

Selection of a Design and Project Management Consultant (DPMC) for Museum,  
Curation and Allied Works of National Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum at  
Garudeshwar, Rajpipla, Narmada District



## **Development Support Agency of Gujarat**

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**Tender Drawings and Details for references**

**For**

**Selection of a Design and Project Management Consultant  
(DPMC) for Museum, Curation and Allied Works of National  
Tribal Freedom Fighters Museum at Garudeshwar, Rajpipla,  
Narmada District**

**Development Support Agency of Gujarat**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Birsa Munda Bhavan, Gandhinagar 382010, Gujarat**

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## 7 Concept Note for Gallery Design

### The Bhoomkal movement of the Bastar communities under Jannayak Veer Gundadhur

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#### INTRODUCTION

The Adivasi communities of Bastar pursued a serene symbiotic life with the nature. The British established themselves in the eastern part of India in 1765 and by 1774 had begun moving towards Bastar. It was only after 1910's Bhoomkal movement that the British managed to gain control of Bastar, showing the resistance of the Adivasis against the East India Company and later the British Crown. The Bhoomkal of 1910 was the tenth and final war engaged by the Bastar communities under the able leadership of Gundadhur of Dhurva community.

The central features of the Bhoomkal movement were the well-defined and distributed leadership roles between the Royal Family of Bastar and the communities of Bastar. The King was the Chief priest of Maa Danteshwari, who was the Kul Devi of the royal family and was revered by the communities of Bastar. According to one of the many Dant Katha (folk stories) of Bastar, it is believed that the name Bastar was derived from the clothes of Maa Danteshwari.

The name of the movement, 'Bhoomkal' is derived from two words of Halbi (language) dialect; 'Bhoom' meaning 'Bhoomi' or land and 'Kaal' (काल) meaning 'fight', i.e. fight for Jal, Jungle and Jameen. Halbi is the lingua franca of Bastar region.<sup>1</sup>

#### ABOUT THE COMMUNITY

**Dhurva community** derive their name from "Dhur" meaning original descendants of the land and is also the title for the head of the village. The community is also known as '**Kangar Dhoharel**' (कांगार धोहरेल) **which means being original descendants of Kangar valley. The Dhurva are the 'mulnivasi of the Kangar valley'**. The Dhurva community is also colloquially known as 'Parja' meaning subjects of Bastar. The community is renowned for its archery and is expert in hunting activities.

The Dhurva practice indigenous religion and worship Bhima Devi or Dokra Devi (Goddess for Monsoon), Dongar Devi or Pahadi Devi (Goddess for Mountains), Paat Dev (Goddess for protection during Journey), Masaan Dev (Goddess of Death), Peela Bhairam, Mavli Mai (MatruDevi or Mother Goddess), Banjaran Mai, Shitla Mai. The primary festivals of the Dhurva are Amus Tyohar, Dhan Nuva Tyohar, Diyari Tyohar, Aamaanuva Tyohaar. The Dhurva are culturally rich in dance, music, musical instruments and culinary traditions.

The Dhurva speak 'Dhurvi' language which comes under the Dravidian family of Indian languages. Their economy is dependent of agriculture, forest produce collection, basketry and working as agricultural laborers.

## **ARRIVAL OF BRITISH**

### **About Bastar**

The Kingdom of Bastar was an independent kingdom stretching from Kanker and Raipur in the North, Jeypore of Odisha in east, Bhadrachalam in South, Chanda and Nizam of Hyderabad in the west. The area of Bastar being 13,062 square miles was twice as large in comparison to any princely state of Central provinces. Geographically, Bastar was a dominated by forests and surrounded by high mountain and rivers, making it rich in natural resources which fulfilled the lives of the Adivasi communities calling it home.

### **British gain control of Bastar**

British made several attempts to establish their control over Bastar. As early as 1774, Dariyav Dev of Bastar princely state sought assistance from Marathas and British to defeat his brother Ajmer Singh for the throne. Raghuji Bhonsle received Takoli in return for his assistance. On 11<sup>th</sup> December 1853, Raghuji Bhonsle died in Nagpur and on 13<sup>th</sup> March 1854, British took over the state of Nagpur. The Zamindars of Nagpur including Bastar became subservient to the British. Officially, on 1<sup>st</sup> February 1855, Bastar came under British control and on the same day Charles Elliot was declared the Deputy Commissioner of Chhattisgarh.

Charles Elliot prepared a detailed report on Bastar and submitted it on 27<sup>th</sup> May 1856. On 11<sup>st</sup> March 1862, Viceroy granted the certification to the right of adoption in absence of a natural heir, as long as they remained loyal to the British crown.

In 1865, the Bastar kingdom was downgraded and converted into a zamindari class and further reduction of powers were implemented.

### **Introduction of British Policies**

In 1867, the British introduced the 'Mal Guzari' settlement in Chhattisgarh, through which the tax rates were fixed for five years for all cultivators and Malguzars. The rates were as follows:

Rs. 2.20 in Cash

2.5 Khandi paddy

5 Payli Urad

2 Sers of Oil

In 1877, the settlement was increased and fixed for ten years and in 1898 was increased and fixed at Rs. 4 to Rs. 7 per holding.

On 18<sup>th</sup> December 1870, the King of Bastar accepted being a governor under the administration of Chief Commissioner of Central Provinces. King agreed to pay an annual Takoli (tax) of Rs. 3056.

In 1891, the British introduced the Indian Forest Act of 1878 through which several of the forests were demarked for protection and reserved. The British appointed Thekedaars to maintain the forest regions which clearly was implemented from an economic perspective.

### **Dynasty of Bastar 1910's**

The kingdom of Bastar was being ruled by the Kakatiya dynasty which was established by Raja Annam Dev.

The British began to intrude deeper into the politics of the princely state after the death of Raja Bheram Dev (1853-1891). The British took over the administration of Bastar stating that Rudrapratap Dev, the heir of Raja Bheram Dev was a minor. In 1908, Rudrapratap Dev was given the throne but without any governing powers.

The traditional practice of the princely state of Bastar was that the Diwan was appointed by the King but since British had incognito powers, they began appointing 'Superintendents' in addition to the designation of Diwan.

	<b>Raja Mahipal Singh 1800-1842</b>	
<b>Raja Bhopal Dev 1842-1852</b>	<b>Dalgajan Singh</b>	<b>Niranjan Singh</b>
<b>Raja Bheram Dev 1853-1891</b>	<b>Lal Kalindra Singh Diwan 1881-1886</b>	
<b>Raja Rudrapratap Dev 1891-1921</b>	<b>Kunwar Arjun Singh</b>	

### **Response of the Adivasis of Bastar**

The intrusion of British caused breakdown in the prevalent systems preferred and revered by the Adivasis. Similarly in Bastar, the communities showcased resistance to the alien powers including armed struggles against both the East India Company and the British Crown. Below are the movements which occurred in Bastar:

(01) Halba Movement	1774-1779
(02) Bhopalpatnam Movement	1795
(03) Paralkot Movement	1819
(04) Tarapur Movement	1842
(05) Lingagiri Movement	1856
(06) Koyi Movement	1859
(07) Meriya (Meliya) Movement	1842-1863
(08) Muriya Movement	1876
(09) Rani Cho Ris <sup>2</sup>	1878-1882
(10) Bhoomkal Movement	1910

The movements of Bastar were fought by the Adivasis under leadership of non-Adivasi Raja's or zamindars while the 1910 Bhoomkal movement was led by the Adivasis under Gund Dhur making it a unique indigenous mass movement.

#### **About Lal Kalindra Singh**

Lal Kalindra Singh was the son of Dalganjan Singh, the second son of Raja Mahipal Singh. Lala Kalindra Singh served as the Diwan of Kingdom of Bastar under Raja Bheram Dev.

Lal Kalindra Singh was born in Tadoki village of Antagarh tehsil in 1863. He inherited the Jagir of 35 villages Kondagaon which was a tax-free land. He served as Diwan for the kings of Bastar from 1881-1886. Lal Kalindra Singh lost his position as Diwan after the arrival of British. Lal Kalendra Singh is considered to be the architect of the Bhoomkal movement of 1910's.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> October 1909, on Occasion of Dussera festival; Lal Kalinder Singh organized a meeting of Manjhis during **Dussera** to convince them to overthrow the British. Diwan Singh was a respected figure for the tribals of Bastar. He created a network of overt and covert leadership for the movement. Gundadhur of Netanaar became the Chief leader of the rebellion and the 46 parganas were given in charge of leaders such as:

<b>Region</b>	<b>Leader</b>
Antagarh	Aytu Mahra
Kondagaon	Bhagi

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Dantewara	Dinda and Kurati Masa
Bijapur	Ramnath Singh
Sukma Zamindari	Bokdi Bori and Daniya
Konta	Dhaniram Halba
Indrawati Valley	Roda Peda
Jagdalpur	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Sitadhar Mahra and Kodra Gadba (Kachora)</li> <li>● Jagdeva Marar and Milap Dhakar (Kesarpal)</li> <li>● Muchiya (Marpal)</li> <li>● Kondariya (Kaikagarh)</li> <li>● Harichalki and Buddhu Maji (Agarwara)</li> <li>● Hunnam (Padmera)</li> <li>● Narsingh and Markami Masa (Chitrakote)</li> <li>● Suku (Raykera)</li> <li>● Jaysingh (Jaitgiri)</li> </ul>
Bastar	Jogi
Barsur	Kodhiya Manjhi and Jakra Pedda

## **CAUSES OF THE BHOOMKAL MOVEMENT**

### **Thekedari System**

The British administration introduced the Thekedari System in Bastar where in villages in their entirety were leased out to individuals to extract money from the Adivasis and the residents of villages. The Thekedar enhanced the rates of rents, leading to alienation of lands for the Adivasis upon failure to pay their dues.

### **Forest Policy, 1908**

In 1908, Diwan Panda Baijnath implemented a new 'Forest Policy' which declared a 6400 sq. Km. area as reserved forest out of 9600 sq. Km of the princely state of Bastar. This policy was interpreted by forest dwelling communities as direct attack on their access to forests and financial independence which depended mostly on forests.

The law destroyed all rights of the Adivasis on the forests including access to forests produce was completely prohibited. The Adivasis who depended on the forests for their many requirements were completely alienated and neglected. From traditional *Daatun* (toothbrush) to traditional *jadi-buti* (medicines) were no longer accessible for the Adivasis.

In 1889, the Diwan had announced that the land including the forests were property of the kingdom. The kingdom should receive a share (revenue or tax) of all or any economic activities made from the minor forest produces by its people. Since the Adivasis were not able to pay for trading the minor forest

produce, the trade eventually went under the control of the kingdom.

The prohibition on forests, dealt another major blow to the Adivasis who undertook Jhum (shifting) cultivation in the forests. Their traditional agriculture practice depended on forest lands was now lost to them and they lost their source of sustenance.

### **Forest Policy and Livelihood issues**

The British forest policy gained control over forests for their commercial needs. This caused a direct effect on the livelihood dependencies of Adivasis communities.

In 1870, the Raja of Bastar entered into another treaty with the British in which he agreed to accept all future forest related policies and forest rights introduced by the British. The British had put substantial pressure on the Raja to accept these clauses in the treaty. The British required the timber from the forests for their Railway project in the region while the other reason was making a profit by leasing the forests to the Thekedars.

In 1861, the British had transported 30,000 logs of timber to Rajmundhary for the 'Upper Godavari Works' and 'Madras Railway'.

In 1897, the work to begin sleeper coaches in Railways began in Jagdalpur in Kokavada. There was a large-scale deforestation for this purpose.

In 1906, the Bastar kingdom contracted Madras Timber Company for One Lakh sleepers and Messers Beckett & Company for another 25,000 sleepers. This earned a lot of profit for the kingdom.

### **Distillation of Mand**

According to a religious practice, the Adivasi communities of Bastar had to distill their traditional brew 'Mand' domestically and only then it could be offered to their family deities. But the introduction of the Excise Rule of 1908, the system of domestic distillation of Mand was banned.

The Adivasi communities felt that offering Mand obtained from any other method would enrage their deities. This new policy hurt the sentiments of the Adivasi people and was considered another intrusion of the British.

### **Forest Policy and Agriculture**

The economy and livelihood of Adivasi communities of Bastar revolved around forests. The traditional form of agriculture practiced by the communities of Bastar was known as 'Penda', which was now inaccessible due to restriction imposed on the access to forests.

### **Excise Act, 1908**

The Excise Act of 1908 introduced by the British imposed restrictions of the culture, heritage and traditional worldview of the Adivasi communities of Bastar.

### **Education Policy**

The first schools established by British administration in Bastar were in 1886-87 and by 1910, there were 60 schools. The British employed the Adivasi children for the construction of school buildings without paying any monetary remuneration.

The western education imparted in these schools, by teachers employed from outside brought about changes among the Adivasi youth. The British form of education began creating rifts between the children and their parents.

### **Ghotul policies**

The Diwan Panda Baijnath was determined to educate the kingdom and imposed forced educational policies. The Adivasis were not forced into education without any prior explanation for its importance. The Adivasi children were taken away from their homes and were being taught foreign languages. This new imposed education system was very different to the traditional ‘**Ghotul**’ education system of the Adivasis where the youth would learn the modalities of their society. The new education system and the Ghotul were very different to each other. The Adivasi who resisted the new educational system were put through severe atrocities. They were hung from trees, had chili powder thrown into their eyes and were severely beaten. The teachers in these schools were non-Adivasis who hated the Adivasis and exploited them economically. The forced education activities of Panda Baijnath became a major cause for the eventual resistance movement in Bastar.

The British believed that the Ghotul’s were at the center of all the Anti-British conspiracies and hence they made efforts to curb and put an end to the traditional Ghotuls.

### **Seva-Bethia Policy**

Begar labor policy was a common practice forced upon the Adivasis, known as Seva-Bethia policy in Bastar. In 1876, the demand for Begar labor increased due to the increase in government machinery in the region. In 1898, the Adivasis were made to commit severe Begar labor work for the construction of road from Raipur to Jagdalpur.

The Adivasi were often forcibly employed to carry goods, cleaning police stations, providing free forest produce, building houses for officers, etc. The British officers would demand meat, rice, etc. during their stay. The British officers would also engage in sexual exploitation of the women and made physical beating of the Manjhi of the village a common practice to showcase their power.

### **British Policies During Famines**

During this phase severe famines hit the region in 1899-1900 and in 1907-08. The impact of the famines was devastating for the living. The lands which were leased to the Thekedars increased their demands



for revenue increased while the collection methods were oppressive. The conditions turned worse when people even started to sell their women and children to survive. Produces from forests and hunting was not possible due to the forest prohibition. Inflation was ever increasing. In 1890s, one rupee could buy 50 kg rice but by 1900s it went down to just 8 kgs. Even during this famine, the Adivasis were forced to engage in Begar. There were also many acts of indecent behavior against Adivasi women by non-Adivasis and government officers.

### **Seeds are sowed for Bhoomkal**

The Adivasis approached Raja Rudra Pratap Dev to register a complaint against Diwan Panda Baijnath, but here they too they received no aid. They later went to seek help from the step-mother of Raja, Rani Suvarna Kunwar and her cousin & the former Diwan Lal Kalendra Singh who gave them some assurances. In 1910, the Adivasis met them again. In this meeting, Lal Kalendra told them armed struggle against the King and British will become eventual. After giving the thought a brief period of rethinking, preparations were undertaken for an armed resistance.

Lal Kalendra Singh, Kunwar Bahadur Singh, Murat Singh Bakshi, Bala Prasad Najeer, and Veer Singh Baidar and few other officials associated with the royal court began meeting regularly in their mansions in which leaders of Adivasi Dhurva and Madiya communities were also invited. The most prominent among the Adivasi leaders was Dhurva Gundadhur from Netanaar village.

It was decided that Veer Singh Baidar who was Maaldar of Gadhiya village had good relations with the Madiya Adivasis agreed to prepare them for the upcoming resistance while Gundadhur would prepare the Dhurva.

### **Dhurva Baagha Dhur alias Gundadhur**

Dhurva 'Baagha' Dhur was born in Gopapadar Netanaar village of Bastar district. He belonged to the Dhurva community and led the Adivasis communities of Bastar during the Bhoomkal movement of 1910's. He was just 35 years of age when the Bhoomkal movement began.

### **Gundadhur – The Name**

The name Gundadhur was an exonym with two distinct meanings. The British version emerged from 'Gunda' meaning 'Goon' and 'Dhur' meaning Mukhiya. Dhur was a title or designation meaning Mukhiya or leader of village. The second version is from Dhurvi language of the Dhurva community, wherein 'Gunda' meant 'soil'; hence defining Gundadhur in Dhurvi would state 'Leader of Soil'.<sup>3</sup>

### **Rise of Gundadhur**

Lal Kalindra Singh was informed about Gundadhur while the former was visiting 'Mauli Padar' (Mavlidar) a neighboring village close to Netanaar. Lal Kalindra Singh was looking for an able leader

from within the Adivasi people who could lead the movement.

In October 1909, Lal Kalendra Singh invited Gundadhur, Debridhur and Khodiyadhur to Tadoki of Antagarh tehsil and declared Gundadhur as the leader of the Adivasis for the movement.

Lal Kalindra Singh gave Gundadhur his Chola (long coat) and Khadak (dagger) as symbol of participation of the royal family through Lal Kalindra Singh. Subsequently, Gundadhur becomes the central leader of all the aggrieved Adivasi communities of Bastar against the British regime.<sup>4</sup>

Gundadhur was an inspiring orator while being the Siraha (shaman/priest) of his village he provided his people both physical and mental strength during the movement.

### **Bhoomkal's 'Dara Miri'**



The headquarters of the movement was Rani Dongri hill in Tadoki. Here the leaders would meet to devise the plans for the movement.

Here, it was decided to create an insignia which can become a secretive message to prepare for movement. An insignia was crafted combining specific articles such as Teer & Dhanush (Bow & Arrow), Lal Mirchi (Red Chilly), Aam ki Tehni (Branch of Mango Tree), and Mitti (Soil). This insignia was then carried from Kolar, Kosronda, Sattighat, Sarandi, Hurtarai, Kaleparas, Kodagaon, Rawdhat, Masbaras, Temrupani and other villages. The insignia carriers chose to early morning around 4.00 a.m. to avoid alerting the British.

#### Symbolic meaning of each article:

Mango branch a notice of a general meeting

Red Chilly                      urgent deliberation for important matters under consideration

Arrow                              Symbol for Fight

The insignia was colloquially known as '**Dara Miri**'.

### **The Deaths of Kanakdai and Manakdai**

Kanakdai and Manakdai, were the two sisters of Gundadhur. One day, the two sisters had gone into the forest to collect leaves on occasion of '**Diyaari**' festival. The two sisters were singing Dhurvi songs while conducting their work. A British officer perched atop a scaffold heard their songs and decided to track

them down.

The British officer upon reaching the two sisters began misbehaving and engaged in blatant molestation. Kanakdai, the elder sister managed to aid in the escape of the younger sister Manakdai, so that she can call their brother for their rescue.

The British officer continued to molest Kanakdai, who eventually committed suicide by a knife which most Dhurva women wear in their hair. Meanwhile, Manakdai had returned with Gundadhur to the location where Kanakdai was lying dead on the ground. The sight of the dead body of her elder sister was too much to bear for Manakdai who also died.

An enraged Gundadhur chased the British officer through the forest. The chase was over near Kesharpadar village where the British officer managed to escape with his life. Gundadhur could only manage to strike the cap of the officer, and since that day he vowed to always oppose the British rule and liberate Bastar from their atrocious regime.

### **The Oath of Maa Danteshwari**

The Adivasi leaders and their community folk in the presence of the leaders of the movement like Gundadhur, Debridhur, Khodiyadhur, Lal Kalindra Singh took an oath before Maa Danteshwari before initiating the Bhoomkal movement.

## **EVENTS OF BHOOMKAL, 1910**

### **Mass Mobilization**

Gundadhur was ably supported his close associates of which Debridhur was a close confidant. Khodiyadhur of Mauli Padar, Madia Manjhi of Tokapal, Muriya Buddhu Manjhi of Tokapal, Muriya Donda Pedda <sup>5</sup>(Poonem) of Pusnar, Bantu Dhurwa (Birth name: Kuta Baghel) of Kokawada, Harchand Naik of Ransargipal, Jakarkat Bhatra of Chote Deora, Roda Pedda of Gaddhmiri were very important leaders of the movement.

Gundadhur had embarked on undertaking a mass mobilization in Bastar. With assistance from his close associates the 'Dara Miri' insignia was the message of Bhoomkal was conveyed to every village within Bastar.

### **Three-Pronged Strategy**

The first strategy of the Bhoomkal leaders was to initiate Bhoomkal on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1910 as a suddenly conducted surprised attack, which would enable the Bhoomkaleya's to kill and capture the officers.

The second strategic action to be executed as planned was to sever the telephone system and shut of post officers to disconnect Bastar from the outside world.

The third strategy was to control access and demolish roads to and from Bastar so that military assistance cannot be sought by the present British military and civil officers.

### **The Bhoomkal Ignites Early**

The discontent and resentment towards the British were paramount and the initiation of actions to overthrow the British and reclaim their homeland led to initiation of Bhoomkal prematurely on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February instead of the designated 6<sup>th</sup> February 1910.

### **The Initial Attacks**

On 1<sup>st</sup> February 1910, the Bhoomkaleya's undertook actions to besiege and capture Panda Baijnath the Diwan of Bastar state.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> February 1910, Bantu Dhurva and Samnath Dhakad of Kokawada lead the plunder of the granaries Pushpal bazaar village in Bastar and distributed all the grains among the people of the region.

On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1910, the Chingpal bazaar was attacked under leadership of Khodiyadhur of Mauli Padar. The Bhoomkaleya's also target the British government to execute, capture and drive them away from Bastar.

On 4<sup>th</sup> February 1910, the Kukanar bazaar is attacked and the police post is burnt down.

On 5<sup>th</sup> February 1910, the Karanji bazaar is attacked and capture which was under the control Kuwar Bahadur Singh, the step-brother of Raja Rudra Pratap Dev.

### **Parallel Events**

On 31<sup>st</sup> January 1910, Panda Baijnath had received information of a possible movement against the government. He had heard of the passage of Dara Miri in Adivasi villages.

On 6<sup>th</sup> February 1910, Panda Baijnath was returning to Jagdalpur after his meeting with Political Agent of Chhattisgarh Mr. De Bret in Bijapur when he received news regarding looting in Puspaal, Chhingpaal, Kukanaar, and Karanji villages. The Adivasis had beaten to death a trader Noorsab Khan in Kukanar who had committed several atrocities against them.

Panda Baijnath decided to escape from Bastar. He reached Raipur via Bhopalpatnam.

### **Bhoomkal Divas, 6<sup>th</sup> February 1910 and later events**

On 6<sup>th</sup> February 1910, an open mass action was executed by residents of Bastar against the British and their collaborators. Dhurva, Madiya, Muriya, Halba, Bhatra, Gond, Dorla were the Adivasi communities which participated in the Bhoomkal. Mahara, Panara, Dhakad, Ghadva, Mirgaan, Banjara, Raut, Sundi, etc. were the non-tribal communities which also participated in the movement.

The Adivasis burnt, looted and destroyed houses of the Mahajans, schools, and government buildings. British and native officers including their family members were killed. The plunder and killings continued relentlessly till 13<sup>th</sup> February 1910. Policemen, traders, school teachers, forest officers, government officers and non-Adivasis began to escape and seek refuge in Jagdalpur.

On 7<sup>th</sup> February 1910, a grand meeting was held in Gidam to openly spread the message of Bhoomkal and call for the end of British rule in Bastar. The meeting was presided by Maharani Subaran Kunwar. A call for establishment of 'Muriya Raj' was heard echoing in Gidam. The Bhoomkaleya's advanced from Gidam towards Barsoor.

On 8<sup>th</sup> February 1910, the Bastar Bazar was besieged. The Bhoomkaleya's executed extensive cutting of wire lines in the region. Gundadhur captured and Kutru village and declared Zamindar Sardar Bahadur Nizam Shah under Muriya Raj

On 10<sup>th</sup> February 1910, Schools in Marenga, Tokapal and Karanji were attacked and burnt down. The attack on Schools was an intriguing aspect of the Bhoomkal movement.

At the center of Adivasi worldview of Bastar, were the traditional community led-education system through the Ghotuls. Due to the forced reform policy initiated by the British and Panda Baijnath by establishing western school systems to shut down the Ghotuls, there were extensive attacks on the schools during Bhoomkal.

Between 9<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> February 1910, all postal services from Raipur, Dhamtari, Bhopalpatnam, Bijapur, Dantewada and Kutroo towards Jagdalpur were being confiscated near Jhumka and Tokapaal.

On 12<sup>th</sup> February 1910, British officer Geyer and Duke met at Keshkal where they were surrounded by the Bastar officers since the movement erupted.

On 13<sup>th</sup> February 1910, Geedam was raided and schools were burnt down.

### **Gundadhur occupies South-West Bastar**

The events between 1<sup>st</sup> February to 13<sup>th</sup> February had enabled the Bhoomkaleya's under Gundadhur to occupy and control the entire region South-West of Bastar.

The Bhoomkaleya's had besieged Jagadalpur for a period of 12 days and a general feeling of Muriya Raj under a people's king was anticipated by Bastar.

### **Gundadhur continues Mobilization**

Gundadhur shifted his attention towards the Abhijmad region in the north-west of Bastar to continue mobilizing the people of Bastar. He began convening meetings in the Ghotuls to specifically imbibe the consciousness of nationalism among the youth of the region.

Ganga Munda

### **The British Response**

On 7<sup>th</sup> February 1910, Raja Rudra Pratap Singh on advice of Inspector Jagannath Prasad issued a telegram to the Political Agent of Chattisgarh Mr. De Bret and Chief Commissioner of Nagpur requesting expedited assistance to tackle the situation in Bastar.

The British Military had arrived in Bastar around the same time when the Bhoomkaleya's had captured Dantewada. British had deployed the Punjab Battalion along with G.W. Gayer, the Superintendent of Police and B.V. Drury from Jagdalpur.

### **Massacre by British Forces**

The British Forces were journeying from Jagdalpur towards Bastar in automated vehicles, The arrival of a vehicle in Bastar was a rare feature. A group of non-combatant Adivasis arrived to see the march of the British forces. The British officers construed their presence as an attack and ordered to open fire leading to death of several people. Officer Gayer trampled the people and issued orders to loot the wealth of the people in the vicinity and inhumane compromised the chastity of several Adivasi girls.

### **The Battle at Khadag Ghat**

On 16<sup>th</sup> February 1910, the British army under Gayer after crossing Asana village reached Khadag Ghat on the river Indravati. Five groups of Bhoomkaleya's personally led by Gundadhur were prepared to attack the British army.

Officer Gayer had served as an administrator in Bastar and was aware of the cultural beliefs of the Adivasi communities. It was essential for the British forces to cross the river Indravati without any attack from the Bhoomkaleya's stationed across the river.

Gayer enticed the Adivasi into undertaking the promise on 'Mati Kiriya' (Oath of Soil), through which he claimed both sides would undertake a ceasefire until the British forces cross the river. Gayer was aware that once the Adivasi undertake the Mati Kiriya, they would never break their word. He pretended to eat the soil and fed soil to the Adivasis as well, effectively executing the temporary truce.

Gayer duped the tribals using Mati Kiriya, and managed to cross the river along with his battalion without any hindrance. As soon as they arrived on the shore, Gayer ordered opening fire on the Bhoomkaleya's.

A fierce battle ensued between the two forces, while the British were trying to cross across the river Indravati. The battle was so fierce that it is said that the river Indravati's water red.

Gundadhur was injured on his head during the battle while several of his associates were killed. The government records state that Adivasi warriors namely Ayatu, Mehra, Kapa, Kola, Edka, Masa, Teka, Bhima, Hunga, Vijja, Lakka and Bodi were among the dead. <sup>6</sup>

Gundadhur made a conscious decision to retreat and sought the cover of mountains and forests.

### **British Forces Arrive in Jagdalpur**

After Khadag Ghat incident Officer Gayer and Political Agent De Bret arrived in Jagdalpur and ten days later successfully recaptured Jagdalpur. The Bhoomkaleya's despite the setback did not waiver. They continued their retaliation. Political Agent De Bret issued a request for further reinforcements.

### **Negotiations between Bhoomkaleya's and British Military**

De Bret opined that the movement was owing to the policies of forced labor, restrictions on forests and injustices committed by the administrators of the royal court.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1910, De Bret entered into negotiations with Lal Kalindra Singh and put pressure on the latter to reveal the names of the Adivasi leaders. But, on his part Lal Kalindra Singh remained loyal to the movement.

On 22<sup>nd</sup> February 1910, De Bret realizing that his negotiation tactic had failed ordered the enforcement of Penal Policy and deployed military forces to Bastar

### **Reinforcements are Deployed by British**

On 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of February 1910, additional forces of military had arrived in Jagdalpur with a substantial arsenal to tackle the Bhoomkal movement.

The deployment included 200 strong Police from Central Provinces, 150 soldiers from Madras Presidency and 170 men of Punjab Battalion

### **British announce reward for capture**

The British government announced a reward of Rs. 10,000 for capture of Gundadhur and Rs. 5000 for capture of Debridhur.

### **Gundadhur shifts his base to Alnaar (Ulnar)**

Gundadhur and his Bhoomkaleya's had suffered two setbacks including at Khadag Ghat and in Jagdalpur. He had lost several brethren in the two battles.

But a resolute Gundadhur decided to regroup and pivoted towards Alnaar about 7 kms away from his native village Netanaar. Once in Alnaar, he continued to unite people and mobilize them for the movement. He planned to conscript further and undertake a sudden attack on the British army in Jagdalpur.

### **The decisive battle at Alnaar**

Gayer utilized his experience of Bastar and coerced Sonu Manjhi of Agarwada pargana to reveal the plans and location of Gundadhur and his forces.

Sonu Manjhi led the British Army under command of Gayer towards Alnaar which was 7 kms from Netanar in the cover of night. The British army reached the location where Gundadhur was camped. Complacency and faith that they were winning the war, the Bhoomkaleya's were unaware and unprepared for an attack during night.

On 26<sup>th</sup> February 1910, the alarming sounds of an attack were sounded in the camp of the Bhoomkaleya's. They were under siege, but they decided not to surrender and gave slogans, 'We Will Fight'.

The skies were filled with a barrage of arrows while an unrelenting hail of bullets flew from the other side. Guns won over bows, leading to a big defeat for the Bhoomkaleya's.

In the battle, 21 warriors of the Bhoomkaleya's achieved martyrdom while about 500 were captured. Madia Manjhi and Debridhur were among the captured while Gundadhur and Khodiyadhur managed to elude capture and escape

The betrayal of Sonu Manjhi was disastrous for the Adivasis and it has been recorded through songs of the community.

### **Arrest of Lal Kalinder Singh**

On 26<sup>th</sup> February 1910, Lal Kalinder Singh along and 15 associate leaders were arrested by British near Jagdalpur. Later, the British army raided the house of Singh and burnt it down. The British army further engaged in looting and burning the property of the leaders. The British also engaged in obscene activities against women. Officer Gayer, had commanded his soldiers to, '*Kill those who become an obstacle in the way*', leading in the baseless random murdering of any protesting Adivasi.

### **Further Atrocities by British forces**

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 1910, the British surrounded a conference of the Adivasis at Naya Munda Pond. During this event, 511 Adivasis were arrested while several were killed. Arrested individuals who admitted being part of the movement were expelled from state.

On 28<sup>th</sup> February Political Agent De Bret issued orders for the return of Madras Police to return. On their way back, the Madras Police looted and destroyed the city of Bijapur.

### **The Hanging of Debridhur and Madia Manjhi**

On 28<sup>th</sup> February 1910, two days after the Battle of Alnaar; British brought the captured leaders



Debridhur and Madia Manjhi to Jagdalpur where they were publicly hanged from a tamarind tree in the Gol bazaar of Jagdalpur.

### **Gundadhur attacks Jagdalpur**

Gundadhur and Khodiyadhur regroup after the Battle of Alnaar, which they had managed to escape. They formed a strong force and undertook a daring attack on Jagdalpur. The Battle cost very little loss of life for the Bhoomkaleya's but about British military personnel were killed. Gundadhur collected weapons from the attack and successfully returned back to safety. Gundadhur had relocated to Kailash Gufa (Caves) near Netanaar where the arsenal was stored.<sup>7</sup> Khodiyadhur relocated to Khodiya Uideer (waterfall) near Topar village which had many caves where he could seek shelter.

### **Gundadhur and Khodiyadhur continue Chaapa Maar**

Gundadhur and Khodiyadhur continued the movement for three months despite the losses they faced after the 26<sup>th</sup> February Battle of Alnaar. Gundadhur had earlier sent away his family to Odisha before the initiation of the movement. Gundadhur had by now shifted his tactics to Chaapa Maar (Guerilla Warfare).

Gundadhur utilized his knowledge of the local geography to continue his struggle against the British and made the Kupaal Dongri mountains near his native village Netanaar.

### **The British Military execute final suppression**

On 6<sup>th</sup> March 1910, the British deploy their reinforced army to suppress the Bhoomkal movement. The British divide their forces as follows:

<b>Officer</b>	<b>Charge</b>	<b>Region</b>
Captain H.L. Randall	Officer of Punjab Regiment and Madras Police	Parja Area (Dhurva)
C. Middleton Steward	Senior Police Officer	Dandami-Madiya Area
B.W. Drury	-	Chote Dongar Area
J. A. Duke	Assistant District Superintendent	Dorla Area

The British aim was to eliminate the leaders and remnant participants of the Bhoomkal Movement.

**The result of the final deployment was:**

Randall unleashed a frightful reign of terrors on the Parja region.

C. Middleton Steward's primary target in Dandami-Madiya area was Kukanar. He coerced Chalan, a resident of Kukanar to gain information on the Madiya Army in Kukanar. He attacked Kukanar village, where he executed a brutal massacre of all men and women of the village.

Drury faced a tough time in Chote Dungar area where the Abhuj Madias had surrounded his army. Drury wrote to Gayer to seek reinforcement. Gayer arrived with 23 Cavalry men and 50 infantry and later 22<sup>nd</sup> Corps also arrived to assist Drury. The British won back Chote Dongar area and, in the process, burnt down Marmana village out of vengeance.

Duke was assisted by collaborator Janakaiah the Diwan of Sukma in the Dorla area. Duke unleashed havoc in Sukma and engaged atrocious acts to suppress the movement.

**Trial and Sentences of the Captured**

The British in the process of engaging in eliminating and capturing the primary leaders of the Bhoomkal movement, had managed to capture hundreds of participants. Between 13<sup>th</sup> March 1910 to 28<sup>th</sup> April 1910, the British undertook trial for the so-called crimes of waging war against the British government.

78 members of the captured Bhoomkaleya's were obviously found guilty for various offences against the British. The accused were jailed in the Central Jail at Raipur.

According to Hiralal Shukla, a List of Prisoners in Raipur Jail dated 7<sup>th</sup> November 1910, the names of 27 prisoners are found who were martyred in Raipur Jail. The British conducted farcical cases against the captured prisoners, put them in jail and undertook vengeful tortures upon them

Lal Kalinder Singh, Rani Subaran Kunwari, Birsingh Bahidar, Bacchu Prasad Pandit, Bala Prasad Nazir, Somnath Baid, Makund Dev Machmara, Kuwar Bahadur Singh and Murat Singh Bakshi were expelled from the state of Bastar.

Lal Kalinder Singh was exiled to Elichpur about 175 miles from Nagpur. He died in Elichpur in 1916.

There was no prosecution and inquiry undertaken on Diwan Panda Baijnath. All land and property of Lal Kalendra Singh were confiscated. British never accepted that it was their policies which were a cause for the movement despite the primary issues were economic oppression and heavy atrocities the Adivasi faced which were direct result of British regime in Bastar.

A major achievement of the Bhoomkal movement was the reduction of reserved forest areas as it was earlier demarked. The ratio of the reserved forests was reduced to half of its initial size.

**Repressive activities of British**

The movement continued in pockets until the 29<sup>th</sup> March 1910 despite arrest and trials of the leaders.

British undertook large scale arrests by launching cases and thousands of people were put in prisons without trials.

De Brett, ordered his troops to whip the prisoners with wet sticks until they came to their senses. The whipping continued for months, leading to hundreds of deaths. Foreign Secretary of India posed to condemn the actions of whipping stating that the administration should not have undertaken such actions until proven guilty.

**Mr. Standen (ibid.) (the Chief Secretary to the Chief Commissioner Central Provinces). justified this hideous action of whipping (in his letter to the Secretary, Foreign Department, Govt. of India) and wrote: "when, therefore, some 500 men were ringed in and captured by the troops and Police, it was imperative that they receive a sharp blow on. It was not as if these 500 men were the whole adult inhabitants of two or three villages singled out for punishment as the scapegoat for the sins of the whole state. They came from no less than 65 villages drawn from parganās covering an area of over 2000 square miles. One may sympathise with the grievances from which they have apparently suffered, one may devise to remove and may actually remove some of these grievances, but the more genuine that these grievances prove, and the more complete the redress that is eventually accorded to them, the greater will have been the necessity for punishing them for the methods they employed.**

### **Gundadhur: The Legacy and Legend of the Dhurva Warrior**

The British had issued a reward of Rs. 10,000 for the capture of Gundadhur but it was never claimed.

There is no concrete knowledge about the fate of Veer Gundadhur after the Bhoomkal movement except that he was never captured. The leader of the great valiant warrior disappeared, never to be heard from again.

According to the Dhurva community, Gundadhur probably escaped towards Odisha where he had sent away his family before the Bhoomkal movement had begun.

Gundadhur lives on in the memory of the people of Bastar even in the contemporary times and is immortalized through intriguing songs sung by community folk.

### **BHOOMKAL GIT**

*Suna Sujan Hem San siyan ho, bhumkal-git gai sunaibi*  
*Kirpa karo moke Bhagwan, kain ke ni jane pilalok mui*  
*Suna tami bap-bhai, kae cho kuchar pangan nasan*  
*Karle ache kay labh, roje din atiyachar ne chet Cheghla*  
*Mawli mata ke Vandna karla, Sati Kunda ghate thul hoy lay*  
*Garia kareya sabu bichar karlay, Senwar dine runda hoi kari*

#### English Rendition

**Hark? Hark? O Venerable men**  
**We will recite the rebel-song**  
**May god forgive us, as we**  
**ignorant children known nothing. (1)**

**Hark? Hark? O Fathers and brothers**  
**Practising black magic and enmity**  
**Do you think helps the men**  
**When outrage is rampant in the society. (2)**

**When such tyranny overruled Bastar**  
**People worshipped the mother goddess**  
**And Assembled near Sati Kunda**  
**Black and white every man thought**  
**And marched on the Saturday. (3)**

**Ulnar Bhata was the battle-field**  
**Dhurwa and Maria launched the fight**  
**They are great and brave**  
**The Mawli of Netanar guided them. (4)**

**Kurumtala-god from Kandki Pargana**  
**And other two gods raised their heads**

**Eventually they marched to Jagdalpur**

**What the British troop could do? (5)**

**The guns were out of order**

**It was the god's bliss**

**Dhurwa and Maria gave a fight**

**Everyone was astonished to see. (6)**

**Gods were also playing with the war**

**All the aboriginals became furious**

**They came from various villages**

**And assembled at one place. (7)**

**The Britishers were undaunted**

**And the aboriginals realized**

**Capture and kill them at once**

**Spoke the Great Gunda and surprised. (8)**

**With swords and daggers in the hands**

**With armour in the chest**

**Marched for the fierce war**

**You may ask the elderly best (9)**

**His dress was a loin-cloth**

**He fastened himself with wires**

**He faced the British army**

**He was one of the real warriors. (10)**

**The rebels with different dresses**

**Someone wore bronze cap**

**Some were clad with torn clothes**

**Someone wore the peacock cap. (11)**

**Hearing the news all wished to march**

**Assembled near Alnar Bhata**

**Dhurwa-Maria all joined**

**There was rush in Almamata. (12)**

**Sonu Majhi saw the army**

**full of the brave Marias**

**He schemed to destroy the force**

**by placing liquor-drums full of agony. (13)**

**Meat was there to chew**

**Chakhna was there to taste.**

**The liquor drums were kept there**

**Sonu Majhi lost his sinew. (14)**

**The rebel army saw the drums**

**full of liquors, every one saw**

**fascinated they were to taste it**

**not they were bound with the military law. (15)**

**Drunk they were, lost the senses**

**Very soon they fell intoxicated**

**In the dense forest night**

**All they slept untemplated. (16)**

**Bows and arrows were kept apart**

**This they could never realize**

**They lost the senses altogether**

**Sonu Majhi slipped away to penalize. (17)**

**Sonu Majhi approached the British  
Rebels like Dhurwa and Maria  
are lying drunk in the field  
The British heard the Bhumkaleya (18)**

**I offered two drums of liquor  
They drunk it with Chakhna, Sir  
No one is conscious, O Saheb  
All are drunk to disaster. (19)**

**At once you should march there  
And you plan yourselves.  
The British marched with cannons  
As they heard the news themselves. (20)**

**Gayer entered the palace  
ordered to carry the guns  
sitting on the motor cars  
All the police and Military persons. (21)**

**As they sat on the Motor cars  
Kept the fetters with them,  
In the midnight lighted the torch  
All armoured men were British men. (22)**

**When they heard that Motor has arrived  
They wanted to escape from the field,  
But the army surrounded them all  
near the corner of Semli tree. (23)**

**In the meanwhile, Gayer came down**

**Ordered the army men to capture  
the bows and arrows of the tribes  
And they were fired at Caricature. (24)**

**On the spot they died  
on the spot they slept  
On the spot they arose  
on the spot they wept  
Bows and arrows they possessed not  
So, they escaped if not kept (25).**

### **Contemporary Aspects**

- Tableau of Gundadhur during the 2014 Republic Day in New Delhi (Karyavya Path) parade celebrations.
- The statue of Netanaar (native village), Jagdalpur, Kondagaon, Sukma, Bijapur, Darbha, Gidam and Kanker.
- Shaheed Gundadhur Agriculture College, Kumravand, Jagadalpur
- Shaheed Gundadhur P.G. College, Kondagaon
- Gundadhur Samman (Chhattisgarh state award for Archery)

### **Leaders and their Villages**

- Gundadhur of Netanaar
- Debridhur of Elangnar
- Khodiyadhur of Mavlipadar
- Bantu Dhurva of Kokawada
- Samnath Dhakad
- Madia Manjhi

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## Videos

Gundadhur

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9YjGxowr6A>

Dhurva (MoTA)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=98reaTKsBOK>

## Suggested Artefacts

Ghotul

Dhurva community head Gear

Dhurva Bow and Arrow as an Exhibit and **Hands On Activity**

Recreation of War Symbols: - 'Dara Miri' Chilly, Arrow, Mango branch and Lump of Earth

A-V Documentation of Dhurva Community Songs, especially portions about **Gundadhur**. During D-