

H.F.M.

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[Selections from Books and Parliamentary  
papers]

THE HISTORY OF THE INDIAN  
INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT  
IN EAST ASIA.

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Section. b.

Selection from Books and Parliamentary papers. (no. 4)

The History of the Indian Independence movement in East Asia

THE HISTORY OF INDIAN INDEPENDENCE  
MOVEMENT IN EAST ASIA.

16/5/18

(79)

## THE INDIAN INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT IN EAST ASIA.

### ORIGIN.

### HISTORY.

1. The Indian Independence Movement in East Asia was in certain respects spontaneous Indian effort, while in some aspects it was inspired by the Japanese and by the circumstances created in East Asia by the victories gained by the Japanese forces against the Anglo-Americans.

2. When the Japanese attacked the British in Malaya the majority of the Indian population in that country numbering about 7 lakhs were not quite clear in their own minds as to their reactions to the incident. There were of course the usual frantic efforts at evacuation resulting in the usual sense of panic in the public mind. But the background of British rule in Malaya for the previous few years spotlighted by their firing on the estate labourers who had struck work demanding an increase in wages in keeping with the rise in cost of living, and subsequent prejudicial acts towards Indians like ordering precensorship of the Indian owned English papers while the British owned press went free and other similar acts had produced a spirit of suppressed antagonism to the British in the Indian Civilians' mind. In the case of the Indian troops, particularly among the Officers, there was disaffection owing to the exhibition of colour prejudice as in the case of the order prohibiting Indian Officers from using the swimming pool of the Singapore Swimming Club though they were allowed membership (after much agitation). Among the men there was a feeling that they were not getting a fair deal in being sent to fight with practically no air protection and with poor equipment.

3. Thus when the Japanese forced British surrender in Malaya, the Indians were ready to welcome them not so much out of love for them or trust in their sincerity as because of a sense of satisfaction in the defeat of the British.

4. Singapore fell on February 15th, 1942. On 17th Febry a few Indians including Sri.S.C. Goho, Sri. K.P.K. Menon and myself were invited to meet Major Fujiwara of the Japanese Military Headquarters. The Majaor started by saying that England's power was dwindling and



that it was the opportunity for India to strike for Independence. He said that Japan was prepared to give all assistance to Indians in this. Indians, though British subjects and thus technically enemy nationals, would not be considered as such by the Japanese in the conquered countries since they realised that Indians were not British subjects of their own will. He suggested the formation of an Indian Independence League to organise all the Indians for fighting for India's independence promising to place all facilities at our disposal. We said we would consider the proposal and meet him again in a few day's time.

MEETING OF MALAYAN INDIAN LEADERS IN SINGAPORE-MARCH 1942.

5. Later we told the Major that we would like to meet Sri.N.Raghavan, President of the Central Indian Association of Malaya before coming to a decision. The leaders met on 9th and 10th March, 1942 in Singapore. In the meanwhile there was an invitation from Sri Rash Behari Bose in Tokyo for representatives from Malay and Thailand to go to Tokyo for a conference. So the meeting of the Malayan leaders to which some representatives from Thailand also had come decided <sup>to</sup> send a Good will Mission to Tokyo. This decision was taken against the desire of the Japanese who preferred an official delegation to be sent, because we did not want to commit ourselves to any course of action."

6. The Tokyo Conference. The Conference at Tokyo was held from 28th-30th March, 1942 with Sri. Rash Behari Bose as Chairman. Apart from <sup>the good</sup> will Mission from Malaya there were representatives from Hongkong, Shanghai, and Japan. Thailand was not represented owing to the death of the representatives in a plane crash on the way to Tokyo.

7. At this Conference it was decided that the time was opportune for starting an Independence Movement among the Indians in East Asia and that "Independence complete and free from foreign domination, interference and / or control of whatever nature shall be the object of the movement." It was resolved that military action against India will be taken only by the Indian National Army and under the Command of Indians, together with such military, naval and air co-operation and assistance as may be requested from the Japanese authorities by the Council of Action of the Indian Independence League. The Confe-



ference also decided "that the framing of the future Constitution of India will be left entirely to the representatives of the people of India".

8. It was decided at Tokyo that another conference more fully representing all the territories in East Asia should be called in Bangkok in June officially to inaugurate the Indian Independence Movement.

#### The Bangkok Conference.

9. Accordingly a conference of Indians in East Asia was held at Bangkok from 15th to 23rd June 1942. Over 120 delegates representing Indians in Japan, Manchuko, Hongkong, Burma Java, Malaya and Thailand as well as representatives of the Indian Army (Prisoners of War) in Malaya and Hongkong were represented. The resolutions passed at this conference formed the basic principles on which the Indian Independence Movement was organised in all territories and carried on till practically the arrival of Sri. SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE to take up the leadership.

The outstanding conclusions of this conference were:-

1. To organise Indians in East Asia into an Indian Independence League to strive for Indians' Independence.
2. To raise an Indian National Army from the Indian troops in East Asia, as well as from Indian Civilians.
3. To so control and direct the programme and plan of action of the Independence movement as to bring them in line with the aims and intentions of the Indian National Congress.
4. To demand from the Japanese Government a further clarification of their policy towards this movement as well as towards India.

#### Early Activities.

10. Branches of the Indian Independence League were organised in all territories in East Asia. The News of the "Quit India resolutions and the arrest of the Indian Leaders in August brought enthusiasm and determination to a pitch. Beginnings were made towards the organisation of Indian National Army under Capt. — Mohan Singh as G.O.C from the Indian soldiers who had surrendered in Malaya. A



call for volunteers from Indian Civilians made in Malaya had very great response.

Straining of Relations with the Japanese.

11. But in the meanwhile relations between the Council of Action and the Japanese were becoming bad. The reasons for this ~~this~~ were, mainly:-

(a) The absence of any itemized reply from the Tokyo Government to the Bangkok Resolutions. There was a general reply reavowing ~~Japa-~~  
*Japan's* determination to help India to get complete Independence and stating that she had no territorial or other ambition over India.

But the Council of Action were not satisfied with such a reply.

(b) The attitude of the Iwakuro Kikan, which had been organised as the liaison Department between the Independence League and the Japanese military authorities and Government. <sup>causing friction.</sup> The Council of Action resented attempts by the officials of the Kikan to interfere in the working of the League as well as the Army.

(c) The apparent unwillingness of the Japanese to assist in the quick expansion of the Indian National Army.

The Crisis.

12. Matters came to a head by December 1942, when the Council of Action refused to allow the I.N.A that had been organised in Malaya to be transferred to Burma before all outstanding points were clarified by the Japanese Government. The situation was made critical on 8th December by the arrest of Col. N.S.Gill of the I.N.A by the Japanese as a suspected British spy without prior consultation with the Council of Action. The four members of the Council of Action resigned.

League Organisation to continue.

13. The President, Sri. Rash Behari Bose, declared that he would go back to Japan and try to get the necessary clarification of issues from the Tokyo Government and requested that till then the organisation, i.e., the League Branches, should carry on. This was agreed. But the Malaya Branch agreed with the rider that "Sri Rash Behari Bose be requested to try every possible means to secure



a clarification of all matters relating to the movement from the Tokyo Government by Declarations, Statements and otherwise at as early a date as possible and that while the normal working of the movement was to be carried on as usual, any further forward move should be decided only after such declaration and Statements."

Crisis in Malaya.

14. Matters seemed to improve somewhat, but this did not last long. The Iwakuro Kikan started trying to build up parallel organisations to weaken the Indian Independence League. The Youth Movement was launched secretly by them and intensive propaganda was carried on against the leaders of the Independence League. In February 1943 the committee of the Malaya Branch of the Organisation after a three days meeting decided to present a memorandum to Sri. Rash Behari Bose as President of the Indian Independence League setting out the difficulties of the situation. The decision of the committee was that they should resign if no improvement was seen.

Resignation of Sri. N. Raghavan.

15. The Japanese managed to get information of the memorandum before it reached the President and they brought pressure to bear on him to insist on the resignation of Sri. N. Raghavan as President of Malaya Branch. Sri. Raghavan had to resign. We then became aware that our resignation was exactly what the Japanese wanted so that they could put in their own men—Indians who would be amenable to Japanese desires in key positions. This would have produced just the result against which we had been striving—the creation of an Indian organisation which would be a puppet in Japanese hands. We therefore decided to carry on in our posts.

Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose assumes Leadership.

16. In April, 1943, another Conference of delegates from all territories in East Asia was called at Singapore in which Sri. Rash Behari Bose announced that Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose would succeed him in leadership of the movement.

17. On July 2nd, 1943, Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose arrived in



Singapore and at a conference of delegates held on July 4th he took over the presidenship of the Indian Independence League from Sri. Bash Behari Bose who resigned.

I.N.A. announced to the World.

18. The whole organisation was overhauled including the I.N.A., military review of the I.N.A at Singapore on 5th July, 1945, the information of the I.N.A. was announced to the world. The unwillingness of the Japanese to allow this had been till then one of the causes of trouble between the League and them.

Rapid Progress.

19. With the establishment of a strong leadership things began to improve and progress rapidly. The following lines of advance need special mention:-

(a) Awakening of Indian Women. Not only ~~the~~ did women start to come in as members of the Indian Independence League in large numbers, but when the President asked for volunteers from among them to form a regiment of the I.N.A called "Rani of Jhansi Regiment" and also for a Red Cross Section, the response was very good. A camp for training the women recruits was opened in Singapore in October, 1943 and later another was started in Rangoon also.

(b) Civil recruiting. In 1947, before the crisis there had been a calling of civil volunteers for the I.N.A and a very large number had enlisted. But owing to the attitude of the Japanese and the difficulties put by them in the way of getting the recruits camped, the scheme was not an immediate success. Now recruiting started in full vigour and nearly 7000 recruits <sup>joined</sup> at one time.

An Officers Training School was also started to train Subaltorns for the I.N.A from among the N.CO's and sepoys of the existing army as well as from the civilians.

(c) Mobilisation of money and material. Donations from Indians towards the I.I.L. Fund started to come in large amounts. Much of the goods required by the League and Army were received from the Indians.

Formation of the Provisional Government of Free India.

20. To strengthen the movement further a Provisional Government <sup>was</sup> formed. \* 4 training Camps were opened in Malaya with a total capacity of training.



of Free India was formed on 21st October, 1943 with Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose as Head of the State. It was recognised by all the countries then fighting against England. On October 23rd, the Provisional Government formally declared war on England and America. Transferrance of Headquarters to Burma and starting of Campaign.

21.

By the end of 1943 it was felt that the Headquarters of the Provisional Government and Indian Independence League should be transferred to Burma to be nearer to India. This was effected on 7th January 1943.

22. The situation after that in Burma was that the Japanese were not desirous of a an offensive campaign. The allied offensive in the Hukwang Valley and later threatened push down the Chindwin river forced the hands of the Japanese. Even then the Japanese plan was to take Imphal and then let the I.N.A come into action. Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose was against this and insisted in the I.N.A. ~~seeme into~~ action. Sri. Subhas-Chandra Bose was aga taking part in the Arakan and Manipur Campaign.

#### The First Campaign.

23. On the 4th Febry 1944 the Indian National Army went into action and on 18th March 1944 they crossed the Indo-Burma Frontier.

24. The I.N.A detachments along with the Japanese detachments surrounded Imphal after taking Morai, Kohima and other villages. But the lack of air support, and the disruption of supplies owing to Monsoon forced our troops to withdraw.

25. But in this first conflict between Free Indian soldiers and the British troops the Indian patriots gave a remarkably good account of themselves, and proved that given a chance they can defeat and drive out the British. The courage, fighting spirit and tenacity exhibited by the civil recruits-mostly erstwhile South Indian clerks and coolies from Malaya and Burma-exploded once for all the martial-non-martial race theory of the British. The instances of sublime heroism and devotion to India are too many for individual praise. Short of food, short of clothing, short of amunition, these soldiers of Azad Hind fought and drove back one of the best of equipped armies



of the world. They lived on grass and yam leaves but they fought till they could no more stand up. The hills and valleys of Arakkans, Palel and Imphal sectors have to us become sanctified by the sacrifice of those our brothers in arms. The very air of those regions will for ever carry the echo of their shouts "INQILAB SINDABAD" "AZAD HIND ZINDABAD" and "CHALO DELHI" Many of them died by starvation and disease. But the spirit of them remained high.

That was the end of the first campaign.

### The Second Campaign.

26. The second campaign in early 1945 was a defensive campaign. *for* it was undertaken *for* two main reasons.

1. The loss of Burma would hamper our movement.
2. *where* The Japanese were in trouble. They fought by our side when they were well off-~~we~~ benefited by their victories. Hence we could not but stand by them when they were in difficulties.

27. During this campaign there was treachery on the part of some of our Officers-the worst being Major Nadan, Major Riaz, Major Gulam Sawar and Major Dey. These were staff officers of the I.N.A. 2nd Division and they deserted to the enemy side. But there were other Officers who stood and fought, like Col. Shah Nawaz, Col. Prem Sahgal, Lt Col. Gurmuk Singh Dhillon Lt. Col. Nehar Das and a host of Junior Officers and men. The I.N.A. held their positions and destroyed two attempts by the British to cross the Irawady. In the end it was the Japanese sector that gave way.

### Evacuation of Rangoon by Provisional Government.

28. When Mayktila fell and the 14th Army's progress was seen to be too fast for the Japanese to stop, it was decided to evacuate Rangoon.

29. Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose and his Government left Rangoon on 24th April, 1945 for Bangkok <sup>*They were the*</sup> last to leave. The Japanese Commander-in-Chief and the Burma Government left on 23rd.

30. A Force of over 6,000 men and Officers of the I.N.A. was left in Rangoon to protect Indian Life and property under Major General Lokanadhan. The Indian Independence League was left in charge of Sri. J.N. Bahduri as Vice-President and the writer as General Secretary.



31. It is a matter of pride to us all that our Government was able to meet all its creditors and pay off to the last cent all its liabilities.

I.N.A. in Control of Rangoon.

32. The I.N.A took control of the city of Rangoon and there was not a single case of dacoity or robbery during the period of transition from the Japanese to British control. Later reports showed that the organisation of League Branches had prevented any harm befalling Indian lives and properties in the districts of Burma also.

Contrast between British evacuation in 1942 and Japanese evacuation IN \*~~1942~~ 1945.

33. This is in strong contrast to what happened when the British evacuated Burma in 1942. Murder and robbery of Indians throughout Burma reached a peak so far undreamed of.

Indians in Burma still speak in shivering tones of the horrors of those days. In 1945, the first dacoity for weeks took place in Rangoon after the British occupation.

34. The League continues Welfare work.

On 5th March, 1945, Brigadier Laudor of the 36th Indian Infantry who was in command of the Rangoon area sent for Sri. Bahduri and me. On his request we described to him what the Indian Independence League was. He suggested that we should continue with the non-political aspects of work. He said that in India, though Congress was not co-operating with the Government, they were still doing welfare work. We agreed to do this. In Rangoon we had been running 5 free dispensaries. We would have them reopened. The Brigadier offered assistance-monetary or by way of medicines which were declined.

35. The National Bank of Azad Hind which had been organised in Rangoon in April, 1944, was also allowed to continue operating.

36. Suppression.

On 19th May, however, the Bank was seized by the Military authorities and the League came to a close on 28th May 1945 when Sri. Bahduri and I were arrested by the Field Security Service. This was the beginning of systematic suppression. Everyone who had



been even remotely connected with the movement was arrested. The method was this:-

The Field Security Service would ask a man to "come for a few minutes" and take him and hand him over to the Field Interrogating Unit. He would have come in the clothes he stood in. The Field Interrogating Unit would generally take days to "finish" a case and all these days the "suspects" would be kept in the Rangoon Central jail where there was no arrangement at all for supplying mats or clothing.

37. Some of the suspects after interrogation are allowed to return home. Others are kept in jail for some time and then allowed to go home but with their movements restricted and under police surveillance. Some have to report to the police daily. This includes a girl who was a member of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment. A few have been taken away, presumably to India. Many have been sentenced without any trial to varying terms of imprisonment and are now in Insein Jail.

### 38. Treatment of the I.N.A.

With regard to the I.N.A the British adopted the same policy of initial hypocrisy. Brigadier Laudor told Major General Loganathan that the I.N.A. personnel would be allowed to go back to India. On his request the Major General agreed to remove the I.N.A ranks from the uniforms those who were previously in the British Indian Army to put on their old ranks. The Brigadier said that the I.N.A would not be used for fatigue except in company with British Indian troops in equal number to do essential duties. The I.N.A Camp was to be guarded by the I.N.A, they were to fly their own flag-the Indian National flag, and sing their own anthem. These were the promises of the beginning.

39. But once they had completed disarmament and collected all the men in the place-the Rangoon Central ~~Cell~~<sup>prison</sup>-the attitude changed. The British Guards replaced the I.N.A. guards-the men were forced to do road fatigue-cleaning and sweeping under supervision of British Indian troops. The Senior Officers were taken away to India under custody.



The other Officers and men are now prisoners in the Jails in Burma.

40. This in brief is the history of the Indian Independence movement in East Asia, from its very beginning till to-day. The treatment by the British ~~of~~ of the League and I.N.A. Personnel in Malaya, Thailand and other places is not yet known, but there is no reason to doubt that the pattern will be followed there also;

## II Important Aspects of the Movement.

### Organisation.

The Ministers of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind acted through the Departments of the Indian Independence League Headquarters. After 1944, January the Headquarters of both the Government and the League were in Rangoon. There were 19 departments in the League H.Qrs, of which the following were the more important ones:-

Supply Department. Finance Department. Audit Department. Recruiting and Training Department. Press, Publicity and propaganda Department.  
Burma Branches Department. (in charge of League organisation in Burma)  
Women's Department. Education Department. Public Health and Social Welfare Department. Reconstruction Department.

There was a Rear Headquarters of the League at Singapore which controlled Malaya, Sumatra, Java and Borneo.

42. The Indian Independence League had 70 Branches in Malaya with a membership of over two lakhs. In Burma there were over 100 active Branches, the work being very much hampered by constant air raids. In Thailand there were 24 Branches. There were Branches in Sumatra, Java, Celebes, Borneo, Philippines, China, Manchukuo and Japan.

### Recruitment of Men.

43. Men were recruited for the I.N.A. and civil service. There were the following camps for training the recruits for the I.N.

4 Camps in Malay	-total strength	7,000
1 Camp in Thailand	total strength	1,500.
4 Camps in Burma	" "	3,000

There was an Officers Training School ~~at~~ in Singapore and another in Rangoon.

44. There was no separate cooking in the Camps for different communities. The recruits themselves cooked by turns. All training



was given by Officers and N.C.O's of the I.N.A in Hindusthani. The words of Command for the whole I.N.A were in Hindusthani.

45. For Civil Service men were recruited for reconstruction work in ~~V~~liberated India and for propaganda. There were camps to train them in Singapore and in Rangoon.

46. Total number of civil recruits who were given training and absorbed into the I.N.A were nearly 70,000 from Malaya alone.

47. Women were recruited to combatant service in the Rani of Jhansi regiment and for Nursing Service in the I.N.A medical Units. There was one Camp in Singapore and another in Rangoon.

48. Finance. The Movement was supported by Indian Money. From all over East Asia contributions were received. More than one person placed everything they possessed at the disposal of the Provisional Government. Nearly 3 crores of rupees were collected in Burma alone. In Malaya 4 million rupees were collected as a New Year Gift to India in two weeks in January, 1945. All our needs except in the matter of arms and ammunitions were met by our own purchases with our own funds. This beyond everything also gave the movement its independence and strength.

49. Dual Aspects of Work.

The Indian Independence League was a political organisation formed with the purpose of fighting for Indian Independence. But along with that it also carried out a programme of Social service. Large Funds were spent for relief work among the Indians who were hard hit by the war. In Malaya, particularly among the labour population in the estates, distress was acute, and various branches of the League appointed doctors and organised relief centres food and medicines were given free to all deserving cases. The biggest relief Camp in Malaya was in Kuala Lumpur where at one time there used to be a daily average strength of over 1,000 men, women and children and the monthly expense came to over 75,000/-. In Burma the League was running a number of Free Dispensaries. There was a fully equipped Hospital for Indians run by the League in Thailand which was bombed by the Allies.



50. To relieve distress the League also undertook a programme of settling Indians on land. This was mainly one in Malaya where over 2,000 acres of land-mostly virgin jungle land-were cleared and allotted to Indian settlers for planting. Whether the British Government will recognise the right of these settlers remains to be seen.

51. The League undertook the education of Indian children. More progress was made in these 3 years in the study of Hindustani by Indians in East Asia than in all previous years. National schools were opened and run by the League in all territories, In Burma itself there were 65 Indian schools run under the supervision of the League

### III. CONCLUSION.

52. The Provisional Government of Azad Hind and the Indian Independence League and the Indian National Army were no puppet organisations. They owed their existence to the kindness and sympathy of the Japanese Government but they were never the tools of the Japanese. The unique nature of the opportunity was realised by the Leaders of Indians in East Asia when the British were driven out of these area, and the Japanese promised help towards attainment of Indian Independence. But at the same time the bitter lessons of British promises had made them suspicious of all promises and they insisted on clarification at issues. The behaviour of the Japanese in occupation showed them to be <sup>as</sup> ~~real~~ imperialistic <sup>as</sup> ~~than~~ the British. This strengthened our suspicions.

53. We believed, however, that an organisation of the Indians would be able to do a lot of good to Indians in East Asia immediately, and with the strengthening of such organisation we would be able to thwart ~~and~~ Japanese intentions of making use of the movement for their own ends. And above all we hoped that with really strong leadership such an organisation would be able to galvanize the two and a half million Indians in East Asia into a supreme effort for India's independence. That was why even in first meeting in Singapore in March, 1942, it was decided to request Sri. Subhas Chandra Bose to come to the East and take over the leadership. At the Tokyo conference one of the requests made to the Japanese Government was to arrange for this.



54. At every step in the development of the movement we fought the Japanese attempt at interference in our work. But the entire breaking up of the movement was never contemplated even during the bitterest days in December, 1942, when the Council of Action resigned, because ~~of~~ the existence of the Indian Independence Movement was the only insurance of protection for the lives and properties of Indians in East Asia.

55. Even if our aim of Indian Independence could not be an immediate success we believed that the League Organisation could help towards its ultimate achievement by instilling a national consciousness into the minds of the Indians in East Asia, and by enabling a good portion of them to receive military training and thereby giving them a sense of self confidence.

56. This movement has left even the rubber estate labourer a changed man. Today he feels proud of his Indian Nationality, and he has the courage to look the English man in the face. He has faced him across the nullahs of the Naga Hills and fought him. There has been an awakening of Indians in East Asia and their new greeting of JAI HIND is but a true expression of that awakening.

57. Once the Leadership was taken over by Subhas Babu, the fears we earlier had of Japanese interference were over. It is true that he too had to fight many a battle with them, but he could fight and win through. The charges that he was ~~Pascifist~~ and that this movement was a ~~Pascifist~~ <sup>civil</sup> organisation are beside the point. His political ideology is known to himself. But the Indian Independence Movement was neither ~~Pascifist~~ <sup>civil</sup> nor Nazi or communist: it was just "Indian". Its aim was the liberation of India, from British yoke by armed struggle, a method that is denied by circumstances to Indians in India. And in the work of liberation we counted on the help, moral and material of every nationalist in India. And we counted on the very magnitude of such help to enable us to cease requiring Japanese help at the banks of the Brahmaputra. We failed in our main aim. But we have changed the Indian outlook in these parts. Indians-at least a couple of million of them-were able to thrill to the sensation of being free under their own Government. Over 20,000 young Indians-men and women



have been trained to fight, fight for India and her cause, and have been trained-to-fight,-fight for India and her cause, and fight for India and her cause, and have been unified in the tradition of ready sacrifice for that cause.

58. As far as lay in our power we protected Indian lives and property. There was much that should have been done, but could not be owing to our own lack of training and the circumstances in which we had to work. But let the British reply for the thousands of Indians butchered in Burma when they ran away, before they blame us for not protecting all Indians in East Asia from Japanese ill-treatment.

59. We throughout looked to the Indian National Congress for Inspiration and example. It is true we adopted "Violence", but we believed that in the circumstances we were justified in that. We accepted Japanese help because that was the only help available, but we did not sell ourselves or mortgage India for that help. We accepted their help only to such an extent as was in complete keeping with our dignity and selfrespect as people fighting for India's cause and we did not commit Free India to anything in return. We might have been "Misguided" in our methods, we might have over-estimated our possibilities of success, but we believed in our cause, we fought for it in the sincere conviction of its justice and in the correctness of our method. Thousands of us died of starvation and malaria in the jungles and swamps of the Indian border. They did not die to bring the Japanese into India: nor did the thousands of their brothers and sisters who are today suffering a different death under the refined suppression of the British in the "Liberated" countries of the East.

JAI HIND.



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they could play in the fight for India's liberation. By placing the ennobling example of the Rani of Jhansi, the heroic daughter of Mother India, before the Indian women in South-East Asia, he wielded almost a magic wand, which raised every Indian mother, daughter and sister to the highest level of selflessness and patriotism. Since the formation of the Rani of Jhansi Regiment in South-Asia upto the time of its demobilization, there was not a single instance of any such action which could disgrace the fair name of Mother India. This could be possible only because Netaji himself was far above any narrowness and because by his actions and utterances he became the idol of millions of Indian men and women in South East Asia. The writer remembers with pride the answer Netaji gave to some one who had asked him why he was marching all the way from Burma to Bangkok with the Rani of Jhansi girls. Netaji said: "The father of one daughter has so many worries and responsibility. How can I cease worrying when I have thousands of daughters to look after." The writer further heard Netaji telling the INA troops at a meeting that after entering Indian soil, their first and the foremost duty would be to guard the honour of Indian women. At that open meeting he told the INA troops that if by any chance even a few Japanese military officers would enter Indian soil and become indecent to Indian women, the Indian troops would shoot them dead on the spot. And Netaji gave this directive rightx in front of a large number of Japanese military personnel, who were present at that meeting.

Netaji's mental composure was uncommon and contagious. At the height of success of the I.N.A. on the Indo-Burma border, when the Indian National Flag was hoisted on Manipur soil and Netaji made all arrangements to move the Azad Hind Government Headquarters there, he was as calm and composed as when the reverse came and the Indian National Army had to withdraw from the Indo-Burma border. Even on his last night in Bangkok when he started on his last fateful journey he remained a picture of tranquility and dignity.

Nearly a decade after Netaji's dramatic disappearance, whenever I remember this great son of Mother India, the following Sloka in Sanskrit comes into my mind:

" Sampattau cha Vipattau cha Mahatamek Roopata  
Udayae Savita Rakta Raktachast Samaye Thatha."

JAI HIND.



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