



Bhikaji Cama

Bhikaji Cama is also known as Madam Cama and is considered as the mother of Indian revolution because of her contributions to Indian freedom struggle. Madam Cama holds an important place in the annals of Indian freedom movement. Her name symbolised courage, integrity and perseverance. Fearlessness was the hallmark of her personality. She gave it all so that India could secure its freedom. She was one of the initial freedom fighters. Born on September 24, 1861 in a rich Parsi family at Bombay, Bhikaji Cama received her formal education from Alexandra native Girl's English Institution. She was a bright student and mastered many languages.

After her marriage to British lawyer Rustom Cama did not work as she had wanted, she devoted herself to various social activities and worked tirelessly for the upliftment of weaker sections of society. Madam Cama did great many socially relevant works and her contributions to Indian society have become a subject of legends. She was also a passionate nationalist. A turning point in her life came when Bombay Presidency was hit by deadly Plague in 1896. She rose to the occasion and devoted herself to the services of plague victims. Her involvement was so complete that she herself fell victim to this dreadful disease. Her condition deteriorated badly and she was advised to go to England for rest and further treatment. She reluctantly left for Britain in 1902. Even in an alien land, Madam Cama worked for promoting India's freedom struggle. She also worked as a private secretary to great Indian nationalist Dadabhai Navaraji. She learned a lot from the legend and that further made her resolver stronger to work for the welfare of the people.

Bhikaji Cama soon became very popular in Britain. The rulers became so scared of her effects on people that they planned her assassination but she survived that and escaped to France. Her efforts did not slow down in France and in fact, she became a leading inspiration for revolutionaries. She sheltered several freedom fighters and kept sending help in form of cash and materials across the sea. British came to know of her movements and asked French Government for her extradition but France refused. Madam Cama is also credited with designing India's first tricolour flag with green, saffron and red stripes bearing the immortal words – Vande Matram. After fighting tirelessly for India's freedom struggle on foreign land for several years, she came back to India and left for heavenly abode on August 13, 1936.