The Role of Muslims in India's Independence

"*Mera Desh Azaad Hai*"

Indian Freedom is written in Muslim blood, since their participation in the freedom struggle was much more, in proportion to their small percentage of the population. As every 15th August we are celebrating our Independence Day. Every Independence Day reminds us about all the red rivers which had flown for this motherland.

We want to respect those freedom fighters who had fought for our India. We should remember their sacrifice for our nation. There are 95300 names of freedom fighters written on India Gate Delhi, out of these 61945 are Muslims which means 65% freedom fighters are Muslims. Here there are some Muslim Freedom Fighters, who had been forgotten from our history.

SYED MOHAMMAD SHARFUDDIN QUADRI

A forgotten hero of India's freedom struggle, Syed Mohammad Sharfuddin Quadri is included in our list for his supreme acts of nobility. He joined India's freedom struggle during the Salt Satyagraha movement in 1930. He ably supported Mahatma Gandhi in every struggle and was imprisoned in the same cell as Mahatma Gandhi. Even after independence, he stayed away from politics and still continued to contribute his bit to the nation. He died on 30 December 2015, at the age of 114, 8 years after getting awarded with a Padma Bhushan.

MOHAMMAD ABDUR RAHIMAN

Born in the Thrissur district of Kerala in the year 1898, Mohammad Abdur Rahiman was known for his heroics in restoring peace in the riot-affected areas of 1921. He was jailed for two years for the same. He practiced Salt Satyagraha and was again sentenced to rigorous imprisonment for 7 months. He mobilized the Muslim masses against the two nation theory of Muslim league Party. Soon after addressing a public meeting at Kodiyathur on 23 November 1945, he breathed his last.

MAULANA MAZHARUL HAQUE

Born in Patna district of Bihar on 22 December 1886, Maulana Mazharul Haque was known for his social works during the famine of 1897. He became the Vice Chairman of Bihar Congress Committee and started taking part in the freedom struggle. He played a major role in making the Non-Cooperation and Khilafat Movements and the Champaran Satyagraha a success. He died in January 1930 before which he donated every single bit of his property for encouraging education.

Abbas Ali

Inspired by Bhagat Singh and Chandrashekhar Azad, Abbas Ali joined the Indian freedom movement in his teenage after completing his education. He joined the Indian National Army (INA) or the 'Azad Hind Fauj' and was subsequently court-martialled and sentenced to death. However, before he could serve his punishment, India attained independence and Abbas was eventually set free. He was in jail for over 50 times all throughout his life and stayed in jail for 19 months when Indira Gandhi imposed the emergency. He died on 11 October 2014 due to a heart failure.

FAZL-E-HAQ KHAIRABADI

Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi (1797– 20 August 1861) was one of the main figures of the Indian Rebellion of 1857. He was a philosopher, an author, poet, a religious scholar, but is most remembered for issuing a fatwa in favor of Jihad against the 'English' in 1857.

Fazl-e-Haq Khairabadi died on 12 February 1861 while exiled on Andaman Island.

MAULVI AHMADULLAH SHAH FAIZABADI

Best known for his role in the Rebellion of 1857, Awadh and capture of Lucknow. British historian G.B. Malleson describes Maulvi Ahmedullah Shah of Faizabad as one of the greatest heroes of the first War of Independence (1857). The British considered him a worthy enemy and a great warrior so much so that many a British officer has praised him in flowing words. Thomas Seaton described him as: "man of great abilities, of undaunted courage, of stern determination, and by far, the best soldier among the rebels."

MUHAMMAD BARKATHULLAH

Muhammad Barkathullah worked along with Ram Chandra and Bhagat Singh. Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan was closely working with Gandhiji and so, he was called Frontier Gandhi. Abdul Hafiz Mohamed Barakatullah, known with his honorific name as Maulana Barkatullah, was an Indian revolutionary. Barkatullah fought from outside India, with fiery speeches and revolutionary writings in leading newspapers, for the independence of India. He did not live to see India free.
Barkatullah was the first president of the India Independence Party.

YUSUF MEHERALLY

The man who gave us terms Quit India Movement and Simon Go Back!. Yusuf Meherally was an Indian freedom fighter and socialist leader. He was elected Mayor of Bombay in 1942 while he was imprisoned in Yerawada Central Prison

MUSLIM VELLORI

Muslim Vellori, a prominent but not so well-known freedom fighter, did not restrict his public role to the freedom struggle but also played a prominent role in social service.

The name of Muslim Vellori does not ring a bell now, but for an older generation of Bangaloreans, particularly Muslims in the city, that name is remembered with a sort of awe as he was a valiant freedom fighter. Born Mohammed Abdul Wahid Khan in 1883 in Ganjam near the historic town of Srirangapatna, Khan grew up to be known as ‘Muslim Vellori

He is particularly remembered for his role during the Khilafat movement (1919-1922) where he met many prominent freedom fighters including Mahatma Gandhi, the Ali brothers: Mohammed Ali and Shaukat Ali, Dr. Mukhtar Ahmed Ansari, Hakim Ajmal Khan, Saifuddin Kitchlew

Vellori was jailed several times for his provocative speeches and was even incarcerated in Bangalore Central Jail between 1924 and 1927. Even in prison, he is supposed to have been a recalcitrant internee and often questioned the authority of the jailers.

ISMAEL SHAHEB

In Tamil Nadu, Ismael Shaheb and Maruda Nayagam fought against the British for seven continuous years. They made British fear like hell.
Tiruppur Kumaran (Kodi kata Kumaran) participated in the Indian independence movement. With Kumaran seven other participants were arrested – all were Muslims: Abdul Latheef, Akbar Ali, Mohideen Khan, Abdul Rahim, Vavu Shaheb, Abdul Latheef and Sheikh Baba Shaheb.

MAULANA HASRAT MOHANI

Inqalab Zindabad (long live revolution), two words coined by maulana which became more famous than his own identity.

Maulana Hasrat Mohani participated in the struggle for Indian Independence and was jailed for many years by British authorities. He was the first person in Indian History who demanded 'Complete Independence' in 1921.

SOME OTHER FREEDOM FIGHTERS

The organizer and leader of "First Indian freedom struggle" was Moulavi Ahamadullah Shah – many were killed, among them 90% were Muslims!
Ashfaqulla Khan was the first to be hanged at the age of 27 years for conspiring against the British Raj.
Shah Nawaz Khan was a soldier, a politician, and a Chief Officer and Commander in the Indian National Army (INA).
Netaji's ministry had nineteen ministers;out of these, five were Muslims. In his tribute to Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Gandhiji writes: "I have had the privilege of being associated with Maulana Abul Kalam Azad in national work since 1920. His nationalism is as robust as his faith in Islam."

And there are some women freedom fighters who had fought for our Independence India.

BEGUM HAZRAT MAHAL

Everyone knows that Rani of Jhansi fought to get the kingdom for her adopted child but hardly anybody knows that Begum Hazrat Mahal was the unsung heroine of the first war of Independence, who shot the British ruler, Sir Henry Lawrence and defeated the British army in a decisive Battle at Chinhat on 30thJune, 1857.

Begum Hazrat Mahal was the wife of Wajid Ali Shah, the Nawab of Avadh who was banished to Bengal by the British. Post her husband's banishment, Begum took charge of Avadh as the regent and played a prominent role in the 1857 revolt. Like Rani Lakshmi Bai, she challenged British rule and especially opposed their mechanism of destroying the religious places.

ABADI BANO BEGUM

Abadi Bano Begum was the first woman to address a political rally wearing a burqa. Popularly known as Bi Amma, she participated in National freedom struggles, Khilafat Movement and propagated Hindu-Muslim unity. On Mahatma Gandhi's advice, Bi Amma played a vital role in encouraging women to take part in freedom struggles. Moreover, she also played a pivotal role in Swadeshi movements. She collected funds and organized meetings to teach women the importance of discarding British goods and using swadeshi products. Bi Amma collaborated with Begum Hasrat Mohani, the wife of Maulana Hasrat Mohani, Sarala Devi Chaudhurani, Basanti Devi, and Sarojini Naidu in this campaign.
Bi Amma was also the mother of Muhamamd Ali Jauhar and Shaukat Ali popularly known as Ali Brothers whom she raised on her own after being widowed at an early age.

AMJADI BEGUM

Amjadi Begum was the wife of Muhammad Ali Jauhar and daughter-in-law of Bi Amma. Unlike the common relationship of envy and fights between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law, Bi Amma always encouraged Begum to join politics. She actively participated in the national freedom movement along with her mother-in-law and husband.

She accompanied her husband in all the political conferences and even addressed and encouraged women to participate in freedom struggles. It is said that she was beside Ali Jauhar in the First Round Table Conference in London as he was too ill to survive alone. She helped her mother-in-law in the freedom movements and in Khilafat movement. Moreover, on Jinnah's advice, Begum joined the First Working Committee of Muslim League as the only woman among 25 members. At an All-India Muslim League annual session held in Lucknow in 1937, Begum formed a separate electorate for women giving them the opportunity to participate in the freedom struggle.

ASGHARI BEGUM

Born in 1811, Asghari Begum took part in the 1857 revolt at the age of 45. She challenged British rule in the present-day Uttar Pradesh. However, she was captured by the British in 1858 and burnt alive. She was the mother of Qazi Abdur Rahim, the revolutionary of Thana Bhawan.

HABIBA

Habiba was another forgotten Muslim woman freedom fighter who challenged British rule in the 1857 revolt. She belonged to a Muslim Gujjar family and fought many battles against the British in Muzaffarnagar. However, at the age of 25, she was captured and hanged along with 11 other female warriors

SURAIYA TAIYABJI

A Muslim lady designed the current Indian National Flag.

Respect those fighters and give our motherland a life. Let India try to move forward.