CHAPTER - V

His Role in Indian National Movement : Third Phase -

In South-East Asia
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Subhas Bose's role in South-East Asia as the Head of the Indian Independence League (I.I.L.) and as the Commander-in-Chief of the Indian National Army (I.N.A.) constitutes the third and the final phase in his struggle for national freedom. In these capacities he rose to the apex of his career as a freedom fighter and organiser. He mobilised the men, material and other resources to fight the British to free his mother country. He gave new slogans to his men like "Chalo Delhi!" and "Give your blood, I give you freedom", etc.

The ground was already prepared for this final battle by the Indian revolutionaries like Rash Behari Bose, Pritam Singh, Col. Mohan Singh and others. The I.I.L. under these revolutionaries, specially invited Subhas Bose to South-East Asia and to take charge of it. Subhas accepted the invitation and left Germany for South-East Asia by a sub-marine.

The situation in South-East Asia then (1943-45) was very tense. Japan, the key-power of the area, was involved in the second world war as an axis power against the allied powers. The whole South-East Asia from Burma to Japan, was
under the command of Japan. The Indian revolutionaries, aided by Japan, were hoping to attack British authority in India and liberate her. They were only waiting for a resourceful General to lead them to Delhi. They were successful in getting Netaji himself to lead them.

Bose arrived in Saban, an isolated off-shore islet, north of Sumatra, instead of Penang (Malaya), where the secrecy of Bose's arrival was revealed by the Japanese Submarine, I-29, on 6 May, 1943. Col. Yamamoto, former Japanese military attache to the Japanese Embassy in Berlin, and the then Director of the Hikari Kikan (a Japanese 'P' organ of psychological warfare and intelligence officers and also an advisory group to I.N.A.) received Bose as a Japanese VIP with the assumed name Matsuda. Bose thanked the Japanese Government in his note to his autograph to a photograph of the passengers with the crew on the surfaced deck:

"It was a great pleasure to sail aboard this submarine. I am deeply grateful to the Japanese Imperial Government for having made it possible... I hereby express my sincere

thanks for the kindness shown us by all the crew members from captain downwards. The voyage I had aboard this ship will evoke pleasant memories for the rest of my life. I believe that this will mark a milestone in our fight for victory and peace.  

Bose flew, after five days, from Saban by a short-range combat plane, with a over-night stop each at Penang, Saigon, Manila, Taipei and Hamamatsu and reached Tokyo on 16 May, 1943. This was his first visit to Tokyo, the headquarters of his third and the last phase of his freedom struggle. He stayed in the Imperial Hotel, very near the Imperial Palace and the Prime Minister's office.

Bose's travel from Berlin to Tokyo was most adventurous one. "Through the entire annals of world war II, this was the only known submarine-to-submarine transfer of passengers in an area dominated by enemy air and naval strength". Navy experts of many nations have termed their success as a near miracle." In the jet age of 1970's a flight from Berlin to Tokyo takes hardly twenty hours, but for Netaji the tremendously perilous voyage from Germany to Japan took more than ninety days.  Adam Von Trot  

3. Ibid., pp. 163-4.  
4. Ibid., p.162.  
5. Ibid., p.158.  
6. Ibid.
retorted to a cable message from the German Ambassador in Tokyo that the Japanese Naval Command objected to a civilian travelling on a war ship in war time: "Subhas Chandra Bose is by no means a private person but Commander-in-chief of the Indian Liberation Army." 7

The next day of his arrival in Tokyo, on 17 May, 1943, Bose started his political mission. He met Japanese Army and Navy Chiefs of staff, Navy Minister and Foreign Minister. He had to wait for a long time for about twenty-five days, until 10 June 1943, to see the Prime Minister of Japan, who was also the War Minister, the German-educated General Tojo as he was busy with the war situation and perhaps, he might have underestimated Bose.

The fall of the Axis powers in the war started six months earlier, when Germany withdrew from Stalingrad, and the German and Italian forces collapsed on the African front. Japan had entered world war II, a year and half earlier, on 8th December, 1941. The Japanese public was jubilant over the fall of the Axis powers.

In the meantime, in June 1943, Rash Behari Bose, President of the Indian Independence League met Bose in the

Imperial Hotel and narrated the situation and requested him to take the leadership of the Indian Independence movement in the Far East.  

Rash Behari Bose had hit the headlines earlier for throwing a bomb at Lord Hardinge, the then Viceroy and Governor General of India, near Chandani Chowk, Old Delhi, in 1912. He was involved in the revolt by the Indian soldiers against the British authority in India. The ship carrying arms and ammunition from Germany for the purpose was captured by the British. Rash Behari escaped to Japan under the name Tagore and since then had been staying in Japan, as its citizen, marrying a Japanese woman. Earlier, for several years he was protected by Prof. Toyama, of the Black Dragon Society of Japan. 

The very next day of the entry of Japan in world war II, the Indian Independence League was officially inaugurated at Bangkok in December, 1941, under the leadership of Baba Amar Singh, assisted by Giani Pritam Singh, two young Indian revolutionaries who had escaped in Dec. 1940 from the Hongkong prison, where they were imprisoned for their anti-British movement and sought asylum under the Japanese Government.  

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9. Ibid., p. 11.
An Official Note was exchanged between Pratam Singh, on behalf of the I.I.L. and Tamura, on behalf of Japan, which was like a treaty of Indo-Japanese collaboration. The Note said:

"We hereby pledge to devote ourselves to the task of realizing the spirit of the following statement which will serve as the basis for our movement.

(1) Our co-operation should be carried on for the purpose of bringing peace, freedom and prosperity to the Greater East Asia on the basis of a collaboration between the completely independent, free and equal countries of Japan and India.

(2) The I.I.L. will carry out anti-British struggle, resorting to force, to win prompt and complete independence. Towards that end, it will welcome the comprehensive support of Japan. However, Japan will guarantee that it has no territorial, military, political, economic, cultural and religious designs and demands whatsoever on India.

(3) The I.I.L. embraces all the Indian people transcending racial, religious and political differences."11

11. Ibid., pp. 13-14.
The I.I.L. intended to organise anti-British Movement with Japanese support (Art. 4(a), and the Indian Independence Volunteer Army (IIVA), Comprising the P.O.Ws and the converts from the British Indian Army (b). The Japanese would treat Indians and Indian P.O.Ws as friends and would protect their lives, properties, freedom including that of religion and honour (Art. 5(c). Even Malayan and Chinese women, it is said started wearing sari.12 The I.I.L. could use the radio stations in Tokyo, Bangkok and other places for its publicity programme, and other communications like aeroplanes to drop publicity materials. (Art.5(d)). The I.I.L. could claim materials and funds from Japan and raise donations from Indians (f).

The I.I.L. was identified on the battlefront, with the 'F' mark, "the brainchild of Pritam Singh, which represented friendship, freedom and Fujiwara."13

Tokyo approved the note.14 The I.I.L. hoisted a big flag in a town Yajyai, on the Malayan-Thai border, and big signboards in the Japanese and Indian languages, were put up. Series of meetings were held to arouse and attract the people for freedom movement.15

Captain Mohan Singh, "short of stature", "intelligent young officer", of the 1/14 Punjab Regiment of the British Indian Army, surrendered to the Japanese forces, as he was isolated and cornered into a rubber plantation, thirty miles east of Arouhatar, on the Siamese border, on 14th December, 1941. Pritam Singh accompanied by Major Fujiwara, in a car flying the flag of I.N.O., received Captain Mohan Singh, who, subsequently, joined the I.I.L.

In spite of his illness, Captain Mohan Singh called at the 'P' Kikan Headquarters, on 31 December, 1941 and put forth some proposals, including the organization of the I.N.O. He pledged full support of not only himself but of his colleagues also for the independence movement. He said:

"I have left my newly-wed wife behind in India. When the British authorities will discover that we have risen to fight against them, they will persecute my wife. The same is true of all other men and officers who have left their families behind in India. We have made up our minds to rise for the cause of freedom of our motherland even at the sacrifice of our families... The men and officers of

16. Ibid., p. 16.
the Indian National Army will certainly do much better
than what they did when they belonged to the British Indian
Army."17

The Japanese Commanders in East Asia advised the
Imperial General Headquarters in Tokyo on the importance
of Indo-Japanese collaboration:

"The grand design of establishing a new order in the
Greater East Asia will be accomplished only with the
co-operation of 350 million people of India... However,
there is a limit to our ability to carry on the war...
Burma is as far as we can get. In any event, we cannot
expect to advance far enough to reach India. Even if we
could go far enough to reach India in pursuit of British
troops, the Indian people would turn against us. From this,
it follows that the best way would be to help the Indian
people win their independence and freedom by themselves.

"To develop this guiding principle on a global basis,
it is essential to keep in close touch with Subhas Chandra
Bose in Berlin so that we can move in from both east and
the west. The east front, however, is more important and
consequently we had better invite Subhas Chandra Bose to
move to East Asia."18

18. Ibid., p.18.
Captain Mohan Singh reorganised the I.I.V.A. into I.N.A., early in 1942 and became its founder and the first G.O.C. 19

The Japanese Army under the command of General Yamashita started attack on Singapore, on 8 Feb. 1942, with the I.N.A.'s propaganda unit in the forefront to defeat Indian soldiers from the British side. Singapore fell on Feb. 15, 1942. The British Army surrendered the next day. The very next day, on the 17th about 45000 Indian P.O.W.s were assembled in the Feroor Park, Singapore at noon, and were addressed by Maj. Fujiwara, Pratap Singh and Mohan Singh. The latter appealed to the P.O.W.s. in Hindustani, to join the I.N.A. Mohan Singh said:

"I could not convince my conscience that it was not for Indians to shed their blood for an end which was not applicable to them. Britain, faced with imminent danger of invasion, had declared that she was fighting for freedom democracy and other high sounding principles.... Even at the most critical period of her national history, and when she was using India to fight for her own freedom she refused to consider the question of India’s freedom. Instead, she ordered the arrest of Indian leaders because they were considered guilty of asking freedom for India. Why should we Indians fight for the freedom of others who consider the mere mention of the word freedom a sufficient crime for the greatest of us to be put behind bars?" 20

Moved by such patriotic speeches, the Indian soldiers defected from the British side. Field Marshal Auchinleck, Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army confessed the policy of 'Indianization' of Army of the British Government of India. He said:

"The early stages of 'Indianization' from its inception to the beginning of the late war, were badly mis-managed by the British Government of India, and this prepared the ground for disloyalty when the opportunity came. There is little doubt that Indianization, at its inception, was looked on as a political expedient which was bound to fail militarily... There is no doubt also that many senior British Officers believed and even hoped that it would fail."21

Racial discrimination was another reason for disloyalty.

Auchinleck continued:

"The policy of segregation of Indian Officers into separate units, the differential treatment in respect of pay and terms of service as compared with the British officer, and the prejudice and lack of manners of some—by no means all—British Officers and their wives, all went to produce a very deep and bitter feeling of racial discrimination in the minds of the most intelligent and progressive of the Indian Officers, who were naturally nationalists keen to see India standing on her own legs, and not to be ruled from Whitehall for ever."

Messrs Gobo and Meon, representatives of the Singapore Indian nationals, joined the I.I.L. on the occasion.22

Meanwhile, Japan's Premier Toji declared in the Diet the intention of the government to liberate the peoples of Greater East Asia and to support freedom movements of Philippines and India. By this time the I.I.L. had shifted headquarters to Singapore and the I.M.A. to Mount Pleasant, Singapore.

Pritam Singh convened a meeting on March 9, 1942, under the chairmanship of Raghavan in Singapore, to elect delegates to the first conference to be held at Tokyo for 3 days from March 28, 1942. It was at this meeting that it was decided to invite Bose to South-East Asia to assume the leadership of the Indian independence movement.

The first conference of delegates from all branches of I.I.L., in South-East Asia met under the Presidency of Rash Behari Bose in Tokyo on March 28, 1942. Divergent opinions between the delegates of North and South of India rocked the conference. The old, Northern delegates like Rash Behari Bose called the southern delegates as the young radicals, and the latter felt that the former were the Japanese puppets and opportunists.23

Pritam Singh, three Indian delegates from Malaya and seven Japanese officers died in the air crash on their way.

to Tokyo. Pritam Singh "was a young man of priest-like appearance, wearing a white turban over his long black hair." He was a devoted and dedicated worker, and the Indian independence movement in South-East Asia - was truly his creation. It was he who found a working basis for co-operation between the Movement and the Japanese authorities. It was he who won over Captain Mohan Singh for the movement and thus fathered, not only the League but also the Azad Hind Psuji. He edited a paper - Azad Hind and arranged broadcasts from Singapore, Saigon and Bangkok.

Another setback came to the Indian independence movement when Major Fujiiwara, the "foster father" of the I.N.A. was succeeded by Col. Hideo Iwakuro, U.S. trained intelligence officer, in March 1942.

The Second Conference of the I.I.L. met at the square in front of the Silver Corn Royal Theatre, Bangkok, Thailand, on 15 May, 1942, under the presidency of Rash Behari Bose, attended by over 2000 Indian delegates from all over South-East-Asia and which was inaugurated by the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Thailand with a message from Field Marshall Pibulsonggram, the Thai Prime Minister.

24. Ibid., p.12.
Among the other messages, the one from the Netaji "attracted the particular attention of the audience." Netaji said in his message:

"The experience I have gained during the last eighteen months has convinced me that in our fight against British Imperialism, the Tripartite Powers are our best friends and allies outside India.... But the emancipation of India must be the work primarily of Indians themselves... We, who form the vanguard of the national army, feel however that the time will soon come when it will be necessary to take up arms in the final stage of the struggle...

India's liberation will mean the expulsion of Anglo-American Imperialism, the goal of the Victorious Japanese Army. It is now time to link up Indian nationalists all over the world in one all-embracing organization. I wish all success to your conference and I ardently hope and trust that it will prove to be a further milestone in our march towards victory." 28

The Japanese, German and Italian ambassadors in Bangkok attended the Conference. After the opening ceremony, the conference debated secretly for three days and adopted

27. Ibid., p.21.
a sixty-point charter for the Japanese government. The request for a loan to establish a provisional Indian government, and for recognition of an equal status for the I.N.A. with that of the Japanese Army were among the points.

Thirty five resolutions were adopted, first framing a constitution for the I.I.L. - with (1) a Council of Action consisting of the President, Rash Behari, two members from the I.N.A. (Gen. Mohan Singh and Col. G. G. Gillani) and two civilians (N. Raghavan and K. P. K. Menon); (2) a committee of Representatives; (3) Territorial Committees; and (4) Local Branches. The Second resolution was to invite Bose to East Asia.

"In terms of the scale and substance", the Bangkok Conference "was significant enough to mark a milestone in the history of the Indian Independence Movement in the Far East."

A rally of 25000 Indians in Singapore on August 12, 1942 and another in Rangoon in April 10, 1943 impressed and even alarmed the Japanese government, of the spirit and strength of the Indian Independence Movement in East

32. Ibid., p. 22.
Asia. By August 1942, 40,000 Indians signed to serve in
the I.N.A. A division of 16,000 was ready by September
1942. Gen. Mohan Singh's target was 2,50,000 which alarmed
Col. Iwakuro.

Meanwhile, divergent views widened between Rash Behari
Bose, president of the I.I.L., who was charged as a Japanese
revolted against the former at the end of November, 1942\(^3\)\(^3\)
and which was put down by the Japanese.\(^3\)\(^4\) Col. N.C. Gill,
commanding officer of the I.N.A. in Burma was arrested on
a charge of being a British spy, which Gen. Mohan Singh
protested against and resigned from the Council of Action,
followed by two others, Col. G.Q. Gilani and K.F.K. Menon.\(^3\)\(^5\)

Rash Behari Bose dismissed Gen. Mohan Singh from the
post of G.O.C. of the I.N.A. and appointed Lt. Col. Bhonsle
to the same and Kurayan Surmi and Harayan Surmi, Singapore
Indians, as members to the I.I.L. in the office of
Col. Iwakuro, on 29 December, 1942.

Subsequently, the Japanese Army in South-East Asia was
also re-organised. Col. Yamanoto, former military attache

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\(^{33}\) Ibid., p.23.
\(^{34}\) Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p.157.
to Japanese Embassy in Berlin and friend of Bose succeeded Col. Iwakuro, as the Head of Hikari Kikan, and Major Fujiwara, co-founder of the I.N.A. and first Head of the Hikari Kikan was assigned the supreme command of Japanese Army in the South-East Asia in Singapore.

On this newly set up stage of the I.I.L., the I.N.A., the Hikari Kikan and the Japanese Army in the south, emerged Subhas Chandra Bose in Greater East Asia in May 1943.

The aging Rash Behari Bose was eagerly waiting for Subhas to the East to take over from him. When Lt. Gen. Seizo, second in Command of the Japanese Army General Staff asked, in a friendly chat, at his residence: "Netaji is desirous of coming over here and I wonder how you would treat him". Rash Behari replied: "Netaji is a born leader of leaders. I shall of course, be quite pleased to ask him to take over from me." 36

Subhas Bose takes charge:

After a long waiting, Bose met Gen. Tojo, on June 10, 1943. "Tojo was very deeply impressed by Bose's personality and underwent a complete change of heart about India and the Indian people as a whole." 37 Four days later, on

37. Hayashida, op.cit., p.29.
14 June, 1943, they discussed in detail, in their second meeting, on co-operation in Greater East Asia. The foreign Minister Mamory Shigemitsu and the Chief of Staff was also present. After Bose left, Tojo said to the Foreign Minister, "He is a great Indian, fully qualified to command the I.N.A."38

On 16 June, 1943, Subhas was invited to visit the Diet (Parliament of Japan) which was in session at that time. Tojo made a historic speech in the Diet to support the Indian cause for freedom:

"We are indignant about the fact that India is still under the ruthless suppression of Britain and are in full sympathy with her desperate struggle for independence. We are determined to extend every possible assistance to the cause of India's independence. It is our belief that the day is not far off when India will enjoy freedom and prosperity after winning independence."39

First time, after arriving in East Asia, Subhas called a press conference on 19 June, 1943, of about 60 Japanese and foreign newsmen, under his real name, and read out his written statement in English, for which, as the Japanese paper quoted, he regretted. "To my regret, I can't speak Japanese and therefore let me speak in

39. Ibid.
English, which is the language of our enemy." The statement read:

"For many a year the British prisons in India and Burma were my home. But, instead of rotting in the den of an Indian prison I am standing in your midst... During the last great war our leaders were deceived by the winning British diplomats. We took a decision some twenty years ago that we would never again be cheated... the opportune time, has now come. We are therefore, determined to utilize it to the fullest extent."

Subhas referred to the total degradation of India under the British rule. The statement continued:

"Spiritual degradation, cultural degeneration, dire poverty and political slavery are the only things which India got from British imperialism. It is no wonder, therefore, that the Indian people have once and for all risen up boldly to smash the British chains and attain freedom..."

Subhas saw freedom of India in the success of the Axis powers. The statement continued:

41. K.S.Giani, op.cit., pp. 4-5.
"...... the Indians are praying for the victory of the Axis Powers (50)... the tyranny of Anglo-American imperialism will come to an end... and India will regain her lost freedom."

He was also for adopting violent method. He said "Since the enemy fights with his sword we too should fight with the sword... I have full faith in the total victory of the Three Powers... and in the liberation of the forty crores of the Indian people."

Dr. Baw Maw, chief state-designate of Burma, appreciated the statement in his telegram to Bose, received on 23, June, 1943.

"... Your first statement issued in Tokyo deeply impressed the Indian people here and gave them courage and hope. Both Indian and Burmese peoples have long awaited this opportunity. The time has come for us to rise. Burma hereby pledges herself to fight on your side in your fight for national honour and independence."42

The press all over the world commented on the statement issued by Bose to the press conference on 19 June, 1943.

42. Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p. 170.
Bose appealed to Indians over Radio Tokyo at 10 P.M. on 21st, at 6.15 p.m. on 22nd June, 1943, to Germans and at 6.40 p.m. on the same day to Italians for the cause of Indian independence. 43

The Times of London wrote:

"All the newspapers in the countries under Axis powers expect a great deal from his forthcoming activities and claim that the plea he made over the radio from Tokyo was far more effective than any broadcasts he made from Berlin. His movement to Tokyo means... the centre of the Indian Independence movement has moved from Berlin to Tokyo. Germany and Italy failed to do much to help the Indian independence movement..." 44

Subhas delivered a two-hour lecture on "India, My Mother Land", to 400 members of Imperial Rule Assistance Association of which Abe was the President, at 2 P.M. on 23 June, 1943. Mr. Ryutaro Hagaki introduced Bose to the audience.

After forty days of stay (16-5-43 to 27-6-43), Subhas left Japan for Singapore, leaving a message 45 to the Japanese which was broadcast on 28 June 1943.

"I was very warmly received wherever I went since I came to Japan. I thank you all for the sympathy you are showing towards us (Indians). On behalf of the Indian people, I promise not to forget the sympathy the Japanese people showed to our independence movement. Japan defeated our common enemy and thus provided us Indians with a golden opportunity to move ahead with our independence movement." 46

Accompanied by Rash Bihari Bose, Subhas arrived in Singapore on 27 June 1943. The leaders of the I.I.A., the I.N.A., the Japanese Army Command, the Hikari Kikan and the Indian nationals received him at the airport. 47

On 4 July, 1943, a historic meeting of about 2000 delegates of Indian revolutionaries all over Greater East Asia assembled at the Singapore Greater East Asia Theatre. The New Leader, Subhas Addressed:

"... The time has come for freedom loving Indians to rise and act. I should like to call on all our fellow country men in East Asia to close the ranks under a unified leadership and prepare fully for the hard fight that we will face before long." 48

46. Ibid.
47. Ibid., p.43.
48. Ibid.
He referred to Lord Wavell, Governor-General-designate of India and the proposals of Sir Stafford Cripps:

"While imposing military, dictatorial government on the Indian people under the new Governor-General, the British Government will attempt to get India to compromise with Britain. This once happened in April 1942, when the special envoy, Cripps came up with a proposal suggesting something along those lines."49

He called for active resistance from outside in addition to the passive movement from within India. Referring to the historical Quit India Movement of August 1942; he said:

"August of 1942 must be long remembered as a milestone in the history of the Indian independence movement. However, the independence movement based upon the principle of non-violence and civil disobedience has moved into the next phase. It is the goal and objective of our new organization to rise in arms against British Imperialism."50

He referred to his plan of Provisional Government.

49. Ibid.
50. Ibid., p.44.
He continued:

"To make it possible to mobilize all our energies and strength, I am planning to form a provisional government of free India. If and when we succeed in our revolution and in driving the American and British Imperialism out of India, the mission of our provisional government will be over. And then, a permanent government will be established in India according to the will of the Indian people."\(^{51}\)

He concluded his speech thus:

"... We have a grim fight ahead of us - for the enemy is powerful, unscrupulous and ruthless. In the final march to freedom, you will have to face hunger, thirst, privation forced marches and death. Only when you pass this test, will freedom be yours. I am confident that you will do so and thereby bring freedom and prosperity to your enslaved and impoverished land."\(^{52}\)

A congratulatory message from Gen. Tojo, Japanese Premier, was read. A resolution was passed to name Rash Behari Bose as the Supreme Consultant to the I.I.L.

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51. Ibid., pp. 44-45.
The same day, after the general assembly, both the Bosees paid a courtesy call to Gen. Count Juichi Terauchi, Commander-in-chief of the Japanese Southern Army Command, at his official residence. The aristocratic general, a man of calibre, one-time War Minister and potential candidate for Premiership, had also studied in Germany after graduation from the Japanese War College. He died from illness shortly after the Japanese surrender.

Next day, on 5 July, 1943, Subhas, first time in the military uniform in South-East Asia took over the command of the I.N.A. with the salute given by the I.N.A. led by Commander Bhonsle, at the square in front of the city hall in Singapore. After inspection and review of 13,000 officers and men, lined up in tens of thousands, under the scorching tropical sun, Subhas addressed them:

"Soldiers of India's Army of Liberation! Today is the proudest day of my life. Today it has pleased Providence to give me the unique privilege and honour of announcing to the whole world that India's Army of Liberation has come into being... the Army that will hereafter create the future national army of Free India... organised entirely under Indian leadership... when the historic moment arrives... it will go to battle." 53

53. Hayashida, op.cit., p.46.
Forecasting the decline and collapse of the British Empire he said:

"History had taught me that every empire has its inevitable decline and collapse... even a child is convinced that the almighty British empire is already a thing of the past." 54

To the Germans, in 1939, the battle-cry was "To Paris!" to the Nippon, in December 1941, "To Singapore!" said Bose, "Comrades, soldiers! let your battle-cry be 'To Delhi!' How many of us will individually survive this war of freedom, I don't know. But I do know this that we shall ultimately win and our task will not end until our surviving heroes hold the victory parade on another graveyard of the British empire - the Lal Killa or Red Fort of ancient Delhi." 55

With the organization of the I.N.A., Subhas joined the ranks of George Washington of America, who won freedom with his army, and Garibaldi of Italy.

Subhas advised the I.N.A. officers:

"... your responsibility is a heavy one... We have to unlearn some of the things that the British taught us and we have to learn much that they did not teach... Remember always that an officer can

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54. Ibid.
55. Ibid., pp. 46-47.
make or unmake an army... out of your ranks will be born the future General Staff of the Army of Free India."56

"Comrades!" He continued, "you have voluntarily accepted a mission that is the noblest that the human mind can conceive of. For the fulfilment of such a mission, no sacrifice is too great -- not even the sacrifice of one's life. You are today the custodians of India's national honour and the embodiment of India's hopes and aspirations...

"... I assure you that I shall be with you in darkness and in sunshine, in sorrow and in joy, in suffering and in victory. For the present, I can offer you nothing except hunger, thirst, privation, forced marches and death... I shall lead you to victory and freedom. It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India shall be free and that we shall give our all to make her free."57

While touring the South-East Asia, Premier Gen. Tojo, accompanied by Subhas, inspected the I.M.A. on 6 July, 1943. The Japanese military officers, in Singapore, praised Subhas in the presence of Gen. Tojo. One Colonel said:

"This Indian leader lives 24 hours of every day only in completely disinterested dedication to the cause of his country's emancipation. He is stoicism itself and has not shown any interest in the common pleasures of life."58

Tojo was satisfied with the mission of Subhas: "I am glad that my judgement was correct. When I met him for the first time in Tokyo, I felt I was looking at a man of

56. Ibid., pp. 47-48.
really great calibre." After conferring with Terauchi, Gen. Tojo permitted Bose to organise a provisional government. "You may go ahead with the establishment of your provisional government." 60

The Singapore Indians rallied round Gen. Tojo on 9 July, 1943. Subhas addressed them, reminding the world as well as the enemy:

"... the Indian people outside India, particularly those in East Asia, are building an army powerful enough to attack the British troops operating in India, and that he was about to establish a provisional government whose mission was to come to a showdown with the British troops in India by mobilising every resource the Indian people could make available." 61

He appealed to India's women to form the Jhansi Rani Regiment:

"I also urge Indian women to be brave enough to form a regiment and take up arms to fight for freedom like the Rani of Jhansi... This will be a real second front to fight for Indian independence." 62

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69. Ibid.
60. Ibid.
61. Hayashida, op. cit., p. 49.
62. Ibid.
Subhas left Singapore on 20 July, 1943, for Rangoon to attend Burma's independence ceremony, scheduled on August 1, 1943. On the way, he stopped over in Bangkok (Thailand), and tried to see the Prime Minister, Marshal Luang Pibulsonggram. Subhas came to know that the latter was out of station. So he fixed his appointment on his way back from Rangoon. There were some indications that the Premier was reluctant to see the Indian revolutionary.

On 29 July, 1943, Netaji arrived in Rangoon. Mr. Gami, President of the Burmese Wing of the I.I.E., Japanese and Burmese Government and military representatives and millions of Indians were present at the airport to receive him. Netaji addressed the Indian youth in Burma, at a meeting, for about an hour.

Netaji attended Burma's independence ceremony, on August 1, 1943 and addressed the audience recollecting his memory of Mandalay days.

He also referred to the politics of Burma, which was separated from India after the Government of India Act of 1935.

64. Ibid.
66. Ibid.
He appealed to the Indians of the two lessons out of the Burmese history: "One is that it has taught us what we can do if we successfully take advantage of a golden opportunity. Another is that when Britain invaded Burma in the nineteenth century, they used India as a stepping-stone. When the Indian National Army will attack British troops, we will likewise use this newly-emancipated country of Burma as a stepping-stone." 67

He appreciated the help of the Japanese: "Contrary to these British empty promises, Japan has lived up to every promise it made, even in the midst of the war... In sharp contrast to the hypocritical policy on the part of Britain, the statesmanship and the generosity Japan has displayed in dealing with India reflect the integrity of its national policy." 68

He called upon the Asians and particularly the Indians, for their emancipation:

"Asia now stands on the threshold of a new era in history. Now is the time for all the oppressed peoples of Asia to rise and fight for emancipation. Particularly, it is the sacred duty of the Indian people to seize this

67. Ibid., p.54.
68. Ibid.
opportunity to realise their long-cherished dream of independence. Freedom for Asia cannot be expected until and unless India becomes free... In any event, India should clasp the hands of Japan extended over India and other oppressed Asian peoples." 69

On his way back from Rangoon, Netaji visited Bangkok for the second time, on 4 August, 1943, and succeeded in meeting the Prime Minister of Thailand and the diplomatic and military agencies of the Axis powers in Thailand and got consent to the I.N.A. to pass through Thailand to Burma. 70

In commemoration of the first anniversary of the Quit India Movement, Netaji held a meeting of the Indians, at the Bangkok University Auditorium, on 9 August, 1943. He called upon them to intensify their fight against Britain. 71

The same day, on 9 August, 1943, Netaji proceeded to Rangoon and met the Japanese Ambassador, Yoshizawa and others. 72 Netaji addressed a meeting of about 1000 Indians.

After the whirlwind diplomatic tour of East Asia since 20 July, 1943, Netaji returned to Singapore, on 14 August, 1943, and on the same day he addressed a rally in commemoration of the first anniversary of Gandhi's arrest, at the square.

69. Ibid.
70. Saito & Hayeshida, op. cit., p.185.
72. Ibid. (But, in A Beacon Across Asia, p.185, to Saigon).
The National Women's Corps, school children and citizens marched through the main street of the city to the rally.

In the meantime, Japan decided on 12 August, 1943 to prepare for the Imphala Operation, an all-out offensive against the British in India, which was revealed to Netaji by the Japanese military officers, Maj. Gen. Totsu Kunomasa, a former Military attaché in Germany, and Maj. Isao Ono, a former Military attaché in France. The Japanese military attaché, Maj. Fujikawa, the I.N.A's foster-father, intelligence officer of the 15th Army, who gave a surprise visit to Singapore, on 26 August, 1943. Gen. Kataguchi was to carry out the operation in close co-operation with the I.N.A. Netaji who was anticipating eagerly such an opportunity, and consented to it enthusiastically in German language. 73

Netaji travelled far and wide to awaken Indians to fight against Britain and to get support to his Provisional Government of Free India, about to come into being, through funds. By the time, the British-Canadian troops landed in Italy and the Badarjo Regime had surrendered. 74 Still Netaji was confident of the fall of Britain, and he regretted, in this respect, for the wavering Indians, in his address to a rally of 15,000, for two hours, at Hinan, 75 on 3 September, 1943:

74. Hayashida, op. cit., p. 56.
75. Ibid., p. 55. (But, in A Beacon Across Asia, p. 197, Penang).
"It is an undeniable fact that some Indians, to our regret, are so heavily influenced by the British that they believe in British Victory. Today, Britain is getting along simply because of outside help. Fighting under American instructions and with American aid, Britain is achieving some success... The present war is actually being fought between Japan and Germany on the one hand, and the United States on the other."76

Netaji correctly forecast the post-war result about the world leadership and about the freedom of India:

"Who will take over the leadership of the world depends upon the outcome of the war. Even if the enemy won the war, Britain would have nothing to gain. It is the United States which stands to gain... Britain will eventually be driven out of India."77

The prophetic speech was so effective that two million dollars were collected on the spot, at the end of the speech.

During the last week of September, 1943, Netaji visited, again, Burma, for the reception of a Division there, which was to proceed to the Indian front.78 He visited the tomb of Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul Emperor of India, who organised the first freedom movement of India in 1857.

76. Ibid., p.56.
77. Ibid.
78. N.G. Jog, op.cit., p.239.
Netaji pointed out the irony of History that the remains of the last king of Burma, in contrast, rest in India. Netaji donated generously to the Burmese Government. Even he made an offer of 100,000 tons of rice to famine affected area in Bengal, provided safe transportation was guaranteed.

The Provisional Government:

"I swear by God," Netaji took an oath at the Conference of about 1000 representatives of the I.I.L. in East Asia, convened by him in Singapore on 21 October, 1943, which unanimously approved his proposal to establish the Provisional Government of Free India and nominated him as the Chief of the Government, "that I will do my best to emancipate India and its 320 million people. I will abide by this oath until my death. I will make every possible effort to bring freedom to the Indian people. I also swear to devote myself to the good of India even after its emancipation."

In the statement, issued on the occasion, Subhas referred to the importance of a national army and a national government: The statement read:

70. Ibid.
80. Quoted, Ibid., p. 239.
81. Hayashida, op.cit., p. 58.
"As a student of the history of revolutions in the world throughout the twenty two years of my political career, I have always felt that India lacks two vital requirements for its struggle for independence. They are a national army and a national government."\textsuperscript{82}

The first requirement was fulfilled with the founding of I.N.A. and the second i.e., a provisional government, was also achieved on this occasion as Ireland had done in 1916, the Czecha, during world war I, and Turkey under Mustapha Kemal Pasha after world war I. Subhas referred to its organization and programme. The statement continued:

"It is organised on a war footing, and its primary objective is to launch the final phase of the struggle against the British in India and its allies... The cabinet is made up mostly of military representatives with a smaller number of officials in charge of cultural programmes... The final phase of the struggle will begin when the Indian National Army crosses into India to start on a historic march towards Delhi. Only when the Indian flag is hoisted over the Governor-General's residence after Britain and the U.S.A., have been driven out of India, our march will come to an end."\textsuperscript{83}

The provisional government guaranteed the freedom of religion,... equal rights and opportunities for all sections of the Indian people."\textsuperscript{84}

On 23 October, 1943, Japan recognised the Provisional Government.\textsuperscript{85} Germany, Italy, Burma, Philippines, 

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{82} Ibid., p.59.
\item \textsuperscript{83} Hayashida, op.cit., pp. 59-60.
\item \textsuperscript{84} Ibid., p.64.
\item \textsuperscript{85} Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p.189.
\end{itemize}
Croatia, Manchukuo and Siam recognised later. The next day, on 24, at 00.55 A.M. The Provisional Government as an independent state, declared war on the U.S.A. and Britain. Terauchi, Field Marshal, pledged to support India.

On 26, October 1943, Netaji left Singapore with his two Generals, Chatterji and Bhonsle for Japan to attend the Greater East Asia Conference scheduled on 5th and 6th November, 1943. The Conference was held in the Diet Building. Premier Cho Kekai of Manchuria, President Oaei of China, President Laurel of the Philippines, Prince Wonweai of Thailand and Premier Ba Maw of Burma attended the Conference. "None of them matches Subhas Bose in calibre. As a result, the conference in substance turned out to be Netaji's conference although he participated in it as an observer."90

German Ambassador in Tokyo, Heinrich Stahmeier made an official call on Netaji and notified the German recognition of the provisional Government, on 2 November, 1943.

On the 2nd day of the conference (i.e., 6th Nov. 1943) after the adoption of the Greater East Asia Joint Declaration, Premier Ba Maw of Burma said that "no emancipation of

86. Hayashida, op.cit., p.65.
88. Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p.190.
89. Hayashida, op.cit., p.66.
90. Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p.192.
Asia is possible without liberation of India" and he moved a motion to "extend full sympathy and support to the Indian struggle for freedom." The motion was unanimously seconded by all the delegates. Netaji took the floor and thanked the delegates for the same. He said:

"This is not a conference for dividing the spoils among the conquerors. This is not a conference for hatching a conspiracy to victimize a weak power, nor is it a conference for trying to defraud a weak neighbour. This is an assembly of liberated nations, an assembly that is out to create a new order in this part of the world, on the basis of the sacred principles of justice, national sovereignty, reciprocity in international relations and mutual aid and assistance." 

Netaji referred to the leading role of Japan: "...this is not the first time that the world has looked to the East for light and guidance... It seems to be a historical inevitability for Japan and the Japanese people to play the leading role in creating the new East Asia seeking freedom and prosperity. It fell upon Japan to undertake to play this role since Japan, as one of the Asian countries, rose to fight against western aggression in 1905." 

Netaji referred to the wrong conception of universalism of India in the Middle Ages. He stated: "India developed the idea of universalism, which is characteristic of Indian culture, in the wrong context of the Middle Ages, and therefore she ended up by getting subjected to foreign rule." 

91. Hayashi, op. cit., p. 66.
94. Ibid., p. 68.
He referred to the international community in contrast to the League of Nations: "The construction of Asia for the Asians or the All Asia Co-prosperity sphere will eventually pave the way for the establishment of a real international community, as opposed to the robber-like League of Nations formed in Geneva... As far as India is concerned... It does not matter who among us will live to see India free. It is enough that India should be free, that the Anglo-American Imperialism is wiped out of India..."95

He concluded his speech with full of "tears in his eyes. What with his broad vision, profound intelligence and heartwarming personality, he held the entire audience spellbound."96 A Japan daily reported:"...President Subhas Chandra Bose.. spoke for thirty minutes,... During his speech, he was moved to tears, Dr. Ba Maw was overwhelmed with emotion and pounded on the table in excitement. The dramatic scene of the conference reached its climax at this point..."97

Premier Tojo concluded the conference by assuring help to India and announced transfer of Indian Islands to the provisional government:

95. Ibid.
96. Ibid.
97. The Nishinippon Shimbun, daily news paper, Published in Fukuoka, Japan, 7th Jan. 1943.
"... Japan stands ready to offer every possible assistance to help India realize its long-cherished dream of freedom... Japan is ready to transfer the Andaman and the Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India in the near future." The announcement of transfer came as a pleasant surprise to the whole audience.

In his statement issued on 7th Nov., 1943, at the residence of Baron Chiba, where Netaji stayed during his visit to the Tokyo conference, Netaji appreciated the sincerity of Japan in transferring the Islands:

"Premier Tojo's announcement of the transfer of the Andaman and Nicobar Islands to the Provisional Government of Free India is in consonance with Japan's oft-repeated statement that it will support the Indian independence movement. The sincerity of Japan in honouring its commitments will surely impress the world... (the) Islands... are the first part of India to be liberated by the Japanese Army from the British rule, (it) has infused a new hope and great confidence into our fight for freedom.

"The liberation of these islands has a symbolic significance... like the Bastille in Paris, which was the first to be stormed in the French Revolution, setting free political prisoners, the Andamans, where our patriots suffered, are the first to be liberated in India's fight for independence. Part by part, Indian territory will be liberated, but it is always the first piece of territory that has the most significance. We have renamed the Andamans as 'Shaheed' (Martyr) in memory of the martyrs, and the Nicobars as 'Swaraj'."

99. The Nishinippon Shimbun, op.cit.
100. Their total area 8,100 sq.miles inhabited by 33,360 people. (Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p.193).
101. Hayashida, op.cit., p.70.
During his stay in Tokyo, Netaji met ailing Rash Behari Bose, the Indian students, and the Japanese government and military officials. In his conversation with Shukai Okawa, Netaji told of Indian's intention of joining hands with any one, including the Russians, in case of defeat of Germany, to free India.

"... the indignation on the part of the Indian people, who have been groaning under British oppression for so long, is such that they would not mind joining hands with the devil."102

On 17 November 1943, Netaji left for Nanking (China) on an invitation, accompanied by three Indians including Col. Bhonsle and some Japanese including Senda, Col. Yamamoto and Ohta, Foreign service officer, for a state visit.103 He broadcast over the Nanking radio on 20 Nov., 1943. On 21 Nov., 1943 he proceeded to Shanghai, and on 22 to Manile (Philippines) where he addressed the Indian rally. On 25 November, 1943, Netaji returned to Singapore. On 10 December 1943, Netaji flew to Djakarta (Indonesia) and attended the local wing of the I.I.L. at the Miyako hotel. The following day he addressed the Indian rally at the Djakarta Municipal Theatre. On 12 December 1943, he proceeded to Surabaya.

102. Ibid., p.74.
103. Ibid.
and then to Borneo and Sumatra and returned to Singapore.

Japan Surrenders:

After crossing many milestones of the independence movement from outside India, Netaji was preparing for the last phase of crossing the Indian border and proceeding to Delhi, via Imphal (the present capital of Manipur state in India). He wrote in his article "March Forward":

"The tenth milestone in our movement for independence is our crossing of the Indian border, our ultimate goal being to advance to Delhi." 104

Netaji shifted his Provisional Government from Singapore to Rangoon (on January 7, 1944) and he declared his intention to Gen. Kawabe, Japanese Commander-in-chief in Burma that his I.N.A. would be the spearhead of the whole advance into India. He wanted that the first drop of blood to be shed on Indian soil would be that of a member of the Indian National Army. He wanted to set up the Provisional Government inside India as soon as the Indian National Army moved into India.

Netaji showed his enthusiasm to shed blood again in his address to the guests, assembled at the welcome party.

to Netaji, on the evening of 7 January, 1944, hosted by the Japanese Commander in Rangoon:

"If there is anything I want to pray to God for now, it is only this, that God let us shed our blood at the earliest possible moment."105

In his condolence statement on the death of Kasturba in Poona, Netaji urged the Indians to take revenge on the British authority. He gave a call to the nation to destroy completely the British empire in India.

The Imphal operation, (from 15 March to 9 July, 1944) was the last, the tenth milestone of the freedom struggle of Netaji, in which three Japanese divisions, 15th, 31st and 33rd and one INA Division commanded by Col. Imai, were deployed. The 31st Division, commanded by Lt.Gen. Sato, which came from Bangkok, deployed to aim at Kohima, north of Imphal. The 15th Division, commanded by Lt.Gen. Mutaguchi, which came from Nanking (China) was deployed to attack Imphal, to which the INA Division was attached. The 33rd Division, commanded by Lt.Gen. Yanagida under Gen. Kawabe, which already in Burma, aimed at Imphal by crossing Chindoween River.

105. Hayashida, op.cit., p.81.
One Battalion, under Major Rathor, of the Subhas Brigade deployed to oppose the British West African Division in the Kaladan Valley, and the other two Battalions, under Col. Shah Nawaz Khan, were deployed to relieve Japanese forces, guarding the lines of communications over the Chin Hills, near Haka and Palaq.

Netaji inspected and encouraged all troops passing through Rangoon to the front. On Feb. 3, 1944, Netaji bade farewell to the Subhas Brigade: "Blood is calling to blood... There in front of you is the road our pioneers have built. We shall march along that road. We shall carve our way through the enemy's ranks or if God wills, we shall die a martyr's death. And in our last sleep we shall kiss the road which will bring our Army to Delhi. The road to Delhi is the road to freedom. On to Delhi!" After Netaji's farewell speech, the troops used to yell "To Delhi, To Delhi!". One day, on such occasion, an air-raid alarm sounded and scores of enemy planes appeared overhead. The Burmese officers ran away in panic, but Netaji was standing erect on the rostrum instructing his subordinates to take the troops away for cover. "Every eye-witness of the scene went away impressed by the courage and presence of mind which

Netaji displayed in the face of impending danger. He proved himself a worthy leader of the independence movement. 107

The Indo-Japanese offensive march towards Indo-Burma border started at 9.30 p.m. on 15 March 1944. An I.M.A. Regiment commanded by Col. Sahgal left the Haka-Falam area for the border. The I.M.A. finally crossed the border and set foot on Indian soil. The Japanese Army also crossed the border on (22 March, 1944). The same day, Netaji issued a statement in Rangoon "to call the attention of the world to this epochal event." 108 In the same statement he urged the Indian soldiers, officials and people to revolt against the British and to help and co-operate with Indo-Japanese Army:

"We urge Indian soldiers serving with the British Army to refuse to fight for the ruthless rulers and come over to us. We urge Indian officials working for the British Government to co-operate with us in fighting this holy war." 109

The same day, Gen. Tojo issued the statement from Tokyo, assuring the Indians to transfer the liberated India to the Provisional Government of India.

107. Hayashida, op.cit., p.84.
108. Ibid., p.85.
109. Ibid., p.86.
Kohima fell to the 31st Division and to the I.N.A. (on 6 April 1944). Imphal was the next target to all the three Divisions and to the I.N.A. Netaji urged again the Indians in liberated areas, on 4th April 1944: "The Provisional Government of Free India is the only lawful government of the Indian people. Rally round your own Government and thereby help to preserve and safeguard your own liberty." Netaji appointed Lt.Col. A.C. Chatterjee as the Governor of the liberated India.

At this time Japan gave an aeroplane to Netaji, who advanced to the front, Maymyo, shifting a part of his Government on 5 April, 1944. Every one, including Gen. Tojo, the Japanese Premier, and ailing Rash Behari Bose were confident of the fall of Imphal, before the Japanese Emperor's birthday on 29th April 1944. Rash Behari Bose, a serious tuberculous patient, rushed to Radio Tokyo, to record his jubilation speech in advance entitled "when Imphal fell." But it was an irony of Netaji's fate that Imphal did not fall, due to failure of human plans and nature's fury in the form of torrential rains in the area.

110. Ibid., pp. 87-88.
111. Saito & Hayashida, op. cit., p.205.
Lt. Gen. Mutagudhi, commander of the 15th Army, blocked Imphal-Kohima road to isolate the British Army at Imphal and compel them to surrender. He thought Imphal as a lake with a big fish, which could be netted at ease. But, the big fish proved to be a crocodile, which dragged them to their doom! Had Imphal fallen to the Indo-Japanese Army, the patriotic plans of Netaji would have been successful and the modern Indian history would have been different! "Had Bose only been able to take Imphal" writes Roy "the bulk of the Indian Army in India would have deserted the British and flocked to swell the ranks of the Indian National Army." 112 Imphal slipped out of the Indo-Japanese, though encircled by three Japanese Army Divisions, 31st, 15th and 33rd and three I.N.A. Brigades - the Subhas Brigade, under Col. Shaha Nawaz Khan, the Gandhi Brigade under Col. M.Z. Kiani and the Azad Brigade under Col. Gulzara Singh.

The Imphal operation would have been successful if Dimapur was attacked first. Lt.Gen. Sato of the 31st Division, who was able to hold Kohima and who was in charge of the Kohima-Imphal sector, failed to give attention to Dimapur, (in Assam), an equally strong hold of Britishers with ample supplies. "Here (at Dimapur)," wrote Arthur Campbell, of the British 14th Army, "was a vast wooden township of sheds

and storehouses and railway sidings, holding sufficient supplies for a whole army for a year... there was no one to defend this base against the Japanese soldiers who had so suddenly appeared only a few miles away."113 Gen. Sir William Slim, then commanding the British 14th Army, memoired that Allied commanders were dreading an attack on Dimapur, virtually undefended at the beginning of April 1944.

Mutaguchi, later, commented, on these British accounts, in a Post-war interview to Fred Saito:

"My original plan submitted to the Singapore command included Imphal, Loko and Dimapur as targets, but that plan was rejected. had Sato (Commanding Gen. of the 31st Division) been a more flexible and imaginative man, he might have done what Slim dreaded, when he saw British troops stampeding in terror and panic towards Dimapur. But Japanese intelligence services in those days performed so poorly that we at Maymyo or Singapore simply failed to imagine that Dimapur was undefended."114

Secondly, the Imphal operation failed because of the low quality of the Japanese army. Mutaguchi said to the interviewer: "I still believe that 'Imphal could have been

113. Arthur Campbell, "A Story from Kohima", The Siege,
114. Saito & Hayeshida, op.cit., p.207.
taken had the three divisions been as good as my 18th Division (when he commanded in 1941-42)."115

Co-operation and co-ordination among the Japanese commanders of the three Divisions failed. Mutaguchi dismissed Lt.Gen.Yanagiida, commander of the 33rd Division, replaced Lt.Gen.Masatumi Yamauchi, commander of the 15th Division, who became ill in May 1944, and dismissed Lt.Gen. Kotoku Sato commander of the 31st Division, who began his withdrawal, on 3 June 1944, without Mutaguchi's authorization, from the Kohima area, which affected badly the remaining two Divisions. Sato retorted: "I welcome a chance to expose all the stupidity and madness behind the entire plan of this operation."116

The Imphal operation was officially called off on 9 July 1944. On 18th July, the defeated Tojo government resigned. (The Allies hanged Gen.Tojo in 1948 as a major war criminal). A month later Mutaguchi retired, (and died later in 1964). His immediate military superior Gen.Kawabe, also, resigned in August, 1944 (and died in 1966).

Shortage of supplies, equipments, aeroplanes etc., was another reason for the defeat of Indo-Japanese army at

115. Ibid.
116. Ibid., p.208.
Imphal. A Japanese writer, Toshikazu Kase gives the following account of loss to Japan in the war:

"Our expeditionary force of 2,70,000 men which had marched to the gates of Imphal in India met defeat. Most of this force perished in battle, or later died of starvation. The disaster of Imphal was perhaps the worst of its kind yet chronicled in the annals of war. One of the regimental commanders, who survived the retreat, called upon me in Tokyo... He told me how the ranks had thinned daily, as thirst and hunger overtook the retreating columns and how the sick and the wounded had to be abandoned by the hundreds. In order to avoid capture, these men were usually forced to seek death at their own hands. Only 70,000 of the original force survived." 117

The I.N.A. also lost about 4000 soldiers in the Imphal operation, and the remaining were sick and wounded. Its role was superior and heroic.

A Japanese newspaper wrote when Netaji visited Japan, (3rd time, in November 1st, 1944):

"The fact that the Indian National Army fought side by side with the Japanese Army on the Indo-Burma border under

117. Toshikazu Kase, Eclipse of the Rising Sun, p.92.
the handicap of shortages of all kinds of supplies should go down as a glorious chapter in the history of the Indian independence movement. Even if the Japanese army was retreating, the I.N.A. was daring to advance. "Colonel Kiani refused to obey Japanese orders for evacuation and insisted that he would continue the march deeper into India." Even Netaji supported the stand of Col. Kiani.

Netaji described the heroism of the I.N.A. in his Special Order of the Day on August 14, 1944:

"Our units, with their better training and discipline and unshakable determination to do or die on the path of India's freedom, soon established their superiority over the enemy whose morale deteriorated with each defeat. Fighting under the most trying conditions, our officers and men displayed such courage and heroism that they have earned the praise of everybody. With their blood and sacrifice, these heroes have established traditions which the future soldiers of India will have to uphold."

Netaji, also referred to torrential rains, due to which Indo-Japanese Army had to postponed the offensive and subsequently to withdraw. Netaji had not given up his

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hopes of victory. He encouraged his men to prepare for final victory and he worked towards that. Even he did not lose his confidence in the Japanese Government, even after resignation of Gen. Tojo. He thought that the new regime would come up with a more determined policy to carry on this war. With that hope he sent a message to Premier Keizo, on the occasion of the opening of the first Diet Session under the new government. The message said: "I hereby declare that we will fight side by side with Japanese and other friendly powers until we win independence by crushing our common enemy." 121

Netaji had determined, any how, to continue the war to liberate India. Japanese Rear-Admiral Nakada, a Naval attache stationed at Burma advised Netaji to continue the fight from north with Russian help, and Col. Yamamoto of the Hikari Kikan, earlier in July 1944; advised Netaji to fight from the north-west. But Tokyo did not approve the two proposals. 122

In October 1944, Japan decided to confer the highest decoration, the First Order of the Rising Sun on Netaji. But he turned it down, saying; "I would like to accept it

121. Hayashida, op.cit., p.94.
122. Ibid., pp. 94-95.
together with my men when we have won independence." To him there was no higher decoration than the independence of his country.

Earlier, on 12 September, 1944, Netaji broadcast a warning to his countrymen against the divide and rule policy of the Britishers and the compromise policy of Indians on the issue of Pakistan.

On 1st November, 1944, Netaji flew to Tokyo, accompanied by his Col., Kiani, Chatterji and Habib-ur-Rahman, to renew the relationships with the new Kioso Government. The Japanese press gave publicity to this visit to Japan after a year and a half. A commemoration function, for his visit, was organised under the auspices of the Japanese Imperial Rule Assistance Association and the Indo-Japanese society, on 3 November, 1944, at the Hibiya Public Hall, Tokyo, at 1 p.m., at which Netaji delivered an hour-long speech on "The Role India Plays in the Final Phase of the Greater East Asia war." Netaji stressed his determination to strike again at the British Forces, at a press conference, held at the Special Guest House, at 3 p.m., on 6 November 1944. One

123. Ibid., pp. 95-96.
124. Ibid., pp. 96-97.
of the newspapers, next morning, put out an article, "President Bose expressed full confidence in his ability to strike against the British Forces in India." \(^{125}\)

Netaji signed the Indo-Japanese Loan Agreement, of 100 million yen (then about 20 million dollars) and utilised the same for his I.N.A., and the Provisional Government. He suggested the Tokyo Government to have direct diplomatic relations instead of the Hikari Kikan system, and got Hachiya\(^{126}\), as the first ambassador.

Ex-Premier Tojo saw Netaji, for the first time after two and a half years, in Tokyo. Amidst his busy schedule, Netaji met Indian students in Tokyo, and gave a talk at Indo-Japanese Society. It was an emotional scene of his meeting with ailing Rash Behari Bose, which became his last meeting, as Rash Behari died in Jan., 1945.

The British 14th Army advanced from North and Northwest, and reached the Chindwin River. On 31st December 1944, they landed at Akyab, from where Netaji wanted to march towards Delhi. Netaji, after his return from Japan, took an inspection tour of the front, accompanied by Major

\(^{125}\) Ibid., p. 27.

\(^{126}\) (Mr. Hachiya was present at the Second International Netaji Seminar, held at Calcutta, from 23rd to 26th January, 1976, and again at the 3rd International Netaji Seminar, held at Calcutta, from 23rd to 26th January, 1979).
Takahashi, who praised the former for his brave decisions and activities.

He did not take rest in the house or a tent but on a hammock. He used to hang a hammock between trees and lay down on it, reading a book (on the history of Irish independence).

On hearing the surrender of some I.N.A. soldiers at the Irrawaddy River area from Gen. Isoda, the new Nikari Kikan head, Netaji issued in the middle of February, 1945, a Proclamation that anyone who attempted to retreat should be shot to death. Netaji advanced towards the Meiktila area, for inspection, where the 2nd I.N.A. infantry Regiment was deployed under Lt. Col. P.K. Sahgal, at the Mount Popa. When Netaji pressed for further advance, in the moonlight, Col. Sheh Nawaj objected, as the enemy was within a few miles of Meiktila.

"Netaji, you are being selfish. Just to show your personal bravery, you are risking your life. But you have no right to risk your life in this way. Your own life does not belong to you, it is a precious trust for India which is in our keeping, and I am going to make sure that the
trust is not endangered in this way."¹²⁷ To this Bose's reply was remarkable:

"Don't worry about my safety, as I know that England has not yet produced the bomb that can kill Subhas Chandra Bose."¹²⁸

Meiktila fell to the enemies on 23 February, 1945. For the first time, the Burmese National Defence Army (B.N.D.A.) commanded by Gen. Onson, the Minister of Defence until the day, was deployed to the front and which started its march on 16 March, 1945 and revolted against its own masters, the Japanese. In contrast to the B.N.D.A. the I.N.A. was appreciated by the Japanese, for its integrity. "This, I believe," writes Hayashida, "is attributable for the most part to the integrity of Netaji and of the Indian people in general."¹²⁹

Gen. Kimura advised Netaji (on 20 April, 1945) to withdraw from Rangoon. After a prolonged discussion, Netaji agreed reluctantly and gave charge of the remaining troops to Maj. Gen. Loganaohan. On the eve of his departure, Netaji issued messages to the Burmese, Indians in Burma and to the I.N.A. Though he accepted temporary defeat, he was

¹²⁸ Ibid., p.179.
¹²⁹ Hayashida, op.cit., p.104.
still indomitable and optimistic of his success.

"Being a born optimist" he said, "my unshakable faith in India's early emancipation remains unimpaired, and I appeal to you to cherish the same optimism. I have always said that the darkest hour precedes the dawn. we are now passing through the darkest hour, therefore, the dawn is not far off. India shall be free!"\(^{130}\)

The 48th of Netaji, the last one during his life-time was celebrated by the I.I.I., in Rangoon, on 23rd January, 1945, by weighing him in gold, collected from among Indians, twice his weight. That was the last golden birth day! Habib Sahib of Rangoon donated all his landed property, cash and jewellery valued at Rupees one crore and three lakhs, and asked Netaji for a pair of Khaki shirts and shorts, to work for the movement.\(^{131}\)

Netaji's hazardous retreat started. He left Rangoon by car for Moulmein (Burma) on the night of 23rd April, 1945, followed by his party of 300 I.N.A. men, 100 girls of the Jhansi Reni Regiment and 100 civilians, in ten odd vehicles. The party arrived in Moulmein, after a week, at the end of April. On 9 May, 1945, Netaji left Moulmein for Bangkok.

\(^{130}\) N.G.Jog, op.cit., p.256. 
by a vehicle, accompanied by some of his cabinet members and some Japanese including Minister Minetani and Lt. Gen. Isoda, escorted by a squad of Indian soldiers and five Japanese military policemen. The party travelled mostly by night to avoid air raids and arrived in Bangkok (on May 14, 1945). S.A. Ayer, Bose's Minister, who was also in the party, has given a detailed and moving account of this march from Rangoon to Bangkok.bose retorted, when he was given an advice to seek safety: "Do you think I am a May of Burma that I will leave my men behind and run for safety?"  

Bose left Bangkok, (on June 18, 1945) for Singapore. He made a series of broadcasts urging Indians to reject Wavell's proposals. That was his last pronouncement on Indian affairs.

The I.I.L. observed the second "Netaji week" (from July 4 to 11) and laid the foundation stone of a memorial to the martyrs of the I.N.A., at Connaught Drive, Singapore. The memorial was blown up by the British as soon as they landed in Singapore.

Germany surrendered to the Allies on 7 May, 1945. Japan also officially broadcast on 15 August, 1945, at noon,

133. Ibid.
its surrender as she was bombed at Hiroshima and Nagasaki on August 6, 1945. Russia had declared war against Japan (on August 8, 1945). "In its 2,600 years of history, the Japanese had never suffered a defeat." But Netaji was moved by the news of surrender of Japan, writes: "My soul was in anguish. My head was in a swirl." But Netaji was indomitable. "Netaji heard the news", writes Ayer, "and after one characteristic 'um', he was deep in thought for a fleeting second. The next second he was absolutely his normal self. He first broke into a smile, and almost his first words were: 'so that is that. Now what next?'... He was already thinking of the next move, and the next battle. He was not going to be beaten." Japan's surrender, he said, was not India's surrender... "Well don't you see we are the only people who have not surrendered?"

The Air-Crash:

The last scene of Netaji's life was tragic. The indomitable Netaji fought till the last breath of his life. On the eve of his final departure from Singapore to an unknown destination, (According to Habib-ur-Rahman, Netaji's Deputy Chief of Staff, the Cabinet meeting decision taken on the morning of 15 August, 1945, was to "proceed to"

136. Ibid.
137. Ibid., pp. 51-52.
Tokyo... for consultations." 138 Netaji in his last Order of the Day as Supreme Commander of the I.N.A. said:

"Comrades,... we have now been overwhelmed by an undreamt of crisis. You may perhaps feel that you have failed in your mission to liberate India. But let me tell you that this failure is only of a temporary nature. No set-back and no defeat can undo your positive achievements of the past. Many of you have participated in the fight along the Indo-Burma frontier, and inside India, and have gone through hardship and suffering of every sort. Many of you comrades have laid down lives in the Battle-field, and have become the immortal heroes of Azad Hind." 139

Netaji pleaded for discipline and self-sacrifice. He continued: "Comrades, in this dark hour I call upon you to conduct yourselves with the discipline, dignity and strength, befitting a truly revolutionary army. You have already given proof of your valour and self-sacrifice on the field of battle. It is now your duty to demonstrate your undying optimism and unshakable will-power in the hour of temporary defeat.... I have not the slightest doubt that even in this dire adversity you will hold your heads erect, and face the future with unending hope and confidence."

Ho was sure of India's destiny and encouraged his soldiers towards that. He continued:

"The roads to Delhi are many, and Delhi still remains our goal. The sacrifices of your immortal comrades and of yourselves will certainly achieve their fulfilment. There is no power on earth that can keep India enslaved. India shall be free and before long."

Netaji left Singapore by a plane bound for Saigon on the morning of August 15, 1945, accompanied by Cols. Habibur-Rahman, Pritham Singh, Gulzara Singh, Maj. Abid Hasean and Messrs. S.A. Ayer and Debnath Das giving the charge of the I.W.A. in Singapore to Maj. Gen. Kiani. The party arrived in Bangkok shortly after Japan officially surrendered. They met Teruo Hachiya, the Japanese ambassador to the Provisional Government of Free India and Lt. Gen. Isoda of Hikari Fikan. Netaji revealed his intention to these Japanese officers, to surrender to the Russian arm and seek their help to fight against the British in India and requested Japanese assistance in this respect. Netaji said: "I have no illusions and I am prepared to face the worst, execution or imprisonment, by the Russians. I wish to go and take a chance so long as there seems to be the faintest possibility..."140

140. Saito & Hayashida, op.cit., p.22.
The same was relayed by Lt. Gen. Isoda to Field Marshal Terauchi, at the Dalat Headquarters (which was moved from Manila in November 1944) and in turn from there to the Japanese High Command in Tokyo, and which immediately retorted:

"Mr. Bose should know better than to write off Japan and go over to Russia after having received whole-hearted assistance and co-operation from Japan."141

The ailing Field Marshal Terauchi much against the view of the High Command, decided to fulfil the wish of his friend Netaji. He growled against the High Command: "Ah, the fat headed staff of Tokyo seem to regard Bose as a Japanese subject! Tell Tokyo that I respect the free will of my friend who fought for his country."142

Netaji, along with his party, proceeded from Bangkok to Saigon by the same plane and met Terauchi, who made a special arrangement for the flight of Netaji, to Shinkyo, Manchuria together with Lt. Gen. Tsunemasa Shidei, Chief of Staff at Burma Command, who had come from Rangoon to Saigon, as he had just been appointed as the Chief-of-Staff of Manchurian Command.

141. Ibid., p.222.
142. Ibid.
A heavy bomber (Model 97-2-Sally, twin engined, measuring 22.5 metres wing to wing, 16 metres nose to tail, weighing 7,450 kilos, built by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries, of maximum speed of 230 Knots) belonging to the Japanese Third Air Force, took off from the Saigon Aerodrome at around 5.30 p.m. on 17 August 1945. Because of limited space in the plane, only Habib-ur-Rahman accompanied Netaji. The remaining members of the party stayed back waiting for the next flight to join Netaji in Manchuria.

Just before the take off, an Indian presented two suitcases full of some heavy things as presents to Netaji on behalf of the 3 million Indians in East Asia. Just before the take off, an Indian presented two suitcases full of some heavy things as presents to Netaji on behalf of the 3 million Indians in East Asia.143

The plane was overloaded with machine guns and bombs. That was lightened at Tourane, where the plane stopped over and where Netaji and his party stayed overnight at the Morin Hotel. The plane took off from Tourane at 5 A.M. on the next day, 18 August 1945, the last day of Netaji's life, and arrived at Taipah at about noon. After lunch and rest for about two hours the plane took off at about 2 P.M. and made a steep ascent when a loud explosion was heard and the plane dived to the ground and burst into flames. It was

reported that six persons were killed including Netaji and seven survived "with minor-to-serious injuries", including Habib-ur-Rehman.

Two of them (Lt.Gen.Shidei and Pilot Major Takizawa) died on the spot and four including Netaji, died in hospital. "Netaji's clothes, writes Hayashida, "were on fire. He was wearing Khaki drill clothes". Col. Rehman laid him down on the ground and noticed a very deep cut on the left side of his head. . . The cut in his head was about four inches long."  

Habib-ur-Rehman himself has given an account of the tragedy in a note to Hayashida, recently in 1965 at Rawalpindi in the following words:

"Mr. S.C.Bose and myself jumped out through the fire. As soon as I was out of the plane, I saw him struggling with fire on his clothes as some petrol had been splashed on them. I rushed forward and put out the fire and soon laid him on the ground."

After laying Netaji on the ground Rehman lay down by his side. Just then Netaji enquired of him, (Rehman) "apko Zinda chot to nahin lagi" (Hope you have not been badly

144. Ibid., p.112.
145. Ibid., pp. 113-14.
hurt). It was a pathetic condition of the two sons of India! Netaji sure of not surviving instructed Rahman:

"When you go back, tell my countrymen that I fought to the last for the freedom of my country. And no power could now keep our country in bondage any longer. They should continue the struggle. India will be free before long."  

Netaji enquired an interpreter, Mr. Juichi Makamura, in the Nanmon Army Hospital, Taipoh, about his men. He said, "My men are following me and they should be taken care of when they come to Formosa." His last words were: "I want to sleep." He took rest, after having fought continuously for the freedom of his mother country, without a word of complain or a groan. The Japanese officers, at the other end, were groaning and crying with pain.

The Japanese doctors (Capt. Yoshimi, T. Tsuruta—who attended on Netaji), two nurses, Col. Habibur Rahman, interpreter Makamura and medical orderly, Mr. Kozo Mitsui were present at the time of Netaji's death. The Medical Officer, Yoshimi wrote in a death certificate in Japanese, that (Chandra Bose) died on account of "Burns of third degree."  

Habib-ur-Rehman, stated: "I noticed that he had sustained a deep head injury which was bleeding profusely. His body

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149. Hayashida, op.cit., p.117.
had also suffered from deep burns."¹⁵⁰ According to Capt. Yoshimi "Netaji was burnt all over... even his chest was burnt. His face was swollen... There was no bleeding injury on his body. His eyes were swollen... He was in his sense when he was brought in. He was in high fever... 39° centigrade. "¹⁵¹

Habib-ur-Rahman has further stated: "The Japanese doctor treated him (Netaji) as best as he could, but unfortunately he expired at 8.30 P.M.,"¹⁵² on the same day, 18 August, 1945.

The cremation of Netaji's mortal remains took place at the Taipch City Crematorium on 20 August, 1945. At the cremation Col. Habib-ur-Rahman, Maj. Nagatomo from the Formosan Army, the interpreter Nekamura, Buddhist priest and manager for the crematorium, were present.¹⁵³

The ashes of Netaji were shifted to the Nishi (west) Honganji Temple, Taipch. Hayashida arrived in Taipch by a plane (at 2 p.m. on 5 September, 1945) and took into his custody two boxes—one containing Netaji's ashes and the other, Netaji's treasure, gold and jewellery, and left after half an hour for Japan, accompanied by Maj. Nakamiya, Lt.Col.Sakai,

Babib-ur-Rahaman and a guard of three soldiers. The party was divided for the sake of safety at Fukuoka. Col. Rahman and Maj. Nakamiya left by plane and the remaining party with boxes, left by train (at 3 p.m. on 6 September, 1945). The party arrived in Tokyo (at 6 p.m. on 7 September) on the eve of the historic entry of the General MacArthur into Japan, and delivered the boxes to (Maj. Kinoshita) the Imperial General Headquarters at 11 p.m. on the same day. 154

The next day (8 September) morning, the officer on duty Lt. Col. Takakura handed over the Urn to Mr. Ram Murti, President, the I.I.L., Tokyo, and J. A. Ayer, who received it with overwhelming emotion.

The conversation between J. A. Ayer and Col. Babib-ur-Rahman, on the same night (8 Sept., 1945), at Mrs. Sehey's residence, where Ayer was staying, "cleared all doubts which Mr. Ayer had," stated Mr. Murti in his statement, "and now Mr. Ayer was convinced that the crash was an indisputable reality, and Notoji was a victim of it." 155 The statement concluded, "and we all accepted this as truth without a shadow of doubt in our mind.

The urn was kept at the Renkoji Buddhist temple, in Suginami Ward, Tokyo.

154. Ibid., p. 121.
155. Ibid., p. 123.
About three days after handing over the urn, the Netaji's treasure of gold and jewellery, of about 11 kilogram\textsuperscript{1} valued at rupees one lakh, collected by about 100 girls of the Taipeth Girls High School, under the direction of the Taipeth Army, after the air crash, another box of valuable was handed over by the Japanese Imperial General Headquarters to Mr. Murthy.\textsuperscript{156} A rough list of the valuables was made by Col. Habib-ur-Rehman and signed by him on it. This treasure along with 300 grams of gold and 2,00,000 yen\textsuperscript{2}, given by Mr. Ayer, remained with Mr. Murthy (from 1945 to 1951). The first secretary of the Indian Mission in Tokyo received the Netaji's treasure, signing on the same receipt of list prepared by Col. Rahman in 1945, and Ayer's treasure, from Mr. Murthi, on 24 September, 1945.

The whereabouts of this treasure are not known as yet.

The Trials and the Rumours:

Soon after the end of the world war II the British Government of India sent two parties of intelligence officers headed by Messrs. Finney and Davies respectively to the Far East to investigate about Netaji and to arrest him if possible. Two Indian police officers, Mr. H.K. Roy and Mr. K.P. De were

\textsuperscript{156} Ibid., pp. 125-129.
also in these parties, which confirmed in their reports submitted to the Government of India the fact that Netaji died in the air crash. On the basis of these reports the Government withdrew the warrant for the arrest of Netaji.

The I.N.A. trials in the Red Fort, Delhi (from 5 November 1945 to the last day of the year), marked, as described by Jawaharlal Nehru, another chapter of India's history. About a century ago, Bahadur Shah, the last Moghul Emperor, the hero of the 1857 Movement, was tried in the same place. It was an irony of fate of the I.N.A. that their war-cry, "Delhi Chalo" (Onward to Delhi!) was fulfilled in the trials, which proved the brave soldiers victorious in their defeat.

The I.N.A. heroes, Captains Shah Nawaz Khan, P.X. Sahgal and Lt.G.S. Dhillon and others were tried by the General Court Martial, composed of seven army officers presided over by Maj. Gen. Blanland. The Defence Committee consisted of 17 members including the Rt. Hon. Sir Tej Bahadur Sapru, three former judges of High Courts, Bhulabhai Desai, leader of the Bombay Bar, Jawaharlal Nehru and others. The Chief defence Counsel was Bhulabhai Desai.

157. Ibid., p.117.
The Court Martial sentenced the three officers to transportation for life on the main charge of waging war against the King-Emperor, subject to confirmation by the C-in-C, (Gen. Auchinleck). The C-in-C was forced by the "universal Indian opposition" (as described by Gandhiji in his letter to Lord Wavell) to acquit them. The Congress, the press in India, the political consciousness in the Indian Army, the revolts in the Royal Indian Air Force and the Royal Indian Navy (in 1946), actually forced him to remit the sentence. The order of remittal was announced in a Gazette of India Extraordinary (on 3 January, 1946) and the War-heroes were released on the same day. The C-in-C's Minute states the reason for remittal of the sentence as follows:

"Having considered all the evidence and appreciated to the best of my ability the general trend of public opinion and of the feeling in the Indian Army.... would have probably precipitated a violent outbreak throughout the country and created active and widespread disaffection in the Army..."  

If the accused were not acquitted, the 1857 Movement would have been revived. Bhulabhai Desai, the Chief defence counsel, pleaded on the basis of International law,

159. Ibid., pp. 233-241.
161. Ibid., p.242.
and quoted from authorities such as Blackstone, Oppenheim, Hyde, Wheaton and the American Jurist Hershey; cited the cases from the British Privy Council, the U.S. Federal Supreme Court etc.\(^{162}\) His main plea was that to fight for the freedom of ones country was an inalienable right of the subjects. He also referred to the American Declaration of Independence.\(^{163}\)

The I.N.A. trials, in short revived the legendary deeds of Netaji, roused the political consciousness of the whole country and brought the independence of the country before long. Gandhiji admitted the great role of the I.N.A. to a group of I.N.A. officers who called on him:

"You have the satisfaction that the whole country has been roused and even the regular forces have been stirred into a new political consciousness and have begun to think in terms of independence."\(^{164}\)

Netaji died but he is immortal. His death however, has become a mystery, an endless chapter of his life. No Bengali, even now, does believe that he is dead.

The both Shaha Navez Khan's (1956) and G.D.Khoela's Reports confirmed the death of the Netaji. In the former

\(^{162}\) Ibid., p. 239.
\(^{163}\) Ibid., pp. 238-239.
\(^{164}\) Ibid., p. 241.
committee, Suresh Chandra Bose, the elder brother of the Netaji, was one of the three members. He refused to sign the Report. Shahe Naveen Khan, later, as a witness, said before the Khosla enquiry Committee on October 10, 1970:

".. Whatever findings I have been able to come to were based on the evidence.... I am convinced that whatever statements have been made, in the report which is before you, are correct. I stand by them and even today."[165] But the Bengalis have treated these two reports as false and called the chairmen of these two committees traitors to the Netaji.

National leaders are not unanimous on this mystery. Jawaharlal Nehru confirmed the death of Netaji while Lal Bahadur Shastri, the Second Prime Minister of India, said Netaji was alive.[166]

An M.P. pleaded in parliament in 1966 that Netaji was present at Nehru's funeral.[167] 350 H.Ps. of all parties submitted a memorandum to the President of India, Zakir Hussain, at the end of 1967 requesting for a fresh enquiry in the matter. The demand was turned down.

166. N.G.Jog, In Freedom's Quest, p.9.
167. Ibid.
The memory of Netaji was revived with honour and respect throughout the country and abroad, across the world on his 81st birth anniversary, on 23rd January, 1978, in a special Order of the Janata Government to observe the birth anniversary of Netaji. If Netaji were to be alive, he would have come out after the success of the Janata Party. Even during the Congress regime, under Jawaharlal Nehru, the indomitable Netaji would have come out if he were to be alive. The whole country would have welcomed him and accepted him as their leader, especially the Indian Army. His officers, like Capt. Shah Nawaz Khan, Capt. Shahgal and Lt. Col. Dhillon were defended in the trial and feted throughout the country. Then it goes without saying that undoubtedly, Netaji would have been accepted by the countrymen as their leader if he were to come out. Habib-ur-Rahman, the only Indian on Netaji’s death bedside in Taipei, expressed similarly in his statement from Rawalpindi to Hayashida in 1966. He stated:

"Many in Bharat still believe that he is alive and will turn up some day. How we wish he had come back alive! If that were to happen, it is more than certain that he would have occupied a dominating position in Indian politics."
Then the relation between Bharat and Pakistan might well have been cordial.... He was known to be a most judicious and fair-minded leader..."168

Hayashida, also felt:

"If he were alive, he would have been striving to create a happy and peaceful welfare state based on Heaven's law and humanitarian ideals and principles."169

"On the other hand," Hayashida saw the other possibility also: "if Netaji had lived, he might have been executed as a war criminal, since the pre-independence Government of India had issued a warrant for his arrest."170 The countrymen, especially the Indian Army, would have revolted against such an order of execution. If Netaji would have alive, undoubtedly, he would have returned to India as a Napoleon from Elba.171

While unveiling a colour portrait of Netaji Bose in the Central Hall of Parliament on 23rd January, 1978, the President of India, K. Sanjiva Reddy said:

"I wish I could believe he is alive. Wish he could come amongst us even for one day to inspire us."172

169. Ibid., p.134.
170. Ibid., p.135.
172. The Deccan Herald, 24-1-1978.
The President drew attention to his (Netaji's) participation at the Haripuro Congress and described Netaji as "most colourful and most original" and "who made men out of dust."173

Prof. Samar Guha, M.P., from Bengal, who fought for the last ten years for getting a portrait of Netaji unveiled in Parliament, spoke emotionally on the occasion that Netaji did not die in an air crash; his death was "nothing but a myth."174

For the last thirty years since independence, the Congress administration had, one may wonder, no idea to commemorate the Netaji, at least with his portrait in Parliament. The Janata government which came to power on 23 March 1977, proposed "to put up in New Delhi statues of leading national leaders like Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose, Mr. C.Rajagopalachari, Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Mr. K.Kamaraj who have not yet been suitably commemorated in the Capital along with other stalwarts of the freedom struggle."175

173. Ibid.
174. Ibid.
175. The Hindu, August 16, 1977.