

Fall

2011



Sandesh

"The Message"

A Newsletter from IndUS of Fox Valley

From Editors' Desk

Over the years it has become a tradition to dedicate the Fall issue of Sandesh to the annual IndUS banquet theme. This year's theme is *Freedom: India's Tryst with Destiny*. A wide range of literature is available to cover the history of India's struggle of almost two - hundred years against the British rule and finally, attain its full freedom on August 15, 1947. In this issue you will find articles on the subjects that have not been covered widely elsewhere. We hope that these articles generate enough interest to learn more about this unique history of a nation in its quest for freedom.

Sandesh

**An IndUS of Fox Valley
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Nehru's "Tryst with Destiny"

By Joe Elder

On August 14, 1947, as midnight approached, Jawaharlal Nehru rose in the Indian Constituent Assembly and, before a hushed audience, gave his speech that began with the statement, "Long years ago we made a tryst with destiny, and now the time comes when we shall redeem our pledge ... At the stroke of the midnight hour, when the world sleeps, India will awake to life and freedom." As he concluded his speech, Nehru asked, "Whither do we go and what shall be our endeavors?" To his own question he replied: India's endeavors should be "... to create social, economic, and political institutions [italics mine - JE] which will ensure justice and fullness of life to every man and woman."

Nearly 65 years have passed since Nehru spoke those famous words. During those years, India's population has increased from 360 million to 1.2 billion people. Today approximately one-fifth of the world's population lives in India. India is being called a rising world economy, and there are more people in India's middle class than there are citizens in Germany, France, and the United Kingdom combined. At the same time, one-third of all undernourished children in the world live in India, and in many Indian villages the quality of life today is little better now than it was in 1947 when India became independent. If Nehru were to return to India today, what might he think of his "Tryst With Destiny" speech?

On one hand, I think Nehru would be distressed that widespread poverty and economic inequality exist in India today. Nehru identified himself as a Fabian socialist. He believed that government should play a significant part in expanding an economy and reducing income

inequality. It would be clear to Nehru that the economic institutions he had helped create had not ensured "fullness of life to every man and woman." And he would have been puzzled at what had gone wrong.

On the other hand, I think Nehru would be impressed with the political institutions he had helped create. Nehru's father, Motilal Nehru, had helped produce an early draft version of India's constitution back in 1928, when the British still ruled India. Following India's independence in 1947, Nehru had worked with Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, whose committee hammered out the constitution India adopted on November 26, 1949. Except for a period between June 1975 and January 1977, when Prime Minister Indira Gandhi (ironically, Nehru's daughter) imposed a presidentially-declared "national emergency" throughout India that suspended constitutionally-guaranteed citizens' rights, that constitution has held firm ever since 1949.

India's new constitution had hardly been adopted before it was amended. In 1951 its first amendment declared that "Nothing ... shall prevent the State from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes." Now the Indian government could legitimately try to level India's playing field for India's castes, tribes, and educationally backward classes. The government could begin implementing Dr. Ambedkar's constitutional provisions for "reserved seats" in India's parliament and state assemblies, and "reserved posts" in India's national and state civil services for the approximately 22.5% of India's population labeled "Scheduled Castes and

Tribes" (identified by the criterion that they occupied a "degraded position in the Hindu social system"). Later that amendment enabled India's government to begin implementing "reserved posts" for the approximately 27% of India's population the Mandal Commission had identified as "other backward classes." Still later it enabled India's government to begin implementing the provision that one-third of village panchayat members had to be women.

Each of these provisions, however, violated the principle of "equal protection under law" since they advantaged certain sectors of the population over other sectors. So the provisions were introduced with time limits. The provisions would expire at the end of ten years unless they were renewed. And -- so far -- they have been renewed every ten years.

To what extent have these equality-extending provisions implemented through India's political institutions had their desired effects of leveling India's playing field? Evidence from the 2006 Sachar Committee report indicated India still had a long way to go. The 22.5% of India's population identified as "Scheduled Tribes and Castes" still lagged discouragingly behind the rest of India's population on almost every measure -- income, education, and health. And the media periodically report atrocities committed by higher castes against lower castes. Nonetheless, there is some evidence that India's playing field has become a little more level for members of the Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs), and other backward classes OBCs).

For one thing, the SCs, STs, and OBCs have determined what they will be called. Before Independence they were called "untouchables" or "outcastes." Gandhi called them "harijans" ("children

of God") in an effort to improve their image. In the 1930s they were referred to by the government's sanitized terms "Scheduled Castes" and "Scheduled Tribes." In the 1950s they were sometimes called "ex-untouchables." Then they found their own voices. They called themselves by Dr. Ambedkar's preferred term, "Dalits" ("the oppressed"). Today, to refer to them is to identify them as oppressed -- something they want people to remember. One might predict that in the future they will continue to call themselves "Dalits" until they are no longer oppressed.

For another thing, there are now several Dalit political parties. Following India's Supreme Court 1992 decision that "caste" could be used to measure "class," hundreds of castes that had not been labeled "scheduled" were now labeled "backward" and were eligible for preferential employment by central and state government agencies. The Bahujan Samaj Party ("People in Majority" Party) with its party symbol an elephant had been founded in 1984 by Kanshi Ram and had drawn support largely from Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Buddhists. After 1992 it drew additional support from the Other Backward Classes. The Samajwadi ("Socialist") Party with its party symbol a bicycle was founded in 1992 by Mulayam Singh Yadav and drew its support primarily from the Other Backward Classes -- especially members of the Yadav caste. Since then, the Bahujan Samaj Party and the Samajwadi Party have competed for Dalit (and other) votes -- especially in the "Hindi-heartland" of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. Both parties have sent candidates to parliament. Ms. Mayawati, a Dalit former school-teacher, has headed the Bahujan Samaj Party since 2003. A

skillful politician, she became Chief Minister of Uttar Pradesh on several occasions and led her party to dramatic majority rule in Uttar Pradesh in 2007. Under Ms. Mayawati's Chief Ministership, statues of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, the Dalit hero, have been installed throughout Uttar Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh's capital, Lucknow, now has a magnificent park honoring Dr. Ambedkar.

For another thing, Dalits are gradually beginning to appear in the higher levels of Indian society. In 2009 a Dalit woman, Meira Kumar, was unanimously elected Speaker of the House in India's parliament. Fluent in Spanish, and Sanskrit, and with postgraduate degrees in law and English, Meira Kumar had served for ten years in the Indian Foreign Service with postings in Madrid and London before she entered politics.

Her qualifications readily merited her selection as Speaker. Meira Kumar was also the daughter of Jagjivan Ram, one of the first Dalits to serve as Congress Party Minister of Labor and Railways, Communications, and Defense. Her father's entry into India's higher ranks a generation earlier had provided Meira Kumar with a platform for her own extraordinary accomplishments.

Another place where one finds evidence of the gradual rise of Dalits' social standing is in India's marriage advertisements. Recently, while in India, I was scanning the Sunday Times "Matrimonials." Under "Wanted Brides" and "Wanted Grooms" were such sub-headings as: "Brahmin," "Vaish/Jain," "Sikh," "Muslim," etc. And then I came to a sub-heading titled "SC/ST." Under the "SC/ST" sub-heading I found the following: "Suitable Match for highly qualified handsome Chamar [Italics mine - JE] boy, 76/5'8"

"At the dawn of history India started on her unending quest, and trackless centuries are filled with her striving and the grandeur of her success and her failures. Through good and ill fortune alike she has never lost sight of that quest or forgotten the ideals which gave her strength."

"We end today a period of ill fortune and India discovers herself again. The achievement we celebrate today is but a step, an opening of opportunity, to the greater triumphs and achievements that await us. Are we brave enough and wise enough to grasp this opportunity and accept the challenge of the future?"

- Jawaharlal Nehru on the eve of Independence Day, August 15 1947

Assistant Engineer Public Works Department seeks beautiful qualified girl (etc.)." In the next column, still under the "SC/ST" sub-heading, I found the following: "*Dhobe* [Italics mine - JE] 30/170 Post Graduate Assistant Manager State Bank of India needs beautiful Graduate (etc.)."

It is possible that the "highly qualified handsome *Chamar*" boy's grandfather was a leather-worker, the presumed "traditional occupation" of the formerly "untouchable" *Chamars*. It is also

possible that the grandfather of the *Dhobe* Assistant Bank Manager was a washerman, the presumed "traditional occupation" of the formerly "untouchable" *Dhobes*. Whatever the actual family histories were, the "Matrimonials" reflected the social rise of families that had acquired enough education, income, knowledge of English, E-mail addresses, and money to pay for an advertisement in the *Sunday Times*. I think Nehru would smile if he read those "Matrimonials." He would recognize that the *political institutions* to

which he referred in his "Tryst With Destiny" speech have played a part for some Indian citizens in ensuring a greater fullness of their lives. □

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A Mutuality of Liberation: India and the U.S.

By Terry Dawson

While all liberation movements share some common threads of freedom, self-determination, respect and justice, there are particular ties between India's struggle for independence and the African-American civil rights movement in the 1950s and 60s. These ties occur in the broader context not only of global anti colonialism and racial justice of the times, but as part of a longstanding pattern of influence and inspiration between the United States and India.

As Mohandas Gandhi was developing his ideas and techniques for political action in South Africa and employing them in India, he was informed by the writings of American philosophers. On a 1931 trip with Roger Baldwin, chairman of the American Civil Liberties Union, Gandhi remarked that Thoreau's essay on Civil Disobedience "contained the essence of his political philosophy, not only as India's struggle related to the British, but as to his own views of the relation of citizens to government."

In 1935, an American Negro church delegation traveled to India, where they met with Gandhi. Howard Thurman, a theologian and educator active in civil rights, had a deep discussion of many issues with Gandhi. Thurman returned to the U.S. inspired and convinced that a fusion of non-violence and "soul force" with Christianity could be powerfully effective in America. Gandhi's final words to the delegation were reportedly:

"It may be through the Negroes that the unadulterated message of non-violence will be delivered to the world." Over twenty years later, these words were recalled to Martin Luther King at the founding of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference in 1957.

It was perhaps inherent that the United States should oppose colonialism, as a former colony which won its own freedom only after long struggle, and was founded on a philosophy which declares: "We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness." As India struggled for independence in the 20th century and the United States was negotiating support for Britain before entering World War II, it is thus not surprising that, as reported by the *Times of India*, Jan. 21, 2009: "FDR was the first American president to push for India's independence. As part of a strategy to break up European empires, it was only British Prime Minister Winston Churchill's severe revolt of the idea that kept FDR from making India's Independence a prerequisite for American help in World War II."

According to FDR's son Elliot Roosevelt, who served as his father's aide during negotiations, FDR, in speaking of India to Churchill, said "The peace, cannot include any continued

despotism. The structure of the peace demands and will get equality of peoples. Equality of peoples involves the utmost freedom of competitive trade." Churchill was concerned that the U.S. wished to dismantle the British Empire.

Nevertheless, it was stated in the Atlantic Charter negotiated between Roosevelt and Churchill in August 1941, that "They respect the rights of all peoples to choose the forms of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereignty and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them." While Churchill may have denied this should apply to India, and some in the U.S. pressured FDR to do more for India, at least it was a statement of good principle in support of eventual self-determination. Whether Roosevelt might have done more for India had he survived the war can never be known.

In postwar America, Martin Luther King, Jr., along with other civil rights leaders, was exposed to Gandhi's ideas and sought ways to implement them in the civil rights movement. While in seminary in 1950, King heard a lecturer who was recently returned from India tell how *satyagraha* had brought about revolutionary changes. Although he began reading extensively about Gandhi, King expressed early skepticism that active, not passive resistance was needed, and that man's sinful nature was a barrier to effective non-violence. He

became acquainted with Howard Thurman at Boston University in 1953 and Thurman was a mentor to the young minister.

King's thoughts continued to evolve, and not long after accepting a leadership role during the Montgomery bus boycott in 1955, he was identifying his movement as "resistance, depending on moral and spiritual forces." The boycott, begun when Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give her bus seat to a white man, lasted for more than 380 days before the protestors prevailed and buses were integrated. Although leaders' homes and churches were firebombed and protestors were attacked, black citizens maintained their nonviolent stance. At one point, King was jailed for two weeks, and wrote of the experience: "I was proud of my crime. It was the crime of joining my people in a nonviolent protest against injustice." In 1958, King wrote "The spirit of passive resistance came to me from the Bible and the teachings of Jesus. The technique of execution came from Gandhi."

In January 1957, King and other leaders, including Bayard Rustin, who had studied nonviolent resistance in India, formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. The SCLC was

distinguished in favoring nonviolent protests and boycotts, rather than legal or legislative solutions, and a strong role for churches as a source of moral force.

In 1959, King journeyed to India where he visited Gandhi's birthplace and had the disconcerting realization that there were many analogies between African-Americans and the Untouchables on whose behalf Gandhi had advocated. In a radio address before leaving, King said "Since being in India, I am more convinced than ever before that the method of nonviolent resistance is the most potent weapon available to oppressed people in their struggle for justice and human dignity. In a real sense, Mahatma Gandhi embodied in his life certain universal principles that are inherent in the moral structure of the universe, and these principles are as inescapable as the law of gravitation."

After his visit, King spoke out strongly on behalf of U.S. support for India, in order to combat the poverty he saw there and to support democracy. He had a deeper understanding and vision, as well as a renewed commitment to broader political action, and a respect for Gandhi's personal leadership qualities. This helped him grow into a national leader and exemplify the power of *satyagraha*.

In a July 4, 1965 sermon at the Ebenezer Baptist Church, King expanded on his famous "I have a dream" speech. He noted: "If we are to build right here a better America, we have a method as old as the insights of Jesus of Nazareth and as modern as the techniques of Mohandas K. Gandhi. We need not hate; we need not use violence. We can stand up before our most violent opponent and say: We will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force."

Even after the 1968 assassination of Dr. King, Gandhi's influence continued. One notable example was in the leadership of César Chávez in organizing migrant farmworkers. Chávez often cited Gandhi and worked for nonviolent struggle, even engaging in hunger strikes and fasts.

In the 21st century, the principles of *ahimsa* and *satyagraha* remain relevant to ongoing struggles in the U.S. as elsewhere. □

Terry Dawson is a third-generation Appleton native and is retired from the Appleton Public Library. He is active in several community organizations including IndUS of Fox Valley, Toward Community: Unity in Diversity and NEW World Cinema

Encounters with Ghadar

By Vijay Prashad

A few years ago, I sat with Kartar Dhillon in her modest home in Berkeley. Kartar, who lived a very full political life, told me about her brother, Budh. In 1924, twelve-year old Budh marched down to 5, Wood Street in San Francisco to a building known as the Ghadar Ashram. There he volunteered to join a *jatha* to go and liberate India, a country that he had not yet visited. It was the homeland of his parents, and he told his sister that unless this country was free, their lives in the U. S. would not be pleasant. People would treat them as coolies as long as India remained in British hands. Along with another teenager, Daswanda Singh Mann, Budh joined the Freedom for India Mission

and set off across the Pacific Ocean. He did not get to India. Budh got distracted in the USSR. The route into India was closed, so he enrolled in the University of Toilers of the East and learnt a little bit about Marxism. Budh Dhillon returned to California and spent the rest of his life as an active militant for freedom and justice for all people.

Of such souls was the Ghadar Party made.

In 1913, veteran Indian nationalist Har Dayal used the \$2000 he had raised from Indian workers in California to buy a house in San Francisco. This house, the Yugantar Ashram initially, became the Ghadar Ashram, and it was from this

base that Har Dayal began to publish a paper (initially 25000 copies in Urdu). He named the newspaper *Ghadar*, Revolt, and its first issue (November 1, 1913) signaled its political views:

"Wanted: Brave soldiers to stir up
Ghadar in India.
Pay: Death.
Prize: Martyrdom.
Pension: Liberty.
Field of Battle: India."

A British intelligence agent who had his eyes on Har Dayal reported that by 1914, Indian students at Berkeley hoarded arms (20 revolvers and 16 Winchester rifles). In 1922, the British Consulate in San Francisco reported,

"California is gaining the reputation of a nursery for Revolution and Revolutionary agitators." When World War I broke out, Indians from along the western coast of North America went as if in an exodus toward India to fight British rule. Three Ghadar leaders, Ram Chandra, Bhagwan Singh and Maulvi Mohammed Barkatullah toured the west coast to urge men to join the *jathas* and cultivate a revolution. A Ghadar song testified to the courage and the idealism of the returnees,

"The time for prayer is gone.

It is time to take up the sword.

Empty talk does not serve any purpose.

It is time to engage in a fierce battle.

Only the names of those who long for martyrdom will shine."

The bulk of the Indian farmers and students who lived along the west coast of North America had deep-set grievances against the British. Their families in India still suffered the indignities and extravagances of British rule, and these exiles continued to feel the stigma of exclusion and racism. It was the British Isles that ruled the bulk of the colonized world, and in particular, a large share of the Indian subcontinent. Indian nationalists in the U. S. made common cause with the Irish republicans. Agnes Smedley, who worked for the Friends for the Freedom of India, wrote of her participation in New York's main Irish nationalist celebration in 1920, "We are in the St. Patrick's Day parade. All the Hindus in the city, practically, will wear native costume and turbans and march. We had the Indian republic flag and banners demanding independence." Both Ireland and India were held in thrall. The longest finger was pointed toward Britain.

Of the 8000 emigrants who returned to India, the British arrested 400 immediately, while they interned 2500 more in their villages. Their uprising did not come. Some of their best comrades (291 of them) stood in the dock in the Lahore Conspiracy Case – the bulk of them went to the gallows, or were sent to the Andamans or to the Lahore jail. Idealistic, they came to inspire the Indian army against their British masters. One

among their lot, Prithvi Singh Azad, recalled their ethos: "The leaders of the Party in the U. S. A. were badly lacking in political awareness. We, a handful of people, plunged headlong in the field of action and had no mass support. We knew not how to gain mass support and never worked for that. We had been impelled by the impulse to free the nation from foreign yoke. I had been under the sway of a powerful passion to liberate my enslaved nation."

This was Bhagat Singh's milieu: people like Prithvi Singh Azad, and Sohan Singh Josh. Josh came from Chetanpura, Punjab, the same town as Surat Singh Gill. Both Gill and Josh had tried to go to the U. S., but whereas Gill got a visa (and became Kartar Dhillon's husband), the U. S. embassy denied Josh. Josh grew up around Ghadarite radicals (and as a Communist leader he would write an early history of the movement). It was through Josh that a young Bhagat Singh learnt the history and theory of Communism. Ghadar, via the Soviet Revolution, played a central role in the dissemination of socialist ideas among the Punjabi youth.

Only marginally did the Ghadar workers turn their attention to the role of U. S. imperialism and of Canadian complicity with British imperialism. The U. S. and Canada allowed the Indian radicals some space to work, although the governments also allowed British intelligence to follow their activities. When World War I broke out, and many Indian radicals decided to make common cause with Germany, the U. S. and Canadian states went after them (M. N. Roy, for instance, fled to Mexico as a result of this pressure, where he helped found its Communist Party; he was the Mexican delegate to the Comintern meetings where he debated Lenin). The repression provided the opportunity for some among the radicals to write in praise of the U. S. that at the very least had an ethos of republicanism and anti-colonialism – something Britain lacked. For example, Taraknath Das, Har Dayal's associate, wrote an essay for the Calcutta-based *Modern Review* entitled "American Diplomacy at its Best," which extolled U. S. foreign policy. Das wrote



Ghadar di Gunj
(Roar of the Revolution) an early Ghadarite compilation of nationalist and socialist literature, was banned in India in 1913.

Ghadar
Newspaper (Urdu)
Vol. 1,
No. 22,
March 24, 1914



this not because he didn't know the reality of U. S. policy, but because he was hopeful to use the United States against Britain.

Bhagat Singh's Naujawan Bharat Sabha wrote a far-sighted manifesto in 1928, inspired by Ghadar. "Without going into details," they wrote, "we can safely assert that to achieve our object, thousands of our most brilliant young men, like the Russian youth, will have to pass their precious lives in villages and make the people understand what the Indian revolution would really mean. They must be made to realize that the revolution that is to come will mean more than a change of masters. It will, above all, mean the birth of a new order of things, a new state."

Three years later, from Lahore Central Jail, Bhagat Singh wrote his letter to political workers. He asked them to form a party to create a popular will for socialism. In this brief essay, Bhagat Singh returned to the origins of Punjabi radicalism, the Ghadar. "One of the fundamental causes of the failure of the efforts of the Ghadar Party (1914-15)," he wrote, "was the ignorance, apathy and sometimes active opposition of the masses. And apart from that, [an organized party] is essential for gaining the active sympathy of and organizing the peasants and workers." By "ignorance" Bhagat Singh did not mean

stupidity as much as lack of access to a broader analysis of oppression and exploitation. Struggle is a school for the masses.

As Bhagat Singh waited in jail, a second group of Ghadar Party radicals entered India. They came with a different purpose. Harbans Singh Basi, Bhagat Singh Bilga, Iqbal Singh Hundal,

Chanan Singh, Gurmukh Singh, Prithvi Singh, Teja Singh Swatantar and others came from Moscow not to conduct individual acts of violence or to hope for an uprising in the army. They returned to build the Indian Communist Party. □

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Movement

By Suryanath Kamath

History has well recorded the countrywide mass Civil Disobedience Movement launched in 1930 by Mahatma Gandhi. The Sathyagraha movement (Insistence on Truth) and in particular the Dandi March were designed to break the British administration's rules by producing salt at the seashore to protest the imposition of tax on salt.

While this can be regarded as the "water-shed" moment in the movement, what is perhaps not well known is the fact that the Civil Disobedience Movement was launched all over the country by picketing of liquor shops, entering reserve forests and cutting symbolically a branch of a tree (which was illegal), not paying fodder tax (for grazing cattle in government lands), etc. In the following let us visit some of those unrecorded stories of unsung heroes.

One such was the No-Tax Campaign in 1928. Among many places, was the village of Siddapur where more than a thousand peasant families had signed a pledge not pay land revenue. The government confiscated their household goods and cattle, and put them up for auction to make up for the loss of revenue. Although the sathyagrahis (truth-seeking volunteers), the protestors of "Pay-no-tax" were only a few, the entire village stood by them. When items were auctioned, there were no bidders. The administration, forced some government servants to bid and gave them at a throw-away price. They expected that this would break the morale of the sathyagrahis. Of a dozen people who had purchased the buffaloes

and cows at the auction, one of the chieftains, Patel took his newly acquired property home and bragged about how smart he was to get the buffalo at a throwaway price by the grace of the District Collector, Mr. Bristo. The next morning, five women volunteers from peasant households squatted in his courtyard and started chanting patriotic songs to protest Patel's unjust acquiring of the buffaloes at the unjust auction and announced that they would launch hunger strike. The Patel refused and insulted them despite his own wife protesting against his act. He tried to force them to leave the place. When the women went out for a short break, he strewn the courtyard with glass pieces. The women managed to sit there, in spite of the discomfort and continued singing. The Patel had the women arrested by the police. His wife, however, was unhappy with the whole episode and was ashamed of her boastful husband. By next morning, four more women joined the pickets, one of them with a suckling baby in arms. The Patel threatened the women. They did not budge. The child started crying. The Patel's wife offered a glass of milk to the child. The mother refused to take the milk and said that she had decided to die by fasting, even risking her baby's life. All the entreaties by his wife to return the buffalo fell on the Patel's deaf ears. She was frustrated as it was getting dark by evening, and the sathyagrahis had not eaten for days. The child would not stop crying for milk. The Patel's wife told him that she could not stand it any more, and went out and joined the sathyagrahis, in their protest. The Patel was helpless. He returned the buffalo,

and gave it in writing as demanded by the fasting women, that he is returning the animal as his 'voluntary wish'. Several volunteers appeared from nowhere to take the women and buffaloes to the village in a procession. Such incidents were many through out the country.

In another incident, in the village of Ankola, several houses of tax-protestors were seized and padlocked.. Manudevi, an illiterate peasant woman entered one such house after breaking the lock and squatted inside. The police arrived, cajoled her to leave the house and abused her. She refused. She was severely beaten, dragged by her locks and thrown out of the house. The house was padlocked again. Manudevi managed to enter the house again. The police returned, beat her again and threw her out into the street. Manudevi fainted. Taking her to be dead the police left. The volunteers found her bleeding profusely and took her to a nearby hospital. After treatment for a few days, she returned to the village, broke the seal again and entered the house. Her determination to serve the national cause was firm despite her physical suffering. Finally the police arrested her and put her in prison. Such was the determination of scores of illiterate peasant women.

In another instance, Nagesh Hegde had resigned his Patel's post in 1920, as he and his large family decided to participate in the No-Tax campaign. Their lands and areca gardens were confiscated for not paying revenue and they were sentenced to imprisonment. Before going to jail, Nagesh Hegde

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not to join the movement or court arrest. He was to safeguard a casket containing his family valuables meant for the non-violent movement. All members of the family except Subraya went to jail. Subraya was restless for not joining the movement. Following his brother's instruction, he dug a hole in the garden and hid the casket in it. He, then courted arrest and was jailed for six months. As their property had been confiscated and left without maintenance, the thatched roof of the house had crumbled. The family members, on their release had no home to go to and stayed in a nearby village under great deprivation. Subraya, on his release returned to the village and could not find the casket he had hidden. He almost lost his mental balance and started behaving like a mad man. Meanwhile, Devi, a tribal farm laborer, who used to work in their garden before they all left for jail, had lost job as most her employers were also jailed and their lands and gardens were left unattended. One day, her young son was crying for food, and she came in search of some wild tubers in Hegde's garden. It had rained heavily and the earth covering the hidden casket had been washed off. Devi saw it and figured out the whole story.

She took the casket to her hut and hid it in the attic. She knew it belonged to the patriotic Hegde and she safeguarded it. Devi invited Subraya upon his return from jail and handed over the casket. Subraya, unlocked it with the help of the key he had been carrying all along. He was grateful to Devi for her dedication to the freedom struggle and offered some jewels from it to her. She flatly refused to take it. Though poor, hungry and suffering she did not yearn for the patriot's wealth. Such were the stories of dedication, sacrifice and love of freedom from oppression in those days. When Gandhi visited Siddapur in 1934, he met Devi and said, "We get rains and reap crops in time as we have noble souls like Devi amidst us". These lesser-known heroes were typical of thousands of participants in the movement all over the country. □

Suryanath Upendra Kamath is an eminent historian of Karnataka. His book Karnatakaada Sankshipta Itihasa won him first prize of the Karnataka Sahitya Academy. He has a dozen books to his credit including three volumes of Swatantrya Sangramada Smritigalu in which he has compiled reminiscences of 850 Karnataka freedom fighters.



News ...

Let's Share Features A Talk on aging Brain

On Thursday, July 21, 2011, IndUS featured Dr. H. A. Majid MD, Neurologist, as a part of Let's Share Program. The presentation was held at Appleton Public Library. A standing-room-only crowd was treated to a very interesting and educational presentation on the Aging Brain. The audience learned about the physiology and associated socio-psychological impact of changes in brain as one ages. A lively

question and answer session dealt with strategies for slowing the aging process as also coping with the challenges.

Dr. Majid who practiced neurology for over 30 years in Appleton has since retired to California. IndUS thanks Dr. Majid for a wonderful presentation, and gratefully acknowledges late Mrs. Nasreen Majid who was a co-founder of Seva, the charitable organ of IndUS.

Appleton Octoberfest 2011

More than 60 volunteers from IndUS and India Association sold delectable





Indian food and drawing of beautiful henna designs was a big hit. From the proceeds, \$1000 will be donated to United Way, Green Bay for a charity involving children.

IndUS Co-Sponsors A Concert By Vidya Dengle

IndUS in collaboration with Lawrence University, Appleton featured Mrs. Vidya Dengle in concert on Friday, October 7, 2011, at Harper Hall. Mr. Manpreet Bedi accompanied her on tabla. The concert delighted the appreciative audience with ragas Jog, Basant, Hamsadhwani and Bhairavi. Earlier in the day, the two artists conducted master class as a part of the freshmen class seminar.



Vidya Dengle, a native of Pune, India, studied under the late Ustad Zahoor Ahmed Khan of Delhi Gharana and

later with Dr. Ashok Ranade of Mumbai. Vidya is also a painter, sculptor, and award-winning author of short stories for children. Manpreet Bedi is a student of Pandit Suresh Talwalkar and Shri Ramdas Palsule of Pune. He resides in Peoria, Illinois where he is a software engineer.

The current tour was partially funded by IndUS to signify its close ties with Lawrence University in promoting Indo - American friendship and goodwill.

If you liked the theme and the articles appeared in this issue, we would love to hear from you. You could send your feedback to Badri Varma at bvarma@uwc.edu.

If you have any suggestions for theme of future issues of Sandesh, please send them also.

IndUS Of Fox Valley
3600 N. Shawnee Ave.
Appleton WI 54914

IndUS of Fox Valley
Presents

IndUS - 2011

***Freedom: India's Tryst with
Destiny***

Saturday, November 19, 2011

5:00 to 9:30 p.m.

**Radisson Paper Valley Hotel
Appleton**

***Exhibition
Social Hour
Authentic Indian Cuisine
Cultural Program***