

ROLE OF WOMEN IN FREEDOM STRUGGLE OF INDIA

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Abstract: The history of Indian Freedom struggles would be incomplete without mentioning the contribution of women. The sacrifice made by the women of India will occupy the foremost place. They fought with true spirit and undaunted courage and faced various tortures, exploitation and hardship to earn up freedom.

Keywords: Women, Struggle, Freedom.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indian gained Independence after nearly 200 years of British rules. One of the most important aspects of the nation's freedom struggle was ever increasing participation of women like Sarojini Naidu, Anne Besant, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kiplani, Vijayalakshmi, Bina Das, Indra Gandhi and many more. In fact they played a vital role in the boycott campaigns. They also actively participated in the non-cooperation movement. Many women attend the Congress rallies, along with their Children's. The terms Indian Independence Movement incorporates various national and regional campaigns, agitations and efforts of both non-violent and militant philosophy.¹

The following is a list of some prominent women freedom fighters.

Sarojini Naidu, Anni Besant, Rani Lakshmi Bai, Aruna Asaf Ali, Sucheta Kiplani, Pritilata Waddedas, Kalpana Dutt, Madam Cama, Kamla Nehru, Indira Gandhi etc.

Rani Laxmi Bai

A name etched in history for her bravery freedom. Rani Lakshmi Bai popularly known as "Rani of Jhansi" was born in 19 November 1836 at Poona in a wealthy high class Brahmin family.² British wanted to take over the Princely state of Jhansi under the cover of "Doctrine of lapse". Sir Hugh Rose come to capture the city of Jhansi in March 1858 but the brave Lakshmi Bai announced to fight for freedom instead to surrender. Though she was defeated here and decided to leave and fight from camp of 'Kalpi'. After Kalpi they decided to fight from Gwalior fort. Here Lakshmi Bai with Damodar Rao has son on her back and cavalry attire died after fighting bravely even Hugh Rose commented that she is the most dangerous of all Indian leader, which is commendable tag.³

Annie Besant:

A great women true fighter Annie Besant was born in 1875. Annie Besant joined the religious movement Theosophy that was based on Hindu idea of 'Karma' and reincarnation. In 1914 when the world was withering world war I⁴ she started All India Home Rule League along with Lokmanya Tilak. Thus body head many branches in India which was active the whole year round and mobilized agitations and demonstrations demanding home rule in India.⁵ She completed the company to declare that they are working towards the Indian Self Government. She once became President of the Congress in 1917. Her active participation in politics gave way to Indians to gain Independence.⁶

Sarojini Naidu:

Popularly known as the 'Nightingale of India" Sarojini Naidu was born on 12 February 1879. She wrote a long poem of 1300 lines 'The lady of the lake'. She was not just a poet but many acted personality, who made an impact on the

contemporary Political Scene.⁷ In 1917, she even helped to launch “Women’s Indian Association”. She acted as first Governor of the United Provinces of agra and oudh. She was second lady to become the President of Indian Congress at the Kanpur in Dec. 1925.⁸ In 1930 during the Salt Satyagraha, she was one of the women protesters at the Dhassava Salt Works, Gujrat.⁹

Sucheta Kirplani:

Great Indian freedom fighter and politician Sucheta Kirplani was born in Ambala, Punjab on June 1908,¹⁰ like her contemporaries Aruna Asaf Ali and Usha Mehta she came to the fore front during the quit India movement. She later worked closely with Mahatma Gandhi during the Partition riots. She accompanied him to Noakhali in 1946. She was one of the few women who were elected to the Constituent Assembly and was the part of the sub committee that drafted the Indian Constitution on the August 1947. She Sang Vande Mataram in the Independence session of the Constituent Assembly.¹¹ She was also elected as the Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh State from 1963 to 1967, after Independence she continued working for weaker sections of the society.¹²

Aruna Asaf Ali

Heroine of Quit India Movement Aruna Ganguly was born on 16 July 1909. She was greatly remembered for the Quit India Movement in 1942 for the Indian National Congress flag, she took part in the Salt Satyagraha in the movement of the Mahatma Gandhi.¹³ She was also put into an Imprisonment to time in 1931 and 1932 and she was also protested with the different manner of treatment with the Political Prisoners with a Hunger strike with the result of that improvement¹⁴ she became the first Mayor is Delhi in the year of 1958. She was also received the India highest Civilian award the Bharat Ratan Posthumously in 1997.¹⁵

Madam Cama:

Madam Cama was one of the great women freedom fighters of India and promoted the cause of Indian freedom movement outside of India. She was the one who first unfurled India’s flag at an International Assembly. Madam Cama was a heroic patriot, who left her home to fight for the freedom of India from within and abroad. She helped revolutionaries with money and material as with ideas. She was a powerful speaker and her shape angered the British and attempts were made to assassinate her. She bought out book and journal from France and Germany on Indian revolutionaries. Her books on India’s first war of Independence (1857), was banned even before its Publication but the book came out through underground channels, reprinted and published by great like Subhash Chander Bose & Bhagat Singh, after 34 years of Heroic campaign for India, she had to move to a hospital, straight from the part. The brave revolutionary breathed her last in August 13, 1936.¹⁶

Kamla Nehru:

Kamla Nehru was married to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Being the wife a person who’s contribution to Indian freedom struggle can never be forgotten is in itself a great contributing to Indian freedom struggle in 1921. During the non-cooperation movement in Allahabad. She organized groups of women and picketed shop of liquor and foreign clothes.¹⁷

Vijay Lakshmi Pandit:

She was born on 18 August 1900. She is an daughter of Motilal Nehru and sister of Jawaharlal Nehru she was the one of the followers of Gandhi. She attended the Congress of 1927 at Lahore. She also took active part in the Civil obedience movement of 1930 and 1931-32.¹⁸ She was the first women to became cabinet minister in Uttar Pradesh. She was designated the Post minister of Local Self Government and Public Health.¹⁹ She was also the first lady president of United Nation General Assembly. She is well known for her Political and diplomatic role during the freedom struggle.²⁰

Indira Gandhi:

She was the most powerful lady in the world and also known as a great politician all over in. She was born Nov. 19, 1917 at Allahabad. He father was a great freedom fighter against the British Empire²¹ and also became the famous Prime Minister with her effective politics among their leaders. Being as a highly with the influence by her father. She also gained herself in the struggle of India in 1942 and she also became the Prime Minister of Republic India for continuous three terms since 1966 to 1977 but by chance she was Beset side by the Jagmohan Sinha Court in 1975.²² Due to illegal, she was again won her case from the Supreme Court and fort her election faithfully, honestly with warm confidence winning a great majority in the parliament. By chance she was assinated beside her office great politician with feeling sorrowness.²³

Kamla Devi Chattopadhaya

Kamla Devi who had participated in the Salt Satyagraha activity, now took her roles in the movement again. She was associated for her political work a number of times between 1939 and 1944.²⁴ She visited the United State with a view to acquainting the people of that country about the true conditions in India. After India attained Independence Kamla Devi's interest was diverted from politics to Co-operative government. She set up the theatre centre of India and also awarded Padma Bhushan in 1955.²⁵

2. CONCLUSION

All the most important leaders must be remembered for strongly freedom with their great efforts. All of us never to forget them due to their qualities. Madam Cama and Annie Besant were the great women freedom fighters of India and promoted the cause of Indian freedom movement outside of India. Vijay Lukshmi pandit was also the first lady president of United Nation General Assembly. She is well known for her Political and diplomatic role during the freedom struggle.

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