Muslim Participation in the Freedom Movement in Rayalaseema

In the two chapters that follow, is an account of the participation of Muslims in the Freedom Movement with special reference to Rayalaseema. There is also an evaluation of the Muslim's contribution. A number of Muslim Freedom Fighters who are alive and have been receiving pensions from the Government have been in corresponded and interviewed. They could be contacted only on the basis of the list of pension-holders as freedom fighters, furnished by the Government. However, many of them because they could not get official recognition, have either been forgotten, or, passed away unnoticed.

However, in this connection the attitude of the Muslims by themselves regarding their involvement in the freedom struggle is discussed. At a later stage in the Freedom Movement, with the foundation of the Muslim League, the attitude of the Muslims with regard to the Movement was quite different. Sir Syed Ahamad Khan, who could be considered the founder of the Muslim League, made out a case for a special treatment of the Muslims since they were on a different footing.
In this respect, it is necessary, once again, to sketch the historic background of Hindu-Muslim relations in India in general and South India in particular. In the north, the Muslims grabbed power right from 1206. After the establishment of the Slave Dynasty, in general. They came here originally as horse-traders, more so, the Arabs. Later, taking advantage of the fissiporous tendencies of the Hindu kingdoms in the north, the Muslims seized power and settled down as rulers.

The people in the north were familiar with foreign invasions and the rule of the aliens over them. They cultivated a sense of assimilation and easily adjusted themselves to the changing political conditions, although, they were non-Hindus. Their only protection was their religion. So long as they were left free to follow peacefully their own religion without any hindrance, they did not worry much about the political changes that came over. They developed a sense of adjustment a change in their own attitude towards life, religion and culture. Even the foreigners that came, easily adjusted themselves to the existing conditions and, despite the fact that, at least in some places, they were rulers, they accepted certain aspects of Hindu culture. Having settled down, some did not hesitate to worship Hindu Gods, to take Hindu
personal names, to follow the existing administrative and economic system and allowed inter-religions marriages.

But, it was a different story altogether with the arrival of Muslims, specially in North India. They not only came to rule but also came to convert people to Islam, spread of their faith in India. Unfortunately, Hinduism was not aware of the effects of conversion. It may be noticed that much later, when the Portuguese, the French and the British came to India, they too brought with them the concept of conversion. They tried, and oftentimes quite successfully, to convert the Hindus to Christianity. Between the Muslims and the Christians, however, there was a difference. The former took to force for converting people while the latter took to diplomacy, taking advantage of the deteriorating economic conditions of the backward and the downtrodden. The former took to arms and imposed heavy fines in the form of jaziya upon those who refused to be converted. Often, the methods adopted for conversion were forcible and cruel. Inspite of the fact that they formed the minority, by sheer force, they could impose on local people their faith and make them submissive. The religious bigottism in them was such that even among themselves there were sectarian differences, separating Sunnis and Shias.
With the arrival the English East India Company, the fortunes of the Mohammeden ruler of the north changed. Even the British came as traders; but they were aware of the mutual material bickerings among the several kings and petty chieftains, besides the Mughals. The British also desired to seize power from them. As the Romans, the British too came, saw, and conquered.

The Mughal empire under Bahadur Shah Jafar, was tottering. The British dealt the last blow. Once masters, overnight, the Mohammeden rulers and their followers became servants, and were at the mercy of the British. The Mughals were great rulers and their patronage to art and architecture, to fine arts, literature and music was immense. There were many poets, philosophers, theologians and artists who flourished under them. Now, both the masters and their proteges were thrown out. Let alone these that received patronage, even the patrons like Bahadur Shah Jafar were now dependant upon the mercy of the new masters. Because of their high-brow policy, to a great extent they had alienated themselves from their subjects from whom they had only reproach. They themselves did not seek help from their subordinate Hindu rulers, and allowed themselves to be vanquished by the British whom they trusted.
The Revolt of 1857, made the position of the Muslims in the north, vis-a-vis the British, miserable. The British attributed all the events connected with the Mutiny and thereafter to the Muslims. Hence, the Muslims lost their sympathy. Let down by the British, and being too egoistic to seek the Hindu help, the Mohammedens were now in a pitiable condition.

As the Freedom Movement slowly caught up, the Muslims could not decide whether to fall in line with the movement which, somehow, some of their leaders thought to be Hindu-based and Hindu-biased? It was Sir Syed Ahamed Khan, who advocated the introduction of Western education among the Muslims that would lead to greater enlightenment and would bring the people from out of their narrow outlook and sentimentalities. Yet, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan felt that the Indian National Congress was neither moderate and reasonable in its aspirations nor sufficiently careful about the interest of the minorities. Hence, he warned his brethren that participation in an agitation such as the one the Congress advocated, would be against their interest. He was the founder of M.A.O. College, Aligarh, and this was the basis, later on, for the foundation of the Muslim League, fulfilling the desire of the Muslim educated classes coming out of the college for more than three decades.

2. Ibid.
The founding of the Muslim League was a landmark in the history of Freedom Movement in India, more so in the north, because, at every stage of progress towards freedom, the Indian National Congress and the Muslim League had differences of opinion. This facilitated the Divide and Rule policy of the British, who slowly, yet steadily brought about cleavage between the Hindus and Muslims. For that they could act as if they were impartial judges between them. North India, therefore, quite often witnessed Hindu-Muslim conflicts which served the British purpose.

The picture in the South was somewhat different, right from the establishment of the Bahamani kingdom in the south. It is necessary to conduct a short survey of the political conducting of the south. The regions around the Krishna river were, formed Hindu kingdoms directly or through chieftaincies. These kingdoms were economically rich with a flourishing and established culture. There was a great deal of patronage for literature and fine arts. Temples grew to be large institutions and were practically hubs of lives of the society. All social activities centred around the temple which also became a great repository of wealth. The temples, as social institutions, served the needs of the society by enabling the society engage itself in developmental and humanitarian activities through subsidies and grant of loans. It was Alauddin Khilji, who
for the first time plundered the temple. Earlier, Ghazani had looted the Somanatha temple. Now the Khilji diverted his attention towards the rich temple cities of the south. He found that the south Indian society at large was affluent and with it the temples also had become rich. He started plundering several other temples for wealth. The political atmosphere in the south was also bad. There were internal feuds, fights between neighbouring kingdoms. Khilji's invasions through Malik Kafur were painful to them and they gave him what he wanted and sent him back. Their giving riches to him time and again made the kingdoms poor. The southern kingdoms were virtually at the mercy of Alauddin Khilji. But, he wanted only their wealth and was not willing to shoulder the responsibility of ruling the kingdom. As long as they paid him the tribute whenever he wanted, he did not bother as to who ruled. So far so good, but, that was not the policy of Muhammed-bin-Tughlaq. He was a conqueror with a desire to rule over the entire Hindustan. He thus became more dangerous to the southern kingdoms than Alauddin Khilji. History tells us how the events that followed, finally led to the establishment of the Vijayanagara kingdom in 1336. The Bahamani kingdom, north of the Tungabhadra and below the Krishna came into existence ten years later. The founder of that kingdom was himself a fugitive, a governor of Tughlaq, who had settled down in the south and tried to establish himself independently and succeeded where some others failed.
The focus of this study is not the political movements of the next three centuries which resulted in the disintegration of both the Vijayanagara and the Bahamani kingdoms. Only Tippu Sultan, of Mysore region, and the Adilshahis of Bijapur survived the debacle. Even Tippu Sultan had a meteoric rise. But, during the few years, of his rule he was a terror to the British. He too wanted to expand his empire and so came into conflicts with the Adilshahis. Within the short span he had many conquests, and he earned the goodwill of his subjects. Though many historians feel that Tippu Sultan was a religious bigot, available evidences indicate that he was more benevolent than others of his day. He was liberal too and loved by his subjects. He had respect for the Hindu religious institutions and presented gifts generously to Hindu Mathas and temples. For he realised that such a sympathetic attitude and religious tolerance is necessary to rule over the territory dominated by the Hindu majority. The Adilshahis were not an exception. They too loved their subjects and, in turn, were adored by them.

During the Bahamani period, the Bahamani rulers favoured only Islamic faith, culture and institutions, and kept Hindu religion and culture and other popular institutions at a distance to their disadvantage. But, the Adilshahis did not follow such a policy. Yusuf Adil Shah I, the founder was a remarkable ruler, free from religious bigotry and he treated
the Hindu subjects sympathetically. During the period of Ibrahim I (1535-58) Kannada and Marathi languages were employed for official purposes. Ibrahim II (1580-1627) pursued an enlightened policy in matters of religion. These Sultans were benevolent, taking great interest in the welfare of the subjects. Tolerance was shown to the religious faith of the subjects and regional language and literature were encouraged. This was the period when Hindu and Muslim culture came closer.

These Mohammeden rulers of the south faced altogether different conditions which made them follow a policy of toleration and adaptation. Later, the region under study, viz., the Rayalaseema region, which had been once the part of Tippu Sultan's kingdom at least for a short time, had come under the hegemony of the Nawabs of Cuddapah, and Kurnool, who ruled over the principalities efficiently earning respect of the people at large. Banaganapalli was also then a petty State ruled over by the Nawab, who was held in high esteem.

by his subjects. These chieftains worked for the welfare of the people irrespective of caste and creed. Although they personally followed their religion zealously, as a generous policy, they did not come in the way of their subjects following a different religion. Naturally, also from the historical point of view, there was a good deal of Hindu-Muslim amity in the society. This is one of the reasons why, in the later period, while in North India people raged because of religious conflicts, there was more calm and tranquility in the south. It was not surprising, therefore, that Mohammedens in the south willingly and enthusiastically participated in the Freedom Movement.

The Muslim chieftains of the Rayalaseema region were themselves subordinate to the British rulers. They practically owed their existence to the British lords. Whatever might have been their attitude, they did not join the mainstream of Freedom Movement in their own interest. Quite naturally so. But, the local Zamindars and other affluent leaders of the society who did participate in the movement had, their own muslim followers and supporters with them. But most of the Muslim freedom fighters who contributed their might to the Freedom Movement belonged to the middle class or even below that. When their own landlords and masters were actively taking part in the movement, they could not keep themselves aloof. Further, communal riots of the
North did not spread to the south. The Muslim League also had not touched even the fringes of this region to influence the people from refraining themselves from participation. Of course, efforts were also made to dissuade the Muslims against such movements. But, that was too negligible to have any impact.

Muslim contribution to the Freedom Struggle:

Sheik Peer Sahib

The foremost of freedom fighters of mention is Sri Sheik Peer Sahib of Cuddapah district. He participated in the Mutiny of 1857. From the records found in the Judicial Court of Fort St. George, dated 20th October, 1857, we learn that this individual among the native officers and men of the 30th Regiment of Madras Native Infantry placed in the Cantonment at Cuddapah. He appears to have told them, during the Muharram festival, "English dynasty would be seized and the Mughal dynasty would be reestablished," that the musket of the English troops would be harmless as they would not fire and the edge of the swords would be blunt, that the English ordered the Mussalman to eat pork and Hindus, beef, and applied the fat of pig and cow to the cartridges and gave them to sepoys to bite, thereby converting all persons to Christianity."

On closer examination and enquiry, the prisoner acknowledged his involvement in the seditious act. According to him, he came to Cuddapah from his village about 20 miles away, and resided in a Dargah in the town. During this period of stay, he seemed to have gone several times to a Mohammeden Law-officer, the Mufti Sadhar Ameen, Moulvi Syed Abdul Aziz Hussain Sahib, from whom he received some money every time he went. Likewise, he went to the houses of the Chief Mohammedan officer in the Regiment, the Subedar Major and his elder brother, a pensioned Havaidar from whom also he sought some money and food. According to his own confession, the object of his visits was only to spread seditious gossip rather than beg food or money. He also prophesied to certain Hindu soldiers of the end of British raj and the commencement of Muslim rule.¹ It was suspected some force behind the seditious acts which made use of him only to feel the pulse of the regiment. The Magistrate who examined the case felt that the prisoner was inconsistent in his statement before him and in the court. Finally, Sheik Peer Sahib, the prisoner, was sentenced to 10 years rigorous imprisonment.²

The Presiding Magistrate E.E. Elliot, and the Commissioner, sent a report of this to the Acting Chief Secretary to Government Fort St. George Emaltby with a hope that such a one

1. *ibid.*
2. *ibid.*
was the only case brought to him. But, there are documentary evidences to show that, though not exactly the same case, at least in different cases, there was such incitement in Andhra Pradesh about some events pertaining to the Mutiny of 1857. One such event, referred to a flag, pitched on the parade ground in the Civil Lines at Machilipatnam, besides a placard in Hindustani. This latter, called upon the followers of the Mohammad to kill all the infidels and Nazarenes. Likewise, at Visakhapatnam was found, a few nights before the Mutiny of 1857, a circular inciting the Mohammedans to revolt against the Company. It was no doubt another futile attempt on the part of the Mohammedans to revolt. However, this made the British obtain letters of loyalty by several military personnel. Several Hindus also presented addresses to the British authorities condemning the revolt and offering allegiance to the British. These will show that, as early as 1857, some Muslims in the Circar region expressed their views about the British rule and overtly or underground, instigated the people, specially the Mohammadens, to revolt. Judged from this point of view, although a lone figure in Rayalaseema, Shaik Peer Sahib stands out the first and foremost of the Mohammedans who participated in the Freedom Movement. According to many historians the Mutiny is the armed effort towards the struggle for freedom.

2. Ibid., pp. 166-167.
3. Ibid., pp. 175-180.
The first noteworthy movement in which the Muslims of Rayalaseema took active part is the Non-cooperation movement. We have information of only four participants in this movement, three of them hailing from Tadpatri in Anantapur district. Of these, we know some details about C. Sulaiman Sahib.¹

Sulaiman Sahib

He was born at Tadpatri on 2nd October, 1892. His father, Masthan Sahib was a contractor by profession. He had very little formal education, having studied up to only the II Form. Like his father, he too was a contractor by profession. He was under thirty years of age when he jumped into fray, of the Non-cooperation Movement against the British. Consequently, he was arrested at Tadpatri on 25-11-1921 and was sentenced to six months' imprisonment. He was placed in the Central Jail at Bellary. At present, this individual is survived by his son Abdul Khader, who is also quite old. But there is no information about his participant in the movement and there is no documentary evidence to substantiate it. Three others from the same place i.e., Tadpatri, are Kareem Sahib, Abdulla Sahib and Sheik Malik Shakkar Barun who, participated in the Non-cooperation Movement.

Kareem Sahib

Kareem Sahib, was a beedi-worker, who was convicted for having participated in the movement with imprisonment of 3 months\(^1\). A fine of Rs.160/- was also levied upon him. Mami-dikayala Jainab Bee is said to be his wife. But, we could not contact her because she had left Tadpatri several years ago, and her whereabouts are not known.

Abdulla Sahib

Abdulla Sahib was the son of Haji Sahib and also a resident of Tadpatri.\(^2\) He too participated in the Khilafath and Non-cooperation Movements. He suffered imprisonment from 12-11-1921 to 31-5-1922 for a period of 5 months. He suffered rigorous imprisonment in the Central Jail of Bellary.

Sheik Malik Shakkar Barun

Another individual who participated in the 1921 movement was Sheik Malik Shakkar Barun.\(^3\) Born in 1879 he had studied upto the 5th Class. He too was a contractor

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1. Pension records of District Collectorate, Anantapur.
3. ibid., p. 30.
by profession and suffered three months' rigorous imprisonment in the same Bellary Central Jail. Abdul Rasool is his surviving son. He too could not give us any details about his father. Nor is there any documentary evidence which could provide us more details.

Madar Sahib

We have a representative from the Chittoor district in Madar Sahib. A resident of Tirupati, he was the son of Miran Sahib. He was a businessman by profession. He participated in the Non-cooperation Movement. According to the press reports, he along with C. Venkoba Rao, M. Srinivasaiah, M. Sundaramaiah, Varadachari and C. Krishna, were convicted on February 11, 1922 under Section 145 of the Indian Penal Code and sentenced to one year rigorous imprisonment. He was also fined a sum of Rs.50/- in default of which, he was to undergo 3 more months of imprisonment. Thus, he was incarcerated for a period of 15 months in the Vellore and Cuddalore Jails.

1. ibid., p. 48.
2. The Hindu, dated February 11, 1922.
Another Freedom Fighter from Kurnool, about whom we have a good deal of information is Maulana Syed Mohiuddin Khadari Biyabani. From his son Syed Basha Biyabani, gave me the information of his participation in the Freedom Movement. Biyabani is the title, meaning, a man living in the forest. Maulana Biyabani's father Syed Ghouspeer Khadari, had four wives and a good number of children by them. He was a famous Unani doctor of his time, and had an opportunity of curing the wife of the District Collector from illness. As if to repay his gratitude, the District Collector took his son Maulana Biyabani to Kurnool, where the young boy completed his S.S.L.C., education. Thereafter, he moved over to Madras where in the Presidency College, he got his B.A., degree. Much later, he also appeared for the L.L.B., examination of the Aligarh University. Maulana Biyabani met Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad for the first time in Madras where the latter had come to address a political meeting. He had an interview with the Maulana who inspired him saying that being a Syed he should serve the Muslims in particular and the nation in general, and should

decline any offer of office under the British rule. After his education Maulana Biyabani was offered the post of Deputy Collector, which, however, he rejected. On the other hand, inspired by the great national leader, Biyabani dedicated his life in the service of the country and particularly his own community. When he was studying for the L.L.B. degree in Aligarh, he became an intimate friend of Prof. Zakir Hussain who too encouraged him to join the National Movement.

He participated in the Nagpur Flag Satyagraha in May, 1923. In Nagpur, the authorities issued an order prohibiting the carrying of the National Flag in procession, in the city. The volunteers declared that it was their right to carry the flag anywhere they desired. The prohibitory orders were disobeyed and therefore several were arrested and sentenced to imprisonment. The A.I.C.C. made it an all India issue and called upon all the Provincial Committees to send a certain number of volunteers to Nagpur to defy the prohibitory order and court imprisonment. The Andhra Provincial Congress Committee sent five batches of eight satyagrahis each, every week, to the Nagpur Flag Satyagraha under the leadership of Jamunalal Bajaj. S.M.K. Biyabani was selected from the Kurnool district to participate in the Nagpur Flag Satyagraha along with Nalam Chinna Bhimraju, Editha Satyanarayana, Bulusu Yagnappa, Jellepalli Kameswara Rao, Bank Achaian Patrudu, Potina Ganapati Rao, and Matara Balasubramanyam Gupta.

2. Ibid., p. 104.
He associated himself with several socio-political and religious activities. He was a member of the Andhra Provincial Congress Committee, as also the All India Congress Committee. He was also a member of the Municipal Council and the District Board. His cordial relation with Maulana Azad and Zakir Hussain provided him an opportunity to serve the cause of the Nation.

He was also a member of the Legislative Council of Andhra Pradesh for two years between 1968-69. When there was a communal rift in Cumbum, he rightly intervened and sorted out the rift so that it would not widen. It was only in 1969, about two decades ago, he passed away. As he was educated, he could understand well the national sentiment of the people. In fact, as he gained importance some members of the Muslim League took objection to his association with the Indian National Movement and even tried to desist him from participation along with the Hindus, in the freedom movement. But, he could not be cowed down and he took part in several movements. It is surprising that, inspite of his active participation, he was not arrested by the authorities.

**Sheik Imam Sahib**

Next comes the Salt Satyagraha. The prominent individual that participated in this Satyagraha was Sheik Imam Sahib, son of Sheik Rahiman Sahib, a petty businessman. He was one among the five sons. He had studied upto the 5th class. He was conversant with reading and writing of Urdu.
and Telugu, and had also developed the habit of reading newspapers. He was popularly known as "Gandhi Imam Sahib."

He was only twenty years old when he was arrested. He was interviewed at Nimmanapalli on 23rd July, 1988. When asked about his participation in the Salt Satyagraha, the reply came pat that after all, Salt was the public property and the British had no business to levy a taxe on it. To some extent, he was influenced by some local leaders, prominently Gopala Krishna Gupta of Madanapalli, who often visited the villages to teach and preach people about freedom struggle and to convey the message of Gandhiji to the people. This impressed Sheik Imam Sahib a great deal. He was selected by the District Congress Committee to participate in the Salt Satyagraha at Madras. He had a number of colleagues like C. Rajagopalachari, Kalahasti Sundaram, Balasubramanyam Dass, Ongolu Subba Rao, Menjory Nagaraja Sharma, and Tekiru Ramachandra Rao, in the same camp led by Smt. Durgabai Deshmukh. They actively participated in the salt propaganda programme by touring the villages in Tamil Nadu, and explaining to the people of the nature of their agitation and the British atrocities.

It was during that campaign Sheik Imam Sahib was arrested and put behind the bars in the Madras Jail for a period of 3 months, from 27-5-1930 to 27-8-1930. In his

2. Interview with Sheik Imam Sahib, freedom fighter on 23-7-88 at Nimmanapalli, Chittoor (Dist).
interview he narrated to us some interesting events of his life in the jail. They followed the Gandhian principles and wore only Khaddar clothes like Khaddar Jubba and Sherwani. He had been assigned by the Jailor the work of grinding oil-seeds to extract oil. With him was another Gandhian Narasinga from Hyderabad and on one occassion the Jailor caned them and abused them saying that, all the Congressmen were rowdies. This infuriated all those Congressmen in Jail, and they started an agitation in the form of Satyagraha and non-cooperation with the authorities. This affected the profits of the jail. Finally, the officials of jail had to come down and apologise to them for their misbehaviour. After his release from imprisonment, he devoted his life for the propaganda of the principles of Congress. He educated the villagers and created political consciousness among them and aroused their patriotic fervour. He also actively participated in the antiliquor campaigns along with Chikkaneni Sundaram and Kurva Venkateswarulu in villages like B. Kothakota, Tanakalu, Kokanti and Gattu. Sheik Imam Sahib appears to be quite healthy and energetic even today. He is practising as a private Unani doctor, serving the people.

On enquiry it became known that as many as eight Muslims, one of them a lady, took part in the individual Satyagraha, and that five of them hailed from Anantapur district, two belonged to Cuddapah and one was from Kurnool district.
The earliest participant in Satyagraha was Shamsheer Baig, born in 1916, a resident of Panyam in Nandyal Taluk of Kurnool district. Mahatma Gandhiji's tour in the Kurnool district in 1929 intensified the National Movement. Gandhiji visited many towns and villages in the district. Shamsheer Baig was a student in the High School in 1932. When a call for Civil Disobedience Movement was given by the Congress.

His father, Khader Baig, was an agriculturist and was, not economically sound. Yet, young Shamsheer responded to the call and took part in the Individual Satyagraha Movement. He was arrested on 6-1-1941 and was sentenced to 6 months' rigorous imprisonment. He could not, and was reluctant to pay the fine and so underwent 9 months imprisonment. Next year also he participated in the Quit India Movement. Under the leadership of Nivarti Subba Rao, a group of people like Dayananda Reddy, Shamsheer Baig, Mulla Mahaboob Sahib and Kodi Narasimhulu participated in removing fish plates of the railway line between Nandyal and Panyam station in 31st August 1942. He was imprisoned on 25-11-1942 for a period of one year, i.e. till 23-7-1943. He was one of those who participated in the Muslim Conference held in Lucknow under the leadership of Maulana Abdul Kalam Azad and Abdul Gaffar Khan who was better known as "Frontier Gandhi". Those two leaders were pleased with his services and devotion. Interestingly, in 1946 he seemed to have received an invitation from Mohammad Ali Jinna.
to go to Pakistan. But Shamsheer Baig had the courage to reply that he did not desire to break the country into two pieces, whereupon Pattabhi Sitaramayya and Prakasam expressed their admiration for his stand. These two, along with N. Sanjiva Reddy, were his jailmates in the Central Jail of Bellary and other places.\(^1\) He served Andhra Pradesh as M.L.C., for two terms from 1966-76. He held several other offices too. He was a member of the District Board between 1946-49; member of the Senate of Andhra and Madras Universities, 1948-49; member of the District congress Committee for about 15 years, also its Joint Secretary for a period of 10 years from 1949 to 1959, a member of the Provincial Congress Committee for two terms.

G. Baba Sahib

Baba Sahib,\(^2\) familiarly known as 'Guntakal Baba Sahib', was a resident of Kanekal in Rayadurg taluk in Anantapur district. He was the elder son of Fakruddin Sahib and he had two younger brothers. He had studied up to 1st form. By profession he was a goldsmith. He was quite an ordinary resident of the place. He was in the habit of reading newspapers like *Andhra Patrika* and *Andhra Prabha* in Telugu. Through them he had some knowledge about the National Movement. Added to that, he had an opportunity of coming into contact with local leaders like Bukkati Basavappa, Chandra Narayanappa, and

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1. Interview with M. Rustom Baig, brother of Shamsheer Baig, Freedom Fighter at Panyam on 27-8-1989.
Gurram Venkanna. The leaders of the Rayalaseema, like Kalluri Subba Rao, I. Sadasivan once visited his home and gave him a grim account of the atrocities committed by the British. Gandhiji undertook a tour in this part of Rayalaseema and Baba Sahib was easily influenced by the emotional speeches made by that unassuming person, the Mahatma. He now could not resist the call for the service of the Nation by the Mahatma and decided to participate directly in the movement. Consequently, he offered himself to participate in the Individual Satyagraha. It was near the Jamia Mosque, on 11-2-1941, that this patriot offered individual satyagraha. The result was his arrest and conviction by the Court and 6 months of rigorous imprisonment. He was kept in the jails at Nellore and Gooty and the Alipur Jail of Bellary. While in prison, he spent much of his spare time reading newspapers and listening to the speeches of those leaders who were his fellow-prisoners. He was one of the few educated Muslim patriots. Since he knew well the politics of the day with least hesitation he participated in the movement. Though he was aware of the Muslim League and its activities, he was not influenced by that party in any way. On the other hand, he came under the influence of the local Congress leaders including N.G. Ranga, Vidwan Viswan and N. Sanjiva Reddy. It was only recently, in September 1989, that he breathed his last. The Central Government honoured him with a tamrapatra.

1. Personal interview with G. Baba Sahib, Freedom Fighter on 8-10-1988 at Kanekal.
Sheik Nabi Rasool

Sheik Nabi Rasool hailed from Kondapuram in the Jammalamadugu Taluk, of Cuddapah District.¹ He was the son of Khaja Hussain, a beedi worker and had studied upto the V Class and had also undergone the lower grade Teacher's Training. He too was attracted by the speeches of Mahatma Gandhiji. Locally, he had close contact with M. Munaiah, President of the Pulivendla Taluk Congress Committee. The latter had brought to bear upon Rasool Sahib much deal of influence. When the individual Satyagraha was started, he was one of those that appealed to Gandhiji to permit him to offer satyagraha. Thereupon, the District Congress Committee selected him to offer individual Satyagraha and duly informed the Collector about this action. At Pydipalem, he raised slogans against the British, called upon the people not to offer any kind of help, be it in the form of money or men. He was arrested and the Deputy Collector sentenced him to three months' imprisonment from 13-1-1941 to 16-3-1941, under the Defence of India rule. He was placed in the Central Jail at Vellore. In his case, however, it is interesting to note that the Muslims of Kondapuram did not approve of his participation in the Satyagraha. But he did not heed to their words. It was in the complete knowledge of the fact that this movement was a part of the struggle for India's freedom, that he participated in this satyagraha.²

² Personal interview with Sheik Nabi Rasool Freedom Fighter, on 12-1-1989 at Kondapuram.
D. Hussain Sahib

It is from the same village Pydipalem that another individual, Dudekula Hussain Sahib, Son of D. Pakir Sahib, a cotton cleaner, also participated in this satyagraha. He had, as his friends and well wishers, K. Gangi Chetty, and K.B. Konda Reddy from the same village, all of whom had come under the influence of Gandhiji, who had toured in the entire district along with Koti Reddy in early 1934. It was Koti Reddy that encouraged Hussain Sahib and his two other friends to participate in the satyagraha. They were all arrested at Pydipalem and suffered two months' rigorous imprisonment from 26-2-1941 to 26-4-1941 in the Vellore Central Jail.

Peer Sahib

Coming back to Anantapur district, we have to refer to Peer Sahib son of Fakuru Sahib, born at Sirivaram in Hindupur taluk in 1918. He was educated upto the 5th form in the District Board Primary School at Lepakshi where, in the school final examination, he secured first class. Being poor, he was not in a position to prosecute his studies.

2. Interview with Sheik Nabi Rasool, Freedom Fighter, on 12-1-89 at Kondapuram.
further on his own. Appreciating his interest in studies Sri Venkatanarayanappa of Lepakshi and Sri H.S.C. Raman, the then Head Master of the School came forward to help him in his further studies. He had almost reading to go to Hindupur, but, unfortunately his mother's ill-health deprived him of this opportunity. At the instance of his father he dropped the idea of going to Hindupur and returned to his village. Soon, he lost his mother and he was forced to marry to work after the household affairs. Tailor by profession, he had contacts with the local people and soon came under the influence of leaders like Kalluri Subba Rao, N. Sanjiva Reddy, and P. Ramacharlu besides, V. Viswam and I. Sadasivan. They visited Sirivaram and Manepalli villages and talked to the people about the Congress, the British raj, and the Freedom Movement. Being a student of History, Peer Sahib was intelligent enough to understand the plight of the country and the sufferings of the people under the British rule. Elections were held to the Madras Legislative Assembly in 1937. K. Subba Rao contested as a Congress candidate and was opposed by Pamiduriti Bayyappa Reddy as an independent candidate. During the election campaign peer Sahib served as a Congress volunteer and this was the beginning for his active participation in several meetings of the Congress. He also associated himself with the Freedom Movement. When the II World War commenced in 1941, the British with the least
regard to the Indians, made the Indian soldiers participate in war on their behalf. Peer Sahib realised that it was against this that Mahatma Gandhiji gave a call for Civil Disobedience Movement and individual Satyagraha. He implored upon the people not to render the British any help either in terms of man-power or money. Peer Sahib could not resist the temptation of following the great Mahatma and so, he offered Individual Satyagraha. He went to Gopimdevarapalli, where he offered satyagraha on 28-1-1941. He was arrested and presented before the Sub-collector of Penukonda who sentenced him to 3 months' of rigorous imprisonment and sent him to the Central Jail at Vellore. Peer Sahib was a member of the D.C.C. for about 2 years and was a witness the contest between P. Ramacharlu and N. Sanjiva Reddy for the position of the Presidentship of the Committee. The Government in recognition of his services, gave Peer Sahib the pension that was being given to the freedom fighters. He is now more than 73 years old and has been kind enough to give us an interview and details of his participation in the freedom movement.¹

S. Khaja Mohideen Sahib

S. Khaja Mohideen Sahib, son of Abdul Rahim, is quite a fit person even today, at the age of 78 years.² While his

¹ Personal interview with S. Peer Sahib, Freedom Fighter on 2-4-89 at Sirivaram.
² Pension Records of District Collectorate, Anantapur.
father was a farmer, he himself took to tailoring as his profession. He was the eldest of six brothers. While he was 25 years old, he came under the influence of Samacharlu, President of the Congress Taluk Committee at Kadiri, owner of the Murali Printing Press. He joined the Congress, the objective of which was to drive out the British who were alien rulers and were looting the wealth of the country and sucking its blood. These inspired him, and in 1941 he was selected to participate in the Individual Satyagraha at the instance of Kota Venkataramaiah Gupta. He was in police custody for some time, but was not convicted. He continued to be active even thereafter. During the time of the Second World War he organised processions, educated the people about the misrule of the British Government and asked the people not to help the kith and kin of those who join the military force. Later on, when the movement took a violent turn, he too joined hands with the radicals. The Taluk Record Office, called "Gagana Mahal", at Penukonda, was burnt by a team of ten members, Bali Reddy, Nagabhushanachary, Gangi Reddy, A.C. Venkata Reddy, S. Syam Moorothy, K.V. Ramakrishna Reddy, K. Mahaboob Sahib and three others all of them hailing from Kadiri taluk. But, in view of his family responsibilities, of his wife and children, P. Samacharlu advised him not to take part in such violent activities. Luckily for him, he was not arrested in that case. Swatantra Bharath, was a daily
newspaper through which he learnt the activities of the Congress. When Babu Rajendra Prasad visited Kadiri, he addressed a large meeting in the precincts of the temple of Lord Narasimhaswamy and inspired the people to come forward with great sacrifices for the sake of the country, irrespective of one's religion, caste or creed, and fight for the freedom. Sometime later, a branch of the Muslim League was opened at Kadiri and its members objected to his wearing the Khaddar and participating in the movement. He was also threatened of social ostracism. But, none of these changed his mind. Today, he is unfortunately not a recipient of any pension from the Central or State Governments.

An interview was conducted of three more Freedom Fighters, who participated in the same Satyagraha or March of 1941. They were M. Rabiya Bee, Khaja Hussain and Mohammed Ghouse who took part in the movement. It is interesting to note that Rabiya Bee's husband Mohideen Sahib also took part in the Satyagraha. But, he later on participated in the Quit India Movement too. Khaja Hussain was his younger brother. Obviously, Mohideen Sahib allowed his brother and his own wife Rabiya Bee, to participate in the movement, much earlier than himself.

Fortunately both Rabiya Bee and her husband were interviewed to record their own versions of their participation in the movement. Sixty one year old Rabiya Bee is the first Muslim lady in the entire Andhra who actively participated in the struggle for freedom. Hailing from Cheyyedu, in Anantapur district, she had married Mullah Mohideen Sahib, who was a member of the Congress. It was in 1932 that, thanks to Harijan Erakulappa, Mohideen Sahib was introduced to Gandhiji at Anantapur. Babu Rajendra Prasad was then the personal Secretary to Gandhiji. Influenced by these great men, Mohideen Sahib changed his habits in life including wearing of dress. He now started wearing a long loin cloth and jubba, all of Khaddar. He became a member of Congress and actively participated in its activities.

Five years later, in 1937, he married Rabiya Bee, who was an orthodox Muslim. But, she drew inspiration from her own husband and was encouraged to come out of purdha and participate in the National Movement. She was also influenced and encouraged by Pappuri Ramacharlu in her activities. She was one of these who were selected to participate in Individual Satyagraha in Anantapur, at the Arts College ground on 3-3-1941. She was not arrested since there was no separate

1. Asia's first who is who of Men and women - Achievements and women - Achievement and distinction, Asia Companion, Vol. II (Delhi, 1980) p. 112.
accommodation in the jail for ladies. More than that, the jail itself was filled with prisoners that participated in the movement. Earlier, her brother-in-law, M. Khaja Hussain, younger brother of M. Mohideen Sahib had also participated in the movement. He was one of those satyagrahis whose names were approved by Gandhiji. But, he too was not arrested and naturally, there was no conviction. He offered Satyagraha at Pulakunta while his sister-in-law participated in the movement at Anantapur itself. It is of interest to note that Rabiya Bee’s participation in the Satyagraha was objected to by her co-religionists on the ground that her participation would mean her coming out of the purdha, something which was considered outrageous for a Muslim lady. But, she did not heed to those objections and courageously enough came forward to participate in the satyagraha.

Mohammed Ghouse Sahib

The last of the Muslims who participated in the Individual Satyagraha was Sheik Mohammed Ghouse Sahib. Sheik Mohammed Ghouse was the son of Fakruddin. His father was a businessman.

1. The Hindu, dated March 4, 1941.
at Kadiri. There is little information about his formal education. But, later on, in his life, he became the owner of a bus and through the bus eked out his livelihood. We interviewed his friend Adapala Venkataramana and his own son S. Saleem. He participated in the Individual Satyagraha on 24-3-1941 at Talupala in Kadiri taluk. But, he was kept in custody for two days in the Penukonda Sub-jail and, later on, released without any conviction. Adapala Venkataramana, and Danikoti Subbi Reddy were two others who participated in the satyagraha along with him. He had earlier attended the public meeting addressed by Babu Rajendra Prasad, T. Prakasam Pantulu, N. Sanjiva Reddy, M. Chidambaram Reddy and others, whose speeches had stirred in him national sentiments. Kadiri being a place with large Mohammedan population and influence, there was an impact of the Muslim League on the people in this place. The local Muslims advised him not to join the Congress and participate in its movement. But, their advice went in vain. He was even threatened of social boycott. Yet, he could not be restrained from his activities. Later on, he participated in several social movements and served the people in different ways as a member of the Panchayat Committee and the District Wakf Committee of Anantapur district and people's Defence Committee and so on.¹

¹ Personal interview with Adapala Venkataramana, Freedom Fighter on 28-2-1988 and also S. Saleem.
M. Mohideen Sahib

Among those who participated in the Quit India Movement mention must be made of Mullah Mohideen Sahib. He was the husband of Smt. Rabiya Bee, whom he had inspired to take part in the Freedom Movement. He himself participated in the Quit India Movement and was arrested at Anantapur on 7-9-1942. There is, however, no record to indicate that he was sentenced to a long period of imprisonment. He was awarded tamrapatra by the Central Government on the occasion of the Silver Jubilee Celebration of the Freedom Movement.

M. Akbar Ali

Next in order comes Mullah Akbar Ali. He was the son of Mullah Ali Sahib, a priest (mullah). He was born on 1st July, 1922 in the village of Nemakal in Adoni taluk. He had a brother. Even while studying in the 8th class, at the age of 18 years, he had participated in the Congress activities, inspired by Sri L. Sitarami Reddy, a village Congress leader. He explained to the people, their socio-political conditions and the atrocities of the British rule. There was another

2. Letter from Rajibhavan, Andhra Pradesh on 12 April, 1986 to M. Mohideen Sahib.
individual, N. Raghava Reddy, a landlord, who was a staunch supporter of the British Government. He threatened Akbar Ali and his friends saying that they could never bring freedom to the country and desisted them from participation in the Congress activities. But, these people were not to be cowed down so easily. Akbar Ali, Sitarami Reddy and two other friends toured extensively in the villages and enlightened the people about the atrocities of the British Government. They implored the people not to pay taxes either on salt or for tapping liquor. They also advised them to cultivate all the barren lands at Nemakal, Timmapur, Nagardona, Kundurthy etc., where they carried out propaganda against the British. Akbar Ali and Sitarama Reddy went to Adoni to defy the government orders on salt tax. In course of one such show of disobedience, the police lathi charged the crowd, when Somayajulu, a leader of the Salt Satyagraha Movement received blows and was injured. But, he was not arrested while another individual Timmayya Chetty was sent to prison.

Again, these two individuals went to Alur to picket the alcohol bidding. Venkateswara Rao of Halli Belugal village was the leader of the local movement. The entire group was divided into four batches of sixteen members each.
All of them were arrested for having picketed against alcohol bidding. Akbar Ali and his friends were convicted by the Magistrate of Adoni for six months of imprisonment, besides a fine of Rs.100/- in lieu of which they were to undergo two more months of imprisonment. He was yet another Muslim whom the members of the Muslim League tried to prevent from participation in the movement. But he defended. His contention was that born in India, they were, after all, Indian Muslims and so had to serve the cause of India, rather than associate themselves with the activities of the Muslim League. Even when he was taken into custody, the Muslims of Bellary advised him to apologise to the British who would, thereupon, set him free. But, he saw more happiness in undergoing punishment rather than bow down to the British. He was in jail at Alipur, Bellary, from 10-7-1942 to 10-4-1943. He had such a deep national feeling that he named his children as Gaffar Khan Gandhi, Firoz Gandhi etc., and also latee on sent one of his sons to the military so that he should serve the nation as a soldier. While in prison at Alipur, a certain Sri Hari Rao, a co-prisoner, wrote on the floor the words "Quit India" and they also raised slogans defying the orders of the jail authorities. The British Jail Superintendent now became furious when he saw such impertinence. He ordered a lathicharge on the naguichavutı day and many fell victims of that action. While in jail, these freedom fighters used to conduct meetings explaining the misrule of the British and their objectives. Sometimes it took the form
of a **harikatha** or a **purana** reading to explain the Congress policies. Akbar Ali, was one of the South Indian Muslims who knew Mohammed Ali Jinnah personally. Yet, the Muslim League could not influence him. He was a staunch Congressman, wearing Khaddar always. On the occasion of the Silver Jubilee of the Freedom Movement K. Akbar Ali too was honoured with **tamrapatra** by the Central Government.

M. Shamsher Baig

We have seen above how Shamsher Baig participated not only in the Individual Satyagraha, but also in the Quit India Movement when they indulged in non-violent and destructive activities.¹

M. Mahaboob Sahib

Mahaboob Sahib, son of M. Sultan Sahib, a **mullah** in a mosque at Togerchedu in Nandyal taluk, of Kurnool district was a colleague of Shamsher Baig and participated in the

Quit India Movement along with him.\textsuperscript{1} Mahaboob Sahib was one of these who came under the direct influence of Gandhiji, when the latter was touring in this area in 1928. In right earnest, he responded to the call of the Mahatma to participate in the Quit India Movement. He had migrated, along with his family, to Nandyal and settled down in nandyal town. The local leader, Nivarti Venkatasubbaiah, Secretary of the District Congress Committee and also a member of the All India Congress Committee led the Quit India Movement in this area. Mahaboob Sahib joined the group of activists including Dayananda Reddy. Shamsher Baig and Kodi Narasimhulu led by Nivarti Venkatasubbaiah in removing the fish plates of the railwayline between Nandyal and Panyam railway stations on 31-8-1942. All of them excepting Nivarti Venkatasubbaiah were imprisoned.

M. Mahaboob Sahib was convicted of rigorous imprisonment for seven months from 23-9-1942 to 21-4-1943 and was placed in the Alipur jail. When in prison, being an orthodox Muslim, he celebrated the Bakrid festival in which leaders of Andhra, like Bejwada Gopala Reddy and B. Venkatasubba Reddy, who were his prisonmates also willingly participated in it. Being a true follower of the Congress ideals, he did not fall a prey to the Muslim League, to the enticement of the members of the Muslim League who invited him to join the Muslim League.\textsuperscript{2}

\textsuperscript{1} \textit{ibid.}, p. 349.

\textsuperscript{2} Personal interview with M.A. Kalam Sahib, son of M. Mahaboob Sahib, Freedom Fighter on 12-1-1989, at Nandyal.
K. MAHABOOB SAHIB

Yet another, K. Mahaboob Sahib, also known as 'Mukka', from Kurumala, Anantapur district also indulged in nonviolent activities, when he set fire to the Forest guest house at Kothakota during the Quit India Movement. He was the son of Karim Sahib of Kurumala in Kadiri taluk a cultivator, who had four sons, Mahaboob Sahib being one of them. By profession, Mahaboob Sahib was a coolie. But, he developed close friendship with T.P. Gangi Reddy of the same village. T.P. Gangi Reddy himself had been influenced by his uncle Subba Reddy of Erracheruvupalli and Rayappa Subba Rao. Mahaboob Sahib was just 18 years old, when he took part in the Quit India Movement. He was an active member of Congress and was carrying on propaganda among the people against helping the British with money and man-power.

It was in July, 1943, under the leadership of Aryasamudra Narasinga Rao, that a group of people including Mahaboob Sahib alias Mukka and T.P. Gangi Reddy decided to set fire to the forest bungalow at Kothakota. Both of them were consequently arrested and sentenced to jail. He was also convicted and was sentenced by the I Class Magistrate for one year i.e. from 19-7-1943 to 19-7-1944 rigorous imprisonment. This freedom fighter is no more, and the information about him was given by his friend, T.P. Gangi Reddy at Kurumala.

2. Personal interview with T.P. Gangi Reddy, Freedom Fighter, on 2-8-88 at Kurumala.
The last of the Muslim Freedom Fighters who took part in the Quit India Movement as known to us, was Mohammed Rasool Sahib, son of Razack Sahib of Kasapuram in the Guntakal taluk of Anantapur district. He was the only son of his father, a farmer. He had undergone formal education up to the 5th class. He had the good company of K. Ramanujacharlu, G.A. Narayanacharlu and Kavali Anjinaiah, all from Kasapuram. All the four were greatly influenced by the district leaders like Kalluri Subba Rao, I. Sadasivan and P. Ramacharlu. Kasapuram is a village famous for the Hanuman temple. Most of the villagers there were patriots who willingly participated in the National Movement. The tour of Mahatma Gandhi in 1934 and of Babu Rajendra Prasad in 1935 instilled a sense of patriotism and desire for freedom from the clutches of the British in the villagers. P.K. Ramacharlu told us that in the 1st week of January, 1934, Gandhi came to Gooty from Cuddapah and addressed the villagers of Peddavaduguru, Ramarajupalli, Timmanacherla, Guntakal, Uravakonda, Vajrakaruru, Anantapur and Hindupur, Gandhi received a grand welcome by the people of Anantapur district who donated huge sums to the Swaraj Fund. It was in one such meeting that the young Mohammed Rasool came under the influence of Gandhi and joined the 'Quit India Movement'. He involved himself in violent activities, like the removal of railway track of Marmagao-Machilipatnam line near Guntakal and damage of the Madras-Bombay trunk road. Soon after, they went underground

1. Pension records of District Collectors, Anantapur.
and sought shelter in Singavatnam Devasthanam near Vanaparthy. However, being a Muslim, the temple authorities were not willing to permit him to stay in the temple. Ramacharlu, then thought of a plan and gave a Hindu name to Mohammed Rasool and on that ground he was allowed to stay with them there. Later, all of them surrendered before the Magistrate of Gooty, who punished them with imprisonment for six months from 24-11-1942 to 25-12-1943. During this period, they were detained in the Sub-jails at Gooty, Anantapur, Penukonda, etc.,

P. Murad Shah Sahib

Chittoor district has offered P. Murad Shah Sahib1 of Madanapalli, son of Mahaboob Sahib, a petty businessman. At the instance of Nooti Radha Krishnaiah, P. Murad Shah joined in the National movement in 1936 and served as the member of the Taluk Working Committee. Interestingly, while Oleti Venkatakrishnaiah was president of the Taluk Working Committee and Mrs. Cousin was Vice President and Radhakrishnaiah was Secretary. The Taluk Congress Committee organised a meeting of protest during the Quit India Movement under the leadership of Radhakrishnaiah at Madanapalli. The police resorted to lathicharge to disperse the crowd on 24-8-1942. P. Murad Shah was one of the participants and received lathi-blows in the occasion. In his interview N. Radhakrishnaiah said he was an active Freedom Fighter but was not arrested by the police. Infact this incident was reported in The Hindu in its edition published on 25-8-1942.2

Finally, we have to recall the services of five Muslims who joined the Indian National Army of Subhas Chandra Bose to serve the nation. Excepting Abdul Khader Sahib, who belonged to the Cuddapah district all the four others were from Chittoor district. Abdul Khader was the only son of Mohideen Sahib, who was a Jatka driver. He was educated upto the 5th standard and was conversant with Urdu and Telugu languages. He too was working as a driver. But, later, at the time of the Second World War, he joined the military on 6th June, 1940 and was given training as a truck driver at Devalia. He was later transferred to I.E.M.E., Secunderabad. From what we have came to know through the interview with Abdul Khader from Rayachoty, he was sent to Malaya to participate in the Second World War in 1941. In the course of the war with the Japanese, they had to surrender themselves to the enemy force. Along with others, he was kept in Penayango and Mangaldone prison camps. There he was a prisoner of war up to 1945. Then came Netaji who visited the prison camps and addressed the prisoners of war to fight against the British for political freedom. His stirring speeches instigated these prisoners. According to available information about 60,000 soldiers joined the Indian National Army of Bose. They were spread out in the

1. Pension records of the District Collectorate, Cuddapah.
borders of Malaya and Burma. Their weakness was dearth of weapons. Finally, Japan was defeated in the Second World War and the Indian National Army soldiers could not continue their fight for want of weapons. They were captured by the British army. J.K. Bose was the leader of their group. Churchill had expressed the view that all of them were to be put to death. But for the intervention of President Roosevelt, their lives could not have been spared. Their life was miserable in the war-camp. Shortage of food and medicine made them suffer. They had to work as coolies, repairing damaged buildings and were put to such other hard labour. There is no information about Abdul Khader and others. They were, however, freed from the prison in 1947. Much later, they received Freedom Fighters' Pension in recognition of their services.¹

S. Abdul Ali

S. Abdul Ali,² son of S. Rahimuddin Sahib, a retired policeman was a native of Chandragiri in Chittoor district. He was born in the year 1919 on November 5th, and studied upto the 1st form. He was the youngest among the five sons of Rahimuddin Sahib. The pension that his father was getting

¹ Personal interview with S. Khader Sahib, Freedom Fighter, on 25-8-1988 at Rayachoty.
was quite insufficient to meet the basic needs of the family. Therefore, Abdul Ali joined the Army as a sapper, when he was 22 years old, and was posted to the unit of Madras Engineering Group. He was sent to Singapore to look after the repairs as a sapper. In course of the Second World War, he was one of those who surrendered to the Japanese army when Japan captured Singapore, after dropping bombs over Singapore. All of them were detained in the camp at Malaya. It was then that Subhas Chandra Bose met these captives of the Indian Army and pleaded with them to join the Indian National Army. He brought to bear upon them that, after all, India was our country and we have to rule over it. The slogan E desh hamara, E Raj hamara, and his vehement appeal stirred up nearly 40,000 soldiers who later joined the Indian National Army under the leadership of Lieutenant Baduruddin Sahib. Abdul Ali being a carpenter by profession, it fell to his lot to prepare doors and windows for the camp quarters. He was later promoted to the rank of a havaldar. They moved to Burma where they built trenches to firing lines.

In his personal interview he failed to recollect the details of war of the Indian National Army with the Britishers to whom they finally surrendered in 1942. They were imprisoned and kept in the Jigarkacha camp in west Bengal for over a year. Interrogated then by the British Army, he had replied
that the notice behind his joining the Indian National Army was only to achieve freedom for our country. Nothing could prevent them from doing so. He further said that it was by his volition and not under any influence of others that he joined the Indian National Army. Here there was no distinction made on the basis of religion, caste or sex. Today, Abdul Ali has settled down at Sri Kalahasti and is receiving a pension from the Central Government.

Mohammad Afzal Sahib

Mohammad Afzal was the son of Mohammad Abdul Mazid, born in 1915 at Chandragiri in Chittoor district. He had his education up to the S.S.L.C., Class. His father was a retired jamedar of the British Army, and at his instance Mohammad Afzal got himself recruited to the British Army. He was also placed in the Madras Engineering Group along with Abdul Ali. In the Second World War his camp was captured by the allied powers.

Like Abdul Ali, he too came under the influence of Subhas Chandra Bose and joined the Indian National Army in 1942 and fought against the British allied forces in the Singapore and Burma borders. He was detained as a prisoner

of war from 15-4-1945 to 3-5-1946, in Rangoon. He was further detained for another 3 months at Jigerkacha camp in West Bengal. Thanks to Abdul Ali, who gave detailed information about this freedom fighter. He too came under the spell of Subhas Chandra Bose who addressed them when his group was captured by the allied powers. Moved by the speech of Subhas Chandra Bose he desired to join the Indian National Army. Later, when he was discharged from the Japanese army, and along with others, was handed over as a prisoner of war to Subhas Chandra Bose he was admitted into the army, and was promoted to the rank of captain, in the war against the British. But, he was one of those who fell into the hands of the British. He was again detained as a prisoner of war. Today only his memory survives.¹

P. Mohammad Ibrahim

P. Mohammad Ibrahim² was also recruited to the Indian National Army. He was also interviewed to elicit information about his own activities. He was one of the eight sons of Patnulu Hyder Sahib, who had also a daughter. He had his formal education upto 7th Class. He knew Telugu and Urdu

¹ Personal interview with S. Abdul Ali, Freedom Fighter, 12-12-1988 at Sri Kalahasti.

² Pension records of District Collectorate, Chittoor.
languages. He was also one of those who, unable to bear the financial burden of his family joined the British Army in 1940 as a Sepoy. He underwent Military training at Bangalore. After the completion of training he, along with others of the batch, was sent to the war-field in the second World War, to face the Japanese army. The British army was defeated and nearly 50,000 soldiers were taken as prisoners of war. They were kept in the prison camp in Singapore. The Japanese army utilised their services as prisoners of war to repair the damaged buildings and for cleaning up of the places. At this juncture, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose appeared on the scene. He organised a meeting in the prison camp. By his captivating speeches, he encouraged them to join the Indian National Army to liberate India from the clutches of the British. The slogans E desh hamara, E raj hamara inspired these prisoners of war to join the army. A majority of them joined the Indian National Army. Mohammad Ibrahim too wholeheartedly embraced the Indian National Army. The Governments of Germany and Japan were then helping Subhas and the Indian National Army in their efforts to fight against the British. With the help of the Indian National Army, Bose also declared war upon the British. Japan occupied the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and also Burma. Japan not only handed over the areas to the Indian National Army but also helped Netaji in organising a parallel government. The Government of Japan and Germany provided Netaji necessary arms and ammunition to carry on war against
the British. The Indian National Army was led by the Lt.Col. Aziz Ahamed, Lt.Col. M.Z. Kianl, Lt. Col. Dhillon and Lt.Col. Shanawaz. It moved forward from Malaya to Manipur. But the army had to face serious problems like inclement weather and lack of arms and ammunition. Yet, undauntedly, they carried on their war against the British and underwent a great deal of sufferings. At this juncture, U.S.A. intervened in the War as an ally of the British. The British now had an upper hand. The Indian National Army was defeated and forced to surrender to the British. Mohammad Ibrahim was one of those who were taken as captives and he was for long in the camp, as a prisoner of war. Asked by the Britishers the reason for his participation in the Indian National Army, Mohammad Ibrahim did not hesitate to answer that it was only to free the motherland from the British. He was sent to India and was subjected the severe punishment. In his conduct certificate he was shown to be indifferent, and was not entitled for any salary. His camp officer sent him back to his native town. The Government awarded him the Tamrapatra. Today, for his livelihood, he runs a Soda factory named after Netaji.  

This Chapter recorded the details of those Muslim Freedom Fighters, alive or dead or about whom evidence is available, to know the manner and extent of their participation in the movement. This information and details are elicited from the alive freedom fighters and about the dead through their survivors by inferious and through questionnaire. This study is concerned about the nature of their participation whether willingly or out of fear. In the later case it is further examined whether they were forced by some, like their own masters, to participate in the movement. Further, our attempt is made to know the background of their participation, their association with other leaders in the society, their intense desire to work for the emancipation of the country. Despite the sincere efforts made, it has not been possible to contact all those people since many of them are dead. Yet, the available data has itself provided some interesting and relevant information, to arrive at certain conclusions and making this study possible.

It is but natural that, when compared to the number of those that participated in the movement, quantitively speaking, the Muslim members were obviously less. Yet, considering that many areas in the Rayalaseema like Cuddapah and Kurnool,
where once the Nawabs were ruling, the number of Muslim population was greater, still, the number of participation appeared to be apparently less there is but little to show the reason for their non-participation is a result of the hypothesis that the movement was essentially one connected with the Hindus and that the Muslims had nothing to gain by participating in the movement. The concluding chapter, in intended to give the details of questionnaire which could be the framework of further extensive and explorative cross examination.

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