The Oracle 2020
Sisir Kumar Bose Centenary Volume

CONTENTS

01  Remembering My Brother Sisir Kumar Bose
    by Anita B. Pfaff

08  Remembering Dr. Sisir Bose
    by Leonard A. Gordon

11  Sisir Kumar Bose: A Life in Pictures (1920-2000)

51  Sisir Kumar Bose and Netaji Research
    Bureau under Intelligence Surveillance:
    Selected Documents

61  The Children of India
    Excerpts from Sisir Kumar Bose’s Editorials as Founding
    Editor of Indian Pediatrics, 1964

65  Selected Editorials, in The Oracle
    (from January 1979 to January 1983)
    by Sisir Kumar Bose

83  Remembering the Twentieth Century
    by Sisir Kumar Bose

88  NRB News 2019

100 Sisir Bose - Bio Sketch, 1993

104 “The Work Goes On”
Remembering My Brother Sisir K. Bose

by Anita B. Pfaff

The first meeting between my cousin brother Sisir and me took place in November 1948, when he visited Europe together with his parents and his two youngest sisters Roma and Chitra. My mother and I lived in post-World-War II Vienna at that time. My father's favourite brother, Sisir's father Sarat, had decided to visit Europe for the first time since his student days, after India had become an independent country. He used this journey also as an opportunity to come to know my mother and me for the first time. (Owing to World War II as well as the post-war and the pre-independence upheavals, he had only learned in 1947 that his brother had left a wife and a daughter who lived in Vienna, Austria.) During that visit, I just turned six years. My memories of Sisir of that meeting, of course, are not as vivid, as my later memories of him. But I do recall a rather tedious visit to a photographer who made some photographs of my uncle and my aunt, their three children who accompanied them, together with my mother and me.
Following the journey with his parents, Sisir stayed on in Europe to study and work for his specialization in pediatrics. In the course of these studies Sisir also spent several months in Vienna in 1950. During that stay we met every day. Even though age wise Sisir was almost like an uncle to me, he was also willing to romp around with me like an older brother, playing hide-and-seek and other games. And I was absolutely thrilled to experience getting to know a relative from my father's side of the family. Together the two of us were subjected to my maternal grandmother's scolding, when we pinched food before the meal was put on the table. We made excursions into the Vienna Woods.
During this stay we could interact more actively than during his first visit to Vienna, because Sisir had learned to speak German – I did not know much English at that age.
As an up-coming paediatrician – Sisir had been studying for his specialty in England and Switzerland before coming to Vienna– he had a knack for communicating with children, even though otherwise he was a rather shy, absent-minded and withdrawn young man. As he grew older, sometimes people mistook this personality trait of his for stand-offishness and arrogance. I knew him differently: Even though he continued to be a quiet and withdrawn person, he and I always retained that informal intimacy of my childhood days.

My mother, unlike me, used to keep up a very regular correspondence with members of the Bose family, amongst those also with Sisir. After all, she had gotten to know him quite well, during his longer stay in Vienna in 1950. Later, after Sisir got married, it was more his wife Krishna with whom my mother exchanged letters regularly. A close friendship developed between the two women, who, incidentally, shared their birthdays on December 26.

This way our families kept in touch.
During my first visit to India I spent approximately half of my time as a guest in Krishna's and Sisir's household. And whenever I and my family visited Kolkata thereafter, I always had a second home with them.

They, in turn, frequently visited me and my family in Germany where we had moved in 1971, especially as long as my mother was still alive. It was during one of those visits, when my mother showed to Sisir the letters which my father had written to her and told him that she had finally decided to let him publish them – after her death. Previously she had always refused to let him have those letters. In fact, she had promised that she would burn them. I vividly recall that the two of them sat at our dining table, reading some of the letters together and commenting on them, while I xeroxed them for Sisir, to make sure that she would not carry out her threat to burn them without his getting them, after all.
Eventually Sisir persuaded my mother to let him publish them prior to her death (as Volume 7 of the Collected Works of Subhas Chandra Bose “Letters to Emilie Schenkl”). He had repeatedly argued “You see, I am also getting older and I want to get this work done, as long as I am still well enough.” And I recall that she was very pleased to hold the volume in her hands, when he brought her a copy during his visits to us in 1994.
Sisir always intrigued me with his capacity for work, in general, and his dedication to my father’s memory, in particular: He led a full, successful professional life as a paediatrician, and on top of that he spent an inordinate amount of time – and quite a bit of his own resources – collecting documents about my father’s life and the Indian National Army all over the world, building an institution – initially without any public support. Very early he started establishing the Netaji Research Bureau, together first with other members of the Bose family, especially with his brother Amiya. But soon it was he (alone) who carried the burden of the work, supported by his capable and gifted wife Krishna who was willing to back him up in all his efforts, playing “second fiddle” to all his projects, even though she had a distinguished career of her own. One can truly say, “He could not have succeeded in doing all he did without her.” Later all three of his children, Sugata, Sarmila and Sumantra, supported him and stayed close to him.

At first I had the impression that Sisir’s conversations at meals at his or at our home invariably ended up with talks about some aspects of his uncle Netaji’s life, for my benefit. But eventually I found out, that even when I was not with him, Sisir’s thoughts always focussed on this topic. He was certainly obsessed with his uncle’s life and achievements. In view of that it is all the more fascinating that he succeeded, nonetheless, in becoming a successful doctor, leaving a mark in that field as well.

When I started to plan bringing back my father’s remains from Japan to India, in the late 1990’s, Sisir supported me without much ado and publicity. He said quite clearly, “I am not concerned with the controversy about your father’s death. I am dealing with his life and with his achievements. But you have my full support.” While other members of our family – with the support of other people outside our family – started to oppose and hamper my plans by calling for a third inquiry commission to investigate the circumstances of my father’s death on August 18, 1945 in Taipei, Sisir was willing to support me. Even though the installation of the Justice Mukherjee Inquiry Commission and the ensuing discussions about its report have, for all practical purposes, held up my efforts, I greatly appreciated to have had Sisir’s quiet support in the matter.

When Sisir passed away I not only lost a person to whom I had always felt close, but also a dependable supporter in trying to reach a closure on my father’s death. It has been a consolation that through Sisir’s work at the Netaji Research Bureau a living monument continues to exist which will tell also in future my father’s story of his sacrifice for his beloved country.
Remembering Dr. Sisir Bose

by Leonard A. Gordon

Dr. Bose was the backbone, the inspiration, of a talented nuclear family and a member of a most distinguished extended family. It was my pleasure and to my immense benefit to begin my contact with Dr. Bose in 1964. I was doing research for my doctoral dissertation on Indian nationalism in Bengal, and, of course, I had to investigate the life and work of Subhas Chandra Bose as an integral part of this study. My Bengali teacher and friend Edward Dimock had visited Netaji Bhawan, and as the next step, I had to meet its director.

I learned that Dr. Sisir Bose was a medical doctor, and lived around the corner at 1, Woodburn Park. I went there one day, around tea time, and met Dr. Bose. He promptly agreed to give me whatever help he could to further my research. His medical chamber was on the ground floor, and the family lived in adjoining rooms. Sugata Bose was a young boy, Sarmila an even younger girl, and Sumantra had yet to appear on this earth. In time, I met Dr. Bose's wife, Krishna, and the children.
Shortly I began working in Netaji Bhawan, reading unpublished letters and manuscripts of Subhas Bose. I would occasionally talk to Dr. Bose about my progress. One day, he told me that he was preparing a book to contain the earliest letters of Subhas Bose, from his teenage years, written in Bengali. A medical colleague had volunteered to translate them into English. So there was a typescript, but Dr. Bose wondered how good the English of the translation was and asked me to look at it. I took it home and tried to make it into readable English. After three weeks I decided it was a hopeless case. Almost every sentence had to be rewritten, and my Bengali was not good enough to compare the English with the Bengali and try to do it myself.

I took it back to Dr. Bose and told him that some alternative path had to be found. He hesitated for a second, and then said, “I will do it myself.” I don’t know whether he had done previous translations and how much experience he had as a writer of English prose, but he took the task in hand. Within a few months, he produced an excellent, accurate translation. As he did it, he gained confidence in his ability to do such work. He was en route to edit, translate, and write many volumes of the works of Subhas, and later of his own father, Sarat, Bose. And also he went on to write his accounts of his personal experiences with his father and his uncle.

In time, Dr. Bose began the extensive project of publishing the works of Subhas Bose in a series of volumes, and I was asked to be a member of the international board of editors. I remember his approaching me with a question about the volume containing materials from 1924 to 1932. He was not sure what arrangement would be best. I looked at them, and asked him, “What about in strictly chronological order?” He ran with this suggestion, and another volume went to the press.

More than a decade later, I returned to Kolkata to work on a joint biography of Subhas and Sarat Bose. I had a grant from the Indo-American Sub-Commission on Education and Culture and an affiliation to the Netaji Research Bureau and the Nehru Library in New Delhi. I was often working in Netaji Bhawan. One day, Dr. Bose said, “The library is a mess. We don’t have a proper librarian to sort it out. Would you see what you can do?” I took up the task and saw that there were some invaluable books, as well as a lot of worthless ones.

The most valuable ones were those that had been the personal copies of Janaki Nath Bose, Sarat Bose, and Subhas Bose, and had their names written in them. These were books of English and Bengali literature, Indian and European history, and a few law books. Sarat Bose liked to write notes in his books. Subhas Bose had used some of these books in preparing for the I.C.S. examination while he was in the U.K. just after World War I.
I decided to prepare what I called “The Library List”. I would have sections for Janaki Nath Bose, Sarat Bose, and Subhas Bose, and comments after each title if the possessor of the book had written interesting notes therein. It turned out to be a long list, more than 50 pages. I made multiple copies, one for Netaji Bhawan, one for myself, and a third for some as yet unknown, eager recipient. It turned out that the last of these was Nirad C. Chaudhuri, Krishna Bose’s uncle, who, upon hearing of the list’s creation, demanded a copy. I gave him the third copy.

As I was trying to finish my research on Subhas and Sarat Bose, I saw that a few prison manuscripts written by the former were not there. I asked Dr. Bose about it. He said that a family member had “borrowed” them many years earlier, promising to return them in a week. They had never been returned. I lamented that this would prove a difficulty for me in preparing a section of the book I was about to write. Dr. Bose said, “Don’t worry about it. You have enough. Go and write your book.” I was buoyed up by his confidence and backing. I took his advice, and went away to write my book. I always remembered that moment. I am sure, he, too, was unhappy about the missing manuscripts, but he said just the right thing, and in a sentence or two.

Dr. Bose went beyond pettiness and encouraged scholarship by those from diverse places having a great variety of points of view. He had his own opinions and assessments but never told anyone else what to write. He gave his help and then these scholars had to go out and find their way.

Apart from his demanding medical practice and administrative duties at the children’s hospital, another of Dr. Bose’s major concerns was: how do we preserve, and communicate the Subhas Bose legacy and then go on from there and explore issues of national importance under the auspices of the Netaji Research Bureau. He tried to do such at Netaji Bhawan through seminars there held over the years.

Outside his own family, Dr. Bose was a major figure in the Kolkata children’s medical network, and I always observed how much he loved being a doctor. To do this important job for other human beings, especially small and vulnerable ones, was most fulfilling for him and a great service to the Kolkata world of children and adults. I quoted a sentence in my Bose book by Dr. Bose’s father Sarat Bose that I try to remember from time to time: “If you want to do great things in life, keep your eye on the task at hand.” Dr. Bose did this. Even amidst hubbubs and controversies of various kinds, he continued to see his patients and gave them his best, and then turned to other tasks and concentrated equally well on them.
Sisir Kumar Bose
A Life in Pictures,
(1920-2000)
Sarat, Bivabati, Prabhabati and Janakinath Bose seated L to R. Sisir, age 4, standing behind Sarat's left shoulder, Srinagar, Kashmir, Autumn 1924

Early Memories
Subhas and Sisir, 1927
Sisir's Portrait of Rangakakababu, 1934
Sisir with Rangakakababu, Subhas, and brother Amiya, 1936 Kurseong

Sisir Kumar Bose, 1941
Sisir (far right) with his mother and siblings at 1, Woodburn Park during his home-internment, 1943

Chargesheet to Sisir Bose, Lahore Fort, November 1944.
January 22, 1945

Sarat Chandra Bose's notes regarding Sisir in his diary, 22 January 1945

Letter from father to Ajit Kumar Dey after receipt of news of Sisir’s transfer to Lyallpur
Sisir's Letter to his Mother from Lyallpur Jail on hearing the News of Netaji's Death in an Aircrash August 1945

Sisir Kumar Bose after release from jail, Lahore, 1945 September
Sisir Kumar Bose, 1945

Family Photo, Vienna, Anita in Sisir's Lap, 1948
Sarat Bose’s last Bijoya (Vijaya Dashami) letter to Sisir. In, London, October 1949

My dear Sisir,

Your letter of the 2nd must have reached you the day before yesterday. I send you my love and Bijoy omen. May the Divine Mother make you the head of your family and the glory of your country!

I am sorry I have not written you for nearly two weeks. It was due to sheer business. Have the physical and mental capacity to write. I will have to do journalistic work during my stay here. I gave an interview to the Indian News of America on Thursday the 6th. Did you see it in any of the British papers?
Sisir and Anita, Vienna, 1950

Anita Autograph, 1952
Sisir and Krishna, 1955 October

Sisir, the young doctor, 1955
Exchanging Garlands, 1955 December 9

First Steps, 1955 December 9
Gaurinath Shastri standing in the background
Krishna and Sisir's wedding, Calcutta (December 9, 1955).
Krishna's uncle Benode C. Chaudhuri in the centre

Krishna, 1955 December 11
Sisir and Krishna, 1955 December 11

Sisir and Krishna, 1955 December 12
Rome, 1959

Sisir, Krishna and Sugata at Harvard, 1959
Sisir, Krishna and Sugata, Thanksgiving on SS United States, 1959

Vienna Christmas, 1959
Sisir Bose showing Jawaharlal Nehru around the Netaji Museum, Sugata at Nehru’s feet, 1961

Sisir, Krishna, Sugata and Sarmila, 1961

Sisir and Krishna with children in Kurseong 1963
Sisir Bose receiving Netaji’s Sword from General Fujiwara, March 1967

Homecoming of Sword, 19 March, 1967
Emilie, Krishna, Sísir, Vienna, 1971

Krishna and Sísir, Rhîne, 1971
Charu C. Chowdhuri, Siddhartha Ray and Sisir Bose at 1, Woodburn Park, 22 January, 1973

Dinner at 1, Woodburn Park first international seminar, Standing Sisir Kumar Bose, Yoichi Yokobori, Milan Hauner, Grant Goodman, Joyce Lebra, Sitting Maya Ray, Krishna Bose, 1973
International Netaji Seminar, 1973: Woodburn Park, Sitting Krishna, Joyce Lebra, Mrs. & Mr. Bhagat Ram, Alexander Werth, Sarmila, Standing Sugata, Yokobori, Milan Hauner, Ranjan Borra, Grant Goodman, Sisir, Lothar Frank, Martin Klein, Charu C. Chaudhuri

International Netaji Seminar at Netaji Bhawan, 1973
Sisir Bose addressing the Inaugural Session of First International Netaji Seminar, 1973, Dilip Kumar Roy listening on the Stage

Sisir Bose with Indira Gandhi at the release of Netaji and India's Freedom. Proceedings of First International Netaji Seminar, 1975
Sisir and Krishna Bose with Mrs. Tojo, in Tokyo, 1979

Sisir Kumar Bose with family in New York, 1981
Mian Akbar Shah and Sisir Bose in England, 1983

Sisir, Krishna and Emilie in Vienna, October, 1987
A postcard to a young admirer, April 25, 1991

[Handwritten text on the postcard]
Sisir, Krishna and Sumantra, Amherst, 1992

Krishna and Sisir, Annecy, 1993
Sisir Kumar Bose being filmed by Charles Bruce, BBC, at Basundhara, 1995

Sisir Bose speaking at Emilie Schenkl's memorial meeting at Netaji Bhawan, Calcutta, March, 1996
Sisir and Krishna, Netaji Footsteps, 1997

Sisir and Krishna, Simla, 1997
At the Opening of the Newly Redesigned Netaji Museum, January 1998

Sisir Bose handing the Torch to the Younger Generation at the Gate of Netaji Bhawan, 2000
Sisir Portrait by Chintamoni Kar, 1978
Sisir Kumar Bose and Netaji Research Bureau under Intelligence Surveillance:
Selected Documents

Intercepted letter from Emilie Schenkl to Sisir Kumar Bose. 20 October 1952
Dear Father,

I am sorry for the delay in replying to your last two letters. I am over a month behind on my correspondence.

I was pleased to hear from you and glad to learn that you have been well. You mentioned the possibility of a trip to Vienna, which is a city I have always wanted to visit. I hope to go there soon.

Please tell me more about your visits to the museums. I am interested in learning more about the art and architecture of different cities.

I have been busy with work and various activities, but I am always happy to hear from you.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

June 53

P.S. I have enclosed a typed letter in your coat which I thought you might find helpful.
Comment:
The address is evidently the alleged wife of Sri SUBHAS CHRONA BOSB.

ATTESTED
Deputy Superintendent
of Police (R)
I.B., W.B.

IB comment on Sisir Kumar Bose's letter to Emilie Schenkl.
A casual agent reports on 14 July 1955 that one Sisir Kumar Bose, 1, Woodburn Park, Calcutta-2, communicated with Frau Emilie Schenkl, Ferogassee 21, Vienna, Austria as follows:

"I hope you received my last letter duly. At last I am keeping my promise of writing again in a fairly short time. We received the news of the end of occupation with relief. We are able to appreciate your feelings in this regard to a certain extent. We all hope the event will lead to improvement in conditions in all directions.

The newspapers also brought us the news of Nehru's visit to you. I am interested to know how the whole thing went. I am sending a few snapshots of the last photographic exhibition on uncle's life and our child welfare work. There is nothing new to report on the activities at Netaji Bhawan except that our welfare work is making steady headway. Speaking for myself, I have become very apprehensive in my own mind about the future and ultimate of Netaji Bhawan. I have doubt now whether my dreams about Netaji Bhawan will ever come true. Something tells me (I have no definite information) that final problems will be made by the ruling circles to take Netaji Bhawan away from us. It will all depend on how we are able to withstand such attempts.

Please do not get worried on account of the last few lines of the preceding paragraph. My fears may be completely unfounded.

How is Obama? I hope both you and Anita are well. Did you manage to take a holiday this year?

An exhibition on child life and health is being organized by the Azad Hind Ambulance Service at Netaji Bhawan for December next. We shall try to put up a good show. We are trying to secure materials for the exhibition from all parts of the world. Do you think the Indian Legation in Vienna will help us to secure some materials on child welfare work in Vienna? If you can think of any other contacts please let me know.

Are you in touch with Mr. Haupt? Do you think he will help us to secure materials on the Azad Hind movement in Germany during the war? I have the feeling that in serious setbacks are made. Valuable historical materials may still be secured both from Europe and East Asia.

If we do not work with a view to immortalizing and giving some permanent form to uncle's and father's life-work, nobody else will. If you were in India today, you will get the feeling that in India's struggle two men mattered—Gandhi and Nehru. The rest were just extras. But I have faith that truth will ultimately prevail."

---

Security Control Office,
3/1 Victoria St., Calcutta,
14th July, 1955.

ATTESTED

Deputy Superintendent of Police (F.I.)
L.B. W.B.

Copy forwarded to
Smt. B.G. Das, IPS, Deputy Commissioner of Police, Special Branch, West Bengal for information.

Deputy Commissioner of Police,
Security Control, Calcutta

Intercepted letter from Sisir Kumar Bose to Emilie Schenkl, 14 July 1955
Copy of Desp. No. 1985/FRM.3437/65 dated 25.5.58
from Calcuta to Shri B. Roy, Asst. Secretary, Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta.

.......

A casual query reports that Swami Satyananda, the late Life Society (Shuddha Samaj). 68, Elgin Road, Calcutta, communicated in 28th June, 1948, with Shri B. Roy, Asst. Secretary, Netaji Research Bureau, Calcutta, as follows:

"I was greatly delighted to receive your kind letter of 25th June 9th, addressed to my former name and address.

After my visit to your late beloved father, I received
orders and am now known as Swami Satyananda. I have founded a new movement called the Pure Life Society under the inspiration of the teachings of Sri Krishna. I was also one of the leaders of Netaji in his movement to have a common spiritual and cultural organization through which the various races and religious, particularly in Asia, could be driven together in an Indian foundation. The foundation stone of the Pure Life Society was laid in 1947 by Swami Satyananda at 68, Elgin Road, Calcutta. It has members all over South East Asia.

I am in full sympathy with the Bureau and you can count on my humble support for your noble work. In fact, Satya Sthabat has been opened to me about some form of Institute to study and propagate Netaji's ideals.

I have some of the personal letters of Netaji in my handwriting which if you wish, I can send to you. I also have the office desk and chair used by Netaji.

I very strongly feel that the ashes of Netaji in Japan should be brought to India and kept in the Netaji Bhawan. I have myself been to the Temple in Japan where the ashes are kept and have paid my respects and offered prayers before the casket. When the ashes are brought to India, I would suggest that you call a convention of Netaji's friends and admirers and on that occasion they may be requested (by previous notice) to give their memories of Netaji. I think you have to work directly on this idea. Funds may also be solicited through the convention. The work of the Institute will provide a nucleus of useful contacts. The following letter I will have written you an idea of our present work.

The Pure Life Society is a non-sectarian and non-commercial spiritual, cultural, educational and humanitarian organization founded in Japan in 1947. Its members and supporters are from all races and faiths.

Thy present activities are:

A boys' home and a girls' home with the combined strength of 75 underprivileged children, including those of lepers and also physically defective and deformed children.

English Primary and Secondary Schools with a strength of 1,500 pupils and 50 teachers. Together with other subjects, Malay is compulsorily taught to all students, and Sinhalese and Tamil are taught to the respective racial groups. Ethical and moral training forms an important part of education.

Providing education and training in clinics to adults through Adult Education Classes.

A library of select books of value and importance which is made use of by teachers as well as other distinguished personalities.

A Printing Press and Handicraft School and Dispensary.

In the Temple of the Universal Spirit of the Society all

ATTACHED

Superintendent

of Police (R)

L.B., W.B.

Intercepted letter from Swami Satyanand (formerly Brahmacari Kalasam) to Sisir Kumar Bose, 22 June 1958

Swami Satyanand sent precious letters, documents and relics from Singapore to Netaji Research Bureau
Copy from 2/Lt. 1472(K) (Japanese), case no: 104.

REGARDING

A casual agent reports on 19.10.63 that K.K. Ghosh, C/O
Aja Bank, Kaikai, 42-2, Komagome - Fuchu, Tokyo, communi-
cated on 17.10.63 with Mr. Sisir Bose, Netaji Bhavan, 30/1, Agia Road,
Calcutta-29, as follows

I have received your letter dated 4 Oct. and regret the
delay in replying to it. I'm spending my days in meeting the co-members
of the Japanese Southern Army and Ministry of Foreign affairs.

I'm really very glad to know that the Bureau is ready to
acquire the materials in S'Pore. I haven't yet got any answer to my letter
to the School. So, I don't think it would be possible for me to acquire it on
behalf of the school before I leave this region. I'm interested, however, to help the Bureau in acquiring the materials in microfilm or photostat as soon
as possible.

I would suggest, however, to make arrangement for Payment of the (I) for getting the copy of the materials and (II) cost of
either photostat or microfilming with some person in S'Pore who can be paid
back in India. The charge of getting microfilm as was asked for, is 400-500 M
and the cost of photostat or photostat would be about M 100.

If I am allowed to express myself frankly I do not like to
bring any dept. of our Govt., into the picture or bring it to their notice.
They are bargaining to acquire these for long time and my approach to the
firm in possession of the materials was through our Ambassadors in J.I., who
may not like willing to be brought to the attention of others. Under the present circumstances, I think the hope to get foreign exchange from the
Reserve Bank of India is remote. The Bureau should try to speedily acquire
the materials before they change hands.

In this matter, if my help is necessary I shall be glad to do
it. If the Bureau is ready to meet the financial requirements, I can talk
to a friend of mine in S'Pore to arrange for procuring copies of the
materials with the help of Kodak Co. I think he may also be ready to pay
both the commercial risk which is keeping the materials as well as the
charge of microfilming, if the same amount is paid to his family in India
according to the current official exchange rate.

Your opinion on this point may hurriedly be conveyed to me. I
shall leave Tokyo on 27 Oct. and reach S'Pore (on my way back to India) on
7 Nov.

The priest of the Shinto Temple has agreed to give a statement.
I am trying to get hold of an interpreter for it. Mr. Onaka has not yet
contracted us. I have arranged to get photostat copies of about 6 items of
documents (in Japanese) on the Provincial Govt. and Netaji from the wax

AKB/24.8.74

ATTESTED

Deputy Superintendent
of Police (R)
J.B. W.B.

Intercepted letter from K K Ghosh to Sisir Kumar Bose, 17 October 1963
A casual agent reports on 9.12.63 that Dr. Sisir K. Bose, Netaji Research Bureau, Netaji Bhavan, 36/2, Elgin Road, Calcutta-20, communicated on 5.12.63 with Mr. Yoichi Yokobori, Kyodo News Service, 2 Mibility Park, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo, Japan, as follows:

I am most grateful to you for your kind letter of the 16th ultimo.

I discovered that though the bulletins of the Bureau were sent to you duly, our book "Crossroads" was, through a misunderstanding not sent with me then. The book however, have been sent by surface mail last week and it will reach you in due course. I have an extra paper-back edition of Hugh Boyle's 'The Springing Tiger'. I am sending it to you by sea mail. Please accept both the books with my compliments.

As regards Rev. Kochizuki's statement, we shall be satisfied with the original Japanese text. In fact the original Japanese text should be preserved. I shall arrange to get the statement translated by a competent translator in India. You are of course welcome to let us have your own translation also for our record. I deeply appreciate the trouble that you have taken to obtain information for us from 'Japan Times', Domei News Agency etc. and also about the books, I.N.A. Literature available in Japan. As to the books, I might try to order them through one of our book-sellers here. As to the photographs, I am interested in all of them in particular the following at present:

1) Netaji speaking in Mibility Park.
2) Paying respect for the tomb of a Sung Yul Sen.
3) With Admiral Isohida on Warship.
4) At Tokyo Air Post on last visit.

Now about the expenses - will you kindly calculate the total expenditure on account of -

1) Microfilms or photocopy of old newspapers.
2) Photographs.
3) Books.
4) Leaflets of I.N.A. and
5) Such other material as you may be able to secure for us.

As you know I shall have to apply to the Government of India for necessary foreign exchange to meet the money to you. I would request you to please let me have an estimate as quickly as possible so that I may take up the matter with the Government of India without delay.

Our second English book will be ready to wards the end of January next. I shall send you a copy as soon as it is out.

AKS/24.6.71

ATTESTED

Deputy Superintendent
of Police (R)
I.B. W.B.

Intercepted letter from Sisir Kumar Bose to Yoichi Yokobori, 5 December 1963
Yokobori sent precious letters, documents and photographs from Japan to the Netaji Research Bureau.
A casual agent reports on 2.11.64 that Damodar R.Sardesai, 1043, West 35th Street, Los Angeles 7, California, U.S.A., communicated on 28.10.64 with Dr. Sisir K. Bose, General Secretary, Netaji Research Bureau, Netaji Bhavan, 161/2, Elgin Road, Calcutta-20, as follows:-

Thank you very much for your letter of September 1, 1964 which was redirected to me from my Bombay address. After writing to you I went to Southeast Asia and among those whom I met were many people who had associated with Netaji. After spending a few weeks in Singapore, Bangkok and Cambodia, I returned to the University of California here.

I shall send copies of Sarat Chandra Bose-Nehru correspondence from you. You may send the material to my Bombay address or 1043-West 35th Street, Los Angeles 7, California, U.S.A., whichever is convenient.

Incidentally, I am writing a short section on I.N.A. in Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam. I have some material on Indian support from Saigon. However, if you feel there are some sources I ought to look into, I shall appreciate your advice.

Hoping to hear from you soon.

A.K.S/24-8-71

ATTESTED

Deputy Superintendent of Police (R)
1B, W.B.

Intercepted letter from Damodar Sardesai to Sisir Kumar Bose, 28 October 1964
A manual agent reports on 7.4.65 that Yoichi Yokubori, Seoul, Japan, communicated on 5.4.65 with P.O. Sisir K. Bose, MIB, Netaji Bhawan, 56/2, Elgin Road, Calcutta-21, as follows:

With all apology I approach you with the hope that you will kindly excuse my long interval between the last letter and present one. I was badly busy with my special assignment to cover the U.S. forces mg. activities here in connection with Viet Nam problems and due to thin I had to spent a considerable long time away from Nippon since the first week of March. I may go to Korea probably next week to write the mg story there.

However I am just sending all materials mg surface mail and I hope they will reach you by the end of April, according to your request I decided to find out the Japanese newspapers (The Asahi and The Mainichi) on the 24th August, 1945 which report the air crash accident and death of our Netaji. At the same time I have succeeded to make copies of important Japanese newspaper's reporting Netaji and NSA activities with the kind cooperation of my intimate photographers. I also included the main mg. magazine articles, memoir on Netaji by ex-General and other closely related Japanes with Netaji. So I believe I had sent most of the main and important English, Japanese newspapers and magazine articles on Netaji. In addition to them, I have sent 2 volumes of condensed edition of "The Asahi" (leading newspaper), special bound volume of the "Bungaku Times", 2 different editions of "The Indian Struggle", "War story in Burma", "The day when England defeated", "The awakening of Asia", "The situation of India" together, 6nd Kurosawa, ex-General Sowa Kurosawa who fought together with Netaji in Burma died. Recently I wrote the letter to his relatives asking whether they are still keeping some materials on Netaji or not. I got a letter from them few days ago and it seems to show if you get his unsigned speech on Netaji or not. I am sorry he could not get the date.

I thank you for your sending me recent MIB bulletin. I was asked to write some essay on ex-Indian leaders during the war for some papers here. If you are kindly enough to send me the photographs of which I've asked you earlier another day (Netaji on boat, his status and so on) and recent portrait of Menon, Kameshwar and yourself. And please let me know the list of publications on Netaji which is available today and your plan of publication using the speech and interview articles during the war time.

For your convenience, I have sent some leaflets of the Asia center, one of the inexpensive hotels in Tokyo, as well as the tourist handbook.

Incidently would you let me know, whether Mr. Joshi? The young Indian senator who visited Japan, has finished his publication on the history of NSA?

ATTESTED
Deputy Superintendent
of Police (R)
K.B. W.B.

Intercepted letter from Yoichi Yokubori to Sisir Kumar Bose, 3 April 1965
The subject took part in the reception which was accorded to Major General Chatarji in 1940 on his arrival at Howrah Station on 9.5.40. He attended a meeting of the Doctors and Medical students held on 9.5.40 at the University Institute Hall wherein he delivered speeches praising Major General Chatarji for his selfless service to the country as a prominent leader of the INA and also demanded his release. He used to visit in the office of the INA Relief Committee at Bowbazar.

In 1942, he was the Secretary of the INA C.O.

In 1952, he communicated with Prof C.R. Desai of Bombay and asked him to render his all possible help for his book on Netaji.

In July, 1956 he communicated with Frau Emilia Schenkl of Vienna, Austria in which he intimated her about his visit to 1344 and the possibility of his trip to Vienna on his way. He also informed her about the progress of work of the Netaji Research Bureau. In August, 1956 he communicated with Mr. Richard H. Kale, Manager Travel Service regarding his travel arrangements to U.S.A for studies.

On 19.9.60, he communicated with His "Akbar Shah" of L.M. of Peshawar, West Pakistan in which he wanted to have full account of Netaji's journey from Peshawar to Russian front in 1941. It was reported in November, 1960 that he was the general Secretary of the first Asian Congress of Paliatries, the Institute of health, 93 Dilkhose St, Cal.

He is the Secretary of Netaji Research Bureau 138/2 Elgin Rd and was in communication 1963 and 1964 with some persons of Japan and Burma in securing various kinds of materials relating to Netaji's activities in Burma.

On Leonard Gordon, 122 Ashland Place, Brooklyn, New York, U.S.A. communicated with the subject on 13/9/65 in which the writer informed that he had a visit to Vienna and met Mr. Bose and Anita. He had also met one Paulin Sack in London who said that he knew everything about Netaji.

P.S.

ATTESTED

Deputy Superintendent of Police (P.)
I.B., W.B.

THE CHILDREN OF INDIA

Excerpts from Sisir Kumar Bose’s Editorials as Founding Editor of Indian Pediatrics, 1964

The New Road

On embarking upon the new road marked by the inauguration of the Indian Academy of Pediatrics and this Journal, Indian pediatricians face a future full of promise and new responsibilities, though not without its share of uncertainties. As builders of the future, let us hope, it is the promise that will inspire all our activities. The uncertainties we shall conquer with the new unity and sense of purpose that we have achieved.

Our first task will undoubtedly be to put our new house in order, so that we may function as a well-knit, constructive and effective force in national affairs. The organization that we shall build must be so fashioned as to serve a two-fold aim – first, to foster, preserve and protect an over-all oneness among the pediatric brotherhood of India, and secondly but simultaneously, to promote full expression in thought and action among all its components in all areas of this vast country. It will be for us to show that there is no contradiction between these two aims.

To us in India, as in all countries in development, pediatrics is more a mission than a means of livelihood. The Academy, as the avant garde of the child health movement in India, has to discover the nature of this mission. This can be done only through a realization of the urges and aspirations, often unspoken and yet unrevealed, of a nation in making. The Indian nation is only about to come of age. And one can see only the beginnings of a real search for a national ideology – the principles on which the new Indian society is to be built. One thing appears to be certain – we are headed towards an egalitarian society based fundamentally on social justice. Where does the child stand in the scheme for a new social order? It will be for the Academy to give the answer, clearly and effectively.

Indian Pediatrics will be the instrument, we hope a worthy one, for the fulfillment of both these aims – a harmonious development of the pediatric fraternity of India and the achievement of its national mission. We shall not forget that in this arduous task the eyes of the world will be upon us.

Sisir K Bose

Planning the Conference

A consensus among pediatricians who assembled at Poona for the First National Conference of the Academy was that new thinking on the planning of future conferences had become necessary. That they had already been exercising their
minds on this question was evident from the very stimulating discussion held at the business meeting on the concluding day.

It is not merely the creation of a single body that will inevitably result in much larger annual assemblies than previously that has led to the reopening of this question. Indian Pediatrics has admittedly taken major strides in recent years. An increasing number of teaching and research centers are now functioning. A new generation of pediatricians and scientific workers have entered the arena and introduced a new dynamism into the Indian pediatric movement. Our annual meeting has to be refashioned to meet the demands of the new and developing situation.

It is necessary, in the first instance, to decide what and how much we may be expected to achieve at the annual meeting. There are obviously two principal objectives and a number of other less obvious ones. The Big Two are, first, the presentation of and deliberations on scientific work in progress at different centers; and, second, to give expression to organized pediatric opinion on national questions relating to pediatric services, teaching and research. And, then, the development of personal and human relationships, a sense of belonging to the same cause and the same country, an awareness of problems of different regions in their proper perspective, are among the other less obvious but no less important purposes of a national conference.

As to the scientific proceedings, in order to do justice to all concerned, it is most desirable to be conscious of the limitations of a crowded annual meeting. With the steadily increasing volume and variety of work, all that a presentation may be expected to achieve is an indication of the line of work and an incentive to further study or, alternatively, a very terse summary of the objectives of a project and the results achieved. Further, it is most important for all prospective participants in the conference to receive adequate and fairly long notice of what is coming and from where in order that the deliberations may be fruitful to all concerned. The time is now come for us to accept the idea of simultaneous sectional meetings devoted to the subspecialties or important disease groups or contemporary public health questions of urgency, etc. rather than continue only with large plenary sessions dealing at random and inadequately with all manner of widely divergent problems. For such sectional meetings to be fruitful, it will be necessary to appoint competent moderators well in advance to guide the deliberations on the right channels.

This is not to suggest that there will be no provision for the clinical pediatrician and the general practitioner. Well-planned integrated symposia on major problems of curative and preventive pediatrics and prepared in advance by carefully chosen teams after adequate mutual consultation could fill plenary sessions with benefit to all concerned. Individual lecturers are of value only when they bring new and original ideas on the basis of work and research over a long period of time. Free short papers will of course continue to be an important feature of every conference.
In order to be able to express its views on national questions relating to pediatric services, teaching and research in clear and concrete terms, the national conference has to be properly guided by the Executive Board of the Academy. The Executive Board can fulfill this role properly if it functions as the watch-dog of all that goes on at the national level and in the States. Finally, in drawing the over-all program of the conference, the great importance of providing ample opportunities of building up personal relationships, particularly among those engaged in similar pursuits, cannot be overlooked. When branches of the Academy start functioning in the different important centers of the country, regional meetings could serve as good testing grounds for contenders for the national conference.

Sisir K Bose

When Comes Such Another?

It has been said that the passing away of Jawaharlal Nehru marks the end of an epoch in India history. This is true in the sense that with his demise the last of the Titans who bestrode the Indian scene for well over half a century has disappeared from our midst. This is not to say in the least that the purpose of his life has spent itself or that the aims he sought to achieve have become obsolete.

Jawaharlal Nehru is historically distinctive in that his life and work will continue to have meaning, purpose and application well beyond the limits of his physical existence. It is of course premature even to attempt an assessment of his role in Indian and world history. Yet, some of the main currents of the course of his great life may perhaps be defined. He was among the very few of India’s national leaders who visualized early the ultimate social purpose of the struggle for national liberation. He spoke to the masses in terms of that vision and the people accepted him instinctively and unreservedly. Nehru was again one of the very few who sensed quite early the inter-relationship of the Indian struggle with world forces. And, then, not many among the national leadership realized, as he did, - long before the attainment of power - the role of science and technology, of planning and research, in national reconstruction. His attitude to science and scientists was not one of mere patronage but of wholehearted acceptance born of conviction. From this very important stand-point, India was fortunate that Jawaharlal Nehru was there to preside over her destinies during the first vital years of independence. But, with all that and more, who dares dispute the role of personality in historical development or that the departure of Jawaharlal the man makes a world of difference to India and humanity? And, what a fascinating example in personality development! A lonely and sheltered child growing up to be the darling of the masses, one reared in affluence and quite un-Indian tradition developing deep spiritual affiliations with the common man, one with no taste of adversity in youth maturing into a fighting champion of great popular causes! Verily, this was the miracle of a man!
Children of India and all those wedded to their welfare will remain eternally grateful to Jawaharlal for dedicating his own birthday as the Children’s Day. The great cause we serve could hardly get a more fitting and worthier recognition. India feels forlorn; millions of hearts ask in anguish: When comes such another?

Sisir K Bose
TOWARDS A NEW NATION AND A NEW SOCIETY

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1979 January

In the long march of the Indian people to their destined goal of national liberation, unification and establishment of an egalitarian social order, a vital turning point has arrived. Such moments do come in the history of nations when a national decision one way or the other make or mar its future. On many similar occasions in the past the Indian people threw up the requisite leadership and took the right road while on many others they failed. The present hour is crucial. Whereas a right leadership and a correct course will enable India to take a great leap forward and be an example to humanity, a wrong step and a wrong direction will land her back to medieval times, to despair and disintegration.

When Netaji Research Bureau was organized a little over two decades ago at Netaji Bhawan, its principal task was to see that the message and teachings of Subhas Chandra Bose were not lost to his country and to history. Recognition of this necessity was timely and vital because the long-term significance of such work was not evident even to his many ardent admirers. The inspiration came in the first instance from Sarat Chandra Bose, founder of Netaji Bhawan. But to our great misfortune and that of the country as a whole, Sarat Chandra Bose was taken away from us not only prematurely but at a vital historical moment. The cruel hand of destiny denied him the opportunity to translate his ideas into reality and deprived the nation of his leadership which with the passage of years has been recognized to be not only correct but in keeping with the highest traditions and aims of the Indian liberation movement.

It thus devolved on Netaji Research Bureau to carry on with the task on its own and often against heavy odds. In the course of unremitting enquiry, studies and research on Subhas Chandra Bose spanning two decades, a new horizon opened up before us. The discovery was not related merely to the evolution, maturation, achievements and failures of one great person. The discovery was more that of a way of life, a new outlook and a scientific perspective in the judgement of history and of historical forces controlling human affairs. Netaji’s grand view of history and his messianic faith in India evolving ‘a new philosophy’, ‘a new ethical conception’ and ‘a new economic and political system’ have since motivated all the activities of Netaji Research Bureau.
In the course of three decades since independence the Indian people have achieved much. Achievements have been due largely to the innate genius of our people and the labours of our working millions. Failures have been due largely to inadequacy of leadership - failure to comprehend the fundamental aims of the Indian Revolution and the inability to guide the destinies of 'a great nation' with a liberality of mind and a scientific outlook that comes only to an inspired and completely disinterested leadership. The overwhelming sense of cynicism, loss of values and fissiparousness that now prevail in this country must be overcome. Merely formal and opportunistic declarations of loyalty to our national heritage and ideologies must be replaced by 'faith, unity and sacrifice' at all levels of our national life.

In this task of reviving the 'faith in India's destiny' and setting the country on the right course in keeping with true historical traditions and aims of the Indian Revolution, THE ORACLE places its resources unreservedly in the service of the nation. It will seek to reopen a new era in Indian journalism by presenting history in its right perspective, current affairs as they affect the lives and liberties of India's working millions and international relations in the light of the enlightened national self-interest of our people and common aspirations of working people of all countries.

Today as never before, India needs to rediscover Subhas Chandra Bose. May THE ORACLE become an important instrument in this rediscovery - in the establishment of *Samyavada* that Netaji was seeking to be the basis of a new India and a new society which will be national in form and character and at the same time fulfil the economic, social, cultural and spiritual needs of the broad masses of our people.
Jai Hind.

*Sisir K. Bose*
THE CHILD IN INDIA

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, The Oracle 1979, April

For a developing nation, India, which achieved independence after World War II, there is a ring of irony about the theme and slogan the International Year of the Child - "A Healthy Child, A Sure Future". The slogan, as all will agree, is indeed a basic truth and hardly needs elaboration. The irony lies in that we failed to grasp the truth at the very onset of planned development of our country. We should have realized three decades ago that for a sure future, healthy children were an absolutely essential element for the simple reason that only healthy children could grow up in about quarter of a century into a virile nation. In other words, we as a nation should have given ourselves this slogan in the late forties and the necessary direction and bias to national planning.

The general objectives that the United Nations General Assembly has set out for the International Year of the Child are clear and forthright. They remind us of what we have failed to achieve and what we must now set out to achieve in a determined manner. The objectives are:

(a) "To provide a framework for advocacy on behalf of children and for enhancing the awareness of the special needs of children on the part of decision makers and the public;

(b) To promote recognition of the fact that the programmes for children should be an integral part of economic and social development plans, with a view to achieving in both the long term and the short term, sustained activities for the benefit of children at the national and international levels."

The most important directive in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child is that the child must be "the first to receive" relief and support in any adverse situation, in any disaster. Indian independence was born in disaster, both man-made and natural. But we failed to realize at the proper time that the child has the first right to everything that life and society have to offer. It was as late as 1974 that the Government of India adopted a 'National Policy for Children' which recognized children as the "nation's supremely important asset" and declared that the nation was responsible for their "nurture and solicitude".

Now, what is the magnitude and status of the nation's 'supremely important asset'? India has 230 million children from 0 to 14 years of age. Of these 115 million are between 0 to 6 years. The latter age period of a child's life is vital for his growth and development, physically, mentally, psychologically and socially. It is during this period of his life, moreover, that the child is exposed and most vulnerable to all kinds
of hazards, natural, environmental and man-made. Of these 115 million, at least 46 million - 9.2 million in urban slums, 2.8 million in tribal areas and as many as 34 million in rural India - live below what has been called “the poverty line”. These teeming millions of children, not counting those of the school age, are exposed to all the hazards of what is at best marginal existence and are the most deprived of the elementary needs of healthy growth and development. It is therefore right, proper and realistic that the general theme of the International Year of the Child in the National Plan of Action of the Government of India has been declared to be: “Reaching the Deprived Child”.

It is thus clear that in respect of the “nation's supremely important asset”, the degree of deprivation is phenomenal. And this deprivation has so many facets: Health and Nutrition, Education at all levels, Environment which includes housing, water and food supplies, combating pollution of all kind and recreational facilities, Social legislation for protecting the child from abuse, Education of the populace in regard to scientific child health and care and last but not least, an enlightened and forward - looking Administration to coordinate and execute measures for reducing the degree of deprivation according to a perspective plan.

It should be clear to any social scientist that no appreciable dent on the problem of the Child in India is possible, even in the short term, in a hole-and-corner fashion. It has to be a well-coordinated national endeavour with the participation of the planner, the research scientist, the statistician, the pediatrician, the educationist, the social and community worker, the mass media expert, the sanitary and irrigation engineer and a host of others concerned with child life, health and care in any of its aspects. The brains trust and working groups must consist of official as well as non-official agencies in order that the maximum possible use may be made of all available talent and resources in advancing a cause which we can ignore any longer only at our own peril. It is now a question of joining hands.

When all is said done, the question remains as to what sort of a social system has evolved in this country since independence that permits nearly 50 million children under the age of 6 years to live below “the poverty line”! What sort of democracy tolerates such a state of affairs! There has been a plethora of ceremonies all over the country to “celebrate” the International Year of the Child and more will inevitably follow. Well-fed and well-dressed children have been marched up and down the streets in honour of the Children's Year and carnivals held galore! Seminars and conferences have been held and reports and proposals made. Bureaucracy has been alerted. But, then, how do we at least inaugurate programmes that will bring some lasting benefits to the vast deprived sector of India's child population?
Two considerations are of fundamental significance. First, the problems facing the Child in India are so vast and variegated that only a national movement for their solution can be of any avail. A national movement, for its inauguration, needs an emotional upsurge under an inspired leadership. We shall have won half the battle if only the Government of India, together with all the state governments and all voluntary agencies concerned, can create the necessary emotional upsurge in the cause of the child in 1979. Secondly, let us not forget that India has reached the crossroads and the next stage of our advance, in any sector or field of our collective life including child life, depends entirely on a national struggle under a new leadership for a new social system based on Samyavada.

Sisir K. Bose
AZAD HIND

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1979 October

Not enough attention has been paid by historians and political scientists to Netaji’s experiment in statecraft symbolized in the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. It does not appear that politicians in India generally learnt any lessons from it either. That political power of which the State is the expression, is self-defeating without a clearly defined purpose and a determination to achieve it is outside the comprehension of most of the present-day politicians of this country. The over-riding sense of purpose and passionate will to achieve it that made a reality of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind needs to be remembered and revived in the present chaotic state of politics in India.

A government in exile with a life span of barely two years and dependent essentially on three million emigres and just the nucleus of an army, may, to superficial observers and political opportunists, appear not so relevant to current conditions and to the size and complexity of the problems we face in India today. Such thinking is fallacious. The life span of a government or the extent of territory controlled by a purposeless bureaucracy is no measure of its success in ultimate terms. The contribution of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind to Indian and Asian history has to be measured both in the short-term and the long-term. In the short-term the State of Azad Hind was an example in organization and inspired leadership, and all that was achieved in record time and in the most adverse circumstances during World War II. It also meant for the Indian people the first experience of independent statehood after two centuries of colonial subjugation and a practical demonstration of an armed crusade, unthinkable for our people disarmed for nearly a century and nurtured on non-violence and passive resistance for quarter of a century. In the long-term and historical terms, it is a moot question today which among the many battles waged across the world during World War II were truly and rightfully fought for freedom and democracy. Only three examples appear to stand the tests of history in this respect: first, the patriotic war waged by the Soviet peoples under the leadership of Marshal Stalin, the national war of liberation of the Yugoslavs under Marshal Tito and the heroic struggle of the Provisional Government of Azad Hind under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.

Sisir K. Bose
WHAT THEN MUST WE DO?

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1980 January

To those who have lived through and participated in the last crucial stages of India's struggle for freedom and since independence have been actively involved in national work, but not necessarily in party politics, the steadily deteriorating situation in the country during the seventh decade has been frustrating and puzzling to a degree. By 1979 it became apparent that nationally and internationally India was on the retreat. Her national identity and unity were in peril as never before. The social aims of the Indian liberation movement, handed down to us by our pioneers and martyrs, appeared to be receding as a distant dream. Politics of idealism and of principle gave way to the politics of the market-place.

But then, those of us who claim to be children of the Indian Revolution have a stake in India's future and an obligation to her millions. We cannot sit back with folded arms, watch impassively and let things drift to the point of no return. It has therefore become urgently necessary to carry out a thorough heart-searching and an objective analysis of the prevailing situation and then take resolute steps to stem the rot.

Let us remember that the most important element in contemporary Indian history is our long and arduous struggle for freedom. Through a process of dialectics, the Indian struggle progressed to a stage in the mid-forties when a revolutionary seizure of power and an outright defeat of British Imperialism were in the realm of possibility. But to our misfortune, Subhas Chandra Bose, whose militant activities during the World War were mainly responsible for the post-war revolutionary upsurge, disappeared from the scene. And, as a result of inadequacy of leadership of both of the Right and the Left, we were compelled by circumstances to start our career as an independent state on the basis of compromises on many counts. Politics of compromise is inherently dangerous in that it carries within itself the seeds of its own ultimate destruction. As a truncated independent state, overwhelmed by the problems of partition and its aftermath, we failed to give the right ideological direction to socio-economic planning and in laying down priorities. Nevertheless, regardless of major historical lapses, India achieved much in the first quarter of a century after independence. Three factors contributed to the gains we made. First, the continuing momentum of our freedom struggle; second, the innate genius and resilience of the Indian people; and third, the presence of Jawaharlal Nehru at the helm of affairs, symbolizing the aims and aspirations of our liberation movement.
Now, what is at the root of our predicament today? First, the momentum and the thrust of our national struggle weakened dangerously in the seventh decade. Secondly, parties of both the Right and the Left failed to provide a fresh new spurt to the national struggle either on the ideological plane or by creating new methods of political action. In fact, all of them more or less became irrelevant to the demands of an entirely new situation. Thirdly and what was worse, taking advantage of the weakening of the national political mainstream, rank opportunistics on the one hand and reactionary, obscurantist, parochial and pseudo-leftists on the other, having no connection with the national liberation movement, entered the arena and made hell of an already dismal situation. Ultimately, under the cover of the blessed word “democracy” and even the slogan of “total revolution,” right reactionaries and known counter-revolutionaries gained ascendance. The country faced utter disintegration in every respect. The outlook was never so grim.

Thus, at the beginning of the eighth decade, India truly stands at a crossroad of history. Dialectics now demands the rise of a new national movement and a new dedicated leadership fulfilling two basic conditions. First, the new movement and the new leadership must be rooted in our century-old struggle for freedom; and secondly, they must be totally committed to placing India firmly and surely and without equivocation on the road to an egalitarian social order or Samyavada. Only an inspired leadership can inspire cadres and the country. Once that kind of leadership has risen, must we find an all-India framework or party. As the leadership has to be totally disinterested, the party has to be a party of pioneers who will be the first to give and last to receive anything in national affairs. Coalitions and so-called united fronts of the Right or the Left, opportunistic compromises with parochial, communal and anti-national forces or recourse to adventurist, doctrinaire and terrorist politics will not solve the Indian problem. Only national revolutionaries and not denationalized cosmopolitans or ideological parasites can lead and carry out and complete national and social liberation - this is the lesson of history as exemplified in Soviet Russia and in the People’s Republic of China in contemporary times.

India is waiting for a new band of national revolutionaries to rise and vindicate her before the world. In the march that is about to begin, the least that we can do is to do our very best.
Jai Hind.

Sisir K. Bose
REVOLUTIONARY VIOLENCE AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1980 April

Fiftieth anniversary of two daring episodes of revolutionary armed action in the history of our struggle for freedom, being observed this year, provides an occasion and an opportunity to historians, political scientists and political workers of the present time to study and analyse the many currents of the Indian struggle and their inter-relationship since the Rising of 1857. The first episode, the Chittagong Armoury Raid took place in April 1930 under the leadership of Surya Sen and the second, the storming of Writer’ Building in Calcutta in December of the same year, under the leadership of Benoy Bose. Formal ceremonies commemorating heroic events of the past help to keep certain legends alive and but do not go much farther. There is however a more far-reaching significance of looking back on such events in a spirit of scientific enquiry and research. After all, violent actions on individual or collective basis continue to take place with increasing frequency all over the world. Some of these are clearly revolutionary and some only ostensibly so. Some of them are acts of individual terrorism, some have semblance of mass involvement and some are openly backed by state power. Motivation of such violent acts has to be understood. Thus, even for the purpose of understanding the nature of current violence the world over, it is useful to seek and discover the origins, motivations, course, changing patterns and ultimate aims of armed struggle in the Indian liberation movement.

From a certain perspective, armed struggle in India in the present century may be studied in two parts, first, that during the period before the advent of Mahatma Gandhi and then its continuance after he had launched his campaign of non-violence. In the pre-Gandhi phase, it would appear that revolutionary violence represented explosive outbursts of a newly awakened nation and also, in a way, efforts of an awakened vanguard to shake up a stupefied and demoralized nation. It is however to be noted that even the pioneers of the violent national movement in India were conscious that not individual terrorism but a general uprising alone could lead to the final capture of power. It is of course true that Renaissance, a religious revivalist wave and the early stirrings of a new Asian nationalism provoked very much by the Russo-Japanese War provided the motive power for the first phase of the movement. Later, the Irish Revolution, the October Socialist Revolution in Russia and the Kemalist Revolt in Turkey no doubt influenced Indian revolutionaries in varying degrees. But the fact remains that the movement was essentially Indian and idealistic and was based, as it always was, on sacrificial patriotism of the purest brand rather than on a clear-cut plan of seizure of power.
It is to be remembered that even after Mahatma Gandhi had emerged as the undisputed leader of the national movement for freedom and his new method of non-violent mass action had shown remarkable results, armed action on many fronts intensified rather than slackened. The Chittagong Raid and attack on Writer’s Building are two important examples in this respect. In this new phase, revolutionaries integrated their movement with the Gandhi movement and in numerous instances, utilized the National Congress platform to advance their cause. The two currents intermingled as the national struggle continued until during the August Revolution of 1942 a synthesis occurred and the Indian masses went over to active resistance and offensive warfare casting aside non-violent passive resistance. The final act of the Indian national struggle was staged in East Asia under the leadership of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose when a well-organised national revolutionary army mounted a general assault on British imperialism. This assault was the sum total of India’s effort of half a century and the shining example of a synthesis of all currents of our national revolution.

Some overzealous votaries of “non-violence” in this country have sought to mix up ethics and morality with revolutionary violence in certain historical situations. Regardless of the total dedication and the noblest motivation of the revolutionaries, these pseudo-patriots and pseudo-moralists have thereby sought to relegate these revolutionaries to the backyard of history. Such unhistorical and unethical attitude of mind of political opportunists and opportunistic historians must be denounced and rejected.

Revolutionary violent action during the course of struggle, regardless of its lapses and inadequacies, was an integral part of the national struggle and motivated by the highest ideals and a sense of total sacrifice for the cause. In fact, many of the armed revolutionaries, represented at their best by Subhas Chandra Bose, were more forthright and clear about the socio-economic aims of the Indian Revolution than most of the votaries of non-violence.

But, all that has been said leaves us with a clear and stern warning. Let us never forget that all armed action is not revolutionary and not all revolutionary action is necessarily armed or violent. Sectarian, adventurist and purely factional politics often leads to violence and such violence must not be glorified. On the other hand, agitational thunder of a non-violent nature, whether of the Left or the Right, is often reactionary politics with narrow and selfish aims. In the context of the current violence in our country and the world over, let us pause to remember the great revolutionary martyrs of the Indian Revolution, endeavour to recapture once again their high ideals and their sense of total dedication and sacrificial patriotism, and so equipped and so armed, renew the march to the new India of our dreams.

Sisir K. Bose
BENGAL AND INDIAN NATIONALISM

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1980 July

On the occasion of the ninetieth birth anniversary of Sarat Chandra Bose in September 1979 Netaji Research Bureau launched a new kind of history conference under the general title 'Nationalism in Bengal 1850-1950'. The second such conference will be held in September 1981 and the event will no doubt become an annual feature of the academic programme of the Bureau.

The purpose and significance of a conference on Nationalism in Bengal should better be stated clearly to avoid any possible misunderstanding. It will be conceded by all who take a practical and scientific view of the Indian situation today that Indian Nationalism is still in a process of evolution, there are big challenges to the very idea and its application and that India is yet to become a well-knit Nation-State. In order that we may not miss the right course in the future and eventually achieve what the pioneers of the Indian Nationalist Movement set out to achieve, it is essential that we seek out origins and the basic currents of our nationalism, identify the pitfalls and failures of the past and then chart out our future course in a way that will bring peace, stability and progress to the entire sub-continent.

That day has passed when nationalism was anathema to doctrinaire pseudo-revolutionaries and was condemned as a refuge of the privileged classes. Nationalism is a scientific reality which gives to a people inhabiting a particular area of the globe certain well-defined characteristics in human behavior in all its aspects. An ideology that does not take into account such distinctive characteristics of a people fails to take root and ultimately becomes unproductive.

It is necessary to study, analyse, discuss and understand the birth and evolution of various forces in far-flung corners of this sub-continent since the consolidation of British power which sought to bring our peoples together, initially to resist and combat alien rule and ultimately to create a unified state fulfilling the national as well as the socioeconomic needs of our teeming millions. Bengal presents a most useful and interesting case for such study and analysis. Being the province that provided the first foothold to British Imperialism in India and received the first shock and impact of Western ideas and culture, the nature of its nationalistic response is of great historical interest. Not that the response was totally in the nature of progressive and enlightened nationalism. But the fact remains that regardless of inevitable revivalist and obscurantist trends, there was a positive forward-looking element in Bengal's reaction to foreign rule which contributed very materially to the growth of Indian Nationalism. Similar studies are possible and desirable in respect of other regions of our vast land,
be it the Punjab, Maharastra, Gujrat, Madras, Manipur or any other. It is the task of historians, political and social scientists to discover and tie up the commonness of our nationalistic response to imperialism and of our aspiration to build a political and social system satisfying the total needs of the millions of deprived masses of our subcontinent.

It is a matter of satisfaction that historians and political scientists of Bangladesh have been showing active interest in our conferences and participating in them with enthusiasm. In fact, Netaji Research Bureau has taken a course in historical studies and research which is beneficial equally to Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. Beginning with an unfettered exchange and contact on the academic plane, such efforts are bound to have in the end a salutary effect on the mutual relations of the three countries concerned on a broad basis and at all levels.

Sisir K. Bose
NEPAJI AND NATIONAL UNITY

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1981 January

Faced with divisive and parochial forces seeking to assert themselves and threatening the integration of the Indian Union, there is bewilderment, dismay and lack of direction in almost very political camp in the country. Counter-agitation is not under all circumstances the antidote of agitation. Counter-measures to separatist agitation have to be on sound historical, political, economic, cultural and psychological considerations. Firmness and resilience must be employed simultaneously in dealing with a fissiparous movement, subject of course to the politics of principle.

It is unfortunate that in tackling the current attacks on India unity, not enough attention has been paid to the ideas and achievements of Netaji in this field, although, in contemporary history, in thought and in action, he is probably the man who has the best record in this respect. To sum up Netaji on the subject, one should like to highlight the following considerations. First, in Netaji’s own words, “only through ignorance or through prejudice could one assert that under British rule India began to experience for the first time what political unity was.” In order to understand the question of Indian unity one has to study and survey the vicissitudes of Indian life and civilization since 3000 B.C. “The ethnic diversity of India has never been a problem - for throughout her history she has been able to absorb different races and impose on them one common culture and tradition.” This historical tradition has to be brought home to our people from one end of the country to the other. Secondly, again in his own words, “on the whole the people enjoyed complete freedom in religious, cultural and social affairs, no matter who occupied the throne at Delhi.” Thus, the tradition of non-interference by the central authority in such affairs has a long historical tradition also. Thirdly, in any country, the history of which has to be reckoned not in decades or in centuries, but in thousands of years, and in a country so vast territorially, it is not possible to have an uninterrupted career of progress and prosperity. It is to be observed that whenever there is an interval of chaos, it is followed by a new political development in some form or other. In Netaji’s own words again, “progress and fresh consolidation has been brought about by influx of new ideas and sometimes an infusion of fresh blood.”

Now, therefore, taking an optimistic view of the situation which one is justified in taking on historical consideration and assuming realistically that we are currently in a state of near-chaos, the situation calls for an influx of new ideas, in other words a new national ideology. In modern terms, a national ideology would consist of a package of ideas and principles on political, economic, cultural and psychological questions involving the Indian people as a whole. This ideology may well be, what
Netaji anticipated in the thirties, India's special contribution to world civilization in the twentieth century. A vehicle is necessary for transmitting this ideology to the people of the country and for translating the body of ideas into practice. That vehicle is an all-India political party.

Answering a question in 1938 on Indian unity after freedom was won, Netaji said: “we want to go not the way of China, but the way of Turkey.... But we shall have to work very hard indeed, if we want to hold together as one nation when we are free. For promoting national unity and solidarity, many things are needed.... But I believe that what is wanted most of all is the will to be one nation.... Thus, to my mind, the problem of unity is largely a psychological problem. The people must be educated and drilled to feel that they are one nation.... In addition to this national will, what is needed for maintaining national unity and solidarity is an all-India party. .... We find in history that each country has produced a party for the purpose of unifying the people of that country.”

At a critical moment of our history, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose demonstrated, through the Indian National Army and the Provisional Government of Azad Hind, how to forge the National Will and then give effect to that Will in concrete and resolute action. The time is now to act that history may repeat itself.

Sisir K. Bose
Under the auspices of Netaji Research Bureau a rather unusual kind of a conference was held at Netaji Bhawan on the occasion of Netaji’s birth anniversary in January 1981. A group of men who in their teens were sent by Netaji to Japan for military training in 1943, gathered at Netaji Bhawan for a re-union and conferred with their seniors in the INA, historians, educationists and others. The purpose of all this was to revive an all-but-forgotten but very important aspect of Netaji’s long-term plans for Free India, viz., training of youth and future citizens and leaders of the country.

It is universally accepted that the youth have certain attributes which are not to be found in other age groups, viz., a great store of physical energy, liberality of mind, readiness to respond to spiritual and idealistic causes, the ability to suffer and sacrifice for a cause, courage and the spirit of adventure. Moreover, it is universally known that it is only in their teens that human beings can be trained, shaped and disciplined in order to become in due course creative citizens and nation builders. There are only a few among them who are so gifted at birth and childhood and so imbued with a sense of mission that they can, regardless of the environment, grow up to be accomplished and disciplined pioneers. Subhas Chandra Bose was one such. But the great majority of us have to be inspired and drilled purposefully by our elders, teachers and leaders to become in the fullness of time citizens dedicated and competent to fulfill a mission.

Even as a child Subhas Chandra Bose was seized with an overpowering sense of mission. As he grew up to be a young man he discovered the nature of the mission, namely, political liberation of India and the building of a new egalitarian social order. To fulfill such a mission, it was necessary for him to accept India as the sole object of his adoration and dedicate his entire being to the service and exaltation of Bharatmata. When he emerged as the leader of India’s youth in the twenties, he preached this ideal of singular loyalty to India and faith not only in India’s political deliverance but also in India’s special mission in contemporary world history. In his address to student and youth conferences all over India in the late twenties and early thirties, his exhortation to India’s youth was on the above lines. These are now being assembled in the Collected Works being published by Netaji Research Bureau.
But Netaji did not stop at making appeals and exhortations. He took practical steps to translate his ideas into reality regardless of the constraints of an unfriendly foreign rule. Planning for Free India included training India’s youth for nation-building and the defence of India’s freedom. At the Calcutta session of the Indian National Congress in 1928, as the General Officer Commanding of the volunteer corps he demonstrated at least in part what he meant by youth training based on ideological inspiration and military discipline. That lesson was largely lost on us. If we could have inspired and organized the youth on an all-India scale in the thirties on the lines indicated by Subhas Chandra Bose, we could have given a better account of ourselves in the final stages of our battle for freedom in the forties. Even during World War II, Netaji did not forget the task of mobilizing and training cadres for the defence of India’s freedom and for building a new India, even though most of his time and energy were taken up by the life and death struggle in which he was then involved. It will be seen from historical documents published in this issue that Netaji was primarily and particularly concerned with spiritual, moral and psychological preparation of his cadets while taking into account the great importance of technological training in various fields for our future development. It will be noted that the basic ideological training that he sought to give to the cadets was in patriotism - a kind of overriding loyalty to India that rendered everything else in life and career merely incidental. This is extremely relevant in our country today when all kinds of denationalizing concepts and extra-territorial loyalties are sought to be imposed on our rising generation.

It is recognized that the youth in India today are a deprived segment of the population in many respects. Some of these are the result of defective planning and politics, some others are inevitable for a time in a developing society. But the principal deprivation is in a national ideology. In indoctrinating our youth with a true ideology that will be the anchor of their lives and the motivating force of all their activities and endeavours, Netaji’s message and teachings are an invaluable legacy.

Sisir K. Bose
NATIONAL UNITY AND THE FUTURE OF OUR REPUBLIC

EDITORIAL by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1983 January

The question of national unity with which the future of our Republic is indissolubly linked has been agitating us greatly during the past half a decade. In order to deal with this vital question effectively two things are necessary; first, to take a long view of Indian history and seek to discover factors contributing to unification and consolidation, and secondly, to critically examine the course of our national liberation struggle since 1857 with a view to understanding the fundamental urges and aspirations of our people in their common struggle against alien rule.

In his introduction to “The Indian Struggle 1920-1942” Subhas Chandra Bose said: 'In order to understand India, however, it is essential to bear in mind at the outset two important facts. Firstly, the history of India has to be reckoned not in decades, or in centuries, but in thousands of years. Secondly, it is only under British rule that India for the first time in her history has begun to feel that she has been conquered.... Only through ignorance or through prejudice could one assert that under British rule India begun to experience for the first time what political unity was. ... The civilization of India dates back to 3000 B.C, if not earlier, and since then, there has been on the whole a remarkable continuity of culture and civilization....The tendency towards the centralization of authority grew stronger during the Vedic and Epic periods of Indian history till from the sixth century B.C. the movement for the political unification of India took definite shape... We have historical evidence of political consolidation during the reign of Chandragupta Maurya, which was further strengthened by Asoka. A period of political anarchy followed which was ended through the rise of the Gupta dynasty the greatest of whom was Samudragupta who ascended the throne in 330 A.D. After a slump, the country was once again unified politically under King Harsha in 630 A.D. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries under the Moghul emperors and particularly during the reign of Akbar there was not only political consolidation but a new culture synthesis. Thus, we have before us a series of historical experiments to learn from in our struggle to achieve political unity in the twentieth century.”

During the national struggle for freedom, questions were raised time and again whether India could emerge as one united nation after the end of British rule. It is interesting to recall what Subhas Chandra Bose had to say on the subject in 1938, the peak period of his political career in India. He said, '...I believe that what is wanted most of all is the will to be one nation and to hold together as one nation, when foreign domination ceases. Thus, to my mind, the problem of unity is largely a psychological problem. The people must be educated and drilled to feel that they are one nation...In addition to this national will, what is needed for maintaining national unity and solidarity is an all-India party. That party is the Congress....’
During the last phase of British rule, after the inauguration of provincial autonomy, the unitary centre dominated by British imperialists and their henchmen plus British Governors in the provinces, created an inevitable alienation between the Centre and provinces largely dominated by the Indian National Congress. This state of alienation between the Centre and the provinces existed till the transfer of power in 1947. Whether we liked it or not, owing to the very nature and circumstances of the transfer of power, we inherited from the British a unitary Centre without the provinces having legitimate share in its formation and functioning. Founding fathers of our Republic sought to rectify the situation as far as possible by creating a system of sharing of power between the Centre and the States which worked well under certain given circumstances and did not under others. More or less, the psychological alienation between the Centre and the provinces of British times lingered on and asserted itself to our detriment whenever there was political instability due to electoral upsets or any other reason. We are currently passing through such a period of political uncertainty.

To raise the demand for more powers for the States without simultaneously demanding constitutional provisions for ensuring a strong federal Centre is irresponsible, meaningless and anti-national. Giving more powers to the States cannot by itself ensure a strong and stable Centre. In fact, it is sure to lead to the Balkanisation of our country. The question before us is basically different. The question before us is how the States can have greater share in building a strong federal Centre and what follows naturally, in decision-making at the Centre. Sharing more power at the Centre by the states and in decision-making there, will bring a feeling of equality among the States, large as well small, will ensure justice and harmony between the states on the one hand and the Centre on the other and the establishment of a strong federal Centre enjoying confidence of the great majority of the Indian people.

Let there be debate and dialogue on how this could be achieved among all the patriotic elements in our body politic. Among the proposals which may be considered are, first, a change in the electoral system at all levels so that a people's representative cannot be elected without securing at least fifty per cent of votes cast. A second ballot after eliminating splinter parties and sectarian regional groups would ensure the emergence of major contenders for political power in the Centre and the States and mean an advance towards political stability. A second proposal that may be considered is a change in the basic constitutional structure of the Upper House of Parliament or Rajya Sabha. The Lower House is constituted by representation in terms of population. May not the Upper House be constituted on the basis of equality of states regardless of their size, so that it may truly represent the collective wisdom and will of the States at the Centre?

What is important at this moment of uncertainty and cynicism is for all patriotic forces to put their heads together and after careful deliberation take resolute steps that may lead to political consolidation and national unity.

Sisir K. Bose
Remembering the Twentieth Century

by Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose

[At the urging of the younger generation, Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose wrote this essay a few weeks before his death in September, 2000.]

Having lived on this planet for the past eight decades, I can justifiably claim the twentieth century to be my inheritance. Myriads of others may of course make the same claim, the nature of the inheritance varying from person to person. I look upon mine as a combination of images and events in my country and the world at large, which influenced my development and propelled me in the journey through life. The sum total of my experience is indeed worthy of record.

My recollections of the first decade of my life are hazy and unclear but the images had a profound effect and became part of my persona through my life. The first was that of Chittaranjan Das, a magnificent tall dark idol that I saw in the Darjeeling hills twice in 1925 and whom my parents appeared to worship. I did not see him again but lived to learn that he was a leader of rare merit whose premature demise robbed my country of the right kind of leadership that she needed in the mid-twenties. The second was the image of my famous kinsman Subhas Chandra Bose who arrived from his Burmese exile in 1927 with the halo of a revolutionary ascetic. The two images mingled to create in a child’s mind the first consciousness of country and its cause. A spectacular demonstration of the cause was the Calcutta Congress of 1928 where the mass more than the leaders captured the young schoolboy’s world of imagination.

In the early thirties, I and my young peers were already breaking out of school and marching down Calcutta streets singing Bande Mataram, denouncing the Union Jack and extolling the National Tricolour. A wave of patriotic fervour was sweeping across the country created by an enigma called Gandhi. The man who looked a fakir and swore by non-violence, led all of us, young and old, forward to challenge the might of an Empire over which, we were told, the sun never set. Regardless of the all-pervasive presence of Gandhi, I and my generation found a more direct and virile source of inspiration in the death-defying exploits of Bengal revolutionaries who taught us to believe that “the blood of the martyr is the seed of the church”.

Thus, as I grew into adolescence, my mental constitution, the shape and form of which I inherited essentially from my parents, developed an ideology - the basics of which were provided by the national consciousness emanating from Gandhi, the dazzling vision of a brave new world of Subhas Chandra Bose, personally too close and compelling, and the sacrificial patriotism of Bengal revolutionaries. Finishing school meant newer pastures in ideas. Social and economic reorganization after political
independence was won became a live issue to me and such of my fellow students who, though numerically small, looked beyond the school curriculum and examinations. Socialism, utopian and scientific, communism, anarchism, syndicalism, and so many other political philosophies agitating human thought since the nineteenth century began agitating us. Nehru and Bose, the twin leaders of the youth preached the new message in their own, separate ways and we listened. Bakunin’s anarchism and M. N. Roy’s Radical Democracy in turn took possession of me. The late thirties saw the emergence of an organized student movement on the national plane and I was inevitably drawn into its activities. In 1937 student unrest in Bengal on the issue of repatriation and release of revolutionary prisoners held in the Andamans developed into massive public demonstrations. I had the first experience of confrontation with armed security police in the streets of Calcutta. At this time I was already mature enough to be moved and shaken by international events across the globe. In the late thirties, Japanese military expedition against China, Mussolini’s attack on Abyssinia and the Spanish Civil War brought grim forebodings of the shape of things to come. Shortwave radio broadcasts had already become an important medium of international propaganda. I was advised by my uncle monitor to broadcasts from Moscow, then a potential ally in our fight against the British.

Subhas Chandra Bose’s election as Congress President in 1938 brought about a new era of hope and sense of fulfillment in Bengal generally and for the youth and leftist elements throughout the country. Nehru’s two terms as President in 1936 and 1937 and his campaigns across the country had already enthused politically conscious students and youth. We expected that the two leaders would bring about a qualitative change in Indian politics and dynamism in our national struggle. A Left Book Club came into existence with Nehru, Bose, Z.A. Ahmed, Jai Prakash Narain and others to provide the new generation of political workers with what was called progressive and socialist literature. However, before the year was out a crisis situation was brought about by Bose’s decision to seek a second presidential term in opposition to a person who was clearly Gandhi’s nominee and supported by the well-organized Gandhi wing led by Patel. In 1939 there was complete disarray in nationalist ranks. I do think a great opportunity was missed by us - the failure of Gandhi and Bose, the two leaders who really mattered in the final encounter with the British, to come to a working arrangement at that historic moment. Nehru by his vacillation and indecisive temperament failed to fulfill a mediatory role.

It was around this time in the late thirties that I had the rare opportunity of coming face to face with our national poet Rabindra Nath Tagore, being an eyewitness to his meeting with Gandhi at the Bose house in Calcutta and again at a unique public ceremony jointly held by the poet and Subhas Chandra Bose. I became aware as I followed the utterance and activities of the Nobel Laureate in literature that he was also a great and forward looking thinker and organizer in the field of education and
socio-economic advancement. I found that in ideas of national struggle and reconstruction he was clearly closer to Bose than Gandhi. This I realized was the *raison d'être* of the political support he gave to Bose during Bose’s tussle with Gandhi.

I watched both the plenary Congress session chaired by Azad and the much bigger Anti-Compromise Conference organized by Bose simultaneously at Ramgarh in Bihar in 1940. By that time Left Consolidation attempted by Bose had already been weakened by the departure of the Socialists and Communists. The Kisan Sabha led by Sahajanand stood solidly by Bose and his Forward Bloc. The Second World War was already on. Having subdued France and Western Europe, Germany was preparing for the next kill. In that international war crisis three major currents operated in Indian politics. First, the orthodox Congress current that consisted of symbolic anti-war postures and gestures and threats of non-cooperation while seeking accommodation with the Imperial power. Second, blatantly open defiance of Subhas Bose and his call to the country to take full advantage of the war to gain independence. And third, the Pakistan movement led by Jinnah which weaned away the majority of Muslims from the national mainstream. However, regardless of indecision and divergence at the top, the overwhelming majority of Indians wanted nothing better that the defeat of the British in the war, come what may.

In 1940 Indian politics was in the melting pot. The British Government, taking full advantage of the absence of united public opinion and political mobilization, went about their business with impunity. The Congress leadership wobbled and prevaricated and Jinnah was totally obsessed with the issue of Pakistan. In this context of a total lack of direction in Indian politics, Subhas Chandra Bose formulated his revolutionary plan of going out of India and organizing an armed assault, the final blow, from outside on the British citadel in India. According to him this was the only option open to India’s national revolutionaries.

The key role that I played in Bose’s secret exit from his Calcutta home in 1941 gave a new meaning to my life and whatever happened to me thereafter till the end of the war, including imprisonment in Red Fort and Lahore Fort, has lived with me ever since and largely determined the course of my life and activities. The August movement of 1942 launched by Gandhi with the call “Do or Die” was a historic example of how an unarmed people fought without any organized leadership with unparalleled valour the organized armed might of the adversary.

I had the privilege, along with my student colleagues, to face a ruthless attack by the security police on our way to a mass rally in central Calcutta in August 1942. What followed in 1943 was the most painful and pathetic event of our lifetime - the Bengal famine. Under house arrest and in helpless rage I watched hundreds of men, women
and children die in the streets of Calcutta. The British Government was much too concerned to provide for their troops to care for their subjects. The loyalists and political opportunists made only weak verbal protests and ran gruel kitchens. What enraged me and others like me was that the self-proclaimed anti-fascists never gave a call for a popular uprising or even a general strike in defence of Bengal’s famished and dying millions.

The next two years of the war were for me a period of great danger and suffering including a long spell of hard prison term. But the memory of all that is elevating. That was the time when I functioned together with a group of our leader’s followers from East Asia and a band of his dedicated supporters in Bengal in what was a romance of underground revolutionary action.

Those of us who were in prison in August 1945 could not, owing to paucity of information, fully comprehend the horror of horrors that the Atomic bomb meant, not only for Japan but for all humanity. National leaders, by and large, reacted weakly to this act except my father Sarat Chandra Bose who openly called it the last word in war crimes.

In 1944 I was ushered into a Punjab prison in handcuffs. At the end of the war on a bright sunny morning in September 1945, I came out to a tumultuous ovation with flowers and flowers all the way. ‘Jai’s to Subhas Chandra Bose, his Indian National Army and also to the “Bose Khandan” rose from a thousand lips.

During the autumn and winter of 1945 and the first half of 1946, Netaji Bose - in absentia – and the INA were in complete command of the Indian political stage. The other utterly demoralized political parties at the end of the war - particularly the Congress - rehabilitated themselves by championing the INA cause. This was convenient and safe for them in the absence of the charismatic Bose. By all accounts the British Indian Army was shaken to its roots and Auchinleck, the British C-in-C could not vouch for their loyalty in the event of a direct confrontation with the nationalist forces. I can recall having been asked by my father Sarat Chandra Bose to secretly usher in Cariappa, one of the top officers of the then British Indian Army and who was later to become India’s C-in-C for a one-to-one meeting at our Calcutta house in the winter of 1945, which was followed by more such meetings in Delhi.

On the other hand, no political party or group was prepared or bold enough to take the situation to its logical conclusion – to make a direct bid for power. The repatriated INA that could have marched to power on their own, given the requisite leadership, felt helpless in the absence of Netaji and faded out as a political force.
The nationwide patriotic upsurge petered out in the middle of 1946 and an unprecedented fratricidal war began with the Great Calcutta killing in August 1946. Being personally involved in relief and rescue operations in the streets of Calcutta, I was a stunned witness to what was an unforgettable example of man's inhumanity to man. In this context, the British showed consummate political skill and planned and carried out a political Dunkirk out of India with the least harm and injury to themselves.

In August 1947, I and many like me felt deeply and sincerely that India's revolutionary conscience had been stifled and we had opted for a lesser role in world history. Only one man at that point of time could have saved India and our future - Gandhi. But he failed. His penance and vow of silence on 15 August 1947 appeared hypocritical. The truth was that he had failed in his mission of life.

A weak and indecisive Congress leadership in the face of a stubborn Jinnah agreed to the deal in 1947, the former having reconciled themselves to a truncated India and the latter to a moth-eaten Pakistan. Thus, India lost a golden revolutionary opportunity only on account of the absence of one man - Subhas Chandra Bose.
Netaji Research Bureau has had another active and productive year.

On January 20, 2019, the Sisir Kumar Bose Lecture 2019 on “The Story of Anti-Colonial Revolutionaries in Berlin during World War II” was delivered in the Netaji Pavilion at Netaji Bhawan by Professor David Motadel, The London School of Economics and Political Science (LSE). Professor Sumantra Bose was in the Chair.

On January 21, 2019, a two DVD-set of Bhavna Records and Cassettes titled *The Life of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose* narrated extempore by Krishna Bose, Chairperson, Netaji Research Bureau, and illustrated with historic photographs was released in the presence of Leonard A. Gordon, renowned American biographer of Netaji, Masayuki Taga, Consul-General of Japan in Kolkata, Professor Sugata Bose and Professor Krishna Bose.
On January 23, 2019, at 10.30 am the traditional Netaji Birthday Assembly was held in the Netaji Pavilion at Netaji Bhawan. Shri Gopal Krishna Gandhi, former Governor of West Bengal, delivered the Netaji Oration 2019 on “Leading India”. A special issue of The Oracle containing a special photo-documentary feature on Mahatma Gandhi and the Bose brothers was released. Shri Keshari Nath Tripathi, Governor of West Bengal, presided over the function. Pramita Mallick performed the opening music. Professor Sugata Bose presented a special Netaji Birthday Concert featuring historic INA songs with “Baikali”. A large audience gathered in the Netaji Pavilion enjoyed the function.
On January 25, 2019 at 6 pm, the Sarat Chandra Bose Lecture 2019 on “Americans and India’s Struggle for Freedom: World War II and Partition” was delivered by Professor Leonard A. Gordon. Professor Sugata Bose was in the chair.

On February 25, 2019, at 6 pm, the Netaji Institute for Asian Studies organized their Annual Sarat Bose Lecture, 2018, on “Revisiting the Chinese World Order” delivered by Professor Prasenjit Duara, Oscar Tang Professor, Duke University. Professor Sugata Bose, Gardiner Professor of Oceanic History and Affairs, Harvard University and the President of the General Council of Netaji Institute for Asian Studies presided over the function. The lecture was hosted in the Netaji Pavilion by the Netaji Research Bureau in Netaji Bhawan.
Professor Krishna Bose welcomed members and guests at the customary Poila Baisakh gathering featuring music and poetry at Netaji Bhawan on April 15, 2019.
On May 13/14, 2019
Professor Sugata Bose visited Japan and met the Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

On June, 25, 2019 Professor Sugata Bose visited Moirang, Manipur.

On August 11, 2019 Krishna Bose’s Bengali book “Ishwarer Sandhane” was ceremonially released by Swami Suparanananda of Ramkrishna Mission. Subir Mitra, Sugata Bose, Sumantra Bose and Biplab Ganguli read excerpts of the book. Professor Sarvani Gooptu and Shri Priyadarshi Banerjee performed the music on the occasion.
On August 14, 2019, Netaji Research Bureau and Tata Steel Kolkata Literary Meet presented “Story of a Garden”, a special commemoration of 100 years of the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, concept and direction by Baikali and Pramita Mallick. Professor Sugata Bose gave the introductory speech placing the massacre in historical context.
On August 25, 2019 at 6.30 p.m. Netaji Research Bureau arranged an illustrated talk on “The Azad Hind Trail” by Anindya Mukherjee based on his journey from Singapore to Moirang, Manipur. Professor Sugata Bose was in the chair.

Netaji Museum continued to be a major attraction for visitors from different parts of India and abroad. Many young students from disadvantaged backgrounds were allowed free entry. School students with their teachers visited the Museum with great interest.

Distinguished visitors who came to Netaji Bhawan during this year included:

Mr. Zha Liyou, Consul General of China, on March 12, 2019.

Admiral Sunil Lamba, Chief of Naval Staff, on May 12, 2019.
Mr. Jean Claude Kugener, Ambassador of Luxembourg to India, and Mr. Rajat Dalmia, Honorary Consul of Luxembourg, on June 12, 2019.

Vice Admiral Atul Kumar Jain, AVSM, VSM, Flag Officer Commanding-in-Chief, and Mrs. Devina Jain on June 18, 2019.
Mr. Yogesh Punja, High Commissioner, Fiji High Commission, New Delhi on July 3, 2019.

Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar, Governor of West Bengal and Mrs. Sudesh Dhankhar on August 4, 2019.

Mr. Nakao Takehiko, President, Asian Development Bank, on August 30, 2019.

Vice Admiral S. N. Ghormade on September 22, 2019.

Mofidul Haque, Liberation War Museum, Bangladesh on October 29, 2019.

Netaji Research Bureau has plans to observe Netaji’s birth anniversary and Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose’s centenary in 2020. T. M. Krishna will pay a musical tribute on January 23, 2020 and Professor Tim Harper will deliver the centenary lecture on February 2, 2020.

Sugata Bose
Sisir Bose - Bio Sketch, 1993

On the evening of January 23, 1993—Netaji's 96th birth anniversary—Dr Sisir Kumar Bose was accorded a citizens' felicitation at Rabindra Sadan, Kolkata. The venue overflowed with people as he was honoured for his contributions to public life. The brochure released on the occasion included this biographical sketch. Written by Sumantra Bose, it was published at the time without attribution of authorship.

Sisir Kumar Bose by Reboti Bhusan Ghosh

Sisir Kumar Bose can justly claim to be a descendant of his illustrious father, Sarat Chandra Bose, and legendary uncle, Subhas Chandra Bose, in far more than the purely literal sense. Ties of blood are accidental and ultimately inconsequential. Much, much more significant is the fact that Sisir Bose is the perfect exemplar of the dedication, selfless idealism and spirit of public service for which his father and uncle stood all their lives.

Indeed, Sisir Bose is one of those rare public personalities who combines accomplishment with integrity, stature with dignity. He is also one of the most versatile personalities in the contemporary public life of Bengal and India, and his achievements are not just many but astonishingly multi-faceted. So much so that confusion has often unwittingly resulted as to whether Sisir Bose the doctor, Sisir Bose the politician, Sisir Bose the prolific author and commentator, and Sisir Bose of Netaji Research Bureau fame are in fact one and the same person. But such is Dr Bose's talent and ability that he has managed to effortlessly encompass this vast range of demanding roles.
In his professional incarnation, Sisir Bose is of course among the most eminent paediatricians in the world today. He was Director of the Institute of Child Health, Calcutta’s largest hospital dedicated to the care of infants and children from non-affluent backgrounds, for two decades between 1972 and 1992, and continues as Director Emeritus to this day. Under his stewardship, the ICH has developed a formidable reputation for dedication and excellence. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that Dr Bose will always be remembered with gratitude by generations of parents whose families he has served with such devotion and competence.

A legislator between 1982 and 1987, Sisir Bose belongs to that near-extinct species of Indian politician who has gained universal respect for moral courage, transparent honesty and incorruptible integrity. He was perhaps the earliest advocate of a national alternative to the Congress-I in Indian politics, and continues today to be one of the most forceful and articulate champions of social justice, religious equality and a negotiated federalism within India, as well as of harmony and cooperation between India and the other countries of the South Asian region. In these days of grave and unprecedented national crisis, one can only say that the country can neglect his advice and agenda at its own peril.

It is a regrettable fact that successive governments in independent India, from 1947 onwards, have done their utmost to suppress or even erase the memory of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose from the hearts and minds of the Indian masses. That they have not succeeded is certainly a tribute to the enduring love and everlasting veneration in which the diverse peoples of the subcontinent, from Amritsar to Jaffna and Lahore to Dhaka, have always and will always hold their immortal leader. But the preservation, in the face of daunting and seemingly insurmountable odds, of Netaji’s message and legacy might not even then have been possible had it not been for the solitary and untiring efforts of the man we have gathered to honour today. It is thus entirely appropriate and befitting that this ceremony is being held on the 96th anniversary of Netaji’s birth.

There could hardly have been anyone more suitable than Sisir Kumar Bose to carry on Sarat and Subhas Bose’s tradition of struggle. Steeped in the ethos of the freedom movement, the young Sisir played the central role in his uncle’s historic escape from Calcutta to Europe in 1941, and was subsequently entrusted by Netaji with the crucial task of organising an armed underground within India to assist the Indian National Army at the opportune time. For this, and for his leading role in the Quit India uprising, Sisir Bose paid a high price: long months in solitary confinement under the most horrifying conditions at the imperialist death-camp of Lahore Fort, as well as prolonged incarceration in the Red Fort and the prison at Lyallpur (now Faisalabad) in western Punjab. This was between 1942 and 1945.

- 101 -
In the post-1947 epoch, it was only natural that the wartime revolutionary and freedom fighter would see it as his duty to combat the new oppression, and in particular to oppose with any means necessary the shameful appropriation and falsification of history by mercenaries in the employ of those who had inherited power from the British. Thus was born, in 1957, the Netaji Research Bureau on the precincts of Netaji Bhawan, the Bose ancestral house at 38/2 Elgin Road which none other than Sarat Chandra Bose had dedicated to the nation ten years earlier. Thirty-five years later, the Bureau has grown to be an internationally renowned institute of history, politics and current affairs and is in itself a monument to the ideals that Netaji fought for all his life. Host to innumerable national and international meetings and conferences, site of one of the finest memorial museums in this part of the world, centre of a gigantic publication effort intended to document for posterity the life and contributions of the Bose brothers, Netaji Bhawan owes it all to the conviction and perseverance, in the face of the apathy and even consistent hostility of the governments of India and West Bengal, of its crusading director - Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose.

Very early on, Sisir Bose realised that Netaji was not an icon to be worshipped at the altar, nor was he a mere legend to be elevated to the pantheon of nationalist martyrs and conveniently forgotten, except perhaps on the 23rd of January each year. Rather, the enduring significance of Netaji’s life and struggle lay in the realm of the political and the ideological - in the incontestable historical facts that Subhas Bose represented the progressive, revolutionary current of Indian nationalism and an alternative, egalitarian vision of a free and truly democratic India based on social justice, religious tolerance and recognition of the distinctiveness of the various nationalities comprising our great subcontinent, enshrined in the form of a voluntary and federal union. To distract attention from this compelling legacy by emphasising such futile controversies as the one surrounding Netaji's death is, Sisir Bose has always maintained, a disservice to the leader's memory. It is precisely this dream of the India that might have been that Sisir Kumar Bose has single-handedly sustained and painstakingly nurtured through four and a half dark decades of enduring mass poverty and illiteracy, deepening ethnic and religious divisions, and an increasingly obvious moral, ideological and political bankruptcy—and which is epitomised in the crowning achievement of his fifty years of dedicated and distinguished public service, the Netaji Research Bureau at Netaji Bhawan, Calcutta. No-one in their right mind would deny that India today needs the political and ideological heritage of Netaji more than at any time in our modern history. For keeping those ideals alive, and for showing us how strikingly relevant Netaji’s message is to our present predicament, the peoples of this subcontinent owe to Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose a very profound debt of gratitude. It is above all for this singular and incomparable contribution that we honour him today. Jai Hind.

Calcutta, 23rd January 1993
Dr. Sisir Kumar Bose, 1981
The Work Goes On ('Kaj cholchhe')

It happened one winter afternoon
He called me over and asked,
Can you do something for me?
He looked at me with his serene but penetrating gaze,
What could I say!
What would I have to do?
Put a letter in the post?
Draft the text of a telegram?
Look after a guest?
But no, it was a secret task
A secret journey in which I would be his companion.
Nobody else would know, except Ila.
What is all this!
I remembered that a couple of years ago, Father said
The boy has fallen into Subhas's clutches
Has that come true!
That was the beginning of the Work
The Work goes on,
It will go on.

- Translated by Sumantra Bose
The Inheritance ('Uttaradbikar')

This life of ours,
A portrait of fulfilment.
The task of preserving the inheritance
Was a heavy one indeed.
But it was achieved,
That's a story unto itself.
Fifty years of struggle,
hand in hand, together,
Recording history, reading politics,
and above all keeping alive the mission
of patriotism, public service.
This life of ours
is blessed
with love, dedication, and service.
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Portait of Subhas Chandra Bose
by Atul Bose.
Portait of Sisir Kumar Bose
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