

Subhas Chandra Bose

Subhas Chandra Bose widely known throughout India as *Netaji* ["Respected Leader"], was an Indian nationalist and prominent figure of the Indian independence movement, whose attempt during World War II to rid India of British rule with the help of Nazi Germany and Japan left a troubled legacy. Bose was a twice-elected President of the Indian National Congress, founder and **President** of the **All India Forward Bloc**, and **founder** and **Head of State of the Provisional Government of Free India**, which he **led** alongside the **Indian National Army** from 1943 until his death in 1945.

Subhas Chandra Bose was born on **23 January 1897 (at 12.10 pm) in Cuttack**, Orissa Division, Bengal Province, to **Prabhavati Devi** and **Janakinath Bose**, an advocate. He was the ninth in a family of 14 children.

He was admitted to the Protestant European School, like his brothers and sisters, in January 1902. He continued his studies at this school which was run by the Baptist Mission up to 1909 and then shifted to the Ravenshaw Collegiate School. The day Subhas was admitted to this school, **Beni Madhab Das [considered by Netaji as his Guru]**, the headmaster, understood how brilliant and scintillating his genius was. After securing the second position in the matriculation examination in 1913, he got admitted to the Presidency College where he studied briefly.

His nationalistic temperament came to light when he was expelled for assaulting Professor Oaten for the latter's anti-India comments. University **military training Corps**, which is the forerunner of **today's NCC** was introduced by Netaji. He later joined the **Scottish Church College at the University of Calcutta** and passed his **B.A.** in 1918 in philosophy. He wrote to his elder brother Sarat Chandra Bose: "Only on the soil of sacrifice and suffering can we raise our national edifice." He also organized "**Nursing brotherhood**" to help poor.

He resigned from his civil service job on 23 April 1921 and returned to India.

He started the newspaper *Swaraj* and took charge of publicity for the Bengal Provincial Congress Committee. His mentor was Chittaranjan Das who was a spokesman for aggressive nationalism in Bengal. In the year 1923, Bose was elected the President of All India Youth Congress and also the Secretary of Bengal State Congress. He was also **editor** of the newspaper "**Forward**", founded by Chittaranjan Das. Bose worked as the CEO of the Calcutta Municipal Corporation for Das when the latter was elected mayor of Calcutta in 1924. In a roundup of nationalists in 1925, Bose was arrested and sent to prison in **Mandalay**, where he contracted tuberculosis.

He **wrote** the first part of his book *The Indian Struggle*, which covered the country's independence movement in the years 1920–1934. Although it was published in London in 1935, the British government banned the book in the colony out of fears that it would encourage

unrest. By 1938 Bose had become a leader of national stature and agreed to accept nomination as Congress President.

In July, at a meeting in Singapore, **Rash Behari Bose** handed over control of the organisation to Subhas Chandra Bose. Bose was able to reorganise the fledgling army and organise massive support among the expatriate Indian population in south-east Asia, who lent their support by both enlisting in the Indian National Army, as well as financially in response to Bose's calls for sacrifice for the independence cause. INA had a separate women's unit, the Rani of Jhansi Regiment (named after Rani Lakshmi Bai) headed by **Capt. Lakshmi Swaminathan**, which is seen as a first of its kind in Asia.

Even when faced with military reverses, Bose was able to maintain support for the Azad Hind movement. Spoken as a part of a motivational speech for the Indian National Army at a rally of Indians in Burma on 4 July 1944, Bose's most famous quote was "**Give me blood, and I shall give you freedom!**"

On 6 July 1944, in a speech broadcast by the Azad Hind Radio from Singapore, Bose addressed Mahatma Gandhi as the "**Father of the Nation**" and asked for his blessings and good wishes for the war he was fighting.

In the consensus of scholarly opinion, Subhas Chandra Bose's death occurred from third-degree burns on **18 August 1945** after his overloaded Japanese plane crashed in Japanese-occupied **Formosa (now Taiwan)**.

Subhas Chandra Bose believed that the Bhagavad Gita was a great source of inspiration for the struggle against the British. Swami Vivekananda's teachings on universalism, his nationalist thoughts and his emphasis on social service and reform had all inspired Subhas Chandra Bose from his very young days.

His most famous quotes/slogans were "Give me blood and I will give you freedom", *Dilli Chalo* ("On to Delhi!") This was the call he used to give the INA armies to motivate them. **Jai Hind**, or, "Glory to India!" was another slogan used by him and later adopted by the Government of India and the Indian Armed Forces. Another slogan coined by him was "Ittefaq, Etemad, Qurbani" (Urdu for "**Unity, Agreement, Sacrifice**"). INA also used the slogan **Inquilab Zindabad**, which was **coined by Maulana Hasrat Mohani**.

On 23 August 2007, Japanese Prime Minister, Shinzo Abe visited the Subhas Chandra Bose memorial hall in Kolkata. Abe said to Bose's family "The Japanese are deeply moved by Bose's strong will to have led the Indian independence movement from British rule. Netaji is a much respected name in Japan.

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