

# **A ZEAL FOR MARTYRDOM KARTAR SINGH SARABHA**

**Dr. Gurcharan Singh Muhay**



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## From the Writers' Pen

This is a sort of homage paid by the writer to the Martyr - Kartar Singh Sarabha for his selfless service, he made for freedom of the country. The words cannot be equal to the contribution Martyr Sarabha made for the country. The best homage to martyrs memory can only be by following the path, they tread on for the maintenance of freedom for the people. And further, if we are honest towards its maintenance, their souls would be in peace. Their sacrifices were meant to save the country from the foreign yoke. The man should be provided maximum opportunities to live like human being. The life should be raised above slavery and the living standards be raised to the worth-living-conditions. They felt that the rulers were looting the wealth of the country. Having not taken the country to be their own, they were wasting the wealth of the country mercilessly. The residents of this country were not considered equal to them. They were being treated as source of production. So they felt it necessary to have our indigenous rulers to provide equal opportunity to each and every citizen. That is why they sacrificed their lives to help the Indians live honourable life. So the a small work on the life of Sardar Kantar Singh Sarah, is nothing more than an homage to his sincerity to get freedom for his fellow citizens.

I am thankful to the authors of articles, books and other related material I have used to complete this project. Without their help in the background I would have not been able to do it. I am indebted for their contributions.

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Ludhiana, 10.10.2004.

Dr. Gurcharan Singh Muhay

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## KARTAR SINGH SARABHA BIRTH AND CHILDHOOD.

The name of Kartar Singh Sarabha will continue to be written in the golden letters in the History of freedom struggle of India, so long as the lovers of freedom continue to live. Besides, as long as the love and respect for freedom would stay in the mind of the human kind, he will be remembered. Freedom and Kartar Singh Sarabha seem to be mutually exchangeable for each other. Whenever the man thinks of struggling for freedom, Kartar Singh Sarabha, is bound to become his dream and shall become his aim. Forgetting Kartar Singh Sarabha, no lover of freedom can keep the candle of freedom alight. In the spirit of freedom, Kartar Singh will certainly be found some-where pulsating. Freedom is the birth-right of the man. It is the duty of every man to fight for its achievement. Those who stand its test, are the lovers of freedom. Such people never die in the memories of the nations, who are conscious of the achievements of freedom lovers.

Sarabha is the name of his ancestral village which is attached to the name of Kartar Singh, because he belongs to this village, in district Ludhiana, Punjab. Thus the name of the village, has become synonymous with freedom fighters. Sarabha is one of the youngest martyrs of this land who sacrificed his youth for freedom. His country was everything to him that mattered most. He did not marry and sacrificed all comforts of life. Nor he had any attachment with himself becoming well-educated person. He did not bother for his relationships. If ever he cared for, it was for living in the air of freedom. Having

experienced despicable treatment, given to Indians abroad, that filled him with the sentiment of getting rid of the foreign yoke. This determination stood by him for whole of his life. He lived and died for this motto of life. For him freedom of the country and respect and honour of the people had the highest priority. If the people of a country do not have freedom, they do not have any respect in foreign lands. This he had seen with his own eyes. This sentiment always lived with him for his life. Once this sentiment entered his mind, it became his religion and he lived with it throughout.

Kartar Singh Sarabha, as has already been mentioned, was born and brought up in the village, which is known as Sarabha. The village is some fifteen kilometers from Ludhiana on Pakkhowal road, which extends to Raikot. It is an old village. This village is one of the clusters of 30-35 well-known villages - Gujjarwal, Narangwal and Qila Rai Pur dominated by Grewal Jats. The village was brought into limelight by the martyrdom of Kartar Singh, the way Khatkar Kalan is known because of the martyrdom of Shaheed-e-Azam Sardar Bhagat Singh and the village Waringa (in Jalandhar District) became important because of Sardar Kishan Singh Gargajj's movement of freedom struggle. Before them these villages had nothing much to be proud of.

This village - Sarabha has given birth to some other freedom fighters besides S. Kartar Singh, i.e. S. Rulia Singh s/o. S. Jagat Singh, S. Harnam Singh s/o S. Gulab Singh, Dafedar Piara Singh, S. Teja Singh Safri and S. Prem Singh are among the prominent freedom fighters of the country. Among them, S. Kartar Singh, S. Rulia Singh, S. Harnam Singh were related to the Gadar Movement. S. Teja Singh and Dafedar Piara Singh - both brothers were related with Akali Movement. These brothers had also been attached to Congress and



Communist Parties. But the prominent martyr of this village was S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, who had been the source of inspiration for most of the following freedom fighters. Still the sacrifices of all other freedom fighters cannot be down-graded. Each one of them played his role according to the time and demand of the situation. That is why the history of freedom will never be able to forget them. It is a matter of combined achievement. Not only hundreds but lakhs of freedom fighters have created a history of free-India. But the sacrifice of Kartar Singh Sarabha is considered to be unparalleled, because of his age, unbound enthusiasm and his continuous single pointed struggle for its achievement. That is why he had been a source of inspiration for freedom fighters like Shaheed-e-Azam Sardar Bhagat Singh. It is said, that when S. Bhagat Singh was taken into custody and his belongings were searched, he carried the photograph of S. Kartar Singh Sarabha in his pocket. Moreover S. Bhagat Singh was fond of the song, which was liked by S. Kartar Singh. He was generally heard singing this song –

*Sewa desh dee jindriye bari aukhi,  
Gallan karniyaan dher sukhalliyaan ne.  
Jinha desh sewa wich pair paiya,  
Ohna lakkh musibataan jhalliyaan ne.  
Jinha desh sewa da ishq lagga,  
Mehal mariyaan chhadd faqeer hoye.  
Hass hass ke charhe kayee phansiyaan te,  
Kale paniyaan dil kayee teer hoye.  
Muafi mangni nahin manzoor sanoo,  
Bane ishq swaraj de beer hoye.  
Asaan desh azaad zaroor karna,  
Tukre ant noo bhawaan Shareer hoye.*

(Most difficult is the service of the country /  
though it is very easy to talk / those who chose to serve  
the country / had to face millions of problems / those love

service of the country / abandoned all comforts of home and hearth and become 'faqirs' / many had faced the gallows smilingly / and many had been sent to Andaman jail / we cannot bow out / we have become lovers of freedom / we must free the country / may our bodies be cut into pieces.)

S. Kartar Singh was born to Bibi Sahib Kaur wife of Sardar Mangal Singh on 24<sup>th</sup> May, 1896. the name of his grand father was Sardar Badan Singh. He had three uncles (younger brothers of his father). They were Sardar Bishan Singh, Sardar Veer Singh, and Sardar Bakhshish Singh. He had a younger sister who was known as Bibi Dhan Kaur by name. After the birth of his younger sister Bibi Dhan kaur, their father Sardar Mangal Singh expired. That is why Kartar Singh and Bibi Dhan Kaur were deprived of the love of their father. They were brought up by their grandfather Sardar Badan Singh. All the three uncles of Kartar Singh were well-educated and well-settled in government service. Thus they also contributed in the bringing up of both these children. At the time of need they would help the family of the deceased elder brother.

Kartar Singh took his preliminary education in the village primary school. He was a prospecting and intelligent student. He was in too much of hurry to do something. He did not like to waste the time. Having passed out of the Primary school, he took admission in the Gujjarwal High School. But he would not like to spend a year in every class. He found it to be very difficult job. To get rid of such a situation, he thought of passing two classes a year. So having attained 7<sup>th</sup> class school leaving certificate from Khalsa High School Gujjarwal, he replaced the figure 7 by 9 and got admission in Arya School, Ludhiana in ninth class. But some adversary back-bited against him in the School.

Thus he had to leave his studies in between. Then he went to his uncle in Orissa. His uncle was a Police Officer. He passed his tenth standard there. Having taken admission in Revanshaw College he also passed the eleventh class therefrom.

Kartar Singh was very active and energetic during his school days. He had tall, imposing and robust figure. He had something hidden in him which would always be inspiring him to do something. He wanted to complete his innings quickly. That is why he was always seen busy. He had ample energy. He had more interest in games than studies. He was very good at school games. His teachers were finding a good leader in him, because he was a good player. So he was captain of his school cricket and football teams. It shows that he had leadership qualities from the very beginning. He was expert in keeping his team-mates disciplined. Even physically he was tall and had well built body. He was 5 feet 8 inches tall. Perhaps because of all this his class-mates and teachers would call him flying serpent and 'Aflatoon'. The saying – the prospective rulers are born ruler and are not made by anyone, that thorns are born sharp - is fully applicable in his case.

Having dropped from the school in Ludhiana, he had to go to his uncle in Orissa. At that time Orissa was a part of Bengal province. Those days the Bengalis were more conscious and aware than the Punjabis. This change of region brought about a turn in the life of Kartar Singh Sarabha. Having been more conscious and advanced in thinking, the people of that province were in the habit of reading progressive literature. That is why Kartar Singh also developed the tendency of reading such literature, which gave birth to new type of consciousness about freedom. It was a sort of a yawn of new awakening in him, which helped him in his future life. Thus his going



to Orissa became a sort of a guiding star for him. Even during the college days, his extra-curricular activities opened new vistas for him. Therefore, it struck to him to go abroad and see for him the conditions prevailing there. That is why, when the family members proposed to send him abroad for higher studies, he immediately agreed and got ready to go. Rather it was according to his own desire. So he was overjoyed.

In 1911 they started preparing to send Kartar Singh abroad. In short, on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 1912 he reached San Francisco port by a ship. Those days, the Indians were given worse treatment in America than other countries. Indians were not allowed entry into the country easily. Americans did not like that slave people of India should go there. Then, how could it be possible that an Indian student should get good treatment there? Whatever the treatment other Indians were getting there, the same he also got. Having dropped from the ship, the immigration officer on the port, immediately asked him, as to why he had gone there. Kartar Singh told him that he had gone there for higher studies. Then the Officer further asked despisingly as to whether there are no facilities of study there in India. Kartar Singh had said, "In my country there are many higher study institutions, but I have come here to take new type of education from Berkeley University". Then the Officer again asked Kartar Singh, "If you are not allowed entry here, what would you do?" Then Kartar Singh replied, "It will be a great injustice that a student is not allowed entry. Who knows, I may be able to do better service of humanity after studying here. If the students are not allowed to have higher education here, then how the world will progress? If I remain under-educated, then I shall be able to do nothing. With this my country and the world will lose a lot". With this reply by Kartar Singh the Officer was



satisfied. Kartar Singh displayed the money on the table of the Officer, necessary for admission. So he was allowed entry.

After this such incidents started coming in the way of Kartar Singh, which started bringing about a silent change in his mind. Though the beginning of such incidents was made on the port itself, but on reaching Yulo County he started getting real experience.

Having reached Yulo County, Kartar Singh found, that the people of Punjab were working in the farms. It was their source of livelihood. He also started working in a farm. He would pluck fruits there. He would get two to three dollars a day. But within two three months he had a bitter experience of bad and humiliating treatment the Indians were getting in America. At that time Punjabis were staying mostly in Washington, California and Oregon state on the West Coast. The free Americans would humiliate them, calling the Indians 'bearded women' or 'Indian sheep'.

A number of such incidents took place, which shook S. Kartar Singh Sarabha to the core of his heart and he started brooding over them day and night. What treatment the people of Indian origin were getting in the hands of the Western people including the British, he could not escape of being influenced by that. One of his American class mates asked Kartar Singh, whether he knew as to what was the national flag of India. Then Kartar Singh lost in his thoughts. Then he had said that the Indian Flag was Union Jack. Then his class mate reacted that 'that is the British flag and not India's. Is there any national flag of a slave country?' This put Kartar Singh into deep indignation.

For some time, Kartar Singh stayed at the house of an old American woman. One day what happened, the woman dusted all the photographed hanging on the walls,

set them right and decorated them. These were the photographs of the freedom fighters of America. But Kartar Singh did not know all about them. So he asked the old lady, as to what was the occasion for her to celebrate. In reply she told him, "Our country got freedom on this day". Means she was celebrating the occasion of freedom of America. This also gave air to the flames of freedom in the mind of Kartar Singh.

Most of the people of Indian origin would stay in the cities on the southern banks and search jobs there. The Indian workers were working in the wood factories and railway workshops in the groups of twenties and thirties in cities of Portland, St. John, Monarch, Linton, Takam, Astoria, Wilham, Woodland, Bellingham and Averot etc. of the marshy country side of Columbia River. The Indian labourers in America and Canada were tired of the treatment, they were getting at the hands of the English people and governments. In Canada Sant Teja Singh was struggling against this injustice and in America Jwala Singh Thatthian was giving fight in this respect. They had planned to educate the Indian students giving them scholarships privately.

After Kartar Singh Sarabha reached America, a big gathering of Indian labourers took place in Portland in 1912. At that time he was staying with S. Rulia Singh of his village in Austria. He also went to take part in this conference along with S. Rulia Singh. Kashi Ram from St. John, Harnam Singh Tundilat from Brad Ville, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna from Monarch along-with their companions, had come to take part in this conference. S. Kartar Singh met S. Jwala Singh Thatthian on this occasion. And he also came to know about the sentiments of Indians staying in America. When they were going to Canada from Portland on the invitation of S. Jwala Singh Thatthian, S. Bhag Singh and S. Balwant Singh, they

stayed in Victoria Hotel on the way, S. Kartar Singh met them even there in their rooms. S. Jwala Singh had a very soothing effect of the personality of S. Kartar Singh. He inspired S. Kartar Singh to take admission in Berkley University.

The decision to bear the expenses of Indian students, who went to America for higher studies by collecting funds from Indians, settled in America, was taken by Sant Teja Singh, S. Jwala Singh Thatthian and Lala Hardyal. Unfortunately, the decision could not be given practical shape. But because of this decision, S. Kartar Singh left Austria for Berkley University. Having taken admission in the Berkley University, he started staying in the Indian students' Hostel. At that time, some thirty Indian students were studying in the University. Majority of them were Bengalis and Punjabis. They came into contact with Lala Hardyal. Lalaji went to the University in December, 1912 to address the Indian students. Lalaji gave a very impressive and inspiring speech there. Having heard him a student – Jatinder Nath Lehri said, "Dear Shri Lalaji, you know it very well, that thousands of Indians are staying abroad. It is also well known that most of them are Punjabis. They are known as very good fighters. Do you not know that they helped the English during 1858 mutiny in India? You have many miraculous inspiring human sources which are present for you. No Indian leader is more capable, who can help establish the revolutionary party and lead the freedom struggle in other countries with the help of your honour<sup>1</sup>." Having addressed the students of the Berkley University, Hardyal had a separate sitting with some of the students. Among them S. Kartar Singh's role was prominent. Besides, Lalaji had a meeting with well-known Indian leaders in Canada and America – S. Jwala Singh, S. Vasakha Singh Dadehar, Santokh Singh Dhardev, Pandit



Jagat Ram Haryana and S. Aroor Singh – regarding establishing of a party, which could play its role to help free India from the shackles of the English Empire. Bhai Parmanand, the brother of Lala Hardyal also played his role in it. He started a very meaningful work to guide the struggling sentiments in the minds of Indians against the English Rule. He wrote in his autobiography about Kartar Singh Sarabha, that Kartar Singh Sarabha was very much unhappy by the treatment the Indians were getting from the English and for this unhappiness, he considered himself responsible for the changes in him.

Mentioning about an incident of his life in his autobiography, Bhai Parmanand wrote about S. Kartar Singh Sarabha that in Lahore jail, a case was being heard against the revolutionaries in 1915, Bhai Parmanand went to Kartar Singh to have a sitting with him and asked him, 'why have you done all this? You were having an easy life in America and now you are stagnating in jail here?' Kartar Singh, replied, "Life for him in America too was a burden. He would have preferred death to such a life and I have come here to die." Having surprised, he tried to know the reason thereof. Then he said, "Yes, in fact you are the cause of all that, which I have done?" I was surprised on such a clear statement. Then he reminded me of the time, when he came to have a treatment for the wound on his wrist. That night we slept together. That night I had asked Kartar Singh, "Have you read the history of India?" On his affirmative answer, I again asked him, "then what is the reason of the Indian Nation of being so useless and unfit that it could not stop the flow of foreign invasions from the west during the last 700 years?" Continuing the dialogue, Kartar Singh did say, "I had decided the same night to sacrifice my life for my country." This dialogue makes clear as to what happened during the dialogue between S. Kartar Singh

and Bhai Parmanand during his stay at Berkley University.

There is no denying the fact that the contact S. Kartar Singh had with Lala Hardy and His brother Bhai Parmanand during his days of stay at the Berkley University, had infused a new spirit in his life. Their contact awakened the sentiment of freedom struggle in his mind. At that time the Indian workers in America and Canada, had started raising their voice against the bad treatment they were getting at the hands of the English. Fortunately, Kartar Singh, who too had gone to America with the aim of getting higher education, having got admission in Berkley University, had entered into the provocative atmosphere there. This provocative atmosphere became the foundation stone of the setting up of *Gadar Party*. S. Kartar Singh sowed the seed of this Party and continued to water its roots for whole of his life and got the pride place among the founding fathers of this party.

Having passed his 11<sup>th</sup> class in Bengal, it was planned to send S. Kartar Singh Sarabha to America for higher studies. By that time, though he had got some political consciousness because of some contacts with some elites in Bengal, but what he became after having gone to America, he had not at all gone there to become that. That whatever contact he got of Lala Hardy and Bhai Parmanand, that transformed his political understanding into a tempest. He had forgotten the aim set by his grandfather of getting education in America. He had come to Berkley University to study chemistry. Lala Hardy was the professor in the same university. His company and his magnetic influence dragged S. Kartar Singh to lead the *Gadar Movement*. Having forgotten his original aim, he wore the crown of martyrs.

1. Gurdial Singh Deol, *Role of Ghadar Party in Freedom Struggle of India*, page 58.

## THE GADAR MOVEMENT

Kartar Singh Sarabha is the patriot and martyr, connected with Gadar Party Movement. So it is absolutely necessary to know about the history of the Movement, so that the life history of Sarabha is properly known. Establishing the Gadar Party was not an ordinary incident. It was a movement, which created awakening among the Indians against the English rule not only in India but in other countries also. It was not connected only with excesses committed by the Whites against the Indian people but its cause was slave-like treatment they were getting even in other countries, which raised anger against them. They started uniting to get rid of the slur of slavery, with the establishment of this party. After the mutiny in 1858, the local people had lost enthusiasm in this respect. But the people, who had gone abroad in search of their livelihood, were not being treated at par with those of free countries. They were discriminated and dishonoured because of their slavery. They had to face many such problems. It worked like an injection for freedom in their mind. Consequently, the Indians in America and Canada were awakened in this respect. There were so many other causes also in the background.

In the beginning of the twentieth century the Indians started going abroad in search of employment. Most of the Indians intended to go to America, England and Canada. Earlier, most of Indians would go to Malaysia, Singapore, Hong Kong and China. Majority of those going abroad was Punjabis. Very few people from other provinces were then going overseas. Bengalis were on the second place in this respect. Few people from other states were going out of the country. Most of the



Indians going to Canada, would go to Columbia and who thought of going to the United States (America) would mostly go to California. Those Indians, who went to Canada and America in the beginning of the twentieth century, 90 per cent of them settled in British Columbia. Most of the emigrants from Amritsar, Lahore, Jalandhar and Ludhiana went to Canada. The area near the marshy area of the ocean of British Columbia, was most suitable for Punjabis because the weather conditions there were like that of Punjab. So that suited them the most. Similarly, in America, they were near the Pacific coast, which was also highly suitable for them. There was a great demand for labour in Canada, thus the details of facilities and wages published in news papers were very attractive for the workers. So an exodus of people started to that country. Only 45 people went there in 1905, while 2623 workers landed there in 1908. Consequently the number of Indians in British Columbia in 1904 was only 258 while in 1908 the number was 5175<sup>1</sup>. Having gone to Canada, the Indians had established two companies and started sale and purchase of land and property – farms, mines and property dealings. The Indians would get jobs in mines, saw factories and laying of railway tracks like hard work. The unfortunate thing was, that their wages were less than those of the Whites. Despite that they would save something to send back to their near and dear ones in India. Whatever the small savings they would send back to India, would be much more than the labour, they would get here as wages. Having seen that, the Indians became enthusiastic for going to Canada. Consequently, more and more people started going to Canada. Resultantly, labour of the whites started to be affected. Because the Indian labour was cheap, so the White labour demand started dwindling. So their anger against the Indian immigrants started increasing. Indians

started to be beaten every day. The Whites were against the Chinese and Japanese too. But anger against them too was more shed against Indians, because they were easily recognized.

Consequently, restrictions started to be put against the Indians, reaching Canada. A ship-full of Indian labour was not allowed entry in Vancouver Port, which was diverted to Victoria in 1906. The Indians entered Canada from there. Because of the restrictions imposed by Canadian Government against the Indians (especially the black people), only 6 Indians could enter Canada in 1909. At that time, India was a British colony. Indians were residents of British Empire. So before making a law in Canada, the Canadian Central Government would consult the British Government, which would further consult the Indian Government. Under these circumstances, Canada had to impose restrictions through the Federal Govt. of Canada. Otherwise they would show that there was no discrimination against the people of any country but it was not there in practice. In British Columbia the Indians were restricted entry into many industries. The Municipal Council of Victoria had decided to the extent that the Indians would not be given any job. In 1908 all the coasts were closed for Indians. This decision was taken through an Order-in-Council. The Indians challenged these orders in courts of law. And some of the orders were declared null and void. Still the efforts to get rid of the Indian labour esp. the Punjabis continued. Consequently, the struggle/tension between the Whites and the blacks continued to increase. The Canadian government taking advantage of this tension, planned to send the Indians to the island of Honduras. Having come to know about this scheme, the Indians gathered in the Gurdwara in Vancouver and passed a few resolutions to condemn the



plan. The home Secretary of Canada J. B. Harkins tried to bring them round. But he could not succeed. Then a delegation was sent to Honduras to convince them. It included S. Nagar Singh Kotli and Sham Singh besides the Home Secretary Harkins. This too could not convince the Indians. Consequently, the attitude of Canadian government became stiffer. They started enacting such laws, which would completely close the entry for Indians. Even the entry of family members to the extent of the wives of the Indians, settled in Canada, was stopped/closed. In 1910, the Privy Council made it compulsory through a legislation, that every Indian, entering Canadian coast, should have minimum 200 dollars in cash. Along with this, every Indian coming to Canada should directly come to Canada by a ship, and should not break his journey anywhere in between. But those days, no direct ship route was available from India to Canada. Thus the Indians were restricted from calling even their families. It was not human treatment, but the purpose of the Whites was to push the Indians to corner. Between 1911 and 1913 about 1700 Chinese families reached Canada to settle there. But Indians were not permitted any entry. The British, who were ruling in India, their colonial government in Canada was not allowing the Indians to call their families in Canada.

In 1912, just to oppose these restrictions, S. Bhag Singh and S. Balwant Singh went to Canada along with their families. S. Balwant was allowed to disembark and all others were not allowed by the immigration officers and ordered them to go back. They went to court of law in Canada, that too decided against this appeal. Then the Punjabis adopted the way of agitation and approaching the International body with habeas corpus appeal. Then they were allowed entry after getting heavy sureties. But they could not get permission

to call in their families in future. A deputation of S. Nand Singh Seehra, S. Balwant Singh and S. Narain Singh first went to London and then to India to get rid of these black laws. A deputation met the Viceroy in Delhi on 13<sup>th</sup> November, 1913. But the Indians settled in Canada could not get any relief. But it certainly happened that listening to the problems, the Indians were facing in Canada, enraged the Indians and some change in the political atmosphere in Punjab did take place. The atmosphere, which was built in Punjab after hearing the revolutionary speeches of the deputation, the Governor of Punjab Michael O' Dwyer was disturbed and he compelled the deputation to go back to Canada after strong warnings.

After taking the advice of legal experts, the Indians staying in Canada, filed an appeal against Governor General in Council's order No. 920 dated 9<sup>th</sup> May, 1910. According to this order, the entry of the person, who has not come directly from India to Canada and who does not possess a direct ticket, purchased either from India or Canada, was banned. He should also possess 200 dollars in cash on him.

The Indians in Canada sponsored and called in 39 Indians to Canada but they were not permitted entry. The Indians saved their return back home by standing huge sureties and filing a case in the High Court in this regard. On 25<sup>th</sup> November, 1913 the Chief Justice nullified the order relating to direct journey condition and the Indians were allowed entry. But it had contrary effect on the government. The restrictions were further increased. The end product was that in 1914 an incident of Koma Gata Maru took place. Consequently, majority of Indians staying in Canada started shifting to America, because it was very easy to go there, since borders of both the countries were common. The incidents were bound to affect the American Indians. So,

as a protest, the Gadar Movement was born in America. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, whose unprecedented sacrifice caused a main source of inspiration for an organized freedom struggle in India, was a product of this movement. It also proved to be the beginning of violent movement. The happenings in Canada inspired Indians to fight for freedom and Gadar Party was born.

At that point of time, the number of Indians in America was very low. This number was 271 in 1906. in 1907 it rose to 1072 and in 1908 it was 1710. the Indians settling in America would come to California through Washington, Montana and Northern Dakota. After this, third entry route into America was through the Ports of Western Coast via Mexico. In 1907-08 riots took place in Wilhelm city of Aryan in American State of Oregon. The White labourers beat and looted the properties of the Indian labourers, because of their cheap labour charges. It affected the Punjabis the most. There was none there to help them. They had to think of their own protection. Consequently, having established committees, they started staying together at one location. On pressure from the Whites, the American Government banned the entry of Indians in 1913. the American Immigration Department would return back the Indians on one or the other pretext. The police there would victimize the Indians staying there through racial extremists. The people of India were slaves of the British Govt., that too was the cause that they hated the Indians. Rather they humiliated them. They would call them 'Damn Hindu Slaves'. They would be thrown out of hotels. It was generally written in Hotels - 'Indians and dogs are not allowed in'.

Among those going to America, the highest number of retired soldiers, students and labourers were included. Some people thought that hunger, sickness and



poverty were the blessings of the English rulers. They considered the slavery as main cause of their plight. The writings of Lala Lajpat Rai and Tarak Nath would give this impression. The number of people who died of famine conditions in India during 1911-14 was 2,87,31,324 while the number of those who died during the First World War, was much less than this<sup>2</sup>. According to Tarak Nath, those who died of famine conditions in India during the last 10 years was one crore ninety lakhs, while only 50 lakh people had died during all the wars during the last 107 years period<sup>3</sup>. According to Governor of Punjab Gen. O' Dwyer, the purpose of going abroad of the Sikhs of Punjab was to improve their economic condition<sup>4</sup>.

Though the Indians settled abroad were freed from poverty, but because of their being citizens of a slave nation, their restlessness could not come to an end. This restlessness guided them to get ready for a prolonged freedom struggle. In American continent, there were three centers of Indian immigrants. The first was San Francisco and the area around Stockton. The second was the basins of the area of Rutland and St. John city on the banks of river Columbia between Oregon and Washington. And the third center was the surroundings of Vancouver and Victoria cities of British Columbia state. All these three centers had their individual role in the building up of Gadar Party. The Gadar Party came into being, which got its name from the newspaper known as 'Gadar'. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha was one of the prominent figures of the pioneers of the Party and the newspaper. This paper was earlier published from the office of 'Yugantra Ashram' in America. But later, when the incident of Koma Gata Maru took place, it was decided that its activities be shifted to India. This duty also was given to S. Kartar Singh Sarabha. For the

success of this mission, whatever the difficulties the patriots had to face, and whichever sacrifices they had to make, we shall discuss in the following pages.

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## FORMATION OF GADAR PARTY

IT HAPPENED in 1912 that an establishment which was known as 'Hindustan Association of Pacific Coast' was set up by a gathering of Indians in Portland. S. Harnam Singh Kotla Naudh Singh (Tundilat) from Brad Ville, Pandit Kashi Ram Marauli and Ram Rakkha Saroa from St. John, S. Sohan Singh Bhakna and S. Udham Singh Kasel from Monarch Mills, were present in Portland. Its office 'Yugantra Ashram' was opened here itself in a rented house. S. Sohan Singh Bhakna was elected President of the Association. The responsibility of a Secretary and Treasurer was bestowed upon Gurudat Kumar and Pandit Kashi Ram respectively. After a few meetings of the Association, Gurudat Kumar fell ill. This affected the plan of bringing out of a newspaper known as 'Hindustan'. Thakur Das Dhuri, who was there in Portland at that time, advised S. Sohan Singh Bhakna and Pandit Kashi Ram that Lala Hardy al should be called from California to hand over this responsibility. Consequently, a letter was written to Lala Hardy al, who promised in reply to come on 25<sup>th</sup> December. But he could not accept this responsibility somehow or other. Another letter from Hardy al came before 25<sup>th</sup> December, in which he mentioned that he would be able to come in last week of March, 1913 only. As per his promise Lala Hardy al reached St. John on 25<sup>th</sup> of March, 1913. His brother Bhai Parmanand also accompanied him. Pandit Kashi Ram gathered all the people by informing them about Lalaji's arrival telephonically and a meeting was held same evening. A future programme was discussed in the meeting. Expressing his views Lala Hardy al said, that the cause of all difficulties of Indians was the foreign rule

and their solution lied in the end of the foreign subjugation.

The Indians settled in America, were well-off. So they thought of such an organization, which aimed at giving armed struggle to British Rulers to bring an end to their rule in India. Bhai Parmanand suggested in this respect that the Indian students should be invited for study there, whose expenses should be borne by the Association and be trained to work in India against the foreign rulers. But rejecting this suggest Lala Hardy al said, that the students, trained and taught in English schools, would not be able to do anything. He suggested a political organization and preparations could be made to create uncertain conditions in India and on an opportune time the English rulers should be thrown out of gear and a Govt. on American style should be established. This suggestion was accepted. Lala Hardy al told this gathering that S. Jwala Singh Thatthian, S. Santokh Singh Dhardev, Pandit Jagat Ram Haryana, S. Roor Singh Chuharchak, Bhai Kartar Singh Latala etc. in California were all very much in a hurry to get the country freed. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and his friends understood its importance, but there was no organization there to lead them.

The first meeting of the party was scheduled to take place on 31<sup>st</sup> March in Brad Ville. Paudit Kashi Ram and Lala Hardy al reached Brad Ville from St. John. Some twenty Punjabis were staying here. All of them became members of this association and a branch of it was opened here. S. Harnam Singh Kotla Naudh Singh and S. Amar Singh Kotla Naudh Singh were appointed Secretary and treasurer respectively.

S. Sohan Singh Bhakna was working in Linton Mill. The next meeting was scheduled to take place there. All Punjabi and Indian immigrants from Portland, St. John and other places around took part in



this meeting, besides the local settlers. Some one hundred Indian immigrants gathered here and all of them agreed to become members of the Sabha and pay party fund. A branch of the party was opened here too. A week after a meeting was held at Vienna on 14<sup>th</sup> April. About 150 Punjabi immigrants gathered here. Immediately after Lala Hardyal rose to address the participants, an old Havaladar stood up to say, "we should not waste any time taking out a newspaper. Some of our associates should find time to tell the Indians that they should leave their jobs and start going to India in groups. Going there they should tell this to their military men that we should throw the Whites out of the country with their help. How many Whites are there in India? Their ratio is five hundred to one". After a long discussion a branch was also set up here too and S. Jodh Singh Kasel was appointed as its secretary. At the residence in Astoria of S. Thatthgarh of district Amritsar, a meeting was held on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1913. The delegates from Brad Ville, Portland, Vienna and St. John participated in it. Here S. Kartar Singh Sarabha was also staying with his village-mate S. Rulia Singh in connection with search of a job. Lala Hardyal appealed here to offer their body, mind and property to all. S. Kartar Singh was the first person to offer his services. Then S. Sohan Singh Bhakna also offered himself for the purpose. The basis for organization to be set up 'Hindustani Association' was already there. Its office was already there in Portland and its branches were already working in Astoria. This organization was set up in 1912. Its President, Secretary and Treasurer were S. Sohan Singh Bhakna, Gurudas Kumar and Pandit Kashi Ram Marauli respectively. The President of the branch of Astoria was S. Kesar Singh Thatthgarh, the Secretary was Munshi Karim Baksh and the Treasurer was Munshi Ram. The name of the organization to be established on



21<sup>st</sup> April, 1913 was similar to that of the earlier association – Hindi Association of Pacific Coast. It was more known as 'Hindi Association'. This very association changed into Gadar Movement or Gadar Party later on. In this meeting at Astoria, Lala Hardyal and Ram Chand Pithoria gave very inspiring speeches. Later on, a basic resolution was passed. Its contents were as below:

1. The name of the organization is 'The Hindi Association of Pacific Coast'.
2. The object of the organization has been fixed to free India from the British rulers.
3. The head office of the organization is decided to be opened in San Francisco in California.
4. It has also been decided to issue a weekly newspaper.
5. An election of the organization will be held every year.
6. The Labourers of every factory will have their committee which will be affiliated to the Centre.
7. The members of the following committees will have an elected executive committee, which will look after the newspaper, press and other important jobs.
8. This committee will select a three-member vigilance commission from among themselves.
9. Every member will pay at least a dollar fund every month.
10. There will be no room of callous religious discussion.
11. It is the duty of every member of the organization that he must participate in the

freedom struggle, let him belong to any part of the world.

After passing this resolution, an election was held and the following office bearers were elected:

President – Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna.

Vice President – S. Kesar Singh Thatthgarh.

Gen Secretary – Lala Hardy, M.A.

Jt. Secretary – Lala Thakur Das Dhuri

Treasurer – Pandit Kashi Ram Marauli.

Besides, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, Lala Hardy and Pandit Kashi Ram Marauli were appointed as members of the three-member vigilance commission. An executive was also appointed with one member from every branch. Its members included Munshi Karim Baksh and Munshi Ram from Astoria, Udham Singh Kasel and Ishar Singh Marhana from Monarch Mill, Harnam Singh and Amar Singh from Brad Ville, Ram Rakkha from St. John, Kishan Singh from Vienna and S. Amar Singh from Portland. Then the election of Astoria branch was held. Kesar Singh, Munshi Karim Baksh and Lala Munshi Ram were elected President, Secretary and Treasurer respectively. Ten thousand dollars were collected on the spot in this meeting for issuance of Gadar newspaper. But bringing out the newspaper could not be started immediately. Lala Hardy went to California from here. Neither the Gadar newspaper was started nor the central office could be opened. In September, Lala Hardy declined to take the responsibility of the newspaper, because of his bad health. Having received this information from Lala Hardy, an executive committee meeting was called in St. John. The meeting planned to arrange for expenses for the treatment of Lala Hardy and also for arranging for more sources for the newspaper.

Kartar Singh Sarabha was one of the pioneers of the Gadar newspaper. First of all the Gadar newspaper started publication in Urdu. The first copy of the Gadar was issued on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1913. Kartar Singh Sarabha was responsible for the whole of its publication. So he started devoting more of his time to press and the newspaper. Then the Punjabi edition of the newspaper was started from 8<sup>th</sup> February, 1914. With this, load of work on S. Kartar Singh increased more, because no body could write Punjabi better than him. He himself would do all translations from Urdu, do calligraphy of the Punjabi paper, print or cyclostyle the paper, prepare postage and posting of the paper. Along with it, he had to do even editing job, since he was one of the editors too. When Kartar Singh would be dead tired after so much of work, he would start singing following lines of a poem in Punjabi:

Sewa des dee jindriye bari aukhi,  
Gallan karniyan dher sukhallian ne.  
Jinha des sewa wich pair paya,  
Unha lakkh musibtaan jhalliyan ne<sup>1</sup>.

(translation already given in the previous chapter).

There is no doubt the role of Lala Hardyal is very important in the establishment of Gadar Party, but it can also not be denied that but for the active participation by Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, Pandit Kashi Ram, Kartar Singh Sarabha and S. Harnam Singh Tundilat this could not have materialized. It was S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, who pressed Lala Hardyal the hardest to start the newspaper at the earliest possible date. He even handed over to Lala Hardyal, 200 dollar amount for use in the newspaper, which he had received from home to meet expenses of his studies. Consequently, on 1<sup>st</sup> November, 1913 first issue of Urdu edition of Gadar was issued and a



party office – Yugantra Ashram – was opened in San Francisco.

In the very first issue of Gadar in Urdu the news of conferences, held in Oregon and Washington were published. Besides, all the details of setting up of the Party in Astoria were published. The Indians, staying in California got more awareness. They arranged a conference in Sacramento during the Christmas holidays in December, 1913. S. Jwala Singh Thatthian, Santokh Singh Dhardev, Sant Vasakha Singh Dadehar, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Aroor Singh and Channan Singh Chuharchak, Pandit Jagat Ram Haryana, Karam Singh Cheema, Kartar Singh Dukki, Hazara Singh Dadehar, Bhagat Singh Alias Sadha Singh Kacharbhann and S. Kartar Singh Sarabha participated in it. Some hand bills were also distributed in the conference. S. Sohan Singh Bhakna, President, Lala Hardyal Secretary, Pt. Kashi Ram Treasurer, Kesar Singh Thatthgarh Vice-President and Executive Secretary Munshi Ram represented on behalf of the party. This conference decided to make the party an all-American party. In the new election, all the office bearers of the previous committee but for the Vice-President, were elected. S. Jwala Singh replaced S. Kesar Singh as Vice President. This change was affected to give representation to California. Thus having begun from the marsh of California, the movement expanded to the level of all-American states. In the Vigilance Commission, Lala Hardyal was replaced by S. Santokh Singh Dhardev. In the new Committee, apart from the office-bearers, S. Santokh Singh, S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Aroor Singh, Pirthi Singh, Pandit Jagat Ram, Karam Singh Cheema, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Sant Vasakha Singh, Pandit Munshi Ram, Harnam Singh Kotla Naudh Singh (Tundilat), were included.

Baba Harnam Singh Kahri Sahri, who was staying in Canada, became active in coordinating the movement of Indian workers in Canada. With this, opening of new branches of the Gadar Party in America, too was activated. Besides, the branches were started to be opened in other countries too like Panama, Malaya, Hong Kong, Philippines and Libya (Siam).

The Gadar weekly and 'Yugantra Ashram' were the headquarter of revolutionary activities of Gadar Party abroad. Yugantra Ashram was the head office of Gadar weekly and shelter for the revolutionaries as well. In the beginning Lala Hardyal, S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and Raghubir Dayal Gupta started staying there. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna would normally be on tour to boost up the activities of the party. He would go to different farms to preach the ideals of the party. He would be accompanied by Bhai Sadha Singh Alias Bhagat Singh Kacharbhann, Kartar Singh Sarabha and Kartar Singh Dukki. Now the work of Urdu paper would be looked after by Raghubir Dayal and Kartar Singh Sarabha would translate Lala Hardyal's articles into Punjabi, then write them, print or cyclostyle them and post the Punjabi edition. Having increased the demand of the paper, Kartar Singh Dukki, Basant Singh, Khem Chand and S. Harnam Singh Tundilat also started helping in the office work. Though the Gadar was also published in Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Nepalese, Pushto, Hindi etc., but Punjabi edition had the highest print order. This paper played the biggest role in connecting the Indians staying abroad with Gadar Movement and organization. It created among them required awareness about the freedom for India. The British rule was very much affected by the setting up of these two institutions. This organization published pamphlets to provide special information, besides the newspaper. The first of the booklets 'Frangi De Freb' was

published both in Punjabi and Urdu. After this a collection of poems 'Gadar Goonjaan' was published in which revolutionary poems and songs were included. These books were distributed free of cost in thousands. Besides, the 'Yugantra Ashram' published – Angrezi Raj Da Kaccha Chittha, Tilak Di Rihayee, Punjabi Bhravaan De Nam Suneha and Hindustani Sepahi – and distributed freely. These booklets and the Gadar created movement against the English Empire in India. Having irritated from this propaganda, the English government banned the Gadar and the Indian Government wrote to American and Canadian Governments to take strong action against Gadar and the party. The English Govt. considered Lala Hardyal as heart and brain of this movement. So they planned to weaken the party by arresting Lalaji. Consequently, on 14<sup>th</sup> March, 1914, the police went with arrest warrants. He sent the police back with the promise to appear in the court the next day. On 26<sup>th</sup> March, a rich lady of San Francisco stood surety for one thousand dollars and got Lalaji bailed out. Hearing the news of arrest of Lalaji, S. Jwala Singh and S. Santokh Singh along with some other people from Hotel Farm, reached Yugantra Ashram. All of them unanimously convinced Lalaji, to go to Switzerland. Consequently, Lala Hardyal, having disguised himself, left for Italy in the 1<sup>st</sup> week of April, 1914. Therefrom he went to Switzerland. Lala Hardyal was replaced by Santokh Singh as General Secretary. But with Lalaji's exile, a movement of restlessness spread there among the Indian labour, which the Gadar movement used against the Whites after organizing them. Yugantra Ashram started distributing writings of Lalaji after republishing them in large quantities. Many protest rallies were held against his exile. A big rally was also held under the leadership of Baba Kesar Singh in Astoria. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna,



Ram Rakkha, Jagat Singh, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Ram Chander, Master Udham Singh, Pandit Kashi Ram and Rulia Singh Sarabha gave very inspiring speeches. Thus a new leadership cadre started coming up at that time. After the exile of Lala Hardy, the maximum burden of the party activities fell on the shoulders of S. Santokh Singh. He, adopted the path of sacrifice, leaving aside the easy-going life style after establishing the party. On the onset of First World War, Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna went out to reactivate the revolutionary movement. S. Bhagwan Singh replaced him as President. He had gone to Japan after leaving Canada and from Japan he came to America. Maulvi Barkatullah Bhopali also accompanied him to America. Despite all these leaders, S. Kartar Singh Sarabha played the most crucial role in giving a practical shape to the party programmes.

After Lalaji shifted out of the country, the activities of the Gadar Movement started moving towards practical and revolutionary work. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha took the most active part in it. After outbreak of 1<sup>st</sup>. World War, when the Indians working in Canada and America planned to go to India to bring about revolution, Kartar Singh Sarabha was in the lead. There was no activity wherein Kartar Singh would not be participating. May it be a matter of preaching revolution in India, collecting money for giving armed resistance against the English in India, plan dacoities to collect money for purchasing arms, or going to the cantonments to convince the soldiers to rise for revolt against the English rulers, Kartar Singh Sarabha would always be found in the forefront. Therefore, the British rulers in India, considered Kartar Singh to be most dangerous person and tried their best to bring him to the gallows. We shall talk of that in the following pages.

Master Udham Singh had been an army man. So he was expert in using the arms. He wanted that a centre to train the Indians, in the use of arms, so that they could be prepared for an armed struggle. So the farm of Baba Jwala Singh became a centre of such a training and Master Santokh Singh became an instructor for that centre. Kartar Singh Sarabha was sent to Europe to get piloting training for planes. S. Harnam Singh Tundilat was sent for getting training of making bombs. While making bombs, it blasted and one of his hands was blown away, so he is called Tundilat (like Lord Tundilat). The Party also wanted that maximum Indian students should get armed training in American Universities and return home. But the American Universities refused to give them admission in the battlefield department. So they could not succeed in it. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Pirthi Singh Lalru and Harnam Singh started taking training in preparing bombs at Jwala Singh Farm. They started this training programme from 5<sup>th</sup> July, 1914. They had prepared some bombs. Rest of the material they kept safe. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and S. Pirthi Singh left for San Francisco according to the plan. Harnam Singh started experimenting with the remaining combustible material. Consequently, a bomb somehow blasted. Thus he got the surname of Tundilat. On the other hand, Jatinder Nath too took admission in making bombs in the Chicago University. After going to India, the activities of starting revolutionary work in India by the Association of Pacific Coast alias Gadar Party started only after 12<sup>th</sup> April, 1914. The meetings at Fresno, Upland and Oxford were held on 10<sup>th</sup> May. At the meeting in Claremore, a call for sacrifices after going to India was given. At the meeting in Astoria on 7<sup>th</sup> June, 1914, S. Sohan Singh Bhakna and Maulvi Barktullah had said that the time to offering sacrifices for the freedom of India and throwing the



English out of the country had come. Such meetings were held on 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> June in Vienna, Washington (Oregon), Amberdin and Seattle. The party was of the view that the English could be thrown out of India with revolutionary activities. There was no paucity of those ready to lay down their lives. Most of the workers of the party were ex-soldiers. Majority of them were immigrant Punjabis. So they were sure that having intruded in the army, they would be able to convince the soldiers for leveling the way to revolution. So the Party leaders wanted that the revolutionary movement should begin in Punjab. For this purpose, having taken trained soldiers from America, they should be sent to Kashmir through China to bring an end to Dogra rule there, an American style republican Government may be established in India by 1925. The Party knew this that the Germans and the English are certain go to war, but they did not expect it to start before 1925. They thought, that they have at least ten years time to prepare for that. But the situation changed suddenly. The onset of War on 28<sup>th</sup> July, 1914 and the incident of Koma Gata Maru, were two such happenings, which put the party in a very strange situation. They could not find an opportunity for full preparation. But it helped them bring about a change and boost in their programme. The Indians were enthused by the news of World War. It boosted the activities for revolution. But the decisions taken in hurry are not those useful as the well-planned and well thought ones are. A rally was held in the Oxnard town on the 20<sup>th</sup> July, 1914 in which a resolution was passed, that 'the war has started in Europe. Let us throw British government out of India. This is the most opportune time for us to indoctrinate the army-men and spread unrest among them in India'. Consequently, the Gadar Party declared war against British rulers with the beginning of War. Though the Gadar Party did not have

sufficient sourced for a revolt, still this declaration was published on 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1914. Big rallies were held in Portland on 7<sup>th</sup> August, in Fresno on 9<sup>th</sup> and in Sacramento on 10<sup>th</sup> August, 1914. Resolutions regarding declaration of war against the English Empire were passed in these rallies. All the Indians were given a call to reach India and take part in the revolutionary activities.

The Koma Gata Maru incident disturbed human sentiments. These news were published in Gadar. Such a big object, the party could accomplish only with the help of 'Gadar' weekly.

1. Sohan Singh Josh, Bhagat Singh Nal Merian Mulakatan, pages 63-64.

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## KARTAR SINGH SARABHA AND 'GADAR'

IT looks as if S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and the 'Gadar' were two sides of a coin. The newspaper Gadar has no meaning without S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and in the absence of the Gadar, Hindi Association of the Pacific Coast, which was set up on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1913 at Astoria, would have never succeeded in taking its shape as a party. Thus in the minds of people of the Hindi Association, the Newspaper 'Gadar' went so deep into their memory that, it later gave its identity to the party, means the party started to be identified as Gadar Party. The Indians abroad had resolved to start a weekly newspaper with the nomenclature of Gadar. It never happened at Astoria on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1913 to start a party with this name. The resolutions passed in this gathering, included one to throw the English out of India and free the country from the foreign yoke. Besides, the name of the Hindi Association was changed to Hindi Association of the Pacific Coast. It was also decided to start a weekly magazine to help the Indian community to get integrated by developing an information system. It was named as Gadar, means the revolution. So the Association had the only way to accomplish its aim was to rise in revolt. But the revolt could only be successful if the English rulers would be in a weak position, means caught in a difficult situation – i.e. their engagement in War against the Germans. On the other hand, opening of another front in India, would mean dividing their power and weakening them so as to achieve the object of freedom for India. The most important role was to be played by information medium.

The resolution to start the weekly – Gadar was passed on 21<sup>st</sup> April, 1913 at a meeting held in Astoria. The gathering collected one thousand dollars on the spot for this purpose. The programme was to start the newspaper at the earliest possible occasion. But a few months passed after Lala Hardyall went back on his job but people knew nothing about the paper. So people started thinking of it and started writing letters to enquire about the fate of the paper from the office-bearers. Then Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna wrote to Lala Hardyall about it. In reply, he showed his inability to take that responsibility because he was not in good health. So S. Ajit Singh was called from Italy for this purpose. It happened in September, 1913. Then Baba Bhakna called a meeting to discuss about starting the newspaper and collecting money for the treatment of Lala Hardyall. It was also decided not to call S. Ajit Singh (uncle of Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh).

It was also decided in the meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> April, that the party and newspaper office be opened in San Francisco. Neither had so far been accomplished. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha took initiative for this purpose and convinced Lalaji and took more responsibility of the newspaper on him. Consequently, office for party and newspaper was opened in House No. 436, Hill Street, in a rented building. This office was given the name of 'Yugantra Ashram' which meant an end of 'an era of the English rule'. People would come here to stay as a guest house. Had there been no news-paper, it could have not happened that the Gadar movement would have taken the shape of a revolutionary party. Kartar Singh Sarabha offered his services for the newspaper. He called a meeting with the help his class mates to bring all the Indians round. He took the help of S. Harnam Singh Tundilat to convince Lala Hardyall to start the paper.



Another amount of 3000 dollars were collected for the newspaper with the efforts of Kartar Singh Sarabha. This money was deposited by S. Sarabha with Lalaji.

Having imported a typing machine from England on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 1914, publication of the paper first in Punjabi then in Gurjarati was started. Lala Hardy, Ram Pithoria, Kartar Singh Sarabha and S. Amar Singh were entrusted with the job of writing articles for the newspaper. In the printing and posting of the newspaper, the role of Kartar Singh Sarabha was important. Along with him, Basant Singh, Mohan Lal, Pirthi Singh, Pandit Jagat Ram and Munshi Ram were active. S. Harnam Singh Tundilat would write poems for the paper. They would preach the principles of the party by delivering lectures.

Kartar Singh Sarabha had unlimited enthusiasm and courage. He would work like a machine in the human form. He would never feel tired and fed up. Once determined to do something, he would never look back. He would fill everybody with inspiration, whosoever came into his contact. It never happened that someone could escape his influence. He had so much of devotion for his work, that he would forget everything else. His duty and religion both were to work for freedom. It was Kartar Singh Sarabha, who convinced Lala Hardy to start publication of the newspaper when he took himself unfit for taking that responsibility. In the beginning, Lala Hardy, Kartar Singh Sarabha and Raghubar Dayal had started working in the office of Gadar secretly. Lala Hardy would write articles for the newspaper. Kartar Singh Sarabha would print the Punjabi edition and Raghubar Dayal the Urdu edition on a cyclostyling machine. In a short span of time the demand for the newspaper increased. So it was not possible to fulfill it with a cyclo-styling machine. Therefore, at the end of the first month, they had to hire a house No. 1324 in Welsia

Street and an electric Litho press was started. Then printing job of the newspaper was started from there. With the increase of demand of the paper, it was but natural that the need for the staff increased. So Kartar Singh Dukki (Latala), Basant Singh Chauda (Patiala), Harnam Singh Kotla Naudh Singh (Tundilat) and S. Khem Singh came to help S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and Raghubar Dayal Gupta in the job of the Newspaper. In December, Shri Ram Chand Pishauria and Shri Amar Singh (Rajput) also joined them for help in office work. Until Shri Barkatullah and Bhagwan Singh came to America in August 1914, S. Amar Singh Rajput and Ram Chand Pithauria continued to look after the work of the newspaper.

The role of Lala Hardyal and Ram Chand Pithauria along with S. Kartar Singh Sarabha had been very important. First of all the effect of Lalaji's articles, published in the *Gadar*, made his personality unforgettable. Later, when Lala Hardyal ran out of the country, Ram Chand Pithauria became all-in-all of the newspaper and the *Gadar* Party. He played a constructive role in the development of the '*Gadar*'. Pandit Jagat Ram was appointed in-charge of posting of the newspaper. He remembered the names and addresses by heart of those whom the paper was to be dispatched. Later on this duty was being fulfilled by Munshi Ram.

Harnam Singh Tundilat, Jagat Singh, Sur Singh and Kartar Singh Sarabha boarded the Nipen Maru ship for Columbo, wherefrom they came to Punjab via Madras. Indian police had no information about them. They had come to India to start the process of revolution. Sarabha had the main role to play in it. He was to start a paper like *Gadar* secretly, so that he could create awareness among the Indians. This inspiration he got from the poem of Tundilat which was like this:

*Jaan jave aan na jave taj ke  
Bani sir siraan de ki jana bhaj ke.*

(let the life come to an end but the honour should remain intact. It is a question of heads, there is no need showing the back.)

Having come in India, he had only one aim. That was to recruit the students and youth and train them for revolution. He had many plans in his mind. But he did not have sufficient sources to accomplish them. This was his problem. While in San Francisco, most of the poems of Tundilat were published. Later on these poems were collected and published in the form of a booklet – *Gadar Goonjan*. It had lot of demand. Thousands of copies were published and distributed. Thus Tundilat had been inspiring many people for revolution through his poems. It is necessary to see the variety of his poems, because it is important to study one's writings to know about his views:

1. *Hindio, je sukkhan wali sej manani,  
Gorian dee hick kar deo Chhanani.  
Ehna noo udavo la ke top bhangian,  
Kha lia hai des lutt ke Frangian.*
2. *Utho khalsaji halla bol daiye,  
kariye gorian noo barbad singho.  
kehre kamm Bhala sade shreer Aune,  
vadh ke gaye ho saroo shamshad singho.  
pave chamak shamsheer dee jang andar,  
bharat varsh noo karo azad singho.  
mile sikkh, hindu, musalman sare,  
daiye katt frang jallad singho.*
3. *Sher da sarup dhar gajjiye maindan vich,  
kadhiye bukhari mar bandran dee dar noo.  
Udd jaye dar sade dilan utton zalman da,  
kadhiye mian vichon tez talwar noo.  
udd jan dukkh te bhukkh de kadake aji,*



*jutti nal kaddho frangi badkar noo.  
zalam frangiyan de chitran te lan hitt,  
kare seekh lal, kaho umre lohar noo.*

4. *hindu, sikkh, pathan te musalmano,  
faujan walio zara khiyal karna,  
sada desh frangiyan lutt khadha,  
aseen yuddh unha de nal karna.  
kar ke door frangiyan bandran noo  
raushan hind noo wang mashal karna.  
bara door pleg te kal karna.*

The poems published in this booklet prepared the Indian people for a revolutionary approach by translating their sentiments and expressing the difficulties they were facing in the hands of the English rulers. They were also preparing them to face the challenges in store for them:

*Marna bhala gulami di zindagi ton  
Nahin sukhan eh man bhulawane da.  
Mulak jagia cheen jo ghook sutta,  
Dhol vajiya hind jagawane da.  
Sanoo lor na pandtaan kaziayan di  
Nahin shauk hai beri dubawane da.  
Jap jaap da wakt bateet hoye,  
Wela aa gia teg uthawane da.  
Parh ke gadar akhbar nu khabr laggi,  
Wela aa gia gadar machawane da.*

*Dera vich amrica de aan laya,  
Hardyal honi meharban ho gaye.  
Hoka pherya gadar akhbar sare,  
Akkhan khullian lok hairan ho gaye  
Chalo chaliye mulak noo yuddh karne  
Ho akhri bachan phurman ho gaye.*

*Sir ditte bajh nahin kamm sarna*



*Yuddh vich pawega zaroor marna.  
 Maar daiye vairi mar jaiye aap jan,  
 Kairta garibi mukh jaye tap tan.  
 Pichhli kalanki sadi chukki jayoogi,  
 Hoyoogi azad nasl sukh payoogi.  
 Jaan jave aan noo na javo taj ke,  
 Bani sir siran de kee jana bhajj ke.*

In reality, the aims and objects of revolution were declared in the very first issue of 'Gadar'. Whatever was being published in the form of poems or articles, had only one purpose. that was to prepare the youth of the country for revolution and to compel the English rulers to leave the country as early as possible so that the country could be freed, and the Indians could breathe in the atmosphere of freedom. The very first issue made it clear that, 'today, in our mother tongue, a war has already been declared against the English people abroad.

"What is our name? Gadar.

What is our duty? Gadar.

Where will the Gadar spread? In India.

That time will soon come, when pen and soldier will be replaced by guns and blood."

The Indians had just started talking of guns, that two great incidents took place. First of them was declaration of World War. The other was that the 376 travelers of Koma Gata Maru were not allowed entry in ports of Canada and compelled them to go back mercilessly. Then whatever treatment they were given on reaching India, that worked as fuel on fire in hurting their sentiments. And it also proved the coordination in the working of both the governments of India and Canada. Their sentiments were badly hurt. Consequently, Kartar Singh Sarabha and his companions were shaken like anything. It is also necessary to know about Koma Gata

Maru because it gave necessary boost to the Gadar movement in India.

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Note – Maru means ship in Japanese.

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## THE STORY OF KOMA GATA MARU

KOMA Gata Maru is a name of a ship, which was hired by an Indian, settled in Japan – Baba Gurdit Singh from a Japanese Company to help sail the Indian labourers, desirous to go to Canada, but were stranded in Hong Kong. But the Canada Government did not allow them entry into their ports, despite the fact that they were medically examined there. Rather they were ordered to go back after a long struggle for two months for entry. The treatment, those Indian labourers got, at the hand of English Government was unprecedented. It was most despicable act of the Govt. It helped Indians, settled in Canada and America to unite against the English regime. It also helped boost the Gadar movement. Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, who was the President of Hindi Association of the Pacific Coast alias Gadar Party, met the Indians returning home on board the Koma Gata Maru and tried to coordinate his activities with them and convince them to start working for a revolt against the English Empire on reaching India. The whole story speaks loud of excesses against the Indians, slurs of slavery, elbowing of Indians by the English rulers and their cruelty. It helped the Gadar Party to unite the Indians to fight against the English for freedom. It worked as a source of inspiration for the revolution. Thus it came to be connected with the Gadar Party of which Kartar Singh Sarabha was a most active figure. He was one of the front-line leaders and pioneers.

The story of the Koma Gata Maru is shocking. We have already mentioned about it. But not in detail. Because its role in the freedom struggles has been very

encouraging, so it becomes necessary to go into the details of it.

Because Canada was a British colony like India, so the Indians thought that because of the same rulers in both the countries, there would be more facilities of entry for the Indians in Canada. In the beginning they were available. Entry into Canada was easier than America. That is why, during the first decade of the twentieth century, the number of Indian labourers had gone very high. Many people had settled there. The Indians there would do the business of sale purchase of land, farms, property and commerce. So by 1914 they had amassed property worth 2 crore dollars. But it pinched the Canadian labour or the Whites. So they became jealous about them. In the last years of first decade of the century, the restrictions were started to be imposed against the Indians. First of all a conspiracy to settle them in deserted island of Honduras was hatched by the government. But they could not succeed in it, because the Indians strongly protested against that and they fought against it unitedly. Still they did not get any relief in their difficulties. Rather they increased. In 1910 the Canada government tried to close all routes for the Indians for their entry into Canada by an Order-in-Council on 9<sup>th</sup> May. According to it, no Indian was allowed entry in Canada unless he had come directly from India to Canada. It meant, that he should have reached Canada directly from India by ship. If he would change the ship on the way or make a stop anywhere on the way, he would not be allowed entry into the Canadian ports. But this condition was very unfortunate, since there was no ship directly going to Canada from India. So no one could fulfill this condition. It meant, that all the routes for the entry of Indians were completely closed. It was applicable against the near relations of the Indians including



the wife and the children. Then there was another condition that even if one fulfills the above condition, he should have 200 dollars in cash with him. Consequently, in 1911 when 1932 Chinese and 2986 Japanese entered Canada, not even single Indian was allowed entry into Canada.

The Indian immigrants did not digest this excess hands-down. They knocked the doors of law. They filed a case against this law in the High Court of Canada. A deputation was sent to England and India. But they could not get any relief from any quarter. If any relief they got, it was only from one quarter. It was the decision of the Canadian High Court in favour of Indians. The Chief Justice Mr. Hunter declared the law dated 9<sup>th</sup> May, 1910 ultravires. Still the Canadian Govt. did not bow down. It continued to be strict against the Indians. So the shipping companies would not give a ticket to Indians even after charging more than the fare. They also did not take the responsibility of dropping the Indian travelers in Canada.

When Baba Gurdit Singh came to know about this decision of the Canadian Government, he himself went to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, many Indians were stranded because of no entry for the Indians in Canada and they were in trouble there. Baba Gurdit Singh was a rich Indian contractor in Malaya. He felt very bad about this treatment. Having gone to Hong Kong, he called a meeting of the Indians and suggested them to start a shipping company and enter Canada. If still there is any problem, that could be solved through legal action. Every one liked it. Baba Gurdit Singh rented a ship from a Japanese company with his own efforts on 24<sup>th</sup> March, 1914. Its name was Koma Gata Maru. It left for Canada with 376 Indians on 4<sup>th</sup> April, 1914. the travelers of this ship were medically examined at the Victoria Ghat and they also got fitness certificates. Then it reached

Vancouver port on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 1914. None of the occupants of this ship was allowed to disembark. Facing hunger and other difficulties, the occupants of this ship were ordered to return back after two month long struggle on 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1914. The way it was sent back, it was also a very painful story.

The Punjabis and Hindis staying in Canada made all efforts so that they could succeed in getting their brothers an entry. They resorted to legal action. They even agitated. But they could not get any success. They were not even allowed to meet any of the Indian travelers. After two months the ship was ordered to go out of Canadian waters. But the occupants refused to obey this order.

The Canada government sent Sea Loin ship to push the Koma Gata Maru out of its waters. This ship came with 250 policemen fully armed with Malaysian rifles to take action against the Maru on 18<sup>th</sup> July 1914. Just to spread panic among the occupants of the ship, they started spraying hot water on them. Along with, they started going up the roof of the ship. But Indians beat them back. Consequently, the Canada government sent a war-ship – Rainbow. It reached there on 21<sup>st</sup> July. Its aim was to arrest the Koma Gata Maru occupants. It was posted near the Koma Gata Maru. They also started threatening to start firing. But the occupants did not have the capacity to face the war-ship. On the other hand, the Indians standing on the coast, were restless. They were ready to face any situation. They could attack in the situation of an attack on the ship. If the occupants were attacked they were ready to put the city on flames and were prepared to sacrifice their lives. Having understood the situation, the Canada government adopted the way of reconciliation. They offered that the occupants will be given full ration and they should go

back. The government which did not allow even one person to see these occupants, took their services to convince them to go back and requested them to find a way out of bitterness after meeting them. Consequently, the Indian settlers also advised the occupants of the ship reconcile with the situation and go back to Hong Kong with ration. The Indian settlers collected 60 thousand dollars to pay for the loss of rental of the ship to the shipping company. On 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 1914, Koma Gata Maru was sent out of the Canadian waters. On 29<sup>th</sup> September, 1914 this ship reached the Bajbaj Ghat in Calcutta. Here the English government gave them a very bad treatment. They wanted to force them go to Punjab after disembarking from the ship. But the occupants protested against it. They wanted to leave the Bir of Guru Granth in some Gurdwara in Calcutta. They came out of the train and sat in the lawns and started chanting bani. They started walking on road to Calcutta with Bir of Guru Granth Sahib. Seventeen Chhachhis of Shahpur district and Bhan Singh Varing (Jalandhar) and Pohle Ram Anandpur and his 30 companion sat in the train on the station. Thus with 59 gents, one woman and two children, the train was signaled to move to Punjab. Rest of the 260 walked to Calcutta after breaking the police cordon. Having cordoned the gathering, the police asked them to go to Bajbaj Ghat. In the evening the Police Superintendent Eastwood was sent to bring Baba Gurdit Singh. He indulged in a scuffle with them and ordered the police to open fire. His bullets hit the turbans of Thakur Singh Udonangal and Harnam Singh. Consequently, the opponents also started firing in reply. Resultantly, the police and other officer went aside and the military took over. Consequently 17 of them were killed and 10 were admitted in the jail-hospital and 72 were put behind bars. Rest of them ran-escape the arrest.



With the orders dated 24<sup>th</sup> October, 1914, of the Governor of Bengal, 203 were sent to Alipur jail and 9 to medical college hospital. 19 acquired martyrdom. 59 boarded the train. Rest of the 32 were declared absconding. Baba Gurditt Singh was one of them. He remained under-ground till 1921. Gurmukh Singh Lalton was one of those arrested. He was released after reaching Punjab. He helped the Gadar movement a lot along with Kartar Singh Sarabha. Another person among them was Shri Harnam Singh Gujjarwal, who worked with great enthusiasm in Ludhiana under the leadership of Kartar Singh Sarabha.

Had the Koma Gata Maru incident not taken place, the Indians in America would not have become so active. This has been accepted by Bhai Parmanand in his autobiography. Even the governor of Punjab – Sir Michael O' Dwyer, Lt. Governor of Punjab agreed with this that 'when physical search of the passengers was done, it was found that many of them had revolvers with them secretly in their baggage. Because of these arms, they got ready to face the police. But whatever was the reaction of this fight was a lot strong and the Gadar movement got a big boost'.<sup>1</sup>

Even the Indians settled in America, could not escape the effect of it. Even at the time, Koma Gata Maru was still in the waters of Canada, the Indians in America had sent financial aid for the Indians stranded in the ship through Vancouver Gurdwara Committee. A good number of copies of Gadar were sent in food packs secretly on board the ship. On receiving the information of returning the Koma Gata Maru, the revolutionaries held a meeting and decided to send Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna to Yokohama. Its purpose was that he should work with the occupants of the ship to coordinate for inspiring them for revolutionary activities going back



home. Besides, he was entrusted with the job of handing the arms over to them. The information about the whole of this scheme was given to Kartar Singh Sarabha and Giani Bhagwan Singh. Kartar Singh got booked a second class room in another ship for Baha Bhakna with great caution. Besides this, he arranged to load boxes full of 200 revolvers and ammunition after taking the loading staff into confidence. The ticket for this ship, Sarabha got through Gernam Council. He helped board Baba Bhakna just ten minutes before its departure, after escaping the eyes of the vigilance by changing the taxies time and again.

Soon after, it was declared in Canada to start moving to India because of beginning of World War, S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and Raghubar Dayal Gupta were sent to meet Baha Bhakna in Yokohama and they accomplished this mission successfully. They told Babaji that the Indians have been called to pack up for India. You also reach India, as early as possible and on the way you keep inspiring all to reach there. The great role behind this decision was that of the Koma Gata Maru. When the members of the Gadar Party started working for the revolution after reaching India, many occupants of the ship joined them. Baba Gurmukh Singh Lalton and Harnam Singh Gujarwal were among the prominent figures of this movement.

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1. The HOME (Political), Sept., 1914. No. 211-24, page. 13.

## DECLARATION OF WAR AGAINST THE BRITISH EMPIRE

Immediately after receiving the news about breaking out of war between the English by Germans, the organization of Indian immigrants in America became active. The Gadar Party declared war against the English and they started preparing to return home to take part in the freedom struggle. According to government statistics, about 8000 Indians returned home between 1914-16. After the breaking out of First World War a meeting was held at Yugantra Ashram in San Francisco in America. Hundreds of Indians settled in America took part in it. They came from St. John, Astoria, Vienna, Brad Ville, and Portland etc. in America. Besides, Babu Ram Kahri Sahri, Balwant Singh, Sher Singh Vein Puin, Bhag Singh Uppal etc. came to participate from Canada. This meeting, taking the beginning of the World War as a God sent opportunity to be availed of, declared war against the English despite less preparedness and gave a call to all Indians abroad to prepare to return home. The party even published the declaration of war against the English in Gadar issue dated 5<sup>th</sup> August, 1914. To review this decision rallies were held on 9<sup>th</sup> August in Fresno and on 10<sup>th</sup> August in Sacramento. In the rally at Sacramento about 5000 Indians took part. All the Indians were asked to return to India and take part in the struggle against the English to throw them out of the country and set up a republican government there. When the Indians were rushing back home, 'Portland Telegraph' had expressed

doubt that if it continued like this then not even one Indian would be left in Astoria'.

Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna had left for Yokohama to inspire the Indians on board the Koma Gata Maru that on reaching India, they should take active part in freedom struggle and work united.

S. Kartar Singh Sarabha was so much in hurry for freeing the country, that he left for India, alongwith Lala Raghubar Dayal even without waiting for the results of meetings of 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> August. An American anarchist Jack too accompanied him. He went to Japan by air. He met Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna at Kobe and informed him about the declaration of war against the Whites and asked him to reach India at the earliest possible and on the way he should continue inspiring the Indians for a struggle against the English. Thus he reached Punjab via Colombo a month before the first group arrived in India. Because he reached Punjab from Colombo via Madras, the police could know nothing about his arrival.

The main part of Indians left on 29<sup>th</sup> August, 1914 from Francisco on board the Korea ship. The occupants of this ship were divided into 4 groups. These groups were lead by one leader each. They were Kesar Singh Thattgarh, Jwala Singh Thatthian, Pandit Jagat Ram Haryana and Nidhan Singh Chugha. Before the ship was flagged off, Maulvi Barktullah, Ram Chandra and Bhai Bhagwan Singh gave this message to all of them, "Your duty is quite clear. Spread revolt in every corner of the country. Loot the rich and show sympathy to the poor. Thus you will have the sympathy of the people. You will be given arms on reaching India. If we can not succeed in it, you loot the arms from the police stations. Do not try any thing without the consent of your leaders."

Besides the four leaders on board, there were some more great people in the ship. They were Udham



Singh Kasel, Aroor Singh, Arjan Singh Dhukchana, Ram Rakkha, Bhag Singh Uppal, Karam Singh Cheema, Safa Singh Bilga, Amar Singh, Inder Singh, Piara Singh Langeri (Hoshiarpur), Nawab Khan Halwara, Ishar Singh Malhana and Pirthi Singh Lalru. The ship was to go up to Hong Kong. The occupants of this ship had no fear of the English at all. On board the ship they had been openly preaching, enjoying and singing the poems and songs of Gadar Goonjan. Wherever the ship stopped they stepped out of the ship and started singing outside. They would invite all the Indians to join them in the struggle against the English and also inspire them to come to India to play their role in it. Having been influenced by their propaganda, Bhai Parmanand, who was bound for America for higher studies, returned back home from Yocohama with them. This ship reached Manila from Yocohama. Having been influenced by their propaganda, the president of Manila Gadar party Shri Hafiz Abdullah Jagraon and Jiwan Singh Daulesinghwala left for India with them. Besides, some 50 workers of Gadar Party apart from Shri Rehmat Ali Wajidke, Bibi Gulab Kaur Bakshiwal, Bakshish Singh Kanpur, Lal Singh Sahibiana, Jagat Singh Binjhal, Dhyan Singh Bangsipura and Chand Singh Waraich also returned home with them because of their influence<sup>1</sup>.

Some people caught the ship somewhere and others dropped at some places for revolutionary duties. Nawab Khan and Jang Singh Marhail dropped at Manila. Addressing the Indians there, he had said, "we have been sending you the weekly Gadar. Now England is involved in the fight for survival against Germany. Now we can throw the English Ruler out of India with great ease. Avail of this opportunity. Do not miss it. Such an opportunity we will never get again. You shake hands with us and bring an end to the English rule in India or



sacrifice your lives while fighting"<sup>2</sup>. The same way Amar Singh and Ram Rakkha dropped at Yocohama to collect arms. Inder Singh, Sur Singh and Piara Singh Langeri dropped at Nagasaki and went to Shinghai.

Nidhan Singh Chugha had collected a number 30 revolutionaries after dropping at Shinghai. This jatha (group) left for India on board the 'Manisha Maru' on 15<sup>th</sup> October. Some of the people dropped at Hong Kong from 'Korea' ship and caught 'Garima Maru' for Colombo and reached India without any problem. Because the revolutionaries continuing their propaganda everywhere on the way, so the English Government had acquired special powers by issuing 'Ingress Ordinance'. Under these orders, they would arrest anybody from the port and send him to Punjab. He would be put under house-arrest or in jail. The 179 occupants of this ship were arrested immediately after stepping out of the ship. The Governor of Punjab Michael O' Dwyer says in his statement in 'India as I saw' on pp. 191-195, he had ordered them to put in jails in Mintgumry and Multan without consulting the police authorities, which were implemented. All the people who had reached Calcutta, by 'Toshamaru' after changing 'Korea' or 'S. S. Korea' were all arrested. They included well-known revolutionaries like Pirthi Singh, Jagat Ram, Kesar Singh, Udham Singh, Jwala Singh, Nidhan Singh, Aroor Singh, Amar Singh, Nawab Khan, Arjan Singh Khukhrana, Ram Rakkha, Safa Singh Bilga, Bhag Singh Uppal, Karam Singh Cheema and Sher Singh.

Since Governor of Punjab took the passengers of 'Toshamaru' to be very dangerous, so he sent 65 of them in Mintgumry and Multan jails and 18 were put under house-arrest. Prominent among those revolutionaries, who were house-arrested in villages included Inder Singh Mallha, Nattha Singh Jhirab, Roor Singh Chakar, Bhan

Singh Sunet, Phool Singh Barsal, Channan Singh Raipur, Rulia Singh Sarabha, Harnam Singh Sarabha, Nawab Khan Halwara, Narain Singh Mann, and Uttam Singh Hans, Ludhiana district. They also included Dewan Singh Nakodar of Jalandhar district, Amar Singh Moranwali from Hoshiarpur, Sunder Singh Sultan Da Wara of Nabha, Chuhan Singh Chuharchak from Ferozepur, Kaku Singh Baliwal of Patiala, Phuman Singh Virk of Amritsar and Kirpal Singh Madhoke Brar etc. in this ship. The informers were also there with them, who became provokers later on like Kirpal Singh (spy), Nawab Khan and Amar Singh. Otherwise there were great revolutionary leaders also in the ship. Had they not been arrested, they would have given a lot of energy to the movement which was being run by Kartar Singh Sarabha and the history would have been a lot different.

It is a fact that the English rulers considered the Gadar movement as if it were a movement of the Punjabi Sikhs only. That is why Pandit Jagat Ram, Pirthi Singh and Bhai Parmanand Jhansi were sent to jail. Out of those Sikhs house-arrested in the rural areas, Rulia Singh, Uttam Singh, Aroor Singh etc. were later taken into custody.

It is said that some 2312 Indians reached India upto 25 February, 1915 after the arrival of Koma Gata Maru. Most of them came from China, Malaya, Singapore, Manila and Hongkong. From America and Canada only 540 Indians came to India. Some people came from Panama too. The lovers of freedom continued to come to India upto 1916. Their number, according to government statistics, stood at above eight thousands. Kartar Singh Sarabha was one of prominent Indians, who came via Colombo. He was the main source of the movement. Besides, hundreds of Indians entered India through this route. The English government got information about their arrival in India later.

After Koma Gata Maru, the first ship, which came to India with 57 revolutionaries, arrived on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1914. The second ship, which brought in Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, arrived on 13<sup>th</sup> October. It carried some eighty five revolutionaries. It was stopped at Calcutta and a thorough search was made and then they were sent to Ludhiana for enquiries. When Baba Bhakna was strolling in Ludhiana bazaar under the supervision of a policeman, Kartar Singh Sarabha met him there and discussed about the activities of the party in Punjab. Jwand Singh Nangal and Bir Singh Bahawal were released after four-days of questioning, but it was decided to send Baba Bhakna to Multan jail after 8 days of questioning. When Baba Bhakna was being taken to the railway station in closed buggy, Kartar Singh Sarabha met him. He also had a necessary discussion with him at the railway Station. The same way 53 passengers arrived by 'Fusang' on 15<sup>th</sup> October, 16 by 'Kwachi Maru' on 24<sup>th</sup> October, 21 by 'Kawang Sung' on 19<sup>th</sup>, 173 passengers by 'Toshamaru' reached Calcutta on 29<sup>th</sup> October, 1914. Apart from this hundreds of revolutionaries came by 'Ringomaru', 'China', 'Manchuria', 'Tanemaru', 'Sinomaru' and 'Mangolia' ships. Besides, some 200 Indians landed on the Indian soil from 'Kutsang', 'Samiki Maru' and 'Lama'. More than 125 people put their feet down 'Salmis', 'Hakamaru' and 'Faosang' ships. About 325 Indians reached India by 'Sanon Maru', 'Fuksang' and 'Astoria' etc. Some 3125 passengers, who came to Calcutta, were checked in by the police by 16<sup>th</sup> February, 1915. Out of them, 704 were house-arrested in the villages. 2211 were released. 331 were sent to jail, and 2576 were detained in the villages between 19<sup>th</sup> October, 1914 and December, 1917. The revolutionaries, who entered via Colombo and could escape the eye of the government for some time. All the others who came to



Calcutta port, continued to become the victims of the English government. Most of the leaders, who entered via Calcutta, were arrested immediately after their arrival. 295 revolutionaries reached Punjab via Lanka between 25<sup>th</sup> October, 1914 and May, 1915. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha was one of them. But he could not escape the eyes of the police of the English Government for long. Some 2500 persons were arrested out of those revolutionaries, who came to India. Out of them 400 were put behind bars and others were detained in villages. The prominent leaders like Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna, Kesar Singh Thattgarh, Jwala Singh, Sher Singh Vein Puin, Ishar Singh and Master Udham Singh had already been arrested. The leaders who escaped the police arrest, were included Kartar Singh Sarabha, Harnam Singh Tundilat, Bhagat Singh alias Gandha Singh Chakarbhann and Nidhan Singh. Those remained out of jails, were all lead by Kartar Singh Sarabha. This 19-year young man was the life current of the Gadar movement in Punjab. Besides, Pirthi Singh, Pandit Jagat Ram, and Parmanand Jhansi were among those, who escaped on the way to Ludhiana. Gujjar Singh Bhakna, Prem Singh, Jagat Singh, Jiwan Singh, Rehmat Ali, Hafiz Abdullah and Bibi Gulab Kaur were among those, who could not be caught by the police. They played a very useful role in revolutionary activities in Punjab. Thus Koma Gata Maru incident and the beginning of the war between the English and the Germans, helped Indians unite and inspire them rush back to India, and the English government tried to bring an end to their efforts by foreseeing the things to happen. We shall study here as to what efforts Kartar Singh Sarabha made in India and how much success or failure he faced in his mission..

1. Gadar Sajish Di Vyakhia, p. 45.

2. Gadar Conspiracy, part 2, section 2.



## REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES IN PUNJAB AND SARABHA

KARTAR Singh Sarabha had started his mission after reaching Colombo, a port in Lanka on 15-16 September, 1914. His highest aim was to approach the people with revolutionary spirit, convince them to work with Gadar Party to compel the English rulers leave the country. But this mission was not a children's play to accomplish. It needed lot of wisdom and the people, who were ready to sacrifice their lives and arms and ammunition too. Besides, it needed the support of the local people. If the people are not well aware, they cannot stand by the revolutionaries. The revolutions succeed only with the people's conscientiousness.

The Indians settled in America and Canada, when found the English caught in war against the Germans, considered it as an opportunity to throw them out of India. So they thought it necessary to open another front against them in India to weaken them. So they declared war against them and gave a call to all Indians, settled abroad to come back home by any ship available at the earliest opportunity and start a struggle with the help of revolutionaries against the English to compel them leave the country. Consequently, the number of Indians, who returned home during 1914-1916 is said to be about 8000. Those few people, who came to India via Colombo, could not be spotted by police immediately. But after some time they too were spotted by the police and they met the same fate, which is normally meted to the patriots by the governments. The patriots of a subjugated country are always considered as enemies of the government of the

time and traitors of the country. They want freedom. So the government, gives them a status of traitors, gives them a treatment of traitors. They are given the most deterrent punishments so that other people do not dare step into their footsteps.

The prominent leaders of Gadar movement – Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna (President), Jwala Singh Thatthian, Kesar Singh Thatthgarh (Vice-Presidents), were arrested immediately after coming out of the ship at Calcutta. So no important Gadar Party leader was available to run the movement. So all the responsibility of contacting those revolutionaries, who escaped arrest fell on the shoulders of S. Kartar Singh Sarabha. So he tried his best to collect them by holding meetings at different places. Finding the ways to attack the English government, was the main point of consideration during the meetings.

S. Kartar Singh Sarabha and some of his companions, had reached India via Colombo on board the 'Nipen Maru' and escaped the eyes of the police. Besides, many more leaders had escaped arrest. They included Nidhan Singh Chugha, Harnam Singh Tundilat and Bhagat Singh Chakarbhann, who also reached India via Colombo on boarded the 'Mashima Maru'. Out of those, who were arrested – Bhai Parmanand Jhansi, Pandit Jagat Ram and Pirthi Singh escaped on the way, while being transported to Ludhiana from Calcutta. Bhai Gujjar Singh Bhakna, Prem Singh and Jagat Singh Sursinghiya too could not be spotted by police. They were, perhaps, not arrested considering them less dangerous, being Hindus. The same way Jiwan Singh Daulesinghwala, Rahmat Ali, Hafiz Abdullah and Bibi Gulab Kaur Bakshiwala were released after questioning by the police at Ludhiana. Besides them another person who escaped the arrest was Kashi Ram Maroli, who went to his village and found

that process of arrests was on. He sneaked out of the village and joined revolutionary activities. Another group of revolutionaries came via Colombo in January, 1915. it included Sant Vasakha Singh Dadehar, as the prominent leader. The English government released Baba Aroor Singh Chuharchak and Gurmukh Singh Lalton from jail taking them for small fines. Apart from the above mentioned, Rang Singh Khurdpur, Pakhar Singh Dhudike, Uttam Singh Hans and Mastan Singh Narangwal, who landed in India in December, 1914 also escaped the arrest.

Having reached India, the revolutionaries could not find necessary support from Punjabis in particular and Indians in general. They had thought that 30 crore Indians would have tightened their belts to fight against the English rulers. But what they found coming here, had opened their eyes. It was quite different. The people like Mahatma Gandhi were helping recruit the youth for the English in the army. In Punjab, Khalsa Dewan movement also did not lag behind in helping the government. They too were in a hurry to get them enlisted among the loyalist of the government. They were surprised to note that there was no movement in India to free the country from the clutches of the foreign rulers. People were not at all ready to listen to these revolutionaries, what to speak of supporting them. Rather 'fatwahs' were being issued against them. They were being refused to recognize them even as Sikhs. Thus, they did not find their hope, which they had come here with, to bear fruit. Still they did not lose heart. They started to open a Gadar Party office here with the hope to be able to convince the people to follow them. The highest hope for the purpose, was S. Kartar Singh Sarabha. He had unlimited enthusiasm and energy, which was not ready to be defeated by anyone.



Despite knowing this fact well that most of his comrades had already been arrested by police, S. Kartar Singh Sarabha was not disheartened. He continued to fulfill his duties fearlessly. When Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna was being brought under police custody, the extent of dare-devilishness of Sarabha was that he met him in Ludhiana bazaar and could know his whereabouts. He had a hearty talk with him in the bazaar. When he was taken to railway station in a buggy, Kartar Singh met him on the way. Then he had discussed the future plans while standing at the railway station in Ludhiana. He was afraid of no situation. But he gave highest priority to his duties.

S. Kartar Singh Sarabha tried to meet all the revolutionaries who had come to India to establish a new organization of Gadar party in Punjab and succeeded in forming a committee which had Kartar Singh Sarabha, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Pandit Jagat Ram, Pirthi Singh Lalru, Banta Singh Sanghwal and Aroor Singh Chuharchak on its executive members. Then Pandit Kashi Ram, Treasurer and Vishnu Ganesh Pingle had joined them in November. Ludhiana was centre of this movement. That is why the English Empire had brought all the passengers of Koma Gata Maru and other ships for investigation to Ludhiana. Bringing them in Ludhiana, everybody was asked about the whereabouts of Kartar Singh Sarabha and Nidhan Singh Chugha. Kartar Singh Sarabha had been studying there. So most of his known faces belonged to it. So he tried to establish the first centre of the party in Ludhiana itself. The companions of Kartar Singh and other students of Ludhiana were – Sajjan Singh Narangwal, Kirpal Singh Boparai and Puran Singh. They also left their studies and joined him. Though Kartar Singh tried his level best to arrange for a press in Ludhiana but could not succeed. At last, he started using cyclostyling machine for printing and



circulating the party literature. He published and distributed 'Ailan-e-Jang' (declaration of war) and Gadar Goonjan (an anthology of poems) in good number. This press was given the nomenclature of 'Bharthu press' (revolutionary press). Sarabha's friends would go to villages to distribute the party literature. This is how he was shifting literature from one centre to another.

Kartar Singh Sarabha established contacts with his old acquaintances like Bhai Parmanand Lahore. He introduced Sarabha to Ram Saran Das of Kapurthala, who had contacts with revolutionaries of Bengal. Sarabha got addresses of Bengali revolutionaries and took Bhai Parmanand to Bengal to develop contacts with them. He met a well known Bengali leader Sanyal. But he could not get much assurance of help from the Bengali leaders. But he said this much – 'You continue to work according to your plans and sources. Bengal would come with you only on right time'. But later, Kartar Singh got assured on Vishnue Ganesh Pingles' visit to Lahore and thus he could come into contact with Ras Bihari Bose.

Having come to Punjab, S. Kartar Singh Sarabha had fixed places for meetings with the passengers in police custody in Malwa and Majha regions of Punjab. Moga and Jagraon were fixed for workers in Malwa and Amritsar clock tower was fixed for Dewali in Majha region. Such a meeting he held in Khanna town of Ludhiana in September, 1914 and another meeting he arranged at 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Nanak Singh's house in Amritsar on Diwali day. Those who participated in these meetings were Dr. Mathra Singh, Bhai Harnam Singh Sialkoti, Channan Singh Burchand, Kala Singh Jagatpur, Piara Singh Langeri, Inder Singh, Buddha Singh, Ganga Singh and Sadhu Singh Sursinghya, Vishan Singh and Ajaib Singh Warpal, Gujjar Singh Bhakna, Harnam Singh Rasulpuri, Sunder Singh Kot Nangal, Suja Singh Valtoha,

Teja Singh Bhikhiwind, Thakar Singh Thatthian and Vasakha Singh Dadehar etc. This meeting decided to openly preach in the villages.

In the event of an opportunity to attack by the movement, different leaders were appointed in different areas. In Malwa, Sajjan Singh Narangwal, Gurmukh Singh, Aroor Singh and Kashi Ram were working with Gandha Singh. Besides, many students in Ludhiana had joined the movement because of Kartar Singh Sarabha's influence. In Majha Gujjar Singh Bhakna was fulfilling his duties with great enthusiasm. Important centres in the area were – Bhakna, Kasel, Dadehar, Sarhali, Kairon, Jhar Sahib, Gillwali, Patti and Sursingh-wala. Prem Singh and Jagat Singh were well known leaders who were looking after the work in Sursinghwala. In Doaba, Banta Singh Sanghwal was a top leader. Piara Singh Langeri, Dr. Aroor Singh, Bibi Gulab Kaur and Harnam Singh Tundilat were also active in this area. Different workers were distributing propaganda material in different areas. Thus Kartar Singh Sarabha had divided Punjab in regions. According to his objects, he tried to coordinate the party activities.

In reality Gujjar Singh Bhakna had started revolutionary activities on his own initiative. He preached revolutionary ideas in the villages. It was decided to hold meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> October, 1914 in Amritsar on Dewali day. On Dewali Dr. Mathra Singh, Paira Singh Langeri and Harnam Singh Sialkoti met on 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Nanak Singh's house. But they could not take a decision about the date of revolt. After this Kartar Singh Sarabha, Jagat Singh Sursinghwala, Kala Singh Jagatpur, Channan Singh Burchandwala and Piara Singh Langeri met at Nankana Sahib fare in November. Here too the date for a revolt could not be decided. Then a meewting was held at Kassa. Gujjar Singh Bhakna and Nidhan Singh Chugha

also took part in it. Here 15<sup>th</sup> November, 1914 was fixed as the date of revolt. But they could not get required arms for the purpose. So the date of revolting against the English Empire had to be postponed. To collect arms it was planned to loot the cantonments of Ferozepur and Lahore. It was decided that revolutionaries of Majha would attack Lahore Cantonment and those of Malwa would loot arms and ammunition in Ferozepur cantt. A high level committee was formed to implement this scheme. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Dr. Marhra Singh Dhudial, Piara Singh Langeri, Gurmukh Singh Bhakna, Vasakha Singh Dadechar, Pandit Jagat Ram Haryana and Vir Singh Bahawal were included in this committee. Meetings were to be held in Laudhowal, Tarn Taran and Moga on 17<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> November, 1914. It was decided in these meetings to hold a meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November at Baddowal in Ludhiana to decide about managing human resources. It was held somewhere in between Mullanpur and Baddowal railway stations. It was decided in that that the cantonments should be attacked on 25<sup>th</sup> November. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Gandha Singh Chakarbhann, Jagat Singh, Nidhan Singh, Kashi Ram, Rehmat Ali Khan and Jiwan Singh took part in it. This decision was the result of an unscheduled meeting of Sarabha with a Havaldar in train. Kartar Singh Sarabha, without knowing the views of the person, questioned him as to why they should not work for freedom after the military service. It influenced the havildar deeply. He immediately offered his services for the purpose and told him that he was in-charge of arms store and if their men attack, he would hand over the keys of the store to them. It seems that only on this much indication, Kartar Singh got the decision made to attack on 5<sup>th</sup> November. Consequently, Nawab khan was entrusted with the job of breaking the railway track,



Sarabha was to cut telephone lines so that no information should reach out of the cantt. to other reinforcement sources. According to the plan, they were to attack the English forces in the cantonment, after looting the arms and ammunition from Mian Mir Cantt. But the plan could not succeed because the Havaldar, who was to hand over the keys of the store, had already been transferred. Thus their scheme to attack the Cantt. could not be implemented. Some of the revolutionaries had reached the Mian Mir Cantonment and had been hiding in the bushes and waiting up to 10 p.m. according to the plans. But they became helpless on not receiving any information and they had to send a special messenger to stop further reinforcement from Ludhiana.

The workers of Majha too had established their contact with army men of Mian Mir. Prem Singh Sursingya had developed contact with the horse-riders of Rasala No. 23. His nearness was established with Sucha Singh and Lance Wafedar. Consequently the horse-riders had a meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November where a decision was taken to go to Jhar Sahib. The same day a meeting was held at Jhar Sahib, which was attended by Nidhan Singh Chugha, Harnam Singh Sialkoti and Vasakha Singh Dadehar for the central committee. But they hesitated to go to Jhar Sahib because of being warned by a Granthi of the Rasala, Mool Singh. So this plan too could not succeed. Though four of the horse-riders left for Jhar Sahib with bonnets, but by the time they reached there, the meeting had already dispersed. There was none there. Thus this plan too failed. The revolutionaries met on the road to Jalalabad out of Ferozepur. This meeting was attended by S. Sarabha, Pandit Kashi Ram, Rehmat Ali, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Gandha Singh Kacharbhann, Jagat Singh Binjhal, Jeon Singh Daulewala, Jagat Singh Sursinghwala etc. but on getting the information from



Nidhan Singh, that the plan to attack the Mian Mir cantt had failed, and they could not make a programme to collect arms from Pathan Regiment at Ferozepur, could also not be possible before 30<sup>th</sup> November, the revolutionaries dispersed. Some of them caught train to Ludhiana next day, those who could not catch the train, hired a Tonga and left for Moga. When they reached near village Misriwala, they found an A.S.I. of Ghall Khurd police Station Basharat Ali, Zaildar of Wara Zaidawala Jwala Singh, Fateh Singh Zaildar Sarbrah and Gulam Qadir were waiting for the D.S.P. having seen these people, Jwala Singh said the those people seem to be suspects. The A.S.I. tried to stop them. The revolutionaries got enraged and the A. S. I. slapped Rehmat Ali and Bhagat Singh, in a fit of anger, opened fire and killed the ASI and Zaildar on the spot. The people started running here and there. Some of their companions mixed with the people and escape with them. But nine of them sneaked into the forests. Having arrived the police encircled the forest near the canal and started raining bullets. At last the seven revolutionaries were arrested. Dhyan Singh Bangsipura and Chanda Singh Waraich were shot dead by the police. Pandit Kashi Ram, Jiwan Singh Daulesinghwala, Rehamt Ali Wajidke (Patiala), Bakhshish Singh Khanpur, Lal Singh Sahibiana, Jagat Singh Binjhal and Dhyan Singh Umarpuriya were arrested. They were hanged in Lahore Central Jail in 1915.

On the other hand a big gathering took place at Kairon in Majha on 27<sup>th</sup> November. Here the attendance was more than that of Jhar Sahib meeting. But none had arms. How could the attack take place on the Cantt without arms? So the plan to attack was abandoned and efforts to collect arms were speeded up. One group went to Sarhali to arrange for arms on 28<sup>th</sup> November so that

arms could be collected after attacking the police station. But that too could not succeed because the gate of the police station was closed. Then they were to gather in Ferozepur. According to Jwala Singh an arrangement had been finalized to collect arms from a platoon on 30<sup>th</sup> November, but they moved to Moga instead of remaining idle till 30<sup>th</sup> November. Resultantly they lost 9 valuable companions after killing an A.S.I. and Zaildar. Thus the Pheru city incident proved to be fatal for the Gadaris. It disheartened S. Kartar Singh Sarabha. Looting of Ferozepur arms store had failed. Then all the revolutionaries went home. Kartar Singh Sarabha went to Harian in Jalandhar where he met his old friend, whom he asked to collect old comrades. But he refused to do that saying that all the revolutionaries had broken their links with the movement, because of his managerial wisdom. It brought down the enthusiasm of Gadar movement in India.

Even after this in December 1914 the revolutionary activities continued. But they could achieve nothing. Now the lack of a leader, an organization and a Centre was being badly felt. People away from the centre could not be directed properly. Despite this fact, therefore, that there were many centres of the Gadaris, but without a Central organization and leadership, the activities could not be properly handled. So the movement continued to face failures one after the other. Consequent upon this thinking Kartar Singh Sarabha tried his best to convince Ras Bihari Bose to lead the movement. Unfortunately, it was a different thing, that even under the leadership of Ras Bihari Bose too, the movement could not get successes. But Sarabha did not loose heart and leave any stone unturned to give a leader, organization and a centre to the party.

The activities of the Gadar Party up to December, 1914 were product of enthusiasm and hurry. It was the

first phase of Gadar Party in Punjab. The reigns of the movement were not in the mature hands. That is why, Gadar Party had to face losses. Though the leaders of this movement tried to propagate the aims and objects of Gadar movement with sincerity, but because of its reigns were in the hands of a few leaders, it could not get desired success and achieve solid results. All the sub-centres could not centrally coordinate their activities. All could not revive equal directions to implement the plans. Consequently, the movement miserably failed in this phase. All the matured organizers had already been jailed. Those who were still free, had no matured leader to guide the movement. All of their plans, having become victims of the desire of success and ended in failure.

In the second phase, the leadership of the movement went into the hands of Ras Bihari Bose and Lahore became the centre for its activities. At this phase, credit of running of the activities of the movement went to the Bengali leader Ras Bihari Bose. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha had come into contact with Bose through a Marathi patriot Vishnu Ganesh Pingle. Vishnu Ganesh Pingle had been an America returned Indian. Having returned home Pingle joined Kartar Singh Sarabha and became active in Gadar movement. The President of Gadar Party had thought that all the revolutionaries might be taken along and the movement be made a success in India. He was sure and hopeful of help from Bengali leaders. But when the people in Gadar Movement contacted the Bengali revolutionaries, they did not give an assurance to support on right time. In this way too, the struggle by Punjabis could not get required success.

On coming to India, the Punjabi revolutionaries started talking of revolution here without recognizing the qualities of the people, who were associated with them. Babu Surinder Nath Sanyal writes about these conditions



in his autobiography, that he himself had heard people talking on the streets of Calcutta that Punjab was preparing for a revolt. Kartar Singh Sarabha visited Calcutta during those days and met some wise Bengali leaders who dodged him saying, 'you continue to work according to your sources but Bengal will come with you only when the right time comes.'

When Sarabha went to Calcutta with one thousand rupees to purchase arms, the Bengali leaders did not believe him, though he had gone there with an introductory letter from Bhai Parmanand. He returned without purchasing any arms. He was, however, benefited by that visit. He succeeded in getting the information that the party branch of Kapurthala had good relations with Bengali freedom fighters. They then sent a worker to Kashi to bring Ras Bihari Bose to Punjab. Bose himself could not come but he sent Sachinder Nath Sanyal to know about the situation in Punjab. He was to study the situation at Jalandhar. But on the way Kartar Singh Sarabha met him in Ludhiana. Both of them along with one of his friends, left for Jalandhar. Sarabha told Sanyal that some 250 people were likely to gather in Gurdwara in Ludhiana where people would be selected for certain duties. When the trio reached Jalandhar, the companions of Sarabha were waiting for them at the railway station. They went into a garden, across the railway lines, where they were being waited by some other friends. They had gathered there with the expectation of meeting Ras Bihari Bose. Kartar Singh Sarabha introduced Sachinder Nath Sanyal as one of the Ras Bihari Bose's nearest confidants. But they refused to talk to him. Then he told them that he had gone there to know about the situation in Punjab. Moreover Bose was not in a position to move out. He wrote in his autobiography about the dialogue he had on that occasion that first of all he had not asked the

names of any of them. Later, while talking, he came to know all about. In the party such an enquiry was considered with suspicion. One of his friends introduced by saying that Ras Bihari could not come because of some urgent work, but he has sent his right arm – Sachinder Nath Sanyal. Kartar Singh Sarabha had said that they had something to do with Bose alone. Then he told him that Bose wanted to know about the situation in Punjab before he came here. Besides, he was in such a situation that he could not come that way for some more time. Then he asked them, as to how many people they had with them to work for their plan. How did they meet each other? Who was their main leader? Amar Singh told him that they were short of a leader. That was why they needed Ras Bihari Bose. None of them had the wisdom of running the organization. Therefore, there was no systematic way of their working. He stressed on the help from Bengal. Kartar Singh Sarabha did not find Amar Singh's briefing convincing. He addressed Amar Singh and said that there was no need of losing heart. You would see, when the time came, many of us would rise to the occasion like hidden Rustams<sup>1</sup>. Having heard this dialogue, Sanyal was convinced that if there was anyone who had the talent to lead the movement, it was Kartar Singh Sarabha. He found such a self confidence in him, in the absence of which no one could make good achievements.

Kartar Singh Sarabha put many questions to Sanyal. In the meantime, he also told Sanyal that they were preparing for revolt in Punjab since September, 1914. then he asked Sanyal as to what extent Bengal could help them with arms. How many thousand guns had Bengal had with them? Sanyal responded, 'What do you think, how many arms Bengal can have?' Then Sarabha said, 'Bengal should have a good stock of arms,

since Bengali friends were preparing for a 'balwa' (revolt) for long time. One Bengali friend of Gadari movement Parmanand had promised some 500 pistols. That is why Parmanand was sent to Bengal. In reply to it Sanyal had said, 'He would have been outsider and boaster, because none can give 500 pistols. He would have just boasted'. Then Sarabha again asked him as to what type of help Bengal could give to Punjab at the time of need. Would the revolt spread there too along with Punjab? How many people were there to work with them?

It was not good to put the questions to an honest leader. So Sanyal said, 'See the way you people got an opportunity to enter the army with so much of ease, had it been available to us, revolution would have come long ago. We do not have many people in our force. It may not be more than one or two thousand. But we are sure that the day open revolt takes place thousands of people will come to join us. You rest assured that the day, there is revolt in Punjab, and Bengal will not be enjoying the sight. The English will be put into such a difficult situation, that they will not be able give full attention to Punjab alone'<sup>1</sup>. he said, Bengal could loot the government treasuries, could attack police barracks, but what would happen after that? Thinking of that we are not doing anything like. We had given them clear instructions that they should not take any step without consulting the leaders. Everything has to be done with great care so that all our labour did not go waste. Having attacked, the energy could be wasted for nothing.

In this meeting at Jallandhar, Amar Singh and Ram Rakkha and an other comrade including Kartar Singh Sarabha were present. They were introduced by a person, who came with Schinder Nath Sanyal.



Sachinder Nath Sanyal also advised that they should send most of the people of their party to stay in the villages. Only the organizers should remain near about the centre. All workers should be divided into groups with one leader for each group. Thus at the time of need, all people could be taken along and used. If small groups are not formed, then there is danger of being arrested all at an appointed time. Then Sanyal addressed Kartar Singh Sarabha that he should send one of his men with him, whom he would like to take to the place, where Ras Bihari Bose is staying. And he could give him the required information to Ras Bihari Bose. For this purpose, they thought of Pirthi Singh to go with Sanyal from Lahore.

Sarabha demanded pistols. Sanyal took out a few pistols and handed over to him and said that he had brought a few, which he could take. He promised to send more pistols later on. And also made it clear, that they did not possess many arms, so they should not expect many arms from them. He also told Sarabha, that Bengalis are very expert in making bombs. So any number of bombs and bullets will be supplied by Bengal. He also told him that they have kept bombs at many places in Punjab. They would be given at the time of need. Kartar Singh Sarabha got ready to go with him to collect bombs. But Sanyal asked Kartar Singh where to meet after that. From this Sarabha understood that Sanyal had no place to stay and a centre, where he could be met and some information could be taken from him. Then Sanyal asked Kartar Singh to accompany him some place the next day. He had a mind to hand over a few more bombs to Sarabha next day. When Sanyal reached the station, Kartar Singh was not there. Then he met Pirthi Singh at an open place near Lahore. When he was asked to go with him to Kashi, then Pirthi Singh demanded 3-4 days

time. He promised to reach Kashi by Calcutta Mail on 4<sup>th</sup> December, 1914. But he was arrested before that.

Thus Sanyal returned to Kashi after collecting required information about the activities in Punjab. He came to know that the Punjab activists did not have any Head Office, a centre, or a residential place, where they could meet to discuss things and issue directions to their workers. After his departure from Punjab, the party determined to open an office in Amritsar. They hired two three houses there for this purpose. There the revolutionaries could stay, and for outside workers stay, they made an arrangement at Veerpali Dharamsala or Gulab Singh's Dharamsala. Thus the party headquarter was established in Amritsar. For the leaders and workers to come from outside, separate arrangements were made. One of the places was the shop of Bhai Naurang Singh Tanghi and the other was the shop of Dr. Harchand Singh Ghanapur.

The activists met at Veerpali Dharamsala on 31<sup>st</sup> December. They discussed here the subjects like looting treasuries, collecting the arms, get coöperation of army, inspiring them for the purpose, making bombs and arranging for dacoities. Kartar Sing Sarabha, Bhai Parmanand U.P., Shri Harnam Singh (Jhelum), Nidhan Singh Chugha, Sri Vishnu Ganesh Pingle, Harnam Singh Sialkoti, Hirday Ram (Mandi state), Jagat Singh Sursinghwala and Balwant Singh Sathiala, besides Moola Singh and Amar Singh (prover) took part in this meeting. Different workers were entrusted with different jobs in this meeting. Moola Singh was asked to look after the management of the Head-quarters. Dr. Mathra Singh was entrusted with the job of collecting the material for making bombs. Nidhan Singh Chugha was asked to collect party funds. Sarabha was asked to develop nearness with Sanyal and other Bengali revolutionaries.

Earlier, when Vishnu Ganesh Pingle reached Calcutta on 20<sup>th</sup> November, 1914, he went to see Ras Bihari Bose in Banaras, then he was asked to come to Punjab. Then Sanyal, having come to Punjab took Amar Singh with him and reached Kapurthala. There they met Kartar Singh Sarabha, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Bhai Parmanand (U.P.) and Ram. Saran Das. Shri Pingle gave the assurance that the Bengali activists are ready to cooperate in their efforts. Ras Bihar Bose sent Pingle to Punjab to investigate the financial position of the Gadar Party, because they felt that the position of Bangla activists too was not very sound and they were not in a position to supply many bombs without money. Those days a bomb would cost about 16 rupees. The activities of Punjab got boost with Mr. Pingle's coming to Punjab. At last Pingle returned to Banaras after having a discussion with them. Then Sachinder Nath Sanyal and Pingle came to Punjab to know about the arrangements of a place for the stay of Ras Bihari Bose. Both of them reached Amritsar directly. They stayed in the Gurdwara there. Introducing Sachinder Nath Sanyal to Moola Singh, Vishnu Ganesh Pingle himself went to Muktsar in search of Sikh leaders. Before Pingle returned from Muktsar, Kartar Singh Sarabha and Amar Singh etc. had already reached the Gurdwara. Having seen Sanyal, Kartar Singh asked as to when would Ras Bihari Bose would come. Then Sanyal replied that now it was his turn. The only delay for his arrival was limited to the delay in the arrangement of accommodation in Amritsar or Lahore for him. The houses in Amritsar were approved by Sanyal himself. But someone else was entrusted with the responsibility to visit the house in Lahore. Sanyal returned to Banaras on 12<sup>th</sup> January, 1915 after enquiring about the activities in Punjab. On 26<sup>th</sup> January, 1915 Ras Bihari Bose had himself reached Punjab. Then Lahore





had become the Party Centre. The enthusiasm of the revolutionaries was marvellous. No body would rent out his house to an unmarried person those days. But the wife of Ram Saran hired a house for him posing as his wife. Another house was hired by Gulab Kaur for printing and storing the party literature and party flags etc. Every activist would be allowed entry only on telling the pass word. Now the party had started working on a fixed programme.

To collect money, arms and arranging for revolvers, a regular programme was chalked out at this stage, that the dacoities be conducted, contact might be established with the army men and the revolt, might be spread in the country. The propaganda machinery of the party was augmented. Party literature started to be distributed in a big quantity. Keeping in view the quantity of the copies of this literature, six more cyclostyling machines were arranged. Class-mates of Kartar Singh Sarabha of Ludhiana were entrusted with this job. They were Sucha Singh, Sajjan Singh Narangwal, Jaimal Singh and Surti Singh. This literature was being distributed far and near, i.e. Ambala, Meerut, Faizabad, Ferozepur, Mian Mir, Jhelum and cantonements of Frontier province, including Ludhiana, Thikriwal, Lohatbaddi, Dhudike and Dadehar towns and cities etc. Besides Central office of the party, many sub-centres were opened - Lohatbaddi and Dhudike in Malwa, Dadehar, Jhar Sahib, Sur Singh, and Valtoha in Majha and Sanghwal and Dera of Binjho Sadh near about Pandori Ladha Singh were important. There was carpentry shop of Baba Madan Singh Gage near Mian Mir cantonement, where he would manufacture milk churners. It was a suitable place for coordinating activities with the army-men. In the back-yard of that shop, Prem Singh Sursanghiya would have meetings with the armymen. Besides, the revolutionaries

had hired another house in Mochiwara for meetings with the armymen. Apart from this, there was a need to collect and manufacture the arms. The revolutionaries had been active in America in making bombs and had good experience in this field. In an experiment, Tundilat had lost one of his arms. He had also done such experiments even after coming to India. Dr. Mathra Singh had already exhibited such a bomb in Amritsar. Consequently, such a factory was set up in Jhabewal village. Dr. Mathra Singh and Hirday Ram were working in the Jhabewal factory. But after they left on 12<sup>th</sup> February, the students like Sucha Singh and others took charge. But when this factory was closed after a dacoity in Mansooran, in Ludhiana and the police started investigations in Jhabewal then the factory was shifted to Lohatbaddi in Nabha. Here Gandha Singh Chakarbhann was more active. Some bombs were gotten through Sachinder Nath Sanyal and Vishnu Ganesh Pingle too. But this number of arms was not sufficient for bringing about the revolution. They could not get arms even from abroad, because the arms imported through ships, were caught on the way. There was paucity of money for purchasing them. So the revolutionaries had to think of resorting to conducting dacoities to collect money.

Kartar Singh Sarabha, that is why, had to work day and night. He would perform journey to many villages by an old bi-cycle everyday. He would look smarter after having long journeys. He would not at all be affected by anything like tiredness. He had so much of enthusiasm that he would feel refreshed after doing hard labour. When he would return home after whole days' rounds, he would find time still to go to cantonments to coordinate with the armymen. Then he would be with the armymen till late in the night.

He had no secrecy in his work. He would work very naturally and innocently. Most of the workers were young boys. So they did not have much sense of secrecy. So they could be soon spotted by the police. So warrants were issued against them. One day, the police had laid siege around a village to arrest Kartar Singh. He too was somewhere around. He also paddled his cycle and reached there. Police did not recognize him, so they asked him as to who he was. He told the police that he was a student of Rurkee University and had gone there to see the school of Lohatbaddi. Then he rode the cycle and paddle away. Later they came to know that it was the same man, who came by cycle and dodged them saying that he was student of Rurkee University, in whose search police had laid siege to the village. His presence of mind and fearlessness saved him from being arrested. In reality, he had gone there to meet one of party activists. They had a bomb manufacturing factory in Lohatbaddi. In that connection, he would generally be visiting Lohatbaddi.

1. Gurditt Singh Di Amar Gatha, pp. 71-72
2. -----do-----, pp 73-74.



## EFFORTS TO COLLECT MONEY

For bringing about a revolution, the highest need was of arms. But all the efforts of the activists had failed to collect the arms. All the plans to loot the Cantonments for the purpose had already failed. Even the hopes on the Bengali revolutionaries for arms help could not bear any fruit. They certainly got a few bombs. But they were not sufficient for bringing about a revolution. Revolution was not a children's play which could be brought about with just four grenades. Therefore, they had to resort to dacoities after failing in all of their efforts.

Before this, they tried to collect the money with donations from the people. They, accompanied by Bagh Singh, Bishan Singh, Haraza Singh Dadehar, Kehar Singh Marhana and Wadhawa Singh, to Gillwali on 11-12<sup>th</sup> January, 1915. They collected eight to nine hundred rupees on the appeal by Nidhan Singh. Sant Vasakha Singh donated one thousand rupees in cash and 20-22 golden dollars. Sardar Bhagat Singh's father S. Kishan Singh also gave a thousand rupees as donation. They got two hundred rupees from Ram Saran Kapurthala. S. Ajit Singh Jandiala gave Rs. 25 in cash and a shawl on the appeal of S. Kartar Singh Sarabha. But this money was not sufficient for purchasing the required arms. So after a long thinking they had to decide that to conduct decoities too are necessary for the service of the nation.

All the meetings, which took place in the beginning of 1915, were related to Ludhiana. Meetings were held in Lohatbaddi on 20<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> February. A meeting was held on 14<sup>th</sup> February in Gujjarwal, on 17<sup>th</sup> in Dhanbdari and on 19<sup>th</sup> in Naranwal. All the meetings

were meant to create resources to purchase the arms. Consequently, 4 dacoities were conducted in Ludhiana district. Though it was a weakness on the part of the revolutionary movement, but it also was their compulsion.

In the gathering, which took place in Baddowal, the proposal of dacoities was considered. Nidhan Singh Chugha had opposed this proposal. He also had offered to bring the money from S Nanak Singh Raees Bhadaur. But this offer was not approved of. The Punjabi revolutionaries had started conducting dacoities after the arrival of the Bengali leader, Ras Bihari Bose in Punjab. But because Nidhan Singh Chugha was against this proposal at the time of Baddowal meeting, so he did not take part in any of the dacoities. But Kartar Singh Sarabha had taken part in the dacoities with great enthusiasm. Chugha was the number two leader after Kartar Singh Sarabha in Punjab. He did not like that the ordinary people should be subjected to dacoities. In reality all the dacoities were conducted in houses of ordinary people. S. Kartar Singh Sarabha had come to Ludhiana from Amritsar on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 1914 after consulting Ras Bihari Bose about the programme of dacoities. For this purpose, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Harnam Singh Sialkoti, Jagat Singh, Sher Singh, Rulia Singh, Dalip Singh, Balwant Singh and Ram Rakkha came to Ludhiana fully armed with bombs and pistols. They had two meetings in the Islamia College before conducting dacoity. Then they conducted the first dacoity in Sahnewal at the house of a moneylender. These revolutionaries, having threatened Mai Sobhi, her husband and daughter, ran away with some cash and ornaments. The husband of Mai Sobhi could not survive the injuries and died. On this occasion, Kartar Singh Sarabha fully armed with grenades, had been watching in the street. Later the ornaments looted

from here had to be given to the police. Actually they got very less material from here. They hardly got at the most the amount of Rs. 150/-.

Kartar Singh Sarabha had agreed for dacoities with the view to bring about revolution in the country, but personally, he could never stoop down to the level of dacoits. The dacoity conducted in Sahnewal, has gone deep in the life history of Kartar Singh Sarabha. Mai Sobhi, whose house was ransacked, had a young daughter, who was about to be married. The girl was quite young and beautiful. One of his companions thought of raping the girl and caught hold of her. The girl shrieked. Kartar Singh Sarabha rushed in and having snatched the pistol from his companion he aimed at him and told him that he had broken the pledge of being a revolutionary. So he should not get any punishment below the death. But if he begs pardon of the girl and she pardons, and make her his sister, only then his life could be saved. Consequently, he begged pardon of the girl and made her his sister. The girl agreed to pardon him. Only then he escaped death. This incident had a very good effect on Mai Sobhi. She said, 'my dear son, how did it happen that a virtuous man like you has indulged in such an evil job?' On this Kartar Singh told the Mai about the purpose of his dacoity that they are revolutionaries. They are not dacoits. They are to fight against the English to get the freedom for the country after purchasing arms with collected money. Then the Mai told the young man, that she was to marry that young girl, so she had collect the money for that purpose. Then Kantar Singh put all the money into her apron and asked her pick up as much money as she required for that purpose. She picked up some money and rest she happily allowed them to take away.



S. Kartar Singh Sarabha took part in a dacoity in Mansooran on 27-28<sup>th</sup> January after Sahnewal dacoity. Gurmukh Singh Lalton, Ram Rakkha and Arjan Singh went up the roof and down to the house and opened the door from within in this dacoity. The neighbouring houses were closed from outside. Kartar Singh Sarabha and Ram Rakkha stood out in the street on a watch. When the villagers gathered against them, then Kartar Singh Sarabha started speaking that they were doing everything to throw the English out of the country and get the country free from their clutches. But the people did not budge. Then Kartar Singh opened the pistol fire. The people ran here and there. First of all they went to house of the *lala* and then to his shop. In the meanwhile the villagers again gathered. The villagers started firing, then Dalip Singh blasted a bomb. When the people started running to safety, the activists had hid behind the bushes nearby. In this dacoity, they handed in gold and golden ornaments. They also got some gold coins which they distributed among them for their personal expenses. This dacoity was committed at the residence of Hamir Chand. Here they got ornaments worth 22000 thousand rupees. On 29<sup>th</sup> January, 21 revolutionaries together conducted a dacoity in village Jhuneer. Here they got ornaments worth one thousand rupees. It was done by Gandha Singh Chakarbhann, Sunder Singh, Karam Singh and Nand Singh. Sunder Singh showed the house. Gandha Singh went up on the roof. Karam Singh, Nand Singh and Sunder Singh waited outside for watching. After looting the house of the *Bania*, they went to another house. They announced in the streets that the people should not be afraid, since they are collecting money to give fight against the English rulers. In this dacoity, they found six seers of silver and seven tolas of gold.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> February, some twenty activists conducted dacoity at the house of *bania* at Chabba. They found an amount of Rs. 18000/-. In this dacoity, Harnam Singh Sialkoti, Ram Rakkha, Jawand Singh, Beer Singh, Waryam Singh 'Opiate', Arjan Singh, jagat Singh, Prem Singh, Bakshish Singh and Surain Singh participated. Surain Singh and bakshish Singh burned the *hundis* of Beli Ram and breaking open his safe, looted the golden and silver ornaments. In this dacoity, the *bania*

Beli Ram was killed. Here they had to use the pistols and bombs. Ram Rakkha himself was injured while throwing the bomb and died. The villagers seized the dacoits while coming out of the village. Beer Singh Bahawal and Prem Singh Sursingh fought against the mob very bravely. Kala Singh ironsmith who was brought along to break open the safe, was caught. Whatever was looted herefrom was handed over to Moola Singh. He handed over whole of the gold after melting the ornaments to Ras Bihari Bose and according to the instructions of Bose, whole of the silver was handed over to Shri Rao to be taken to Banaras. On 3<sup>rd</sup> February, a dacoity was held at Rabbon Ucchi. They looted the house of a widow – Bibi Shardi. In dacoity, it is said that a few dacoits also coopted with the revolutionaries. Party could collect only one thousand rupees only in this dacoity. Rest of the loot was divided among the dacoits. This dacoity was lead by Gandha Singh and Chuhan Singh Leelan. Some of the money was returned to Mai Shardi on her request. They got an amount of 2020 rupees and some ornaments.

The revolutionaries committed these three four dacoities. But the arrested revolutionaries were held responsible for many more dacoities. The details thereof are given below:

- 1 A dacoity each on 24<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> December at Frala and Karnama in district Jalandhar. The loss at Frala was of Rs. 100/- and at Karnama of Rs. 2000/-.
- 2 Two dacoities in Ferozepur on these dates.
- 3 On 27<sup>th</sup> December, Choriyan in district Gurdaspur a dacoity took place.
- 4 On January 1 and 4, dacoities in districts of Hoshiarpur and Jalandhar.
- 5 A dacoity at the residence of canal patwari in Mintgomry.
- 6 A dacoity at Hargobindpur on 16<sup>th</sup> January.
- 7 A dacoity in a city in district Kapurthala on 27<sup>th</sup> January.

These dacoities were not the part of revolutionaries' activities. But they were made responsible for them too. The Punjabi activists started dacoities only after the arrival in Punjab of Ras Bihar Bose. Katar Singh Sarabha had come to Ludhiana from Amritsar with the thought of conducting dacoities on 15

January, 1915 after meeting Ras Bihari Bose. They committed first dacoity in Sahnewal on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. But the above mentioned dacoities were related to the dates prior to that. So it is quite clear that they were all the false cases which were leveled against them.

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## EFFORTS TO TAKE THE FORCES ALONG

FOR Kartar Singh Sarabha and his companions, the most difficult job was to instigate the armed forces for a revolt. First of all, it was not easy to approach them. Then the lesson of loyalty among the forces would be very strong and if an army-man would be found disloyal, he would be treated like traitor and would meet the worst of fate. So it could not be done without palming ones death warrant. But the revolutionaries had no fear of death. They were committed to their cause. The revolutionaries were least worried about their lives. So they tried to accomplish this mission with great loyalty.

They entrusted different duties to different persons. Everyone was asked to report back within a stipulated period. Everything was thus well-planned. No room for mistake was left. The revolutionaries, who were more acquainted with a particular area, was entrusted with job of contacting the people in that area cantonment.

Kartar Singh Sarabha played the key role in this respect. He was linked with it from its planning to implementation. He would be present in every meeting. He was the main confidant of Ras Bihari Bose. Bose would do nothing without consulting him before doing anything he would be called and asked to prepare a plan thereof. While returning to India, he had been giving such suggestions to army-men on board the ship fearlessly. Having reached Punjab he would lose no occasion to do that. But success or failure could not be the criteria of ones honesty. The criteria would always be one's honesty in implementing the

plans. In this respect Sarabha and company would miss the train on no account.

It is said, the revolutionaries were too much in hurry for revolution. So they could not plan their contacts properly. That too was not correct and acceptable.

Having come to India they had planned to contact the army in the meeting held at Ladowal on 17th November, 1914. then the same decision was repeated in the December-end meeting at veerapali Dharamsala in Amritsar. Then the 15th January, 1915 decision to shift the headquarters from Amritsar to Lahore had the same thing in mind so that contacts could be developed with armed forces in Lahore Cantt and they be prepared for a revolt. They had an important meeting on 12th February, 1915 to decide that the revolt be spread in all places on 21st February, 1915. Their plan was first of all to attack Mian Mir Cantt, Lahore and Ferozepur and loot arms therefrom. To implement this plan, the revolutionaries were entrusted with following duties.

Kartar Singh Sarabha was asked to work in Ferozepur and Maharashtra. Vishnu Ganesh Pingle was to take along 212th Rasala unit of 128 Pioneers and attack Delhi. Dr. Mathra Singh was sent to Peshawar. Nidhan Singh Chugha, Gurmukh Singh Lalton, and Harnam Singh Kahuta were to establish contacts in Hoti Mardan, Jhelum and Rawalpindi Cantonments. Kartar Singh Sarabha along with Vishnu Ganesh Pingle was to approach Ambala, Banaras, Lucknow, Dinapur, Allahabad and Faizabad Cantonments. Succha Singh was allotted Ambala Cantt and Bhai Parmanand Lahore in Majha and Ferozepur in Malwa in Punjab. According to the plan, some armed men from outside were to attack and the army men from within the cantonment would coordinate the revolt.

The revolutionaries had planned it after giving sufficient thought. Though it looked as if it had been done

in great hurry, but it was not true. Before planning an attack, they had worked in different cantonments and had created a certain influence zone. They had established their contacts with No. 13 Rasala Unit in Mian Mir Cantt, Platoon No. 26 in Ferozepur Cantt, No. 12 Rasala in Meerut Cantt, No. 9 Rasala in Ambala Cant, No. 35 Platoon in Jhelum and had also established contact in Faizabad and Banaras. In Mian Mir Cantt. Lahore, Wafedar Lachhman Singh Causrewal of Rasala No. 23 was their confident. In Ferozepur Sajjan Singh Narangwal and among the revolutionary leaders Kartar Singh Sarabha and Ras Bihari Bose were responsible for coordination. Sajjan Singh Narangwal had also been considered as dangerous person by the English rulers like Sarabha.

Kartar Singh Sarabha went to Meerut to meet Vishnu Ganesh Pingle. He got the information from Phoola Singh that 1100 army men there were ready for revolt and for handing over the ammunition. They also went to Agra, Kanpur, Banaras and Allahabad Cantonments and also to Bengal to meet Bangla leaders. On return, he shared his report with Ras Bihari Bose, Amar Singh and Dr. Mathra Singh. Nidhan Singh Chugha was to collect the information about the revolutionary activities in Kohat and Naushehra Cantts. Real beginning of a revolt was to be made by No. 23 Rasala at Mian Mir. So Prem Singh, Jagat Singh, Sursinghwal and Jagat Singh Sanghwal would regularly having meetings with organizers at Madan Singh Gaga's shop in Amritsar. They had perfect contact with Lachhman Singh of Rasala No. 23. He would be present in each and every meeting with them.

The leaders in Malwa had a meeting in Gujjarwal on the occasion of Akhand path where it was resolved that on 21st February, all armed revolutionaries be collected and then go to Ferozepur to spread a revolt. Bhai Randhir Singh appealed to all to help in the revolt. Apart from



others, Gandha Singh Kacharbhan, Issar Singh Dhudike, Udham Singh Hans, Inder Singh Paddhari, Piara Singh Nandpur Kalaur, Atar Singh Chakwal, Harnam Singh Koma Gata Maru, Jagat Singh Gujjarwal and Karam Singh Kotla Ajmer had participated. Similarly on 17th February, Sant Randhir Singh had collected the members of his Jatha to ensure the plan to go to Ferozepur. Sajjan Singh Narangwal was sent to Rasala No. 23 to inform about the plan. He confirmed on return that the Rasala is fully prepared for the plan. Then he went to Ferozepur with Kartar Singh Sarabha.

In whole of North India, the activities of revolution were progressing very well. Encouraging reports were coming from every cantonment. They had spread their contacts to every cantonment. Everyone was doing his duty whole heartedly. None would leave any scope for doubt. According to Sachinder Nath Sanyal, no Cantonment on North West Frontier from Danapur to Bannu was left uninfluenced. Almost all platoons had assured them to join revolutionaries once the revolt began. Most of the leaders were of the view that the army was waiting for their initiative of revolt. Success was sure. For example, Shri Harnam Singh had given the report on return from Rawalpindi, Gurmukh Singh Lalton and Udham Singh Varing had also reported that the forces in Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Hoti Mardan and Peshawar were ready for revolt. Hirday Ram brought a report from Jalandhar, that the Dogras and Sikhs were ready to support the revolutionaries. Kartar Singh Sarabha was also of the opinion that all the regiments in Ferozepur were with them. Moola Singh had informed that army in Lahore Cantonment was also ready. Vishnu Ganesh Pingle was of the opinion that some 300 army-men were in hurry for a revolt in Ferozepur Cantonment. In Banaras too some two to three hundred men were

waiting for the signal of revolt. This information was given by Dila Singh.

In January, 1915 there was Buta Singh Jamadar in Forezepur Cantt. He noticed Kartar Singh Sarabha frequently visiting the barracks. He became suspicious. There were many soldiers who had returned from Hong Kong. They were not happy even in Hong Kong. They were being influenced by the talk of revolution. The English government was already apprehensive about their intentions, since they did not like to fight for the English. So they were on the watch for an opportunity to get rid of the English slavery. So Buta Singh talked of it with Capt. Kargil. Consequently, some of those army-men were discharged on 19th February.

It is also important to know as to why the soldiers were unsatisfied and why they wanted to be part of the revolt. The German army had defeated the Indian Army in the First War. The Indian army had already got this information. Secondly, there was rumour that the Germans were likely to win this war too. Thirdly, the activities of Gadar Party were effective enough to convince these men. Under these circumstances, the Indian soldiers did not like to go out of India. Though they knew that they could at any time be ordered to move to the front. But they desired that the revolt should take place in India as early as possible and they take part in that, throw out the English and free the country from their cruel clutches. Thus they wanted to contribute their mite in the freedom struggle of India. Moreover the English Officers would not allow them to stay at one station for long and keep transferring them from place to place. This was also an evidence that the White government was cautious of the activities of a revolutionaries in India. They were also apprehensive lest the revolutionaries should intrude the army and create some problems for them. So they did not allow the army-men to stay long

at one station. The Indian army too was conscious of this fact. So they were also restless for revolt in India before they were ordered to move to the front abroad. So they too were eagerly waiting for the gadar.

Kartar Singh Sarabha was leading the Gadar Movement in Punjab. The revolutionaries had resolved to attack Ferozepur and Lahore cantonments in the meeting held at Nankana Sahib and Khassa (Amritsar). The whole North India had been prepared for this purpose as mentioned above. The plan to attack was, that all workers upto river Beas would attack Mian Mir Cantonment in Lahore and the workers on other side of Beas - Jalandhar, Ludhiana, Hoshiarpur and Ferozepur would attack Ferozepur Cantonment, so that the arms could be collected and the army could be used for revolution.

After the failure of the plan for Ferozepur and Mian Mir, the unfortunate incident, near Pheru city, dampened a lot their enthusiasm. But they were not ready to be defeated. When they had come into contact with Ras Bihari Bose after a contact with Sanyal, the reigns of revolution went into the hands of Ras Bihari Bose. Then the plan to attack these cantonments was finalized on 21st February, 1915. It had leaked to the English government. So the date to attacking the cantonments was changed to 19th February. But the English informer - Kirpal Singh came to know of it also. So the English government succeeded against the revolt. All the information about the army men who had assured to help the Gadar Party at night, had passed to Kirpal Singh and all plans were further passed on to the government. On his information, the 21st February plan failed. When the revolutionaries reached Ferozepur cantonment to implement their plan, they found none on the appointed site to give them the required cooperation. Then they got suspicious that some thing was wrong at the bottom. Later on, they came to know that those who were



to coordinate with the them, 9 of them were discharged and 5 of them packed off by train to their native places. The same thing happened in Lahore. At both the places, on receiving secret information from Kirpal Singh, the army got ready to fight. Simultaneously, they raided some places in Amritsar and arrested some leaders. Hundreds of revolutionaries were caught in villages and put behind bars. Consequently, the English government started arresting Indians returned from abroad. All people related to them were being arrested under suspicion. The English government had come to know about the activities of Gadar Party. Under such circumstances it was not possible to resort to direct confrontation with the army. The movement was not in such a position. So Kartar Singh Sarabha and company were all frustrated. In frustration they reached Lahore at night. There they met Ras Bihari Bose and narrated what happened at Ferozpur Cantonment.

From the above information, it was clear that there were no loopholes in the plans of revolutionaries. Everything was done very well. There was no room for failure. But when they reached Ferozepur at the appointed time, they found everything calm and quiet and were perplexed. When they returned back after long wait, they came to know that those army-men, who were to coordinate with them, had already been dismissed from service. Others were transferred over-night. It happened because of the information, given by Kirpal Singh to the government secretly. Consequently, the whole plan had failed. The same thing happened at Mian Mir. On the other hand Govt. started arresting the revolutionaries. Then they went to Bose to consult him. He advised them to go underground to avoid arrest. He himself immediately left for Banaras with same object.

## DETAILS OF FAILURES

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IT HAS already been mentioned that in the dacoity which was conducted at Chabba on 2-3 February, 1915, Kala Singh ironsmith was caught and some revolutionaries were killed. The arrested - Kala Singh ironsmith had disclosed everything about the activities of revolutionaries to the police. It was clear that the dacoity was committed by Gadaris and in-charge of Amritsar office, was Moola Singh Meerankotia. And also Moola Singh was all-in-all of the party in Amritsar. Moola Singh was arrested at the railway station, while coming to Amritsar. Nidhan Singh Chugha, Harnam Singh Tundilat, Wasawa Singh Gillwali and Kehar Singh Marhana had gone to the Haveli of Rasulpurian. Balwant Singh, brother of Kirpal Singh, who got him recruited in No. 23 Rasala, on a suggestion by the party, had recommended his brother Kirpal Singh to be taken for party work. Then Nidhan Singh Chugha, who knew him while in Shanghai, had approved of the recommendation. So Kirpal Singh was taken to work for the party in place of Moola Singh. In reality, he was appointed to collect secret information on the recommendation of Zaildar of Village Madoke by the Dy. Commissioner of C.I.D., Hayat Khan. Just to ensure his credibility, Kirpal Singh had suggested looting Lopoke police station. The party sent him to inform the revolutionaries in Dadehar. He had reached Lahore after completing his mission.

Different people were given different duties to implement the plan for revolt by the party. This work had been completed on 15th February. Nidhan Singh Chugha

and Mathra Singh were sent to Jhelum and Suba Sirhind. Harnam Singh and Gurmukh Singh Lalton were also sent to Jhelum and Hoti Mardan cantonments to prepare the armed forces for the purpose. Moola Singh was asked to collect the revolutionaries of Lahore and Amritsar. Ras Bihari Bose took the whole responsibility for Uttar Pradesh and Ambala on him. He selected Vinshnu Ganesh Pingle and Succha Singh for this work. Sant Vasakha Singh was asked to go to Delhi. The Lahore Cantonment was the centre of activities of revolutionaries. Sajjan Singh had coordinated with the army in Lahore. Kartar Singh Sarabha was responsible for Ferozepur Cantonment. Six to seven revolutionaries were to enter Ferozepur Cantt. when the forces were to be filed for roll call. The revolutionaries were to have control of the swords of their forces. Looting of the magazine was entrusted to some other people. By that time the cavaliers were to join the revolutionaries. Then the army along with artillery would join the revolutionaries and would attack the English and kill the White officers. But Kirpal Singh brought an end to all the plans.

Kirpal Singh knew all about this plan. So he had sent a telegram to Liakat Hayat Khan on 15th February that they should come to Lahore Gate where the revolutionaries were manufacturing bombs. And that day the revolutionaries were holding a meeting at Mochi gate in Lahore, which was to be attended by S. Kartar Singh Sarabha, Nidhan Singh Chugha, Dr. Mathra Singh, Harnam Singh Tundilat, Hirday Ram, Parmanand U.P., Sajjan Singh, Vishnu Ganesh Pingle, Jagat Singh Sursingh, Kharak Singh, Jwand Singh Nangal, Balwant Singh Sathyala, Harnam Singh Sialkoti, Arjan Singh Khukhrana, Kirpal Singh, Gurmukh Singh Lalton and Ras Bihari Bose. But this telegram reached Liakat Hayat Khan late. So by the time the police reached there, the meeting had already dispersed. So the revolutionaries had escaped arrests.



When the police reached there on information of Kirpal Singh all people had scattered. So the police went back without arresting anyone so that the revolutionaries do not become cautious. But the suspicion was raised. When Kirpal Singh was asked to go to Mian Mir, then he was spotted by Nidhan Singh Chugha suspiciously moving around at Amritsar Station. A man sent to Cantonment, if found moving at the Amritsar station, makes things clear about his intentions. The person Moola Singh, who had vouched for him at the time of his recruitment, informed the party office about his movement at the railway station. So the party changed the 21st February to 19th February for spreading revolt. But Kirpal Singh, somehow, came to know about that too. Having made the message reach Dadehar, Kirpal Singh returned office, found some change in the moods and understood that his secrets had come to be known. The party had fixed some men to watch him. Just on stepping out of office, he met a secret service man. He told him about the change of date. On turn to the office, the revolutionaries were thinking of finishing him. Having noticed that, he immediately rushed to the roof. He signalled the police outside about the danger to his life. The police raided the house. Hirday Ram, Kharak Singh Boparai (Ludhdiana), Amar Singh, Balwantr Singh Sathiala and Gurdit Singh were taken into custody. Thus the government raided the headquarters of Gadar Party. And Kirpal Singh had succeeded in doing away with all of their plans. On 19th February, the government telegraphed to all the cantonments, that they should be fully prepared because the revolutionaries were likely to attack that day.

On 19th February when all the armed revolutionaries had reached the railway station under the leadership of Prem Singh and Jagat Singh, the White army men were moving in the city. The White policemen were also moving with them. Two groups of revolutionaries from Amritsar

and Lahore had already reached there. They found that all the men of Rasala No. 23 were standing out without arms. They were disheartened. The Indian army men were disarmed and filed outside the barracks before 7 a.m. The revolutionaries had fixed with these men that when two groups of revolutionaries come and stand on the railway tracks and when they were to stand out for roll call, the revolutionaries would attack and lay their hands on the swords. And after the attack on Quarter Guard, the service men were to join them. But having found the change in the situation, the revolutionaries dispersed after a brief meeting.

Suspicious horse-riders of 23rd Rasala at Mian Mir were started to be tortured. Twenty of them were sent to Digshai for Court Marshall after arrest. Out them Wafedar Lachhman Singh, Wadhawa Singh and Abdullah Nahalband, Lahore were sentenced to death and were later hanged in Ambala Jail. Rests of the eight persons were sentenced to life imprisonment.

On the other hand, at Ferozepur Cantonment, it was planned that when an attack by revolutionaries on the cantt. took place, and when they would get arms and ammunition for facing the revolutionaries, they would start shooting back on the White Officers and kill them instead of fighting against the revolutionaries. It is known from the case against the traitors of Cantonment on 19th February, that a good number of revolutionaries had gathered near the shooting range of Ferozepur Cantt. A jatha of Bhai Randhir Singh had already reached there by 9 p.m. Kartar Singh Sarabha was waiting for them on the station. He had told the jatha that if someone asked them about their destination, they should tell that they were going to Muktsar. This jatha consisted of Bhai Randhair Singh, Uttam Singh Hans, Gandha Singh, Banta Singh, Ishar Singh Dhudike, Arjan Singh Khukhrana and Nahar Singh

Grewal. At the Ferozepur Cantonment, the White soldiers were on the watch. Still the jatha had passed by them chanting *shabdas* on the harmonium. The Whites allowed them go, considering them as ordinary musicians. The group went near village Fattuwal and sat chanting gurbani. The White army had made all arrangements in the city like that of a cantonment. The soldiers, who were to hand over the keys of the magazine that morning, had been dismissed that day and they were put into trains to leave for their home towns. One of the dismissed soldiers went to join the revolutionaries. His name was Kirpa Singh. When he was sent into the barracks by Sarabha then he was arrested there. The revolutionaries dispersed by the morning after waiting for the whole night. When Kirpa Singh was asked by the officers as to why he had come back after having been dismissed, he told them that he had gone there to clear his account with the army. Then he was released. But when Kartar Singh Sarabha and others went to the tracks after Kirpal Singh's return, they found that the whites were on the watch. It confirmed, that advance information had already reached there and there was no hope of any success. Despite so much of watch, Sarabha succeeded in meeting the Havaladar. The Havaladar had told him, that nothing could be done under the circumstances. If any attempt was made, everything would be destroyed. The party would not be able to raise its head again. Still Sarabha told him that, had nothing been done at that moment, nothing would be done afterwards. This was the first and the last opportunity. Sarabha returned hopeless. The villagers also returned to their places. Consequently, some of the people of Cantonment were arrested and sent to Hazaribagh Jail. Among them were Harnam Singh Kalasangha, Labh Singh, Kala Singh and Fumman Singh.

With this, the process of arrests was accelerated. Kartar Singh Sarabha advised Harnam Singh to leave for



the village to escape arrest. Then he was arrested at the village on 23rd February.

Similar things happened in Rawalpindi Cantonment too. The Whites arrested the men of Platoon No. 30. The army-men in Meerut and Banaras too had been waiting for signal of revolt, which they could not get. Thus the whole revolutionary plan had failed.

The process of arrests in Punjab had started on war footing. The revolutionaries, who were arrested, had to face fate of traitors. Those who would be caught, would name a few more people. Thus almost all the revolutionaries but for a few leaders, were arrested. So almost all the important leaders of Gadar Movement were put behind bars and the back bone of the party was broken. Of the revolutionary movement, only Ras Bihari Bose alone could escape safely.

After the failure in Lahore and Ferozepur Cantonments, Kartar Singh Sarabha, Arjan Singh Khukhrana and Harnam Singh Sialkoti left Ferozepur for Lahore. Reaching Lahore, they narrated the whole episode to Ras Bihari Bose. Bose advised to go underground to pass the time. As far as possible, the arrests should be avoided. When Kartar Singh reached Ras Bihari Bose, then he was lying on the face in the cot as a very dejected man. Sarabha also lied down beside him in another cot in the same mood. He was dead tired. This state of their mind could be interpreted in many ways. Otherwise, how could Sarabha, who was not even aware of the word 'tiredness' go into this state? The defeat in the revolutionary plans was evident from this state of their mind. This dejection was their language. It was the state of mind on 20th February under which Kartar Singh Sarabha had reached the residence of Ras Bihari Bose. At that time Harnam Singh Tundilat and Lala Ram Saran Das Kapurthala were present there. The same day it was decided to abandon that place and Ras Bihari Bose immediately was sent to Banaras and Lala

Ram Saran Das was asked to go to Kapurthala. Consequently, having disguised in a Punjabi dress Ras Bihari was sent to Banaras by train. He reached Banaras safe and sound. He had two young men of Kashi with him. One of them was Vinaik Rao Kaple and the other was Ganga Ram. Immediately after Bose left his residence, the house was raided by the police and besieged. It was known from Ganga Ram who went to collect some of his clothes on request by Bose. When he reached there, he found the house under siege. Had they stayed a little more time in the house they would have all been arrested including Ras Bihari Bose.

On 20-21 February night Kartar Singh Sarabha and Harnam Singh Tundilat went to sleep in Fish Market house. Jagat Singh was to come there from Dadehar. Jagat Singh reached there on 21st February. Without wasting any time they moved out of the danger area to the peaceful border area. They thought that to resume the revolutionary activities when the conditions allowed later. They caught the train that night and reached Harchand Singh's house in Layalpur. There-from they reached Michni via Peshawar on the border of Afghanistan. On the way they read in a newspaper that the Afghan government had started arresting the Muslim students who ran from Lahore and put them behind bars on the request of English government. They thought, that if the Afghan government can arrest and put into jails the Muslim students from Lahore, how that could give asylum to the revolutionaries of White government. They understood that having gone to Afghanistan, their purpose would not be served. They would not give shelter to those who spread revolt against the English government. Consequently, they started analyzing the causes of their failures. They thought that the losses were not yet very heavy. Only a few leaders had been arrested. There were still many who could not be

arrested by the police. There were many more people who stayed in villages. If all of them could be contacted, there was nothing to be dejected. So they decided to again gather the people and start the movement anew.

Harnam Singh Tundilat started singing these lines of a poem published earlier in 'Gadar',

*Jaan Jave aan na jaave taj ke,*

*Bani sir siraan de kee jana bhaj ke.*

Kartar Singh Sarabha also started singing this couplet with Tundilat. These words changed the mind of Kartar Singh Sarabha. So his decision suddenly changed and thought not to go ahead further. They decided to try to get their arrested companions released. They needed arms for that purpose. He thought to arrange for the arms. He planned to go to a friend at Jagatpur in Sargodha, who had promised him to give three revolvers and three rifles. Consequently, they traced their feet back. They reached the house of Rajinder Singh, Pensioner in Bar Chak No. 5 in Sargodha on March 2, 1915. though he had promised to give arms, but in reality he was not to hand the arms over to him. He informed Rasaldar Ganda Singh about their arrival. He then got them arrested. When the police reached there, Kartar Singh was reading the poems from the 'Gadar Goonjan' in the presence of local people. They were arrested from Wilsonpura Farm in Sargodha. Thus the lover of Freedom of the country became victim of a conspiracy of a traitor. Having hand-cuffed them, the police took them to Ballhowal Police Station. Even after having been arrested they had been enjoying the poems of 'Gadar Goonjan'. They were brought to Lahore Central Jail from there. This jail had two circles. Kartar Singh Sarabha and his companions were lodged in Circle No. 1, Here normally the condemned prisoners or hard core criminals were kept.

Meanwhile Arjan Singh Khukhrana, Harnam Singh Kahuta and Banta Singh Sanghwal were going on a tonga



through Anarkali Bazaar in Lahore. On the way they were stopped by policeman - Sub-inspector Mohammad Musa and Havaladar Mohsin Ali Shah and were asked to accompany them to police station. One of them had a pistol. One had dagger with him. Arjan Singh shot and killed the Havaladar on the spot. But while running his foot fell in a drain and fell. Thus he was caught. Harnam Singh Kahuta and Banta Singh Sanghwal succeeded in escaping arrest. Same day, Parmanand Jhansi was also arrested from the house in Wachhowal market. Vishnu Ganesh Pingle was also rounded up from Meerut Cantonment.

Pingle faced charges in Lahore Central Jail. Phoola Singh, Issa Singh and 4 others were sentenced to death by a Court Marshall. The suspected army men were started to be watched from Peshawar to Danajpur. Arrests were made every-where and innumerable people were discharged. The Platoons which were dismantled, their arrested men were tried. Piara Singh Langeri was arrested from Hoshiarpur district on 12th April, 1915.

The Gadar Party of those revolutionaries later accomplished many fiats and offered arrests but the party could not achieve what was aimed at under the leadership of Kartar Singh Sarabha. Unfortunately, the confidents of the party had brought an end to the plans, they thought of implementing. Otherwise it would have never happened that Indian History would have remained unchanged. Had the Whites not got clues of the would-be happenings of Ferozepur and Lahore Cantonments, the history of India would have been quite different.

The revolutionaries, who escaped arrest were Bhai Prem Singh Sursinghwal, Banta Singh Sanghwal, Jwand Singh Nangal, Beer Singh Bahawal, Ishar Singh Dhudike, Gandha Singh Kacharbhann, Uttam Singh Hans, Buta Singh Akalgarh and some others. These eleven revolutionaries attacked the Walle Bridge on 11th June, 1915. They

planned to attack Kapurthala Magazine on 12th June but that was to be abandoned. They planned a conspiracy for Mandi State, that too could not materialize. It had to be abandoned because of Nidhan Singh Chugha's arrest. Besides, many other small incidents took place.

The government activity against the revolutionaries had been accelerated after 15th February. The revolutionaries who remained out of jails, retaliated strongly against the government informers and supporters. For example, on 25th April, 1915, Zaildar Chanda Singh, on 5th June Sardar Bahadur Ishar Singh of Jagatpur and on 2nd August Kapur Singh of village Paddhary was killed by them. The people responsible for all these incidents were later arrested. They were tried in the courts of law. Some of them were hanged to death and others were sentenced to long-term imprisonments.

The cases - Lahore Conspiracy Case No. 1, No. 2, No. 3, No. 4, No. 5, Mandle Conspiracy Case No. 1, San Francisco Case, Mandi Conspiracy Case, Ferozeshah incident Case, Wallah Bridge Incident Case, Paddhary Murder Case, Jagapur Murder Case, Nangal Kalan Murder Case, Karnana Case and Marshall Law Cases against the army men can be considered as cases against the revolutionaries. 315 Gadar Party persons were tried in courts. Out of them about 60 were sentenced to be hanged, 121 were sentenced to long term imprisonments and 94 were sentenced to lesser durations of imprisonments. Seven persons were killed in different incidents and nineteen people breathed their last in jails. The revolutionaries killed 12 persons in Punjab. Two persons - Mr. Hogkins and Ram Chand, killed in America are not included in these 12 killed. All of them were related with Gadar Movement. Kartar Singh Sarabha was related to 1st Lahore Conspiracy Case. Eighty-two revolutionaries were included in this case. Out of them 61 persons were available for trial. Out

of the 61, 7 were sentenced to be hanged to death. 4 were set free of charges, 50 faced different duration terms of imprisonment. Among the seven who were to be hanged, the youngest was the teenage Commander - Kartar Singh Sarabha . The Lahore Conspiracy Case No. 1, in which Kartar Singh Sarabha was punished to death, opened on 26th April, 1915. On 13th September, 1915 the decision was announced. Kartar Singh Sarabha along with six of his companions was hanged on the night of 16-17 November, 1915. The trial case against S. Kartar Singh Sarabha is an historical event and document. That is why it is necessary to give its details here.

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## LAHORE CONSPIRACY CASE NO. 1 AGAINST KARTAR SINGH SARABHA AND OTHERS

As it has already been mentioned that Kartar Singh Sarabha, Jagat Singh Sursinghia and Harnam Singh Tundilat were arrested at Wilsonpura Farm in Sargodha and were first taken to Bullhowal Police Station and then they were shifted to Lahore Central Jail for trial. There they were lodged in ward No. 14. The D.I.G., who took them to Lahore from Sargodha, was Tomkin. Because Kartar Singh was a fear-less patriot, and so his behaviour everywhere would be very free and frank and cheerful. He would not treat the Whites like those of rulers. When Tomkin was taking them to Lahore, Kartar Singh had told him at the Lahore railway station, 'Mr. Tomkin, get us something to eat since we are hungry.' At that time they were handcuffed and fettered.

In this case, the revolutionaries were tried against clause 81 of Indian Penal Code. 18 of them were declared absconding. No. 54 Nidhan Singh was later arrested. He was presented before the court on 1st May, 1915. The number of absconders was left at 17. Out them Banta Singh and Buta Singh were caught during the hearings. They were later sentenced to death after the trial of Wallhapur Bridge Murder of Chanda Singh Case. Beer Singh was arrested very late. So he could not be tried along with other accused. Umrao Singh was freed of charges. Among these accused 48 had returned from abroad and were arrested on the ports

itself. They had not done anything in India. Those, who were tried in Lahore Conspiracy Case No. 1 (5009), 33 persons belonged to Majha, 28 to Malwa, 19 to Duaba, 3 to Lahore, one each to Rawalpindi, Jhelum, Sialkot and five were outsiders (Vishnu Ganesh Pingle from Maharashtra and Parmanand 2 of U.P., were among them). Among them 24 persons belonged to Amritsar, 19 to Ludhiana, 9 to Lahore, 7 to Hoshiarpur, 5 to Ferozepur and one each to Jalandhar, Sialkot, Rawalpindi and Jhelum. Five of them were not Punjabis.

Besides Kartar Singh Sarabha and Vishnu Ganesh Pingle, there were well known leaders, who had been in America and had been entangled in this case. They were Balwant Singh Sathiala, Kesar Singh Thatthgarh, Pirthi Singh, Sohan Singh Bhakna, Rulia Singh Sarabha, Jwala Singh Thatthian, Udham Singh Kasel, Sant Vasakha Singh Dadehar etc. Those who were arrested on the ports and who had done nothing on the Indian land, but forcibly included in this case were - Sohan Singh Bhakna, Bhai Parmanand Karyala, Ram Saran Das Kapurthala, Pirthi Singh Lalru, Kesar Singh Thatthgarh, Udham Singh Kasel, Sher Singh Vein Puin, Inder Singh Granthi, Jwala Singh Thatthian and Mangal Singh Lalpura.

The trial of this case, opened on 26th April and ended within four and half months on 13th September, 1915. According to its verdict, 24 persons were sentenced to death, 27 to life imprisonment and confiscation of properties, 6 to lesser durations of imprisonment terms and 4 were freed of any charge.

When Kartar Singh Sarabha was sentenced to death by hanging, he immediately retorted, 'Thank you'. And when the order was read about of confiscation of his property, he had said, 'Even if our clothes are auctioned, even then the loss of the English government will not be compensated.' Such sentiments were expressed by almost

all the revolutionaries. None felt sorry for meeting that fate. When the sentence to hang Nidhan Singh Chugha was read out, he had retorted, 'Oh, was this only your power?' When Jwala Singh was sentenced to imprisonment, he had said, 'While my companions have been sentenced to death by hanging, why imprisonment for me? I don't want imprisonment but death.'

The whole case depended upon eight approvers. They had been related to revolutionary activities at one stage or the other. They knew internal secrets of the party. So they were responsible for destruction of Lanka. Their names were Nawab Khan Halwara, Moola Singh, Umrao Singh, Succha Singh Vidyarthi, Jwala Singh, Amar Singh, Udham Singh and Narain Singh.

Lahore Conspiracy Case was heard by three judges. They were stooges of Punjab Governor. This commission had special powers. There was no appeal against its decision. Only the State and Central governments had the power to hear the mercy appeals. These three judges were A.A. Inwyne, I. P. Elis and Setu Narain. A. A. Inwyne was the Presiding Commission and other two were Special Commissions.

Among those 24 persons, who were sentenced to death, 17 were those who did not have an opportunity to step on the land of the country before their arrest. So how could they be responsible for a conspiracy here? So it was not a punishment but an order, considered to be a mass murder. So some lawyers like Lala Raghu Nath presented the facts of the case to Pt. Moti Lal Nehru and sought his legal advice. They also met the members of the Council of the Viceroy - Sir Harnam Singh Kapurthala, Shri Madan Mohan Malaviya and Sir Imam Ali. They had assurance of help from them. Then they met the Viceroy. The members of the Council of Viceroy also strongly recommended that they should not be hanged. Consequently, 17 out of the 24



were saved from death and their death was converted to life imprisonment. Those seven persons, whose sentence to be hanged was upheld by Lord Harding, were like this:

1. S. Bakshish Singh s/o. Santa Singh Gillwali (Amritsar)
2. S. Harnam Singh s/o. S. Aroor Singh Bhatti Goraya (Sialkot).
3. S. Jagat Singh s/o. Aroor Singh Sursingh (Amritsar)
4. S. Kartar Singh s/o. S. Mangal Singh Sarabha (Ludhiana)
5. Shri Vishnu Ganesh Pingle s/o. Shri Ganesh Pingle, Telangana Dhammdhera (Poona)
6. S. Surain Singh s/o. S. Boor Singh, Gillwali (Amritsar) &
7. S. Surain Singh s/o. S. Ishar Singh, Gillwali (Amritsar).

Those seventeen convicts, whose death penalty was converted into life imprisonment were as below:

1. S. Balwant Singh (Amritsar)
2. S. Sawan Singh Chabba (Amritsar),
3. S. Sohan Singh Bhakna (Amritsar),
4. S. Wasawa Singh Gillwali (Amritsar),
5. S. Kala Singh Amritsar (Amritsar),
6. S. Kesar Singh Thatthwal (Amritsar),
7. S. Khushal Singh Paddhri (Amritsar),
8. S. Harnam Singh Tundilat, Kotla Naudh Singh (Hoshiarpur).
9. Shri Jagat Singh Haryana (Hoshiarpur),
10. S. Nand Singh Kaile (Ludhiana),
11. S. Rulia Singh Sarabha (Ludhiana),
12. Shri Ram Saran Das, Kapurthala (Kapurthala),
13. S. Pirthi Singh Sambhu (Patiala),
14. Bhai Parmanand Karyala (Jhelum),

15. S. Nidhan Singh Chugha (Ferozepur),
16. Sri Parmanand, Sakrada Kharka, Hamirpur (U.P.) &
17. Shri Hirday Ram Mandi (Himachal Pradesh).

Rest of those 27 persons whose sentence to life imprisonment and confiscation of property was upheld, their names are given below:

OF DISTRICT LUDHIANA

1. Bhan Singh Sunet.
2. Chuhar Singh Leelan.
3. Gurmukh Singh Lalton.
4. Inder Singh Mallha.
5. Kharak Singh Boparai.
6. Kirpal Singh, Boparai.
7. Puran Singh, Issewal

OF DISTRICT AMRITSAR

8. Bishan Singh S/O. Jwala Singh Dadehar.
9. Bishan Singh S/O. Kesar Singh Dadehar.
10. Jwala Singh Thatthian.
11. Lal Singh Bhure.
12. Mangal Singh Lalpura.
13. Sher Singh Vein Puin
14. Udham Singh Kasel
15. Sant Vasakha Singh Dadehar.
16. Jwala Singh Dadehar.
17. Kehar Singh, Marhana

OF DISTRICT FEROZEPUR

18. Roor Singh, Chuharchak,
19. Roda Singh, Rode.

OF DISTRICT LAHORE

20. Gurdit Singh, Sur Singh.
21. Kala Singh, -----do-----
22. Inder Singh, -----do-----





lightly. He never thought that the Whites could harm him. He was sure that he would not be spared by the English Empire. He was to get death penalty. Rather he was in a hurry for that fate. So he would not at all bother about the arguments of their lawyers. During the trial of this case, Mr. Petman had said, that the purpose of this conspiracy was to fight against the Crown and throw out the unconstitutional government and having thrown the Whites out of the country, they wanted to establish a free national government. It also aimed at eliminating the persons used by the government against them and to instigate the local Indian soldiers against the Throne. Also to collect arms and ammunition by all means. To achieve that objective, they would loot govt. treasuries, conduct dacoities, kill people during dacoities and do away with those military, civil and White people, coming in the way of this conspiracy. They also was aimed at blasting railway lines, bridges and also attacking the European Platoons. To write and distribute revolutionary literature against the government and instigate the people for revolt, was also included in their objects. These were the ways and means adopted by them to harm the government.

Kartar Singh Sarabha was fully prepared to face his lot. He was not afraid of death. Rather he would become hilarious thinking of death. His pensioner uncle tried to convince him for appeal against his death penalty. But Kartar Singh did not listen to him. Then his grand father tried to change his mind, but he too failed. While talking to him, the grand father asked Sarabha, "My child, what did you gain out this? Meaningless death? What shall the people give you?"

Having heard his grand father, Sardar Kartar Singh had said, "Bapuji, there was so and so Sardar in our village, how is he?"

-He had died of plague long ago.

-Really? Then what about so and so?

-He had also died last winter.

-(after a little pause) Kartar Singh spoke, "Bapuji, had plague played the same game with me, then who would bother about me? Now I am dying a death of a lion. You should be proud of me."

S. Kartar Singh Sarabha was sure that whatever he was going to do was not to go waste. Every drop of martyr's blood would be honoured. So he had written with a charcoal on one of the walls of jail cell - 'The blood of martyrs never goes waste. It shall bear fruit at last.' Having read it, Sohan Singh Bhakna had remarked one day, "Kartar Singh, even the bones are burnt in the jail here. How would the information shall reach out? How, then, the blood of martyrs will bear fruit?" The Kartar Singh replied, "Dear President, this blood, today, tomorrow or a day after must prove fruitful". The time, Kartar Singh was to be hanged, even then he had strong belief that he was laying his life for a great cause. The words, he spoke on the occasion, were repeated by Kalhan Khan to Bhai Randhir Singh and Nahar Singh. They were, 'Daroga, do not think, that Kartar Singh has died. My blood will give birth to as many Kartar Singhs (patriots) as the number of drops it contained and they all will work for freedom".

Thus martyrdom of S. Kartar Singh Sarabha bore fruit. People like Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh, Babbar Akali Movement leader S. Kishan Singh Gargajj were inspired. Kartar Singh's forecast that 'As many Kartar Singhs (patriots) would be born as the number of drops of his blood and would fight for freedom of the country' has proved to be true. Consequently, India started breathing in free air after about 30 years of his martyrdom.

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