

Mian Akbar Shah and His Role During the Struggle for Freedom

Dr. Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah

In the following pages an attempt is made to provide an accurate and authentic account of the life and times of Mian Akbar Shah, a prominent freedom fighter of the North-West Frontier Province who did his best to get rid of the British Imperialism in South Asia. Mian Akbar Shah and his comrades left India 'in search of freedom'. They decided to wage a holy war against the Raj, crossed over to Afghanistan, the neighbourly Muslim state who's young and revolutionary Amir Amanullah Khan was already popular by countering the British activities in his country. Soon they found themselves in Afghanistan confronted with a new dilemma: the so-called leaning of Amanullah Khan towards the British. Afghanistan signed a treaty with British India and this was regarded by the Indian *Muhajirin*, then present in a large number in Kabul as 'betrayal' on the part of Amanullah Khan. Afghanistan to them was no more an 'ideal' country. By signing this treaty with British India it became a country similar to the rest of Islamic countries in the world. Living under such circumstances in Afghanistan was not acceptable to the Indian Muhajirin. They decided to leave Afghanistan and crossed over to Soviet Union, the 'Land of Revolution'. The Indian Muhajirin, including Akbar Shah were facilitated by the Bolsheviks across the Oxus. After spending some days in Tirmiz, they started their onward journey to Tashkent via Bukhara. In Tashkent they were provided training in anti-British activities. Akbar Shah also represented the Indian youth in the Baku Conference. After getting the required training to counter the British imperialism, Akbar Shah was deputed back to India to help other revolutionaries in their struggle against the Raj. After a hazardous journey through Iran he succeeded in reaching India but soon was imprisoned. After the completion of his prison period he resumed his studies and did his Law from the Aligarh Muslim University. He joined the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, became a trustworthy comrade of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and remained a true Khudai Khidmatgar till the creation of Pakistan in August 1947. More details on the life and times of Mian Akbar Shah are thus given in the following pages.

Early Life and Journey to Afghanistan:

On 18 January 1899 Akbar Shah was born at Badrashi (Nowshera).ⁱ After completing his early education at Nowshera, Akbar Shah was sent to Islamia College,ⁱⁱ Peshawar, for further education. Like many other awakened youth, Akbar Shah took keen interest in politics. As India was passing through one of the crucial years of its history it was impossible for him to concentrate on his studies only.

During the First World War, India supported the British against its enemies. Help was provided to the Raj both in cash and kind. Indian soldiers defended the British Imperialism even in the remote corners of the empire. They were promised rewards on the conclusion of war. The war ended in favour of the British. After the war, instead of giving them rewards, new oppressive laws were introduced in the country. To curb possible revolutionary and terrorist activities, the government of India forced the Rowlatt Actⁱⁱⁱ through the Central Legislative Assembly during the war. Although the ostensible reason for promulgating the Act ceased to exist after the war, it still remained in operation. The Indian nationalists opposed the Act. M. K Gandhi, the Congress leader, issued a call for an all-India *hartal* on 6 April 1919 to protest against the Rowlatt Act.^{iv} Responding to Gandhi's call, on 6 April a complete hartal was observed in Peshawar. Urban political workers of the city, Muslims and non-Muslims, participated. Following Peshawar, similar protest meetings were reported from other settled districts of the N-WFP.^v Meanwhile, news of firing on innocent citizens at Jallianwala Bagh, Amritsar,^{vi} reached the Province. Abdul Ghaffar Khan, the newly emerging socio-political worker of Charsadda convened a protest meeting at Utmanzai. The participants, as reported by the CID, numbered between 50,000 and 70,000. In the rural area of the N-WFP, this was the first meeting of its kind convened to express solidarity with the an all-India cause.^{vii}

The effects of the all-India agitation combined with developments in neighbouring Afghanistan. Partly influenced by the Indian revolutionaries then residing at Kabul,^{viii} Amir Amanullah Khan, who recently succeeded his father after his assassination, denounced the British policies regarding Afghanistan and demanded full sovereignty for Afghanistan. The British paid no heed to Amanullah's demand. On 4 May 1919,

Amanullah declared war against British India. Though the war was very short in its course, it gave Afghanistan complete independence.^{ix}

Mian Akbar Shah and some of his college friends gave much attention to these drastic developments taking place around them. They hated slavery and thus were opposed to the British imperialism. As they were not prepared to give time to their studies, they started thinking otherwise. Plans came under discussion regarding their future course of action. It was agreed upon that they should go to Afghanistan and with the help of Afghan forces to struggle for the liberation of their homeland.^x Four years ago the same course of action was adopted by fourteen other students from Lahore.^{xi} However, Mian Akbar Shah has not mentioned any where in his writings that they were aware of the past action of the afore-mentioned students. According to his own account it was because of their hatred of slavery and their love of independence that always they were thinking on these lines. They left Peshawar for Charsadda, met Abdul Ghaffar Khan and apprised him of their intentions. Abdul Ghaffar Khan welcomed their plans and provided an introductory letter for Haji Sahib of Turangzai, then residing at Lakarhi, in the independent tribal territory. Haji Sahib was pleased on meeting the young revolutionaries. He blessed them with his prayers and provided them necessary help and guidance. Their next destination was Chamarkand, the abode of the Indian Mujahidin, who were famous for their fanaticism and anti-British activities since the second half of the 19th century. From Chamarkand they crossed over to Jalalabad, the first important major town of Afghanistan. At Jalalabad they met General Nadir Khan, the then commander-in-chief of the Afghan forces. Their journey to Kabul was facilitated by the Afghan authorities and without much difficulty they arrived at Kabul. In Kabul the Afghan government took the responsibility of providing them boarding and lodging.^{xii}

In the meanwhile the Khilafat movement was launched in India. Indian Muslims had close religious ties with the Turkish Sultan who was also the spiritual head, the Khalifa. In order to gain the support of Indian Muslims during the war years, the British government had promised to protect the Holy Places, to safeguard their religious sentiments and to do no harm to the Khalifa. But during the Paris Peace Conference (1919) reprisals were announced against Turkey, which led to a large scale agitation in

India. Protest meetings were organised to show solidarity with the Turkish cause. The Central Khilafat Committee was established at Bombay with Maulana Shaukat Ali, Maulana Mohammad Ali, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Maulana Abdul Bari Firangi Mahal, Hakim Ajmal Khan and Maulana Hasrat Mohani as the central leaders.^{xiii} Interestingly the politically-minded Hindus also decided to side with the Muslims.

The Khilafat movement was followed by Hijrat Movement. Despite the country-wise protest of the Indian Muslims, the British government was adamant on its stand to reduce the Ottoman empire to a pretty state. The Ulema declared India as *Dar ul Harb* (land of war) and issued *fatwas* for migration to *Dar ul Islam* (land of Islam).^{xiv} Indian Muslims were looking towards Afghanistan, with whom they had religious, cultural, political and ethnic ties. Amanullah offered asylum to the intending Muhajirin. Peshawar became the hub of the movement. In the beginning the government discouraged Hijrat, but later on people were encouraged to go to Afghanistan in large numbers. In this the government's twin objectives were to remove active political workers from the province and to burden the limited finances of Afghanistan.^{xv} The Muhajirin, who exceeded 60,000 in number, were welcomed by the Afghan government. Amanullah offered them jobs and cultivable lands. They refused his offer and demanded the waging of war against the British. Amanullah was unable to concede their demand. Differences emerged which resulted in the return of majority of Muhajirin to India. The return journey was miserable. The impoverished and destitute Muhajirin were resettled in their home areas.

In Soviet Russia, Iran and Back to India:

Some of the Muhajirin, including Akbar Shah and his close friends were still residing at Jabal-us-Siraj. When they got information about the affairs at Kabul and of the plight of the Muhajirin, they convened a meeting. Some^{xvi} of them were very critical of Amanullah's conciliatory policy towards the British. They instigated the Muhajirin to abandon Afghanistan as, according to them, now there was no difference between India and Afghanistan. They wanted to help their Turkish brethren, who were facing the hostile European powers alone. The Afghan authorities tried to stop them but they stuck to their programme. A caravan, including Akbar Shah and his comrades started for Anatolia

via Soviet Union. After crossing the Oxus near Tirmiz they entered their 'dreamland', the Land of Revolution. In Tirmiz they were greeted by the local officials. After spending some days in Tirmiz, despite the warning of the Soviet officials, they resumed their onward journey. Near Kirki they fell victim to the harsh treatment of the Turkomans, who regarded them as 'Jadidis' (Bolsheviks). Death was imminent for them, but it was their good luck that they escaped it. In Charjoi a division appeared within the ranks of these revolutionaries: half of them opted for Anatolia while the remaining half decided to stay in the Soviet Union. Akbar Shah was among the latter group. They went to Tashkent and their met other prominent Indian revolutionaries including M. N. Roy and Maulana Abdur Rab. Akbar Shah and his friends got admission in the Turkistan Lenin Academy. They were given training how to fly an aeroplane and how to organise 'subversive activities'. Later on under the changed circumstances they were sent to Moscow and were provided places in the Eastern University, Moscow. The life in Moscow was one of the favourite themes of Akbar Shah. He narrates how the students took active part in the reconstruction of the city and how the Soviet economy was on its way to development. Akbar Shah was invited to represent the Indian youth in famous Baku Conference. After his return to Moscow, he was directed to proceed to India and to prepare the ground for 'revolution'. Akbar Shah followed the following route to India:

From Moscow → Baku → Armenistan → Anzoli (sea port) → Gilan → Rasht → Qazvin → Tehran → Qum → Isfahan → Yazdgard → Bushahr → Muscat → Karachi → Lahore → Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib → Badrashi.^{xvii}

In Badrashi the Officials of Intelligence Branch were waiting for his arrival. As soon as he arrived at the village he was arrested and sentenced to prison under the Peshawar Conspiracy Case.^{xviii} After his release Mian Akbar Shah went to Aligarh and did his Graduation in Law. On his return to Peshawar he started legal practice. At the same time he resumed his socio-political activities and joined the *Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghana*, an organisation, started by Abdul Ghaffar Khan, of the like-minded Pashtoon nationalists/social workers struggling both for the uplift of the Pashtoons and for the eradication of social evils and purification of the Pashtoon society.

Mian Akbar Shah's Participation in the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement:

After the bitter experience and 'failure' of Hijrat, Abdul Ghaffar Khan concentrated on Pashtoon politics. He was joined by a group of Pashtoon intellectuals/social workers including Mian Ahmad Shah, Mian Abdullah Shah, Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, Mohammad Akbar Khadim, Mian Jaffar Shah, Maulana Mohammad Israel and a host of others. Creating awareness amongst the Pashtoos about modern education, freeing the Pashtoon society of evils like the blood-feuds and factionalism and prevention of crime and the use of intoxicants were some of the major concerns which brought these intellectuals together. On 1 April 1921, the *Anjuman-i-Islah-ul-Afaghana* (Society for the Reformation for the Afghans) was formed with Abdul Ghaffar Khan as its president and Mian Ahmad Shah as its Secretary. The aims and objectives of the Anjuman included: the eradication of social evils, promotion of unity amongst the Pashtoos, prevention of lavish spending on social events, encouragement of Pashto language and literature and the creation of 'real love' for Islam among the Pashtoos.^{xix} The Anjuman engaged in a wide spectrum of activities including the revival of the old network of the Azad Madrassas; to make trade and commerce respectable in the eyes of the Pashtoos and to revive Pashto and to promote Pashtoon culture.^{xx} As there was no political journal in Pashto the Anjuman decided to publish a socio-political journal in Pashto. The first issue of *Pakhtun* came out in May 1928.^{xxi} It contained articles on a variety of subjects including Pashtoon patriotism, Pashto language and literature, political essays, dramas, religious writings, and official and non-official news. Initially the circulation was limited to 500 copies but in course of time it rose to 3,000.

Initially the Anjuman was a social reform movement but soon it developed into a political movement. Its members regarded British rule as the root cause of the pernicious poverty, backwardness, illiteracy and ignorance of the Pashtoos. The Pashtoos were urged to unite against alien rule and jointly struggle against social evils and put an end to their blood feuds. The Anjuman members undertook tours of various parts of the province and propagated the Pashtoon cause on the above lines. The Pashtoos were exhorted to join the Anjuman and resist the British imperialism and its supporters in the Frontier Province.

Events in neighbouring Afghanistan changed the outlook of the Frontier intelligentsia. Amanullah had been ousted from power and Habibullah (Bacha Saqao), a bandit Tajik, had occupied the throne. The Anjuman members were indignant over the overthrow of Amanullah whom they regarded as the 'ideal Pashtoon king'. They sensed a British conspiracy behind the troubles in Afghanistan. The main reason for the British dislike of Amanullah was the 'extraordinary progress of reforms in a neighbouring [Muslim] state would support the demand for similar institutions in the Frontier Province, a demand which it was the policy of the Government to resist'. Anti-government demonstrations were organised by the Anjuman. The Anjuman members toured the province and made a fervent appeal to the intelligentsia and the masses to support Amanullah's cause against the 'bandit King'. Simple methods were adopted for propaganda purposes. Mosques served as platforms for the Anjuman members, then the traditional Pashtoon *Hujras* (meeting places of adults) were used. Kinship and ethnic connections were also utilised. Before anything could be achieved by the efforts of the Anjuman members, a desperate Amanullah proceeded to Italy, and settled there permanently.^{xxii}

Mian Akbar Shah, an active member of the Anjuman proposed the formation of a youth league on the pattern of such organisations in Afghanistan, Turkey and Bukhara.^{xxiii} A meeting was convened on 1 September 1929 at Utmanzai and the formation of the *Zalmo Jirga* with its temporary headquarters at Utmanzai was announced. No exact age limit was fixed for its membership but the name itself indicated the composition of the organisation. Its membership was open to 'every youth without any discrimination of caste, creed or religion, provided he is literate', and that he, 'should not participate in any form of communalism'. Pashto was announced to be the official language of the Jirga's proceeding. Other objectives included the 'attainment of independence for Hindustan by all peaceful means'.^{xxiv} The *Zalmo Jirga* published a booklet in Pashto reiterating their demand for complete independence from colonial rule by peaceful means, and arguing that to achieve this end they would try to bring about harmony between Hindus and Muslims and the political awakening of the youth of the Frontier Province.

To accommodate the majority of the uneducated sympathisers of the Pashtoon nationalists and the aged members of the community, another organisation Khudai

Khidmatgars (Servants of God) was formed in November. This new organisation superseded the former and later on become most popular and influential in the N-WFP. The party appealed to Pashtoons to join the organisation and help them in the eradication of social evils from Pashtoon society, to forge unity among their rank and file and to struggle for the liberation of their homeland from the foreign yoke.^{xxv} Both of the organisations were working for the promotion of the Pashto language and literature, and were struggling for the 'purification' of Pashtoon society and for the independence of the Pashtoon region which they viewed as their *Watan* (homeland). The leaders were almost the same. A member after joining one organisation automatically became a member of the other organisation. The same group of Pashtoon intellectuals who were guiding the Jirga were in the forefront of the Khudai Khidmatgars. Within a short period a network of the Khudai Khidmatgar organisation was established in the Pashtoon dominated areas of the province. Its emphasis on Pashtoon identity and values had very little appeal to the non-Pashtoons. The remarkable feature of the organisation was the solid support for it in the rural areas, which hitherto had been neglected by other political organisations. Many reasons contributed to the popularity of the Khudai Khidmatgars. Various sections of the Pashtoon society interpreted the Khudai Khidmatgar programme in their own way. To the Pashtoon intelligentsia, it was a movement for the revival of Pashtoon culture with its distinct identity. To the smaller Khans, it was a movement that demanded political reforms for the province that would enfranchise them and give them a greater role in governance. Its anti-colonial stand suited the majority of the anti-establishment Ulema, who always regarded British rule in the sub-continent as a 'curse'. For the peasants and other poor classes it was against their economic oppressors, British imperialism and its agents — the pro-British Nawabs, Khan Bahadurs and big Khans.^{xxvi}

After his joining the Khudai Khidmatgar movement Akbar Shah accompanied Abdul Ghaffar Khan almost every time to the Khattak area. According to Akbar Shah he learnt many things from the Pashtoon legendary leader. He regarded Abdul Ghaffar Khan as a true reformer who's concern was the eradication of social evils from the Pashtoon society and to promote education in his people. He had never 'seen a reformer so much devoted to his cause' as was Abdul Ghaffar Khan.^{xxvii} Akbar Shah appreciated Abdul Ghaffar

Khan for visiting every nook and corner of the Pashtoonkhwa to educate the Pashtoon on social reform movement and to urge them to struggle for the liberation of their *Watan*. However, it was at two occasions when differences emerged between the Pashtoon social reformer and Mian Akbar Shah but as there was no personality clash involved so within very short time the differences were resolved and Akbar Shah resumed his political activities under the guidance of Abdul Ghaffar Khan.

Akbar Shah remained busy with the preaching of the Khudai Khidmatgar doctrine in his area. During the election (1936-37) campaign he contacted the masses and told them that instead of following the foot-steps of the Khan Bahadurs, Nawabs and Jagirdars, who were their oppressors and always busy in serving the imperialism in South Asia, they should follow the nationalists leaders and thus support the Khudai Khidmatgars in getting rid of imperialism. The untiring efforts of Akbar Shah and his comrades resulted in the election victory for both of the Congress candidates Mian Jaffar Shah and Amir Mohammad Khan from Nowshera and Mardan respectively. However, in the summer 1938 an ugly situation emerged due to the confrontation^{xxviii} between the tenants at Ghalla Dher and their landlord, the Nawab of Toru, whom they accused for his harsh treatment and oppression.^{xxix} The Nawab fined the whole village. The Ghalla Dheris, politically conscious after their participation in the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, refused to comply with the orders of the Nawab. The Nawab sought the help of district administration which was provided immediately. Police came to Ghalla Dher and served the orders for eviction. The tenants refused to follow the eviction orders; the police resorted to violence. The Ghalla Dheris were expecting support from the Khudai Khidmatgar high command and the provincial Chief Minister Dr. Khan Sahib, elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Moreover, they were waiting for their local MLA Amir Mohammad Khan to help them in their fight against the 'pillars' of the British imperialism. But to their chagrin the provincial authorities and the Congress MLA from Mardan both sided with the Nawab. Justifying the police action against the Ghalla Dheris, Dr. Khan Sahib made it clear that in no way the Chief Minister would allow any one to disturb the peace and tranquillity of the province. Shocked at the behaviour of their comrades-in-arms, the Ghalla Dheris sought the help of Mian Akbar Shah and his

Socialist-minded friends. Help was readily provided and onwards then an organised campaign was started against Dr. Khan Sahib and other Congress leaders who were accused of protecting their class interests versus the down-trodden rank and file of the Khudai Khidmatgars. The ring leaders of the movement including Mian Akbar Shah were also imprisoned. Abdul Ghaffar Khan tried to contact the Ghalla Dheris but they refused even to see Abdul Ghaffar Khan until their comrades were in prison. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was not happy over these developments and accused the Socialists and their friends of creating problems for the Khudai Khidmatgars. The Congress high command was approached which sent a delegation of three central Congress leaders and it was with much difficulty that rapprochement between the Ghalla Dheris and the provincial government was made. However, eventually various unjust taxes were abolished and the arrested persons freed.^{xxx}

Another occasion when Mian Akbar Shah defied Abdul Ghaffar Khan was the participation of the former in the 'Forward Bloc', formed by Subhas Chandra Bose within the Indian National Congress.^{xxx} Bose's cause was supported by Akbar Shah and some other left-wingers in the Khudai Khidmatgar movement. In 1938 differences in the ranks of provincial Congress came to surface and Abdul Ghaffar Khan openly criticised Akbar Shah and his comrades for their ideas which he regarded 'harmful' for the Khudai Khidmatgar cause. During one of the meeting of the Working Committee of the Frontier Provincial Congress, held at Abbottabad, Abdul Ghaffar Khan while endorsing the contributions of Akbar Shah and his friends for the national cause, urged them to form their separate organisation because their attitude, according to Abdul Ghaffar Khan was detrimental to the Pashtoon national movement. Akbar Shah was hesitant in denouncing his relation with the Khudai Khidmatgars. The matter was thus reported to Gandhi who was also then in Abbottabad. Gandhi did not approved the idea and immediately summoned the Congress/Khudai Khidmatgar members, including Abdul Ghaffar Khan to his residence. He apprised them of his views regarding the members of the 'Forward Bloc' and told them that Congress is a national organisation and even there is a strong presence of Communists in Congress. There is no harm in having these Socialists in the organisation. Then he quoted the example of the Forward Bloc president Subhas Bose

who never denounced his membership of the Congress and always referred to it as Forward Bloc within the Indian National Congress. So to Gandhi they form part and parcel of the Congress. Thus a difficult and complicated issue of retaining their membership of the Khudai Khidmatgar organisation was solved without creating any further bitterness within the local Congress leaders.^{xxxii} Except these two occasions, Akbar Shah remained a true follower of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and was a staunch Khudai Khidmatgar till getting rid of imperialism in South Asia. He regarded Abdul Ghaffar Khan as a matchless leader because no one has contributed as he did in creating political/social awareness amongst the Pashtoons. He lauded the services rendered by Abdul Ghaffar Khan to the national cause and was proud of his close association with the Pashtoon reformer.

Akbar Shah and the Escape of Subhas Chandra Bose :*

*(The present article of the author has already been published under the caption of 'The Escape of Subhas Chandra Bose: Myths and Reality', in the 'The Oracle', a publication of Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta, in its issue of July-October, 1996. Keeping in view its relevance to Mian Akbar Shah it is thus here reproduced in its original form with the courtesy of Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta).

Persecuted and prosecuted by both his friends and foes, he by dint of his gifted ingenuity and intrepid resolve, forged his way out from the bog of Congress conservatism, as well as from the imperialist cage of slavery ; and flew like a freed bird to distant lands till he reached hospitable asylum near his home , from where he worked and worked ceaselessly to free his homeland from both conservatism and lethargy of his own people and from political bondage and exploitation of foreigner till fate cried halt to his successful activities.^{xxxiii}

These laudatory expressions about Subhas Chandra Bose^{xxxiv} by H. Sahai illustrate the Bengal revolutionary's zeal to liberate his native land from the British Imperial control. In his struggle he had to face not only the wrath of the rulers but was also harassed by his own countrymen, including his own comrades-in-arms. But he never gave up his mission. However, a time came when he realised that he had to leave the country for the struggle of Indian independence.

The escape of Subhas Chandra Bose remained a matter of great controversy for many years. For some time, there were speculations regarding the possible routes of escape

taken by Subhas Bose in leaving India. In March 1946 some details appeared in the *Hindustan Standard*, Calcutta, by a person who claimed that he directly helped Subhas to escape. Shortly after the publication of that account, Uttam Chand, who had acted as host to Bose during his stay in Kabul, wrote for *The Hindustan Times*, Delhi, giving an account of Bose's life in Kabul. However, the details of Bose's journey from Calcutta to Kabul remained a mystery for some time more. Sisir Kumar Bose, a nephew of Subhas Chandra, who accompanied Bose from his home to the railway station, published his account of the escape episode in his book, *The Great Escape* (Calcutta, 1975, rep. 1995). But a more detailed account was given by Bhagat Ram Talwar, who escorted Bose from Peshawar to Kabul. His book, *The Talwars of Pathan Land and Subhas Chandra's Great Escape* (Delhi, 1976) deals with the story of escape in a comprehensive manner, but gives only a partial account of Bose's journey from Calcutta to Peshawar and his stay in the Frontier.

In the following pages an attempt is made to retrace Bose's escape from Calcutta to Peshawar and his time in Peshawar. The story is based on the unpublished diary of Mian Akbar Shah (1899-1990), one of the most trusted comrades of Bose from the North-West Frontier Province. Akbar Shah had vast experience of the escape routes from the Frontier to Central Asia through Afghanistan. He had left the country at the beginning of 1919 for Afghanistan, like many other Indian Muslims seeking help from abroad for a *Jihad* against the British. From Afghanistan, he along with many other young radicals went to Soviet Central Asia where the Bolsheviks were understood to be favourably disposed towards all those who wanted to fight against the British. It was here that Akbar Shah became a Communist. When in 1921 the Tashkent School was closed he and several other Indians were taken to Moscow to receive further training at the University of the Toilers of the East. He remained there until 1922, when he and his fellow comrades were despatched to India via Iran to carry out revolutionary activities against the British. Unfortunately, however, he and the other revolutionaries were caught, convicted and imprisoned in the Peshawar Conspiracy Case of 1923. After release, he took an LLB at Aligarh University, started practice in Peshawar and came to the forefront of Frontier politics by joining the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement. After rendering great services in

the Khudai Khidmatgar Movement, he became the General Secretary of the Provincial Forward Bloc within the Indian National Congress and played a key role in Bose's escape from India to Afghanistan.

In the first week of September 1939 when World War II broke out, Britain asked her dominions to join the cause. The Dominion Parliaments met and decided to endorse the declaration of war as a mark of popular consent. In the case of India, however, the British ignored the public opinion and Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, declared that India too was at war with Germany.^{xxxv} Bose decided to take advantage of the situation in order to oust the British from India. His long experience in public service, had taught him that it was almost impossible to organise an armed resistance in the country without some help from abroad.^{xxxvi} He was convinced of three things : First, that Britain would lose the war and that Empire would break up; second, the British would not easily hand over power to the Indian people and the latter would have to fight for their freedom; and, third, India would win her independence only if she collaborated with the powers who were fighting Britain.^{xxxvii} Bose concluded that the Axis Powers — particularly Japan — would be eager to see a free India. And, therefore, they would be ready to render assistance to the Indians should they desire it.^{xxxviii} To him a Britain at war would mean a vulnerable Britain; and thus more amenable to pressure.^{xxxix} He considered the war, therefore, a 'God-sent opportunity for achieving not Dominion Status or Colonial Self-Government but full and complete independence...'.^{xl} Bose broadcast to Gandhi:

If I had the slightest hope that without action from abroad we could win freedom, I would never have left India during a crisis. If I had any hope that within our lifetime we could get another chance — another golden opportunity — for winning freedom, as during the present war, I doubt if I would have set out from home. But I was convinced of two things : firstly, that such a golden opportunity would not come within another century — and secondly, that without action from abroad, we would not be able to win freedom merely through our own efforts at home.^{xli}

He knew that it was only during the war that he would have an opportunity to meet the enemies of Britain and use them to gain independence. He therefore decided to leave the country to establish direct contacts with the Axis Powers. He was aware of all the risks and dangers involved in it. 'By going abroad on a perilous quest, I was risking — not only

my life and my whole future career — but what was more the future of my party' and that 'having been in prison eleven times, it was much easier and much safer for me to continue there, but I felt that the cause of India's independence demanded a journey abroad, regardless of the risk that it involved'.^{xliii}

In the summer of 1940, while the Germans were pressing the Allies hard on the western fronts of Norway, Holland and France, Bose started a Satyagraha movement for the demolition of the Holwell Monument, erected to honour the British dead in the Black Hole tragedy in the mid-eighteenth century. He declared 3 July 1940 as the 'Nawab Sirajuddaula Day', in honour of the last independent Muslim ruler of Bengal. The Holwell Monument was not merely an unwarranted strain on the memory of Nawab, it was an attempt to remind the Indians of the treachery of British against an indigenous ruler and thus to inculcate in them a spirit of defiance.^{xliii} In official circles the agitation, however, was considered as only 'one phase of the consistent endeavours of Subhas Bose and the Forward Bloc to find some plank' on which civil disobedience against the Government could be started,^{xliv} and to the great astonishment of the Governor, with the support and assistance of the Muslims. On the afternoon of 2 July, the day before the proposed Satyagraha, Bose was arrested under Section 129 of the Defence of India Rules 'to forestall breach of peace' in Calcutta, where he had declared to lead the procession to get rid of the Holwell Monument. He was taken to the Presidency Jail, Calcutta.^{xlv} It was probably a deliberate move on his part to court arrest as most of his Forward Bloc friends including Sardar Sardul Singh Caveeshar, Satya Ranjan Bakhshi and N. N. Chakravarty were already in jail and he wanted the seclusion of his jail to consult them. They all concurred in Bose's plan to leave India. But Bose was held in the Presidency Jail for an indefinite period. The authorities were in no mood to release Bose during the war period. It was decided that he should be prosecuted in a Special Magistrate Court, in connection with two of his 'actionable speeches'.^{xlvi} The Advocate General assured the Government of every chance of success against Bose. They were determined to keep Bose under detention in any way and 'if the unexpected happens and Subhas Bose is acquitted', remarked the Governor of Bengal, 'he should be detained under Rule 26 of the Defence of

India Rule'.^{xlvii} Bose got wind of the Government intentions so he started devising ways for getting out of the jail.

Bose took nearly four months to give a practical shape to his plan. On 29 November 1940, he went on a hunger strike. He would drink only water with a little salt and not allow himself to be force-fed by the prison authorities. He knew that a fast unto death would not bring his release, but he warned the authorities that if they resorted to force he would commit suicide. He created an impression in Government circles that he was going to die as a martyr. He wrote to the Governor of Bengal

What great solace can there be than the feeling that one has lived and died for a principle? What higher satisfaction can a man possess than the knowledge that his spirit will beget kindred spirits to carry on his unfinished task? What better rewards can a soul desire than the certainty that his message will be wafted over hills and dales and over the board plains to every corner of his land across the seas to distant lands? What higher communication can life attain than peaceful self immolation at the alter of one's cause? This is the technique of the soul. The individual must die, so that the nation may live. Today I must die so that India may live and win freedom and glory.^{xlviii}

As a result of the hunger strike, Bose's health deteriorated. He lost 24 pounds in weight during detention.^{xlix}, The Superintendent of Jail informed the higher authorities about the worsening condition of Bose's health and of the seriousness of the situation.^l The Government would ill-afford a country wide discontent resulting from his death. They were left with no other option but to release Bose. Therefore, on 5 December 1940, the detention order was lifted and he was unconditionally released. He was brought to his Elgin Road residence in Calcutta and kept under police surveillance around the clock. It was a cat-and-mouse policy, the moment Bose recovered, he was to be re-arrested.^{li} On 9 December 1940, Bose sent a letter to the Chief Minister of Bengal asking about the withdrawal of the two cases against him and the withdrawal of the order under Section 26 of the Defence of India Rules. The letter was discussed in the Cabinet Meeting of 11 December and he was informed that the Government did not intended the withdrawal of any of the above cases.^{lii}

After his release Bose remained busy receiving relatives, colleagues and friends. He took this opportunity to re-establish contacts with his old Frontier comrades. He sent a word to

Mian Akbar Shah, General Secretary, Forward Bloc in the Frontier Province, to come and see him. Akbar Shah lost no time in reaching Calcutta. Bose revealed his plan to Akbar Shah : that he intended visiting the Soviet Union.^{liii} Akbar Shah himself offered to take him to Kabul and beyond to the Soviet Union where he had received political training^{liv}. 16 January 1941 was fixed as the date of his leaving Calcutta. Bose called his nephew Sisir Kumar Bose, introduced him to Akbar Shah and instructed him to accompany the latter to the hotel where he was staying and then take him to the railway station. Both went to the Mohammadan departmental store of Wachel Molla's on Dharamtala Street to buy some clothes for Bose, necessary for his disguise. Two sets of Pashtoon type pyjamas and a black cap were selected by Akbar Shah; Sisir Kumar also arranged for two copies of the Holy Quran, a few medicines and other personal effects. These things were put in a suitcase which carried the initials M. Z painted on it. His visiting card was as follows: -

Mohammad Zia ud Din, Travelling Inspector The Empire of India Life Insurance Company Ltd. Permanent Address: Civil Lines, Jubbulpore.^{lv}

After his return from Calcutta, Akbar Shah contacted his most trusted comrades, Mian Mohammad Shah, an activist of Forward Bloc from Pabbi, Nowshera and Bhagat Ram. He briefed them about the whole matter. It was agreed that they would receive Bose on 19 January 1941 at the Peshawar Cantonment railway station. In view of the importance of Bose's mission, it was decided that he would not be sent alone or entrusted to an ordinary agent. It was, therefore, agreed that one of themselves would accompany him. As Akbar Shah was a well-known person, he could not undertake the journey himself. Therefore, Bhagat Ram,^{lvi} who had experience of that kind of work, was chosen to accompany Bose to a safer destination.^{lvii}

At his end in Calcutta, Bose pretentiously went into seclusion. He explained to his cook the manner of serving food from outside and removing used utensils and crockery the next day. He would not be seeing anybody or even talking on telephone with any body.^{lviii} Apart from Sisir Kumar, he included few near relatives in his escape plan. They were his niece Ila, two other nephews Aurobindo and Diwijen Bose, his elder brother Sarat Chandra Bose and his wife Bivabati. As planned, on 16 January 1941, Bose accompanied by Sisir Bose went to Berari near Dhanbad by car. After resting for a short while in the

residence of Asoke Bose, elder brother of Sisir Kumar, they went to Gomoh railway station where on the night of 17-18 January Bose boarded the Delhi-Kalka Mail for onward journey to Delhi.^{lix} At Delhi, Bose took the Frontier Mail for Peshawar. Unfortunately there is no record of the details of the journey from Delhi to Peshawar but apparently it went as planned without any apparent hitch. Meanwhile, in Peshawar, Akbar Shah and his comrades had been waiting for Bose's arrival. It was a long wait for them though he was late by only two days. It was on 19 January that Bose arrived. He was dressed as a North Indian Mussulman, a travelling insurance agent. Akbar Shah boarded the same train at the city station to check the arrival of Bose. They looked at each other but did not talk. Bose called for a porter at the cantonment station, sat in a Tonga and directed the *tongawala* to Deans Hotel. Akbar Shah followed him in another tonga. The *tongawala* was surprised as to why a good Muslim should go to the hotel of the *Kafirs* (infidels), where he would not be able to get *Pak* (pure) water for his prayers. He was told that as there was no reasonable Muslim hotel in the city, the Deans was the only choice. The *tongawala* took them to the Taj Mahal Hotel. At the hotel they were informed that there was no room available. The *tongawala* got angry and his loud protest brought some of the guests out to see what was happening. The manager, seeing an honourable Muslim in distress immediately arranged a room for him.^{lx} Bose thus spent his first night in the Taj Mahal Hotel. Then next day he was shifted to Abad Khan's two-room rented flat in Bajauri Gate, Peshawar City. The property was owned by Khan Bahadur Mian Feroz Shah, one of the staunch supporters of the British imperialism in that part of South Asia. Abad Khan, a resident of Pir Pia (Nowshera), was a close friend of Akbar Shah who frequently visited Afghanistan in connection with his transport business.^{lxi} Interestingly, some writers including M Bose have misunderstood the position of Abad Khan and the part played by him. He considered Abad Khan a very important person and relates how Mian Mohammad Shah gave the idea of informing Dr. Khan Sahib, elder brother of Abdul Ghaffar Khan and the former Congress premier of the Frontier Province, of Bose's presence in Peshawar and that he was snubbed by Abad Khan.^{lxii} Let me make it clear that Akbar Shah was the main character in Bose's escape and all the remaining ones like Bhagat Ram, Mian Mohammad Shah and Abad Khan were merely carrying out his

directions. They briefed Bose about *Pashtunwali* (the Pashtoon code of life), the tribal ways and their customs, rigours of climate and other essentials. He was informed of unfamiliar food, unclean water, difficult terrain and the hazards of the journey. Bose was trained to look and behave like a Pashtoon.

After consultations, it was decided that he would continue to use his newly acquired name of Zia ud Din . But while Bose did not know Pashto, he was asked to pose as a deaf and dumb person. Bhagat Ram, his contact, assumed the name of Rahmat Khan. He was dressed in a Pashtoon dress i.e *malatia shalwar kamiz*, leather jacket, *khaki kulla*, *lungi* and a Peshawari *chappal* alongwith a Kabuli blanket.

After careful planning they decided upon the following route:

from Peshawar to Jamrud, they were to go through the Khajuri Maidan British Military Camp; from there they would pass through the Afridi and Shinwari tribal area into Afghan territory. That would take them to Gardhi on the Kabul-Peshawar road, Bhatti Kot, Jalalabad, Adda Sharif, back to Jalalabad and then to Kabul.^{lxiii} It was an unfrequented and difficult track but, at the same time, it was the shortest route and used by various revolutionaries in the past.

The departure was fixed for 26 January 1941 and while there was no time for 'dress rehearsal' they could not afford any lapses. On the appointed day, Bose and Bhagat Ram escorted by Abad Khan and an Afridi guide left Peshawar. Abad Khan carried them upto the Khajuri Maidan British Military Camp, fifteen kilometres from Peshawar. Bhagat Ram, Bose and their guide got off the car inside Shinwari territory. The guard on duty took them to be ordinary pilgrims visiting a holy shrine there. According to their instructions, the car waited for sufficient time until they had gone deep into the tribal area. After walking for some time, Bose felt down tired. They sat down for a brief respite. Bhagat Ram informed Bose that they were beyond British jurisdiction. Bose felt relaxed breathing the air of an independent territory, where he could not be touched by the heavy hand of the British Raj. The night was spent in Pishkan Maina, a village in the Shinwari territory. The next morning, 27 January 1941, they crossed the border into Afghanistan and reached Jalalabad the same evening. The next day (28 January) they went to Adda Sharif and from there to Lalman to meet Haji Mohammad Amin, the famous

revolutionary. Bhagat Ram introduced Bose as one of his comrades but did not reveal his identity. He discussed further details of their onward journey in order to 'send the comrade to Soviet Union'. Haji Amin briefed them about their journey and advised them to avoid suspicion by not travelling by bus. He considered a journey by truck safer than any other mode. From Haji's abode they came back to Jalalabad and then started for Kabul. On 29 January 1941 they were safely in the Afghan capital. It was there that they heard in the news bulletin of the disappearance of Subhas Chandra Bose.^{lxiv}

It was exactly ten days after Bose had left Calcutta that the fact of his disappearance became known. *Anand Bazar Patrika* came out with this caption:

"What Has Happened to S. Subhas Ch. Bose?"

"Unexpected Exit from Home:

"Great anxiety prevails amongst the relatives and friends of S. Subhas Bose since yesterday afternoon when it was noticed that he was not in his room where he was confined since his release from jail in the first week of December last. It is generally known that from the last few days he was observing strict silence and had not been seeing anybody not even the members of his family but has been spending his time in religious practices. Anxiety is all the more acute on account of his present state of health'.^{lxv}

The disappearance of Bose created a stir and sensation in the country. Lord Linlithgow, the Viceroy, immediately wired the Governor of Bengal for confirmation and further information.^{lxvi} The Governor confirmed the news of Bose's disappearance and his ignorance of Bose's whereabouts. To him the disappearance of Bose was no cause of worry: 'If he has left British India, he will be unable to return, if in British India, his arrest is only a question of time'.^{lxvii} The police and the CID launched a massive hunt for him. It was rumoured that he had renounced the world and has become a *Sadhu*. For some time the police chased every suspicion-looking *Sadhu*. No *Sadhu* was safe in Benaras, Allahabad, Madras, the Himalayas and even in Pondichery. They searched for Subhas but all in vain.^{lxviii} In order to deceive the police and the CID, the family members joined in the search for Bose and sent necessary messages enquiring if he had been seen anywhere. Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Rajendra Prasad wired their concern at his disappearance. Sarat Bose pretended that nothing was known and told them that 'we as

much in dark as public about Subhas' whereabouts and intention and even exact time of leaving'.^{lxi} There were some reports that he had escaped to Japan on a boat leaving for Hong Kong; some were of the view that he had simply absconded, in order to avoid the charges against him, but the investigations found that they had no basis.^{lxx}

Meanwhile in Kabul, Bose and Bhagat Ram stayed in a *Serai*. They started roaming about the Russian Embassy to negotiate Bose's escape to Russia. They kept themselves in disguise because the Afghan Government was under the influence of the British and they were afraid that the Afghans might hand them over to the Indian Government. For the next one and a half month, they kept on moving to various places to avoid detection.^{lxxi} They also tried to contact the legations of Germany, Italy and Japan. As a result there was a flurry of activity and messages between these Embassies and their governments but without any positive results.^{lxxii} Eventually the Italians succeeded in arranging Bose's safe exit from Afghanistan. On 18 March 1941 Bose left Kabul for the Soviet Union by car, with a passport with the forged Sicilian name of Orlando Mazotta. First they went to Samarkand , from where they travelled by train to Moscow and then flew into Berlin on 2 April 1941.^{lxxiii}

In Germany, Bose established contacts with the German authorities. He met Hitler and discussed in detail their future course of action. With the support of Germany, Italy and Japan he established the Indian National Army and took over as its Commander-in-Chief. His main assignment was to start operations against the Allied Powers. But eventually the course of war turned against the desires and wishes of the Indian freedom fighters as the ambitions of Japan and Germany were not realised. After the defeat of the Axis Powers, Subhas Chandra Bose decided to escape to Manchuria on 18 August 1945. But while doing so he died in an air crash. The following passage from Bhagat Ram is a befitting conclusion to the story of Bose's escape:

I thought within myself that after all this great man from Bengal suffered all the hardships with me in this trip without a murmur — the terrain, the language, the custom and the way of life of this country were entirely alien to him. A man used to good and clean living has had to live in shacks and had to go without food ever so often. His burning patriotism alone sustained him in the plunge that he had taken risking his whole life and career and leaving everything behind.^{lxxiv}

The story of Bose's escape ends here but the plight of Akbar Shah was not yet over. All was quiet until April 1941. One day police came to Akbar Shah's house and searched it thoroughly. Akbar Shah was used to such things. But to his astonishment nothing was found that what they were looking for. They carried the unpublished manuscript of his book about his journey to Russia. He was also arrested and kept under Section 29 of the Defence of India Rules. His other comrades Mian Mohammad Shah and Abad Khan (who were also directly involved in the escape of Bose) were also arrested the same day. Interestingly they were not accused of any offence. Akbar Shah was taken to the notorious Badshahi Qila, Lahore, and was kept as a prisoner for twenty days and afterwards was shifted to Deoli Detention Camp in a deserted place at Rajputana, as a detainee. It was there that he was told that he was arrested for assisting Bose in his escape from India. He remained there for another 18 months. On the abandonment of Deoli Camp he was shifted to Peshawar Central jail and after a couple of days was shifted to the famous Haripur jail. In Haripur jail he met his other revolutionary friends including Maulana Abdur Rahim Popalzai and Ram Saran. Akbar Shah became ill and was transferred back to Peshawar jail.^{lxxv} In Peshawar jail he got the opportunity of meeting his former Khudai Khidmatgar colleagues who were arrested due to their taking part in the civil disobedience movement against the British during 1940. They included his close associate of the Hijrat days Abdul Akbar Khan Akbar, and, Qazi Ataullah, who remained very close to Akbar Shah both in Khudai Khidmatgar movement and during his legal practice; and, Abdul Wali Khan.^{lxxvi}

Meanwhile in the absence of the nationalists parties from the political scene of the province, the provincial Muslim League leader Sardar Aurangzeb Khan was invited by the Frontier Governor Sir George Cunningham to assist him in the formation of his ministry. The League-Akali coalition ministry was formed on 25 May 1943 and it remained in office till 12 March 1945.^{lxxvii} Besides Sardar Aurangzeb, as the Chief Minister, the Ministry also included Samin Jan Khan, a Congress deserter and former colleague of Akbar Shah as Education and Prisons Minister. After taking his oath as Minister, Samin Jan visited Peshawar jail and was astonished to see Akbar Shah there. He was apprised of the plight of Akbar Shah and Mian Mohammad Shah by some political

prisoners present on the occasion. Samin Jan simply whispered: 'They would be out of jail by tomorrow'. Someone brought the news to Akbar Shah. He replied: 'Samin Jan Khan is our friend. But in our case he is helpless because we are not provincial prisoners. We are prisoners of the central government'. But the next day they were out of the jail.^{lxxviii} Actually Akbar Shah did his law apprenticeship with Sardar Aurangzeb Khan, who was then one of the prominent advocates practising in Peshawar. When he came to know of the account of Akbar Shah, he took personal interest in it and did not hesitate to contact the Governor N-WFP for his release.

Politics Abandoned:

After his release from prison Akbar Shah resumed his law practice in the province and soon became one of the prominent member of the Nowshera Bar Association. He did his practice with full devotion and found very little time to enjoy politics furthermore. Another reason for not taking active part in politics was the drastic changes on an all-India level and its repercussions on the provincial politics. As Pakistan was seen the only solution of communal question in India, some close friends of Akbar Shah including Mian Mohammad Shah changed their loyalties, left the Khudai Khidmatgars and joined the provincial Muslim League. Like many other Pashtoon intellectuals he was also concerned about the future of his people and the province. After the announcement of Third June Plan (1947) about the transfer of power to the Indian hands and the referendum in the N-WFP, Akbar Shah simply followed his party line and like the rest of the Khudai Khidmatgars boycotted it. Pakistan came into being on 14 August 1947 and according to Akbar Shah the fight for freedom was over because the British imperialism had left India, against which they were struggling since long.

At the instigation of Abdul Qaiyum Khan, the then Chief Minister of the N-WFP, he contested the first provincial assembly elections after Pakistan came into being and got elected. This created bitterness between the local Khudai Khidmatgars and Akbar Shah. Justifying his act he stated that the Khudai Khidmatgar organisation was already banned and I was compelled by my friends to give a tough fight to some of their opponents, mainly the anti-Qaiyum Leaguers, so he simply did that. The bitterness between the local Khudai Khidmatgars and Akbar Shah remained for a very brief period and despite his act

of not following the party-line, he was given all due respects by his fellow Khudai Khidmatgars and other like-minded people of the area. He left practice in 1978 and spent the remaining years of his life in his home town Badrashi. Mian Akbar Shah died on 8 April 1990 and was buried at Badrashi (Nowshera) leaving behind two sons and five daughters.

Thus was an end to the life story of a legendary freedom fighter who did his best to free the country from the clutches of the British imperialism and travelled as far as Russia 'in search of freedom'. Akbar Shah remained a true spirit of the revolution and was a practical man to that extent that even did not hesitate to support and help Subash Chandra Bose in his great escape from India knowing that he is risking his own life in that episode. Although his support of Qaiyum Khan after the creation of Pakistan made him a bit controversial, particularly amongst his comrades-in-arms of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, yet he was respected for his brilliant record of the pre-partition time and for his sacrifices for the achievement of freedom.

ⁱ: Personal Interview with Mian Akbar Shah at Badrashi (Nowshera) on 8 September 1984 (hereafter Interview).

ⁱⁱ: In education the North-West Frontier Province before 1947 was one of the most backward of the Indian provinces. Muslims and especially the Pashtoons lagged behind other communities in receiving English and Vernacular education. The Pashtoons 'despised education as fit only for Hindus and cowards', as they had little need for spelling, but much for swordmanship. Undoubtedly this was in part a colonial construct, arcane and essentialist: yet it was true that levels of literacy were low. For more details see Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, 'Muslim Politics in the North-West Frontier Province 1937-1947' (University of Oxford, 1997, unpublished D. Phil thesis, hereafter Muslim Politics.), pp. 59-61. Through the joint efforts of Sir George Roos-Keppel and Sir Sahibzada Abdul Qaiyum the Islamia College, Peshawar was founded on 5 April 1913. Sir Harcourt Butler, Education Member of the Viceroy's Council (1910-1915) said on this occasion: 'Standing here on the most famous highway of Asia, facing the mouth of the Khyber Pass, I confess that my imagination is powerfully affected at the prospect of the enlightenment which will radiate from this School and College, not only in this Province and along the Frontier, but for into the recesses of Asia'. Lal Baha, *N-WFP Administration Under British Rule 1901-1919* (Islamabad, 1978), p. 216. Based on Aligarh pattern in their general set up, the School and the College followed the courses of study prescribed by the Punjab University. For more details see *ibid.* pp. 192-220. However, some educated Muslims of the Frontier regarded the establishment of Islamia College as a nest producing the loyalists for the British Raj. According to Ali Abbas Bokhari, the then Secretary of the Frontier Muslim League '...to all intents and purposes the College is a political college having a body of European civil and military officers including the Inspector General of Police in the Committee....It will educate people, but it has stopped people from going to Aligarh, and other places and thus free education will disappear'. Ali Abbas Bokhari to Syed Wazir Hasan, 23 June 1914, quoted in Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, *Muslim League in N-WFP* (Karachi, 1992), p. 21.

ⁱⁱⁱ: A Committee was appointed under Justice S. A. T Rowlatt. Other members included: B. Scott, C. V Kumarswami Sastri, H. W Lovett and P. C Mitter. They after long deliberations presented some suggestions during the first quarter of 1919, which were accepted and enacted through two Bills, known as Rowlatt Bills.

^{iv}: Call for Hartal by Gandhi, *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 15, (Ahmedabad, 1965), pp. 177-188. Full details can be seen in Judith M. Brown, *Gandhi's Rise to Power Indian Politics 1915-1922* (Cambridge, 1972), pp. 160-189.

^v: Shah, *Muslim Politics*, p. 71.

^{vi}: On 13 April 1919, a peaceful unarmed mob was fired upon by one General Dyer resulting in the deaths of more than three hundreds and a thousand wounded. Details can be seen in R. Furneax, *Massacre at Amritsar*, (London, 1933), p. 33; *Disorders Committee 1919-1920 Report*, (Calcutta, 1920), p. 45; 'The Rowlatt Committee Report', F. No 1010, Bundle No. 58, Special Branch Material, Provincial Archives, Peshawar.

^{vii}: Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 71-72.

^{viii}: During the second decade of the twentieth century, the number of the 'wanted' Indian political activists in Kabul exceeded hundred. They had been busy in anti-British activities. To induce the pro-British Amir Habibullah Khan to support Turkey and Germany in war against the British, an Indian-Turko-German Mission was dispatched to Kabul in October 1915. Prominent members of the Mission included Mahendra Pratap, Maulana Barkatullah, the Indian revolutionaries; Rauf Bey and Kazim Bey, noted Turkish Commanders; and, two Germans Dr. von Hentig and Neidermayer. It had allegedly brought messages from the Turkish Sultan and the Kaiser of Germany. The main purpose of the Mission was to convince and persuade the Amir of Afghanistan to sign/cement a German-Afghan treaty and to attack the Indian border or join hands with Germany and Turkey in the event of their invasion of India and to attempt to prepare the Pashtoon tribes to rise against the British as soon as the Turko-German forces attacked India. The situation at Kabul was in their favour. The pro-Turkish 'War Party', led by Sardar Nasrullah Khan, the younger brother of the Amir, had lent their full-fledge support to the Mission members. They were also joined by an influential section of the Afghan intellectuals led by Mahmud Tarzi and his son-in-law, Amanullah Khan, the young and energetic anti-British prince. Moreover, a large number of Pashtoon tribes and a considerable number of religious elements in the country also promised their support to the Turkish cause. The Amir, however, under the pressure of the anti-British elements, at least for the time being, assured the British government time and again that he would remain neutral. On the other hand, the Amir professed his devotion to the Turkish cause, with the understanding, that the call for holy war was not yet valid for him because the World War had not been waged in Afghanistan. The Amir, largely depending on British subsidies, was in no way prepare to annoy the British at any cost. He informed the British that he always preferred British friendship and they must trust him. The members of Turko-German Mission, however, sensed the Amir's duplicity. Realising about the failure of their Mission they left Kabul on 22 May 1916 without accomplishing their assigned task. For more details see M. Pratap, *My Life Story of Fifty Five Years* (Dehra Dun, 1947); Dushka H. Saiyid, *Exporting Communism to India: Why Moscow Failed* (Islamabad, 1995).

^{ix}: Fazal-ur-Rahim Marwat, *The Evolution and Growth of Communism in Afghanistan 1917-1979 An Appraisal* (Karachi, 1997), pp. 157-161. For more details see L. Adamec, *Afghanistan 1900-1923, A Diplomatic History* (Berkeley, 1967); A. Fletcher, *Afghanistan Highway of Conquest* (New York, 1965); V. Gregorian, *The Emergence of Modern Afghanistan* (California, 1969); Aziz Hindi, *Zawwal-i-Ghazi Amanullah* (Urdu) (np, 1934); Beverley Male, *Revolutionary Afghanistan* (New York, 1982); Leon. B. Poullada, *Reform and Rebellion in Afghanistan 1919-1929* (Ithaca, 1973); and, R. Stewart, *Fire in Afghanistan 1914-1921* (New York, 1973).

^x: Mian Akbar Shah, *Da Azadi Talash* (Pashto) (Peshawar, nd), pp. 1-8.

^{xi}: In February 1915, fourteen students from various colleges of Lahore left for Afghanistan. They planned an organised struggle against the British from Afghanistan. They included Mian Abdul Bari, Shaikh Abdul Qadir, Abdul Majid Khan, Allah Nawaz Khan, Shaikh Abdullah, Abdur Rashid, Ghulam Hussain, Zafar Hasan, Abdul Khaliq, Mohammad Hasan, Khushi Mohammad, Abdul Majid II, Rahmat Ali and Shaikh Shujauallah. For details see Zafar Hasan Aibak, *Aap Biti* (Urdu), I, (Lahore, nd).

^{xii}: Akbar Shah, *Azadi Ki Talash* (Urdu), tr. and ed. by Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, (Islamabad, 1989), pp. 48-71.

^{xiii}: For more details see Malik Shad Mohammad, 'Deed Wa Shuneed' (Urdu), (Peshawar, unpublished); Allah Bakhsh Yusufi, *Maulana Mohammad Ali Jauhar* (Karachi, 1984); Abdul Qaiyum Khan, *Gold and Guns on the Pathan Frontier* (Bombay, 1945); S. W. A. Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 56-57; Lal Baha, 'Khilafat Movement and the North-West Frontier Province', *Journal of the Research Society of Pakistan*, XVI,

(July 1979), pp. 5-11; Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, 'N-WFP and the Khilafat & Hijrat Movements', *Central Asia*, (Summer 1987), pp. 126-128.

^{xiv}: H. Malik, *Moslem Nationalism in India and Pakistan* (Washington, 1963), p. 343.

^{xv}: Shah, *Muslim Politics*, p. 57; Lal Baha, 'Hijrat Movement and the North-West Frontier Province', *Islamic Studies Journal*, (1979), p. 231.

^{xvi}: It included Haji Miraj Din and Shahab-ud-Din of Lahore, who became the ring leaders.

^{xvii}: For these and other details of the adventures of Akbar Shah during his long and hazardous journey see *Azadi Ki Talash*, pp. 80-275.

^{xviii}: Under 121-A of the Defence of India Rules, those returned from Soviet Russia were convicted under the Peshawar Conspiracy Case. The 'culprits' included Mian Akbar Shah, Feroz Din, Abdul Majid, Habib Ahmad, Rafiq Ahmad, Sultan, Abdul Qadir Sehrai and Gohar Rahman.

^{xix}: Abdul Akbar Khan, 'Autobiography' (unpublished), Abdul Akbar Khan Personal Collection, pp. 8-12 as quoted in Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 62-63.

^{xx}: *ibid.*

^{xxi}: It was first published from Rawalpindi, then from Amritsar and finally from Peshawar. Abdul Ghaffar Khan was the editor and Khadim was the co-editor. In 1931 the co-editorship was given to Khaleeq who voluntarily left it in April 1947 and then Nazim Sarfaraz Khan became the co-editor. The journal appeared and disappeared at several times. The main reasons were bans on its publication and circulation by the government and the arrest of Abdul Ghaffar Khan. Its appearance as a monthly magazine continued until April 1930, then it was banned; it reappeared in 1931 for a short period and again was banned in December 1931. In May 1938 it reappeared (three in a month) and then was banned in 1940. In 1945 it reappeared and was again banned in August 1947. Prominent contributors included Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Jaffar Shah, Ahmad Shah, Mohammad Akbar Khadim, Abdul Akbar Khan, Syeda Bushra Begum, Fazal Rahim Saqi, Kiramat Shah Faulad, Abdul Malik Fida, Abdul Ghani Khan, Abdul Wali Khan, Qazi Ataullah and many others. No exact figure is available about the total of published copies; it is estimated that about 220 issues appeared. For details see Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 64-66.

^{xxii}: Shah, *Muslim Politics*, *ibid.*

^{xxiii}: *Pakhtun*, October 1929, p. 14; Abdul Ghaffar, *Zama Zhwand Au Jaddo Jehad*, (Kabul, 1983) p. 350.

^{xxiv}: *Pakhtun*, October 1929, pp. 14-16 as quoted in Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 67-68.

^{xxv}: 'An Appeal to the Khudai Khidmatgars', Hijab Gul, *Pakhtun*, November 1929, p. 38.

^{xxvi}: Interviews Mian Akbar Shah, Badrashi (Nowshera), 8 September 1984; Haji Mohammad Asim, Nowshera; 30 October 1984; Fazal Rahim Saqi, Wardaga, (Charsadda), 17 November 1991; Warris Khan, Rashakai (Nowshera), 3 June 1987; Mir Mehdi Shah, Wahid Garhi, (Peshawar), 4 February 1989; Sarfaraz Khan, Boobak (Charsadda), 17 November 1991; Fazal Karim, Pabbi (Nowshera), 10 November 1994; Kiramat Shah Faulad, Peshawar, 8 March 1992. For full details see Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 68-69.

^{xxvii}: During his frequent travelling with Abdul Ghaffar Khan Akbar Shah was much influenced by his simplicity and dedication to the cause of Pashtoon nationalism. Akbar Shah narrated an interesting account that once Abdul Ghaffar Khan and Mian Jaffar Shah visited him at Badrashi and asked him to wait for their return from Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib as they intend to eat their lunch at with Akbar Shah. Akbar Shah agreed and simply told his mother that two guests will be coming for lunch and just to add little bit more to their ordinary lunch, without disclosing the guests identity. When Akbar Shah's father sensed that some one was due for the lunch he asked Akbar Shah about their whereabouts. Akbar Shah without any hesitation told him about his guests. His father asked Akbar Shah's mother about the menu. She informed her husband that she had prepared nothing special for the guests. To this the old man got infuriated and took the lunch arrangement in his own hands. Despite telling by Akbar Shah not to cook so many dishes, his mother, as instructed by his father, prepared many dishes including 'Pulao' and chicken for the guests. On his return from Ziarat Ka Ka Sahib Abdul Ghaffar Khan, who was very hungry by then, asked for the lunch to be served immediately. On seeing so many dishes at the table-mat Abdul Ghaffar Khan got disturbed. He reminded Akbar Shah of the basic teachings of the Khudai Khidmatgar movement that he will not indulge himself in lavishly spending on such occasions. Abdul Ghaffar Khan refused to eat lunch at Akbar Shah's house and despite requests from Akbar Shah and his father they left the place without eating. Interview Mian Akbar Shah 8 September 1984.

^{xxviii}: A bullock belonging to one Gulzada, trespassed into the fields of another tiller in Ghalla Dher. The matter was reported to Azimullah Khan who fined Gulzada of Rs. 40. As he had no other mean to pay, to recover the fine Gulzada's bullock was carried away by Nawab's men and was sold. This aggravated Gulzada who uprooted the newly planted orchard of the Nawab and threw the plants into the river.

^{xxix}: It was a common practice in the area that after the harvest, the crops were divided into two parts: the share of the landlord and that of the peasant. The agents of the Nawab, present on the occasion, abusing their authority, were demanding more and more from peasant share: in the name of the *patwaris* and other related revenue officers. Then the peasant had to provide for the guests of Nawab; for the cattle of the Nawab; and many other deductions were also made from the peasants shares. Another tax called *Tora* was levied on both the bride and the bridegroom, irrespective of their social status, on the occasion of their marriage and it was to be given to the Nawab; *bigar* (forced labour without any wages) was demanded; and in cases of disputes and quarrels among the tillers, the Nawab usually exercised his judicial powers imposing fines and some times physical punishments thus adding to his treasury and striking terror among the peasants. For more details see Warris Khan, *Da Azadi Tehreek* (Pashto) (Peshawar, 1988); R. S. Nagina, *Surkhposh Kisan or Tehreek Ghalla Dher* (Urdu) (Peshawar, 1939); and, Bhagat Ram, *The Talwars of Pathan Land and the Escape of Subhas Chandra Bose* (Delhi, 1976).

^{xxx}: Full details can be seen in Shah, Muslim Politics, pp. 92-110.

^{xxxi}: Details can be seen in Sayed Wiqar Ali Shah, 'Mian Akbar Shah-A Profile', *Central Asia*, Area Study Centre, University of Peshawar, No. 27, 1990, pp. 119-121.

^{xxxii}: Interview Mian Akbar Shah, 8 September 1984.

^{xxxiii}: G. C. Jain (ed.), *On To Delhi* (Delhi, 1946), pp. 10-11.

^{xxxiv}: Subhas Chandra Bose, born at Cuttack (Orissa-India) 23 January 1897; father Jankinath Bose prominent Bengali lawyer; edu, Cuttack, Presidency College, Calcutta and Scottish Church College, Calcutta; for ICS to England in 1919; joined but resigned the post; in 1921 came back and joined Indian National Congress; remained in mainstream of national politics; in 1938 became president of INC at Haripura; in 1939 re-elected president of the INC at Tripura; differences emerged with Gandhi and other Right Wingers in the Congress; resigned the presidentship; 3 May 1939 formed the Forward Bloc within INC; August 1939 suspended from Congress for three years; arrested for the 11th time on 2 July 1940; released on 5 December 1940; escaped via Peshawar to Kabul, Moscow and finally to Germany; 4 July 1943 took leadership of the Indian National Army; died in an air crash on 18 August 1945. For more details see, Leonard A. Gordon, *Brothers Against the Raj* (New York, 1990); Subhas C. Bose, *The Indian Struggle 1920-1942* (Calcutta, 1964), and Sisir K. Bose, *The Great Escape* (Calcutta, 1975 and 1995).

^{xxxv}: N N Mitra (ed.), *The Indian Annual Register July-December 1939* (Calcutta nd.), p. 21.

^{xxxvi}: Subhas Chandra Bose, *India Calling* (Lahore, 1946), pp. 48-49.

^{xxxvii}: S C Bose, *Indian Struggle* as quoted in Gordon, *Brothers Against the Raj*, p.416.

^{xxxviii}: *ibid.*

^{xxxix}: M Bose, *The Lost Hero* (New York, 1982), p.138.

^{xl}: S C Bose, *India Calling*, p. 59.

^{xli}: S C Bose, *Blood Bath* (Lahore, 1947), p. 44.

^{xlii}: S C Bose, *India Calling*, p.47.

^{xliii}: S C Bose, *Crossroads* (Calcutta, 1981), p.344.

^{xliv}: Bengal Governor Report: 4 July 1940. p.115. R/3/1/13 India Office Record Library, London (henceforth as IOLR).

^{xlv}: Gordon, *Brothers Against the Raj*, p.420.

^{xlvi}: Bengal Governor Report: 22 August 1940, R/3/1/13, IOLR, pp. 150-151.

^{xlvii}: *ibid.* 10 September 1940, R/3/1/13, IOLR, p. 157.

^{xlviii}: Edmund Muller, Arun Bhattacharjee, *Subhas Chandra Bose and Indian Freedom Struggle* (Delhi, 1985), p.37.

^{xlix}: Bengal Governor Report: 20 September 1940, R/3/1/13, IOLR, p. 167.

^l: *ibid.* 7 December 1940, R/3/1/13, IOLR, p. 203.

^{li}: *ibid.* 5 December 1940, R/3/1/13, IOLR, p. 200.

^{lii}: *ibid.* 11 December 1940, R/3/1/13, IOLR, pp. 208-209.

^{liii}: Mian Akbar Shah, *Autobiography* (Unpublished), p. 7 .

^{liv}: *ibid.* For details of Mian Akbar Shah's journey and his political training in the Soviet Union see Akbar Shah, *Da Azadi Talash* (Pashto), (Peshawar, nd). tr. and ed. by S W A Shah as *Azadi Ki Talash* (Urdu), (Islamabad, 1989).

^{lv}: These details are taken from Sisir Kumar Bose, *The Great Escape* (Calcutta, 1995), pp. 23-26.

^{lvi}: Bhagat Ram's father Gurudasmal, a wealthy zamindar of Ghalla Dher (Mardan) became prominent by helping the police in restoring the law and order in the area. For his services, he was issued licences for keeping fire-arms. His eldest son Jamuna Das, entered politics, joined Congress and became an MLA on the Congress ticket. Hari Kishan, second of the nine sons of Gurudasmal joined the Naujawan Bharat Sabha. On 23 December 1930, at the convocation of Punjab University, Lahore, he fired on Sir Geoffery de Montmorency, the Governor of Punjab, who escaped death. However, the firing resulted in the killing of Chanan Singh, a sub inspector of the police on spot and injuring Budh Singh, a CID inspector and Miss Dermitt of the Lady Hardinge Women's College, Lahore. Hari Kishan was arrested, tried and sentenced to death. On 10 June 1931 Hari Kishan was hanged in Mianwali Jail, Punjab. The third son, Bhagat Ram started his political career by joining the Khudai Khidmatgar movement, and became prominent in escorting Bose from Peshawar to Kabul. The remaining six brothers, before partition had confined themselves to getting education. Interview Ishar Das Talwar, 24 January 1995, Delhi.

^{lvii}: Mian Akbar Shah, 'Netaji's Escape — An Untold Chapter', *The Oracle*, vol. VI, January 1984, pp. 18-19; Bhagat Ram, 'My Fifty Days With Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose', S K Bose ed., *Netaji and India's Freedom*, p.159.

^{lviii}: Sisir K Bose, *The Flaming Blood Forever Unsheathed* (Calcutta, 1986), p. 96.

^{lix}: S K Bose, 'The Great Escape', S K Bose ed. *Netaji and India's Freedom* (Calcutta, 1975), pp. 130-142.

^{lx}: Akbar Shah, Autobiography, p.16.

^{lxi}: Interview, Mian Akbar Shah, Badrashi (Nowshera), 8 September 1984.

^{lxii}: M Bose, *The Lost Hero*, p.152.

^{lxiii}: Bhagat Ram Talwar, *The Talwars of Pathan Land and Subhas Chandra's Great Escape* (Delhi, 1976), p. 64.

^{lxiv}: *ibid.* pp. 66-82.

^{lxv}: *Anand Bazar Patrika*, Calcutta, 27 January 1941, as quoted in S K Bose, Birandra Nath Sinha (eds.), *Netaji* (Calcutta, 1979), p. 123.

^{lxvi}: Governor General to Governor of Bengal: 28 January 1941, R/3/1/14, IOLR, p. 8.

^{lxvii}: Secretary to Governor of Bengal to Private Secretary to Viceroy, 28 January 1941, R/3/1/14, IOLR, p. 7.

^{lxviii}: M Bose, *The Lost Hero*, p.155.

^{lxix}: Muller, Bhattacharjee, *Subhas Bose and Indian Freedom Struggle*, p.39.

^{lxx}: Bengal Governor Report: 6 February 1941, R/3/1/14, IOLR, p. 11.

^{lxxi}: Full details of the time spent in Kabul can be seen in Bhagat Ram, *The Talwars of Pathan Land and Subhas Chandra's Great Escape*, pp. 85-120 and Uttam Chand's, *When Bose Was Ziauddin* (Delhi, 1946) and Abdul Majid Qureshi, 'Siyasatdan Ka Farar' *Urdu Digest*, January 1980, Lahore.

^{lxxii}: H N Pandit, *Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: From Kabul to the Battle of Imphal* (Delhi, 1988), p. 1.

^{lxxiii}: Riemund Schnabel, *Tiger and Schakal Deutsche Indien Politik 1941-43. Ein Dokumentarbericht, (Tiger and Jackal German Indian Politics 1941-43 A Documentary Report)*, (Wien, 1968), pp. 50-58.

^{lxxiv}: Bhagat Ram, 'My Fifty Days With Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose', S K Bose (ed.), *Netaji and India's Freedom*, p.180.

^{lxxv}: Full details can be seen in Akbar Shah's unpublished diaries (presently under the possession of the author), pp. 32-82; and, Mian Akbar Shah 'Netaji's Escape - An Untold Chapter', *The Oracle*, Calcutta, January 1984, pp. 22-23.

^{lxxvi}: Diaries, *ibid.*, pp. 85-115. Akbar Shah narrates how it was impossible for Wali Khan to accommodate himself in the common beds. Carpenters were, therefore, called and were ordered to prepare special *charpoy* (bed) according to his size which they did accordingly and hence the solution to a difficult issue. *ibid.*

^{lxxvii}: For full details of the formation, working and the resignation of the Muslim League ministry in the N-WFP see Shah, *Muslim Politics*, pp. 200-212.

^{lxxviii}: Diaries, II, pp. 112-114.