

Shyam Sunder Das

The Icon of Justice

- A Brief Account of 60 Years of Journey For Human Rights -




A CLAP PUBLICATION

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- A Brief Account of 60-years of
Journey of a Sarvodaya Worker
for Human Rights -

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DEDICATION

This Booklet on the Vision and Action of Shyam Sunder Das is brought out by CLAP as a matter of respect and recognition of his 60-years of long walk for Promotion and Protection of Human Rights, which he traversed from 1948 to 2008 as a Sarvodaya Leader.

CLAP FAMILY



Published by CLAP on the auspicious occasion of the 83rd Birth Anniversary of its Founder President Reverent Shyam Sunder Das for popularisation of his Vision and Action at the completion of 6-Decades of Public Work by him as a Sarvodaya Worker.

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PREFACE

It has been observed that in the postcolonial independent India a handful of individuals have the unique distinction of serving the nation as social worker through out their life. Sri Shyam Sundar Das, the Founder President of CLAP is among those statesman who has sacrificed the entire life for public work. Hailing from an established family with education in Commerce and Law he vowed to work for social upliftment and human right. He ensured that he never deviates from his commitment to serve the nation all through his life. In spite of several opportunities he stayed on for period of 6 decades in the Sarvodaya Movement as a Constructive Worker to serve the lowliest and the lost. Human Right with Dignity was the centre of his public work for which he stood courageously against all odds.

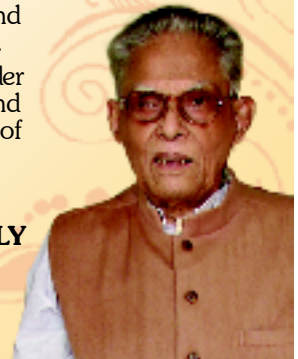
Sri Shyam Sundar Das as a non-jail going freedom fighter and Gandhian has the unique distinction of fighting for the rights of people through the means of law. He always considered evolution of good governance through rule of law in course of his crusade against injustice. He is perhaps the only Gandhian in the post-independence era who has exclusively fought for human right through the means of law. That makes his work inimitable in India for which his work receives wide recognition and appreciation.

He started his public work in 1948, after almost 6-years of involvement in the Independence Movement and integration of princely states between 1942-47. Between 1948 to 2008 he traversed a long journey of 60-years fighting for human right for the underprivileged communities. As a tribute to his life-long service this booklet is being brought out by CLAP with the fond expectation that His Life can have impact on future generation. We at CLAP believe that the life-time contribution of Sri Shyam Sundar Das shall motivate and influence our society to accomplish peace and justice. Sri Shyam Sundar Das had established Committee for Legal Aid to Poor (CLAP) way back in 1982 with a vision of protection and promotion of human right. We are committed to follow the path of our mentor and leader for purposes of accomplishment of his vision.

May the Almighty bestow all good things on our Leader Shyam Sunder Das. We send our warm greetings and congratulate him on the completion of 6-decades of Public Work.

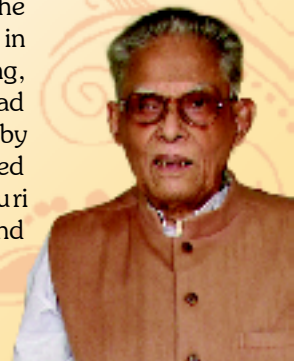
Date: 4.10.2008.
Cuttack, Orissa.

CLAP FAMILY



Shyam Sundar Das, an eminent Sarvodaya Leader of Orissa has the unique distinction of serving the nation by dedicating his entire life for public work. All through his life and action as a constructive worker, he followed Gandhian values and the principles of Satyagraha to bring about a Sarvodaya order of Society along with his wife Late Bimala Devi. Born on October 4th 1926 in the erstwhile princely state Bolangir, now in western Orissa, he got involved in the Freedom Struggle from his school days and led Student Movement across Western Orissa between 1942 to 1952. As a non-jail going Freedom Fighter his contributions to the Freedom Movement received due acknowledgement in the book of Swapnananda Panigrahi, a very influential Freedom Fighter who became the Member of Parliament, titled Swadhinata Sangram Itikatha. During Colonial Rule, Sri Das identified himself among a galaxy of student leaders of Bolangir who fought for freedom of India and integration of princely states especially the Patna state. His co-workers in Bolangir during 1942-48 were Swapnananda Panigrahi, Kapil Tiwari, Balaram Khuas, Biranchinarayana Routray, Rajani Bhoi and Sidheswar Sai et al.

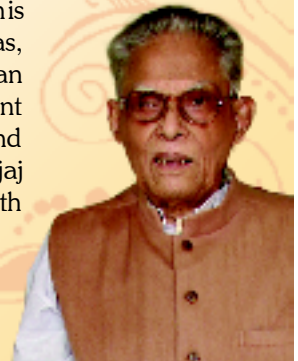
The life of Shyam Sundar Das is the depiction of a life of non-violent struggle for people's power. As a crusader against injustice he decided to become a Budhidani (A donor of knowledge) for his entire life and started working against the practice of bonded labour system in tribal dominated Koraput district in Orissa in the year 1955. Having full faith in building a Sarvodaya order of society he joined the Padayatra of Vinoba Bhave as a part of Bhoodan Movement. Sri Das played the role of translator of speech of Vinoba during his Padayatra (Foot March) in Orissa. On the completion of Padayatra of Vinoba in Orissa in 1955 Sri Das was asked to write the Farewell Song, as he was among few sarvodaya worker who had much interest in literature. The poem written by him 'Rati Asi Pahilani' (The night is over) was recited by a group of Satyagrahi led by Malati Choudhuri (Numa), the legendary woman freedom fighter and Member



of Constituent Assembly. This poem is still recited by people believing in Sarvodaya in Orisa and often sang in people's struggle. This poem found a space in an anthology of poem by Shyam Sundar Das titled "Dyaba Prithivi" published in 2005. All the poems in this anthology are reflection of philosophy and vision of a Satyagrahi. Late Sri Sharat Chandra Maharana, an distinguished Gandhian, in his autobiography Anubhavamala - II, published by Sikshya Sandhan, at page 128 referring to his Diary dtd. 1.10.1955 pointed out that Sri Shyam Sundar Das, a graduate who is doing Bhoodan work, wrote the poem in Kujendri of Koraput district for bidding farewell to Vinoba Bhave.

His public work began around 1948, after almost 6 years of extensive student movement against British Rule and Princely Rule beginning from 1942 from a very early age of life. In the initial stage of his public work, he accepted the invitation of people of Bhainsa Village of Bolangir, especially the proposal of Hiradhar Gountia, Somnath Gountia and Gobardhan Dasto start a Middle English School in their village. Sri Das took up the initiative for establishment of a School, Library and latter on a Post Office as he considered such work as constructive work suggested by Gandhi. At that time there was a provision for providing a Post Office where the population is 2000 or more on demand of the people. This resulted in development of a Gandhian Centre for Constructive Work. Gobardhan Das became a volunteer to carry forward this mission all through his life as a co-worker of Shyam Sundar Das.

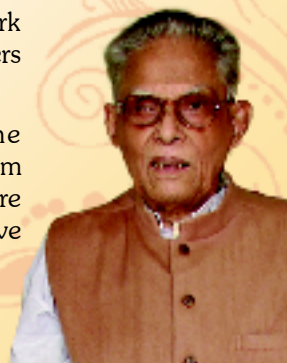
Subsequently, Sri Das worked for Bhoodan Movement (Land Gift Movement) along with his wife Bimala Devi on the advice of Dr. Ratan Das, who persuaded him to work in Koraput for Bhoodan Movement. There he got associated with eminent Gandhian Babulajee Mittal, Dr. Ratan Das and Shanti Das, who became a Jamunlal Bajaj Awardees, eminent Bhoodan Leader Biswanath Pattanayak (Agyan) and Freedom



Fighter Moh ammad Baji of Nawaragapur. SriDas joined Anna SahebSahasrabudhe, a doyen of Sarvodaya Movement in 1955 to render assistance to Anna Saheb in conceptualising Panchasheela Policy for community upliftment in Koraput District of Orissa (Panchasheela or Five Principles. For promotion of constructive work in 1958, he became the Vice Principal of Utkal Grama Swarajya Vidyalaya, Gopalabadi now in Rayagada District, an informal institution of its kind for Gandhian Studies in Orissa at that time. He started working in the first and only Non-Governmental Development Block in Boipariguda of Koraput District in 1960. The then Prime Minister of India, the great Jawaharlal Nehru himself took interest in this endeavour of people's planning and inaugurated the Block as an experimentaleffort. Sri Das closely associated himself as the Block Development Officer of this only Non-Governmental Development Block in India along with Gandhian Socialist Basant Palsikar and Sri A.V. Swamy, who became the representative of OXFAM in India and undertook a massive social action programme in Western Orissa in the name of OXFAM West Orissa Programme (OXWORP).

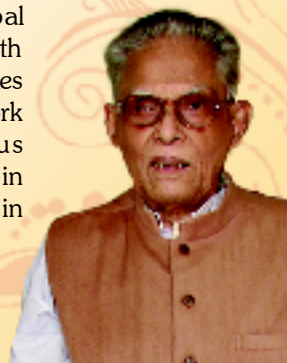
On the call of the then Chief Minister of Orissa, renowned Gandhian and Freedom Fighter Nabakrushna Choudhury he took up the responsibility of fighting against the practice of bonded labour system along with his wife Bimala Devi and became instrumental in releasing thousands of people from the bondage of Sahukas or Money Lenders with former Member of Parliament Anadi Das in Koraput district. He decided to undergo Legal Education and use Legal Profession for the cause of public as a Budhidani (Donor of Knowledge), a social work approach initiated by eminent Sarvodaya Thinkers including Nabakrushna Choudhury.

Sri Das had a Degree in Commerce from the Rajendra College, Bolangir which persuaded him to start Cooperative Society in the nomenclature of Boipariguda Forest Marketing Co-operative Society, Boipariguda in Koraput and became a



Director of it. The Boipariguda Cooperative Society helped thousands of tribal people to avail material and financial support with the policy of financial inclusion for their development between 1960-70. In order to render professional services to develop the cooperative society he had undergone a Diploma course in Cooperative Management at Ranchi, which was organised with support of Reserve Bank of India for promotion of Cooperative Movement. The contribution of Shyam Sundar Das towards Cooperative Movement is also widely acknowledged as Director of Koraput Cooperative Central Bank for 10-year. He was the Chairman of Jeypore Cooperative Branch for Koraput Cooperative Central Bank.

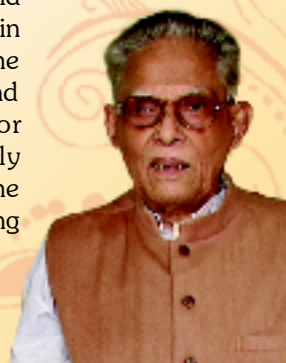
He established as a part of his constructive work Tara Gaon Gramadani Sangha in 1970 for production of Khadi along with Mohammad Baji, which was the largest Khadi producing centre in Boriguma Block of Koraput District. That was the biggest unit ever supported by Khadi Commission of India. Subsequently after severe drought in Orissa he established Sarvodaya Relief Committee in 1974 along with Ramadevi and Manamohan Choudhry. Under his leadership, in the tribal dominated Keonjhar district drought relief operation was conducted. As a part of this endeavour a Lift Irrigation Programme in Champai village in Keonjhar had been started in 1975-76 which was also the biggest non-governmental effort for water supply for drinking and irrigation, supported by OXFAM. Padmashree Tulsi Munda, Rabi Pattanayak and the then Collector of Keonjhar District Sri Pyari Mohan Mohapatra supported the effort immensely which contributed largely for development of tribal communities at a time when starvation and health hazardous among indigenous ethnic communities mostly Juang was rampant. Subsequently the work of Sarvodaya Relief Committee spread to various parts of Orissa like Turakela and Loisingha in Bolangir, Gania in Nayagarh, Pattamundai in Kendrapara, Khariar and



Junagarh in Kalahandi and Gudari in Koraput with support of OXFAM where he was the Chief Functionary. Sri Binod Mohanty, Parikhita Pattnayak, Rabi Kamal, Bhakta Batsal Mohanty and other eminent Sarvodaya Workers got associated in this endeavour. These activities were conceptualised in association with Sri A.V.Swamy who has a deep understanding of Relief Work being the representative of OXFAM.

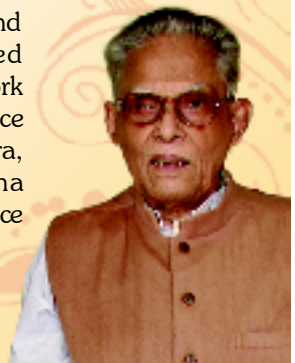
During Emergency he became the source of inspiration for thousands of youth who protested against it. He led the Movement from Gunanidhi Bhawan, Cuttack, the centre of political power at that time and undertook demonstrations as well as dissemination of knowledge about the evils of repressive State. In Keonjhar District he Campaigned against State of Emergencies for which he was detained by Police several times. He was responsible for propagation of Ideology of Jaya Prakash Narayan for Sampurna Kranti (Total Revolution).

As a non-conformist human right defender he relied on the International Bill of Human Right and joined the struggle for making access to justice a constitutional mandate. After incorporation of Article 39 (A) in the Directive Principles of State Policy Chapter of the Indian Constitution, he started his mission of securing justice for the disadvantaged through use of law as an instrument of change. In order to give a meaningful expression to his vision he established Adhoc Committee for Legal Aid in 1975, which was registered as a society in 1982 as Committee for Legal Aid to Poor (CLAP). After his significant public advocacy work demanding Constitutional status for Legal Aid during 1975, the CLAP came into existence in 1982 as a registered society. Since then he continued his crusade against injustice and exploitation under the banner of Committee for Legal Aid to Poor (CLAP). He is widely acknowledged as the only Gandhian in the contemporary society who is exclusively promoting Human Rights with Dignity through



the means of Law. His idea of Law as a Tool for empowerment revolves round the method of Public Interest Negotiation in which Law is considered as the prescribed standard of a society to prevent exploitation. His legal support work is far away from the conventional nature of adversarial justice, which often considers Court as the ultimate dispute resolution agency. Sri Das believes law is a means through which inequality in income and resources can be substantially reduced. Thus there was an apparent shift in the approach of law. His philosophy of Legal Activism revolves round promotion and protection of Human Right with Dignity through the intervention of the State. Creation of facilities and opportunities for marginalized people through legislative arrangement was considered paramount in his endeavour.

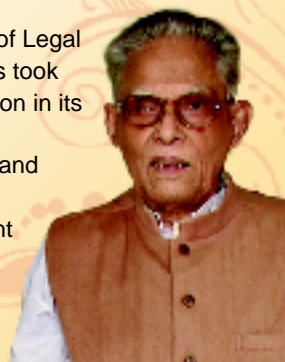
The Committee for Legal Aid to Poor popularly known as CLAP established by him completed its journey of 25-years as a legal support and advocacy group exclusively as well as extensively working on promotion of legal activism in November 2007. As a result of his power of articulation of issues, visualisation of ideas and strong commitment to the cause, CLAP not only enabled people and communities to secure their fundamental human rights it also created a popular sanction and space for the organisation for which CLAP becomes a household name in the State of Orissa. His work received wide recognition from former Judge of Supreme Court Justice Radha Charan Pattanayak who travelled to various parts of Orissa with Shyam Sunder Das for promotion of legal aid movement in Orissa. The then Member-Secretaries of Orissa State Legal Aid Board like Saroj Kanta Mishra, Himadri Mohapatra, Hrudaya Ballav Das and Member and Senior Advocate Bipin Bhari Ratha also extended unconditional support to make Justice System work for Poor People. Many Legal Luminaries like Justice Jugal Kishor Mohanty, Justice D.P. Mohapatra, Justice Sarat Chandra Mohapatra, Justice Purna Chandra Mishra, Justice Pradipto Roy, Justice Susanta



Chaterjee, Justice M. Papanna and Senior Advocate Divya Singh Mishra, Dr. V. Pruthiviraj and Kedarnath Jena have rendered services in various way to strengthen the endeavour. □

At the beginning of Legal Aid Movement in Orissa he started holding training programmes for Para Legal Activists in various parts of Orissa by which more than 20,000 Para Legal cadre could be developed who subsequently reached out to invisible pockets in the nook and corner of Orissa for establishment of rural entitlement. He motivated such Para Legal Activists to render assistance in getting public assistance from Govt. for various segment of the society who have very little or no access to public service due to their helplessness. In this endeavour, one of the co-founder of CLAP Bhakta Batsal Mohanty took the lead by reaching out to invisible pockets to organise camps for cadre development. The first Para Legal Camp was held in Balasore with the active support of one of the founder member of CLAP Sri Aditya Pattanayak of Antyodaya Chetana Mandal which was attended by former Chief Justice of India Justice Ranganath Mishra. These Para Legal Workers all across Orissa bridged the gap between social welfare schemes and its beneficiaries like old age, sickness, disabled and widows. The Legal Aid Movement through extensive effort of Para Legal Activists secured for under privileged entitlement over land, water and forest as a matter of Right over natural resources. The Legal Aid Movement led by Shyam Sundar Das in Orissa intervened at two-dimensional level such as creation of greater access to formal justice system and liberation of bonded labourer.

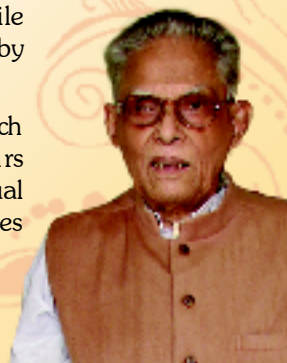
The Legal Aid Movement also witnessed promotion of Legal Literacy through various measures in Orissa. Sri Das took interest in demystification of laws and its dissemination in its widest possible manner. For this purpose several hundred of legal resource materials were published and distributed. At the request of Sri Shyam Sundar Das publishers of law books like Legal Miscellany brought out low priced Oriya



translation of law books. Prof. Kamadeva Muduli who joined CLAP as its Founder Vice President and Prof. Chinmaya Halder, a founder member of CLAP on the call of Shyam Sundar Das prepared manuscripts in Oriya on almost all social legislation and public interest laws. Similarly, Goutam Samal, the Proprietor of Legal Miscellany agreed to be the Founder Secretary of CLAP who subsequently undertook the responsibility to publish Oriya manuscripts in printed format. This contributed to the Legal Literacy Movement substantially in early 80s. The CLAP, as one of its core programme, regularly brings out demystified legal resource materials for dissemination of legal knowledge. So far 100 demystified law books have been published by CLAP for promotion of legal literacy.

Along with Legal Aid in Court Proceeding, the CLAP has also undertaken several Public Interest Litigations in Orissa High Court and Supreme Court of India. The first Public Interest Litigation on behalf of CLAP was filed in 1985 by one of the Founder Members of CLAP Chandana Das on public health issues. The verdict of Orissa High Court came in this case in 1999, which desired the public authorities to adequately address public health issues through a definite plan of action. The CLAP has filed several Public Interest Litigations like in matters of Right over Playground, Displacement, Environmental Pollution, Juvenile Justice, Prison Reform, State Repression, Land Right and Protection of Tribal and Dalit. Most recently PIL on issues like application of Pro-biotic on Children, Kalinga Nagar Massacre, Child Labour, Quality Education in Primary School, Mid-day Meal in Schools and Juvenile Justice have been filed for protection of right by CLAP.

The CLAP supported many individual cases which are in the nature of Test Case over last 25 years not only for the protection of Rights of individual only but on the consideration that these test cases might help



in numerous other cases as these cases have been expected to have impact on similar matters in future.

Sri Shyam Sundar Das was appointed as the Commissioner of Investigation in the infamous Kalahandi Starvation Death case by the Supreme Court of India. Sri Das made it a point to secure for people adequate food security and livelihood through legal recourse. He considered starvation a question of food insecurity and inadequate livelihood for which he always emphasised on public assistance in cases of underserved want in accordance with constitutional mandate.

In order to make Legal Aid Movement a people's movement he developed a Network of voluntary organisations in Orissa in the name of Legal Support Network which has a membership base of 1000 registered societies at present. Through the Network, Sri Das tried to build the capacity of Activists of different NGOs who can play a catalytic role in bringing about a change. Through his endeavour the right-based movement in Orissa could be widely expanded as all the members of Legal Support Network incorporated right-based approach in their broader development plan. This Network enables CLAP to reach out to invisible pockets all across the State for protection of rights of victims of gross human right violation.

The Legal Service Centre, which is the core programme division of CLAP renders legal support in its various dimensions. The Legal Service Centre renders legal support to prevent injustice and exploitation. The evolving legal needs in matters of human rights in India has been addressed through strategic measures like the following:

1. Legal Aid in Court Proceeding.
2. Legal Advice.
3. Right-based Conciliation.
4. Referral Services.
5. Representation.
6. Public Interest Litigation.

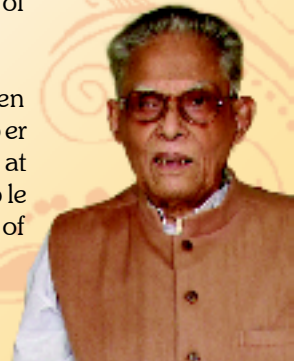


The CLAP has introduced several innovations, which offers socio-legal solution to the emerging needs of the society through programmes described below:

- (1) Justice Line - A Telephone Legal Advisory Service and Internet based Legal Advice.
- (2) Legal Service Clinic- A Door Step Justice Programme for the poor to have access to lawyers for on-the-spot consultation about their grievances.
- (3) Defenders Protection- The first ever initiative in Orissa State for Legal Protection to Human Right Defenders.
- (4) Justice File- A Documentation of Human Right Cases which can be used for advocacy for reform and sensitisation of democratic institutions about human right.

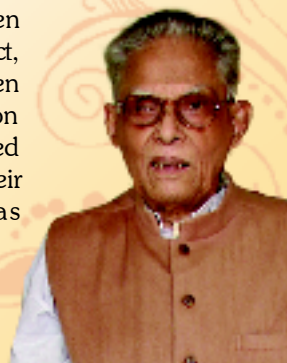
The perception of Sri Shyam Sundar Das towards the judicial governance and rule of law in India finds expression in his concept of Public Interest Negotiation (PIN). He believes that Public Interest Negotiation (PIN) must replace Public Interest Litigation (PIL) to resolve the grievances of the underprivileged people in a non-adversarial manner as in a democracy the interest of people needs to be protected on priority basis. For this Sri Das suggested SANE Approach instead of insane conflict and disputes. While giving explanation to SANE Approach his idea always revolves round Social Action, Negotiation and Empowerment. These ideas are always reflected in the Policy of CLAP for which it has a wider credibility in the society as an NGO. It shows the reflection of Gandhian principle on CLAP, which uses law as a tool for justice and peace instead of a method of repression of voices of people.

The idea of Public Interest Negotiation had been experimented widely in the wake of the Super Cyclone of Orissa in 1999. The CLAP looking at the extent of damage and sufferings of people decided to resolve the issue through a process of Public Interest



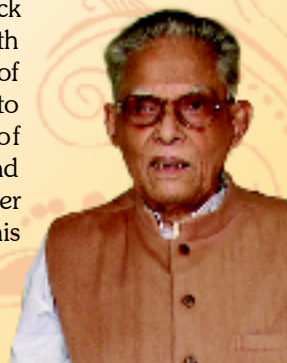
Negotiation. For this purpose a Public Hearing on Orissa Super Cyclone was held in September 2000, which has been considered as the largest ever organised public hearing across globe. This Public Hearing resulted in establishment of entitlements of marooned victims of Orissa and also significantly contributed in bringing the issue of victims of disaster on the agenda of human rights. Sri Shyam Sundar Das headed the effort as Chairperson of a Citizen Committee which submitted a Report on State of Relief in Orissa in the nomenclature of "Brutal Mischief - Micro Misfortune". The Report was released by Former Prime Minister of India Sri I. K. Gujral. A high level Jury headed by Justice Rajinder Sachar considered the Report in the Public Hearing and recommended a thorough review of disaster related policies. Consequently, it has been noticed that the Govt. of India enacted a law relating to calamities in the title Disaster Management Act and also the Orissa Govt. thoroughly reviewed Orissa Relief Code.

In his effort of Legal Activism, Rights of Children always finds a Centre-stage, as Sri Das believes that children are also legal aid eligible as per the provision of The Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987. Children deserve special treatment of law in a proactive manner for protection of their best interest. He is a Champion of Child Right for which he supported the movement for affording legal status of children as a person. However, he believes that the Convention nature of Legal Aid would not adequately address the needs of children for which he always relies on a relaxed interpretation of law for realisation of Rights of Children. Under his stewardship the CLAP formulated a strategic plan of action for children in the nomenclature of In Defence of Child Project, which seeks to realise the best interest of children in accordance with the provision of UN Convention on Rights of the Child. The Netherlands based Bernard Van Leer Foundation extended their support for giving expression to his ideas concerning legal framework for Rights of



The In Defence of Child Project over the years not only created massive awareness concerning Rights of Children in India but also helped innumerable children to realise their right in reality. The programme enabled families and parents to secure for their children the Right to Identity through Birth Registration, Access to School, Reunion of Separated Families where children can receive parental care, Promotion of Breastfeeding, Elimination of Child Labour System, Protection of Children in Conflict with Law and Child Right to Custom and Language etc.

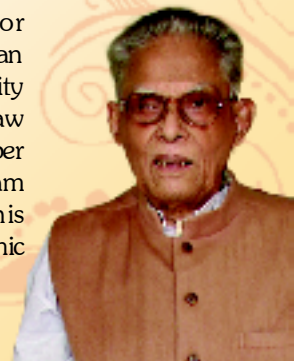
The distinctive characteristic of Legal Intervention by CLAP lies in its endeavour to take laws to household level and communities for creation of facilities and opportunities. Conventionally the legal aid programme across the globe mostly revolves round resolution of disputes in the law court. However the intervention of CLAP under the guidance of its founder Sri Shyam Sundar Das is a departure from conventional approach. The team of legal professionals and Para Legal Activists in CLAP use law in the field to bridge the gap between governance institution and public at large. The team enables person and communities to have access to facilities and opportunities which can help them in the process of long term development. These field application are made under Rural Legal Intervention Programme (RULIP) in Badamba Block of Cuttack District, Urban Legal Intervention Programme (ULIP) in Cuttack City and Tribal Legal Intervention Programme (TRILIP) in Scheduled Areas of Orissa. While in Badamba children are provided with opportunity in order to ensure transition from home environment to school environment, in Cuttack urban area children are provided with Birth Certificate in accordance with the provision of Registration of Birth and Death Act, 1969 to establish the Right to Identity. In tribal areas of Orissa Customary Modes of Dispute Resolution and special provision for scheduled areas, as per Constitutional provision is being addressed. This paradigm shift in the approach of



application of law for protection of human rights makes the role of CLAP unique and innovative.

Even though he is a Gandhian in his action, he decided to work for Right of People through the means of Law, Legal Process and Legal System, which makes his work exceptional. As a Gandhian, his emphasises was primarily on Adalat Mukti (Liberation from Court) and creation of democratic peoples organisation to make sure that Lok Adalat (People's Court) evolves to the position of comprehensive meta legal approach consistent with Sarvodaya thinking in respect what was described as Soumaya Satyagraha instead of violence. From Adalati Mukti to Jana Adalat (People's Court) he traversed a long march securing justice for the people.

Gram Swarajya (Self Reliance of Villages) through deployment of Volunteers in every Village is his passion for which he undertook Vikash Yatra in 2001 in the International Year of Volunteer to mobilise volunteers and network building all across the State of Orissa along with a group of youth activists over 45-Days. Senior Gandhian workers like Sri Binod Mohanty and Bhakta Batsal Mohanty led the movement along with many young activists like Sk. Qu arish, Bikash Das, Chitta Ranjan Mohanty, Akshya Mohanty, Govind Seth, Purusottam Sahoo and Ramakanta Satpathy. At the age of 80 he undertook 11-days Foot March in Badamba Block to persuade families to provide opportunity to their children for primary education instead of engaging them in Bidi rolling and other forms of child slavery. A team of 30-young lawyers work with him as constructive worker in tribal, rural and urban set up respectively for protection of Human Rights. Advocate Jyoti Ranjan Mohanty, Member of State Legal Service Authority Namrata Chadha, Head of the Department of Law of Utkal University Prof. P.K. Sarkar, former Member of National Commission for Women Sukeshi Oram and Dr. V. Pruthiviraj etc. are associated with this noble endeavour of Shyam Sunder Das. A dynamic

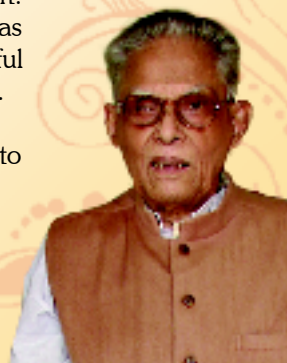


group of young legal professional like Sidheswar Mohanty, Ramesh Mandal, Pravati Nayak, Pramod Acharaya, Amulya Panda and Manas Debabrata Mansingh etc lead various activities of CLAP with a sole motto of a accomplishment of the vision of Sri Shyam Sunder Das.

His action in the arena of Legal Activism have always been grounded on theories which generated a wealth Legal knowledge, Notions like Legal Paediatrics, Public Interest Negotiation, SANE Approach instead of in-sane conflicts and disputes, Legal Activism and Meta Legal Approach for Social Development have been conceptualised by him, which are being applied in practice for field test. Thus Sri Das is not only a Man of Legal Action he is a visionary Statesman who leaves behind him a Legal Philosophical Order for building a just society.

As a believer and practitioner of Gandhian Ideology, he visited Phoenix Ashram at Inanda, Durban in South Africa in 2002 with his only son Bikash to offer their Tribute to Mahatma and also to have a first hand knowledge concerning Non-violence and Satyagraha. He never worked in isolation and has long association with Gandhian workers all over India for which renowned Gandhians like Sundarlal Bahuguna, Rabindra Upadhaya, Asgar Ali Engineer and Prof. Ramjee Singh etc. visited CLAP during the Sarvodaya Sammelan held in Barabati Stadium, Cuttack in 2004. He worked closely with Prem Bhai of Banawasi Seva Ashrama, Uttar Pradesh and Haribalhab Bhai Pariekh, Gujarat for shaping strategy for securing Rural Entitlement. Among the new generation of Gandhians he has a long association with Kalanand Mani of Peaceful Society, Goa, Aditya Pattanayak of Orissa etc.

He was also successful in motivating his family to join him in his struggle for Human

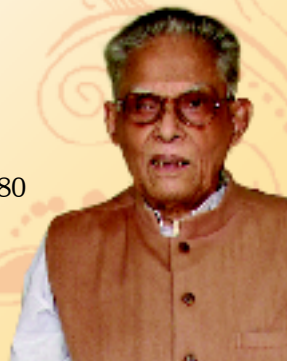


Rights, Justice and Peace all through his life. While Late Bimala Devi, wife of Shyam Sunder Das herself worked extensively among tribal people in Koraput District she always played the role of a Co-Worker of Shyam Sunder Das. His only son Bikash Das, who has a Doctoral Degree from India's premier educational institution Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi in Law and Governance is also a full time legal professional who exclusively work for promotion and protection of Human Rights. Bikash Das is also well known in the Human Right Circle for his unparalleled contribution to the field. Bikash Das served as the Advisor to the Commission of Supreme Court on Food Related Schemes between 2003-06 and was one of the Editorial Board Member of Combat Law- A Human Rights Magazine of India. In a nut shell his son Bikash has inherited the legacy of Non-violent, Apolitical and Non-conformist Public Work created by his parents Shyam Sunder Das and Bimala Devi.

A voracious reader and known for his pro-poor vision he has been honoured with awards like "SUPRATIVA SAMMAN" for selfless service, "SARALA PURASKAR" by IMFA Charitable Trust for social work, "SWARAJ SAMMAN" for Gandhian constructive work, NILADRI SAMMAN in recognition of his life long contribution to the society, VINOBA PEACE AWARD for Non-violent public service, "BHARAT JYOTI AWARD" and many more public recognitions.

At present Sri Shyam Sundar Das continues to be the President of Committee for Legal Aid to Poor (CLAP) and based in Cuttack in Orissa. He can be contacted in the following address:

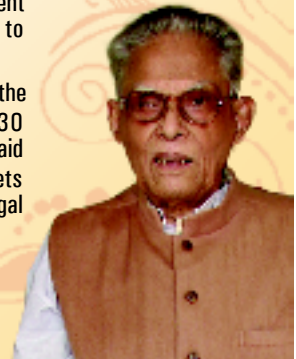
Shyam Sundar Das, President,
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SPOTLIGHT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

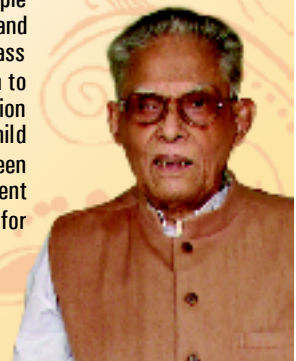
Some of the major initiatives and achievement highlights of CLAP over 25-years starting from 1982 to 2007 under the noble guidance of Shyam Sundar Das are succinctly enumerated below:

1. In Orissa started Legal Literacy Movement in 1980 by preparing demystified legal materials for wide dissemination. On his clarification the Legal Miscellany, a publisher of law book and Prof. Karanadeva Muduli prepared more than 100 Oriya translations of lawbooks. So far CLAP has also brought out 100 legal literacy materials on various aspects of law for promotion of legal literacy.
2. Liberation of 4,000 Bonded labours in Kalahandi district and 380 in Cuttack district during the period 1982-86. Besides thousands of others were released through the efforts of NGOs with the legal assistance of CLAP.
3. Around 50,000 legal aid eligibles were recommended for legal assistance from Govt. Legal Service Structure.
4. Around 1000 NGOs were mobilised for integration of Legal Intervention Strategies in their broader development approach through continuous training and orientation.
5. Promotion of Legal Aid Movement in the state from mid 1970's.
6. Filing of around 50 nos. of Public Interest Litigations in the Court in the larger public interest.
7. About 20,000 Para Legal Workers were trained through Para Legal Worker's Training Camps.
8. More than 200,000 rural populations have been covered through Legal Awareness Camps and Legal Aid Clinics.
9. Around 15,000 legal aid eligible were given free Legal Aid in court proceedings.
10. Around 20,000 beneficiaries were given free legal advice and counselling.
11. Around 25,000 beneficiaries had been given access to various Public Assistance Schemes with the support of CLAP.
12. CLAP could be able to enrol 1,465 child labours in different schools during implementation of its project Right Path to Education in Badamba, Cuttack in 2004 and 2005.
13. Creation and facilitation of a Legal Support Network in the State in which 1000 registered NGOs from all over 30 districts of Orissa are members and promoting legal aid movement in the state. CLAP reaches to invisible pockets for protection of human rights through its Members of Legal Support Network.
14. Registration of 5,000 nos. of Births in Cuttack



Municipality under the project "Civil Registration for Children" in a bid to make Cuttack, a Model Municipal Corporation where every birth is registered as a matter of Right of children.

15. CLAP organised a large scale Public Hearing in the aftermath of the Orissa Super Cyclone 1999 with a high level Jury comprising of India's renowned Jurists and Human Right activists headed by Justice Rajinder Sachar. Finally the former Prime Minister of India Hon'ble Mr. I.K. Gujral released the Citizen's Report in a Public Meeting. Such People-Centred Advocacy resulted in constitution of a special committee to immediately redress the grievances of the cyclone-victims; announcement of Govt. in the State Legislative Assembly to review the Orissa Relief Code and thousands of cyclone victims got relief and rehabilitation measures as a matter of right.
16. In the year 2001 the CLAP conveyed a Mega Convention of NGOs to protest the Orissa Legislative Assembly's resolution to control NGOs on grounds that the NGOs could only play complementary role for development of the state. The effort of CLAP for protection of Freedom of Association finally resulted in withdrawal of State from making a law to curtail independence of NGOs.
17. With regard to Legislative Advocacy, the CLAP submitted depositions to appropriate law making agencies at both national and state level. CLAP had the privilege to submit oral deposition before Parliamentary Standing Committee on various Laws including IMS Act on Breast Feeding, Child Marriage Act, NREGS. It submits regularly written depositions covering wide range of issues like National Tribal Policy, CARA Guideline concerning Adoption, Child Labour, Commission for Protection of Child Rights Bill 2005, Gram Nyayalaya Bill 2007, Compulsory Registration of Marriages, Participation of children in preparation of Country Report on UNCRC, etc.
18. CLAP initiated a citizen's movement for complete elimination of child labour system in the state through internalisation of the concerned law, under the banner of Liberated Childhood Movement (LCM). It organised the first ever non-political state wide Bandh on 9th October 2007 on the issue of child labour, which was turned out to be a grand success so far as the response from the society and the media is concerned. Around 200,000 people joined this state wide campaign. The 9th October event and consequential follow-up measures witnessed a mass awakening and a positive transformation in the approach to deal with the issue. Numbers of raids and rescue operations were made by the concerned Govt. Deptt. where 484 child labours were rescued out of which 205 children have been rehabilitated. The Govt. Constituted a Task Force in different districts and developed a rescue and rehabilitation plan for the entire state.



PERSONAL INFORMATION

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2365680
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Email- clap_india@dataone.in

DATE OF BIRTH : 4th October 1926

PLACE OF BIRTH : Bolangir, Orissa

ANCESTRAL HOME : Kalyanpur, Jajpur, Orissa

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATION : B.A., LLB

ADDITIONAL QUALIFICATION : Trained in Regional Cooperative
Training Center, Ranchi for 6
Months in 1959 on Cooperative
Marketing Sponsored by the
Reserve Bank of India.

NATIONALITY : Indian

RELIGION : Hinduism

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY : Oriya, Hindi
and English

NAME OF PARENTS : Late Adwait
Charan Das,
Late
Kshetramani Pattanaik

MARITAL STATUS : Married to
Bimala Devi,
Sarvodya Activist, in 1959



