

## CHAPTER III

### REVOLUTIONARY ACTIVITIES OF GADAR PARTY IN CHINA

The Gadar Movement was started by Har Dayal in United States of America in 1911 with the aim to bring about a revolution in India and throw out the British rule. The movement included Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims but remained confined to the sikhs largely. The movement found its social base in several thousands of Indian immigrants working as labourers in industry and agriculture. The movement was formed into the Gadar Party in 1913 by Har Dayal.

In order to disseminate their revolutionary inspirations for the independence of India, the revolutionaries published a paper called *Gadar* and pamphlets like *Gadar-di-Gunj*, *Ailan-i-Jung*, *Naya Zamana* and *Balance-sheet of British Rule* etc. According to the intelligence report of Isemonger by the end of the summer of 1913 he (Hardayal) had collected sufficient money to establish a press at San Fransico for the publication of the newspaper Ghadr and the first number in *Urdu* appeared on the first November 1913. In December an edition was brought out in *Gurumukhi* and later in May 1914 a third edition was published in *Guzrati* and it is stated that 2,500 copies were printed weekly in *Gurumukhi* and 5,500 copies in *Urdu*. It was announced in the first number that, "The object of the paper was to bring about a rising in India with in a few years because the people could no longer bear the oppression and tyranny practised under English rule"<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Isemonger, *The Ghadr Conspiracy*, confidential intelligence Report, Achieves on Contemporary History JNU.

Ghadr-di-Gunj first came out in 1914 and was printed in *Gurmukhi* and consisted of Ten thousand copies. The pamphlet *Ilan-i-Jung* (Declaration of war) pointed India as downtrodden and trampled on by foreigners. Yet another pamphlet *Nia-Zamana* (New-Era) criticized the congress as an "official Assembly" of the British and said that almost every year an Englishman is appointed its President and further said that all its members are flatterers and timid men."<sup>2</sup> With the objective bringing about an armed revolution and making people aware of the wrong doings of the British in India these publications were secretly dispatched to India and many other parts of the world where Indian community lived. It was emphasized that independence can be attained only through an armed revolution for which preparations has to be made by collection of arm, spreading disaffection among British Indian soldiers, policemen serving the imperialists and forming of secret societies . The influence of these publications specially the 'Gadar' was such great that it enthused people to sacrifice everything for the country and to reach the country at the earliest opportunity for the sake of independence. "The spell of Gadar article was so powerful on Indians that they became fearless fighters for independence in the durations of a few months"<sup>3</sup>

### **Early Phase 1913-1920**

Once the Ghadar Party was founded and its publications brought out it became the responsibility of various Indian groups abroad who were enthused by Ghadr literature to

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<sup>2</sup>     ibid

<sup>3</sup>     Sohan Singh Josh, *Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna: Life of the Founder of the Ghadar Party*, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi: 1970, p.28-9.

organise fellow settler and open up Ghadar branches. In Canada Baba Harnam Singh played an important role. In Japan Prof. Barkatullah was there. The Japanese base helped India to mobilize and organise Indians at a number of other places as well. Sohan Lal Pathak did a good job in Penang, Burma and Siam. So for China was concerned. "Bhai Nadhan Singh Chugha and Mathra Singh Chima knew the Indians of HongKong and Shanghai very well. Mathra Singh had even participated in the Chinese revolution. Through letters he persuaded the Indians to read the paper *Ghadr* and organise themselves. Party Branches big and small were opened in these places. Gujjar Singh. Bhakna and some other Comrades established a party unit among the police of Shanghai"<sup>4</sup> Meanwhile the branches of Ghadr Party were opened in Hongkong, Hankou, Tianjin and Canton. There were some activities in Beijing as well. But Shanghai, Hong Kong and Hankou served as the main centres. "In 1913 the paper *Ghadr* and other Ghadr literature from America inspired the leaders at Hongkong to set up a unit of the Ghadar Party. A committee consisting of four members (Hira Singh, Labh Singh, Bhagat Singh and Hardit Singh) was formed. At that time there were 9000 Indian settlers at Hongkong which Included two regiments of Punjabis 28th and 26th; Gyani Bhagwan Singh worked among them. Bhai Bishan Singh was the leader".<sup>5</sup> However according to Isemonger on August 14, 1914 the assistant Superintendent for sikh Shanghai municipal Police had stated that "the Indian community in Shanghai numbers roughly about 1,100 of whom 900

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<sup>4</sup>     ibid, p.37.

<sup>5</sup>     G.S. Deol, *The Role of Ghadar Party in the National Movement*, Sterling Publishers, Delhi:1969. p.62-3.

are Sikhs and in Hongkong the figure are given as 2000"<sup>6</sup> During the early phase of revolutionary activities of Ghadr, Shanghai and Hongkong were at forefront. After early twenties these spread to other centers like Hankou, Nanjing, Tianjing, Canton and Beijing.

Once the branches were opened in the many corners of the world, the party started its organisational work and at the same time preparations for going to India and organising revolt to throw the British out of India were started. Meetings were organised at different places such as Los Angeles, Oxford, Vyana, Washington, Shanghai etc. places. Meanwhile in Berlin Indian revolutionaries were contacting German Government for possible help. As soon as the World War broke out Harendernath Chattopadhyaya succeeded in this mission on September 3, 1914. The German Government was very much interested in giving arms and taking help from the Indian revolutionaries in America and other foreign countries to destabilize conditions in India and it jumped at the suggestion of aid"<sup>7</sup> In the words of Emily C. Brown in her book on Hardayal, it was agreed that "the Indian's would take loan from the German Government to be repaid after Indian independence is achieved. The German Government further agreed to supply arms and to send orders to all their consulate abroad to help Indian revolutionaries in their efforts and to persuade the Sultan of Turkey to declare a jihad (holy war) against Britain."<sup>8</sup> The Indian settlers abroad were to be trained for an uprising in 1915 and the plans were made to capture Burma and then to launch a final assault to make India free from there. In 1915

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<sup>6</sup> Isemonger, *The Ghadr Conspiracy*, op. cit..

<sup>7</sup> Sohan Singh Josh, *Hindustan Gadar Party Vol II*, Peoples Publishing House, New Delhi: 1978, p.10.

<sup>8</sup> Emily C. Brown, *Hardayal: Hindu Revolutionary and Rationalist*, pp.179-80.

Santokh Singh went to Shanghai and then to Siam, from there he was to send two expeditions, one to reach the frontier of India via Yunnan and the other to penetrate into upper Burma and join with revolutionary elements there."<sup>9</sup> During 1914-15 thousands of Ghadr followers returned to India to arouse a revolution. February 21, was decided to be its date Sohan Singh Bhakna at that time was in Tokohama, Japan. He immediately rushed to shanghai where he "met Dr. Mathra Singh and Bhai Gujjar Singh Bhakna and others. There was a strong branch of the party at Shanghai. The upsurge was so much that thirty members gave up their jobs at once to go to India. All these passengers left Shanghai and reached Hongkong."<sup>10</sup> Harambhalal Gupta was also sent to China to consult and meet Chinese officials and buy arms from them, he could not succeed in his scheme and proceeded to japan on the same mission "The Japanese secret services got wind of his mission ... and he had to leave Japan hurriedly in order to escape arrest."<sup>11</sup> Similar attempts were made in other countries. On June 7, 1914, In Astoria (U.S.) Barakatullah and Sohan Singh delivered speeches and 'advised the audience that it was time to hasten back to India and start a revolution there." The revolutionaries even did not let the opportunity of *Komagata Maru's* return from Kobe to Calcutta go in vain. While at the return of *Komagata Maru* from Kobe to Calcutta some passengers appears to have slipped off at Yokohama and Kobe, and it's known that two men named Harman Singh and Bir

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<sup>9</sup> Hindustan Gadar Party, op.cit, p.17.

<sup>10</sup> *Baba Sohan Singh Bhakna*, op.cit, p.41.

<sup>11</sup> *Hindustan Gadar Party*, op.cit.,p.21.

Singh were given money by Gurdit Singh at Kobe and were sent to Shanghai and Hong Kong in order to collect men to organise agitation in India"<sup>12</sup>

The seduction of the troops was in the forefront of the Ghadr propaganda. Through its papers and pamphlets it called on the Indian community abroad to rise against the exploitation and terror of the imperialists, desert them and fight for motherland instead of fighting for the British. One such call said, "You go and fight for the sake of the whites. You always attack other countries, why do you not take your own country into your charge? Yet another said, "There are battalions and cavalry consisting of Indians---- they have sold themselves for a miserable seven rupees" it called on the soldiers in the services of British that. "O soldiers in the army, have you nought to do with Indian...? Have you vowed to live as slaves of the English? Are your lives worthy only nine rupees each? You can extirpate the European . . . in a moment . . . O' brave men, how long will you remain slaves? arise and sacrifice yourselves ?"<sup>13</sup> Such appeal left great influence in the hearts and minds of people serving the British. It provided an opportunity for introspection and questioned them instead of fighting for the British why shall they not fight for their motherland. However top Ghadr leaders frequently visited Shanghai and Hong Kong provided them its literature and enthused them with the feeling of sacrifice. Outbreak of World War provided an opportunity to strike the enemy when it was engaged in war at many fronts. Following the outbreak of war, meetings were held at various places and thus started the exodus of Indian settlers abroad to India with the objective to

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<sup>12</sup> Isemonger, op.cit.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

release their motherland from the imperialist shackles. On 9th and 11th of August Ghaderites held meetings at Frenano and Sacramento and advocated going to India with the express objective of starting a rising in conjunction with the enemies of the empire and advocated the murder of all Europeans and loyal Indian subjects, the overthrow of existing government and the foundation of a republic."<sup>14</sup> It was with this objective that *S.S. Korea* left San Francisco to Hong Kong on 29th August. Next ship was *S.S. Siberia* Which left on the 5th of September Some important Ghadr leaders on board were Mula Singh, Umrao Singh and Dhian Singh, Shanghai being their destination. In the words of Isemonger the party appears to have gone on to Shanghai for they met Nidhan Singh there and Mula Singh relates that Nidhan Singh was given Rs.500 by the Gurdwara for national purposes in India and that some arms were obtained from a German."<sup>15</sup> In September 1913 Mathra Singh had come to Shanghai and worked among the Indian community in Shanghai for the cause of Indian independence. In the beginning of 1914, he went to India, stayed there for two months and returned back to Shanghai upon his arrival in Shanghai he reported that the situation in India was favourable to their cause and after a few days he left to Hong Kong. In Hang Kong he worked among the Indian troops. He took lot of Ghadar literature from Shanghai and distributed it among the troops through a watchman. When the revolutionaries began to flock back to India on the outbreak of war, he started to beat up recruits for the cause and sailed for India with some of them

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<sup>14</sup> Isemonger, op.cit.

<sup>15</sup> Isemonger, op.cit.

arriving in Calcutta in October."<sup>16</sup> Another prominent leader in Shanghai was Mula Singh, who had been there in the Shanghai Municipality police but was dismissed after two and a half years for "having been a ring leader in disturbances between the Manjha and Malva sections of the Sikh policemen"<sup>17</sup> In Shanghai he was assigned the job of military operations and collected arms and immunities for the Indian cause.

During Siam-Burma Plan Ghadarites in China were very active. Burma was completely under the British control, plans were chalked out for its liberations and later on to use it as a base for operations in India. It was suggested that the revolutionaries will work among the Burma Military Police and win them over. In this connection Atma Ram who was a Ghadar leader in Shanghai had gone to Siam. Other Ghadar leaders such as Santokh Singh and Bhagwan Singh had come from San Francisco. With everybody's efforts a branch was opened in Siam.

According to an intelligence report Atma Ram was a member of the Indian Revolutionary Party in Shanghai and after the outbreak of war volunteered for work in Siam. Early in 1915 he was sent to Calcutta and the Punjab with messages for secret societies there..."<sup>18</sup> Another Indian revolutionary in Shanghai Thakar Singh "left Shanghai in 1915, possibly for Manila en route to India with the object of disseminating sedition among Indians in Siam"<sup>19</sup> Yet another Ghaderite Banta Singh of Distt. Amritsar

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Home Pol.Dept., B.April 1917, Nos. 700-703, NAI.

<sup>19</sup> H.Willianson (comp), *The Ghadr Directory*, New Delhi: 1934, p.286.

was one of those who were sent by Tehal Singh to Siam on Ghadr mission but he could not proceed on account of his illness."<sup>20</sup> Other Gader revolutionaries of this period active in Shanghai were Atma Singh of District Gurdaspur, Gopal Singh of District Ludhiana was said to have gone to Siam with Santokh Singh of Dodher Amritsar District."<sup>21</sup> Nand Singh who according to British authorities was actively disloyal during the great war and have assisted in the distribution of seditious literature arriving in Shanghai.<sup>22</sup> Nand Singh was a close associate of Harbaksh Singh and Gujjar Singh and have assisted them in the production of Gadar paper '*Hind Jagawa*' Ujagar Singh was another active Ghadr in Shanghai. He worked as a constable in Shanghai Police Force but was dismissed by the authorities for his 'seditious' activities in 1916. Lachman Singh was a close follower of Ghadr doctrines 'and wrote several seditious letters and claimed to have sent the *Ghadr* to numerous addresses'<sup>23</sup> For his seditious activities he was deported to India in 1917. Apart from Shanghai Ghadrites were equally active in other cities as well and had opened its branches there. Mewa Singh of Amritsar District was active in Canton. He worked in Canton as a Chief Officer of the French Consular Police. According to British authorities "he was reputed to have been a seditious monger in Canton and a dangerous man."<sup>24</sup> He was reported to have entertained at Canton the *Tosha Maru* emissaries who went to

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<sup>20</sup>     ibid., p.28.

<sup>21</sup>     ibid, p.85.

<sup>22</sup>     ibid, p.205.

<sup>23</sup>     ibid.p.175.

<sup>24</sup>     ibid,           , p.187-88.

see the German Counsel. He was deported to India by the British in September 1915. In Hankou, Kharak Singh carried Ghadr activities. He was a Granthi in a Gurdwara in Hankou and used this as a centre for the receipt and dissemination of Ghadr literature.

British government with the help of Burmese Government resorted to repression and put down the plan many were executed and many put behind bars. According to a weekly report of the Director Criminal Intelligence of February 1918 from Burma in regard to this plan, "Sikhs began to arrive in Siam and a good many went through to India, but the Burma government was on the alert, having taken warnings from certain discoveries in Rangoon, from the arrest of two Indians who were attempting to seduce Indian troops from their allegiance and from the discovery of a plot undermine the loyalty of the Indian military police the plans miscarried, partly through the loyal co-operation of the Siamese government and a considerable number of leading conspirators were brought to trial and convicted and later at Mandalay.<sup>25</sup> Due to the solid spy network and the 'Loyal Siamese Government the revolutionary plans in Siam failed miserably. After the breakdown of Siam-Burma plan there was no further attempt to organise an expedition against India but the Ghaderites in Shanghai didn't rest in peace and kept the British authorities busy hunting for them as reflected in a weekly intelligence report from the Director of Criminal Intelligence, He said, "The remnants of Ghadr Party in Shanghai and partially the desperate ruffians who had escaped from Siam were a serious menace to the peace of Shanghai"<sup>26</sup> Atma Ram of Siam plan fame with Mustafa Hussain and some

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<sup>25</sup> Home Department Political Proceedings, February 1918, No.31, NAI.

<sup>26</sup> Home Deptt. Pol. B, March 1918 Nos.399.

other revolutionaries had planned to murder the notorious superintendent of Shanghai Police captain Barret. They obtained three pistols and waited for him on two evenings. When detained by a Chinese policeman Mustafa Hussain tried to persuade the policeman to let Atma Ram go but failed, at this shot the Chinese policeman. Later they executed a plan and shot dead sub inspector Harman singh of United Provinces Police who was inquiring into the doings of the Gadar Party in Shanghai"<sup>27</sup> D. Petrie, the British intelligence officer wrote from Peking on September 1918 appraising the British-Indian Government of the revolutionary activities of Gharites in Shanghai and other places. He was of the opinion that the Order in Council law didn't kill the Indian revolutionary plots in China beyond all possibilities of revival. In his opinion at that time no active plotting was going on but," Shanghai and other places in China, it may give little trouble when it is left undisturbed, but when it is played on by the influence of inflammatory agitators from America and elsewhere it is very easily stirred into a stage of ferment." Shanghai he said "specially has been a fruitful recruiting field for the *Ghadr* movement" which he said in the past was used as a 'safe rendezvous for parties of conspirators returning to India"<sup>28</sup> He further said that they have used Shanghai to elaborate their plots and increase their following. Here nearly all the very worst wandering emissaries of revolutionary movement have from time to time congregated. In this connection D. Petrie mentioned the names of prominent revolutionaries such as Rash Behari Bose, J.N. Sanyal, Bhagwan Singh, Gopal Singh, Santokh Singh, Ram Singh, Abani Nath Mukherji, Atma

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<sup>27</sup>     ibid.

<sup>28</sup>     Home Department, Political Proceedings B., March 1919, No.165, NAI.

Ram, Benoy Kumar Sarker, Tarknath Das, Santipada Mukerji etc. Therefore Petrie suggested that in order to further crackdown on revolutionary activities in China 'the need for a special existing executive powers will not disappear after the war and therefore the only prudent course is to perpetrate them.'<sup>29</sup> because the Order in Council he said was of 'immense use in the suppression of Indian sedition in China'. In India the Rowlatt Committee empowered the authorities to arrest, to search under warrant, and to confine in non-panel custody and therefore he said in China the authorities should be empowered with the same powers "to sent to India any person in respect of whose conduct the local authorities thought it necessary or desirable to have the opinion of an investigation authority such as is described in the (Rowlett) report."<sup>30</sup>

All the plans and plots of the Ghadr revolutionaries to overthrow the British didn't materialize. Meanwhile the success of the Russian Revolution made great impact on them and they began to study the success of it at one hand and to study the failure of their plans in India at another. At the same time they started to come into contact with Russia and looked for their possible assistance.

### **Second Phase: 1920-28**

After the event of World War, China was going under tremendous changes. It was immediately followed by the outbreak of great patriotic May 4th, Movement. Two other events which had repercussions on the activities of Ghadr revolutionaries in China were,

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<sup>29</sup> Home Dept Proceedings, March 1919, No.165, NAI.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid.*

the formation of Communist Party of China (CPC) and the reorganisation of the Knomindang (KMT) party. On the other hand Lenin had called on the communist parties and all progressive forces of the world to join hands with bourgeois nationalist parties in order to fight imperialism. Meanwhile Soviet Union offered that it will abolish all the unequal treaties signed by Czarish Russia with China. Sun Yat-sen was greatly impressed and he looked at Soviet Union as his friend and hoped for assistance in his campaigns against the warlords. In 1921 H. Maring reached China and proposed that the nascent CPC should join hands with KMT and expand its influence. KMT agreed to it as the party wanted to expand its influence among workers and peasants. Other Comintern persons like Adolf Joffe, Borodin and M.N. Roy encouraged CPC to join bourgeois democratic revolution led by KMT. Soviet Union was to be the source of assistance as far as military political and moral support was concerned. A military Academy at Huangpu (Whampoa) in Canton was established with Soviet help. In this background, came into being the First United Front between KMT and CPC against the imperialist backed warlords. A Nationalist Government was established on July 1, 1925 and appointed Jiang Jieshi Commander-in-Chief of the Nationalist Revolutionary Army consisting of some 90,000 troops, and finally on July 27, 1925 much delayed Northern expedition started off. With the help of Soviet Union and formation of the First United Front by March 1927 revolutionary armies had taken Wuhan (Sept 1926), Nanchang (Nov. 1926), Fuzhou (Dec. 1926), Shanghai (March 1927) and Nanjing (March 1927). The campaign was a spectacular success and it appeared that the revolutionary armies would soon unify the entire China.

The development in Russia, formation of United Front and the Victories of nationalists armies over the imperialists backed warlords left great impact on the Indian revolutionaries operating from China. They reorganised themselves, strengthened their party organisation and sought support from soviet union. At the same time came into contact with the revolutionaries of other oppressed countries such as koreans and Vietnamese operating from China. British intelligence agents in China got worried, when they learn about the sympathy shown by Ghadriles to the Nationalists, and the Communists and letters support for them. With this they saw possible Soviet Union's support to the revolutionaries as well. Infact during the Third international held at Moscow in 1925 Zinoviev had said that China had become for us the central starting point for action in India and was an important incendiary Centre for revolutionary and technical contact with India",<sup>31</sup>and had quoted that the revolutionaries slogan was 'Via revolutionary China to the Federal Republic of the United States of India'. In order to check the effect of Bolshevism and impact of the Chinese revolution and the British Indian subjects being drawn into these; the British intelligence agents in China conducted political reconnaissances on the activities of Indian in places such as Shanghai, Canton, Hankou, Nanjing, Tianjin etc. On India 'sedition' at Canton the agent said that the position of Indians in Canton was rendered difficult by the extreme anti-British feeling prevailing there and it was not natural for them "to be drawn into the general agitation", else where he said were no evidences but put a note of warning that should there be further anti-European outbreaks ... for some time to come vigilance will be necessary and

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<sup>31</sup> David Petrie, *Communism in India 1924-1927*, Calcutta: 1972, p.187.

close liaison between India and the Far East"<sup>32</sup> The British were of the opinion that the Indian revolutionary elements will find a footing in a disordered China and the Ghadr plotters and the Soviet emissaries will join forces and endeavour each to exploit the other to his own advantage.<sup>33</sup> Meanwhile the Chinese propaganda machinery addressed many pamphlets and other materials through press or otherwise to Indians in China and abroad to revolt against the British Government. Many such pamphlets were intercepted by British intelligence the first of its kind was in the shape an English leaflet from 'The whole Body of Chinese Seamen" which was addressed to many labour unions throughout India, *The Union* published by Shanghai students Union dealt in detail about the Shanghai massacre. The leaflets were addressed to over twenty five Labour Unions in India with the object to win the sympathy of disaffected elements in India.<sup>34</sup>

During the second phase of Ghadr activities in China, the Ghadrites win the support of Soviet Union, the KMT government as well as the communists. Their activities flourished in the centres such as Hankou, Shanghai Canton, Nanjing, Tianjiag and Peking. In *Hankou*, Ganda Singh was the most active leader of the Ghadr party. In 1926 when Jiang Kaishek went to Hankou 'he made an anti-British speech on the occasion of the welcome to Chiang Kaishek.' Sikh Gurdwara in Hankou was the centre place to execute Ghadrite plans and other activities. When M. N. Roy visited this Gurdwara in 1927, Ganda Singh was present in the reception. He was one of the staff member of *Hindustan*

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<sup>32</sup>     ibid, op.cit. p.189-90.

<sup>33</sup>     H.Williamson, *India and Communism 1933*, Govt of India Press, Calcutta: 1933, p.7.

<sup>34</sup>     David Petrie, op.cit., p.190.

*Ghadr Dhandora*. Another Prominent leader was Pritam Singh of Amritsar. He was also sent to Soviet Union for training. Initially he was active in Canton but in 1927 came to Hankou with Bishan Singh and Sawan Singh and took over the leadership of the Ghadr Party of Hankou<sup>35</sup>. At that time Pan-Pacific Trade Union Conference was held in Hankou, Pritam Singh and Bishan Singh attended the conference as representatives of the Ghadr Party. In 1930 he went to Moscow as a representative of Ghadr party. Narain Singh was another leading member of the Hankou Ghadr Party. Yet another prominent leader Sadhu Singh a Jat from Lahore District worked for Ghadr in Shanghai, Nanjing and Hankou. He was active in Hankou in the Years 1927-1928 and assisted Ganda Singh in the work of the India section of the Eastern oppressed people Correspondence (Ghadr Dhandhora). Sawan Singh and Karam Singh were also active Ghadr members of Hankou section Yet another prominent Ghadr leader of Hankou Branch of Ghadr party was Dasaundha Singh of District Hoshiarpur. He was one of the member in Mahendra Pratap's anti-British mission in Tibet in 1925. He reached Hankou in 1927 and formed the Oriental Oppressed People's Association which also enlisted active support of KMT government. In February 1927 he approached KMT to enlist some of the Indians for military training.<sup>36</sup> Earlier in February 1927, meetings were held and it was decided to set up a printing press for the *Hindustan Ghadr Dhandora* in Gurmukhi. the propaganda work and the distribution of Ghadr literature was in Charge of Gajjan Singh. The postal address of Hankou group was post office Box No.14 Hankou. The office of the Oriental Oppressed

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<sup>35</sup> H. Williamson (comp.), *The Ghadr Directory*, New Delhi 1934, p.229.

<sup>36</sup> Williamson, *The Ghadr Directory*, op.cit, vol.I, p.65.

People's Association was in KMT building in Shanghai. Dasuandha Singh and Charan Singh were in close contacts with the KMT as well as Communists inside the KMT, and had enjoyed their active support. In 1927 they "approached KMT with requests to enlist a number of Indians and to give them military training".<sup>37</sup> Later in March "it was proposed to form an Indian army unit in Hankou for service with the Cantonese" and the question was referred for decision to the KMT Committee. Dasuandha Singh was reliably reported to be in close touch with Borodin and George Hsu Chien, Communist minister of Justice of the Nationalist Government who were believed to be financing his activities."<sup>38</sup> Their paper *Hidustan Ghadr Dhandora* did a great job in spreading disloyalty among the Indian troops and policemen stationed by the British in various parts of China. The paper was initially edited by Dasuandha Singh but later its editorship was taken over by Samand Singh of Lahore District. In one of its publication it carried a special appeal to the Indian troops entitled "The Duties of the Indian Army in China". It said, "The dutiful sons of China are fighting for the freedom of their country. The freedom of India and the freedom of china have a close connection with each other. By the freedom of China the day of the freedom of India will draw near", it called on the Indian troops to help China in the following words, " Oh! Brave ones of the Indian Army, as a revolution is going on in China for its freedom... likewise it is the duty of the Indian Army to create a general mutiny and exterminate the unjust British rule with the power of their military knowledge and having cut the Chain of slavery of their mother country

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<sup>37</sup>     ibid.

<sup>38</sup>     David Petrie, *Communism in India*, op. cit. p.208

to cause the flag of freedom to wave over her head"<sup>39</sup> Hindustan Ghadr Dhandora continued its publication from Hankou and its members were in touch with Moscow and *Kirti* Group of revolutionaries in Punjab. Hankou group also organised an army unit and was being trained by KMT government, and it was reported by the British intelligence sources that in May 1927 there were in Hankou some 80 disaffected sikhs of the watchmen class"<sup>40</sup> in this unit. Besides, many revolutionaries had entered the KMT as its members.

**Shanghai** Shanghai was another prominent centre of the Ghadr activities. Ghadr leaders such as Dasaundha Singh of Ferozpur District, Dasuandha Singh of Hoshiarpur, Asa Singh of Lahore, Bishan Singh of Ferozpur, Budh Singh of Amritsar, Gainda Singh of Hoshiarpur, Gajjan Singh of Ludhiana and Ranjit Singh of Gurdaspur beside many other Ghadrites were active in Shanghai. In Shanghai Sikh Gurdwara at Paoshing Road was the centre beside Dasaunda Singh Mann's house in Chapei. Other centres being the Chinese Press building in Jinjiang Road and a club opened by Lal Chand at No.19, North Sichuan Road. On April, 3, 1927 about 60 Ghadrities held a meeting in the Chinese Press building and anti-British speeches were made. Gajjan Singh in a speech explained that it was the duty of every Sikh to help the Cantonese movement.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>     ibid, pp.209-10.

<sup>40</sup>     ibid, pp.217.

<sup>41</sup>     David Petric op.cit. p.213.

On April 16, 1927, Dasaundha Singh came to Shanghai from Hankou and hired a house in Paoshan Road, soon it became an important centre of Ghadr activities in Shanghai. On 19th April in a meeting which was also attended by Gainda Singh and Gajjan Singh, Dasaundha Singh informed the gathering that he was asked by M.N. Roy to visit Shanghai and deliver the following message. The message read. "The Hankou Government is ready to give military training to a thousand Indians and say that each should be paid not less than what he received from the Shanghai Municipal council. They should persuade their fellow Sikhs and the Indian troops to desert and join the Hankou Government. After a year's training they would be taken to the frontier of India through Afghanistan and supplied with arms and money..."<sup>42</sup> If in Hankou *The Hindustan Ghadr Dnandora* enthused the Indian community same job was done in Shanghai by '*Hind Jagawa*'. In Chapei on 14th of August 1927 a meeting was called by the revolutionaries and it was resolved that the publication of *Hind Jagawa* a revolutionary paper brought out from Shanghai should be resumed. Another Ghadr revolutionary Ishar Singh of Gurdaspur District who have said in a meeting addressed by him in Jessfield park in Shanghai that "it was the duty of the all members of Sikh community to prepare the field for revolution", Commenced the publication of yet another Gurumukhi paper called *The ShanSher-i-Hind* (sword of India).<sup>43</sup> Beside the publication of these papers and pamphlets it was advocated by Asa Singh of District Lahore that violent measures should be taken against Municipal Police Detectives engaged in watching Indian 'seditionist'

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<sup>42</sup>     ibid, p.215.

<sup>43</sup>     H. Willianson, *Ghadr Directory*, opcit p.131

activities <sup>44</sup> As a result the Ghadr revolutionaries in Shanghai murdered Budha Singh and Harnam Singh the Municipal Police inspectors looking into the Ghadr activities in Shanghai. The Chinese Communist Party Headquarters at Chapei was another important centre of Ghadr activities. Dasaundha Singh, Ganda Singh and Gajjan Singh the prominent Ghadr leaders with various others attended various meetings here. 'Plans for the removal of Sardar Sahib (Budha Singh) were made here'<sup>45</sup>

**Nanjing** In Nanjing activities were carried by Mahendra Pratap, Ganda Singh of Ferozpur who left Hankou for Nanjing in October 1927 with Arjun Singh and Udham Singh. Others being Inder Singh, Tuto Majra and Narain Singh. A branch of Eastern Oppressed Peoples Association was opened in Nanjing and Ganda Singh was made manager of it and editor of *Ghadr Dhandora* here.<sup>46</sup> Other Ghadrites who reached Nanjing in 1929 were Sadhu Singh of Lahore District with Bishan Singh, and assisted Ganda Singh in his work. The British intelligence intercepted one letter of Sadhu Singh written from Nanjing on November 7, 1929 in which he had stated that he had an interview with the Chinese Government officials who asked him to commence the republication of the *Ghadr Dhandora* as soon as possible with financial aid from them."<sup>47</sup> Nanjing branch of Eastern Oppressed People Association had been established by Isher Singh and other revolutionaries in September, 1927. Isher Singh had good contacts with

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<sup>44</sup> ibid, p. 15.

<sup>45</sup> David Petrie, op.cit, p.213.

<sup>46</sup> H. Williamson, *Ghadr Directory*, op. cit. p.77.

<sup>47</sup> ibid.

the KMT government and according to British intelligence was in receipt of a monthly allowance of 200 Dollars from KMT government. <sup>48</sup>

**Beijing** In 1925 after the failure of Mahendra Pratap's anti-British mission Dasaundha Singh had stayed in Beijing and was engaged in the organisational work of Ghadr Party there. The revolutionaries had laid the foundations of a Ghadr Ashram in Beijing in October 1926 he made a speech here on the occasion of Guru Nanak's birthday celebration in which he condemned the British for their cruel repression of the Akalis. Other revolutionaries present in the meeting were Ganda Singh, Inder Singh, Dulla Singh and Charn Singh. Charn Singh also delivered a speech and exposed the tyranny of British in Punjab. About the same time he wrote an article in *Ghadr Dhandora* entitled "Let China and India unite for the holy cause". From 10th to 12th April 1931 various revolutionaries gathered at the Paoshing Road Gurudwara and attended Akhand Path celebrations in the honour of Bhagat Singh, Sukhdev and Rajguru.

Apart from above mentioned centres other carters being Hongkong, Canton and Tianjin, where the activities of Ghadr Party went on with equal zeal as these were carried out in the centres like Shanghai, Hankou and Nanjing. Much of the activities centred around Hankou for being the centre of KMT Government and Shanghai and Hong Kong being the places where Indian settlers including policemen and troops numbered maximum. Some of the people mentioned by David Petrie, had directly approached the troops to rise against the British. These being; Gulzara Singh, Sangat Singh, Asa Singh,

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<sup>48</sup>      *ibid.* p.124-5.

Amar Singh and Dalip Singh. Dasaundha Singh Gainda Singh and Gajjan Singh were captured at their headquarters in Chapei for the same crime.

To summarise, the earlier activities of Ghadr in China (1913-20) were without any support from outside at first instance. These were carried out by collecting funds within the party and the assistance which came from its headquarters in U.S.A. However, they worked together with the Germans and also received their assistance during Siam-Burma plan and Mandalay plan. In the words of J.C. Kerr "... The first Gadar Scheme, namely that the sikhs should return to India and raise an insurrection in the Punjab, owed nothing to the Germans in its inception and very little, if anything at all, in its execution. In the later schemes, however, the Ghadr Party and the German worked together."<sup>49</sup> But during the second stage of their activities in China after the failure of Siam-Burma and Mandalay plans they became politically matured, sought the help of Moscow Government, the Chinese Government and made contacts with comintern. however as mentioned earlier their support to the Chinese Nationalist Government and enlisting latter's support was the outcome of First United Front formed between KMT and CPC against the imperialist backed warlords. Their activities in China came to an abrupt end with the collapse of United Front. In April Jiang Jieshi had organised a purge committee in order to liquidate the communists from KMT. From April 12, 1927 the whole sale liquidation by communist started in which thousands were killed. At this Wuhan Government backed by Moscow dismissed Jiang as commander in-chief. But Jiang had emerged quite strong from his Northern Expeditions, he immediately staged a coup and established his own Nationalist

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<sup>49</sup> J.C. Kerr, *Political Trouble in India, 1907-1917*, op.cit., p.272.

government at Nanjing. It was in the wake of these developments that when the All China Labour Federation sent a message to the Ninth All-India Trade Union Congress in October 1928 it severely criticised Jiang with many other bourgeois leaders. The message read, "The oppressed and the exploited masses of all countries, nationalities and races must realize once and for all that a united front with, or the leadership of such peoples as the MacDonalds, Purcells, Citrines, Burgi Suzukis, Chiang Kai-Sheks, Nehrus etc inevitably lead the workers and peasant movements to the most crushing defeats --- Unless such traitors are discarded and their reformist policies repudiated national independence in India or else where is not attainable and the emancipation of the working class and peasant masses is impossible".<sup>50</sup> It was stabbing in the back of Chiang Kai Shek that the communist while attacking him also attacked Nehru and others. They compared the congress with KMT and its leaders with Chiang. For Ghadrates it was equally a tragedy, but their dependence on Moscow and Comintern and on the top execution of a revolt without rallying the masses in India in their cause was bound to meet with a failure. However, their heroic struggle outside India and having worked for the Unity of India and China should not be undermined in any way.

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<sup>50</sup> A.K. Adhikari, *Documents of the history of the Communist Party of India*, vol.III, 1928, people's publishing House, New Delhi, p.390-1.

## List of Some of the Ghadr Activists in China\*

Name	Home Town	Place of Activity in China
Atma Singh	Gurdaspur	Shanghai
Banta Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai, Nanjing, Hankou
Gopal Singh	Ludhiana	Shanghai
Nand Singh	Lahore	Shanghai, Nanjing
Jiwan Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai, Hankou
Kharak Singh	Sialkot	Hankou
Lohra Singh	Lahore	Shanghai, Nanjing
Bishan Singh	Patiala	Tianjing
Hans Raj	Ludhina	Shanghai
Harbaksh Singh	Gujranwala	Shanghai
Harjap Singh	Hoshiarpur	Hankou
Harnam Singh	Lahore	Shanghai
Hazara Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai
Inder Singh	Hoshiarpur	Peking, Nanjing, Shanghai, Hankou
Inder Singh	Kapurthala	Shanghai, Hong Kong
Isher Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai, Hankou
Isher Singh	Gurdaspur	Shanghai
Jiwan Singh	Amritsar	HongKong

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\* Source, *Ghadr Directory*.

Kanshi Ram	Lahore	Shanghai
Karan Chand	Jallundur	Shanghai
Karan Singh	Lahore	Hong Kong
Kesar Singh	Lahore	Shanghai
Lachman Singh	Hoshiarpur	Shanghai
Mawa Singh	Amritsar	Canton
Ala Singh	Patiala	Shanghai
Bachittar Singh	Ludhiana	Shanghai, Hankou
Bur Singh	Amritsar	Hankou
Narain Singh	Lahore	Shanghai
Narain Singh	Ferozpur	Shanghai
Phuman singh	Jullundur	Hong Kong
Ram Singh	Hoshiarpur	Hankou
Sucha Singh	Ferozpur	Shanghai
Tara Singh	Lahore	Nanjing
Thakar Singh	Kapurthala	Shanghai
Ujjagar Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai
Dasaundha Singh	Hoshiarpur	Shanghai, Hankou, Nanjing, Beijing
Charan Singh	Jallundar	Hankou, Beijing
Asa Singh	Lahore	Shanghai
Bishan Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai, Hankou
Budh Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai, Conton

Gainda Singh	Hoshiarpur	Beijing, Tianjin, Shanghai
Gajjan Singh	Ludhiana	Shanghai
Ganda Singh	Ferozpur	Hankou, Nanjing
Ranjit Singh	Gurdaspur	Hankou
Roda Singh	Lahore	Hankou
Prittam Singh	Amritsar	Shanghai, Hankou
Narain Singh	Amritsar	Hankou
Sandhu Singh	Lahore	Hankou, Nanjing, Shanghai
Sawan Singh	Lahore	Canton, Hankou, Shanghai
Karan Singh	Amritsar	Hankou, Nanjing
Kehr Singh	Ludhiana	Shanghai