



23 JANUARY: ON THE OCCASION OF NETAJI JAYANTI

# 'NETAJI' STRUGGLED FOR NATIONALISM

***Subhash Chandra Bose was an extraordinary political leader. He was completely involved and true patriot with aggressive and rebellious opinions. He held the British to be his extreme enemy and this enmity was the basis for his personality and his highest goal. His deepest ambition was India's independence. He was a true karmayogi and believed in action. His strength can be seen in his great political work. He was a warrior who believed in fighting for his country's independence. Subhash Chandra Bose's greatness and glory will always be written about in Indian history.***

Subhash Chandra Bose was born in Cuttack on 23 January 1897. His father's name was Jankinath and mother's name was Prabhawati. Jankinath Basu was an advocate and in 1885, he settled permanently in Cuttack, where he practiced law. Otherwise, his ancestral village was Kodalia. Jankinath's practice flourished in Cuttack and by the time Subhash Chandra Bose was born, Jankinath Basu was a well-known advocate. Earning a lot of money, he had become quite prosperous. He had reached the top position in the Court of Orissa. In 1917, after a clash of opinions with the District Magistrate, he resigned from the post of Public Prosecutor and ceased to be a government advocate. In 1930, in protest against the British rule, he gave up the title of 'Rai Bahadur'. He used to frequently visit Kodali village and established a hospital in his parents' name along with a library there. Subhash's mother, Prabhawati, was a gracious lady who was content with her 14 children.

Subhash Bose was the ninth child of his parents and sixth among the boys. Apart from the children, the household included his uncles and aunts. In this crowded household and with the business of his parents, it was but natural that Subhash felt lonely. The place of his parents was filled up to some extent by his nurse, Sharda. She used to call Subhash Chandra by the name of 'Raja'. The environment of the house made Subhash an introvert.

He was admitted in the Baptist Mission School for his studies in 1902, at the age of five. Naturally, in this school, the number of Anglo-Indian students was high. There were a total of 15 seats for Indian students. The headmaster and mistress of the school, Mr and Mrs Young, had come from England. Seven years of Subhash's school life, from 1902-1908, passed very peacefully. Subhash Chandra blended very well with the English environment of the school. However, the environment at home was always very Indian. Their lifestyle, habits and manners were all Indian. Subhash Chandra never had any inclination towards sports.

In January 1909, Subhash Chandra was admitted into the Rowensha Collegiate. In the Baptist Mission School, he had spent seven years in Anglo-Indian environment. In the new school, he was looked upon with great respect because of his knowledge of the English language and his family's prosperity. He was admired by one and all.

Subhash Chandra started learning his mother tongue, Bengali, here. In those days, Benimadhab Das was the headmaster of the school. Subhash was much influenced by his personality. When he spoke on ethical values and social responsibilities, it made a great impact on Subhash Babu. There was something in Benimadhab Das that made him stand out amongst all other teachers for Subhash. After a year, Benimadhab was transferred but he kept in touch with Subhash through letters and continued instilling the love of nature in his favourite student, Subhash Chandra.

Subhash Chandra Bose had entered his sixteenth year when village development

and service became his passion. He also went and taught in a school in a village. He got a lot of love and respect there. Along with school education, Subhash Chandra's opinion became strong but his political knowledge was almost nil. He was anyway not inclined towards politics and at the same time, talk of politics was forbidden at his home. During his time as a college student, he searched all the cities of north India in search of a spiritual master. He gained a lot of new knowledge and information while traveling.

Hemant Kumar was responsible for awakening the political consciousness in Subhash Chandra. In 1912, Hemant Kumar had come to Cuttack for a visit with his party. Subhash Chandra was introduced to Hemant Kumar by headmaster Benimadhab Das. Hemant Kumar's party was involved in spiritual development and social service. Subhash Chandra came in close contact with him and thus got involved with his party.

Now Subhash's spiritual feelings ran quite high and his mind strayed from his studies. He started spending more time in discussions with his friends. Among teachers, he only liked those who discussed Swami Vivekananda and Ramkrishna Paramhansa. During this time, Jankinath's guru came to Cuttack. Subhash Chandra went to meet him and after the meeting, his inclination, interest and passion towards religion increased manifold. As a result, he left his studies and spent his time happily in the company of sages. His parents got very worried with this and admitted their beloved son in the Presidency College in Calcutta for his B.A. Subhash Chandra made social service and spiritual development his life's goals and with this in mind, he took up philosophy as his subject for B.A.

Subhash Chandra was always eager for social service. Every holiday he would visit the nearby villages and with the help of his group would collect money and food every Sunday for distribution among the poor. Once there was a cholera epidemic in villages. Subhash Chandra went off to care for the patients without informing his family. According to him, "this one week's experience opened my eyes and made the picture of administration in India very clear—The India in which poverty reigns over villages, where villages die in the manner of flies and mosquitoes. There is just ignorance everywhere." He began to think that if there is so much suffering and pain in this world then what is the use of

meditation and yoga? He became impatient to oppose the present social organization.

Subhash Chandra got kindness, empathy and love from his father as an inheritance. Upon seeing any beggar while traveling to and from college, his heart used to tremble with pain. He stopped using the tram for travel and gave the money of the tram fare to the beggars.

In 1919, Subhash Chandra passed his B.A. in First Class and exhibited his exceptional talent.

Jankinath was in Calcutta those days. In the evening he called Subhash Chandra and spoke to him about going abroad to prepare for the Indian Civil Service (ICS) examination. Subhash decided to go. On 25 October 1919, Subhash Chandra reached London and got admitted into Cambridge. He got only 8-9 months to prepare for the ICS exam. On 22 September 1920, Subhash Chandra passed the ICS examination.

Subhash Chandra was an admirer and worshiper of Indian culture, tradition and lifestyle. He could not bear any disrespect towards it. Subhash was also a great admirer of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das. He kept in touch with him even while he was residing in Cambridge. Hence, Subhash Chandra was completely informed of the activities of the Indian National Congress and the behaviour of the British government. He wrote to Das that on returning to India he will teach in a college and become a journalist. Hence, he prepared to give in his resignation letter to the ICS.

Finally on 22 April 1922, Subhash Chandra Bose resigned from his post in the ICS. Subhash Chandra Bose was the first Indian to resign from the Civil Services. This step tells us what a great sacrifice was made by Subhash Chandra Bose and then he jumped into the world of politics—never to turn back and come out.

Subhash Chandra Bose was an extraordinary political leader. He was completely involved and true patriot with aggressive and rebellious opinions. He held the British to be his extreme enemy and this enmity was the basis for his personality and his highest goal. His deepest ambition was India's independence. He was a true karmayogi and believed in action. His strength can be seen in his great political work. He was a warrior who believed in fighting for his country's independence. Subhash Chandra Bose's greatness and glory will always be written about in Indian history. Bose gave the message of a true nationalist and struggled for this.

- Presented by: Jayshankar Misra, 'Sabyasachi'