



Lala Lajpat Rai

Lala Lajpat Rai was born on January 28, 1865. He was fondly known as Lala ji among the people. Lala Lajpat Rai was one of the foremost freedom fighters in India. Born in village Dhudike in the present day Moga district of Punjab, Lala ji was designated the title of Punjab Kesari (Lion of the Punjab) which tells a lot about his contributions and efforts in the Indian freedom struggle. Born in a family of traders, he inherited strong moral and ethical values from his loving parents. His first brush with the freedom struggle occurred during the time when he joined the Government College at Lahore to study Law. He came in contact with people like Lala Hans Raj and Pandit Guru Dutt who had revolutionary thoughts about the freedom movement taking place in the country at that time.

Lala Lajpat Rai soon joined the 'Arya Samaj' founded by legendary figure, Swami Daya Nand Saraswati. After the completion of his law course, he started to practice law and at the same time, was active in congress activities. Lala ji was a part of famous trio of Lal-Bal-Pal who were considered as the three most prominent Hindi Nationalist members of that era. The other two members were Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Bipin Chandra Pal. Actually, these three important members of the congress party represented aggressive side of the freedom movement.

Lala Lajpat Rai was a staunch believer of 'Swadeshi'. He campaigned aggressively against the partition of Bengal. British government put him in prison for six months in 1907 for his aggressive campaign. He was a strong believer of organizing propaganda in foreign countries against the British rule. He travelled to Britain and USA for this purpose but got stuck during the First World War. He also wrote a book called 'young India' in which Lala Ji had vehemently attacked the British rule. The book was banned even before its release. He also established Indian Home League Society of America.

After his return to India in 1920, he admirably led the protest against British rule for Jalianwala Bagh Massacre. Lala Lajpat Rai used to differ with Gandhi ji's suspension of Non-Cooperation Movement. He formed his own party named Congress Independence Party. When British government decided to send Simon Commission to India for constitutional reforms, he led the protest against the committee because it had no Indian members. During the protest rally, brutal lathicharge was ordered by the authorities in which Lala ji suffered fatal head injuries and finally he succumbed to it on November 17, 1928.