

AZAD HIND FAUJ (INDIAN NATIONAL ARMY)

Origin and Purpose

Subhas Chandra Bose', popularly known as 'Netaji', was not convinced by the policy of the Congress to acquire freedom. He was an extremist and felt that it was impossible to compel the British to leave India without force.

In 1943, Netaji formed the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) in Singapore and gave his famous call 'Dilli chalo'. He started a military campaign for the independence of India. Indian residents of South-east Asia and Indian soldiers and officers captured by the Japanese forces in Malaya, Singapore and Burma joined the INA in large numbers.

Rise and Decline

Subhas Chandra Bose set up the headquarter of the INA in two places—Rangoon and Singapore—recruits were sought from civilians, funds were gathered, and even a women's regiment called the Rani Jhansi regiment was formed. One INA battalion also accompanied the Japanese Army to the Indo-Burma front to participate in the Imphal campaign. But with the defeat of Japan in 1944—1945, the INA also died out. Bose is said to have been killed in an air crash on his way to Tokyo in August 1945. But his death is still considered a mystery.

★ Subhas Chandra Bose (1897-1945)

Born in Cuttack, Bengal, and educated at the universities of Kolkata and Cambridge, Subhas Chandra Bose left a career in the Indian Civil Service to fight for India's independence and was imprisoned a dozen times by the British. He shared the leadership of India's youth and

peasant societies with Jawaharlal Nehru and became the president of the Indian National Congress in 1938. Bose was opposed however, by Gandhi, whose principle of non-violence he did not accept, and was forced to resign the following year. In 1941, hoping to take advantage of the war to free India of the British rule, Bose fled to Germany. From there he went to Malaya, where he set up (1943) a Provisional Government of Free India, and with Japanese help, organised the so-called Indian National Army. Bose led his troops against the British on the Burma-India frontier until 1945; He is speculated to have been killed in a plane crash while fleeing to Japan in August of that year.

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