনবনে  
জীবন মৃত্যু পায়ের ভৃত্য ভয় নাহি মনে।।

ছুটিল চিয়ার সাই হস্তে মোটা লাঠি  
জোয়ান মর্দ বাপের ব্যাটা আটত্রিশ ইঞ্চি ছাতি  
দোহতিয়া বাড়ি মারে সৈন্যের মাথায়  
বাপ ডাক ছাড়ি সৈন্য টলে পড়ে যায়।।

আর এক গুলি চিয়ার সাই এর বুকে ছোটে  
আন্ধার হইল দুনিয়াদারি চেতন গেল টুটে  
বেহুঁশ হৈল মর্দ রুহ ছেড়ে দিল  
অভিमानে মায়ের বুকে আছাড়ি পড়িল।।

চিয়ার সাই প'ল দেখে খেপিল সকলে  
দিশা নাই হুঁশ নাই মার মার বলে  
তীর-ধনুক শাবল লাঠি হালুয়া কুঠার  
মারিছে সবাই দেখ যা ছিল যাহার।।

বন্দুকের গুলি মুখে টিকিতে না পারে  
একে একে বীর গণ ঢলে ঢলে পড়ে  
তিনখানি ঢ্রাকের মধ্যে অচল করল দুই  
শহীদের রক্তে রাঙা হয়ে গেল ভুঁই।।

একে একে একুশ বীর জান ছেড়ে দিল  
শহীদের রক্তে রাঙা লাল ঝান্ডা হল  
যুগ যুগের রুদ্ধ রাগ এই মত করে  
ফাটিয়া পড়িল ভাই ওই না খাঁপুরে।।<sup>75</sup>

**Translation :**

They have stood up  
And the drums of war are beaten.

Friends! Listen to the history of battle of *Khanpur*  
That I am going to tell you vividly,  
It was the year 1353<sup>76</sup>, the end of *Maagha*<sup>77</sup>,  
The farmers proclaimed the *Tebhaga* war bravely.

They took up the bows in hands  
And filled up their armories with sharp arrows,  
They came out unitedly in groups,  
They were all ready for the battle.

It was the darkest of night and it down poured,  
All set for the devil with his mighty blow  
So the volunteers<sup>78</sup> were ready at the junction of Patiram<sup>79</sup>  
And they were ready with bows and arrows.

Meanwhile motor cars were seen at distance  
there lights were blinking softly  
The volunteers suspected them to be military cars  
and blew the whistle of warning steadily.  
The motor cars did not come straight  
they took a right turn from Patiram junction.  
then they left the main road and took the path to village  
they moved on, slowly and cautiously.

Heaps lined with one side, the other lined with huts  
The motor cars moved on through deserted path  
they suddenly stopped at a secluded spot  
and the soldiers came out with guns on shoulders.

They stealthily entered into a house  
and arrested five along with Gopesh doctor,  
the village women burst out in agitation  
and they gheraoed the car with brooms in hands.

The women, addressing the soldiers as slaves,  
asked them to free the arrested people with a salute  
the men came and stood, behind the women  
and they all had clubs in hands, and bows and arrows too

some brave volunteers dug up a trench  
just behind the motor cars, unseen to all  
the soldiers trembled in fear seeing crowd in front  
they were furious and huge in number.



The soldiers felt helpless as they could read the future they were standing in front of arrows, and a trench behind the captain cried out to the army, "Fire! Fire" though his voice startled, shaken with fear.

The sounds of *nakara*<sup>80</sup> and *maadal*<sup>81</sup> rose the tension up the farmers' army stood up, furious and indomitable the arrows came in number, and the clubs were rotated they overcame the fear of death, thus they fought the battle

Chiar sai<sup>82</sup> came running with a huge club in hand he was brave as lion with a breast enlarged, he hit the soldiers at their heads and they fell on ground, loosing consciousness.

A bullet came at once, hit Chiar sai's breast and darkness covered his eyes he fell on the ground and breathed his last, he sacrificed his life, fighting for the just.

On seeing Chhar sai dead, everyone got insane  
as they could bear no more pain,  
they took out all native weapons like bows, clubs, arrows and axes  
and they pranked upon the army with louder noises.

But they could not stand up before bullet  
they fell one by one, what a pity! What a regret  
yet they destroyed two trucks out of three  
and the soil got reddened with the blood they shed.

They were *twenty one*<sup>83</sup> in number, accepting death  
they become the martyrs who made the flag reddened.  
They died, but the history of their struggle for justice  
will remain alive in the soil of *Khanpur* and they will rest in peace.

#### 8. SONG ON 'TUSU SATYAGRAHA' (1948-1956) :

It is not that independence in 1947 had brought every sweet fruit that we expected. When colonialism was off, provincialism came into existence immediately. The '*Tusu Satyagraha*' movement was a case at point during the reconstruction period of provinces (1956) when the people of Bengal, especially of the then Purulia

sub-division and people of Bihar got engaged into big in-fighting on the issue whether Manbhum would be included to Bengal or to Bihar, the two neighbouring provinces of the eastern part of the country.

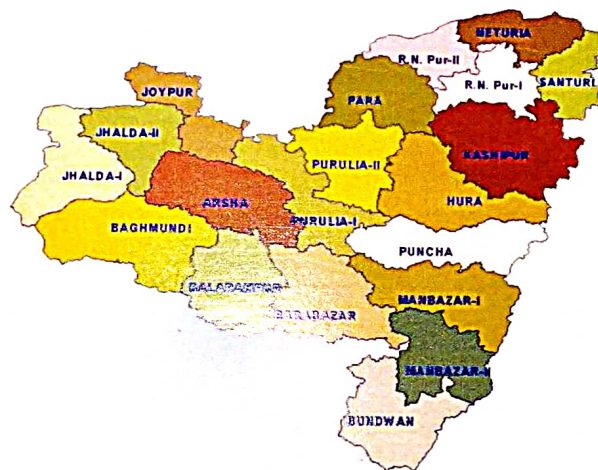
The Manbhum district, formed in 1879 by the British administrators with two sub-divisions namely Purulia and Dhanbad<sup>84</sup>, was mostly occupied by the Bengalees, i.e., the group or community that accept the Bengali language as their mother language.

It is, however, to be remembered that the demand for the re-organization of provinces on the basis of linguistics started long before independence, i.e., in 1893 when the people of Orissa raised their voices for the bifurcation of Bihar state to gain the status of a separate state on the basis of linguistics. Their continuous struggle was finally approved by the British Government in 1936 and Orissa was bifurcated from Bihar. In the post independent period too, the state of Andhra Pradesh was created in 1953 by bifurcating the northern part of the Madras state on the basis of the demand made by a huge member of Talegu-speaking people.

The Manbhum district, though included in the jurisdiction of the Bihar state, was occupied by 87% of Bengali-speaking people, as revealed in the census report in 1931<sup>85</sup>. So, when the process of re-organization of states started right after the independence, i.e., in 1948 under the government appointed commission led by S.K.Dhar, the former judge of the Allahabad High court, people of Manbhum raised their voices demanding to be the part of west Bengal. Sensing danger, the government of Bihar immediately



**MAP OF MANBHUM (19th Century)**



**MAP OF PURULIA**



adopted unjust Measures to curb the demand. On March 8, 1948, a notice was circulated from the office of the district inspector of schools containing the order that Hindi language should be the medium in every govt. aided schools<sup>86</sup>. The people of Manbhum district burst out into loud protest and initiated for a greater movement under the leaderships of Atul Chandra Ghosh, Nibaran Chandra Dasgupta, Bibhuti Bhusan Dasgupta etc. These leaders greatly adopted the *Tusu* songs<sup>87</sup> as means of protest and hence, the movement was named as the '**Tusu Satyagraha**'.

In 1954, a group of representatives under the leadership of N.C. chatterjee and Sucheta kripalini, the two members of parliament, met the then prime minister Jawaharlal Nehru and demanded for an immediate intervention<sup>88</sup> as the case was becoming worse day by day, Finally on August 16, 1956, **The West Bengal - Bihar Land Transfar Bill** was accepted in the Indian parliament. The government of India ultimately solved the issue by bifurcating the Manbhum district. On **November 1, 1956 the district Purulia was formed and included in West Bengal** with 16 police stations that had been existing already in the purulia Sub-division, and with some parts of Purnia<sup>89</sup>, Kisanganj<sup>90</sup> and Gopalpur Sub-division.

The following two songs, that had become the most popular during the 'Tusu satyagraha' movement, had a grat impact on people. The songs clearly reveal how much loyal and how much impressed were the Bengali-speaking people of Manbhum with their mother-tongue.

SONG (i) :

আমার মনের মাধুরী  
সেই বাংলা ভাষা করবি কে চুরি।।  
আকাশ জুড়ে বিষ্টি নামে মেঠো সুরের কোন দুয়া  
বাংলা গানের ছড়া কেটে আষাঢ় মাসে ধান রুয়া।।  
মন্সাগীতি বাংলাগানে শ্রাবণে জাত-মঙ্গলে  
টাঁদ-বেহুলার কাহিনী গাই চোখের জলে গান বলে।।  
বাংলা গানে করিলো সেই ভাদু পরব ভাদরে  
গরবিনীর দোলা সাজাই ফুলে-পাতায়-আদরে।।  
বাংলা গানে টুসু আমার মকর দিনের সাকরাতে  
টুসু ভাসান পরব টাঁড়ে টুসুর গানে মন মাতে।।<sup>91</sup>

Translation :

Bengali is the sweetness of my mind  
Who dares steal that away from behind.

When it pours down heavily from the sky,  
*Dhua*<sup>92</sup> is sung in folk tune,  
And rhymes are composed in Bengali  
And crops are harvested in *Aasaadh*<sup>93</sup>.

Song of *Monosa*<sup>94</sup> is sung in Bengali  
In the month of *Shraavana*<sup>95</sup>,  
We sing the story of *Chand*<sup>96</sup> and *Behula*<sup>97</sup>  
And our tears know no bound.

We celebrate the *Bhaadu*<sup>98</sup>  
All with songs in Bengali  
And decorate the rocker of the goddess  
With flowers and leaves beautifully

We sing the songs of *Tusu*  
And celebrate the *Makara*<sup>99</sup>,  
When *tusu* is immersed with songs,  
The touchy tune fills our hearts with sorrow.

SONG (ii) :

আমার বাংলা ভাষা প্রাণের ভাষা রে  
(ও ভাই) মারবি তোরা কি তারে ॥রং॥  
এই ভাষাতেই কাজ চলেছে সাত পুরুষের আমলে

এই ভাষাতেই মায়ের কোলে মুখ ফুটেছে মা বলে।।  
এই ভাষাতেই পরচা রেকর্ড এই ভাষাতেই চেক্ কাটা  
এই ভাষাতেই দলিল নথি সাতপুরুষের হকপাটা।।  
দেশের মানুষ ছাড়িস যদি ভাগ্যের চির অধিকার  
দেশের শাসন অচল করে ঘটবে দেশে অনাচার।।<sup>100</sup>

**Translation:**

Bengali Language is the life to me  
you never be able to make it separate from me.  
We have been working with Bengali over the generation  
we say 'mother' in Bengali, when we have been born.  
Our every records of land are written with this language.  
Our deeds, wills and other records, over the age.  
Oh countrymen! If you leave today your birth right  
There will be acute disorder forever, and unending fight.

**9. SONG ON EMERGENCY RULE (1975-77) :**

The period of Emergency Rule (1975-77) is probably the darkest and the most debated chapter so far in the history of independent and democratic India. On June 25, 1975, an emergency was declared by Smt. Indira Gandhi, the then prime minister of India,





# THE TIMES OF INDIA



## PM resigns, asked to continue till new govt is formed

By The Special Correspondent

Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi has announced her resignation and that of her cabinet to the President of India.

The Prime Minister's resignation was accepted by the President of India, and she was asked to continue in office until a new government is formed.

### Sanjay quitting politics

Sanjay Gandhi has announced that he is quitting politics and will be concentrating on his education.

The Prime Minister's resignation was accepted by the President of India, and she was asked to continue in office until a new government is formed.

### Sukhadia resigns

Sukhadia has resigned from the cabinet and will be concentrating on his education.



## Ban on RSS, Jamaat & 25 other bodies goes

The government has announced a ban on the RSS, Jamaat, and 25 other bodies. The ban is effective from March 26.

The ban is effective from March 26.

## Janata and allies get over 300 seats

The Janata Party and its allies have won over 300 seats in the Lok Sabha.

### A.K. Gopalan dead

A.K. Gopalan has died at the age of 70.

## Leader to be elected tomorrow

A leader will be elected tomorrow.



### 2 Rajasthan ministers resign

Two ministers from Rajasthan have resigned.

### RSS chief released

The RSS chief has been released.

अडवाना, चरण सिंह गिरफ्तार



# THE HINDU

Indian National Newspaper



## President Proclaims National Emergency

"Security of India Threatened by Internal Disturbances"

## Preventive Arrests: Press Censorship Imposed

## PM Explains Action

The President has proclaimed a National Emergency in India, stating that the security of the country is threatened by internal disturbances. The Prime Minister has explained the action taken by the government, including preventive arrests, press censorship, and the imposition of press censorship.



with the order issued by Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed, the then President of India. It was the **third emergency**<sup>101</sup> witnessed by the countrymen in post-independent period. The emergency lasted for 21 months and was called off on March 21, 1977. The major reasons, as proclaimed by the Government, were the threat to national security and instable economic conditions of the country. But the real story behind such declaration by imposing **Article 352** of the Indian constitution was quite different. It was actually implemented with an intention to curb the spirit of the anti-congress leaders and to withheld the general parliamentary election. A series of arrest was made; almost every leader of several opposition parties was put behind the bars and the whole country had been turned into a prison house.

Another darkest feature of Emergency was imposition of censorship on media, "The Home Ministry Told Parliament in May 1976 that 7,000 persons had been held for circulating clandestial literature opposing the Emergency"<sup>102</sup>.

The officials who were in-charge of the 'Akashvani Bhawan' in Kolkata, set up an example of autocracy at the highest level when they had forcefully ceased the broadcast of the song "*Byartho Praner aborjana puriye phele agun jwalo*" (Burn out the dirt of fruitless life and light up the fire), a song by Rabindranath Tagore<sup>103</sup>.

Sri Nivaran Chakraborty, a very famous village poet and composer of north Bengal, immediately composed the following song after he had heard of the incident. He was at his death-bed and expressed his deep frustration and dissatisfaction with the scenarios and the system, through this song.

মুখগীদাল হামরাগুলা ভাওয়াইয়া গান গাই  
হাল বাড়ীর কামাই সারি দুতারা ডাঙাই  
সুখ দুঃখের কথা যেলায় মনতে পড়িল  
চট্কা সুরে দুতারা ডাং, বাজিয়ারে উঠিল।।

স্বাধীন হইনু ঘর হারাইনু নাই আর ভিটামাটি  
পরার ভুঁইয়ত ঘর বান্ধিয়া পরার ভুঁইয়ত খাটি  
দিন মনে সেই আড়াই টাকা মজুরী পাইয়া  
মাইয়া ছাওয়ায় রুটি চাবাই আন্ধারত বসিয়া।।

হামি হয়ত মরি যাইম ভাই না বাঁচিম্ বেশীদিন  
ডাগ্দারবাবু কইছেন হৃদরোগ বড়ই কঠিন  
গান কবিতা বন্ধ হইল্ মোর আসর করা মানা  
কেমন করি গান করি ভাই হইল্‌রে ভাবনা।।

ভাবিনু না হয় ছাপি দিম মুই গান দু চারখানা  
সেন্সারে কাটিয়া গানের ভাবে রাখিল্ না  
মনের আগুন চোখের জলে নিভানর্ কথাখানা  
সেন্সারে কয় আগুন্ শব্দ বলারে চলিবে না।।

আগুন বাদ দিয়া শুধু জল দিয়া কি করে গান গাই  
ভাবে বুঝিনু দুঃখ পাইলেও বলিবার উপায় নাই  
হামার গান তোমরা ভাইরে সঙ্গ ধরি নিও  
সময় এলে আগুনে গান হাজার কণ্ঠত গাহিও।।<sup>104</sup>

**Translation :**

We the ignorant *geedaal*<sup>105</sup> sing only *bhaaiaa*<sup>106</sup>,  
we work in fields, and play *dotara* to pass leisure.  
when moments of happiness or sorrow flash back in mind  
*dotara* is played out spontaneously and tune of *chatka*<sup>107</sup> takes us behind.

We became free, and became homeless too<sup>108</sup>  
our roofs, our shelters are gone  
now we live on someone else's land  
and work in their fields, their errands we run,  
two and a half rupees is the wage  
thus the family survives chewing bread at night and nothing else to say

I probably will die soon Not much life is due in me  
the doctor has made it clear that the cardiac blockage is massive



I will write poems no more and my performance is forbidden  
how I will live without singing the thought haunts me and I am shaken.  
I wish I would publish a few songs of protest  
but the Censor Board is ready with scissors  
to cut off the words of sentiment  
my mind is engulfed with fire And only tears can put that out,  
as the Censor Board has said.  
the word 'fire' cannot be pronounced.

how can I deal with water only? Leaving the fire behind,  
this I cannot ask them and can only suffer with mind.  
you brothers should take up my song  
and never let it down,  
you must sing the songs of fire in chorus  
when the time will come, and it will come soon.

## VI

### THE CONCLUSION

If folk music has a certain function in human life and, if the study of Folk songs as well as Folk instruments primarily enhances the prosperity in the study of Ethnomusicology, then it is needless to say that the efforts in respect of restoration and preservation of folk songs had not been much satisfactory so far. The research in Folk Music was "First under taken by British scholars who were the employers of the British Government in India"... They resorted to Arm chair method of field work and the material was gathered by their Indian Sub-ordinate employees and translated by them into English"<sup>109</sup>.

In the post independence period, the story has remained almost the same. The research in Folk Music is mostly dealt with mere collection and compilation of songs. Mr. Sankar Sengupta, a keen admirer, researcher of Folk music and the founder of the 'Indian Folk Lore Society' in Calcutta had made the observation that Indian folklorists are lying too much stress on the literary value of the folk song. But the thing is that its socio-historical and psychological values merit more attention than its literary value"<sup>110</sup>.

To understand the matter, we have to go through a few books published in the post independence period, namely "*Bangiya Loka Sangeet Ratnakar*" (4 volumes) in 1970s, by Dr. Ashutosh Bhattacharya, "*Banglar Palligeeti*" (1966) by Sri Chittaranjan Dev, "*Loka Sangeet Prasange*" (1991) by Sri Ramashankar Chowdhury.

Each of these books contain lyrics of a few songs that are concerned with regional rebellions, but they do not provide us the tunes and the rhythms of such songs and thus, they exist only in books which are read by a handful scholars and researchers and the songs that once had become the parts of history, have now been completely forgotten. As folk songs surpass the ages through oral transmission, the folk songs of various rebellions, which were composed on special occasions, were not transmitted any further after a particular point of time. We have restored a few, but we have lost many of them also, and lost them for ever probably.

Nothing can be as painful and as shameful to a nation or a community as to lose its heritage and traditions. The fight that our predecessors put up before the foreign rulers and the tyrant *zaminders*, the struggle they had made to achieve their rights, the blood they had shed on the way towards independence – have enabled us to take birth in a free and democratic country. But due to our indifferent attitude, the songs and the literature and all forms of fine art that hold the glory of their struggle and rebellion, are being gone deep under the sea day by day. This very scenario exists not only in Bengal, but also in most number of states in India. The researchers of folk music have to come up from all parts of the country to restore the history and the songs of all regional rebellions, to preserve them from permanent extinction, and to preach them among the masses. Only thus the mission to safeguard the intangible cultural heritage will be successful and will help the nation to prosper with its own traditional way.



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3. S.A.K. Durga, *Ibid*, P-9
4. Ashoke D. Ranade, *Ibid*, P-15
5. Rabindranath Tagore, *Sangeet chinta*, Reprint, Visvabharati, 1392(Bang era), P-71.
6. R.V. Williams, *Folk songs, Encyclopaedia Britanica*, 14<sup>th</sup> Edn., EB., 1932, P-448.
7. Source: Sri Arya Chowdhury, dist.- Maldaha, the lyric is also given in *Bangiya Loka Sangeet Ratnakar* (Vol-I) by Dr. Asutosh Bhattacharjee.
8. Company- East India Company
9. Mirmadan- One of the commanders of Siraj-ud-daullah who died at the battle ground of palashi.
10. Mirjafar- Military commander of Nawab Siraj-ud-daullah who betrayed in palashi war and became the first Nawab of Bengal with support of East India company.
11. Mohanlal- A deewan of Nawab who stood by the Nawab and fought bravely till death.
12. Bhagirathi- The channel of Bhagirathi river is a branch of the Ganga. Murshidabad City is situated on its bank.
13. Gobindapur- One of the three villages which were merged to form the city of Kolkata.
14. Sutanuti- The city of Kolkata was formed with three villages namely Sutanuti, Gobindapur & Kolkata.
15. Gulbagh- An amusement Park built by the Nawab on the western bank of river Bhagirathi.
16. Khoshbagh- Another amusement park built on the western bank of



- river Bhagirathi.
17. Chandoa- A Canopy that is hanged over.
  18. The term was actually introduced by J.C. Price, the Chief settlement officer of Midnapore, in his book 'The Chuar Rebellion.'
  19. Source : The lyric was obtained from Sri Sharat Chandra Mardi of Chatna, Bankura and the original tune recovered from Sri Gandhiram Mahato, performer and trainer of the Royal Chau Academy, Balarampur, Puruliya.
  20. Vikramjit- a king of the tribals.
  21. Chhatapukur- a place in Saraikillah district, now in Jharkhand state.
  22. Barasat- at present the district town of the North 24 Parganas district.
  23. Narkelberiya- Native village of Titumir, now in north 24 parganas district.
  24. Golam Masum- nephew of Titumir, and the chief commander of the rebel group.
  25. Deganga- a block in Barasat sub-division of north 24 Parganas district.
  26. Gaajir gaan- a special type of folk song, a narrative one and popular among the Muslim community.
  27. Source : the lyric obtained from 'Saajoner Gaane Titumir-er lorai' by Dr. Girin Das (Subarnarekha, Kolkata, 1995). The original tune obtained from Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee, a researcher and author of the Bengali folk music.
  28. Saraullah- loyal to the truth, here Titumir.
  29. Sara pole- a place in Barasat sub-division.
  30. Puro ghat- Puro or Pura was the jurisdiction of Zaminder Krishna Dev Roy where the British soldiers and Zaminder's force had met before they marched towards Narkelberia.
  31. Zaminder- Krishna Dev Roy who was deadly against Titumir and Charged taxes on him.
  32. Meher Ali- anonymous; probably a holy personage.

33. Suprakash Roy, ***Bharater Krishak Bidroha O Ganatantrick Sangram***, 1st Redical Edn., Kolkata, 2012, P- 323
34. Hul- Santhali word, it suggests Rebellion.
35. Suri- Now the district town of Birbhum district.
36. Source : The song was originally written in Santhali language which is obtained from late Sri Arun Chowdhury, Suri, Birbhum. Later it was translated by Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee.
37. Baajaal- Cowboy.
38. Doctrine of lapse- a British technique perpetrated by Lord Dalhousie. It prohibited a Hindu-ruler from adopting a successor if the ruler did not have a natural heir.
39. Barrackpore- Now a sub-division of North 24Parganas district.
40. Bengal presidency- The East India company set up three separate regiments for Madras, Mumbai and Bengal presidency. The Bengal presidency was mostly occupied with the high caste sepoys from Ayodhya, Bihar and Rohilkhand.
41. 24Parganas- a very large and populous district. It was bifurcated into two parts namely North 24Parganas and south 24Parganas on March1, 1986.
42. Source : The song- with original tune is obtained from Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee, Kolkata. The lyric was also published in Banglaar Palligeeti by Chittaranjan Dev (1966), P-427.
43. Mr. Panda- Mangal Pandey.
44. Bareilly- a district in Uttar Pradesh.
45. Faizabad- A district of Uttar Pradesh. It is now renamed as Ayodhya by Uttar Pradesh cabinet on November6, 2018.
46. White Skinned man- the mutineers killed the British officers as well as the British women ruthlessly at various places such as Delhi, Kanpur, Meerut etc.
47. Chandanagar- Now a block in Hooghly district, the French set up their colony here.



48. Suprakash Roy, ***Bharater Krishak Bidroha O Ganatantrick Sangram***,  
1st Redical Edn., Kolkata, 2012- P – 87
49. The university of Calcutta, ***The Calcutta Review***, 1861, P-291
50. Chaugacha- a village in the district of Nadia.
51. Barishal- Now a district of Bangladesh.
52. Suprakash Roy- Ibid, P- 387
53. Madhusudan Dutta- a very popular poet and dramatist of Bengal  
during 19<sup>th</sup> century.
54. Rev. James long- an Anglo Irish priest and also a humanist, educator,  
translator, essayist. He resided in Kolkata from 1840-  
1872.
55. Kaliprasanna Singha- a famous Bengali author, playwright and  
philanthropist. Translator of Mahabharata into Bengali.
56. Jhumur- the major type of folk song of the western part of  
Bengal.
57. Source : both the lyric and the tune obtained from Late Mihir Lal  
Singh Deo, a legendary performer of Jhumur.
58. Nilmoni- Nilmoni Singh Deo (1823-1898), the 66<sup>th</sup> Maharaja of  
Panchakot Royal family of Purulia who took leading role  
during Sepoy Mutiny and Indigo Revolt.
59. 'They' here refers to the British planters.
60. Foreign cocks- the British indigo planters.
61. Source : the song obtained from Sri Arya chowdhury, a very  
renowned researcher and performer. It was a very  
famous composition by Safiur Rahaman, popularly  
known as Sufi Master, one of the greatest village poets  
and performer of Gambhira.
62. 'Nana' refers to Lord Shiva, the central character of Gambhira whom  
people describe their plight or urges to.
63. Neelkuthi- the house where the British indigo planters lived and  
stored the indigo.
64. Bhang- Kind of Cannabis.

65. Dhutra- a wild flower blooms in bushes and Lord shiva is worshipped with.
66. Siddhi- Kind of Cannabis
67. Gaanjaa- Kind of Cannabis.
68. Chinha- a low quality food grain.
69. Rangrej bazaar- colloquial pronunciation for English bazaar, the head quarter of Maldaha district.
70. Jotdaar- holder of land
71. Dr. Susnata Das, Introduction of 1<sup>st</sup> print, **Abibhakta Banglar krishak Sangram**, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edn., Nakshatra, kolkata, 2007, P-1
72. Balurghat- a sub-division of undivided Dinajpur district before 1947. Now the district town of south Dinajpur district of west Bengal.
73. Kali Sarkar was one of the organizer of Tebhaga Mutiny in undivided Dinajpur district. He was put behind the bars of Raajsahi Jail.
74. Jang gaan- a popular folk song of Dinajpur, more like jaari gaan that narrates an event.
75. Source : Sri Manabesh chowdhuri, a keen admirer of folklore of Dinajpur and the author of 'Tebhagar Path Dhole'.
76. 1353 Bengali era, i.e., 1947 AD.
77. Maagha- the tenth month as per Bengali calendar.
78. Volunteers- the share croppers built up watch parties themselves to guard the crops at night and to cut and store it as soon as the crops matured.
79. Patiram- A place in Balurghat sub-division.
80. Nakara- a kettle drum played with two sticks by the tribals.
81. Madal- a musical rhythm instrument mostly used by the tribals.
82. Chiar Sai Sekh- leader of the farmers of khanpur village who was brutally killed at khanpur on 20.02.1947.
83. 'Twenty one' refers to the 21 farmers who were killed by policemen on 20.02.1947 at khanpur village.



84. Dhanbad- now a district in North Chotanagpur sub-division of the Jharkhand state.
85. Bimal Ch. Chattopadhyay, *Pratibadi Bangla Lokasangeet*, 1st print, Loka Sanskriti and Adivasi Sanskriti Kendra, W.B. 2010, P-75.
86. Circular of District Inspector of Schools, Manbhum, No.- 700-116-5 48, dated : March 8, 1948.
87. Tusu is one of the most popular folk songs of the western part of West Bengal and adjacent areas of Jharkhand and Bihar. Besides Jhumur, Tusu has a separate melody structure or 'dhun'.
88. Bimal Ch. Chattopadhyay, Ibid, P-78.
89. Purnia- one of the 38 districts of the Bihar state now.
90. Kishanganj- Now a district in Purnia division of Bihar state.
91. Source : Late Sri Mihir Lal Singh Deo, Legendary performer of Jhumur of Puruliya.
92. Dhua- a devotional type of folk song mainly sung in the puruliya district, more like Baul song.
93. Aasaarh- the third month as per Bengali calendar.
94. Monosha- the goddess of snakes.
95. Shravana- the fourth month of Bengali calendar.
96. Chand- a famous mythological character of 'Monosa Mongal,' Chand Saudagar.
97. Behula- another mythological character of 'Monosa Mongal,' wife of Lakhinder.
98. Bhadu- a popular folk festival of the western part of Bengal, observed through out the month 'Bhadra' (August - September)
99. Makara- the most popular harvest festival of the western part of Bengal, observed throughout the month of 'Pousa' (December-January). Tusu is the deity, hence it is also known as Tusu festival.

100. Source : The song with its original tune was obtained from Sri Bidyadhar karmakar, Koradih, Suklara, Purulia.
101. The first two Emergencies after the independence were declared in 1962 and in 1971 because of the Indo-China War and Indo-Pak war respectively.
102. Rohit B, [www.quora.com](http://www.quora.com) (Source of the information : Indian Express).
103. Kankan Bhattacharjee, *Nivaran panditer Gaan*, West Bengal State Music Akademi, Kolkata, 1986, P-101.
104. Nivaran Chakraborty was popularly known as Nivaran Pandit and an exceptional composer of Bhaoaia and Chatka. Besides, he was an outstanding performer of 'Dotara', a very popular stringed folk instrument of North Bengal.
105. Geedal – a performer of Bhaoaia song.
106. Bhaoaia – The major folk song of the hilly area of Northern part of Bengal. It has quite a number of varieties as per style of singing and also the rhythm.
107. chatka – a very popular type of folk song of North Bengal, famous for its rhythmic pattern that is faster and suitable for dance.
108. The poet had to leave his native land in the eastern part of Bengal due to the partition of the country in 1947.
109. S.A.K. Durga, Ibid, P-24
110. Sankar Sengupta and K.D. Upadhyaya, *Studies in Folk Culture*, Indian Folklore society, Indian Folklore publication series (No.- 6), Calcutta, 1964, P: 6-7

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## **ANNEXURE-I**

### **THE LOST TUNES**

We, While discussing the urgent need for the preservation of the songs that bear historical and social importance greatly, have mentioned clearly and severally that most of the folk songs concerned with various rebellions, have lost their original tunes and exist in the pages of books or in the note books of the researchers only with their lyrics. Here we present a few of them with **transliteration**.

#### **(i) SONG ON CHUAR REBELLION :-**

*Hansa Raajar Kansa Singh*

*Chara holo Bishan Singh*

*Ego Malbhnuie lagho ladhai,*

*Malbhnuie More gelo Raja ho Bishan Singh*

*pagdi ailo re nishan.*

*Kaha chutalo re mor*



*Hansa Raajar ghora re*

*Kaha chutal mor dhal-taloar.*

*[Source : Navin Besra, Shushunia, Bankura]*

The song depicts the picture of enormous struggle of the people of the marginal class under the leadership of Bishan Singh and Durjan Singh who drove away the British appointed officials and took the charge of almost 30 villages in Raipur parganas. Later they were curbed by a military force sent by the British administrators.

## **(ii) SONG ON SANTHAL MUTINY**

*O Sidho bhai Sidho bhai*

*Tor kiser tore rakta jhore.*

*Ki katha roilo gantha*

*O Kanhu tor chhal chhal sware*

*Desher lage ange moder*

*Rokte raanga besh*

*Janone ki dasyu banik*

*Luthlo sonar desh*

*[Source : 'Lokasangeet prasange' P-75].*

### **iii) SONGS ON SEPOY MUTINY :**

*Hai re ki hoilo, Sipai paltan khepilo*

*Chardike mar mar kat kat*

*Joto sipai khepeche*

*Kashipurer Maharaja Mahal chere aseche.*

*Kashipurer Mahal chilo*

*Chilo sukher Brindavan*

*Se Mahale ghas biralo*

*Ki koireche Nilmohan.*

*[Source: Jaladhar Karmakar, Purulia]*

The song was composed after raja or the *zaminders* of Kashipur Nilmani Singh Deo was arrested by the British and was imprisoned in Alipore Jail in Kolkata after he had proclaimed his support to the mutineers.

Another song on sepoy mutiny praising the sepoys who killed number of firingis (English men) in Meerut was:

*Eso sob dekhe jao, Meerut-er bazare*

*mar khey pore ache amader Raja re*

*dongole dongole maar khey chit pat*

*Karo Bonduk luth, pistol borbada,*

*Khola akasher niche karo ghora okka,*

*Dhora pore maar khey firingi fokka,*

Eso eso dekhe jao, hajaare o hajaare

Firingi pore ache Meerut-er baazare.

[source : Dr. Pradik Kumar Ghosh, Kolkata]

**(iv) SONG ON INDIGO REVOLUTION:-**

Chal Bahuri Gour jabo, Neelkuthite kamai pabo

(hai re) sahib dileng taanre matir kaam

Hey Bhajuram, micha kothai bhulaleng karam.

Tumi bothi ke ba chileng

Taakar lobhe bikaing dileng.

Khun diyeng likhaileng.

Teen purusher naam.

Koto sukher asha koreng.

Sindhai chilam kuthi ghoreng.

Kuthi ghore khaateng khaateng

Jhoreche jaareng gham.

Dungri dhaareng patthar kaateng

Khun jhoreng haat fateng

Dadan bhuktan na sujhaleng

Libe pither cham

*Kuthialer sipaigula*

*nesha koreng reter bela*

*Bulcheng 'pabi lakri chulha Reter kaamer daam.'*

*[Source : Arya Chowdhuri, Maldaha]*

The song depicts the plight of the labourers who came from far Manbhum district and settled in Maldaha and worked under British indigo planters. It was actually a jhumur composed in kurmali, a colloquial language of the western part.

#### **(v) SONG ON PABNA MUTINY (1872-1884)**

*Bongo deshe kali seshe ghotlo bisham dai*

*Monib loker jer hoeyeche Bidruker jwalai*

*Joto praja loke jote theke*

*Zaminder ke bedakhal dai*

*Nalish koe shanty raksha,*

*Zulum-nisedh prajar pakkhe*

*Tar raja holo Nishan (Ishan) babu*

*Kalsap zaminder*

*Gopal Nagarer zaminderer luthlo bari ghar.*

*Se Bidruk elo ghar jwalalo*

*Chamatkar sob zaminder bari*



*Shune hoi shankito*

*Bidruker photang koto*

*Nishan Roy-er hukum moto*

*Lok chole hajaar hajaar*

• *Jotaya mamla Nishan babu*

*Korechen kabu monib lok koto*

*Asthir hoilo zaminder aar Taalukder joto.*

*[Source : 'Pratibadi Baangla Loka sangeet' –P - 53]*

The people of pabna, now a district of Bangladesh, witnessed a strong mutiny by the farmers that lasted for more than 12 years, and ended with a new Law namely **"Bangiya Praja svattva Aain"** in 1885 by the British government. Ishan Chandra Roy, Popularly called as '*Raaja*' by the farmers, was the leader of the rebel group. The new law ultimately reduced the power of the *zaminders* and saved the farmers from their ruthless tortures.

## **(VI) SONG OF PROTEST MOVEMENT AGAINST PARTITION OF BENGAL (1905)**

*Ebar Vandemataram bolo sarbajan*

*Shuno he Bharatbaasigon.*

*ebar maha utsave*

*dako maa ke bhaktibhabe*

Tobe to shudhibe jeebe  
eto karjya sadhan.  
Tyajo bilati basan, bilati bhushan,  
bilati chini o laban  
Keho aar koro na grahan  
e je sokol jaatir dharma nosto  
hoteche e ku-bhojone  
e sokol agnate paap  
dharma boi aar keu na jaane,  
tai ekhone sobe jene shune  
ghrina upajilo mone,  
je kodin aar pran banche koro na grohon  
ebar Vandemataram bolo sarbajan.  
aacho jata Hindu-Musalman  
sobe hole bhai buddhimaan,  
rokkha korte chao jadi bhai  
swadharma somman  
e kaaje je hoyeche brati  
brati hoye taar prati  
ghuchao Bharater durgati

samprati hoye e sampatti janete  
koro ha hela  
dure jaabe sokol jwala  
dio na prachin helai  
Sei paap sagar e bisarjaan  
ebar vandemataram bolo sarbajan  
aacho jata gyani-guni  
ebar dekho muni guni  
aaha mori aaha mori  
ki aschorjo mahiyasi  
je beta aanlo kaanch-er churi  
bole Delli-r darbar  
ki baahar mere nilo tule  
swarna-rupa-moni-muktahaar.  
Manaranjan bole bhai  
esob nehat ekkebarei koro parihaar  
michhri o laban chini  
sob-i dio bisarjan  
ebar badan bhore bolore sobai vandemataram

[Source : 'Banglaar palligeeti', P - 431-32]

When the British government passed a law in order to divide Bengal province into two parts on October 16, 1905, the entire Bengal rose up and burst out in protest and anger. The village poets played a great role to unite people. A good number of songs were composed and spread orally by them. The song given here was composed by Sri Manaranjan, a village poet of the eastern Bengal, who encouraged people to give up the use of foreign commodities and join the protest movement uttering 'Vandemataram' from heart.

**(vii) SONG ON PRICE-HIKE :**

*O bhai desher ki dasa hoile*

*Bharatbaasir ghore ghore chal nai je mele*

*alu patal kala kachu Baazar-e je na pai kichu*

*Sob kheyechhe banar chuncho roite nahi dilo*

*(o bhai) desher ki dasa hoilo.*

*Brahmanadi bhada muchi*

*Sob hoiache ebaar shuchi*

*O bhai re desher ki dasa hoile*

*Baabu loker dafa saara*

*annabhabe jai je maara*

*Ekhon bole o maa taaraa*



*Tumi kene nidoi hole  
Bhaire desher ki dasa hoile.  
baabu loker kemon kotha  
Ration-card je pita-maata  
Control-er line dhoirle.  
Adham Jatin bole binoy kore  
Ei Bhaarater ghore ghoere  
Jege uthun hunkare nebe asun dale dale  
Noile desher ki dasa hoile,  
[Source: 'Baanglar palligeeti' (1966), -P - 429]*

The song was composed by Jatin Roy, a very popular village poet of east Bengal, depicts the plight of people due to price hike during world war II and at the same time inspires people to come down to the street in number and protest collectively.

**(viii) SONG ON EVACUATION (1939-40) :**

*Jalpaiguri saharat gaarit naamise  
Maadar ganjer baalur dhipot  
Jaaya Maareche tope  
Shuno o nagarvaasi o*

*Maharaajar hukum jaari na koren belok*  
*Chat koriya na palaile koribe zarimana*  
*Shuno o nagarvasi o,*  
*Char baari girasthi saaj taamaane charinu*  
*Sogai paalaiche hutaashe mairaa dhoriya*  
*Shuno o nagarvaasi o.*

[Source : "Pratibaadi Bangla Loka Sangeet by Bimal Ch.  
Chattopadhyay(2010),-P - 75]

This very protest song was composed by a village poet of Jalpaiguri district of northern Bengal when people were being shifted forcefully from their habitats through Evacuation process during the second world war.

## **ANNEXURE- II**

### **REPORT ON SEMINAR**

📅 Date of Seminar : **September 18, 2019**

📍 Venue : **Rabindra Bhavan** (Baranagar Municipality Auditorium, Kolkata-700035)

🕒 Time : **5-30P.M.**

🗣️ Speakers :

- i) **Dr. Pradip Kumar Ghosh** (Musicologist, Author and former chief editor of West Bengal state Music Akademi)
- ii) **Dr. Kakali Dhara Mondal** (Head of the department, Dept. of Folk lore, The Kalyani University, West Bengal.)
- iii) **Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee** (Researcher of Folk Music of Bengal, Author and former executive member of state Music Akademi, West Bengal)

**Convener :**

**Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee** [Investigator of the project]

The seminar and the public performance on '**Bidroher Loka-gaan**' (Folk songs of Rebellion, 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century), the last step of the project, was held on Wednesday September 18, 2019 at Baranagar Rabindra Bhavan at 5-30 P.M with the gracious presence of the scholars of different fields concerned with the project. The seminar was started with a brief inaugural programme in which the scholars were welcomed and garlanded.

**Dr. Pradip kumar Ghosh**, the famous musicologist, author and recipient of many national awards, delivered his speech at first emphasizing the utility of the project in respect of the enhancement of the study of ethno musicology and musicology as a whole. He first started analyzing the term musicology and then discussed various aspects and purposes of musicology and also the various branches of it. Dr. Ghosh severally mentioned about the lack of musicological approach in the field of research of music and admired the project as it is concerned with the preservation of songs with the original tune which, as said by him, will enable the people of Bengal to get connected with past history and heritage.

The next speaker, **Dr. Kakali Dhara Mondal**, a very eminent researcher of folklore of Bengal and present HOD of the dept. of folklore, the Kalyani university had stressed on the importance of study of folklore that has already been accepted in developed countries as one of the most important means to recapitulate the history as well as culture of any nation or community. She also stated that it is only folk songs that enlarges the arena of researches in folklore beside the other elements such as rhymes, riddles etc. and of course, the regional language. In her lecture,



Dr. Mondal severally mentioned some other mutinies by people of tribal groups during the 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> century and lamented that today we have no way to recover the songs of such rebellious with their original tunes. She accomplished the project a lot and remarked that this is the first time a collection of songs of rebellions are put in a single album and emphasized that deeper research is highly required to dig out the lost cultural heritages.

**Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee**, the third and the final speaker of the seminar, is a very keen researcher of folk music of Bengal over the years and has collected more than ten thousand folk songs with original tunes through his vast field surveys in his career and has stored them in his personal audio-library. It is only Sri Bhattacharjee who has published two or three songs of greater rebellions with their original tunes where as all the other researchers remained indifferent and silent. Sri Bhattacharjee pointed out that folk songs are never composed for mere entertainment and they have immense importance in respect of history, man and society and psychology. He shared a few incredible experiences of his own life and stressed on the issue that field work is much more important instead of bookish knowledge. He was overwhelmed that finally the songs of rebellions were being collected together for the national archive.

At the end of Sri Bhattacharjee's speech, the speakers were interacted briefly by a few researchers present in the seminar namely Dr. Gargi Das Bakshi (Researcher of Rabindra sangeet ) and Dr. Sudipta Paul (Researcher of mass communication). The brightest moment of the seminar came when the CD entitled

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"Bidroher Loka-gaan" was published by the guest-speakers and some other scholars (photograph given) of Music of Bengal.

The seminar followed a public performance with power-point presentation that had been widely accepted by the listeners as it had taken them hundred years back and revealed many more historical events and incidents unknown to them.



# PHOTOGRAPHS OF SEMINAR AND PERFORMANCE



## Guest Speakers

From the left : Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee (Folk music researcher and author),  
Dr. Kakali Dhara Mondal (HOD, Department of Folklore, Kalyani University)  
Dr. Pradip Kr. Ghosh (Musicologist and author)





**GUESTS ARE BEING WELCOMED**



**Speaker : Dr. Pradip Kumar Ghosh**



**Speaker : Dr. Kakali Dhara Mondal**





**Speaker : Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee**



**Convener of the Seminar :  
Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee (Extreme left)**



**Speaker : Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee**



**Convener of the Seminar :  
Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee (Extreme left)**





**Public performance with power point presentation  
by Dr. Tamas Ranjan Banerjee (Investigator of the project)**

## PHOTOGRAPHS OF FIELD SURVEYS



**INTERVIEWS :** (Above) Late Mihir Lal Singh Deo, (Left side)

Legendary performer of Jhumur, Rajnowagarh, Purulia.

(Below) Prof. Dr. Susnata Das (Right Side), Former HOD,  
Department of History, Rabindrabharati University





**INTERVIEWS :** (Above) **Dr. Pradip Kumar Ghosh** (Right Side),  
Musicologist and author, Former chief editor of  
W.B. State music Akademi, Kolkata.  
(Below) **Dr. Manti Baroi** (Right Side),  
Asstt. Prof., Department of History, J.K. College,  
Purulia.





**INTERVIEWS :** (Above) **Sri Kankan Bhattacharjee** (Left Side),  
Researcher of Folk Music and author,  
Sarat Dhar Road, Kolkata.

(Below) **Dr. Jaladhar Karmakar** (Right Side),  
Researcher, author and asstt. teacher of  
High School, Purulia.





**INTERVIEWS :** (Above) **Sri Bidyadhar Karmakar** (Right Side),  
Outstanding performer of Jhumur, Bhadu and Tusu songs  
Karadih, Purulia.  
(Below) **Sri Arya Chowdhury** (Right Side),  
Outstanding performer and author, Maldaha.



**INTERVIEWS :** (Above) **Sri Gandhiram Mahato** (Left Side),  
Performer and Trainer, Royal Chhau Akademi  
Balarampur, Purulia.

(Below) **Sri Manabesh Chowdhury** (Right Side),  
Keen admirer of Folklore and social worker,  
Phoolbari, Dakshin Dinajpur.





**INTERVIEWS :** (Above) **Smt. Ashalata Hansda**,  
Keen admirer of Tribal and folk culture,  
Balarampur Mission, Purulia.  
(Below) **Sri Sarat Ch. Mardi** (middle) & **Sri Nabin Besra** (right)  
Preachers and admirers of Tribal culture,  
Susunia, Bankura.