Nationalism has undoubtedly been one of those intriguing processes that have invoked formidable social and political forces in the world since its first use in the French Revolution of 1789-1799 as a rallying cry for unity and defence against the enemies of the La Patrie. The response of the subjugated states in Africa and Asia to European nationalism and expansion was given full expression in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries and culminated in the independence of various countries in these continents. Even if the European model of nationalism was one of myths and idealizations, the response that it evoked in colonial-nationalism was even more complex. One such model of colonial-nationalism that developed in reaction to British rule could be observed in colonial India in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

The first official contact between the English and the Indian subcontinent occurred in 1615 when representatives of the East India Company paid their first visit to the court of the still-powerful Mughal Emperor of India. It was from this footing that the East India Company established itself as a major economic force in the Indian subcontinent, later developed into a powerbroker in the rapidly disintegrating Mughal Empire in the early eighteenth century and finally became the arbiter of the fates of the post-Mughal states.

The first recorded massive revolt, between indigenous group’s hostile to the East India Company and its Indian allies, which took place in 1857, is considered by most of the historians as the first struggle for Indian freedom which actually made a great sensation among the British. There were only a few states that did not answer to the Company politically and economically. The Indian National Congress (hereafter INC or Congress) was formed in 1885. Later, the INC became the main organization that carried forward the Indian national movement for freedom. In the Congress there were conflicts between two groups known as the extremists and moderates. The organization was at its best in the beginning of twentieth century under the leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (hereafter Gandhi). In 1921, like many others, Subhas Chandra Bose (hereafter Bose) joined the Congress fascinated by Gandhi and due to his passion for the liberation of the country. He found that it was not possible
to achieve his goal of liberating the country in his own way by being in the INC due
to ideological and radical differences with dominant leaders. This compelled him to
continue his fight from outside the country, seeking help from Germany, Italy and
Russia; in which he was not quite successful. Finally he joined hands with Japan
which helped him in reshaping the Indian National Army and made successful efforts
to enter the North Eastern part of India fighting against the British Army with
Japanese collaboration. But it went in vain due to the defeat of Japan in the Second
World War.

It is to be noted that Bose made a successful effort to gain popularity among
Indian populace and inspired many of the younger generation to follow his path. But
he was considered notorious by the British as he became a real threat for the ruling
British, which was not the case with many other Indian leaders. The narrative and
analysis of the thesis focuses on other pivotal events too; which includes the
declaration of the death of Bose in the alleged plane crash in Taiwan (Formosa) on
18th August 1945 and the trial of Indian National Army personnel. Many of these
events have become fiercely contested grounds between historians. The nationalist
historians have maintained that there existed a monolithic anti-colonialist movement
as exemplified by the INC while others oppose that claim.

This thesis looks at the life and activities of the controversial Indian nationalist
revolutionary leader Bose during the period between 1921 and 1945. Attempts are
made to examine the attitude of Indian political leaders towards Bose and bring
forward the ideological differences between Indian leaders during the freedom
movement that forced Bose to continue his struggle for the country from outside the
country. The thesis argues that it was the activities of Indian revolutionaries like Bose
and their theory of revolutionary violence that the British really feared, as those were
possible forces that could cause serious damage to the stability of the British Empire
in the Indian subcontinent, during a period when the non-violent civil disobedience
style anti-colonial agitation of the INC was in its peak.

The thesis critically analyses the strategy and role played by Bose during the
freedom movement of India in India and abroad. It makes an attempt to examine the
reasons for Germany and Japan supporting the efforts in forming the INA through
military assistance programme and his strategies and its limitations by a case study of his struggle for India’s freedom.

Objectives of the study

- To provide the political context of Indian nationalist scene during the formation of INC.
- To examine the ideological differences of dominant members of the Indian National Congress during the freedom movement.
- To analyse the role played by Bose during the freedom movement of India.
- To examine the various circumstances that led Bose to make alliance with Japan rather than Germany and the USSR.
- To examine the reasons why Bose was being supported by Germany and Japan in reshaping INA through economic and military assistance program.
- To critically examine the trial of INA officers considering them as deserters.
- To examine how far Japan had given assistance to Bose in his fight for freedom and how far his visit to the Andaman and Nicobar islands in 1943 had made any difference in the lives of the people of the islands which were under the Japanese regime.
- To analyse the reasons why Indian government was very keen to declare Bose’s death without any proper investigation.

Methodology

- The researcher has used primary and secondary sources in the thesis and has used analytical and eclectic methods.

Sources for the Research

This research is based on a good deal of primary and secondary sources that are available in many languages, namely English, Hindi, Bangla, Tamil and Japanese. The twelve volume of *Netaji collected work* published by The Netaji Research Bureau of Kolkata is a good primary source for the research apart from the unfinished autobiography of Bose, *An Indian Pilgrim*, which is a basic source for the study of his
early life. Netaji Research Bureau of Kolkata has a number of manuscripts which facilitate better research. The National Library: Calcutta, National Archives of India: New Delhi, Teen Murti Bhavan: New Delhi provides enormous research material including primary and secondary sources. There is a vast and diverse collection of secondary sources for the study across the country.

**Historiography**

In contemporary Indian history, serious researches on Bose are rare. Most of the eminent historians who have written about him have discussed about the mystery of his death and political biography rather than his ideology and strategy in the freedom struggle of India. Research is usually done on him from two perspectives. The school of national historians understates his role in freedom struggle or picture him as a traitor of the country or as a radical fascist. On the other hand, the leftist historians glorify him for his role in the freedom struggle and most of them believed that he was alive till recent past. This thesis tries to bring out some aspects of Bose which are less discussed in Indian historiography like his political status in India, the reasons why he felt that India was not the right place to fight for Indian struggle of freedom, his strategy for the freedom of India, the grounds on which he joined hands with the Axis powers or the role he played in taking over Andaman islands in 1943. A few historians have worked on this, but more work should be done in this area.

Jayant Dasgupta in his book *Japanese in Andaman & Nicobar Islands: Red Sun over Black Water* tells the inside story of the Japanese occupation of the Andaman and Nicobar islands during Second World War. But what is not known generally is that the Imperial Japanese Army, after its victories in Southeast Asia landed in the Andamans in March 1942, and occupied it till October 1945 and they were there even after the unconditional Japanese surrender on 15th August 1945, till the Allied army took them back. The book also deals with a detailed account of the period of occupation and an exploration of the Bose connection.

Tilak Raj Sareen in his book *Sharing the Blame: Subhas Chandra Bose and the Japanese Occupation of the Andaman’s, 1942-1945* critically examines the nature of the Japanese rule in the Andaman’s, its relations with the members of the
provisional government of Azad Hind, who participated in the civil administration, the torturing of the so-called spies, the devastation caused to life and property of the people by the Allied air raids on the islands. The author presents objectively the circumstances leading to the atrocities committed by the Japanese and the Indian police officials on the innocent people and deals with the visit of Bose and his alliance with the imperial Japan that did not help Bose in liberating the Islands.

Joyce Chapman Lebra’s *The Indian National Army and Japan*, traces the origin of the Indian National Army in the imagination of Iwaichi Fujiwara, a young Japanese intelligence officer, and the relationship between the Imperial Japanese Army and the Indian National Army as it evolved under the leadership of Bose. It also discusses the initial efforts of Mohan Singh to form the INA from among the Indian prisoners of war in Japan. The book also deals with the episode of INA trial in Red Fort.

Sugata Bose in his book *His Majesty’s Opponent: Subhas Chandra Bose and India’s struggle against empire*, discusses the political life of Subhas Chandra Bose in the context of Indian National Movement and the factional differences with the mainstream leaders of Indian National Congress. The ideological difference between him and the Congress leaders prohibited him in functioning properly and that led to the division of the Indian National Congress into two groups, the leftist group and the Rightist group, and also formation of Forward Bloc within the Congress under the leadership of Bose. The mainstream leaders of Congress became the opponents of Bose though they all shared the same goal of liberating India from the British rule. The radical view of Bose against the leading group of Congress prompted him to leave India and seek the assistance of Japan and Germany— the anti-British Powers. Bose’s fundamental means did not achieve its anticipated target in Germany. Therefore Bose had to seek the help of Japan in order to achieve his target. With the Japanese support, he reorganised the Indian National Army in order to liberate India; in which he failed. Finally the author discusses the mysterious death of Bose.

Romain Hayes in the book, *Bose in Nazi Germany*, traces the relation between Bose and Germany and discusses the circumstances under which Bose had to leave Germany. The author starts with Bose’s radical view against Gandhi’s way of
struggle for independence through non-violence. Bose saw an opportunity to contribute to the freedom struggle by joining anti-British forces and had the idea to form an army against the British with the outbreak of Second World War. The author brings out a detailed study of the Bose-Germany equation. The book traces out the support Bose got from Germany and the reason why Germany considered Bose’s ideas worthwhile. He further deals with several points where the ambiguity in their relation creeps up. The book addresses the basic question: Why did not the German alliance succeed?

Leonard A. Gordon in his book, Brother against the Raj: A Biography of Indian Nationalists Sarat and Subhas Chandra Bose, discusses the situation in Bengal during the freedom struggle of India and the development of Anti-British feeling in amongst the people of India. It tries to critically analyse the role played by Subhas Chandra Bose and his brother Sarat Chandra Bose in the Indian freedom struggle. Further, the author brings out the political obstacles that Subhas Chandra Bose had faced during his days in Indian National Congress due to his divergent views with other leaders of the Congress. His alliance with the Axis Powers, Germany and Japan, to drive the British out of India is also examined in great detail. It brings out a detailed picture of his leadership qualities with episodes from his life. The author describes Bose as a tragic hero.

Hugh Toye’s Subhas Chandra Bose: The Springing Tiger is a very compassionate study of Subhas Chandra Bose which pictures Bose as purely anti-British and as a born revolutionary whose ultimate goal was to drive the British out of India. For this he sought the help of Hitler, Mussolini and the Russians and, in the Second World War, allied himself actively with the Japanese. Bose’s escape from India through Afghanistan and Russia to Germany, his organising an Indian Legion there etc. is vividly described by the author. He also discusses Bose’s failure in liberating the Andaman Islands.

Alexander Werth edited the book A Beacon across Asia: A biography of Subhas Chandra Bose. This biography of Subhas Chandra Bose, gives equal importance to his role in the Indian National Congress and the ideological and factional differences of Bose with the mainstream leaders of Congress as well as his
wartime efforts to procure the help for the liberation of India in Germany and Japan. Further, it deals with the Indian National Army which fought along with the Japanese, Bose’s mysterious death in an air crash in Formosa as he was trying to go to the Soviet Union three days after the Japanese surrender.

Peter Ward Fay in his book, *The Forgotten Army: India's Armed Struggle for Independence 1942-1945*, gives a detailed account of the formation and operations of the INA during 1942-45. The history of the INA is explored from three perspectives. The author mentions the role of Subhas Chandra Bose and his Indian National Army in the military operations in Southeast Asia under Japanese sponsorship. The book also discusses in detail about his leadership role in the Indian National Congress, his escape from Calcutta in January 1941, his journey to Germany to seek Axis help for India’s liberation, and his subsequent arrival in Sumatra and Singapore. Japanese intentions and Bose’s relationship with them are discussed perceptively. The author also describes the efforts of INA soldiers and the Japanese soldiers in the war front and also the sufferings of INA soldiers during their campaign.

**Chapter Scheme**

The thesis has six Chapters including an introduction and a conclusion.

**Chapter II: Ideology & Political Vision of Subhas Chandra Bose in Early Life**

This chapter discusses the unique political vision of Bose. Some of the issues that would be discussed in the chapter include the socio-cultural environment during the early years of Bose’s life. It discusses briefly the childhood of Bose, his education by means of school and Gurus. It also discusses his family background and its impact on him. It shows that he was inspired by the thought of nationalism and that he admired many great personalities likely Swami Vivekananda and Ramakrishna Praramahansa from his childhood itself. What appealed to Bose most was the life and message of Ramakrishna and his emphasis on character building and spiritual upliftment. Under the impact of Ramakrishna’s ideology of renunciation and passion for spiritual and immortal life, Bose started thinking in terms of the service he could offer to humanity. The spirit of defiance that overtook him under the influence of
Ramakrishna Praramahansa prepared him to defy the imperial authority in future for the sake of national liberation. In this chapter his college life, during which he was seen taking a stance against racism and the treatment meted out to the Indians by the British, is also discussed briefly. Finally the Chapter narrates his journey to England for joining the Indian Civil Service. In 1920 he cleared the civil service examination and stood fourth in the rank list. During his stay in England he realised the shortcomings in INC. Despite the luxurious career at hand, he made up his mind to join the INC and make a difference there and serve his country.

Chapter III: Subhas Chandra Bose and the Indian National Congress

This chapter aims at discussing chronologically the nationalist political landscape in British India from 1885 to 1941. The chapter would give a brief background of the leading political parties, indigenous revolutionary organizations, their dynamics and leadership, and how they all interacted with each other and the nature of their relationships with the British rule in India. The intention is to contextualise the activities of Bose in the contemporary Indian political scenario and therefore it will not necessarily deal with the full spectrum of parties and politics but only those that had relevance with Bose’s life and work. This chapter also discusses the unique political vision of Bose and the influences of social and political reformers such as Swami Vivekananda and Aurobindo Ghose on him. It also discusses the development of Bose's political ideology through the 1920s during his political apprenticeship under the All-India Bengali leader Chittaranjan Das whom he considered his political Guru. The chapter would further discuss the convergence of Bose’s ideas into a concrete political ideology, influenced by Indian traditions and the influences of the dominant political ideologies of Fascism, National Socialism and Marxism on his thinking during his years of forced exile in Europe in the 1930’s. Bose's views and solutions on problems peculiar to India, the question of caste etc. are also discussed.

The chapter concludes by looking at the clash between Bose and the INC high command in 1939 which led to Bose's decision to leave INC as well as India to start an armed struggle from abroad to free his country and to his eventual alliance with Axis powers.
Chapter IV: Subhas Chandra Bose and His Strategies for Armed Struggle

This chapter discusses Bose’s dramatic escape from India during his house arrest by the British and his journey from Kabul to Germany. The chapter analyses his failure in getting assistance from Germany and Russia for the liberation of India, which was his main aim when he had been in exile in Europe during 1930’s. Realising in 1943 that he was not benefitting India by his work in Germany and totally disillusioned by Hitler's declaration of war on Russia, he decided to approach and seek assistance from Japan.

Chapter V: Bose’s Armed Struggle in Southeast Asia and the INA Trials

This chapter discusses the years from 1943 to 1946 in the context of the activities of Bose. The chapter also analyses the unique place of Bose amongst Indian revolutionaries and the characteristics that set him apart from his fellow revolutionaries which allowed him to single-handedly create a "Free India" movement in Occupied Europe and Southeast Asia. The reshaping of Indian National Army by Bose and the internal dynamics and limitations of the movements that Bose headed with Japanese collaboration is also discussed. This chapter critically examines the role of Bose in taking over the Andaman and Nicobar Islands and the level of success of his visit to Andaman as the head of Andaman & Nicobar Islands. The specifics of Bose’s strategies for alliances, armed struggles and revolting against the British are critically analysed. The chapter also looks at how the INC viewed the activities of Bose and the Free India struggle during the war and how it utilized the countrywide unrest in favour of Bose during the INA Officers Trial of 1945 for their own ends. The chapter concludes by looking at how the British viewed Bose during this period, the precautions they took against the Indian National Army and the impact of the INA Officers Trial of 1945.