

# MAATIR TAAN -- BRATACHARI



under

Scheme for Safeguarding the Intangible Cultural Heritage  
and Diverse Cultural Traditions of India

2014-15

## Resubmission of 1st Report

# Uhinee Kolkata

30P/2, H. K. Sett Lane, Kolkata 700050,  
West Bengal

Ph.: 033-25572658

Mob.: 09433119710

E-mail: [uhineekolkata@gmail.com](mailto:uhineekolkata@gmail.com)



## REPORT 1: MAATIR TAAN – BRATACHARI

The present day society consists of segregated individual self-centred men. It is not only reflected in his lifestyle, it is rather influencing art and literature and thus, culture itself. If it continuous to be like this, it will give birth to a generation which, in a whole day, will watch television for a few hours, will chat on facebook for a few hours, will play games in computer or phone for a few hours and will talk to his parents at home for a few minutes. This generation meets with friends on facebook; not in the playground or while swimming in the river or in the cue for ticket of a cinema hall or in the horizons on bicycle. Time has been like this that nobody will give up a even centimeter of land to anyone. A friend is a friend only for the time being till he is not a rival. Rivalry can be open but it can never be fair. Hence, the question arises that what is conscience or realization? Do these words have any significance in the process of living? The saints of our country have uttered --- "All of us are for all; each of us is for others." What is the meaning of this in life?

Nowadays, human life is fragmented internally and externally due to differentiation and imbalance. Man is trying to see the undivided whole in pieces. He is trying to practice his complete life in segregated portions referring them as science, religion, body, soul, character and so on.

*"Sangachchhadwan, Sanbadwan, Sanwomanansi jyanatamah  
Samano Mantre Samiti Samanee Samanan Manah Saha Chittamesham.  
Samanee Iwa Akutih Samana Hridayaniwa  
Samanamastu Wo Mano Yatha Wah Musahasati."*

With this hymn, the process of establishing national and human unity began in the primitive era of human civilization. 'Bratachari' is actualy a contemporary transformation of the same process.

The word 'Brata' means taking a strong resolution for some holly objective and trying to execute the resolution with all heart and soul.

'Bratachari' is the person who takes his or her whole life as such a 'Brata'.

'Brata' always has rhythmic and particular rituals. In the same way, a 'Bratachari' has to follow a supreme ethic and has to follow it with rhythm.



### Ethic, Aim and Objective of 'Bratachari'

- Ethic:** To unify the human kind all over the world and to engage them with the tradition of soil and nationalism.
- Aim:** '*Bratachari*' is never confined to a particular class. It is a way To achieve completeness of human life irrespective of community and religion.
- Objective:** To provide internal and external total independence, strength, unity, development, realization and pleasure.

According to the '*Bratachari*' ethics, the life of world human kind and world nature is derived from and thrives on pleasure. Hence, the internal and external physical and spiritual endeavours become complete only when they are based on pleasure and pleasure generating rhythmic practice.

Every '*Bratachari*' has to take five primary '*Bratas*':

- (i) *Jyan Brata* ['*Brata*' of Knowledge]
- (ii) *Shram Brata* ['*Brata*' of Labour]
- (iii) *Satya Brata* ['*Brata*' of Truth]
- (iv) *Oikya Brata* ['*Brata*' of Unity]
- (v) *Ananda Brata* ['*Brata*' of Pleasure]

In order to follow the one complete '*Brata*' of life easily, it has been distributed in these five '*Bratas*'. However, to maintain the wholeness of the '*Brata*' of life, these five are to be followed simultaneously.

To execute these five '*Bratas*', a '*Bratachari*' takes upon Sixteen Oaths and Seventeen Rules along with some other regulations. These are written and recited in rimes, so they can be remembered easily by everyone.

### The Sixteen 'Aali' of 'Bratachari'

The word '*Aali*' is a '*Bratachari*' term. It refers to 'work' or 'ritual'. All the rituals of a '*Bratachari*' have been divided in these sixteen '*Aalis*'.

- 1) *Abrittaali* [Recitation]
- 2) *Krityaali* [Working]
- 3) *Sangeetaali* [Singing]
- 4) *Kriraali* [Sports]



- 5) *Mallaali* [Rowing]
- 6) *Dhaaraali* [Tradition]
- 7) *Sebaali* [Service]
- 8) *Shilpaali* [Art]
- 9) *Jyanaali* [Knowledge]
- 10) *Chaashaali* [Agriculture]
- 11) *Dakkhotaali* [Skill Development]
- 12) *Sankhyanaali* [Mathematics]
- 13) *Foujaali* [Martial Art]
- 14) *Kathaali* [Conversation]
- 15) *Bhramantaali* [Travel]
- 16) *Koutukalli* [Wit]

The Four Promises of 'BRA-TA-CHA-RI' of Bengal:

BRA: (*Brata* – Ideal)

We take the Brata to serve Bengal; along with Bengal to serve India; along with India to serve the world of humanity.

TA: (*Tarunata* – Youthfulness)

We shall bring the lively stream of youthfulness into our lives.

CHA: (*Chai* – Desire)

We desire a strong body and a free and liberal mind.

RI: (*Ritimoto* – Systematically)

We shall systematically endeavour to pursue the vows.

The Seventeen Don'ts:

- 1) I will not hang the Kachha (Dhoti end).
- 2) I will not speak in a mixed language.
- 3) I will not develop a
- 4) I will not eat except when hungry.
- 5) I will not spend beyond my earning.
- 6) I will not give way to fear before danger or obstacle.
- 7) I will not indulge in luxury.
- 8) I will not exhibit anger even when angry.



- 9) I will not forget to smile even in misfortune.
- 10) I will not be puffed up with pride.
- 11) I will not be untrue in thought or spirit.
- 12) I will not be discourteous in manner.
- 13) I will not place reliance on luck, chance or destiny.
- 14) I will not rest without striving.
- 15) I will not flee from failure.
- 16) I will not beg for livelihood.
- 17) I will not violate the given word.

#### Value of Rhythmic Training:

"The way thousands of soldiers becomes a unified force in a mission getting rid of their divided beings through the rhythmic movement of their hands and legs, hundreds of men can be unified in their souls by being inspired and conducted by the ethics of unity with the help of rhythmic practice."

--- Gurusaday Dutta

The Bratachari system of discipline, combining, as it does, songs of simple and unsophisticated type, with a spiritual and earnest purpose, song to a vigorous rhythm to the accompaniment of simple and vigorous physical movements, provides inspiration for the development of body and soul.

The simultaneous rhythmic discipline of body, mind and speech develop a passion for knowledge, for work and labour, for unity, for joy of every sphere of life including religion and daily labour.

#### Harmony within and with the world:

The soul of every person is born from his or her birthplace. Hence, it is a must to have a connection between the rhythm derived from his motherland and his own education and practice. The practice of mother language, songs and dance emerged from his motherland are indispensable in the process of physical and intellectual learning. Through 'Bratachari', Man develops his rhythmic power which he has achieved from his birth and realizes the complete ethic based on the five 'Bratas'. The



process of '*Bratachari*' aims to build up complete human beings through this rhythmic practice.

If we want to establish the sovereignty of the community, we need to unify the souls of thousands of people in a community at first. It is necessary to have love and honour for each and every object, tradition, ritual and rhythm derived from that soil from which the community has emerged.

The key words of '*Bratachari*' are based on the theory of soil and rhythm. According to '*Bratachari*', the unity of this cosmos is based on the earthly varieties. Man can find out the universal unity only through the practice of the individuality of his soil. A '*Bratachari*' wants to free Man from unnatural segmentation of life and to provide them with the completeness of ideology and balance of behavior so that every human being can establish a natural and proper relationship with the earthly nature and his own motherland. Hence, '*Bratachari*' contains the elements of achieving pleasure and unity of a community through character building, physical exercise, working and through traditional dance and songs.

In order to make the people of Bengal feel proud and unified of their nationality, to build one community out of them; '*Bratachari*' tries to intrigue those rhythmic works into the lives of Bengalis which contains the age old bravery, spirituality and pleasure of Bengal. '*Bratachari*' is determined to establish the features of Bengali martial arts like '*Raybeshe*' and '*Dhaali*' dance, the spirituality in '*Jari*', '*Baul*' and '*Kirtan*' and the rhythm of '*Kathi*' and '*Jhumur*' dance in the community life of Bengal.

The first step is the unity with the people of Bengal, if the '*Bratachari*' is a Bengali. The second step is the unity with the people of India as an Indian. The third step is unifying with the people of other countries for being an inhabitant of the earth. '*Bratachari*' does not say anything about any regional ethic. If the national unity is to be achieved, then all human; irrespective of community and religion; have to establish the stream of sense and rhythm of their particular lands in their lives.

Every '*Bratachari*' has to utter the three oaths for the love of his soil with his hand on his heart. It is called '*Bhukti*'. It differs a little bit with the change of country or place. A '*Bratachari*' speaks the names of the place or country where he belongs.



Thus, a '*Bratachari*' from West Bengal will say:

- I      love Bengal  
         love India  
         love the entire world
  
- I      will serve Bengal  
         will serve India  
         will serve the entire world
  
- I      am the '*Bratachari*' of Bengal  
         am the '*Bratachari*' of India  
         am the '*Bratachari*' of the entire world

Again, a '*Bratachari*' from Sylhet in Bangladesh will say Sylhet instead of Bengal and Bangladesh instead of India.

Spirit of harmony:

Modern sports and games tend to encourage combating and competitive spirit but Bratachari exercises and dance actively develop the spirit of harmony and co-operation.

Unity in diversity:

While an Indian Bratachari regards India as possessing an underlying spiritual and cultural unity, he takes note of the fact that this Indian synthesis must be composed of important regional diversities representing different aspects of the one great Indian cultural unity. It is thus the duty of those who are residents of each of these distinct cultural or linguistic regions of India to develop its own special cultural traits so as to enrich fully the common Indian heritage.

Promotion of national unity:

Apart from the physical and spiritual development resulting from Bratachari, one of its fundamental feature is that it develops pride by the re-introduction from the heroic and joyous ancient traditions of the race and from the point of view of nation building, these are of the utmost importance.



### Resolution of 'Bratachari'

"I believe in the traditional features, glorious past and even more glorious future of Bengal and India. I will put my effort in following the ethics of 'Bratachari' in my body, soul, character, speech, behavior and work for achieving that glorious future and tradition and in becoming a complete person of India and Bengal."

### The Bratachari Emblem:

The Bratachari emblem is a design of interlocked symbols representing the five Bratas. The flame in the middle represents knowledge, the spade and the axe represent labour, the horizontal straight line in the middle represents the straight path of truth, the knot tying these symbols together represents unity, the ripple below on which all these rest represents joy.

### Parts of of Selected Bratachari Songs:

#### The Joy of Life

Let us all meet  
And dance and sing in rhythm,  
And the pang of separation and of the  
Loss of our dear ones through death;  
But shall such thing make us forget the  
Joy of our soul?

#### Realisation of life

Give thyself away in the service of others ---  
Join thy mind with others' minds,  
Remove the sense of 'mine' an 'thine' from thy mind;

Let the flood of universal love wash away the wall of thy selfishness  
If thou wouldst gain peace of mind,  
Wipe away the tear from other's eye,  
If thou wouldst gain ease of heart,  
Wipe away the pain from other's heart



If thou wouldst be large,  
Give away thine wealth to others;  
If thou wouldst be great,  
Attune thy mind to the minds of others.

Bharat Mata

With head erect  
Sing the anthem  
Glory to India; the Mother!  
Glory to India; the Mother!  
Glory to India; the Mother!  
Glory, glory, glory,  
Glory to India, the Mother!

With head bent  
Sing the prayer ---  
Rain down the stream of thy blessing, great God!  
Thou dispeller of fear from the mind of men!  
Unto the vast multitudes of India's children,  
In the cause of human welfare and service,  
Do thou bestow enlightenment, unity and strength,  
Glory, glory, glory to thee, O god!

The song of India

It is through much merit that one is born in India.

What proud memories of many centuries are bound up with her rivers and deserts and mountains and wide plains and with her land and water!

It was here that Shakuntala and her love met each other in the shady nook of the hermit's home; that the gentle Sita trod the glades of the Panchavati forest.

Community Songs of 'Bratachari'

The community songs of 'Bratachari' have been composed from several subjects of daily life. These songs tell us about the mundane ground level works in their lyrics, discourse, rhythm and tune. They have been



composed in such a way so that they can be sung with a simple rhythmic movement so that people of all ages can practice them and can get rid of stagnancy and dullness of life and luxury on the other hand and can achieve a natural and simple freedom, pleasure and development.

In the song of Gurusaday Dutta on agriculture, we can find a sense of providing respect to village:

*"Chal Kodai Chalai  
Bhule Maaner Balai"*

[Let's dig out the harvesting field forgetting about status.]

Song for teaching the illiterates:

*"Mora Shikhbo Lekhapara  
Je Lekhapara Shekhe Naa Taar  
Golay Pore Dara."*

[We will learn to study. Who does not learn to read he gets strangled one day.]

Song to clean the environment:

*"Chal Aay Kachuri Naashi..."*

[Come let's demolish the Water Hyacinth]

'Bratachari' is respectful towards all sorts of people and their work. Work and knowledge, both are equally important:

*"Chasha --- Jodi Taar Naai Ba Sore  
Mukher Bhasha*

*... ..  
Jyaner Mashal Niye Haate  
Neme Ay Chasher Khete"*

[If a farmer cannot speak his mind, come to the harvesting field with the light of knowledge]

### Traditional Dance of Bratachari:

Raibeshe Dhace:-

This is a traditional dance form of Bengal and derives its name from the Raibeshe soldiers who were the spearmen in the armies of the kings of ancient Bengal. This is a form of war dance. This name was applied to the



spearman because the handles of their spears were made from a particular kind of bamboo called 'Rai (king) Bansh (bamboo)'. Raibeshe soldiers took part in the campaign to other parts of India. The descendants of these soldiers are now the Raibeshe dancers. Nowadays they do not carry any in their hands while dancing and it heightens the artistic character of the dance.

This dance is performed in a circle and accompanied by 'Dhol' and 'Kansi'. The dancers wear brass anklets in one leg. Different kinds of hand movements and arm-gestures indicate the hurling of spears, the drawing of bow and the brandishing of swords. Some movements indicate horsemen. The dancing is punctuated with raising yells.

In rabindranath Tagore's words ---

"Dance of such a manly type is rarely met with. In western countries, dance in the portrait of valour. This dance will be able to remove the feebleness of spirit in our country."

**Dhali Dance:-**

The 'Dhali' ('Dhal' means shield) dance as its name implies, is a war dance. This dance is practiced by the shield-men of the potentates, Pratapaditya and Sitaram, of the district of Jessore. The descendants of these soldiers, both Hindus and Muslims, now perform this dance on occasion of wedding and other festivals. In place of actual shields and swords they use small cane shields and light cane sticks.

**Dhamali Dance:-**

This dance is performed by the Hindu women in the district of Sylhet on the occasion of wedding and other social festivals. The dance is performed in a ring with the accompaniment of singing and clapping of hands or playing of cymbals by the dancers themselves.

**Jhumur Dance and Songs:-**

This is a social dance form which is practiced on the occasion of social or domestic festivals.



The songs refer to the sentiment connected with simple village themes. The dancers stand in rows, those in each row clapping the hands of the dancers on either side.

#### Boul Dance:-

This is the dance of the professional religious mendicants of Bengal. The singing and dancing are performed to the accompaniment of the 'Gabgubagub' or 'Anadalahari' which is a stringed instrument.

#### Kirtan Dance:-

This is a national religious dance of all clans of Hindus in Bengal. It is a dance of deep spiritual appeal and lends itself to complicated movements. The accompaniment is 'Mridanga' (one kind of percussion).

#### Brata Dance:-

This kind of dance is practiced by Hindu women in ancient Bengal on the occasion of religious festivals. They have no musical association or suggestion. Whatever is there is movement.

#### Remarks of Respected Persons:

##### Rabindranath Tagore:-

"May the Bratachari movement soon spread throughout the length and breadth of the country. I feel confident that wherever it is adopted, it will conduce to the development of joy of spirit, capacity for work, strength of character and enthusiasm for social service."

##### Mahatma Gandhi:-

"I am trying to study the movement and after I have done so, hope to help in its growth. I am hoping to come into closer contact with Mr. Dutta (Gurusaday Dutta) and to know more of his movement in course of time."



Dr. Rajendra Prasad:-

"It aims at the development of a good physique and service of the country."

Acharya Sir P. C. Roy:-

"I entirely agree with the principles of the movement. It is due to our slavish mentality that we regard any game and play practiced in Europe as dignified and our own national games and plays as inferior. We have forgotten to take pride in the rural culture of our country. The Bratachari Movement is reforming this slavish mental attitude."

Dr. Shyamaprasad Mukherjee:-

"The Bratachari movement will enable India to unite Hindus, Musalmans, Buddhists and Christians into our common Indian Nation and by infusing physical and moral strength into the Indian people will enable them to demand and obtain their rightful place among the nations of the world."

### **Gurusaday Dutta**

"There is no doubt in the fact that health and accumulating food for the country is very much important --- however, the expression of delight is not less essential than that ... All sorts of expression of delight revive the inner strength of men. Man does not die only out of starvation --- when he is deprived of delight, his strength dries out to death."

--- Rabindranath Tagore

India is a country based on rivers, agriculture and villages. The primary ground of cultural ambience of this country is the folk practice. Since ages, the Indian society has survived through hard work and simultaneously it has given birth to various traditional practices to forget the harshness of its struggle and to make its survival delightful. These practices are express through dance, songs, drama, narration or religious rituals at times. This is a gigantically spread ancient stream.



Some of the talented children of our country had realized the importance and utility of these traditional streams and had taken the responsibility to express them in a combined form. 'Guruji' or Gurusaday Dutta is one of the most vital among them.

Patriotic I.C.S. Gurusaday Dutta believed that our actual motherland lives in the villages of India. However, he had noticed that the Indian freedom fighters are trying to achieve only political independence, ignoring the development of the villages. The urban citizens are becoming the face of freedom fighting. Hence, the Indian rural societies are living a segregated and oblivious life staying miles away from the process of freedom fighting and they are only accusing their individual destiny for all of their troubles, limitations, and hostile situation.

Gurusaday Dutta had thought that our country cannot become independent if the farmers, workers, students and youths are not unified. In spite of being a high ranking government official, he thought that if the proper development of the country is to be done then one has to struggle incessantly against illiteracy, underdeveloped economy, malaria and oppression. Moreover, the differentiation and outrage among community and religion are added to them against which he had uttered repeatedly:

*"Ke Hindu Ke Musalman Janen Taa Bhagaban;  
Deshar Sebay Jibanpaat Kar Bule Tui Ke Kon Jaat."*

[God knows who is Hindu and who is Musalman; you sacrifice your life for your service to the country, forgetting about who belongs to what community.]

Or,

*"Amaar Thakurer Nei Kono Achaar ---  
Nei Ko Naam, Nei Ko Dhaam, Nei Ko Jaat Bichar.  
Keu Bole Allah Ho Akbar.  
Keu Bole Bonomali Shyam Natabar.  
Mori Hay-Hay Re  
Keu Bole Bonomali Shyam Natabar  
Abar Jishu Naame Bethlehem-e Holo Go Prochaar ----."*

[My God has no rituals, no name, no place, no judgment on caste. Some take the name of Allah; some say the names of Lord Krishna. Again, his name is celebrated as Jesus Christ in Bethlehem.]



## Life Sketch of Gurusaday Dutta

Gurusaday Dutta was born on 10<sup>th</sup> May of the year 1882 in Birashree village situated on the bank of river Kushiya in Shrihatto district (presently in Bangladesh). He was the fourth and the last child of Ramkrishna Dutta and Anandamoyee Devi of the reputed Dutta choudhury family of Birashree village. His three elder sisters were Katyayanee (her grandson was Khaled Choudhury or Chittaranjan Dutta), Susheela (mother of ee central minister and reputed educationist Dr. Triguna Sen) and Manorama.

The school, in which Gurusaday Dutta completed his primary education, was founded by his own uncle Radhakrishna Dutta Choudhury in the year 1857. In 1982, on the first centenary of Gurusaday, this school was named as Gurusaday High School.

He lost his father at a very early age in 1895. Only after two years after that, in the year 1897, his mother also expired.

Gurusaday's talent was first identified when in the educational year 1898-99 he stood first in the entire Assam state and second among all the applicants in the entrance examination of Calcutta University. In 1901, he stood first in F.A. examination in Presidency Collage.

While studying in Presidency Collage, he used to encourage many students in various games and lead them as well. The practice of sports was acquired by Gurusaday in his early student life in the primary school in Birshree village. The Principal of that school was Tarak Nath Roy. His influence can be found largely in the work engrossed life of Gurusaday. Tarak Nath Roy first started football and cricket in Birshree village. He used to keep his keen eye, standing in the playground with a cane in his hand, on the fact that nobody is breaking discipline. He always encouraged his students to play the exhausting and courageous games instead of games for leisurely time pass. Not only sports, Tarak Nath also teach his students to bloom flowers and harvest vegetables and he personally joined with them. He also inspired his students to patriotism by telling stories and about historical events.

The seed of nationalism was planted in the mind of Gurusaday in his early childhood. It began to bloom and grow during his study in Presidency Collage when he regularly heard speeches of Gurudas Banerjee, J. N. Das, Reverend Kalicharan Banerjee, Surendranath Bandyopadhyay, Bipin Paul and many more. Gurusaday became a volunteer in the Calcutta Congress Ceremony in the year 1901.



Meritorious student Gurusaday had a wish to study to become I.C.S. and Barrister in abroad. The primary hindrance for that were financial limitation and the objection of his uncle. At last, with the intervention of Tarak Nath Roy he got the permission of his uncle and financial support from Shrihatto Sammilanee (forum) and set out for Europe in the month of June of 1902. He started studying in Cambridge University. In 1905, he stood first in I.C.S. examination, got 100 out of 100 in horse riding. He began to study law in the mean time. He became Barrister with very good marks and stood first in the examination for Constitutional Law.

After returning to India, he was asked to sacrifice for crossing the sea according to the Hindu rituals. He protested against this custom and started following Bramha religion.

In the year 1906, he married Sarojnalinee Devi and in 1909 his only son Birendra Saday Dutta was born. After the demise of Sarojnalinee Devi on 19<sup>th</sup> January 1925, Gurusaday Dutta decided to dedicate himself completely to the service to his country and society.

After returning from Europe, Gurusaday realized for sure that with the material development the world, especially the West, is somehow losing the totality of life. The rhythm of life is being lost. So he thought that this wholeness, the connection between man and nature, is to be restored at any cost. From this thought, his search for the folk culture began and this search brought him to a running, yet new, practice of living.

"What the race lives by is its tradition, its power of embodying the finest emanations of it and fresh in forms of undying beauty and aspiration which are never twice the same. These traditions it is which are the immortal joy and strength of Mankind, and in their destruction the race is for more hopelessly impoverished than in the destruction of any number of human beings. For it is by his traditions that Man is Man, and not by the number of meaningless superfluous millions whom he spreads over the earth."

--- Havelock Ellis [*'The Art of Life'* (XCIX)]

Gurusaday Dutta realized that if the preservation of folk culture is not taken as a '*Brata*' (a holly mission), then a person and his practice of nationalism will not get any permanent value. Hence, to serve nation as proper human and to preserve folk elements, a '*Brata*' is needed and those who will follow this '*Brata*' --- will be known as '*Bratachari*'. The



official announcement regarding this was held on 6<sup>th</sup> February 1932 in the second folk dance camp in Suri. The organization named 'Bratachari' --- following the five 'Bratas' (*Jyan, Shram, Satya, Oikya* and *Ananda*) in order to serve the country --- was founded.

The struggle to build up ideal people began. Gurusaday did understand with his knowledge, belief and experience that our country will be free one day. But to preserve that freedom, a group of idealistic and patriotic workers are needed, who will fight against the cultural and social decay of the country.

According to Gurusaday, --- "Only uttering 'Vandemataram' is pretention if you cannot pray the soil. Civilized and uncivilized --- all must concentrate to agriculture. Change the definition of civilized person from now. Say that those who can work in farming lands by putting physical labour in their free time, they are civilized and those who do not want to do so, are uncivilized."

*"Laago Kaaje Komor Bendhe  
Khule Dekho Jyaner Chokh  
Kodal Haate Khate Jara  
Taarai Asol Badrolok"*

[Get engaged in work, see with the eye of knowledge, those who work in field are actual civilized people]

Hence, he said, --- "so the Bengalis should understand that the simple lifestyle and rituals of their mothers and grandmothers and those which are still alive in the interior villages and those ladies who still have kept them alive --- are much more important than the thousands of rootless ladies graduating from universities. The Raybeshe, Poli, Jari, Kirtan dances in the rural houses of Bengal, which reflect the bravery, spirituality and simple pleasure and which are neglected by the present day educated Bengalis --- the value of these forms and the lives of their illiterate and poor rustic people are a lot more than the value of the lives of hundreds and thousands of university graduates who are detached from their culture."

At the very beginning of his professional life, Gurusaday Dutta worked as an Assistant Magistrate Sub-divisional Officer in Gaya, Sahabad, Kishanganj in Bihar. Later, he got married to Sarojnalini, the fourth daughter of I.C.S. Brajendra Nath Dey, on 23<sup>rd</sup> September of the year 1906. After 1911, he had to work for some time in the judicial department in various districts like Khulna, Pabna, Bagura, Faridpur, Dhaka, Barishal



etc. then he was appointed as the District Magistrate of Birbhum district for four years (1915 – 1920). After that, he worked in the administrative department for ever.

Alike Gurusaday, his wife Sarojnalini had the deepest sympathy for the poor as well. After the untimely death of his wife in 1925, Gurusaday founded 'Sarojnalini Narimangal Samiti' (Sarojnalini Women's Welfare Society) in order to spread out education among poor women. He wrote lyrics for them ---

*"Theke Gharer Kone Gupto  
Mora Roibo Naa Aar Supto ---  
Bidhir Deoya Shakti Mora  
Korbo Naa Bilupto ---"*

[Remaining hidden in a corner of the house, we won't be sleeping any more, we won't waste the God gifted strength.]

Patriot Gurusaday supported the independence movement of India. Because of his trying to make the foreign fund reach the freedom fighters in Howrah district and his protest against the British government, he was transferred to Mymensingh district (in the year 1929). At this time he went to London for fourth time and got acquainted with Cecil Sharp --- the soul dedicated to restoration of old English folk culture. Sharp inspired Gurusaday a lot. While attending the ceremony of Folk Song and Dance Preservation Committee in Albert Hall, he realized that the almost extinct folk songs and dance of Bengal and India needs to be restored. In this period he attended several ceremonies, such as 'International Agricultural Congress' in Rome and 'World Adult Education' in Cambridge, as the Indian representative.

When Gurusaday Dutta joined his charge as the District Administrator of Mymensingh, the Civil Disobedience Movement has been spread all over the country. He noticed that at the same time communal disturbance is spreading equally. He decided to use the folk tradition to unify the Hindu and Muslim communities. He found out 'Jari' song and dance and the 'Baul' songs. He arranged for a special ceremony where he invited the 'Bauls' from Netrakona and the 'Jari' troupe of Imambaksh from Atarbari. At the beginning, many people did not want to come to the programme showing their ignorance towards the art of these rustic, poor, illiterate people. However, when they heard that the District Administrator himself will dance with them with bare body, the government and non-



government workers, Hindus and Muslims --- all joined in the ceremony out of curiosity. Though many of them wanted to ignore him by calling him insane, it can be assumed easily that this activity had left a long lasting influence in the mass. Gurusaday founded 'Mymensingh Folk Dance and Music Society' with people from both Hindu and Muslim communities. For his activities regarding communal harmony and supporting the Civil Disobedience Movement in spite of being a government official produced a bad record to his higher authority. As a consequence, he was again transferred from Mymensingh to Birbhum district in twenty four hours' notice.

*"Ayre Hindu Musalman Bhai Golay Jorajori,  
Ek Deshete Janmo Ay Ei Desher Kaaje Mori."*

[Come Hindu and Musalman brothers hugging each other, we have born in the same country so let's die working for her.]

Gurusaday could write poems, lyrics and rimes instantly. He used that talent in building up a social consciousness. He has written poems and composed songs on various subjects such as development of agriculture, cooperative farming, clearing out Malaria and so on. Moreover, he has added dance movements into the works so that the school students can practice them.

The work which he had started at Mymensingh, seeped up even more in Birbhum. Here, while researching for folk dance, Gurusaday found the almost lost war dance 'Raibishe' or 'Raybeshe' in 1930. From this very war dance, he found out the descendents of the warriors of ancient Bengal. Everybody got to know about the dominance of the soldiers from Bengal in the battle force of our country till sixteenth-seventeenth century. Gurusaday wrote ---

"Maha	Mad Patrer 'Raybenshe' Sahay
Emoni	Chhutechhilo Lausener Moynay.
Raaj	Nagarbaasi Beerrajar Bansho
Ray	Bensher Sahaye Korto Shotrur Dhansho.
Raja	Mansinger Durdhorsho Fouj 'Raybenshe'
Emoni	Naachto Ullase Ranobijoy Sheshe
Ko	Linger Samrater Padatik Beshe,
Emoni	Chhutto 'Raybensher' Dol Gujrat Deshe
Theke	Chhoddobeshe Adhahpotit Deshe
Ray	Benshe Naache 'Raibisher' Beshe."

[In this manner the 'Raybeshe' force had rushed to the court of Lausen. They were the descendents of King Beer of Raajnagar, who used to



demolish the enemies. The magnificent army of King Maan Singh used to dance like this while celebrating after victory. They used to rush to Gujrat like this in disguise of the messengers of the King of Kalinga. While staying in their disguise in foreign land, the 'Raybeshe' soldiers danced in the apparel of 'Raibishe'.]

Gurusaday founded '*Bangeeo Pollysampad Rokkha Samiti*' (Rural Resource Preservation Society of Bengal). He started publishing a quarterly magazine named '*Pollysampad*' (Rural Resource). He built up a troupe for folk dance and for its training and publicity he arranged for '*Shibir*' (camp). Gradually, several folk dance forms '*Raybeshe*', '*Kaathi*', '*Baul*', '*Jhumur*' of Birbhum, '*Dhali*' of Jessore, '*Sari*' of Chittagong, '*Dhamail*' of Shrihatta were collected there. Important personalities of the time; such as, Hemlata Tagore, Dinendranath Tagore, Dinesh Chandra Sen, Sudhanshu Kumar Haldar (I.C.S.), Raybahadur Abinash Chandra Bandyopadhyay, Raybahadur Nirmalshib Bandyopadhyay and many more; came forward to help '*Bangeeo Pollysampad Rokkha Samiti*'.

In few days Gurusaday became successful in forming the 'Bratachari' movement which gradually spread in other parts of the country. Rabindranath Tagore wrote to Gurusaday in a letter from Shantiniketan:

"I pray that the programme of Bratachari spread all over Bengal. There is no doubt in the fact that with this practice the delight of soul, power of work, firmness of character and enthusiasm to work for the mass will become stronger."

In 1933, Gurusaday organized a folk dance programme in Delhi and at the same time he founded 'All India Folk Dance and Folk Song Revival Society'. After his transfer to Kolkata, he organized an exhibition of folk art in the Society of Oriental Art which ended with an applaud (20<sup>th</sup> March, 1932).

In the month of October in 1933, he found an ancient temple of sixteenth century with Terracotta art work in Mathurapur village in Faridpur district. The height of the temple was about 90 ft. just like this, whenever Gurusaday has found anything, he has rushed over there to collect it and to present it to the specialists. The reports of these researches and his own essays are there in the journals and magazines of that time. '*Shribhumi*', '*Bichitra*', '*Banglar Shokti*', '*Modern Review*', '*Probuddho Bharat*', '*Kolkata Review*', '*Indian Arts and Letters*', '*The Religions of the World*' and '*Calcutta Municipal Gadget*' are significant instances of them.



When the total number of folk art collections exceeded two thousand five hundred, Gurusaday founded *Bratachari* Archive. In the year 1935, Gurusaday went to England to participate in the International Folk Dance Festival as a representative of Calcutta University and founded 'All England Bratachari Society' there.

In 1936 in the '*Nikhil Vishwadharmā Mahasammelan*' in Kolkata Town Hall, Gurusaday proved in an exceptional exhibition that '*Bratachari*' is a movement to establish communal harmony.

In the same year at Tamluk of Midnapore district an excavation took place under Mr. Ramachandran --- the then Administrative Chief of Indian Museum and Gurusaday Dutta. The excavation ended up in the discovery of an age old statue of a Jakkhini (Indian mythological deity) and a carved earthen pot which was about four thousand years old.

In the year 1940, Gurusaday conducted an excavation at Sagar Island in South 24 Pargana and found the reminiscent of a primitive township.

These priceless findings of Gurusaday added new facts to the history of Bengal.

Gurusaday wanted to build up a 'rural university' for folk practice. He bought 101 *Bigha* land for thirty three thousand rupees in Joka village near Thakurpukur by the side of Diamond Harbour Road in the south of Kolkata in December of 1940. He named it as '*Bratachari Gram*'. He declared the educational institute of *Bratachari Gram* will have (1) *Paatbari* [School], (2) *Sadhonabari* [Gymnasium], (3) *Karika Bari* [Workshop], (4) *Chaash Bari* [Farm House], (5) *Punthhi Bari* [Library], (6) *Seba Bari* [Village Development Centre] and (7) *Sangraha Bari* [Museum].

Due to tireless labour and cancer Gurusaday met his untimely death on 25<sup>th</sup> June 1941 at the age of fifty nine. But the inspiration of his work was left for the countrymen. His innumerable songs and poems remained which are still the key words of *Bratachari* and equally important. In Gurusaday's own words ---

"Those who still consider the oaths and rules of *Bratachari* as childish games, the time has come for them to understand that they are not so. These are the simple, yet effective process of practicing the complete total ideal life. Through the individual and communal practice of it Bengalis will empower themselves physically, mentally, characteristically and spiritually both in individual and social aspect not only in India but also in the entire world."

# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



1 July 2015



**Adrija Dasgupta and Debidas Tarafdar are taking Interview of Bratachari Nayak (chief trainer) Boidyanath Jee**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



1 July 2015



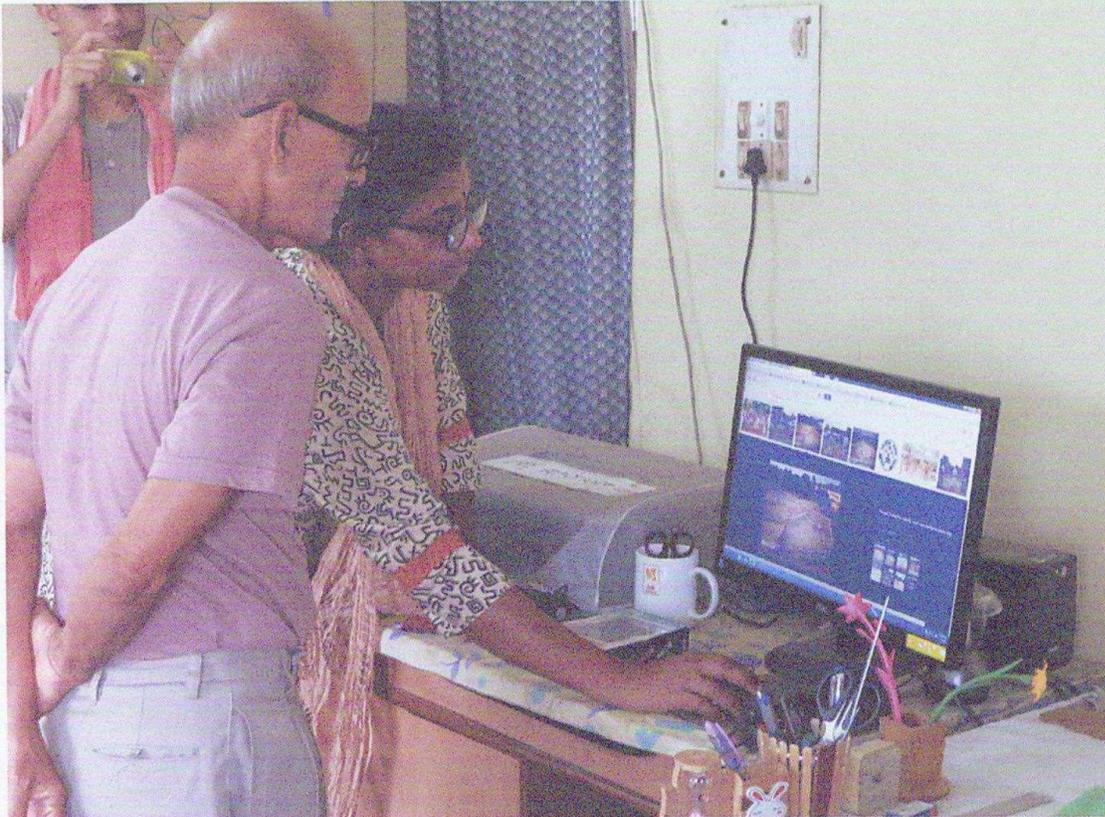
**Boidyanath Jee is demonstrating some movements of Bratachari**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



1 July 2015



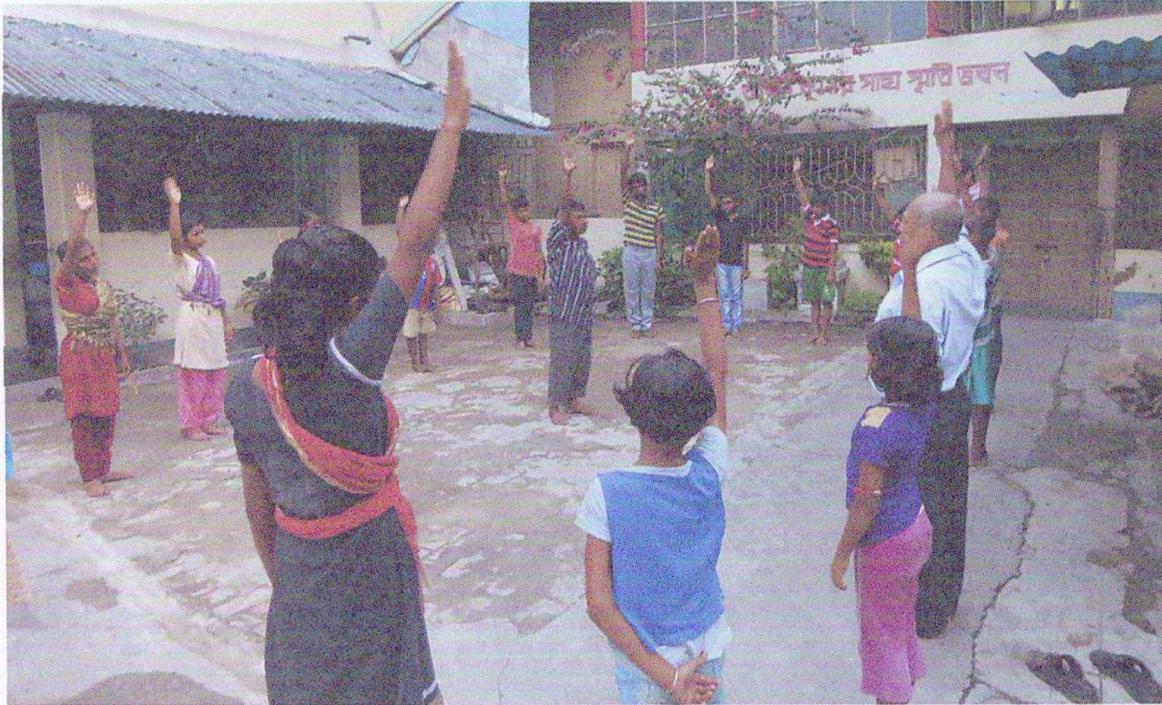
**Boidyanath Jee is explaining the collected research materials of Uhinee Kolkata**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



30 June 2015



Regular Bratachari class in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



30 June 2015



**Regular Bratachari class in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.**

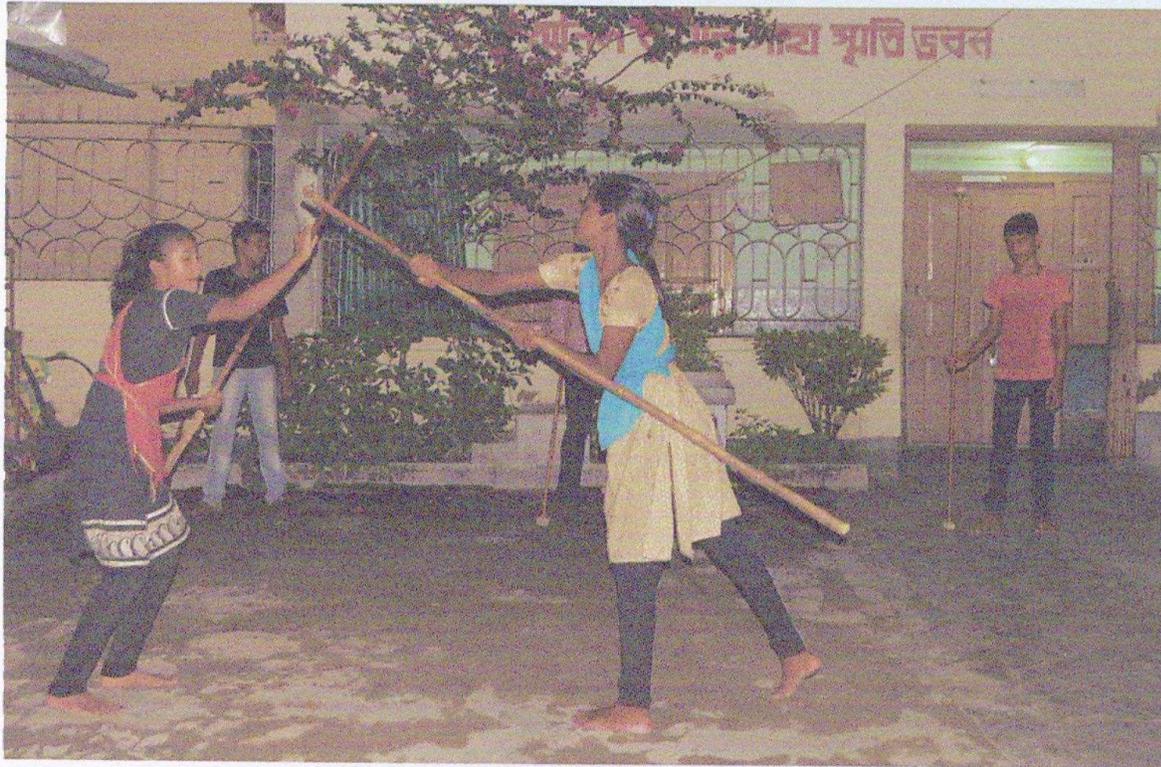


**Adrija Dasgupta is taking Interview of Bratachari Nayak in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.**

# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



30 June 2015



The Trainees are practicing in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



30 June 2015



**The Trainees are practicing in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



30 June 2015



The Trainees are practicing in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



The Trainees are practicing in Bibek Bharati Bratachari centre, Garia, South 24 Pgn.



Prayer Ceremony

# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**Regular Practice**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



Regular Practice



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**Regular Practice**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**Regular Practice**



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**Innovative Shields made of Bamboo for *Lathhikhela***



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**The Trainers are Teaching new lessons of *Lathikhela***



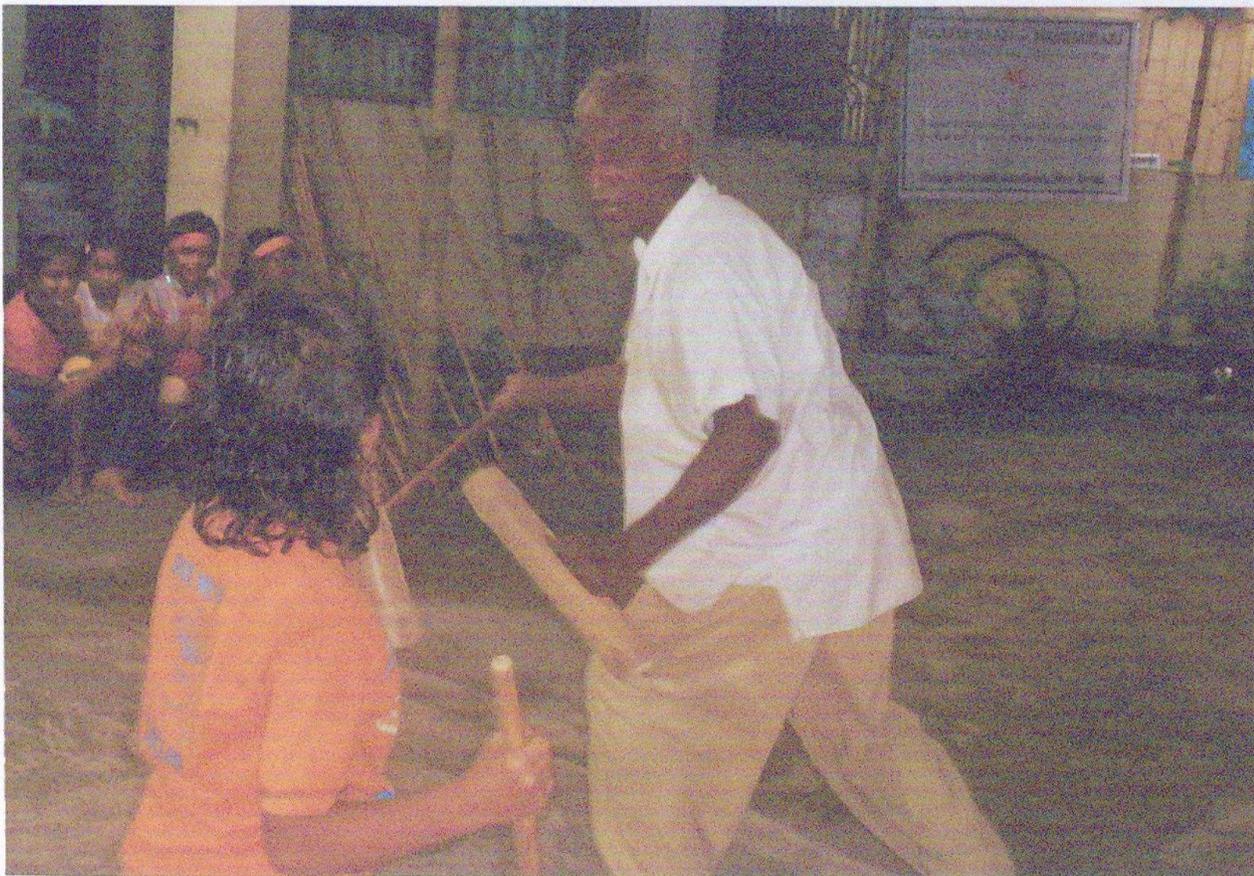
# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**The Trainers are Teaching new lessons of *Lathikhela***



# MAATIR TAAN --- BRATACHARI



19 July 2015



**The Trainers are Teaching new lessons of *Lathhikhela***



**The Trainees are Playing their Exercise Games**