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Dynamics of  
REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT  
IN INDIA

They sang the song of victory of life from the  
platform they mounted for the gallows. The  
rope was a divine garland of death to them.

54.03  
BANJI

BINDA LALL BANERJEE, M.A., LL.B.

# DYNAMICS OF REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN INDIA

*With a Foreword by*

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And

*A Prologue by*

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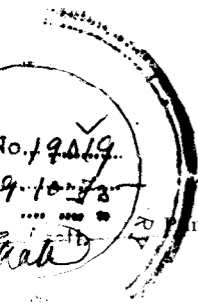
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TO  
KIRAN DA

Kiran Chandra Mukherjee was born in the year 1883 in the village Vugilhat in the district of Jessore and died on December 12, 1954, at Calcutta Medical College Hospitals. He suffered imprisonments for about 25 years since 1908 and through 1909, 1913, 1915, 1924, 1930 and 1942. As Gandhiji laid great emphasis on the constructive programme of his non-violent way of fighting any wrong, the biggest one being the subjugation of India, so also Kiran Da, as he was affectionately called, devoted most of his energy on the constructive side of the revolutionary movement. Satyashram of Daulatpur on the bank of the river Vairab in the district of Khulna, now in East Bengal, which he established in 1920 but had to abandon during the struggle of 1930, and Swami Prajnanananda Pathagriha which he started in Calcutta after his release from jail in 1945 and is a living institution today, are the two embodiments of the inner working of his mind. Precision and accuracy was almost a passion with him, so much so, that if he noticed that a watch in the hand of a stranger, not to speak of person known to him, or a clock in the house of a neighbour was not showing correct time, he would not hesitate to tell the stranger that his watch or the clock was going wrong. He wrote many instructive and purposeful books in simple language for the inspiration and guidance of young boys who were his constant playmates. Ever smiling, but otherwise possessing a grim look in a short and bony body bearing the stamp of suffering and of stubborn character he would never admit defeat before his ill health. With a stick in his hand he would go

everywhere, from palace to cottage, and endear all. His advice on this occasion would have been a precious thing. It is satisfaction beyond measure to be able to dedicate this labour to the memory of such a man, Kiran Da, as a recognition of debt owed to him.

GOBINDA LALL

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## Foreward

~~Indians are now arbiters of their own  
destiny. The ship of state~~

Indians now control their own destiny: and the ship of state seems fairly launched, and has already braved successfully a few squalls and rough weather.

But whether bound? This question torments many anxious hearts - especially of those who after their excitements and trials during the early days of the so-called Revolution now have quieted down to modest and peaceful avocations.

The author of this book had been one of those whose imagination had been fired in his youth with the ideas of revolution preached by Mahatma Jyoti and Sri Aurobindo; who had suffered and had shared many reverses with the other fighters of freedom, who are now no more.

In

The goal ~~was~~ ~~is~~ reached - and Banerjee has now set down to study the Dynamics of the Revolutionary movement in India; and has messems ably projected on a broader political canvas the activities of the early fighters, and has ~~repeatedly~~ sought to read into them a purposeful meaning wearing a common aim in apparently ~~many~~ many desperate endeavours.

I welcome the plan of his book, and extol its execution: The present generation should be accurately informed of the history of the sacrifices and the sufferings of their predecessors, who had fought on many fronts, and had adopted various tactics during the years of hard struggle with the British Imperialism. All such endeavours are welcome though their interpretations would appear tinged with a personal flavour.

However the present-day young India should know and remember the trials of the older fighters.

I commend this book to the young student - and also to those who take ~~an~~ <sup>more</sup> ~~an~~ <sup>active</sup> share in running this democracy, ~~as~~ or serve the present Government in its various fields of administrative and nation-building activity.

Perhaps a study of the history of this Century of Struggle for independence would evoke and ~~as~~ arouse in their minds a sense of high mission and responsibility - The spirit of ~~their~~ <sup>the</sup> ancestors will be infused ~~in~~ <sup>into</sup> them, and ~~thus~~ <sup>thus</sup> help to ~~preserve a continuity, continuity~~ <sup>achieve</sup> ~~continuity~~ ~~and~~ a synthesis of the present with the age-old traditions of this country.

The book is concise, and well-written,

The author ~~has~~ <sup>has</sup> tried to keep alive the spirit of nationalism and the sense of national solidarity;

I hope it will be widely ~~read~~ <sup>read</sup> and thus will be achieved the purpose for which it has been written.

16.11.65

— Satyendra Nath Bose

## PROLOGUE

As I was going through the book I was experiencing the dynamism of the movement and I have been much informed of it. Isolated acts of valour have their social values so far as they inspire the individual but to make them purposive and direct them to a particular end, imagination, preparation and leadership are necessary. The revolutionary movement in India is known to us as numerous violent activities of the youth of our country but how it was related to the political movement in general was not very clear to many of us. The author has drawn in this book—*Dynamics of Revolutionary Movement in India*—a wider canvas and has ably depicted the revolutionary activities on it in a concise but complete manner. As one reads it, he will feel, as if, he is swimming in the political currents of the time.

There are books, mostly in Bengali and in other state languages, dealing with a set of events or with the stories of hardships, sufferings and sacrifices, but in this book one will find the significance and the meaning of those events in relation to the flow of the political movement as a whole. I very much appreciate the approach of the author in upholding the totality of the political upheavals without lessening the value of any one.

In the last chapter on “The message from the gallows”, the author has rightly said that India is a land of philosophy and not of religion and that gives her the capacity to march with the times without abandoning the past.

The author is in politics since his school days and was in prison for a total period of sixteen years and has parliamentary experience of good many years, both in India and in

Pakistan and the stamp of his experience and vigour is discernible in these writings.

I would very much like to commend this book to every young man and student and also to every person of some age and experience. It has been a nice presentation to the present generation as a guide to future course of nation building. I understand that publications of this book in different languages will also come out.

TRIGUNA SEN  
*Vice-Chancellor*  
Jadavpur University

November 2, 1965

## PREFACE

This is not the history of the revolutionary movement in India nor a chronicle or a catalogue of events. This is a modest attempt to bring to light the flow of the movement. It matters not whether some events have been left out or some names have not been mentioned. The events were numerous and the preparations were enormous and the men who participated in these acts were not few. Even the books which claim to be the histories of the movement are neither exhaustive nor authoritative. It is difficult to be so except in parts.

The purpose of bringing out this publication is to safeguard against oblivion and to hand over to posterity some idea of the magnitude of their heritage so that they may not feel divorced from this movement. It has been endeavoured to show how various social and political movements contributed towards liberation of motherland. They were neither in conflict with nor antagonistic to each other. After all, organised consciousness of the people is the ultimate arbiter. No one generation can accept things on behalf of another generation to come. It is therefore a presentation before them for their acceptance or rejection. In any event, the labour will be amply rewarded if it conveys the inspiration to act in a bolder and bigger way. This is an imperfect layout and an open invitation to criticism, fair or fierce, which alone can add flesh upon the skeleton.

When this plan of writing the dynamics of the revolutionary movement in India was disclosed and explained to the leading men of the movement who were available in Calcutta, full encouragement was received from them. Con-

temporary friends and admirers also did not hesitate to offer material assistance and guidance in this matter. Customary gratitude is too formal a thing but the quality of their heart is remembered with pride.

44 A Ballygunge Gardens  
Calcutta-19  
October 2, 1965

GOBINDA LALL BANERJEE

## INTRODUCTION

The ninth of September is the most inspiring day for the revolutionaries of India, particularly of Bengal. This day which is known as the Balasore Day was observed secretly by the youth of the country as the revolutionaries functioned through secret societies during their fight for freedom under repression and the watchful eyes of the secret service of the British Government. On this day of the year 1915 the armed revolutionaries confronted the armed forces of the Government in a direct fight for the first time near Balasore in Orissa. How they were initiated, what vow did they take, wherefrom did they procure arms, what was their objective and ways and means—all these were not known to the people in general but the alien Government that ruled over the country was aware of the danger to the administration. The revolutionary movement or any movement whatsoever which moves the mass of people with an objective in view is itself a sign of maturity of the nation. Therefore in order to make a proper appraisal of the revolutionary movement it is necessary to traverse the socio-political history of our country and to remember various social and political impacts upon the society of the last hundred year or more.

# DYNAMICS OF REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN INDIA

## A NATION IN THE MAKING

The presence of all the elements of a nation does not create a nation. A nation to be a nation must have a sense of heritage to be shared by the individual members of the society. A process of exercise in the nationhood is necessary to develop this sense of heritage. Like the individual a nation has a feeling of weal and woe. It gives and enjoys.

India was a land of kings and princes variously styled as Maharaja, Raja and Nawab and the Moghul Emperor ruled over them for several centuries. When the Europeans began to appear on the scene during the 17th and the 18th centuries as commercial men, they brought with them a way of life which was not known to the people of India. The Moghul administration was then rapidly losing control, insecurity of life and property became the order of the day and people felt exasperated. Gradually these commercial men organised their own security and gave shelter to others. With the fall of Sirajudoula in Bengal in 1757 at the battle of Plassey the Britishers got a firm footing in India. The Moghul Emperor at Delhi was then being hammered by the Mahrattas and India was plunged into darkness. By this time many Indians, particularly the Bengalees became initiated in the Western way of life and culture. This change was romantic and the leading men discovered in it the road to progress and enlightenment and breathed fresh air but they did not like to replace the Moghul Emperor by the

PANGS IN THE WOMB  
THE UPRISING OF 1857 AND THE INDIGO REBELLION OF 1859

There was no press in India except those run by some Englishmen. Both the Governor Generals, Lord Bentinck and Sir Charles Metcalfe, were liberal with the press and it was generally free from restrictions until the time of the viceroyalty of Lord Lytton and for a brief period during the uprising of the Indian Kings and the Company Sepoys against the British in the year 1857. This uprising of 1857, one hundred years after the battle of Plassey was the last flicker of a proud people but the country as a whole was then plunged into darkness by the neutralising activities of the descendants of Akbar and Aurangjeb and those of the Peshwa of Poona. The policy of escheat of Lord Dalhousie by denying the right of adoption enraged the ruling princes, and the introduction of grease-coated bullets moved the Sepoys emotionally. The economic condition of the country was as bad as it could be because of economic drain. All these factors worked as ammunition to the uprising but the intelligentsia, particularly those who had come in touch with western education and learning, saw in the coming of the Britishers, the rising star in an otherwise dark horizon. The uprising was crushed, oppression was let loose but a new era began. Queen Victoria took up the administration, Universities, High courts and Legislative Councils were established (1861-63). The British Rule came to be recognised as a dispensation of Providence and India settled down with that resignation which was one of her characteristics.

Almost immediately after the uprising of the year 1857 there was the Indigo Rebellion of Bengal in 1859. After the battle of Plassey the East India Company transferred its

## A NATION BORN

The Charter of 1833 made Indians eligible for all official posts for which they were qualified. This was however not liked by the officials and the Anglo-Indians. In 1853 a system of competitive examination for the Civil Service was introduced. Indians had to go to England to sit for the examination. The handicap was so formidable that it was as good as denying the facilities to Indians. Even then some Indians crossed the seas and succeeded in going through the examination. In 1868 Surendra Nath Banerjee, Ramesh Chandra Dutta and Biharilall Gupta went to England and qualified themselves for the Indian Civil Service. But contrary to the spirit of the Charter of 1833 a provocative discrimination was made against Surendra Nath. He left the service and made it a public cause and carried on ceaseless agitation on this issue throughout India to make the rising intelligentsia conscious of the injustices done to him because he was an Indian.

In 1877 the great and pompous Darbur was held in Delhi under the viceroyalty of Lord Lytton. It was the assembly of kings and princes and the elites of the country. Surendra Nath was also present in the Darbur. This was the first All-India Assembly and Surendranath was caught with the imagination of an All-India forum for agitation for the redress of national grievances. In 1878 Lord Lytton introduced the Vernacular Press Act in order to muzzle the Indian Press and there were other means of oppression in action. Sir W. Wedderburn says, "These ill-starred measures of reaction combined with Russian methods of police repression brought India under Lord Lytton within a measurable distance of revolutionary outbreak." The secret activities of the Sannyasis were very intense then.

towns and these again became centres of revolutionary activities.

In the year 1883 a political conference was held in Albert Hall, Calcutta, where Surendranath, Anandamohan and other leaders expressed their intention to start an All-India political organisation. The leaders of British public opinion including the Viceroy Lord Dufferin, Lord Ripon, Lord Dalhousie and other eminent men also felt the need of such an organisation to counteract the incubation of armed revolution in the form of sudden violent outbreak of sporadic crimes, murder of obnoxious persons, robbery of bankers and looting of bazars, acts really of lawlessness which by a due coalescence of forces might any day develop into national revolt. On 28 December, 1885 the first Indian National Congress was held in the Hall of the Gokuldas Tejpal Sanskrit College at Poona under the presidency of W. C. Banerjee. The nation was born.

### THE NATION MOVES

The birth of Congress was a great and most exciting event in those days. India became India—Bharat Mata. Illustrious men of different parts of India assembled once or twice every year and discussed and formulated their demands towards the fulfilment of national aspirations. Their feeble voices gradually became stronger and each and every one of them shared the personality and prestige of the All-India Assembly. They reacted sharply to acts and expressions of insults from the British masters who also became apprehensive of the potentiality of the Congress and a sense of racial superiority led them from one wrong to another and this process made India stronger and prepared her for direct action to enforce her demands and avenge insults.

started under the presidency of Sir Gurudas Banerjee, a retired judge of the Calcutta High Court.

### REVOLUTIONARIES APPEAR

Quite a large number of National High Schools were started and the students who left schools affiliated to the Government-controlled University were admitted to these national schools. Satish Chandra Mukherjee became the principal for imparting education on national lines under national control directed towards the realisation of national unity. Bepin Chandra Pal became the avowed and authoritative exponent of the cult of nationalism, national education and the New Spirit throughout the country. He did splendid work in the South. Sri Aurobindo who failed, such was destined for India's boiling future, to secure a place in the I.C.S. as he could not pass the riding test, joined the Education Department of Baroda on his return to India and then came to Calcutta to take up the cause of national education at the instance of Niralamba Swami who carried on his work in the Punjab. Sri Aurobindo flooded the land from the Cape to the Mount with the effulgence of his light. The *Yugantar*, the *Sandhya* and the *Bandemataram* were the organs of the New Spirit and they were all suppressed by the Government when the situation became too hot for them. The revolutionary movement then took the form of avenging insults by individual murders. Bhupendra Nath Dutta (brother of Swami Vivekananda) openly preached violence. Sister Nivedita was also an exponent of revolutionary activities. One Sir Curzon Wylie was murdered in London at a public meeting by Madan Lall Dhingra in 1907. The collector of Nashik Mr. Jackson was also murdered. Ullaskar Dutta manufactured powerful bombs for revolutionary acti-

sentences to transportation for life and reduced other sentences as well. The proceedings of the case throughout the years 1908 to 1910 only manured the soil for the growth of future revolutionaries to fight for the liberation of Motherland. Thus ended a chapter full of glory and revolutionary splendour.

### ANUSHILAN AND JUGANTAR

At this stage it is of much interest to know about the two revolutionary organisations that came into existence, namely, Anushilan and Jugantar. It can well be imagined that Calcutta was the nerve centre of all activities not only of Bengal but of the whole of India. The reason is simple and obvious. Calcutta was the capital of India and the impact of the western education and culture upon India was the greatest here. The speeches of Swami Vivekananda and the publication of 'Anandamath' by Bankim Chandra inculcating therein the mantra of 'Bande Mataram' moved the youth of Bengal tremendously. A movement of physical culture and moral training and a spirit of service swept over them. Centres of physical culture grew up. One Satis Chandra Bose started such a centre at Madan Mitra Lane in Calcutta which subsequently came to be known as 'Anushilan Samity' in 1902. In this connection Satis Babu came in touch of one Sashi Bhushan Roy Choudhury of Sodepur who took him to Ashutosh Choudhury, Bar-at-Law. Ashu Babu advised them to approach P. Mitra, Bar-at-Law who became the chief guide of the Samity. At about that time one Jatindra Nath Banerjee who afterwards became Niralamba Swami went to Baroda for military training with the ulterior purpose of fighting the British and driving them away. There he met Sri Aurobindo and decided upon a plan to organise a revo-

Pulin Das and was known as Anushilan Samity. These two organisations claimed among themselves many revolutionary activities in Bengal and other places in India. These activities are more important for the present purpose than the organisational aspects which may be gathered from various books written on the subject.

### REVOLUTIONARIES PRESS FORWARD

The revolutionary activities were secret and the movement had no public leader but its impact upon the popular leaders were such that they in a large measure gave expression to the aspirations of the movement. The volunteer movement of Bengal was the field of recruitment of the revolutionary workers. It is necessary to trace the rise and fall of the tone and temper of the Congress along with the spread of revolutionary activities. In 1901 the first Indian Industrial Exhibition was held in Calcutta for the propagation of Swadeshi. To this Lord Salisbury gave the direction that "Steps should be taken to protect the British manufactures against the competition of Indian manufactures." Speaking on economic condition Sir Charles Elliot said that "half the agrarian population did not know from one year's end to another what is to have a full meal". Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya in a speech at the ninth session of the Congress in the year 1893 said, ". . . . wherever you go, you find British manufactures and British goods staring you in the face . . . . in the matter of services, in the matter of trade, our people are not enjoying one-hundredth part of the profit and gain which they used to enjoy fifty years ago. How then is it possible for the country to be happy?"

The partition of Bengal was given effect to on the 16th of

left alone to find out their own leadership for the course of action to follow. The Congress of 1907 went back upon the resolution of 1906 adopted at Calcutta. It eliminated the subject of boycott and the resolutions on self-government were subordinated to an examination of the Morley-Minto reforms announced by the British Parliament.

### REVOLUTIONARIES STEP UP

Every movement has its crest and fall. Tilak adhered to the thought and declaration "Swaraj is my birth right and I will have it" but he went out of the Congress and was again convicted in 1908 and remanded in Mandalay jail until he was released in June 1914 in a shattered health. Aurobindo after his acquittal from Alipore Conspiracy Case left for Pondicherry. There was little popular interest in the Congress. On the 12th December, 1911 a Durbar was held in Delhi on the occasion of the coronation of the British King who declared from the pavilion the annulment of Bengal Partition and the transfer of the seat of the Government of India from Calcutta to Delhi. There was rejoicing in the camp of the moderates but the people were far away from it. The Sedition Meeting Act, the Press Act, the Criminal Law Amendment Act and the Regulation III of 1818 and other allied acts in different provinces under which deportations were freely taking place were there and moreover, the political objective remained to be attained. In 1912 when the Viceroy Lord Hardinge was riding an elephant in a procession organised on the occasion of his entering Delhi, a bomb was thrown at him but he narrowly escaped death. This incident reminded British Government once again of the deep discontent of the people.

Dacoity, Sibpore (Nadia) Dacoity and there were few others.

### JATINDRANATH TAKES COMMAND

Jatindranath, a disciple of Bholananda Giri Maharaj, was then the accredited leader of this new phase of revolutionary movement. His charming personality, iron muscles and steel nerves, his boundless courage and calmness in action, electrified the rank and file and they were experiencing a thrill with the approach of the opportunity to die fighting for the liberation of motherland. They conceived of a social order in which everybody would be a trustee for the good of the other. Such a concept dissolved the question of Hindus and Muslims and similar other questions of social disability that stood on the way of the feeling of nationhood.

One Indian revolutionary Har Dayal went to America and organised a party named Gadhar (Revolution) Party with the object of overthrowing the British Government from India with the help of foreign powers. The opportune moment came when World War I broke out. Many Indians, particularly the Punjabi Sikhs became members of this party. Ram Chandra and Barkatulla were important members amongst them. It had many centres. The centres at California and San Francisco were very active and one Ashram named Jugantar Ashram after the name of the paper Jugantar which was edited by Bhupen Dutt in Calcutta was started. When the activities of this party were intensified, the British Government made protests and the Government of the U.S.A. arrested Har Dayal who was however released on bail and he came to Europe and established contacts with the German Government.

Chatterjee, Atul Ghosh and Naren Bhattacharjee (M. N. Roy)—met at Banaras and discussed the matter in all its aspects. It was planned that Jatindranath would carry on guerrilla warfare with the arms that were expected from abroad and Rashbihari would proceed on according to the plan he had already drawn, and with the progress of these activities the forces would be united for the seizure of power. The organisation was so elaborate to details that any General would envy it at that period of the war. It was visualised that the guerrilla war would spread throughout India and develop into a great conflagration in which the mass of the people would participate. After some time Rashbihari had to leave India and he did so in May, 1915 before the prospect of the supply of arms from abroad was known. Congress leaders was then thinking in terms of self-government within the British Empire to be achieved by show of loyalty to the Crown and as a reward for India's contribution to War on the side of the British.

#### BALASORE FIGHT

Jatindranath and his associates were in hiding and they had to work under great hazards. Meanwhile a message was received on the question of selection of the sites where arms could be safely and conveniently unloaded and received and distributed to different centres. The talk of Karachi was dismissed and then remained three places, namely, Rai Mongal in the Sunderbans of Khulna, Sandwip in Noakhali and Balasore in Orissa. After taking into account the advantages and disadvantages it was decided that Balasore would be the suitable place. Jatindranath collected a band of revolutionaries consisting of Chittapriya Roy, Jyotish Pal,

Monoranjan Sen Gupta and Nirendra Das Gupta and proceeded towards Balasore. They were fully armed and had to wait and watch for the signalling of the ship. The secret service of the Government became very alert and began combing the whole area for the capture of Jatindra-nath and his men. After days of chase and escape the revolutionaries had to confront the armed forces of the Government in a direct fight. With whatever resources they had in their possession they took up their position behind a hillock in a forest adjoining the village Chaskhand by the side of the river Bura Balan in Balasore. The armed forces of the Government were also ready to meet the challenge of the revolutionaries. There was heavy firing on both sides and the casualties in the Government forces were also equally heavy but alas! The revolutionaries had limited supply of men and materials and they had to fight with their back to the sea. Chittapriya died on the spot. The leader Jatindra-nath was hit and he died next day in Balasore hospital. Monoranjan and Niren were hanged and Jyotish was sent to Andamans to serve life sentence where he became mad and died in 1924. This tragic but glorious event took place on the 9th of September, 1915. There was a great set back in the revolutionary movement but the country marched forward and the popular leaders had to reckon with this onward march. Thus the ninth of September, 1915 is remembered as a milestone in the progress of revolutionary movement in India.

#### POST BALASORE

Subsequent history of the movement would show that the forces released by this movement took up a distinct course

## REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE CONGRESS

The revolutionaries did not propose to create a public platform of their own. They realised that the Congress organisation had great possibilities which would one day answer to their call. When Congress took up a fighting programme the revolutionaries employed all their strength in it. They believed that the next phase of the revolutionary movement was mass action and when they found that the mass of people was on the move, they also marched with them and when they showed signs of weariness the revolutionaries came out with all their fury. The leaders of the Congress became intimately known to the revolutionary leaders and their ways and means and also of the end they had in view. It may be remembered that Deshbandhu C. R. Das was the chief defence counsel in the Alipore Conspiracy Case in which Sri Aurobindo, Barin Ghosh, Ullaskar Dutta and others were the accused persons. When Deshbandhu became one of the foremost leaders of the Congress, these revolutionaries very easily established a workable understanding with him and through him with the leaders of other provinces and rendered all possible assistance to him in building up the Congress and the Swarajya Party. There were however some amongst them who had no faith in any deal with the Congress and they stayed out.

Mahatmaji took up the challenge of the Rowlatt Bill which sought to amend the criminal law of the land in two parts: (1) Indian Criminal Law Amendment Bill and (2) Criminal Law Emergency Powers. The bill was introduced in the Supreme Legislative Council in the year 1919. On the 18th March Gandhiji published a pledge for the Satyagraha Movement against the Bill declaring that it was unjust, subversive of the principles of liberty and justice and

destructive of the elementary rights of an individual on which the safety of India as a whole and the state itself was based and called upon the people to refuse civilly to obey these laws and to follow faithfully truth and refrain from violence to life, person and property in the course of the struggle. The 30th of March, 1919 was fixed to be a day of Hartal, a day of fasting and prayer and penance and meetings all over the country. The day was changed to the 6th of April but because of inadequate publicity the movement started as scheduled. There was violence in Delhi, Bombay and the Punjab. On the 13th of April, that is, 1st of Vaisak a large meeting was called at Jallianwala Bagh and there was a gathering of more than 20,000 people. General Dyer took an armed force there and almost simultaneously with the order to disperse fired upon them and killed more than 400 and wounded thousands. Many people including the leaders of the Congress did not understand why Gandhiji had chosen the petty and collateral issue of Rowlatt Bill for starting Satyagraha when the issue of Self-Government was there. This is an interesting phase of the Congress because the organisation did not authorise him to start a movement against the Bill but he assumed the leadership by his own authority which nobody could challenge.

#### REVOLUTIONARIES AND GANDHIJI

It is worthwhile to remember that in 1913 the Congress adopted a resolution paying glowing tribute to Mahatmaji for his work in South Africa. He was then known by name only and not as a leader of the Congress. In 1916 he could not be elected to the subjects committee of the Congress but he was subsequently taken in by the Nationalist Party of Tilak. Even at the Delhi session of the Congress in the year

appreciate this understanding. They made the same mistake when Gandhiji lent support to the Swarajists and made the leaders his 'attorneys' and gave them almost a blank cheque. Nevertheless, the revolutionaries did not antagonise any one.

### REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE COUNCIL FRONT

Gandhiji was arrested in March 1922 for sedition in connection with the non-cooperation movement which was started in 1920. Deshbandhu presided over the annual session of the Congress held at Gaya in 1922 and proposed his council entry programme with the object of carrying the movement from within the council. Gandhiji was released in February, 1924 and he presided over the Belgaum Congress that year. During this period the council entry programme attracted the attention of the people when there was no mass movement. Gandhiji took a vow of political silence for a year which he broke at Gauhati in 1926. It was only in the Calcutta session of the Congress in the year 1928 that he again actively participated in its deliberations.

The programme of the Swarajists in the central legislature now and then excited public interest and it kept up the anti-government spirit. The revolutionaries watched the public reaction and timed their activities accordingly. This council entry programme brought about a lull in the country but the educated section some times took pride in the exhibition of parliamentary talents of Congress leaders like Motilal, Malaviya, T. C. Goswami and Satyamurti and others. After a spell of excitement this policy of opposition for the sake of opposition lost much of its charm and value and a realisation was dawning upon the legislators that they could do something through cooperation, at least on specific items. Both Lord Birkenhead, the then Secretary of

Bhagat Singh and Batukeswar Dutt were also wanted in this case which came to be known as Lahore Conspiracy Case.

### REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE CONSTITUTION TRAIN AND COMMUNAL TROUBLES

Revolutionary activities were not acts of desperation but they were deliberate and purposive. They watched with keen eyes the fixation of political objective from time to time and the constitutional developments. On February 18, 1924 the Swaraj Party tabled a resolution urging upon the Government to summon at an early date a Representative Round Table Conference to recommend a scheme of constitution for India. Accordingly a committee under the chairmanship of Sir Alexander Muddiman was appointed to go through the working of the Montford reforms and to recommend changes in it. When the report of the committee came before the house, Motilal moved an amendment to the effect that His Majesty's Government should take immediate steps to summon a Round Table Conference or other suitable agency adequately representative of all Indian, European and Anglo-Indian interests, to frame a detailed scheme based on the principle of full responsible Government and it was passed by 72 to 45 votes in September, 1925.

These two resolutions and the offer of cooperation made by Deshbandhu in his Faridpur speech led the British Government to think that the spirit of cooperation would become stronger and Indian opinion would be satisfied by doses of reforms. The Cawnpore Session of the Congress (1925-26) over which Sarojini Devi presided gave a mandate to the Council Front to give an ultimatum to the

## THE TWO FORCES

In order to make proper understanding of the correlation of forces as represented by the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji and the revolutionaries it is necessary to remember a few events of momentous importance. Ever since the activities of the revolutionaries began the Congress was very particular in passing resolutions condemning the acts of violence and pledging its loyalty to the British king but the revolutionaries did not show any anger either to the organisation or to the sponsor of such a resolution. But the Bengal Provincial Conference held at Sirajgunj passed a resolution applauding Gopinath Shaha who was hanged for killing one Earnest Dey in January, 1924 mistaking him to be Sir Charles Tegart, the then police commissioner of Calcutta, for his (Gopinath's) selflessness and paid respectful homage to his patriotism. Gandhiji became perturbed at this trend of thought in Bengal Congress but the A.I.C.C. meeting held at Allahabad in June 1924 passed a resolution disapproving such acts. Nevertheless, the impact of the revolutionary activities upon the Congress leadership, particularly in Bengal was felt. In early 1925 Bengal Provincial Conference was held at Faridpur. Gandhiji was present as President of the Congress for the year 1924-5. Deshbandhu sponsored a resolution on Dominion Status within British Empire. This raised a storm because the revolutionaries did not feel inclined to support it as their declared objective was complete independence. He was virtually in tears. The revolutionaries however did not oblige him. Many of their leaders were in jail then and they thought that for the Congress some intermediate stages might be necessary for final attainment of the goal of complete independence and it would not be wise for them to

## REVOLUTIONARIES AND SUBHASH CHANDRA

The above sequence of events clearly demonstrates how the revolutionaries and the Congress under the leadership of Gandhiji put their faith in mass struggle without abandoning respective approach to the issues involved in such a gigantic task but at the same time keeping confidence in each other. It is now necessary to go back to 1920. By the time the Nagpur session of the Congress was held on the momentous issue of non-cooperation almost all the revolutionary workers and their leaders were released. Under the leadership of Deshbandhu they attended the session and became his close associates. When non-cooperation movement was started, they carried on extensive propaganda amongst the masses in favour of the movement. Subhash Chandra Bose who gave up his I.C.S. post and joined the movement became a convert to the revolutionary way of thinking. When Montford reforms were inaugurated and Gandhiji cried halt to mass civil disobedience movement as embodied in the Bardoli resolution of February 12, 1922 because of violent activities throughout India, particularly in Chauri Chaura in Gorakhpur in U.P., Deshbandhu took up the council entry programme under the Swarajist banner when he could not get it passed through Gaya Congress of 1922 over which he presided until the Congress approved of it in its special session in September of the year 1923 at Delhi over which Abul Kalam Azad presided and confirmed at its annual session at Coconada presided over by Mohammad Ali. Gandhiji was however arrested on March 13, 1922. The revolutionaries participated in this new programme of Deshbandhu. Their purpose was to stand by any movement which kept the people in a fighting mood.

On August 3, 1923 the post office of Sankharitola, Calcutta

accused persons and felt deeply concerned with the operation of the law in this regard and raised funds for the defence of the case. There were no such activities or any organisation of the communists in India to account for but the Government became foolishly wise to start such a conspiracy case to give publicity to the communist idea which the whole literature on Communism could not do. Even inside the jail the Government censored and passed communist literature like the Communist Manifesto and Marx's Capital but disallowed nationalist literature.

### REVOLUTIONARIES AND THE CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

The Lahore Congress rejected the Viceroy's proposal and adopted the resolution of Complete Independence at midnight of December 31, 1929 and called upon the Congress members to resign their seats in the legislatures. The Working Committee which met at Sabarmati on February 14, 15 and 16 authorised Gandhiji to start civil disobedience as and when he desired and in the manner and to the extent he decided. Gandhiji began his historic Dandi March on March 12, 1930 with 75 chosen volunteers from Sabarmati Ashram with a vow not to return there until success was achieved, and it lasted for 24 days to cover a distance of 200 miles to reach a sea-side village Dandi in Gujarat for breaking salt-laws, on April 6, by picking up the salt lying on the sea-shore. Gandhiji was eventually arrested at 1 A.M. in the night of May 5 and was taken in Yeravada Jail. The whole country was in flames. The revolutionaries joined the movement wholeheartedly but at the same time made wide-spread arrangement and preparation for carrying on revolutionary activities. They recruited volunteers for breaking the salt laws and carrying on civil disobedience in other ways. The

## 'QUIT INDIA' MOVEMENT AND THE I.N.A.

The secret revolutionary organisation that came into existence in the early part of the century and carried on its activities all through these years ceased to exist as such after the release of the revolutionary workers from jail in the year 1938-39 but the tie of their long association remained. Subsequent history of their participation in political activities had no bearing upon the past discipline and leadership. They worked under different alignments at different times. While some members kept away from political activities, others joined the Congress or became members of different political parties. Before the chapter is closed it will be worthwhile to mention some of the events leading to "Quit India" movement and the formation of Indian National Army (I.N.A.).

On April 7, 1934 Gandhiji advised Congressmen to suspend civil resistance for swaraj but kept it reserved for himself. In the Bombay session of the Congress in October 1934 under the presidency of Rajendra Prasad, Gandhiji retired from the Congress but remained associated with it as its adviser. Congress then took up the programme of fighting the coming election to the Central Legislative Assembly for which in May, 1934 the A.I.C.C. had already authorised Dr. Ansari to form a Parliamentary Board.

Thousands of revolutionary workers were then rotting in jail while their families were in ruins. A.I.C.C. decided to observe the 19th May as Detenu Day and issued an appeal for funds for their relief. The Bihar earthquake took place on January 15, 1934 and it was followed by Quetta earthquake on May 31, 1935. The next session of the Congress was held at Lucknow and Jawaharlal presided. The Faizpur session was held in December, 1936 with Jawaharlal again

campaign. We are opposing an Empire and ours is a straight fight." He made an offer to the Muslim League to take over the National Government if the Britishers quit India. He issued instructions to the Press, to the Princes and the Government servants and also to the students and the professors. He exhorted the people to take the vow 'Do or Die'. He was to write to the Viceroy and anticipated an interval of few weeks but the Government did not take any chance and on that very night there was police sweep and all the members were taken to prisons but the whole country was ablaze. It was the happiest day for the revolutionaries who were no longer members of secret societies but were one with the masses in the revolutionary struggle for the liberation of the motherland. The history of the mass struggle with 'Quit India' objective and the vow 'Do or Die', will be another Mahabharat of modern India.

#### REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES GALORE

The revolutionary activities since Balasore Day which we celebrate year after year were most thrilling and covered wider and wider area of operation and assumed various forms and strategies. Manifestation of the revolutionary activities ever since Congress took up the programme of non-cooperation, passive resistance, civil disobedience and other forms of clash and conflict with the ruling power, were numerous. Gopinath's attempt to kill Tegart in 1924 has already been mentioned. Then there was Dakshineswar Bomb case, the murder of Bhupen Chatterjee inside Alipore Central Jail. In Andhra there was agrarian rising under the leadership of Citaram Raju. The Kakori Conspiracy and Kanpur and Meerut Conspiracy cases were evidences of the spread of organisational activities. The Assembly bomb case

in future and yet the history will remain incomplete. On this occasion of the fiftieth year of the Balasore Day we remember the flow of the revolutionary movement and its confluence with the flow of various other movements for a great purpose—liberation of Motherland.

### THE MESSAGE FROM THE GALLOWS

It may very well be asked what is the message of the Day we celebrate and what is the shape of things conceived of in the context of the existence of different warring nation-states and the development of science and technology. The message of Balasore day is firstly, grim resolve, secondly, absolute faith and thirdly, determined action. Today we are confronted with two alternatives—totalitarianism and co-existence of democracy with the other. The former leads to annihilation of values and the latter to a static state of affairs, that is, at best competitive and not communicative. But Balasore Day conceives of the dynamism of co-operation on the basis of which a co-operative commonwealth of nations will grow. The spirit of co-operation is growing all over the world. It may be remembered the year 1965 was observed as the year of International Co-operation. All these concepts have been pushed ahead by the far reaching development of science and technology and new concepts are taking the field. 'Ism' period has gone into the archives. It has got to be appreciated that India is not basically a land of religion but of philosophy. It is a land of doubts and questions and not of faith in the sense we understand it. 'Ism' may fit well where religion rules but not where philosophy dominates. Therefore the revolutionaries, rightly in full concord with their nature, did not give their seal upon any particular form but accepted the flow of human know-

**I** WELCOME the plan of his book, and extol its execution. . . . the present day young India should know and remember the trials of the older fighters. I commend this book to the young students and also to those who take in a more active share in running this democracy, or serve the present Government in its various fields of administrative and nation-building activity. Perhaps a study of this century of struggle for independence would evoke and arouse in their minds a sense of high mission and responsibility.

PROF. SATYENDRANATH BOSE, F.R.S.

**A**S ONE reads it, he will feel, as if, he were swimming in the political currents of the time. . . . I very much appreciate the approach of the author in upholding the totality of the political upheavals without lessening the value of any one. . . . I would very much like to commend this book to every young man and student. . . . It has been a nice presentation to the present generation and a guide to future course of nation building.

DR. TRIGUNA SEN  
*Vice-Chancellor*