

Who was Birsa Munda?

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About Birsa Munda:

- He was a folk hero and a **tribal freedom fighter** who played a pivotal role in the Indian independence movement, particularly in the tribal regions of British India.
- He belonged to the **Munda tribe** in the **Chhotanagpur Plateau area**.
- He **spearheaded an Indian tribal mass movement** that arose **in the Bihar and Jharkhand** belts in the **early 19th century** under British colonisation.
- Munda rallied the tribals to fight **against the forceful land grabbing** carried out **by the British government**, which would turn the tribals into bonded labourers and force them to abject poverty.
- He **influenced his people to realise the importance of owning their land** and asserting their rights over it.
- Birsa **encouraged the tribe to stick to their traditions** and get back to their tribal roots.

- One of Birsa's notable contributions was the formation of the **Munda Rebellion**, also **known as the Ulgulan**, or the **Tamar Revolt**, in the **late 19th century**.
 - The rebellion was a **response to the oppressive policies of the British** administration, including the introduction of the **Forest Laws**, that **restricted tribal access to their traditional lands**, and the imposition of **exorbitant taxes**.
 - Birsa united various tribal communities under the banner of the Munda Raj and **led a series of guerrilla warfare campaigns** against the British forces.
 - Birsa Munda's leadership during the Munda Rebellion **earned him the title of "Bhagwan" or "Birsa Bhagwan"** among his followers.
 - He often **took inspiration from Munda traditions, Christianity, and Hinduism** to guide his followers in rituals and prayers.
 - **His struggle** against exploitation and discrimination against tribals **led to a big hit** against the British government **in the form of the Chotanagpur Tenancy Act** being passed **in 1908**.
 - The act **restricted the passing on of land from the tribal people to non-tribals**.
 - Birsa also played a **crucial religious role** among the Munda people.
 - He **founded the faith of Birsait**, a **blend of animism and indigenous beliefs**, which emphasized the **worship of a single god**.
 - He **became their leader** and was given the **nickname, 'Dharti Aba'** or the **father of the earth**.
 - He died on June 9, 1900, at age 25.
 - In recognition of his impact on the national movement, the **state of Jharkhand** was **created on his birth anniversary in 2000**.
 - **November 15, the birth anniversary** of Birsa Munda, was **declared 'Janjatiya Gaurav Divas** by the **Central Government in 2021**.
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Q1: What is Chota Nagpur Plateau?

Known to be one of the most important industrial regions of India, the Chota Nagpur Plateau is a dissected plateau. Located in the north- eastern edge of the Indian peninsula, the Chota Nagpur Plateau covers much of the state of Jharkhand as well as adjacent parts of Odisha, West Bengal, Bihar and Chhattisgarh. Covering a total area of approximately 65,000 sq. km, the Chota Nagpur Plateau has the Indo-Gangetic Plain to the north and east of the plateau and the basin of the Mahanadi River lies to the south.

Source: [Jharkhand Guv, CM pay homage to Birsa Munda on his death anniversary](#)

Source: <https://vajiramandravi.com/current-affairs/birsa-munda/>

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