



KAMARAJ IAS ACADEMY
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15th November is the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda

Published On: 07-11-2022

Why is in news? 15th November is the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda who is revered as Bhagwan by tribal communities across the country

In 2021, the Government had declared 15th November as 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas' dedicated to the memory of brave tribal freedom fighters.

To commemorate the contribution of the tribal freedom fighters, the Ministry of Education in association with the AICTE, UGC, Central Universities, Private Universities, other HEIs, CBSE, KVS, NVS and Skilling institutions is celebrating 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas'.

The nationwide celebrations of Janjatiya Gaurav Divas will witness a large number of programmes such as debate competition on the **theme 'Contribution of Janjati Heroes in freedom struggle'**, social activities, etc. in the educational institutions across the country.

Born on 15th November 1875, belonged to the **Munda tribe in the Chotanagpur Plateau area**.

He was also known as **Dharti Aaba (Father of Earth)**, Birsa Munda is known to have mobilised the tribal community against the British and had also forced the colonial officials to introduce laws protecting the land rights of the tribals.

Birsait Sect: Having gained awareness of the British colonial ruler and the **efforts of the missionaries to convert tribals to Christianity**, Birsa started the **faith of 'Birsait'**.

Members of the **Munda and Oraon community joined the Birsait sect** and it turned into a challenge to British conversion activities.

Munda Rebellion:

It is one of the most important tribal movements.

It was led by Birsa Munda in the south of Ranchi in **1899-1900**.

The movement identified following forces as the **cause of the misery** the Mundas were suffering: The **land policies of the British** were destroying their traditional land system, **Hindu landlords and moneylenders** were taking over their land, **Missionaries** were criticising their traditional culture.

The '**Ulgulan**' or the '**Great Tumult**' as the movement came to be called, aimed at **establishing Munda Raj by driving out the British**.

Birsa's followers began targeting the symbols of diku and European power. They attacked police stations and churches, and raided the property of moneylenders and zamindars. They raised the white flag as a symbol of Birsa Raj.

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On 3rd March, 1900, Birsa Munda was arrested by the British police while he was sleeping with his **tribal guerilla army** at Jamkopai forest in Chakradharpur (Jharkhand).

Birsa **died of cholera** in the jail and the movement faded out.

Significance of Munda Rebellion:

It **forced the colonial government to introduce laws** so that the land of the tribals could not be easily taken over by dikus (**Chotanagpur Tenancy Act, 1908**).

It showed that the tribal people had the capacity to protest against injustice and express their anger against colonial rule.