



Chandrasekhar Azad

Chandrasekhar Azad was one of the most famous Indian revolutionaries. He was a firebrand revolutionary who terrorised British with his bravery and guerrilla tactics. Chandrasekhar Azad was a contemporary to another fierce warrior, Bhagat Singh. Azad, as he was fondly known among his fellow freedom fighters, inspired generations of young Indians to fight for country's independence. He was a crucial cog in the wheel of national movement for freedom. Chandrasekhar Azad was born to Pandit Sita Ram Tiwari and Jagrani Devi on July 23, 1906 in Badarka (Unnao). Chandrasekhar Tiwari was his original name.

After receiving his early education in Bhavra District in Jhabua, Madhya Pradesh, Chandrasekhar Azad went to the Sanskrit Pathashala at Varanasi for further studies. The turning point in his life came during the Jalianwalabagh massacre in Amritsar in 1919. This incident left him shell-shocked and filled his heart with anger and hatred for English rulers. His first foray into the revolutionary activities took place when he was merely 15 years of age. He also participated in Non-Cooperation Movement for which he was sentenced to whiplashes by the court. There is an interesting anecdote of how he came to own 'Azad' as his surname.

When he was caught by British police and was presented to magistrate, he was asked his name. In response, he said 'Azad' meaning independence. Since that day, Chandrasekhar assumed the title of Azad and was known as Chandrasekhar Azad. Withdrawal of Non-Cooperation movement by Mahatma Gandhi alienated Azad and Bhagat Singh from Gandhi Ji's policies and they decided to follow armed revolutionary way. He was fascinated by violent revolutionary ideals and means. Chandrasekhar Azad carried out several attacks on British officials including the famous Kakori Train Robbery in 1926 and assassination of J.P Saunders in 1928.

Azad became the most wanted freedom fighter for British police but he kept evading them. Such as his terror that British police wanted him dead or alive. One unfortunate day, Azad was betrayed by a close associate of his and was surrounded by heavily armed British officials at Alfred Park, Allahabad. He was asked to surrender but he kept fighting courageously and killed three policemen. But his ammunition soon got exhausted and he shot himself in the head with his last bullet. He preferred to die than being caught by the British.