Muslim Unsung Heroes of India's freedom struggle

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Kerala Promoter: IBRAHIM KUTTY BK

Publishers of Shalimar Papers & Publications – by Salim Desai (wordpress.com)

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17 September 2025

Abstract

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, a pivotal figure in India's struggle for freedom, collaborated with numerous Muslim individuals across various capacities during his leadership of the Indian National Army (INA), also known as Azad Hind Fauj, and his international missions. This article explores the roles of these Muslim personalities, from high-ranking officers and personal aides to financial supporters and helpers in clandestine operations. Drawing from historical accounts, it highlights their contributions in India, Germany, Japan, Rangoon, and other locations, emphasizing their impact on communal harmony and the broader independence effort. The analysis underscores Bose's vision of unity beyond religious divides, showcasing how these collaborators advanced the cause of a free India.

Keywords

Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose, Indian National Army (INA), Azad Hind Fauj, Muslim freedom fighters, Hindu-Muslim unity, World War II collaborations, Provisional Government of Free India, Submarine journey, Burma campaigns, Red Fort trials

Introduction

Some lesser-known Muslim heroes of India's independence movement include Muslim Vellori, Sharfuddin Quadri, Maulana Mazharul Haque, Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah Faizabadi, and MY Nurie, among others.

Profiles of Lesser-Known Muslim Freedom Fighters

- Muslim Vellori (Mohammed Abdul Wahid Khan): Played a significant role in the Khilafat movement and social reform in Bangalore, often imprisoned for his provocative activism.
- Syed Mohammad Sharfuddin Quadri: A Unani medical practitioner and Salt Satyagraha participant; assisted Gandhi and was imprisoned during the Civil Disobedience Movement.
- Maulana Mazharul Haque: Advocate, philanthropist, and leader in movements like the Champaran Satyagraha, Khilafat, and Non-Cooperation; donated all his property for education.
- Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah Faizabadi: Key leader in the 1857 revolt, called the “Lighthouse of Rebellion”; fought against the British East India Company and was martyred in 1858.
- MY Nurie: Opposed Partition and led Muslim efforts for unity during the 1940s, acting as a competitor to MA Jinnah.

Other Unsung Muslim Contributors

- Begum Mahboob Fatima: Imprisoned for resistance, representing lesser-known Muslim women fighters.
- Sirajul Haq, Abdul Momin, Nasiruddin, Razia Khatun: Regional heroes from Bengal and Bihar, often cited for their grassroots contributions.
- Abadi Bano Begum (Bi Amma): Supported education and mobilization, mother of two famous freedom fighters, yet largely overlooked.

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Historical Notes

- Many Muslim freedom fighters were involved in lesser-known revolts, grassroots campaigns, and intellectual movements across regions like Bengal, Bihar, South India, and the North-West Frontier.
- Ulema, scholars, and clerics such as Shaikhul Hind Maulana Mahmoodul Hasan played major roles in organizing and inspiring anti-colonial movements, including the Silk Letter Movement.
- Historians note that thousands of freedom fighters honored at India Gate bore Muslim names, illustrating their widespread participation.

These figures and their sacrifices illustrate the diverse and often underrepresented Muslim contributions to India's liberation from colonial rule.

Conclusion

The Muslim collaborators of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose exemplified unwavering dedication to India's independence, bridging communal divides and bolstering the INA's fight against imperialism. From commanding battlefronts in Burma to funding operations in Rangoon and aiding clandestine travels between Germany and Japan, these individuals embodied Bose's ethos of unity. Their efforts not only advanced military objectives but also inspired post-independence harmony, as seen in their roles in free India's governance. By highlighting these unsung heroes, we recognize the inclusive nature of the freedom struggle, ensuring their legacies endure in India's historical narrative.

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