

1.150th Birth Anniversary of Birsa Munda

15 November Is Observed As Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, Commemorating The Birth Anniversary Of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. The Government Designated This Day As Janjatiya Gaurav Divas In 2021

Early Life & Background

Birth And Identity – Born On 15 November 1874 in Ulihatu Village, Ranchi District (Present-Day Jharkhand). Belonged to The Munda Tribe, A Major Adivasi Community of The Chhotanagpur Plateau.

Revered As “Dharti Aaba” Meaning “Father of The Earth” For His Vision of Protecting Tribal Land, Identity, And Ecological Harmony.

Spiritual Reform & Leadership – Introduced A Socio-Religious Movement Called Birsait, Promoting Monotheism, Moral Purity, And Rejection of Superstitions. Encouraged Abstinence from Alcohol, Traditional Healing, And Social Evils That Weakened Tribal Unity. Strengthened A Collective Consciousness Against Cultural Dilution and Missionary Influence.

Birsa Munda’s Movement & Ulgulan (“The Great Tumult”)

Nature Of the Movement– The Ulgulan (1899–1900) Was One of India’s Most Formidable Tribal Uprisings, Aimed at Overthrowing British Control and Restoring Tribal Governance. Also Called the Munda Rebellion (1895–1900), It Combined

1. Political Resistance
2. Social-Religious Reform
3. Economic Assertion Through Land-Rights Struggle
4. Cultural Revival of Tribal Customs and Rituals

Major Causes of The Ulgulan

Economic Causes – Destruction of Khuntkatti Land System

1. Traditional Munda System of Community Ownership Replaced by British Revenue Policies.
2. Land Transferred to Zamindars, Moneylenders, Contractors, And Non-Tribal Settlers (Dikus), Causing Widespread Dispossession.

Beth Begari (Forced Labour)

1. Tribals Compelled into **Unpaid Labor** for British Officials and Dikus.
2. A Major Symbol of Exploitation and Loss of Dignity.

Socio-Cultural Causes

Missionary Activities & Cultural Erosion

1. Conversion Efforts and Expansion of Missionary Influence Threatened Indigenous Beliefs.
2. Traditional Festivals, Sacred Groves, And Rituals Faced Restrictions.

Breakdown Of Tribal Institutions

1. Traditional Authority of The Mankis and Mundas (Village Chiefs and Clan Leaders) Diluted.
2. Tribal Justice Systems Were Replaced with British Courts and Police Structure.

Political Causes

Loss Of Autonomy & Self-Governance

1. British Interference in Tribal Governance Led to Loss of Self-Regulation and Traditional Legal Systems.
2. Tribals Became Politically Alienated and Administratively Marginalized.

Assertion Of Identity Under Birsa

Birsa's Charisma Provided

1. A Unified Identity
2. A Message of Liberation
3. A Promise of Self-Rule and Freedom from Dikus

His Call, "Abua Disum, Abua Raj" (Our Land, Our Rule), Galvanized the Movement.

Course Of the Rebellion

Birsa Mobilized Villages Across Ranchi, Khunti, Gumla, Singhbhum.

Organized Guerrilla Attacks On – Police Outposts, Christian Missionaries, Zamindar Estates, British Administrative Centres. The Rebellion Soon Grew into A Mass Struggle for Land, Dignity, And Autonomy.

British Deployed Massive Forces; Birsa Was Arrested In 1900 And died in Ranchi Jail At 25 Years Old.

Significance Of the Ulgulan

Landmark In Tribal Resistance

First Organized Tribal Resistance Blending Political, Cultural, And Ecological Justice.

Impact On Colonial Policy

Forced British to Review Land Policies Leading To

Chotanagpur Tenancy Act (Ct Act), 1908. Protected Tribal Land Rights. Restricted Transfer of Land to Non-Tribals. Recognized Traditional Land-Holding Practices.

Legacy & Ideological Influence

Inspired Tribal Movements Such As – Santhal Movement, Tana Bhagat Movement, Kol Uprising (Legacy Refinement). Stands As a Symbol of Adivasi Assertion and Environmental Ethos.

Government Of India Initiatives To Honour Birsa Munda

Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Declared 2021)

15 November Celebrated Annually to Honour – Birsa Munda's Birth Anniversary. Contributions Of Tribal Communities to India's Freedom Struggle. Focuses On Integrating Tribal History into National Consciousness.

Tribal Pride Year (2021–22)

Organized Countrywide Programs Promoting – Tribal Heroes, Languages and Culture, Indigenous Art, Crafts, And Heritage. Aims To Strengthen Inclusivity Within the Narrative of Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat.

Development Of 11 Tribal Museums

Dedicated Tribal Freedom-Fighter Museums Across India. Document Stories Of – Birsa Munda, Sidhu And Kanhu Murmu, Alluri Sitarama Raju, Rani Gaidinliu. Funded Under Support to Tribal Research Institutes (Tris). Goal – Preserve Tribal Knowledge Systems Previously Marginalized In Mainstream Historiography.

Administrative & Development Initiatives

Expansion Of Schemes Under –

- 1.Ministry of Tribal Affairs
- 2.Eklavya Model Residential Schools (Emrs)

3.Mission Mode Implementation of **Van Dhan Vikas Kendras**

4.Fra (2006) Implementation for Forest Land Rights

Combined Aim - Economic Empowerment, Education, And Preservation of Tribal Identities.

Source - <https://www.pib.gov.in/Pressreleasepage.aspx?Prid=2189915>

