



Dadabhai Naoroji

Fondly called as the "Grand Old Man of India", Dadabhai Naoroji played a significant role in the initial period of Indian freedom struggle. He was in fact, one of the founding members and architects of freedom movement of India. Born in a poor Parsi family in Bombay on September 4, 1825, Dadabhai Naoroji was the son of Naoroji Palanji Dordi and Maneckbai. His father died when he was just four. His mother took great pains to ensure that Dadabhai get the best of education. He was an amazing student of Mathematics and English during his student days at Elphinstone Institution, Bombay. Once he completed his education, he was appointed as the Head Native Assistant Master at the same Institution. To his credit, he was the first Indian to become a professor of the college.

Because of his advanced thoughts and promising career, Dadabhai Naoroji was fondly known as 'The promise of India' in his youth. His political career began around the year 1852. He founded Gyan Prasarak Mandal for the purpose of promoting education among the illiterate people of India. He realised that education is at the core of suffering of Indian population and hence corrective measures need to be taken. Naoroji was deeply affected by the sufferings faced by Indians because of poor British rule. He wrote several letters to British Government but no actions was taken.

At the age of 30, Dadabhai Naoroji left for England to start his own business. He had a very eventful time in Britain where he delivered many speeches highlighting the plights of Indian people. He established and joined several learned societies and wrote numerous articles trying to influence people to realize the importance of freedom. Dadabhai played a crucial role in deciding several policies made by British rule. He also played a major role in Indian National congress and was elected its president three times in 1866, 1893 and 1906. He was a man of integrity and sincerity and was always respected among the freedom fighters for his purity, generosity and patriotism. Dadabhai Naoroji died in the year 1917 at the ripe age of 92. But before that, he ensured that his contribution to the Indian freedom struggle will always be remembered and cherished.