



Peasants' Mobilization under the Communist at its formative stage in Colonial Odisha: a case study of Kolkata Odia Krushak Sammilani

Amit Kumar Nayak
Research Scholar

Department of History, Utkal University,
Odisha, INDIA

Abstract: *Given the agrarian economic base of India coupled with ongoing peasants' discontentment against institutionalized government and former's relation with the Left political parties, the present situation demands to find out the answer as to the historical basis of the relationship between the Left and the peasantry in India as well in Odisha during the colonial period. Organized peasants' movement in Odisha started taking its configuration following the suspension of Civil Disobedience movement and the coming of Socialist ideas in subsequent period. The Congress Socialists, which subsumed in it the extreme radical leaders who later on constituted the atoms of the Communist movement in Odisha, were the pioneer of that organized movements. Unlike all Indian scenarios, the Communist movement started to surface lately in Odisha at a time when it was undergoing a passive stage due to colonial apathy towards its very existence. However it remained within Congress Socialist party for a long time and actively participated in the peasants' struggle in colonial Odisha until it was separated from Congress Socialist party/Indian National Congress. The tempo the Communist party had at its birth clearly found its expression in the heightened upward peasants' mobilization and radicalization of congress ideologies. Therefore, this research article tries to study the birth and growth of Communist movement in India and Odisha in brief keeping in view the peasants' mobilization. The study also aims at analyzing the role of Communists in the peasants' struggle in Odisha in 1930s when the party was at its infant stage. Apart from it, this article endeavors to assess the role of the Communist leaders in organizing peasants' conference in Kolkata (Calcutta) and in creating radical content of resolutions passed in the conference.*

Keywords: Communist, Kolkata, Mobilization, Peasant, Socialist, Sammilani,

I. Introduction

The victory of the proletariat¹(Sweezy,1969) i.e., the workers, the peasants, and the slaves etc., over the age old Czarist rule and the interim capitalist system through the famous Bolshevik revolution, the first ever Communist party composed of peasant-labor majority, led by Vladimir Lenin in 1917 objectified, to a greater extent, the notion of dictatorship of the proletariats, non-existence of private property, dominance of peasants and labors on land and industry, equal distribution of surplus value and an egalitarian society with much say for the oppressed--the cardinal principles of Socialism/Marxism. As this revolutionary transformation of Russian society, a step toward realizing communist state, was an open threat to the European capitalistic society and its brain child i.e., colonialism, as the revolutionary sequel stood by free society and Free State, It was inevitable that the way the revolution was carried out by the peasants and the workers would found its echo in the world, especially, in colonized Asiatic states. With rapid economic development, a hitherto unknown innovative foreign policy, successful transformation of feudal-capitalistic base into organized, planned and above all inclusive growth, Russia paved the way for coming up of new challenges to the colonial governments across the globe. The newly indoctrinated oppressed and exploited class of the imposed capitalistic colonial states endeavored to steer the state in Russian model leading to the formation of radical institutions on Marxist-Leninist ideologies¹, famously known as communism.

¹It was Karl Marx and Frederick Engels who perceived of a Communist society in which in the very first stage the proletariat dictatorship would replace the age old capitalistic means of production characterized by monopoly of a few over means of production, existence of private property, and non-availability of surplus value for the labor seller, and in the next step the proletariat would destroy itself as a class leading to the existence of a communist state. It was Vladimir Lenin who led the Bolshevik party ---the first ever communist party----and fulfilled the first stage of a communistic society to a greater extent. So in academic literature Marxism-Leninist ideological Discourse is generally accepted as the bedrock of communism.

India, being a colonial victimized state, was not an exception to it. That innovative leftist ideas, though reached India in late 1920s (Chandra, 1989), slowly and steadily started to gain currency in post Non-cooperation movement phrase and in Odisha as a part of it, giving birth to a complex phenomenon in Indian political circle i.e., the emergence of a band of radical leaders of heterogeneous ideas. When newly encroached communist ideas was looking for space in Indian political circle and trying to focus on remaining independent of Indian national Congress, the growing discontentment and agony among peasants and workers, due to apathetic role of Indian National Congress, provided a good deal of opportunities for easy but resisted growth of those ideas. Formation of different organizations across India during that time amply proves this fact² (Chandra, 1989). The situation took a 'U' turn following the temporary end of "Congress-CPI romance" in 1930s, stringent anti-communist measures of colonial government (Chandra, 1987), direct involvement of congress in class cause and above all the subsequent colonial governments' banning of Communist Party of India in 1934 (Chandra, 1989). But the post-Civil Disobedience movement India and Odisha witnessed a radical transformation not only in the political horizon but also in the socio-economic sphere as well. It was partly because of the resultant forces that came out of the frustration caused due to the suspension of the Civil Disobedience Movement and partly due to the gradual loss of confidence in Gandhi's leadership and the efficacy of All Indian Congress Party. This transformation compounded by germination of the socialist ideas found its manifestation in the emergence of radical ideas within or outside the Congress circle, the emergence of class consciousness among the peasants, youths, women and depressed classes.

The case of Odisha was somehow different from the all Indian phenomenon. The same fervor, as was seen from an all Indian case so far as communist party was concerned, seems to be absent in Odisha though it being a part of colonial India. Exception was that Odisha pioneered the socialist movement prior to that of other states of India in late 1930s (Dwivedy, 1984). The Communist and the Socialist combination, of all their political as well as non-political works, did a good job by successfully integrating, mobilizing the peasants in Odisha in post 1934 period. Before analyzing the achievements of the Communist—Socialist combine in the peasants' cause in Odisha, it seems desirable to have a glance over the birth and growth of 'Communist' as a political ideology in India as well in Odisha.

II. Birth of the Communist Party in India and Odisha

In general Communism was considered as an alternative political ideology, advocating communal ownership over means of production and absence of private property, which stands as an antithesis of capitalism and feudalism, and a modified version of Marxism. Due to its eye catching socio-economic and political programs and above all its anti-colonial stance, Marxism-Leninism got easy popularity in the era of colonial-capitalistic rule in Asian nations. The history of communism in India goes back to the 1920s. It was the famous Yugantar revolutionary Naren Bhattacharyaji (Manabendra Nath Roy), who came in contact with the Bolshevik Mikhail Borodin in Mexico in 1919. The communist party of India (CPI) was founded in Tashkent, Turkestan autonomous soviet socialist republic on Oct 17th 1920 soon after the second congress of the communist international (Chandra, 1989). The founding members were M.N Roy, Evelyn Trent Roy, Abani Mukherji, Rosa Fittings, Mohamed Ali, Mahumme Shafiq Siddique and MP. B. T Acharya. The environment was not so conducive that the communist could make easy head way due to strong colonial opposition. Basing upon those communist ideologies, the front line leaders organized peasants and workers in different parts of India and mobilized the mass through different activities. Soon after its formation, CPI began efforts to build a party organization inside India and in turn so many communist groups were formed in West Bengal, Bombay, Madras (Chennai), united provinces, and Punjab, which were integrated in 1925 at Kanpur to Communist Party of India. During the period from 1920 to 1930, the party was badly organized with lack of national coordination (Devdas, 2014). Even the British government then banned communist activities in India. Following the direction of the 7th communist International, the CPI was reorganized under P. C. Joshi and was made an ally of Indian National Congress for a 'united front' against the colonial government (Haithcox, 1971). Before independence, the CPI never become a prominent political party, but was prominent as an advocacy organization of peasants and workers.

As already mentioned Odisha lagged behind all Indian states so far as an organized communist movement was concerned. However, the leftist ideas found its germination in the minds of young students of Odisha. The students with radical ideas like, Pranannath Pattnaik, Sarat Pattnaik, Gurucharan Pattnaik etc., studied at famous *Kasi Vidyapitha* around 1934 (Nanda, 2008), when colonial government had a strong objection to its very existence, where they utilized available platform to shape their mind. It was here that the students got inclined towards Marxist ideology and formed a group known as Young Communist League (Nanda, 2008). But the genesis and gradual development of the communist ideas in Orissa could only be attributed to the Navayuga Sahitya Sansad organised by the youth students of Ravenshaw College under the leadership of Ananta charan pattnaik and Bhagabati Panigrahi (HPD, 1938). It must be noted that formative period of communist movement

²The first such organization was the Labour-Swaraj party of the Indian National Congress by Muzaffar Ahmed, Qazi Nazrul Islam, Hemanta Kumar Sarakar and others in Bengal in November 1925. In late 1926, a Congress Labour Party was formed in Bombay and a Kirti Kishan Party in Punjab. All these parties came to be united under an umbrella organization named Workers' and Peasants' Parties in 1928 at Kanpur.

in colonial Orissa was full of constraints and challenges due to government's ban of Communist Party of India (CPI) in 1934. Late awakening of the so called communist in Odisha coupled with situational constraints lessened the intensity of its rapid growth and even made the movement somehow passive. But, our evidences shows that as early as 1935 Guru Charan Patnaik had become a secret member of the banned Communist party (Dwivedi, 1984). In 1936 Pranatanath Patnaik, Gurucharan Patnaik and Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi formed a Secret Communist Party in Odisha (Pradhan, 2007).

Of all those important developments in mid-nineteen thirties, the coming of a new and nation-wide awakening among the Indian peasants realizing their own strength and capacity to organize themselves for the betterment of their living conditions (Chandra, 1989) was the most important, as it was alien to the age old tradition of India. This new awakening among this subaltern class was largely a result of, apart from the deep impact of Marxism, the combination of particular economic and political developments i.e., (a) The Depression which brought agricultural prices crashing down to half or less of their normal levels, dealt severe blow to impoverished peasants. (b) The refusal of Government to scale down the taxations (c) The stagnation of prices of manufactured goods (Chandra, 1989). (d) Inability of Indian National Congress to do more for peasants.

Formation of Congress Socialist Party under some veteran congress leaders of socialist Ideology in 1934 following the suspension of Civil Disobedience movement coupled with the opening of its branch organization in Odisha in the form of *Utkal Provincial Shamyavadi Karmi Sangathan* (UPSKS) in the same year paved the way for heightened upward mobilization of peasants. The socialist leaders in Odisha tried tooth and nail to organize peasants on their class interest along Marxist ideology as a part of national politics of Congress Socialist party of India. As a result of which *Utkal Provincial Krushak Sangha* (UPKS) came in to being in 1935, and it, subsequently, acted as a provincial branch of All India Kishan Sabha (AIKS) formed in 1936 under some of the noted peasants leaders of the time (Nanda, 2008; Dwivedy, 1984). Hereafter the peasants were organized, integrated and mobilized under AIKS and UPKS in Indian and Odishan level respectively. In every respect it is concluded that the Communists never had strong hold in Kishan Sabha movements before 1940s in India.

But Odisha was an exception to it to a great extent. Peasants were mobilized along class line under the banner of UPKS led by then Congress Socialists which had subsumed 'the Communist' within its party. As the so called communists remained within the Congress Socialist Party for a long time particularly up to 1939 when controversy arose as to membership in Kishan Sabha in Odisha (Samaja, 1937), and tried hard to fetch a space for their activities. In fact the communists had been trying to indoctrinate the peasants in their ideology (Pradhan, 2007) while remaining in CSP. As pointed out by Ashish Mahapatra, while remaining a member of Congress Party and a legislator, Pranatanath Patnaik was openly implementing the mass program of Communist party in large areas of Khruda, Jatani, Chandaka, Bolgarh and Begunia, and the flag of Communist party was flying along with those of Congress and Krushak Sangha (Mahapatra, 1988). The communist leaders like Pranatanath Patnaik, Gokul Mohan Rai Chudamani, Parashuram Padhiary, Gangadhar Mishra, Laxman Patnaik, Raghunath Patnaik, Gangadhar Paikray, Sadhu Charan Mohanti, Baikunthanath Subudhi, Niranjan Jagaddeba, Upendra Nath Das, Damodar Mishra, Purna Chandra Mahanti and others carried on movements for abolition of *Sarbarakaki* system, repeal of Khas Mahal law and tenancy Act (Pradhan, 2007). For mobilizing peasants along communist line, the leaders like Sachidananda Routray, Ananta Patnaik distributed many booklets like *Raktashikha* in villages of coastal Odisha (Pradhan, 2007). The communist led peasant movements not only aimed at redressing the peasant's agrarian grievances but also overthrowing imperialism and capturing power by the peasants and labors. As early as 1938 an official report revealed that undisguised reference to a future mass no-tax campaign in conjunction with a possible general strike on railways and in key industries with a view to crippling the administration and ultimately drive away the Britishers out of India early, showed the penetration of communist ideology to the interiors of Orissa (Pradhan, 1996). The communist usually tried to meet the peasants challenges by inhibiting a rare militancy in them. Again the changing political circle in all Indian level made it easy for communists to participate in peasants' cause successfully.

Following the famous Dutt-Bardley thesis of 'united front' of Communist Party of India with the mainstreamed Indian National Congress (Bairathi, 1987), the political atmosphere in India witnessed, after a long hibernation, a radical transformation. On the eve of the election scheduled to be held on 1937, the congress as well as other political parties tried to mobilize the masses and canvassed for votes, which, in turn, resulted in strong class mobilization along specific class ideologies. The peasants, of those classes, were far ahead as far as the question of mobilization and their struggle for class interest were concerned which could only be contextualized in that socio-political situation in India. The dominance of left ideologies and their proponents within congress circle and their avowed objectives to organize peasants and workers along their class ideologies, the coming of congress socialist parties within Indian national congress, the united front of communist party of India and Indian national congress, and above all the coming up of All Indian Kishan Sabha in 1936 electrified the whole atmosphere. It was the peasants which snatched the maximum benefits out of that situation which were manifested in the congress election manifesto and the subsequent victory of congress leaders of left ideologies in 1937 elections.

The year nineteen thirty six, from an all Indian as well as Odishan perspectives, bore special characteristics as far as the question of peasants' mobilization was concerned. The members of UPSKS as well as UPKS held peasants

conferences in Cuttack and Puri (HPD, 1935; Pati, 1982), and mobilized the peasants on different burning peasant issues. They too gave that movement a national character by bringing peasant leaders of all Indian repute to address those peasant conferences. Large scale peasant disturbances in coastal Orissa characterized that phenomenon. The newly indoctrinated communist leaders following the directions of CPI, too, endeavored to lead peasants' movement in large scale. There were many instances to substantiate the fact that the communists in Odisha, despite remaining within the UPCC and UPSKS, led the peasant well and effectively, and one such big example was Odia peasants' conference in Kolkata held towards the end of 1936 under the Communist leadership though the Socialists were actively involved in it. Before stepping towards analyzing Communist characters in Odia Krushak Sammilani in Kolkata, the situation demands to have a general overview as to the burning peasants' issues of that period around which the communist mobilized the peasants.

III. Peasants' Issues

The peasant issues or demands that are potent enough to mobilize the peasantry into protest or revolt is always legitimate and rightful (Mukherjee, 2004). The analysis of the peasants' demands to the colonial government in Odisha in different peasants' conferences and meetings organized by UPCC and UPKS in time to time shows the following 'Issues' which mobilized the peasants.

First, the abolition of colonial imposed capitalistic farming system and its brain child ----*Zamindari* system. The abolition of *Zamindari* system as an agrarian institution side by side setting up of direct connection between the government and the rentee emerged as an eye-catching 'Issue' in the late nineteen thirties and early nineteen forties, which provided ample opportunity to the peasant leaders to mobilize peasant around this issue.

Secondly, exorbitant Government taxation, which had by that time emerged as one of the major issues around which peasant protests surfaced in many parts of India (Mukharjee, 2004). In Odisha, too, taxation on land or land rent assumed same attention in the peasants' agenda during that period. In the temporary settled estates rent was increased by the *zamindars* quite disproportionately due to lack of security of tenure and fixity of the rent by the government. In the permanently settled area, due to absence of any regulation from the government the *zamindars*, too, used to collect more rents. Apart from it, the frequency in the rent hike abnormally aggravated the situation. Besides this, many peasants' movements in Puri, Cuttack and Balasore districts planned and implemented the 'no-revenue' as well as 'no-tax' campaign during the Non Co-operation Movement and Civil Disobedience Movement periods (Pradhan, 2007).

Thirdly, Collection of the illegal dues or cess called *abwabs* by the *zamindars* besides the regulated rents had also been an important 'Issue'. T.E. Ravenshwa, the Commissioner of Odisha, wrote to the Board of Revenue that there were few, if any, who do not, more or less in some form or other, levy cesses over and above the settlement rents, and in excess of the legitimate demands due on agreements with their tenantry (POGB, 1871). Those cesses were collected on jungle, fishing pond, grazing land and other means. Apart from that, forced labor (*bethi*, *begari*) along with other illegal dues were forcefully collected and appropriated by *Zamindars* and his associates in large scale. So abolition of that system was also another important peasant issue of the time.

Fourthly, *Zamindar's* frequent interference in the question of tenants' occupancy rights over land they cultivated, the trees and ponds they had with their cultivated lands had also been an important 'issue' behind peasants' discontentment in colonial Odisha during that time.

Fifthly, Remission or exemption of rents or debts had also been another important peasants' issue around which peasants were mobilized in large scale. In other words widespread rural indebtedness, a resultant side effect of the newly imposed capitalistic agrarian system deemed to have been an important challenge in the way of development of peasantry (Maddox, 1900). *Sahukars*; *Mahajans*, *Sabarkars* (money lenders of the rural areas of the time) exploited the *raiya*s in different ways by giving loans to those needy at exorbitant rent due to absence of institutional mechanism for that purpose. The growing indebtedness were resulted in rampant transfer of lands to the hands of unproductive moneylenders leading to 'Sub-infeudation' and 'absentee-landlordism'. As a proof of the existence of widespread indebtedness in rural Odisha, the Bihar and Orissa Provincial Banking Enquiry Committee's investigation report 1929-30 put the figure of indebtedness of the 822,000 rural householders of coastal Odisha alone at 7 corers (Mishra, 2007). The gravity of this 'Issue' can be easily known provided we see the resolution of the first, second and third UPKS (Utkal Provincial Kishan Sabha) conferences. The pre-election Congress manifesto along with Kisan manifesto of 1936 in Odisha included this issue atop in the agenda. The peasants' campaign in Khurda, Puri, Jajpur, and Cuttack against the growing rural indebtedness in 1930s and 1940s certainly proves the intensity of this issue.

Sixthly, many peasants' disturbances in colonial Odisha occurred on the issue of abolition of "a chain of intermediaries" between the state and the actual rural cultivators. The gravity of the issue could well be assessed if one views the report published in the *Nabeen* newspaper which read as *raiya*s earnings like the course of a stream passed through the hands of the *zamindars*, the collectors and numerous other hands till it finds its way into the hands of the revenue secretary where it is lost to public view like the sacred Ganga concealed in the matted hairs of Shiva (Star of Utkal, 1912). The mere existence of so many intermediary interests in land below that of the *zamindars* viz., *padhans*, *mukadammas*, *Tankidars*, *Sarbarakaras*, *Lakhraj bahaldars*, *kharidars* etc.

contributed to make the development of agriculture and the living standard of the agriculturists depending on it, further lop-sided..... to a deplorable state (Mishra, 2007). Therefore, abolition of intermediaries was, too, a burning issue of the time around which peasants could be well mobilized.

In nutshell, Issues like abolition of *zamindari* system as an agrarian institutions, abolition of rigidity in the process of tax collection un regulatedly, abolition of collection of illegal cesses, ending presences of a chain of intermediaries, controlling widespread rural indebtness, stopping outright transfer of cultivated lands to the unproductive hands, and protesting against government inability and indifferences towards impoverished *mofussilies* in times of flood, drought and famine were prominent. It may be concluded that there were numerous peasant issues to be used as means for large scale peasant mobilization and disturbances to fulfill class interests.

IV. The Communists and Odia Krushak Sammilani

Against that background when peasants' mobilization was at its hey-day following the formation of Odisha as a separate state, successfully holding of Puri peasants' conference, and Jawaharlal Nehru's visit to Odisha, another Krushak Sammilani (peasants' conference) of Odia peasants was organized on 29 November 1936 at Elbert Hall in Calcutta (Naveen, 1936). This Samilani or Conference was attended by a galaxy of eminent Krushak Sangha, UPSKS and Communist leaders of Odisha like, Harekrushna Mahatab, Jagannath Das, Dwarikanatha Das, Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, Surendranath Dwivedy, Gour Chandra Das, Anata Patnaik, Pari Shankar Roy, Rajkrushna Bose, and Nabakrushna Choudhury (Naveen, 1936). The noted Communist leaders of that conference included Bhagabati Charan Panigrahi, Gour Chandra Das, Anata Patnaik, Pari Shankar Roy and many more leaders of public stature. The Willington Square of Calcutta witnessed a mass peasant rally who shouted "*Lal Jhanda Ki Joy*"(generally, Red flag is the symbolic flag of the communists), "*Majdur Kishan Ki Joy*", "*Duniyaka Majdur Ek ho Jao*"(slogans reflecting communist radical ideologies) while handling Red Flag with their hands. Besides peasants of Odisha, thousands of peasants of Bengal from *Beluta*, *Lilua Susuchi*, *Khijirpur*, *Shalimar* etc. attended the conference.

A number of well known communist leaders from Bengal were specially invited to that conference i.e., Mujaffar Ahmed, the great communist leader of Bengal and was convicted in Meerut conspiracy case, Niharendu Datta Majumdar, the leader of Bengal workers party, Sri Fazul-ul, member of Bengal provincial kishan committee, and many leaders of provincial trade union congress of Bengal ----Sudhir Pramanik, Devendrra Natha sen, Shyam Shundrar Huda, Srinath Pathak and Dayaram Bedi etc., The conference, basing upon basic tenants of communism—'equality', was presided over by a group of presidents----Nabakrushna choudhury, the chief president, Bhagabati Charana Panigrahi, Krupasindhu Khuntia and Narendra natha Majumdar. The aim and objectives of the conference could well be known from the Odia pamphlets circulated among the workers of different industries of Calcutta then, which bore the sign of three Communist leaders of Odisha--- Sarat Chandra Patnaik, Guru Charan Patnaik, and Aparti Charan Naik. That pamphlet clearly stated that the objective of the conference was to strengthen, invigorate and help in revolutionizing the fast developing peasant movement of Orissa by their active co-operation and generally to link up the working class movement in Calcutta and elsewhere the peasant movement at home (Nanda, 2008).

The Communist and Congress Socialist leaders mobilized the peasants differently on different issues. For examples, H. K. Mahatab tried to mobilize the half-slept peasant community with his heart touching speech which clearly defined the aims and objectives as well as the necessity of an organized peasant's movement in India as well as in Odisha. The aim of the organized, H. K. Mahatab said, peasant movement in Odisha was to arouse the long oppressed peasant community and to inhibit in them all the qualification of being a human being. Nabakrushna Chaudhury with the capacity of the chief president of the conference, following the toes of H.K. Mahatab lamented upon the gradual destruction of a self sufficient village economy of India and how the poor *raiya*s had to bear the brunt of its resultant forces. Going a step ahead, Mr. Chaudhury explained the cyclical process of the rise and development of colonialism by citing nexus between population explosion and industrialization. Gradual disappearance of handicraft industries from rural areas and the process of deindustrialization had pauperised the *raiya*s dependent upon that. The communist leaders of Odisha as well as of Bengal utilized that platform to awake the poor *raiya*s of Odisha. Apart from discussions, speeches and interactions, the conference passed many proposals to address the burning peasant issues of the time. The content of those resolutions, as illustrated in following lines, clearly manifested the radical communist ideology and communist plan of action in regard to peasant cause.

Proposals and Resolutions of the Proceedings of the Conference: All the resolutions passed in that conferences were twenty in number and they had already been passed in the conference at Puri organised by UPSKS in August, 1936 (Pati, 1992). The resolutions passed in that conferences reflecting communist ideologies were as follows (Naveen, 1936)

1. **Demands related to Land revenue:** The land revenue of the share-cropper peasants (*Bhaga chhasies*) should not be collected for the 1340,41,42,43 *sana* (the year1932, 33, 34, 35). Due to the losses of profit, the condition of the peasants had been precarious. So, one of the resolutions demanded that 50% of the land taxes should be waived. As to the faulty land revenue assessments, the conference

demanding that the taxes on income incurred on land should be imposed by taking a family of 5 members whose annual income should not exceed RS 250 as a single unit. Water tax should be reduced by 50%, and it was too demanded that immediate steps should be taken to provide water to far off lands by the government keeping in view the scarcity of water and non-availability of other alternative sources.

2. **Demands related to rural indebtedness:** In order to relieve the poor *raiya*s from indebtedness, independent enquiry should be undertaken by the government and proper remedial measures should be undertaken instantly. Apart from it, the government should stop the implementation of the Laws which allowed authorities collecting arrears for 5 years, and till that date all the arrears should be cancelled. Collecting more than 60% as interest (*sudha*) should be declared illegal. On the other hand the government should provide institutional mechanism for easy and timely credits to the farmers. The government should too ban the rampant use of compound interest. For the sake of the poor farmers non-institutional as well as non traditional sources of credit supply should be regulated with tough hand. The money lenders (*mahajan*s) should be registered and be given licence from the government to carry on their transactions.
3. **Demands related to tenancy reform:** In view of peasants interest, the leaders demanded, there should be a uniform Tenancy Legislation thorough out Odisha with following outstanding features (a) the *raiya*s and *sikmi raiya*s should have ownership on tilling land; (b) the *raiya*t should have complete independence of transferring ownership rights; (c) legal steps should be taken to prevent *benami* transfer (unauthorized transfer)/sub-infeudation;(d) the *raiya*s should have full right and independence on fish and trees that belonged to their land;(e) they should have right to make bricks, construct concrete home, dig well independently and it should be independent of zamindars; (f) in order to make a barren land fertile, if the initiative was not taken by *zamindars*, the *raiya*s should not give any extra dues to *zamindars* and should be given *patta*(deed of occupancy) without any difficulties; (g) in case of default of land dues, *zamindars* instead of other belongings of the *raiya*s, should seize only those lands whose revenue had not been deposited;(h) there should be adequate provisions in regard to the auction and selling of land according to the court decree so that the poor *raiya*t must get right and adequate compensation(i) the *zamindars* should not be given the right to certify the same procedure directing that transaction;(j) *raiya*s could deposit their land revenue through money order. In case of non acceptance of money order by the *zamindars*, the same should be returned to the *raiya*s as soon as possible; (k) stringent policy should be made by the government as to forced labour and illegal dues so that the *zamindars* demanding those dues could be easily penalized, and (l) the *raiya*s should have full rights to use jungle and uncultivated government land in the way they liked.
4. **Demand as to land revenue settlement:** Due to numerous difficulties, the government should nullify the permanent land revenue settlement forth with.
5. **Miscellaneous demands:** Apart from above demands as to agrarian reforms, there were numerous other demands which were of non-agrarian nature made in that conference. They were as follows:
 - i. The peasants in general and tenant-at-will in particular should be guaranteed just and adequate wage by the government leading to easy life style.
 - ii. The poor children of *raiya*t should be provided elementary education free of cost.
 - iii. Adequate policies should be made on god land and charitable land so that the revenue coming from that should be spent on managing schools and charitable hospitals.
 - iv. Import taxes on some of the indispensable articles of the day today life -----kerosene, matches, sugar etc., ---should be lifted to facilitate easy peasant life.
 - v. Cheap post cards should be provided even at the cost of 1 paisa per copy.
 - vi. In permanent settlement areas, adequate places should be arranged for storing cow dung.
 - vii. Fish taxes collected in coastal areas of Orissa by *zamindars* should be lifted forever.
 - viii. Adequate government provisions should be made to prepare fallow lands cultivatable by the government and provisions should also be made to water supply to the lands.
 - ix. Enactments made to diffuse peasants and labour movements in Orissa should be banned as soon as possible, and;
 - x. The poor peasants should be enabled to keep arms and ammunition with themselves for self protection and self defence.

V. Conclusion

Going against the propositions raised by Prof. Bipan Chandra on Indian Marxists as well as Indian Communists that the left parties in India had lacked theoretical as well as programmatic ideologies (Chandra, 1987) and their utter failure as an advocacy organization, this study has tried to prove the opposite to a great extent, and seldom can anybody deny this fact. Despite being a late comer to the political arena, the Communists in Odisha became successful in raising peasants' questions as was done by Congress Socialists and Right wing elements in Utkal

Provincial Congress party. Congress party composed of elite leaders, as it was usually dubbed, was forced by the Communists in Odisha as was in India to raise radical agrarian issues in its own party agenda as well as a policy of defending peasantry from further exploitation. The Communists in colonial Odisha also, in combination with the Congress Socialists, organized peasants along their class ideologies, helped integrating peasants' issues with mass issues, and strengthened the organizational base of UPKS. The Communists too give an inter-regional/intra-national configuration to the peasants' struggle in Odisha by organizing a big peasant conference in Kolkata with the cooperation of noted Communist leaders of the then Bengal. It was those Communist leaders who raised newer agrarian questions and demanded its instant and effective solutions in an atmosphere where there was an intra-congress controversy as to independent existence of *Krushak Sanghas*. However, unlike the Bolsheviks, it neither lacked extreme radical notions, nor did it aim at establishing the dictatorships of the peasants, but it tried its best to procure maximum benefits for peasantry in a hegemonic colonial rule. In nutshell the Communists at its formative stage actively participated in peasants' mobilization in post-Civil Disobedience movement period in Odisha, organized UPSKS as well as UPKS and provided a batch of dedicated leaders to peasants to bargain with Congress and to snatch their legitimate rights from the colonial governments.

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