













'THE INDIAN PILGRIM'





**NETAJI  
DEAD OR ALIVE ?**



# **NETAJI DEAD OR ALIVE ?**

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## Author's Note

IS NETAJI SUBHAS CHANDRA BOSE dead or alive ? This poignant question has agitated the minds of the Indian people for the last thirty years. Neither the Report of the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee nor the Khosla Commission could provide any satisfactory answer to the issue which involves the fate of the greatest hero of Indian freedom and, in consequence, the Netaji mystery continues to remain unresolved even today.

The Tokyo broadcast of August 23, 1945, announcing the alleged death of Netaji on August 18, 1945, appeared as intriguingly cryptic and evasive. This radio news and some other press reports, as published at Tokyo and Taihoku (Taipei) discernibly contradicted one another on vital matters of information regarding the circumstances relating to alleged death of Netaji. The discrepancies as clearly found in these reports very reasonably roused suspicion in the minds of the Indian people and of the Anglo-American authorities as well. Lord Wavell, the then Viceroy of India, noted in his diary that the report appeared to him as purported to camouflage Bose's going "underground". Gandhiji also publicly said that, "I believe Netaji is alive and is hiding somewhere." He further stressed most emphatically that, "If someone shows me the ashes, even then I will not believe that Subhas is not alive". The Congress President, Maulana Azad, asked the AICC meeting held in Bombay in September, 1945 not to pass any obituary resolution on the alleged death of Netaji, as according to him the news of Netaji's death was confusing.

It was, therefore, widely believed by the Indian people that Netaji escaped out of the approaching dragnet of the Anglo-



American army which was cast to 'catch' him alive. A lurking hope continued and continues upto now in the minds of the Indian people that Netaji is alive and he will reappear soon. It was not mere wishful thinking of the Indian people that Netaji's death report was treated as nothing but fictitious, but it was strengthened by the fact, as was admitted by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself in 1962 that, "There was no precise and direct proof of death of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose". Regrettably, however, the Government of India made no effort, whatsoever, till eleven years after the report of alleged death of Netaji to find out the truth as to what actually happened to him. Under persistent pressure from the public, the Government of India instituted two inquiries, one in 1956 with Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan as the head of an Inquiry Committee and another after 27 years with Mr. G. D. Khosla as the Chairman of a One-man Commission, but the findings of both these investigating bodies appeared to the Indian people as nothing but some kind of a make-believe or command performance reports.

Recent London publication of the "Top Secret" documents of the British Government has made startling revelation after 30 years that the British Government did not believe the report of Netaji's death in the alleged air crash. It also indicates that they suspected Netaji's escape to Russia which was factually corroborated later by a report of the British Intelligence that was submitted to the Wavell Government in 1946.

The reaction of the earlier Government of ours to this extremely startling disclosure should have been very prompt and sharp, and they should have of their own started a fresh inquiry about the fate of Netaji, but unfortunately the conscience of the former Government remained unevoked and they took no notice of it at all. It is yet to be seen how the 'Janata Government reacts to this sensitive issue which is agitating the minds of the Indian people.

In later forties and early fifties, Pandit Nehru brusquely turned down all public demands for a proper inquiry into the

mystery behind the disappearance of Netaji, but when a non-official Committee was proposed to be formed under the Chairmanship of Dr. Radha Binod Pal, the eminent Indian Jurist of the Tokyo War-crimes Trial, Pandit Nehru suddenly constituted a Committee to “inquire into the circumstances leading to the alleged *death of Netaji* Subhas Chandra Bose”. Surprisingly, when the Committee was having investigation into the matter, Panditji said in a statement in Parliament that “the question of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose’s death was a settled fact beyond doubt”. The then Indian Prime Minister thus not only prejudiced the minds of the members of the Inquiry Committee, but he also prejudged its findings and in consequence the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee did not dare to contradict Pandit Nehru but arrived at a rather queer finding that “In all probability Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose died in the alleged air crash”, as if the question of arriving at a finality about the fate of Netaji can be left to any uncertain speculation of “probability”. One Member of the Committee, the late Suresh Chandra Bose, however, submitted a report contradicting the findings of the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee.

In 1967, the author of the present book raised the issue of making a fresh inquiry into the Netaji-mystery in his maiden speech in Lok Sabha. Thereafter, a Memorandum was drawn up for the purpose and it was signed by more than 350 Members of Parliament and submitted to the President and the Prime Minister of India. At no time before, a Memorandum of the kind was known to have been signed by a majority of the Members of both Houses of the Parliament. In 1969, when, after the Congress split, Mrs. Gandhi was running a minority Government, a new political compulsion was created which forced her hands to set up a One-man Commission under the Chairmanship of Mr. G. D. Khosla, a retired Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court. Its objective was to “inquire into the circumstances leading to the *disappearance of Netaji* Subhas Chandra Bose on August 17, 1945”.

The Chairman of the One-man Commission conducted the

inquiry in a way which was least expected of a man belonging to the judicial profession. What he produced as the report of the Commission can verily be described as an unusual specimen of a judicial chimera.

The Shah Nawaz Khan Committee in its report pointed out innumerable instances of contradictions and discrepancies in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses and also raised many baffling issues related to the story of Netaji's death, but it never tried to fathom the causes behind such lapses or anomalies. Mr. Khosla examined 224 Indian, Japanese and Taiwanese witnesses, but discarding the evidence of almost all, he relied exclusively on the evidence of 4 Japanese who claimed to have travelled in the same plane with Netaji and a doctor who also claimed to have medically treated him in a hospital at Taihoku. Mr. Khosla found nothing wrong in the evidence of the five Japanese witnesses which can truly be described as nothing but hearsay or tutored evidence as none of them could produce any document whatsoever in verification of their deposition before the Commission. Indeed, after a careful scrutiny and thorough analysis of the reports of the two inquiries, it can be said that the Report of the Khosla Commission proved to be worse than the report of the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee. Thus, even after two inquiries, the question about the fate of Netaji remains unanswered.

While in Rohtak jail during Emergency, the author undertook the task of writing a book to substantiate why he believed that the story of Netaji's death in the alleged air crash is nothing but a myth. He generally outlined the original manuscript of the book during his detention mainly with an object to refute the arguments put forward by Mr. Khosla in justification of his findings. But coming out of jail, the author felt it necessary to thoroughly recast and re-write it so as to make the book easily understandable to the general readers.

The author moved a motion in Parliament for rejection of the findings of the Khosla Commission which were accepted by the former Government without giving any opportunity to

discuss the Khosla Commission Report in Lok Sabha. The debate on his motion continued for over three sessions of Parliament and the author felt it desirable to bring out the present book before the debate on the Khosla Commission's Report was concluded in Parliament. For this, he had to complete the manuscript of the book very hurriedly, although under the changed political circumstances necessary time for the purpose was very little at his disposal, and as such the language of the book may not be, at places, as satisfactory as he would have liked it to be.

The author has drawn the material for the book almost exclusively from the evidence and documents that were placed before the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee and the Khosla Commission. He has nowhere introduced anything which was not found in the voluminous reports of the proceedings and the exhibits of the Shah Nawaz Khan Committee and the Khosla Commission and if any additional matter is found to have been incorporated in the book, the author has unfailingly mentioned its source. The book is, therefore, based, from the beginning to the end, on facts and documents without entertaining any kind of imagination in writing it.

In this book, the author has tried to prove on the basis of irrefutable facts and arguments that the report of Netaji's death in the alleged air crash was wholly fictitious and its story was circulated by Japan in order to provide a camouflage for giving Netaji an opportunity to seek an asylum in the Russian territory. The book has been devoted mostly to prove that Netaji did not die in the alleged air crash. What happened to him after his escape to Russian territory has not been discussed in this book.

If Netaji was alive after the alleged air crash, the question naturally arises, is he alive even today ? Many probabilities are linked with this pertinent question. Netaji might have met natural death in a Russian prison, or he might have been killed by the Russians as it happened in the case of many other revolutionaries who were kept in the concentration camps of

Russia or else he might be still languishing behind the bars of a Russian prison in Siberia, or some other part of Russia. It might also have happened that Netaji succeeded in escaping again from the Russian prison and is living somewhere *in cognito* waiting for an opportune moment, according to his own way of thinking, for reappearance before his countrymen. The author possesses some significant information which indicates that Netaji is still alive. But the author has not said anything about it in this book in support of his belief of Netaji being alive,—for reasons which may become known in the near future. The author can say this much that he dreams, he hopes and prays to the Almighty that Netaji comes back to his motherland to fulfil the cherished mission of his life.

The object of writing this book is to rouse the conscience of the Indian people and of the Government of India and of the Members of the Janata Party and the Opposition Parties in Parliament for making a supreme effort to unearth the mystery shrouding the fate of the Revolutionary Pilgrim and the Epic Hero of the Indian Revolution. It is a sacred national duty which we lamentably failed to discharge so long towards one of the Men of Destiny of India, but for whose revolutionary exploits the Imperialist Power of Britain would not have so soon and so precipitiously withdrawn from India after its spectacular triumph over the Axis Powers in the last World War.

The author is grateful to Shri Gobinda Mukhoty, the Counsel of the National Committee and Shri Sunil Gupta, who helped him directly and indirectly to prepare the manuscript of the book. He is also thankful to Shri Shyamlal Gupta, M.P., Managing Director, S. Chand & Company Ltd, for making a very hurried publication of this book a possibility.

NEW DELHI :

FEBRUARY 20, 1978

THE AUTHOR

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## PUBLISHERS' NOTE

The author for some reasons has dropped the Annexures at the end of the book. The references to these on pages 37 and 42 may please, therefore, be ignored.

# 1

## Dead Without Death

THE JAPANESE RADIO announced on August 23, 1945, on the ninth day after their surrender to the Allies, that the Head of the Provisional Government of Free India, Subhas Chandra Bose, died in an air crash at Taihoku in Formosa. The report further said that the Indian leader was going to Tokyo for consultation with the Imperial Headquarters of Japan, via Taihoku where he met his fatal end. After hearing this Tokyo broadcast, the British Government never officially confirmed the news of death of their greatest Indian adversary, Subhas Chandra Bose, nor did they reject it as unfounded. However, they were always seen to maintain a public posture before the Indian people as if the British Government believed the story that Bose really died after the alleged air crash. In the higher circles of their administration, on the contrary, an acute anxiety prevailed to ascertain whether the cryptic Tokyo news was just a political camouflage for covering the escape of 'Bose' from the hands of the Anglo-American forces. Three intelligence teams were quickly sent to inquire into the truth about Netaji's death. One was sent from Delhi by the Government of Wavell, the second proceeded from the Headquarters of Mountbatten at Singapore and the third from the Tokyo Headquarters of MacArthur. These teams fanned out to South East Asia, Formosa and Tokyo and, after several months of hectic probes, they submitted their reports to their respective



authorities. But strangely, these reports were never made public by the British Government either from Delhi till they were the administrative authority of India or from London after transfer of power to the Indians.

Why the British Government pursued an official policy of calculated, yet enigmatic silence, over the fate of Netaji ? This question was never asked before, nor its significance understood earlier. But very recently, as late as in 1976, after the startling disclosures made through the publication of 'Top Secret' documents of British Administration in India,—the political conspiracy—why they pursued a policy of intriguing silence over the fate of the greatest leader of Indian revolution,—has become amply clear. Now, when publication of factual information about Netaji posed no problem for them, they revealed their secret documents disclosing the report they had with them about 'Bose'. If they had come out with the report in 1945-46, the political situation in India could have gone out of their control and further, it would have created a situation of confrontation between the Anglo-American Powers and Russia. That possibility has now receded to a sphere of mere speculation of history, and the British Government have, therefore, recently published the report they had in their possession about Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. The recent publication of the 'top secret' documents unmistakably revealed that the British Government never accepted the story of Netaji's death as true,—nay, they knew much more. They knew where Bose had gone under the smoke-screen of the news of his death and where he was kept under some kind of captivity.

### PUBLICATION OF TOP-SECRET DOCUMENTS

After 30 years of their withdrawal from the Indian soil, the British Government have now started publication of secret documents connected with their administrative policies in India prior to the transfer of power to the Indians. These documents are being brought out under the title, "Transfer of Power 1942-47" by Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London. In Vol. VI of such documents a few "Top Secret" letters have

been published incorporating various British proposals regarding "treatment of Subhas Chandra Bose", after the fall of Japan.

Sir R. F. Mudie, Home Member, Viceroy's Executive Council, on being asked by the Viceroy, Lord Wavell, wrote a letter to Sir Evan Jenkins, his Private Secretary, suggesting various steps for dealing with the issue of trial of "Bose and his INA". The following "*Top Secret*" letter No. 57, dated August 23, 1945, with its very important enclosure, shows that it was written *in response to His Excellency's request for notes on any subjects that Department might wish him to discuss in London.... in Bose's case :*

SIR R. F. MUDIE TO SIR E. JENKINS

WAVELL PAPERS. OFFICIAL CORRESPONDENCE : INDIA,  
JANUARY-DECEMBER, 1945, pp. 273-5

**TOP SECRET**

HOME DEPARTMENT,  
NEW DELHI.

*23rd August, 1945.*

My dear Jenkins,

I have not so far answered your Top Secret Letter No. 1157 dated 11th August, 1945, about the Japanese "surrender list" and Bose as I wanted to look up the papers regarding the "surrender list". *I am, however, now enclosing a note on the treatment of Bose, in response to His Excellency's request for notes on any subjects that Department might wish him to discuss in London. Whatever decision is taken in Bose's case must have the full backing of His Majesty's Government.*

2. *The note has been prepared after discussion with Smith and Tottenham. Smith is more afraid of the agitation that his trial in this country will cause than either Tottenham or I and attaches less importance to the objections to trial outside India than we do. Otherwise we are agreed.*

3. I have examined your suggestion that Bose be treated as a 'war criminal'. He clearly is not one in the ordinary

sense of that word. Nor does he appear to come within the extended definition which has now been adopted by the United Nations. In this connection I would refer you to the air mail edition of the Times of August 9.

Yours sincerely,

R. F. MUDIE.

*Enclosure to No. 57*

**TOP SECRET**

### HOME DEPARTMENT

One of the most difficult questions that will confront Home Department in the near future is the treatment of Subhas Chandra Bose.

2. The difficulty of the problem is due to Bose's peculiar position as explained below :—

- (a) Bose's influence over the INA is very considerable. It extends to the great bulk of the 12,000 INA, both soldiers and civilians, already in our hands and probably to an even higher percentage of the estimated 15,000 still to be recovered. It affects all races, castes and communities almost equally strongly. They regard him with deep admiration, respect and confidence as a sincere patriot, as an able leader without peer among the overseas Indian community, as the organiser of India's first "National Army", as the protector of his countrymen under Japanese occupation, and as one who successfully dealt with the Japanese and was accorded by them greater respect and power than most other leaders in the same position. All this in addition to his already great prestige as an Indian nationalist figure in his own country.
- (b) *Bose's influence over Bengal politics.* Bose is prominent in the Bengal political field and, in Bengali estimation, probably ranks little, if anything, below Gandhi as an all India figure. As founder and leader of the Forward Bloc he possessed very considerable potential power for harm. To the youth of Bengal and to terrorists, in particular, he is, and

has long been, a source of inspiration. His influence in this respect will in no sense be diminished by his recent exploits as Head of the Provisional Government of Free India and Commander-in-Chief of the INA.

3. *As regards the treatment of Bose, there were the following possibilities :—*

- (a) bring him back to India and try him either for waging war or under the Enemy Agents' Ordinance;
- (b) have him tried by a Court in Burma or Malay for waging war against the King in that country;
- (c) have him tried by a military court outside India;
- (d) intern him in India;
- (e) intern him in some other British possession, e.g., Seychelles Islands;
- (f) leave him where he is and don't ask for his surrender.

4. *I do not think that there is any chance of Bose being hanged if he were tried in India.* The pressure of his release would be too great; also his trial would result in great publicity for his doings, motives, etc. On the other hand, trial in India would be the straightforward course and the trial as such could not be criticised. If it is accepted that execution would, in the end, be impossible then reprieve immediately after conviction, to forestall agitation, would be the best course.

5. *It is extremely unlikely that the Government of Burma, which is engaged in appeasing the Burma National Army, would agree to try Bose and even more unlikely that, if they did, they would hang him.* The Government of Malay might possibly have no such scruples, and we might get a hanging if His Majesty's Government agreed to ignore agitation in India and Parliament however strong. But a trial in Singapore would cause almost as much agitation in this country as a trial here, unless it were held in camera and no news released till after his execution. But in that case we would be accused of judicial murder. It would be said—and truly said—that we had kept the proceedings secret to prevent his friends and supporters from doing all they could to save his life. Also, what reason could be given for trying Bose outside India when the leaders of the INA are to be tried openly in India? The long-

term political consequences of this course might be very serious.

6. *Trial and execution by a military court outside India would be open to similar objections but to a less degree, as the trial would presumably be less prolonged and military punishments are expected to be more severe than civil ones. Again, trial by a military court would suggest that his crime was killing our soldiers, whereas trial by a civil court at once raises the independence issue. On the other hand, this could be an obvious subterfuge and it is unlikely that the military would lend themselves to it.*

7. *Interning Bose in India would lead only to an agitation to let him out and to his release after a short time, he might then escape to Russia as he did in 1940. (See paragraph 9 below) There would also be the usual agitation for a trial and we would incur the odium of detention without trial.*

8. *There is more to be said for detention and internment somewhere out of India. Out of sight would be to some extent out of mind and agitation for his release might be less. Also, escape to Russia would be difficult.*

9. *In many ways the easiest course would be to leave him where he is and not ask for his release. He might, of course, in certain circumstances be welcomed by the Russians. This course would raise fewest immediate political difficulties but the security authorities consider that in certain circumstances his presence in Russia would be so dangerous as to rule it out altogether.*

10. *The choice seems to be between deporting and interning Bose outside India or trying him in India and commuting the death sentence. The two might be combined and Bose deported (or "transported") after conviction. There would be considerable long-term advantages in a trial, but reprieve might raise the question of why military officers who joined Bose's Army should be hanged. The answer would be that their position in the Army greatly aggravated their offence, but this might not be accepted by the Army.*

R. F. MUDIE. 23-8-45  
-Home Member.

What these 'Top Secret letters' reveal ? They reveal that although during the days of war the British Government did not hesitate to decry Netaji as a 'renegade', 'a quisling' or 'a

puppet of Japan', yet in their official evaluation of his political role and the position of eminence he enjoyed among his countrymen, they viewed that the Indian people :

“....regard him with deep admiration, respect and confidence, as a sincere patriot, as an able leader without peer among the overseas Indian community, as the protector of his countrymen under Japanese occupation, as one who successfully dealt with the Japanese and was accorded by them greater respect and power, than other leaders in the same position. All this in addition to his already great prestige as an Indian nationalist figure in his own country”.

Secondly, these letters made the most vital disclosure that the British Government did not accept Japanese report about Netaji's death as true. Netaji was supposed to have died on August 18, 1945, but the first letter was written by the Home Member on August 23. If the British authorities relied on the report of air crash, they would not have any longer bothered about the question of what should be the most suitable alternative of the various suggestions made for punishing 'Bose' as a 'war criminal'.

Thirdly, as they believed that 'Bose' was alive, the British Government assessed all probable repercussions if 'Bose' was to be tried and hanged either in India or in any country under British control in South East Asia or interned in some insular British possession.

Fourthly, Mr. Mudie, after careful consideration of various alternatives "regarding treatment of Bose", suggested to the Viceroy :

**“IN MANY WAYS THE EASIEST COURSE WOULD BE TO LEAVE HIM (BOSE) WHERE HE IS AND NOT ASK FOR HIS RELEASE”**

The British decision "not to ask for his surrender or release" leads to more intriguing question. It becomes evident from such categorical observation that the British Government definitely knew where Bose was hiding or kept under duress, and therefore they did not want to press for his *release*. Two inquiries held later under Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla

Commission irrefutably led to a positive finding that Netaji's plan was to go to the territory of Russia across the Manchurian border. Indirect hints about Netaji's preference for Russian asylum, as left in these British 'Top Secret' letters, made it almost certain that the British Government came to know that Netaji reached Russia, but to avoid obvious diplomatic complications soon after the war, they refrained from categorically mentioning it, as Russia was then an Ally of the Anglo-Americans with whom they had yet to settle innumerable post-war problems.

The importance of Mudie's letter is underlined further by another top secret report published in the same document. Wavell visited London during the last week of October, 1945 with the confidential note prepared by Mr. Mudie regarding Netaji and INA. This note was discussed by the British Cabinet on October 25, with Mr. Attlee, the then U.K. Prime Minister in the chair and in the presence of other senior Cabinet Ministers. The following is the record of the Cabinet meeting marked as document number 168 :

“168

### CABINET

India and Burma Committee. I.B. (45) 6th Meeting

Those present at this Meeting *held at 10, Downing Street, S.W.I. on 25th October, 1945 at 12 noon* were : Mr. Attlee (in the Chair), Sir Stafford Cripps, Lord Pethick-Lawrence, Miss Ellen Wilkinson, the Earl of Listowel.

Also present were : Mr. G. H. Hall, Mr. A. Henderson, Mr. E. A. Armstrong and Mr. J. P. Gibson (Secretariat).

### MINUTE 1

L|WS|1|1577 : ff 128-32.

**TREATMENT OF INDIAN AND BURMESE RENEGADES AND COLLABORATORS WITH THE ENEMY**

The Committee had before them I.B. (45) 16 and 18—Memoranda by the Secretary of State for India.

## TREATMENT OF INDIAN CIVILIAN RENEGADES

The Committee turned to a consideration of the principles which should govern the trial and punishment of Indian civilian offenders. The following were the principal points raised in discussion :—

- (1) It was generally agreed that the only civilian renegade of importance was Subhas Chandra Bose.
- (2) On the question whether Indian renegades rounded up outside India should be brought to India for trial, it was pointed out that it was part of the general arrangements for dealing with war criminals that they should be taken back for trial to their own country. It was suggested, on the other hand, that consideration might be given to the possibility of civilian offenders being brought before Army Court Martials in non-Indian territories, following the procedure adopted in Europe.
- (3) It was agreed that a clear distinction should be drawn between civilian offenders and military offenders, particularly so far as persons of lesser importance were concerned. If greater leniency were to be shown to civilians than to soldiers, it would emphasise the fact it was no part of our policy to punish unduly genuine adherents of the cause of Indian national independence.”

—(*The Transfer of Power*—Pages 402-405).

This U.K. cabinet meeting was convened on October 25, in London to consider the confidential note sent by Wavell to Attlee regarding the suggestions of the Delhi Administration for finalisation of their policy towards “Bose” and his INA. It was, thus, held more than two months after the Tokyo report about the alleged death of Netaji. This second document makes it absolutely clear that till October 25, 1945, neither the British authority at London nor in Delhi believed that Subhas Chandra Bose died in the alleged air crash, on the contrary they were in possession of definite information that Bose was alive and kept under duress in a country, the name of which could be understood from the text of the document, but was not specifically mentioned for obvious political reasons,



**WHAT WAVELL BELIEVED**

F. M. Wavell, Viceroy of India in 1945, promptly recorded his reaction in his 'Diary' after hearing Tokyo broadcast on the news of the death of Netaji in an air crash at Taihoku. What he wrote in it on August 23, has been published afterwards in "Wavell's Journal". Wavell noted :

"I wonder if the Japanese announcement that Subhas Chandra Bose's death in an air crash is true. I suspect it very much. It is just what would be given out if he wanted to go underground".

Wavell noted in his Diary again after about a month :

"According to the Japanese at Singapore, Subhas Chandra Bose is definitely dead, but I shall be sceptical till further confirmation".

Wavell ordered immediate investigation about the report of the air crash and alleged death of 'Bose' by the Home Department. He also requested Admiral Mountbatten, the Chief of the Allied Headquarters at Singapore, to take prompt steps for thorough probe into the matter.

**REPORTS FROM MOUNTBATTEN'S DIARY**

Mountbatten's Headquarters and MacArthur's Headquarters conducted inquiries in Japan and Formosa but full reports of these probes were not made available either before Shah Nawaz Committee, or Khosla Commission. [*What happened to these reports, we will discuss later.*] However, a few scrappy and disconnected pages from Mountbatten's Diary were produced before these two investigating bodies. These few pages contained very important informations which clearly showed that Mountbatten also did not believe the story of Netaji's death.

During the days of the second world war, the British Government had set up an office of military intelligence at Chungking, the former capital of Nationalist China under Chiang-Kai-Shek. It operated under the South East Asian Allied Headquarters, first from Colombo and then from Singapore. Mountbatten received the following secret report from Chungking, after

the news about Netaji's death was broadcast from Tokyo. This Chunking despatch stated : "The report of the Director of Military Intelligence—D.M.I.—posted in China informed Mountbatten by telegram on October 17, 1945 : When Bose was preparing to leave Burma with his family by plane, Chinese intercepted Japanese message ordering Bose to separate from his family and remain in Burma. *DMI's supposition is that though Bose's family were in the plane that crashed, Bose was not there and he subsequently escaped into Thailand. DMI has no evidence other than the intercept but is still convinced that he is correct.*"

Another significant intelligence report was found from the same Diary of Mountbatten. After occupation of South East Asia, Mountbatten's Army failed to seize any important war document from the Japanese sources, as all their military and political documents were totally destroyed soon after their surrender to the Allies. However, the British Army found a few important signals at Bangkok at the office of the Hikari Kikan, a *liaison* organisation that worked as the link between the Government of Japan and Netaji's Azad Hind Government. These signals were kept, apparently, within easy reach of the British Army. All these signals, sent from the Japanese Military Headquarters at Saigon, noted some 'secret' informations about Netaji and his alleged death. The first signal informed the Hikari Kikan that Subhas Chandra Bose left Saigon on August 17, 1945. Saigon Headquarters asked Hikari Kikan to communicate this news to the Indians at Bangkok. The second signal, dated August 20, stated that Bose died in an air crash at Taihoku (Taipei) on his way to Tokyo and his body had been flown to Tokyo. The third signal asked the Hikari Kikan to inform the Indians about Bose's death. The last signal sought news about the condition of Col. Habibur Rahman, Bose's aide, who was also reportedly injured in the air crash.

The British intelligence team smartly seized these four secret signals and made a thorough analysis of the informations contained in them. In their report to Mountbatten, regarding these signals, the team observed :

“For three reasons it appears that the report on Bose’s death in air crash was cooked up :

- (i) In this connection all papers at Bangkok and Saigon had been destroyed by the Japanese and they have left only one file and in that file only four signals were found;
- (ii) The Japanese General Isoda, it appears, deliberately spread the news of Bose’s departure among the Indian staff and the Indians were prepared in advance about the news of Bose’s death; and
- (iii) Japanese once said that Bose died in Formosa and then again say Bose died in Japan,—these two reports cannot be simultaneously true”.

General Isoda was the Chief of the Hikari Kikan and it was this Japanese General, along with Col. Tada of F. M. Terauchi’s Headquarters at Saigon, who planned Netaji’s departure from Saigon. The British came to know later that F. M. Terauchi and Gen. Isoda had great respect for Netaji and they were the persons who drew up, maintaining extreme secrecy, the plan of Netaji’s escape from the fast encroaching dragnet of the British Army. This intelligence report further said :

“It appears that the whole thing is suspicious. It has been said that only two seats were available in the plane. It is natural that any important person like Bose should have been allowed to move in a special plane.

“The description of the funeral is more suspicious. The secret signals say that Bose was flown to Tokyo. The news that was broadcast by the Domei Agency said that Bose died in Japan and his body was cremated there. Again Habibur Rahman says that Bose died at Taihoku (Taipei) and his body was cremated there. Such contradictions are suspicious. It can be said that Bose definitely left Saigon. *Perhaps the air crash was cooked up at Taihoku.* Possibly after that Bose escaped somewhere.”

### RUSSIAN DISCLOSURE

First investigation by the Headquarters of Mountbatten, it appears from the above report, discarded the story of Netaji’s death. Accordingly, the Intelligence Team that was sent from Delhi to track Bose in the region of South East Asia was given

special instruction to “*arrest Bose dead or alive*”. If either the British authority in India, or Mountbatten’s Headquarters at Singapore really believed that Netaji died in the reported air crash, there could be no question of asking the investigating team to ‘*arrest Bose dead or alive*’.

The British Army arrested all the top ranking Japanese Officers, INA Generals and Ministers of the Azad Hind Government soon after the surrender of Japan. All these important personnel, captured in South East Asia, were repeatedly interrogated by the British Intelligence Team. It was revealed in the course of their interrogations that Netaji’s plan, after flight from Saigon, was to go to the Russian territory across the Manchurian border. Although the Russian newspaper, *Pravda*, uncalled for, published a denial of the report of Netaji’s going over to Russia, two Russian diplomats stationed then at Kabul and at Teheran publicly confirmed Netaji’s arrival at Moscow.

A British intelligence report submitted to Wavell’s Government during early part of 1945 noted in its secret communication that probably Bose reached the Russian territory and Gandhi and Nehru also received some secret communications from him. This report was found in the documents submitted before Shah Nawaz Committee (No. 10/Misc./INA-pages 38, 39) which noted :

“Gandhiji stated publicly at the beginning of January (1946) that he believed that Bose was alive and is hiding, ascribing it to his inner voice. The Congressmen believe that Gandhiji’s inner voice is a secret information which *he received. There is, however, a secret report which says Nehru received a letter from Bose saying that he was in Russia and that he wanted to escape to India.* The information alleges that Gandhiji and Sarat Bose are those who were aware of this. It is probable that a letter arrived about the time Gandhiji made his public statement. In January also, Sarat Bose is reported to have said that he was convinced that his brother was alive. Another piece of intelligence which connects Bose with North West Frontier Province... is a letter written by the President of the Frontier Student Congress that he was going there himself. In this letter, the writer said that Bose is in T.T.—that was some code word”.

“The information received from the internal source is puzzling and same can be said about the external information. On 7th January the Russian paper *Pravda* denied in strong terms that Bose was in Russia. Before this, however, *Ghilazi Malang had been coupling with a live Bose in Russia, and in December, a report said that the Governor of Afghan Province, Khost, has been informed by the Russian Ambassador in Kabul that there are many Congress refugees in Moscow and Bose was included in their number.* There is little reason for such persons to bring Bose into fabricated stories. At the same time, the view that the Russian Officers are disclosing or alleging that Bose is in Moscow is supplied in a report received from Teheran. This stated that *Maradoff, the Russian Vice-Consul General disclosed in March that Bose is in Russia . . .* Taihoku, Congress and Russian representatives in Teheran and Kabul are most important objectives in this case as it stands now”.

The British Intelligence must have had pursued the matter further at Kabul and at Teheran for ascertaining the truth about the report of Netaji's arrival at Moscow and submitted their findings to the Government. But no report about such follow-up action was placed either before Shah Nawaz Committee, or Khosla Commission. The Government under Mrs. Gandhi told Khosla Commission that many confidential files of Nehru connected with the reports about Netaji were either “*missing or destroyed*”. These files were dealt with by the personal secretary of Pandit Nehru.—Mr. Mohd. Yunus.

*[Details about these files discussed in the last chapter].*

### DID NEHRU BETRAY NETAJI ?

The British intelligence team informed their Government that Pandit Nehru “received a secret communication from Bose”. This report was confirmed by a witness, Shri Shyamlal Jain of Meerut, while he deposed before Khosla Commission. In 1945-46, Shri Jain was working as a confidential steno of Asaf Ali who was Secretary to the INA Defence Committee with Bhulabhai Desai as its Chairman and Pandit Nehru as one of its prominent members. This confidential steno of the INA Defence Committee, in the course of his deposition, made a shocking revelation about Nehru's attitude towards Netaji.

Shri Jain told Khosla Commission :

“I solemnly affirm and state on oath that one evening (the date may be December 26, or 27, 1945) I was called by Shri Jawaharlal Nehru on telephone to come to the residence of Shri Asaf Ali with a typewriter as he had a lot of work to be typed by me, which I complied. After getting some papers typed by me, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru drew out a paper from the pocket of his *achkan* and asked me to make four copies of it for him. The said paper was a hand written matter and was somewhat difficult to read. Now, what was written in that paper, I am trying to reproduce from memory :”

“Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose proceeding by aeroplane from Saigon arrived today, August 23, 1945 at Dairen (Manchuria) at 1.30 afternoon. The said plane was a Japanese bomber-plane. It was full of gold in the shape of bars, ornaments and jewellery. Netaji carried two attache cases, one in each hand. On alighting from the plane, Netaji took tea with bananas. When Netaji finished tea, he along with four others, out of which one was Japanese named General Shidei (and others have lapsed from memory), took their seats in a jeep standing nearby. The said jeep proceeded towards Russian territory. After about 3 hours the said jeep returned and informed the pilot of the plane who flew back to Tokyo”.

“After handing over the said paper to me for typing, Shri Jawaharlal Nehru went to Mr. Asaf Ali and remained busy in conversation with him for 10 to 15 minutes... I could not complete the work, because the name of the writer on that letter was not readable, and I kept waiting for Shri Jawaharlal to come and tell the name. In the meantime I went through the letter several times and that is all that I could remember to the present day. Shri Jawaharlal could not discern the name of the writer and asked me to pull out the papers and hand over to them as they were.

I solemnly affirm and state on oath that thereafter Shri Jawaharlal Nehru gave me four papers from his writing pad to make four copies of a letter, which he would dictate to me on typewriters, which I also complied. The contents of the letter as far as I could remember were as follows :

“To Mr. Clement Attlee,  
Prime Minister of Britain,  
10, Downing Street, London.

Dear Mr. Attlee,

I understand from a reliable source that Subhas Chandra Bose, your war criminal, has been allowed to enter Russian territory by Stalin. This is a clear treachery and betrayal of faith by the Russians. As Russia has been an Ally of the British-Americans, it should not have been done. Please take note of it and do what you consider proper and fit.

Yours sincerely,  
Jawaharlal Nehru.”

One has to rub one's eyes many times to read and then to believe what Shri Jain told Khosla Commission. Can the evidence of Shri Jain be relied upon ? It appears as unthinkable that Pandit Nehru could stoop down so low to ask Mr. Attlee to see that “their war criminal Bose” was buried alive in Russia. But from the circumstantial facts the testimony of Jain cannot be discarded as a figment of any ugly imagination.

Firstly, the British Intelligence affirmed that Pandit Nehru received a secret communication from Netaji and Jain confirmed it further without knowing anything about this secret report.

Secondly, Col. Tada, one of the principal architects of Netaji's escape plan confided to S. A. Iyer in 1951 that the Japanese agreed to make necessary arrangements to convey Netaji to Russian territory across the border of Manchuria.

*[More about it later]*

Thirdly, neither the Government Counsel appearing before the Inquiry Commission, nor Mr. Khosla either challenged or refuted the veracity of Jain's testimony.

Fourthly, most of the secret files about Netaji, that were maintained by Pandit Nehru himself as “P.M's Special” files, one of which included all communications connected with INA Defence Committee, were reported by the Government as “either missing or destroyed”. It will not be easy to pre-

sume that Netaji's communication to Nehru and a copy of Nehru's letter to Attlee have also been destroyed.

*[More about the files in the last chapter].*

Fifthly, Pandit Nehru's attitude towards Netaji completely changed after he met Mountbatten at Singapore in 1946. Late Amritlal Seth, former editor of the Gujarati daily *Janambhumi*, who accompanied Nehru during his visit to Singapore told late Sarat Chandra Bose immediately after his return from Singapore that Panditji was warned by the British Admiral that, according to his report, 'Bose' did not die in the alleged air crash and if Nehru played up too high with the legends of Bose and demands for re-absorption of INA in the Indian Army, he would be taking the risk of presenting India on a platter to Bose when he reappeared.

Sixthly, the report of Amritlal Seth is corroborated by two facts. On arrival at Singapore Pandit Nehru was given a rousing reception by the INA there, when Panditji agreed to their request to place a wreath on the INA Martyr Monument, which was demolished under orders from Mountbatten immediately after British reoccupation of Singapore . . . Strangely, next day, Nehru refused to attend the INA martyr memorial ceremony organised at Singapore. About three decades later, Mountbatten boastfully stated in his 'Nehru Oration' speech that Nehru acted very compliantly on his advice regarding treatment about INA.

Seventhly, after his return from Singapore, Nehru never uttered a word about Netaji for over a decade even after he became Prime Minister of India. Till fifties, AIR was instructed not to cover any special talk on Netaji or broadcast any news about Netaji's birthday, exceeding a few minutes. All army barracks were prohibited from displaying any portrait of Netaji and this ban-order continued for years even after withdrawal of the British Power.

Eighthly, after coming to power ; Pandit Nehru got all the secret British reports which informed Wavell Government that Bose reached Russia, but as Prime Minister of India he



never inquired anything publicly about these reports from the Russian Government.

Ninthly, Nehru all along opposed any demand of a fullfledged judicial inquiry about Netaji mystery and appointed Shah Nawaz Committee mainly for the purpose of scuttling the move for a non-official inquiry about Netaji under the chairmanship of Dr. Radha Benode Pal.

Pandit Nehru's changed attitude towards Netaji, and particularly regarding inquiry about him, lends credence, though abominable to think of, to the testimony of Shyamlal Jain.

#### SUPPRESSION OF A VITAL DOCUMENT BY NEHRU

Pandit Nehru undertook another unusual step in suppressing a very important document on Netaji, which definitely indicated that the revolutionary leader had positive plan to go to Russian territory across the border of Manchuria. In 1951, Panditji had sent Shri S. A. Iyer, a former Publicity Minister of the Azad Hind Government, who was then working with the Bombay Government as their Publicity Officer, to Japan for collecting information relating to the report of Netaji's death. On return from Tokyo, Shri Iyer submitted a long report to Nehru which was read out by Panditji in Parliament. But Panditji did something which one would not have expected of a man of his stature and position. Iyer's report to Nehru included an extremely important confidential note, but Pandit Nehru withheld this note from the knowledge of Parliament. The existence of this confidential note came to light when the Government, perhaps inadvertently, produced it along with the original report of Iyer to Nehru before Khosla Commission. Pandit Nehru's other confidential files relating to the story of Netaji's death were withheld from the Commission, but this confidential note, somehow, came before it.

This note of Iyer contained a very significant information communicated to him at Tokyo by Col. Tada. Col. Tada was a special officer attached to the Headquarters of F. M. Terauchi at Saigon. General Isoda and Col. Tada were the two high-ranking Japanese military officers who, under instructions from

F. M. Terauchi, prepared the top-secret plan of Netaji's escape from Saigon. In his confidential note, Iyer informed Nehru :

“This time I could gather very important information. Col. Tada told me that after the end of the war when Japan surrendered, Terauchi took all responsibility to help Netaji and asked him to go to Kaka Bose (His Excellency Bose) and tell him to reach Russian territory—all help will be given to him. It was arranged that Chandra Bose will fly in the plane in which Shidei was going. General Shidei will look after Chandra Bose up to Dairen, and thereafter, he could fall back on his own resources to contact Russians. Japanese would announce to the world that Bose had disappeared from Dairen. That would absolve them of all responsibility in the eyes of the Allies.”

General Shidei, who was appointed Chief of the Japanese Manchurian Army, knew English and German quite well and was very friendly with Netaji. He was going to take charge of the Japanese Army in Manchuria which was opposing the advancing Russian Army in that sector of war at that time.

Shri Jain did not know anything about the existence of this confidential note of Iyer which was submitted to the Commission much later—about a year, after his deposition before it. The contents of Iyer's note materially confirmed the evidence of Shri Jain.

### DILEMMA OF PANDIT NEHRU

Pandit Nehru told the Lok Sabha in 1956 that “Netaji's death was a settled fact”—but his behaviour later, related to the issue, clearly showed that in his heart of hearts, he did not believe it. In late fifties Nehru visited Renkoji temple near Tokyo in Japan where the alleged ashes of Netaji were reported to have been preserved. Many other distinguished Indians, like Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Rafi Ahmed Kidwai, also visited the temple and in its visitor's book they recorded their deep feelings in paying high respect to the ‘memory’ of Netaji. Panditji while visiting Renkoji temple, ostensibly for the same purpose, avoided writing anything in the visitor's book, either good or bad, in ‘memory’ of Netaji, instead, he scribbled a sentence in it, which read : “May the message of Buddha bring peace to

mankind''. Can it not be presumed that Panditji knew quite well that Netaji did not die in the alleged air crash, and it was this knowledge that cramped his conscience from writing any obituary note about Netaji in the visitor's book !

After about two decades, perhaps Panditji's conscience started wavering. In reply to a letter from an elder brother of Netaji, late Suresh Chandra Bose, who was also a member of Shah Nawaz Committee, Pandit Nehru wrote.

''You ask me to send you proof of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death. I cannot send you any precise and direct proof. But all the circumstantial evidence that has been produced and which has been referred to in the Inquiry Committee's report has convinced us of the fact that Netaji died. In addition to this, the lapse of time and extreme improbability of his being alive and living secretly somewhere, when he would be welcomed in India with great joy and affection, adds to that circumstantial evidence''.

Look ! What a reply it was ! Pandit Nehru admitted that there was no ''direct or precise proof of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death''—nevertheless, he accepted the death report as true, because circumstantial evidence proved it. But to find out the most relevant circumstantial evidence, he did not allow Shah Nawaz Committee to visit Taihoku (Taipei) in Taiwan which was alleged to be the place of occurrence of the reported accident. That Netaji did not return to India, could such an argument be attributed to justify the report of his death in the alleged air crash ? He might have been under duress in Russia, as now revealed by the publication of top-secret British documents. Nehru quite probably knew what happened to Netaji and he, therefore, made every effort to avoid the crucial issue that was involved in ascertaining the truth about the story of Netaji's death.

Shri K. K. Shah, the former Information and Broadcasting Minister and Governor of Tamil Nadu, told the present writer in 1968 that Nehru never believed the story of Netaji's death. Nehru personally told this to Shri Shah on more than one occasion. Shri Shah also informed the writer that Pandit Nehru maintained a special secret file himself about all information

regarding Netaji. This fact about a special file about Netaji was corroborated later when the report about "P.M.'s files—missing or destroyed" was produced before Khosla Commission.

Pandit Nehru's persistent interest, although maintained under strict secrecy, showed that he knew that Netaji did not die in the alleged air crash and reached Russia after the surrender of Japan. He always felt extremely concerned if any report or even rumour was found anywhere about the probability of Netaji's being alive. Facts about such anxiety came up before Khosla Commission, when a number of former Chiefs of Intelligence Department of Government of India, like B. N. Mullick, S. R. Mirchandani and others appeared before the Commission. These witnesses informed the Commission that whenever there was any report about Netaji being seen or heard anywhere in India, Nehru never ignored such reports. Top men of the intelligence department were asked to inquire into such reports. It came before the Commission that many Naga and Mizo leaders were examined when some of them publicly stated that they knew that Netaji was alive.

The mystery of Shaulmari Sadhu created a sensation in early sixties all over the country. Pandit Nehru also felt quite concerned about the identity of this Sadhu. Late Surendra Mohan Ghosh, a former revolutionary leader of Bengal who was once very close to Netaji, was specially chosen by Nehru for verification of the identity of the Sadhu of Shaulmari Ashram. Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Shri Morarji Desai also evinced keen interest in the matter. Late Surendra Mohan Ghosh visited Shaulmari Ashram and had long talks with its Sadhu. On return to Delhi he informed Nehru that the Sadhu was not Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. All this information late Ghosh communicated to Khosla Commission when he deposed before it.

A few days before Panditji's death, Shri Amiya Nath Bose, a nephew of Netaji, wrote to him that "in the national interest there should be a final judicial inquiry by the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court regarding the air crash at Taihoku in August 1945". In his prompt reply, Panditji informed Amiya Bose : *"I agree with you that something should be done to finalise the question of Netaji's death."*

## AN INTERPRESS ARTICLE

Deben Sen, a former M.P., gave a surprising account of his accidental meet with Netaji at Marseilles airport in France in 1949. He and Joglekar, a trade union leader of Bombay, went to France to attend an international labour conference. Both of them were well-known labour leaders of those days. When they arrived at Marseilles they were extremely puzzled to find a person in military uniform, exactly like Netaji, standing in the airport lounge surrounded by a few white security men. Deben Sen knew Netaji quite intimately when he was in India. Being surprised and overjoyed Deben Sen and Joglekar moved hastily to greet the person whom they identified as Netaji—but before they started to approach him, Netaji, as they believed him to be, raised his forefinger cautioning them not to try to talk to him. The 'man' with his security personnel boarded a plane some time later, and left Marseilles.

Returning home from their European visit, Deben Sen took the first opportunity to inform Sarat Chandra Bose about this strange incident, when the latter advised him not to mention this apparently unbelievable story publicly. Deben Sen disclosed his puzzling experience to the press many years later and only some time before his death. Earlier he narrated his experience to the present writer and to Chapala Kanta Bhattacharya, a former M.P. and editor of *Ananda Bazar* as well. Shri Bhattacharya told about it to Khosla Commission while he appeared before it.

Interestingly, however, a British Communist leader, Gallacher, said in a statement almost at the same time when the story was narrated by Deben Sen, that 'Subhas Bose' secretly visited Ireland to see De Valera. His statement, independently, lent support to the account of Deben Sen's accidental meeting with a man like Netaji at Marseilles. Could it be possible then that Netaji was going to Ireland from Russia via Marseilles ? It is very difficult to say yes or no.

A German global intelligence agency, well known as *Interpress*, published an article in 1949, which claimed to possess

information about Bose's living in Russia. It included Gallacher's statement as well. In this article called "Internationaler Biographischer Pressedents Subhas Chandra Bose", a copy of which was produced by the writer before Khosla Commission, Interpress wrote : "Recent happenings indisputably point to the fact that Indian Revolutionary, Subhas Chandra Bose, who is alleged to have died in a plane crash after the Second World War, is waiting for an opportunity to bring the Asian political scene under his control".

Whatever might be the evidentiary value of this article, at least, this article published by an internationally reputed intelligence agency corroborated the fact that many in the Western world did not believe in the story of Netaji's death in the alleged air crash. In the concluding part of its fairly long article it was stated : "Immediately after termination of the Second World War, Mr. Bose had again been declared dead . . . It was true that Tokyo Radio had broadcast that Bose met with an accident on his way from Taihoku airport in Formosa and later succumbed to injuries. The world had not given any evidence whatsoever to this broadcast. . . Nobody has seen the dead body caught in the flames of the wrecked plane. Those who were conversant with post-war development in South East Asia were aware that at the time of surrender, the Japanese in their declared lists to the Allied Powers referred to many important persons as having died in plane crash. Even at the age of fifty Subhas Chandra Bose was physically strong and possessed unparalleled mental strength and a political leader of unique foresight. . . And it should not be assumed that this stout-hearted and farsighted leader had not thought of his possible future course of action. Was he not aware of the intention of Moscow to utilise the resurgent Asian Nationalism then or in near future ?

"He could well have taken advantage of the prevailing turmoil in China consequent on the Allied victory in 1945 and with the help of considerable amount of gold he had in his possession he could have easily made his way into the Soviet territory and could well have arranged to reach Moscow

or in any other lonely locality in a plane and seek asylum there. *What else could have been the significance of the news given out by the British Communist leader Gallacher that Bose had gone to the Irish Free State on a secret mission?*”

“Crores in India firmly believe that after an epoch, vast changes would overtake the country which would in its turn convert India into a veritable heaven. *Mr. Bose, with his Buddha-like appearance and a Yogi of a very high order, would perhaps one day be emancipator not only of India but of whole Asia. . . . The whole of India was today swayed by the impact of his tremendous personality. If Mr. Bose is alive today—and in all probability he was alive—it was certain the world would again hear his voice.*”

Yes, innumerable Indians refused to believe that their leader—the Revolutionary Pilgrim of Indian freedom—will no longer come back to his beloved motherland. The Tokyo broadcast appeared to them as nothing but a political story which was neither proved nor attempt was made to officially confirm it by the Japanese authorities. All the men of the highest echelon of Japan, in those days, looked upon Netaji—as found to be recorded in their secret documents—as a “Superman”. Tojo described him as “The greatest revolutionary of Asia,” and Shigametsu, his Foreign Minister, called him “The greatest hero of our age”. Could the Japanese authority lapse into complete silence by simply announcing the report of his death—so cryptic and so evasive in contents—had Netaji really died ? The analysis of all circumstantial evidence, made in the following chapters, would make it clear that the news of Netaji’s death was deliberately broadcast, as a part of a political camouflage for enabling him to go underground after the Japanese surrender to the Allies.

## 2

### An Unconvincing Broadcast

A FEELING OF uncertainty about their beloved leader, Subhas Chandra Bose, was uppermost in the minds of the Indian people after they heard the news of Japanese surrender to the Allies on August 15, 1945. Amidst such anxieties, abruptly came a broadcast from Tokyo Radio on August 23, 1945 which announced : "Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose died in a Japanese hospital from injuries received in an air crash". Quoting the Japanese Domei Agency as the source of the information, the Radio further said : "Mr. Bose, Head of Provisional Government of Azad Hind, left Singapore on August 16 by air for Tokyo for talks with the Japanese Government. He was seriously injured when his plane crashed at Taihoku airfield at 14.00 hours on August 18. He was given treatment in hospital in Japan where he died at midnight. Lt-Gen. Tsunamasa Shidei was instantly killed and Col. Habibur Rahman, Bose's adjutant, and four others were injured in the crash".

Two days later, i.e., August 25, *Taiwan Shin Pao*, only daily at Taihoku in those days, published a Pressnote issued by the Military Intelligence Bureau of Formosa. It reported : "The Chief of Independence movement of Free India, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, desirous of a discussion with the Japanese authorities, took the plane from Cho Nun (Singapore) *en route* Tokyo on August 16. The plane crashed in the vicinity of Taihoku (Taipei) airport at 2 o'clock in the afternoon



on August 18. Mr. Bose had sustained severe injury and was sent to the local hospital for treatment. He died at 0 (Zero) or the 24th hour—the junction of August 18 and 19. On the same plane, there were Col. Habibur Rahman, a senior aide, also badly burnt, Lt.-Gen. Shidei, a Japanese military officer, who died on the spot and four other officers who were either severely or slightly injured.”

The news of Netaji's death was so sudden, so unexpected and so terribly stunning that waves of shocking anguish swept the country. But after the initial shock, discerning minds started scanning these news, analysing their contents line by line. Many questions arose in consequence. Why neither the Government of Japan nor its Military Headquarters issued any official communique to confirm the report of Netaji's death ? Why the news was broadcast 5 days after the alleged air crash ? Why the news was so unusually cryptic ? Why one report said that Netaji died in a hospital in Japan while the other stated he died at Taihoku ? Why the extraordinarily photo-minded Japanese failed to take a photograph of the body and publish it ? Why no other foreigners were shown the dead body except Col. Habibur Rahman ? What happened to the personal effects of Netaji ?

Innumerable questions like these sprang up, following the Tokyo broadcast, but there was no answer to any such queries from the Japanese authorities. Later, Shri S. A. Iyer, told Khosla Commission, that in fact the news was also not really circulated by the Domei News Agency, but on request from the Tokyo Military Headquarters, it was Iyer who drafted the news on behalf of this agency. This revelation by Iyer made the whole story look rather extraordinarily intriguing. Naturally suspicion arose in the minds of many in India. Doubts about the veracity of the report were first expressed almost simultaneously by Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya. Both of them telegraphically asked Bose's family “not to perform *Sraddh* ceremony but to hold mild prayer.” AICC meeting held at Bombay on September 21, 1945 echoed this doubt more sharply. It was the first AICC meeting since

adoption of Quit India resolution on August 8, 1942, which made respectful obituary references in memory of those important leaders who passed away since its last meeting. However, in regard to report of Netaji's death, Maulana Azad, the Congress President, told the delegates :

“The circumstances in which the news of death of Bose has reached us and the sources responsible for the announcement do not make certain that Bose is in fact dead. Therefore, his name should not appear in the list of those who died since the last session of AICC”.

### NEHRU EXPRESSED DOUBTS

The API published, earlier on August 29, 1945, an account of a meeting between Pandit Nehru and an American journalist of Chicago Tribune, Mr. Alfred Wag, who claimed to have met Netaji in the vicinity of Saigon after the report of the air crash on August 18. According to API, *“The American correspondent asserted that Bose was alive and seen four days ago in Saigon.”* On September 11, Nehru himself told a Press reporter of API at Jhansi *“...like many other people, he did not believe the story about the reported death of Subhas Chandra Bose. . . . I have received a number of reports which have raised in me grave doubts and I disbelieve the authenticity of the news”*.

### GANDHIJI SAID — “NETAJI IS ALIVE”

Mahatma Gandhi not only disbelieved the air crash story, but publicly said with positive emphasis that he believed on the contrary that Netaji was alive. He told the detenus in a meeting in Dum Dum Jail, most of whom were associates of Netaji, in the month of December, 1945 : *“I believe Netaji is alive. If some one shows me ashes, even then I will not believe, that Subhas is not alive.”* In fact what Gandhiji exactly said in Hindustani was *“Agar mujhe koi rakh dekha de, tohhi main biswas nahi karunga ki Subhas zinda nahi hai.”* The present writer was also present as a detenu in that meeting.

Later, on January 2, 1946, Gandhiji said again in a workers' meeting at Contai in West Bengal : "*I believe Subhas Bose is still alive and is hiding somewhere.*" He made similar public statements on many other occasions. When Shah Nawaz and Sehgal went to Bombay to see Gandhiji after their release from the Red Fort, the Mahatma told them on March 14, 1946 :

"Whatever you may tell me to the contrary, I still believe in my heart of hearts that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is still alive."

In an article published earlier in *Harijan* on February 3, Gandhiji wrote :

"The hypnotism of INA has cast spell on us. Netaji's name is one to conjure with. His patriotism is second to none. (*I use the present tense intentionally*). His bravery shines through all his actions."

Gandhiji, however, made an ambiguous statement when Col. Habibur Rahman met him at Wardha later. After the meeting with the adjutant of Netaji, although Mahatmaji significantly observed that Habibur had made a "soldier's statement to me", yet he asked the Indian people to believe what Habibur said about Netaji. It was to be noted that Gandhiji did not say what he believed, but asked the countrymen to believe what Habibur said. Perhaps, by then Gandhiji realised that over-emphasis on Netaji's being alive might endanger his safety.

After his release from prison, Sarat Chandra Bose went on a month's European tour. On coming back to India he told the *United Press* at Bombay on July 22, 1946 : "I am led to believe that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose is alive. The story of the plane crash connected with his death is a myth. Recently, I had the opportunity of meeting a European lady journalist connected with a weekly paper in Switzerland who was at that time in Japan. The journalist contacted many people and tried to know details about the air tragedy. She is also convinced that the air crash story is a myth."

**HABIBUR RAHMAN CONVINCED NONE**

Col. Habibur Rahman was chosen by Netaji as the only Indian aide to fly with him from Saigon. It was reported that he was also injured in the alleged air crash and had been an eye-witness to the whole episode beginning from the flight from Saigon to the reported cremation of the body of Netaji. Habibur Rahman was, therefore, the person who could say the last word about the fate of Netaji. After coming out of detention from Red Fort, he met Sarat Chandra Bose and stayed with him for months, where he met many of his INA colleagues and other close associates of Netaji. He repeated to everyone the same story of air crash and subsequent death of Netaji, but strangely he persistently refused to subject himself to any cross-examination. He showed a woollen sweater to his friends telling them that he was wearing the same sweater when the plane crashed and got immediately engulfed in flames. But none could find any mark of burning on his sweater. In narrating the story of the air accident, he said that after the crash the whole plane was caught in surging flames and he and Netaji had to fight out through the blaze resulting in severe burning of Netaji's bush-shirt and the upper part of his body. When his friends asked him—how then could his more inflammable woollen sweater remain completely unaffected and escape burning? He had no answer.

Col. Habibur Rahman's dorsels had signs of burning, but inside his two palms no such scar marks were found. Dr. Col. Raju and Dr. Kasliwal, both of whom were Netaji's personal physicians, closely examined Habibur Rahman. When they asked him that although he used both his hands to put out fire over the burning bush-shirt of Netaji, how his palms remained unaffected though his dorsels bore burn marks? The story of burning of dorsels of his two hands leaving two palms unaffected was so unnatural that Habibur rather preferred to remain silent. Summing up the impressions of the INA colleagues of Col. Rahman about his account of Netaji's death, A. N. Sarkar, a former Law Minister of Azad Hind Government, wrote in an article published in weekly *Forward Bloc*

in 1947 : “...From the perspective of medical legal jurisprudence, I examined the physical marks on the person of Col. Habibur Rahman and noted his demeanour and how that officer behaved, when I smiled understandingly. Admittedly, there is no corroboration of Netaji’s death, whether direct or indirect—neither substantive nor circumstantial. The fact of death has not been proved. No question of disproving, therefore, arises. So much of law, logic and casuistry.”

#### DISCLOSURE BY SARAT CHANDRA BOSE

Sarat Chandra Bose in an exclusive interview on October 7, 1949, about four months before his death, told the correspondents of the defunct Calcutta daily, *The Nation* that “he believed that Netaji was in Red China”. This interview was published in a special edition of *The Nation* under a six-column banner headline. Sarat Bose said : “The Government of India were in possession of definite information that Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose was in Red China of Mao Tse Tung.” Citing the report of a Swiss journalist, Dr. Miss Lily Abegg, he further informed the press, “The British and the American sources did not believe either in the Taihoku air crash in which Netaji had been presumed to have perished or that he was dead.”

According to the report : “Mr. Bose, in a confident and measured voice, said, “On my return to Calcutta in August last from the Continent, *I heard from a well informed source, which I cannot possibly disclose, that the Government of India were in possession of definite information that Netaji was in Communist China. It is not possible for me to say where he is at present. But, as I have already said, I believe and I have always believed that HE IS ALIVE,*”—Mr. Bose added, “with a smile flickering over his lips”.

Mr. Bose further said, “when the story came out, I was in prison, I confess, as long as I was in prison I felt upset. I had not any material then to enable me to judge, whether the air crash story was true or not. But even then I felt it was somewhat strange that the air crash story should have been re-

leased to the public five days after the crash was supposed to have happened.”

“After I came out of the prison in 1945, I had the opportunity of talking to Col. Habibur Rahman of the INA. He, however, stuck to the story.....The impression left in my mind is that Habibur Rahman had orders from his Chief to come out with that story. As a man and officer of INA, Habibur Rahman left the impression in my mind that he was sterling gold. And when I felt unconvinced about the air crash story, the only conclusion I could come to was that he had orders from his Chief to keep his whereabouts a closely guarded secret. If Col. Rahman had orders from his Chief, he would not tell that to me, because, after all, I am a brother and I may have the feelings and weakness of a brother.”

“No one knows what his (Netaji’s) plans exactly were, except possibly Habibur Rahman. But I had it from a very good source that before leaving Bangkok he told one of his close associates that he desired to go to North China”.

Mr. Bose, then, referred to the UPA message of October 3, 1949, from London wherein it had been stated that “Mr. Bose’s speedy support to the Chinese Communist Government was seen in London as an intimation that Mr. Bose had prior consultation with the Chinese Communists”.

### DEMAND FOR AN INQUIRY IN PARLIAMENT

As stated above, the story of Netaji’s death was found to be hardly convincing. It appeared wholly suspicious, and even intriguing. The people of India expected that after coming to power on August 15, 1947, Pandit Nehru would consider it a foremost patriotic duty to institute an all-out inquiry to find out what really happened to the greatest hero of Indian freedom. But what to speak of taking any initiative in this regard, he, in an inexplicably surprising attitude, stoutly and persistently turned down all public demands for holding an inquiry into the Netaji mystery.

Shri H. V. Kamath, an indomitable colleague of Netaji, was the first member of Parliament who desperately raised the

issue of an inquiry in the Lok Sabha. Rejecting his demand Pandit Nehru said on September 29, 1955, in Parliament : "In a matter of this kind, the only inquiry that is to a satisfactory manner, that can be made can be made by the Government of Japan. The matter is in Japan, the whole thing is there. We cannot impose ourselves or an inquiry committee on the Japanese Government. Of course, if they chose to inquire, we will gladly co-operate and give such help as we can. But we cannot simply inquire into their territory and more specially also where all the possible witnesses are probably either Japanese Government officials or others connected with their Government. And, as I said, the initiative must come from the Japanese Government in this matter".

What a cold, indifferent and unpatriotic reply ! Why the Government of Japan will take the initiative in this matter, which principally concerned the national interest of India, to discredit their own war-time Government and invite as well, the wrath of the Americans who still had control over the fate of Japan ?

#### MOVE TO SCUTTLE NON-OFFICIAL INQUIRY

Continued apathetic attitude of the Government of India towards Netaji, compelled prominent citizens of Calcutta to take a decision in 1956 to set up a non-official inquiry committee with the internationally known jurist, Dr. Radha Benode Pal, as its chairman. In a statement on July 22, 1946, Sarat Chandra Bose had said earlier : "*My friend, Dr. Radha Benode Pal, who was in Japan as a Judge of Tokyo Trial, has told me that he had heard from prominent American, English and Japanese journalists of position and standing that they declined to believe that there was any crash and that the story was only a myth*". The present writer had availed himself of opportunities to meet Dr. Pal on several occasions when the eminent jurist assertively told the author each time that he had many reasons to disbelieve the story of the plane crash.

Later Dr. Pal publicly said in a letter to Shri A. M. Nair, on February 14, 1953 : "I could not accept as true the

*story of Netaji's death in Formosa. In any case I feel that the whole thing demands a thorough investigation. Statements by individuals made here and there will not convince me as to the truth of the story given out. I have reasons to doubt it''.*

Pandit Nehru felt greatly perturbed by the news of the move to form a non-official inquiry committee. In an effort to outmanoeuvre this non-official initiative, the findings of which might cause extreme embarrassment to his Government, he conveniently swallowed back all his earlier pleas against holding any inquiry and hurriedly announced in 1956 the decision of the Government to form an official inquiry committee. Demands were raised to appoint Dr. Radha Benode Pal as its chairman, as, for his separate judgement in the Tokyo Trial, different from the verdicts of the American and British Judges in absolving the Japanese leaders of the charges of war crimes, Dr. Pal had earned abiding gratitude of the people, the war-time leaders and the Government of Japan. If he was appointed chairman of the Committee, his easy accessibility to the war-time documents and his credibility with the top leaders of Japan would have perhaps enabled him to get into the depth of the mystery of Netaji's disappearance. But for his dissentient verdict in Tokyo Trial, Dr. Pal became a *persona non grata* with Pandit Nehru, so much so that the Government of India never utilised, since that trial, the services of this internationally famous Chief Justice of Calcutta High Court. Instead Shah Nawaz Khan, who had by then switched over his loyalty to Pandit Nehru, was appointed chairman of the three-member Inquiry Committee. The other two members were Shri S. N. Moitra, a veteran I.C.S. Officer, and Shri Suresh Chandra Bose, an elder brother of Netaji.

#### ONE-TRACK INQUIRY BY SHAH NAWAZ COMMITTEE

The Government appointed merely an inquiry committee and not a judicial commission, with a chairman who had little capability to handle a complicated international issue like that of an inquiry about Netaji in South East Asian countries—



and in the mainland of Japan and Formosa particularly. The Government moved to initiate a probe into the fate of Netaji, 11 years after the report of the air crash, but surprisingly the terms of reference were restricted to inquire and collect evidence only in support of the alleged death of Netaji. The Government notified the appointment of the committee "to inquire into the circumstances concerning the departure of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose from Bangkok about August 16, 1945, *his alleged death as a result of an air crash accident, and subsequent development therewith*".

After appointment of the committee, Pandit Nehru made an astounding statement in Parliament, which was tantamount to prejudice and prejudice the findings of the committee. He said : "I have no doubt in my mind—I did not have it then (5-3-52)—and I have no doubt today of the fact of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's death, is, I think settled beyond doubt."

The chairman of the Committee evidently conducted the inquiry exactly on the lines dotted by Pandit Nehru. On reaching Tokyo, on March 4, 1956, Shah Nawaz Khan told the Japanese pressmen at the airport : "His mission was mainly to interview people who might offer direct evidence of Shri Bose's death". In Tokyo he selectively asked witnesses to appear before the Committee who could provide corroboration to the story of Netaji's death and avoided others who contradicted it. He did not examine Gen. Oshima, Gen. Kowabe, Gen. Yakuru, Mrs. Tojo, Mrs. Shidei and other top-ranking personalities of the war-time Government of Japan, all of whom were great admirers of Netaji and who could provide positive clues to resolve Netaji mystery. Nor did he ask for war-time documents connected with the plan of Netaji to move out of Saigon or to verify whether Gen. Shidei actually died at Taihoku or in Manchuria. The Committee made all arrangements to visit Taihoku, the alleged place of occurrence of air crash, but at the last moment, under orders from Pandit Nehru, it was abandoned.

## COMMAND PERFORMANCE REPORT

As was apprehended that Shah Nawaz Khan would not dare to unsettle, what was described by Panditji as 'a settled fact beyond doubt', the Inquiry Committee submitted a report in which it noted innumerable 'contradictions and discrepancies' in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses and even in the evidence of Col. Habibur Rahman. Nevertheless it queerly concluded its finding: *"At no stage was the casket containing the ashes sealed, no formal receipt issued, nor again continuous watch was kept over it. So although there cannot be absolute certainty about it, nevertheless, it can be said that, in all probability, ashes kept in Renkoji temple, Tokyo, are the ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. If the ashes are taken to be genuine, Renkoji temple cannot be obviously their final resting place."*

What an absurd finding it was! Who will decide with absolute certainty to resolve the question of probability in regard to exact identification of the ashes? The findings of the Committee, therefore, appeared as nothing but patently ambiguous and self-defeating. The third member of the Committee, Shri Suresh Chandra Bose, although he was crudely denied access to various documents and evidence produced before the Committee, submitted a "Dissentient Report" challenging the findings of the other two members.

The people of India refused to accept this dubious finding of the Inquiry Committee, but its chairman, Shah Nawaz Khan, got his reward for his changed loyalty to Nehru. Soon after the submission of his report, Shah Nawaz Khan was made a Deputy Minister in the Government of India.

## FRESH DEMAND FOR FRESH INQUIRY

After the 1967 elections the present writer took upon himself the task of initiating a fresh move for a fresh inquiry about Netaji. In his 45-minute maiden speech in the Lok Sabha, the writer exclusively devoted his time to rouse the conscience of the Parliament to undo the injustice done to the greatest national hero of our time. Fortunately, many leading dailies had

lent their support, editorially, to the demand placed before the Lok Sabha. Soon a 'National Committee on Netaji', with noted men from inside and outside Parliament, was formed and on behalf of the Committee, the eminent historian, Dr Romesh Chandra Majumdar, drafted a memorandum for presenting to the Government, jointly by the members of the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. Within a few days it was signed by more than 350 members of Parliament.

The memorandum, *inter alia*, reminded the Government : "It was the INA, under the inspiring leadership of Netaji, that liberated Indian territory from British bondage and hoisted the banner of India's independence almost three years before it was unfurled over the Delhi Red Fort. Netaji was, in fact, the first President of Free India". Expressing regret the memorandum pointed out that : "the Government has signally failed to accord due honour and recognition to the unique personality and leadership of Netaji or to his historic role in our freedom struggle," and it urged the Government to take steps to "(i) place Netaji's portrait in the Central Hall of Parliament and all offices of the Government, (ii) erect a statue of Netaji on a prominent site in New Delhi, preferably at the India Gate, (iii) devise suitable means to accord national recognition to his military genius, (iv) observe his birthday every year with due solemnity, (v) erect suitable memorials at Kohima and Imphal in honour of the INA heroes, (vi) prepare and publish a history of the Indian National Army, (vii) give the place due to Netaji in the History of Indian Freedom Movement, and (viii) arrange publication of Netaji's writings and speeches."

It further added : "Even the late Prime Minister of India, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, had to admit in a letter written to Shri Suresh Chandra Bose, an elder brother of Netaji, that there was no 'precise and direct proof' of Netaji's death. On the other hand, Reuter's correspondent reported on September 2, 1945, that neither the British nor the American war correspondents believed the news of Netaji's death and there is enough evidence of his presence at Saigon a few days after the

reported plane crash. A correspondent of an American paper also told Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru on August 28, 1945, that Subhas Chandra Bose was not dead and was still alive and was possibly at Saigon. There are also published reports of Radio Broadcasts by Netaji in December, 1945 and January, 1946”.

The memorandum, therefore, demanded that “further inquiry be made with collaboration of the Governments of Japan and Taiwan by a small independent committee consisting of a judge of the Supreme Court and two or three public men whose integrity and capacity to conduct such an inquiry will satisfy public opinion by removing the mystery that hangs around Netaji. Even though it is already very late, still such an inquiry may be fruitful, but if such a step is not taken without delay, posterity will never forgive the Government and the people of India for their neglect and indifference to ascertain actual facts about one of the mightiest architects of India’s liberation.” (Appendix-1).

Never before such a memorandum on any national issue was signed by the majority of Members of Parliament irrespective of party affiliations, but the response to it from the President, Dr. Zakir Husain, was not favourable. On behalf of the President, his principal secretary informed the Convenor of the National Committee on May 24, 1968 : “Government’s view on the suggestion that there should be a fresh inquiry into the death of Netaji has been. . .that an inquiry into the matter like this after a lapse of 22 years can hardly help in bringing to light any further material set at rest, whatever doubts people may have.” However, in regard to according national recognition to Netaji the Government agreed to take certain steps.

The reply from the President was no doubt disappointing, but the National Committee decided to pursue the matter further. A delegation of Members of Parliament met President Zakir Husain with a renewed request to reconsider the issue of fresh inquiry. Another letter signed by about 45 leading Members of Parliament with a copy of the memorandum enclosed was sent to Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, urging her also to institute a fresh inquiry into Netaji mystery.

The reply, dated July 30, , came not from the Prime Minister, but from the then Minister of External Affairs, Shri Dinesh Singh, in which he wrote : “As you are aware that this matter has been raised in Parliament on several occasions and the Government have adequately explained their stand. Last year, when Members of Parliament had given a memorandum, the Government considered it in some depth. However, Government reiterated that a further inquiry into the death of Netaji was not warranted.”

Frustrating though it appeared, the National Committee continued its campaign, inside and outside Parliament, for a fresh inquiry. Meanwhile, the political situation in the country radically changed after split in the Congress in 1969 over the issue of defeat of the Congress nominee for the Presidential election. The Congress candidate, Shri Sanjiva Reddy was defeated by the independent candidate Shri V. V. Giri with the active support of Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The split in Congress forced Mrs. Gandhi to depend on the support of the Opposition for running her minority Government. Political situation, thus, favoured intensification of the campaign for fresh judicial inquiry about Netaji. The Convenor of the National Committee repeatedly raised the issue on the floor of Parliament and met the Prime Minister more than once and led a delegation to the newly elected President, V. V. Giri. The new President was an old friend and ardent admirer of Netaji, who forwarded the memorandum, which already carried the signatures of the majority of Members of Parliament, to the Prime Minister with his own favourable comment. A political compulsion, quite powerful, was thus created, which finally made Mrs. Indira Gandhi inclined to accept the demand for a fresh inquiry into Netaji mystery.

Shri Y. B. Chavan, the then Home Minister of the Union Government, convened a meeting of 45 leading Members of Parliament to consider “all aspects of the question regarding holding of a fresh inquiry into the circumstances leading to disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose.” The meeting was held on December 5, 1969, in which all the Members present, expressed their views unanimously in support of a

fresh inquiry. However, as the Government continued to drift, the National Committee had to mount its agitation till the Government finally decided to hold a fresh inquiry.

The Convenor of the National Committee received the following letter from the Home Minister, intimating him Government's decision regarding fresh inquiry on Netaji :

“HOME MINISTER OF INDIA,  
NEW DELHI,

*March* 18, 1970.

Dear Shri Guha,

Please refer to your letter dated January 29, 1970, inquiring about the decision on the demand for inquiry on the disappearance of Netaji which has been discussed with you and other Members of Parliament on 5th December, 1969. It has been decided that a Commission of Inquiry by a judge of a Supreme Court or High Court should be appointed to inquire into the matter. A formal announcement will be made in due course.

Shri Samar Guha, M.P.,  
New Delhi.

Yours sincerely,  
Y. B. Chavan.”

The Government formally announced its decision on July 11, 1970 to set up a “one-man Judicial Commission to inquire into disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose”. About a month later, Mr. G. D. Khosla, a retired Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court, was appointed Chairman of the one-man Judicial Commission. The Members of Parliament felt that after 27 years of the alleged air crash and having one inquiry already made earlier—yielding by the Government to hold a second inquiry was a great triumph for the cause they fought for so assiduously. In this mood they did not feel much concerned, at that time, whether a Judicial Commission constituted only by one-man would do necessary justice to the objective of the inquiry.

# 3

## Findings Without Foundation

THE SECOND INQUIRY into the Netaji mystery roused tremendous interest and expectation in the country. The Commission constituted for the purpose was a judicial body, which the people believed, would conduct inquiry without any kind of fear or favour from the Government. It was further hoped that all efforts will be made to find all facts, surrounding the circumstantial mysteries of Netaji's disappearance and the Commission's findings will be objectively based on them. For this, it was desirable that the Chairman of the Netaji Inquiry Commission will conduct himself scrupulously free from any kind of Government influence or pressure. But regrettably Mr. Khosla, the Chairman of the one-Man Commission, behaved as if he was obliged to act more as an executive officer of the administration than an independent judge. He seemed so anxious to please the then Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, that the work of the inquiry finally turned into a veritable mockery.

Can it be thought of that the chairman of an independent judicial commission will undertake an official assignment to write a biography of the Prime Minister while presiding over the proceedings of a judicial commission ? Mr. Khosla committed such an unbelievable folly by agreeing to write a biography of Mrs. Gandhi and receive a substantial royalty for it and even published it before he completed the assigned work of the Commission.

Pandit Nehru did not permit Shah Nawaz Committee to visit Taipei (Taihoku), the place of occurrence of the alleged air crash. After six months' hard struggle in Parliament, Mrs. Gandhi was made to agree to allow Khosla Commission to visit Taiwan and conduct inquiry there. The Commission visited Taipei, but Mr. Khosla, most obligingly carried a secret directive with him from Delhi not to enter into any kind of communication with either the Government of Taiwan or any non-official agency there. Shri H. V. Kamath, Mulka Gobinda Reddy, late Prakash Vir Shastri and some other prominent Members of Parliament, who visited Taiwan earlier, told the Commission that the Taiwan Government conducted an inquiry to ascertain whether any plane really crashed at Taipei airfield in August, 1945 and they found that no such incident occurred there at the specified date. But, while at Taipei, Mr. Khosla officially refused to seek any report from the Government of Taiwan and the Taiwan authorities also declined to hand over their findings to Khosla Commission on their own.

Mr. Khosla did something more unbelievable at Taipei—he bought a present for the Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, at Taipei, which he personally handed over to her on returning home. Could any other ex-judge—a chairman of a judicial commission—think of behaving in a similar manner ?

Nay, this gentleman did something more ugly. He took four years to complete the work of the Commission and before his report was placed on the table of Parliament, it was found that a Delhi publisher had already published a book named "Last days of Netaji" by Mr. Khosla which was verily a verbatim reproduction of the Report of the Commission which he submitted to the Government. It means, Mr. Khosla betrayed the secret of the Report to his publisher, much before it was discussed by Parliament.

Chairmanship of the Netaji Commission was the 13th assignment of its kind for Mr. Khosla, after his retirement from the office of the Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court and all throughout, thereafter, he enjoyed same benefits from the Government as he had when he was in regular judicial service,



**WHAT THE COMMISSION WAS EXPECTED TO DO**

The National Committee on Netaji emphasised from the very beginning that judicial findings of the Commission from any enquiry, after 27 years, primarily depended on availability of documents like—(i) reports of investigations made by Mountbatten's Headquarters and MacArthur's Headquarters, British Counter-Intelligence Organisation known as CSDIC; and the probe conducted by the Government of Wavell, (ii) Mountbatten's full Diary, (iii) War-time Japanese records connected with the reported incident of air crash at Taihoku and the story of Netaji's death, (iv) U.S.A. records, (v) Russian records, (vi) Nehru's secret files connected with all the information regarding the report of Netaji's death, (vii) report of Taiwan Government's investigation about the alleged air crash at Taipei (Taihoku), (viii) Habibur Rahman's statements and reports of his interrogations by different investigating agencies, etc., etc. The National Committee submitted a long list of documents asking the Commission to make every effort to make them available for necessary examination by the Commission. (See Annexure 2)

Mr. Khosla made little attempt to bring pressure on the Government to secure relevant documents from the foreign sources. The Government further informed Mr. Khosla that more than thirty personal files of Nehru connected with the story of Netaji's disappearance, were either "destroyed or missing". Mr. Mohd. Yunus who was special secretary to Nehru used to deal with them, but he was not asked by Khosla to appear before the Commission to explain the most intriguing official communication of "missing or destroyed" of so many vital files connected with the information about Netaji. Some other files which were produced by the Government, almost at the last stage of the proceedings of the Commission, deprived the counsel of the National Committee to pursue many matters found in them for further investigation. Khosla Commission mainly received only those documents which were placed before Shah Nawaz Committee.

**FINDINGS BY KHOSLA COMMISSION**

Exactly 4 years after the formation of the Commission, Mr. Khosla submitted his Report on \_\_\_\_\_ to the Government, which contained the following findings :

(i) Bose was informed on August 12, 1945, that the war was about to conclude and the Japanese had decided to surrender to the Allied Forces. He was at that time at Saramban. The message was brought to him there by Negishi (witness No. 50).

(ii) Bose at once left for Singapore where he discussed his future plans with his colleagues and the ministers of his Cabinet, almost day and night. Final decision was taken on the 14th when Sakai arrived and conferred with Bose. It was decided that Bose himself should leave Singapore and try to escape to Russia where he hoped to find asylum.

(iii) On the morning of August 16, 1945, Bose left Singapore accompanied by Col. Habibur Rahman, S. A. Iyer (witness No. 29), a Japanese Liaison officer Negishi (witness No. 155) and others. The party arrived at Bangkok at 3.30 p.m. and spent the night there.

(iv) At about 8 a.m. on August 17, 1945, Bose and party left by two planes for Saigon. Bose's party included Col. Habibur Rahman, Deb Nath Das (witness No. 3), S. A. Iyer (witness No. 29), Hachia (witness No. 51), Isoda (witness No. 68), Gulzara Singh (witness No. 153), Col. Pritam Singh (witness No. 155), Abid Hussain (witness No. 157) and others. The party arrived at Saigon at 11 a.m.

(v) The planes in which Bose and his party had travelled to Saigon had to go back, and fresh arrangements had to be made for the next stage of the journey. Bose was informed that one seat could be given to him in a Japanese bomber which had come from Manila and was going to Dairen in Manchuria. The plane, Bose was informed, had, on board, a number of Japanese army officers who had been posted to Manchuria and who could not be left behind.

(vi) Bose was very upset on hearing this, because he wanted to carry all the members of his party with him. Isoda

and Hachia were sent to Dalat where Field Marshal Terauchi was camping. These two emissaries could not see Terauchi personally, but his Adjutant told them that it might be possible to make available two or three seats in all for Bose.

(vii) Isoda and Hachia returned to Saigon and conferred with pilot of the plane and the Japanese military authorities there. The conclusion was that two seats were placed at the disposal of Bose.

(viii) After some discussion, Bose decided to avail himself of the two seats, and asked Habibur Rahman to accompany him.

(ix) The Japanese bomber left Saigon at approximately 5 p.m. carrying Bose, Habibur Rahman, Lt. Col. Sakai (witness No. 47), S. Nonogaki (witness No. 53), Tarakuno, Navigator (witness No. 63), Takahashi (witness No. 65), the pilot in charge Takizawa, Gen. Shidei, second pilot Ayoagi and some others, whose names need not be mentioned. They were the crew and other officers posted at Manchuria, or to Tokyo. The last three were killed in the alleged air crash.

(x) The plane arrived at Tourane at 7.45 p.m. and the party spent the night there.

(xi) On the morning of August 18, 1945, the bomber left Tourane carrying the previous complement of crew and passengers and arrived at Taipei in Formosa at 2 p.m.

(xii) The party had a snack lunch at Taipei while the pilot attended to a snag, which he declared, had been corrected after a short while.

(xiii) The plane took off at 2.35 p.m. but within a few seconds one of the engines flew out and the plane crashed near the fringe of the Taihoku airfield. The body of the plane broke into two parts and caught fire.

(xiv) The pilot Takizawa and Gen. Shidei were killed inside the plane. The rest of the crew and the passengers came out, but all of them had sustained burn injuries, two of them, viz., Ayoagi and Bose had received very severe burns.

(xv) Injured persons were carried to the army hospital

a few kilometres from the airfield and given medical treatment.

(xvi) Bose had sustained burn injuries of the third degree and despite the efforts of the doctors to revive him, he succumbed to his injuries the same night.

(xvii) Of the other injured persons Ayoagi, the second pilot, also died.

(xviii) Two days later, Bose's body was cremated and his ashes were carried to Tokyo in the beginning of September 1945 where they were deposited in the Renkoji Temple.

(xix) There is no reason for believing that the relations between Nehru and Bose were anything but friendly on a personal basis. Political differences between them did not lessen Bose's great respect for Nehru and Nehru's affection for the younger politician whose patriotism no one questioned.

(xx) There is not the slightest evidence of any attempt by Nehru to suppress the truth about Bose at any stage or to make false statements about his death at Taihoku on August 18, 1945. His concession to a public demand for enquiry was an instance of his compliance with democratic procedures and not an admission of his disbelief in the truth of the crash story.

(xxi) The personnel of the Committee appointed by Nehru's Government to inquire into Bose's disappearance is ample evidence of his *bona fides*. He appointed Bose's brother who could be presumed to make an earnest search for truth about his brother and whose appointment would win public confidence. The Chairman was Shah Nawaz Khan who was a close associate and confidant of Bose who had taken a very prominent part in INA's campaign against the British. Shah Nawaz Khan could, therefore, be depended upon to conduct the inquiry honestly and conscientiously. The third member was Shri S. N. Moitra, a member of the ICS and a Bengali. He was chosen because of his administrative experience, his proved integrity and his attachment to Bose who belonged to his own State.

(xxii) There is no evidence of any attempt by the present Government to withhold evidence or place impediments in the

way of this Commission. All documents called for have been supplied and the delay occasioned in making some files and documents available cannot be construed as placing obstacles in the progress of the inquiry ; such delays are a normal feature of Government red-tape and pre-occupation with more urgent matters.

(xxiii) Bose had impressed the Japanese as a great patriot and a competent administrator and could win the confidence of Indians in South East Asia. The Japanese, however, looked upon him not as an equal ally, but as a person whom they could use for their own ends. It was with great reluctance that they allowed Bose to organise the Burma campaign against the British forces. The Japanese, however, did not give adequate assistance to the INA and despite promises, they did not hand over the occupied territory to the Provisional Government of Azad Hind. An instance in point was the Nicobar and Andaman Islands, the administration of which was not completely entrusted to Maj.-General Loganathan, who was sent as High Commissioner by Bose to take charge of the Islands. All the evidence points to the fact that the Japanese neither had complete confidence in Bose's ability to lead a large army and secure victories over the Allied Forces, nor did they fully trust him. They, nevertheless, had considerable respect for him because they saw that he was a man of remarkable courage and unquestioned patriotism.

(xxiv) The Japanese attitude towards Bose underwent a change when the war concluded. The Japanese were more concerned with trying to retrieve whatever they could of their own resources than with giving large-scale help to Bose which would have proved detrimental to their own interests. Also the blow to their self-esteem was so violent that they became indifferent to Bose and his future plans.

(xxv) The numerous stories about encounters with Bose at various times and various places after 1945, are completely false and unacceptable. They are the result either of hallucination helped by wishful thinking or have been invented by

persons who wanted to draw attention to themselves and advertise themselves as public-spirited men.

G. D. KHOSLA.

### A CHIMERA OF JUDICIAL FINDINGS

How did Mr. Khosla arrive at his findings ? Did he analyse the documents placed before the Commission, inadequate and meagre though they were ? No, he ignored them mostly, except those which lent support to his patently motivated findings. Did he examine the evidence of all witnesses ? No, he made selective use of the evidence of only five Japanese witnesses, merits of which will be discussed later, in corroboration of his findings. Mr. Khosla altogether examined 224 witnesses, including 18 Japanese. His report consists of 123 printed pages—77 pages of which he dealt with various evidence. Nearly 42 pages of the analysis of the evidence were devoted to Japanese witnesses, 35 pages to the evidence of Shaulmari adherents, to which the counsel of the National Committee, Shri Gobinda Mukhuty, in course of his 25 days' arguments paid no attention whatsoever. Only 7 pages were kept apart by Mr. Khosla for dealing with the evidence of 185 Indian witnesses, including that of high ranking INA officers, Azad Hind Government Ministers and well known associates of Netaji. The big volume of the evidentiary materials, related to the vital facts and information produced before the Commission by so many important Indian witnesses, were almost totally ignored by Mr. Khosla. In some cases only he casually referred to them and that too with many arrogant, insinuating and vulgarly disrespectful remarks against many of the most trusted and respected colleagues of Netaji. Mr. Khosla did not hesitate to suppress and distort many evidentiary facts even and in many instances, resorted to inconceivable trickery of judicial perjury. An instance of the kind is his reference to CSDIC Report, which will be taken up later. The present writer was made a special target for his disdainful criticism deliberately based on malicious suppression or distortion of evidentiary facts.

The Commission was asked only to “inquire into all facts and circumstances relating to the disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose in 1945—and subsequent development therewith”. However, even a casual perusal of Khosla’s Report and his findings will show how tendentiously he violated the terms of reference of the Commission. He defended Shah Nawaz Committee’s Report, although at the initial stage of the proceedings of the Commission, he described it as “non est”. He extolled the role of Nehru vis-a-vis Netaji and made every effort to justify Nehru’s anti-fascist war policy as against the revolutionary war strategy of Netaji. Nay, Mr. Khosla transgressed all judicial norms and values of patriotism in brazenly concluding that Netaji’s war of liberation “ended in a failure”, Mr. Khosla exceeded all limits of depravity in describing Netaji as playing role of a “puppet”, or “a pawn”, or “a quisling” of the Japanese. He mentioned that “all evidence” showed that Netaji’s status was no better than he depicted him in his Report. At least at 27 places in his Report, Mr. Khosla in most outrageously disparaging terms tried to denigrate the revolutionary personality of Netaji. In about 5,500 pages of the proceedings of the Commission, neither in any document, nor in any evidence by any witness, any such comment could be traced even faintly. Nevertheless, this ex-judge of a High Court made so many derogatory remarks and malicious observations about Netaji, without any kind of evidentiary basis, that the Indian nation will hardly pardon him for his dereliction almost amounting to criminal propensity.

What Mr. Khosla produced as the Report of the Commission can verily be described as an ugly specimen of a judicial chimera. The subsequent chapters will show how he arrived at his findings without even any semblance of respect for the facts and documents that came before the Commission as evidentiary materials.

## 4

### A Different Story From Taiwan

TAIHOKU, THE JAPANESE name of the present city of Taipei—the capital of Taiwan—was reported to be the place of occurrence of the alleged air crash involving Netaji on August 18, 1945. Shah Nawaz Committee was not allowed by Pandit Nehru to visit this city. Indira Government also refused for months to permit Khosla Commission to visit Taiwan. According to Commission's Report, "The Government expressed its reluctance to sponsor the Commission's visit to Taiwan . . . Mr Samar Guha, however, declined to accept this position and continued to agitate the matter and press for a visit to Taiwan. At the beginning of 1973, the Government saw its way to allow the Commission to visit Taiwan".

Inquiry in Taiwan was agreed to by the Government too late—delayed almost by 27 years. Nehru Government should have sent a powerful investigating team in 1947 to Taipei, soon after coming to power, but regrettably, it was not done. His daughter reluctantly agreed to allow the Inquiry Commission to visit Taiwan. However, Mr. Khosla was secretly instructed by the Government not to enter into any kind of communication with either the Government of Taiwan or any non-official agency at Taipei for conducting the work of inquiry there. Mr Khosla, who was the Chairman, not of a committee like Shah Nawaz Committee—but of a judicial commission having an independent status—most obligingly agreed to obey the secret directive of



the Government. He did not disclose the matter till his arrival at Taipei.

Three members of the National Committee, including the author, reached Taipei a few days in advance to prepare the ground for holding a fruitful inquiry in Taiwan. They met the Foreign Minister of Taiwan, its Chief of the South East Asia Bureau and a number of prominent members of Taiwan Parliament. They all agreed to help the Commission. The Convenor of the National Committee held a press conference, giving details about the purpose of Commission's visit to Taiwan. Taipei press and television gave wide publicity to it. Many pictures of Netaji, with his biographical sketches, were also published in all the dailies of Taiwan. Indeed, the press and television gave wide coverage to Commission's activities and a number of young journalists of Taipei most enthusiastically did their best to find out necessary information and witnesses for the success of the inquiry in Taiwan.

#### UNEXPECTED SHOCKS FROM KHOSLA

Mr. Khosla was received at the Taipei airport on July 11, 1973 by many important dignitaries of Taiwan. But we had yet to know what unexpected shocks awaited us. At the airport Mr. Khosla sprang a surprise while unsolicitously congratulating the Convenor of the National Committee by saying : "Mr. Guha, you have done a great job. *Delhi Times of India* reported that you have already found out a nurse who corroborated the facts about Netaji's death. After all, our job is to find out the truth." The Convenor was utterly jolted by the news and he promptly denied it. Later, it came to his knowledge that the same coterie, which opposed a fresh inquiry, made this mischief by circulating in advance an inspired news to the *Times of India*.

The second shock came to the members of the National Committee when they found Mr. Khosla closeted with a few Taipei press reporters at his room in the Prince Hotel. The Convenor politely objected when, understanding its legal implication, Mr. Khosla abruptly stopped his press interview. But

the mischief was already done, as the next day, Taipei press flashed the news of the press interview to inform the Taipei people that : "According to Mr. Khosla, Chairman of the Inquiry Commission, all the Japanese witnesses confirmed Bose's death report". Mr Khosla behaved almost exactly like Shah Nawaz Khan, who on the very first day of his arrival at Tokyo told pressmen there that his object was to examine only those people in Japan who could verify the report of Netaji's death.

The third and the worst shock came from Khosla when he refused to write even an informal letter—not to the Government of Taiwan but even to the Chief of the South East Asia Bureau, requesting him to extend necessary co-operation to the Commission to conduct its inquiry in Taiwan. It was merely a question of international etiquette for seeking a formal permission of the Bureau for holding inquiry on the soil of their country. The Secretary of the Commission soon disclosed to us that according to a confidential directive from the Government of India, the Commission was prohibited from making any move to establish any contact with either the Government of Taiwan or any other non-official agency there. When the Convenor angrily asked Mr. Khosla why this vital matter was kept secret in Delhi, he kept mum.

Somehow the news about the attitude of the Commission percolated to the official circles in Taiwan and the Government of Taiwan almost decided to debar holding of any proceedings of an Indian court in their country without formal approval of their Government. After much persuasion by the members of the National Committee, the Government of Taiwan reluctantly agreed not to prohibit the Commission to proceed with its work, but their attitude hardened towards the Commission.

Fortunately, the members of the National Committee were invited to a dinner party by Dr. Ku Cheng Kang, the third leading personality of the Ruling Party of Taiwan. It was attended by leading Directors of Taipei press, a few prominent members of Taiwan Parliament and two scholars of Indo-Chinese history. They were very unhappy over the attitude

of the Commission ; nevertheless, on our rather emotional appeal, they finally agreed to extend their informal assistance to the National Committee but they made it clear that they would have nothing to do *directly with the Commission.*

The National Committee soon realised that Mr. Khosla was out to frustrate Taiwan probe and their responsibility, thus, increased manifold. They hurriedly met the Governor of Taiwan and with the help of Dr. Ku, contacted the Police Chief, Intelligence Chief, the Head of the Municipal Bureau, the Chief of the National Library of Taipei, Directors of various newspapers and many other important persons there. We provided them with the following list of persons whom we desired to contact. Many Japanese mentioned in the list had since left Taiwan, but many others included in the list we could contact with the help of their South East Asian Bureau of Taiwan :

**IMPORTANT PERSONS AND PLACES WHICH FIGURED IN  
INVESTIGATION IN FORMOSA (TAIWAN)**

Pro. K. S. Wwi	—Chinese Professor at the University of Taiwan.	
Sister Tasn Pi Sha	—Surgical nurse at the former Japanese South Gate Military Hospital, Taipei.	
Sister Chu Chow Tse	—Nurse at the same Hospital.	
Dr. Chu	—Deputy Director, Taiwan University Hospital No. 1.	
Dr. Kunio Kawaishi	—Japanese Professor of Surgery at the University Hospital.	
Dr. A. Motogi	—Japanese Professor of Ophthalmology at the University Hospital.	
Masanori Nagasaki	—Japanese M. P. (Military Police).	
Tyong Chung Chna	—Crematorium at Taipeh.	
Ku Chin Hui Chin Chu Chung Muen Kuo Hys Cheng Kuo San	} —Formosan medical students at the University Hospital.	
Li Chin Qui Tan Chi Chu		} —Formosan clerks at Municipal Bureau.
Dr. Kaw King-yen		

Col. Wu Kuo Hsing	—C. M. O. at Chinese Military Hospital, Taipeh.
Taihoku Liku Gun Byoin Namoon Ponyshch	—The Taiwan Southgate Military Hospital.
Chu Tsung	—Keeper at the Crematorium.
Ting Shang Wun	—Hotel boy at Railway Hotel.
Miss Inagaki Noliko	—Japanese waitress at the Hotel.
Chung Young Kai	—Attached to the office of the Governor of Formosa.
Huang Li Chuan	—Police Superintendent of Taipeh.
S. P. Chen	—Private Secretary to the Commissioner of Police.
Sam Pang Kyo	—The bridge across which lies the crematorium.

The members of the National Committee, of their own, chalked out a programme for the Commission and virtually forced Mr. Khosla to examine a number of Taiwanese witnesses and inspect several spots connected with the story of the alleged air crash. Mr. Khosla, as was expected, refused to take any initiative of any kind in regard to any work of inquiry in Taiwan.

### INSPECTION OF TAIHOKU AIRPORT

Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report : "The Commission was able to inspect Taihoku Airport and to pay visit to the crematorium." But he avoided to mention that he was almost dragged out of his hotel to pursue all these programmes chalked out by the National Committee.

The old and unused Taihoku Airport lies within the area of the present Taipei airport. Although it was a prohibited area on security grounds, we managed to secure permission to inspect it. After reaching the airport office, Mr. Khosla declined to get down from his car refusing to personally inspect the old Taiwan runway. Again we had to practically compel him to get into a jeep, and inspect the old Taihoku runway twice.

We carried with us copies of the pictures of three crashed planes showing in them the hilly background around the airfield. These photographs were submitted both to Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission by the Japanese Government. We very carefully compared the actual hilly features around the airport with the printed features of hills as shown in these photographs. We also examined the natural views of the hills around the airport from different angles, when it became absolutely clear to us that the three photographs could not be, under any circumstances, different cross-sectional photographs of a single crashed plane as had been stated by the Government of Japan. They appeared to be three different pictures of three air crashes.

On reaching Taipei, we came to know from the local Taiwanese, who were there in 1945, that actually three different planes—an American B-52 bomber and two other Japanese fighter bombers—had crashed within Taipei airport areas in 1945. These three photographs, on actual inspection and examination of the comparative features of the existing hilly features and the hilly features as printed in the photographs, clearly substantiated the above report. We rather pleadingly placed these three pictures before Mr. Khosla and implored him, "Please look at the printed features of the three photographs and compare them with the actual features of the existing hills round the airport. Please note that they don't tally, and, these three photographs, therefore, could not be the pictures of the ruins of a single crashed plane—even if the pictures were taken from different angles !"

Mr. Khosla angrily replied to our utter surprise: "What am I to do with these pictures ? I have nothing to do with them." Saying this, he almost jumped into the jeep.

We were utterly flabbergasted by the show of his temper. Here was a positive proof to record that the Japanese Government deliberately supplied these three photographs, leaving perhaps a hint, that the reported plane crash did not actually taken place, but, the Chairman of the One-Man Commission refused to take any cognizance of this vital evidence which he himself found to be irrefutable !

## METEOROLOGICAL REPORT CONTRADICTED AIR CRASH

More surprise was in store for the Commission. On coming back to the airport office, we requested the Chief Meteorological Officer to explain to us the weather-chart of the month of August. By showing a chart, he explained us that every year during the months of July, August, and September, air current moved from the direction of north to south. He also told us that according to common practice an aircraft would invariably take off against the wind current. It meant that during the month of August, 1945, the plane must have moved from the south-end of the runway towards the north-end till it became airborne.

The present Taipei airstrip is prolonged from north to south and the old Taihoku airstrip was lying unused parallel to it. Three sides of airstrip are surrounded by hills.

According to all Japanese witnesses and Habibur Rahman as well, the plane crashed on August 18, 1945 within a minute or two immediately after its take-off and it crashed near a Japanese temple. This Japanese temple, which still exists, was situated about a mile from the *south-end of the runway*. In the month of August the plane must have run from south-end of the runway against the seasonal air current towards its north-end. This means, the plane must have crashed, if it did crash at all, somewhere near the north-end of the runway. *But it was stated by all Japanese and other witnesses that the plane crashed at the south-end. However, such probability was an absurdity according to meteorological report of the month of August. The meteorological report, thus, totally disproved the whole story of the plane crash.*

On our request the Meteorological Officer of the Taipei Airport agreed to give in writing an expert view of the implication of the weather-chart, regarding usual practice of take-off by any aircraft in the month of August. But, again Mr. Khosla, with a queer grimace blatantly refused to accept any report from the meteorological officer.

**INSPECTION OF THE REPORTED AIR CRASH SPOT**

Japanese witnesses told both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that the alleged plane crashed near an old Japanese temple at a place about a mile away from the south-end of the runway. Earlier there was a railway track near this Japanese temple but now that rail-line has been shifted about a mile further south. We again forced Mr. Khosla to visit that spot. It was located at a much higher level than the airport, and now a metal road replaced the old railway track there. Looking northward from this spot was found a river, called the Kee Lung, which separated the airport from the alleged crash spot.

According to the statement of Habibur Rahman and other Japanese, who claimed to have travelled in the same plane with Netaji, soon after alleged crash, Netaji and Habibur Rahman were shifted in seriously injured condition in an airport truck immediately from this crash spot to a military hospital. The question naturally arose, how the carrier truck came from the airport to carry Netaji to the hospital ? There was no bridge connecting the alleged crash spot with the airport, nor any sign of any old bridge over it was noticed anywhere and no witness said that such a bridge existed there in earlier days. But every Japanese witness said that Netaji was very promptly rescued and within a few minutes after the crash he was sent to the Japanese military hospital.

If it was so, from where and how the truck came ? If it came from the city, as there was no connecting road between this spot with the airport, and naturally it had to detour a long way to reach the spot of the alleged air crash to take Netaji to the hospital. It, therefore, appeared that the truck required about an hour to take Netaji to the hospital. But every claiming Japanese co-passenger said before the Commission that within a very short time after the alleged crash all the injured passengers were taken to the hospital. The inspection of the actual topography of the place, thus, wholly belied the story of quick conveyance of 'injured Netaji' to the military hospital situated inside the city.

We explained this matter to Mr. Khosla and although he took inspection note of this alleged crash-spot, neither he cared to analyse it nor mention a word about it in his Report.

### STRANGE COFFIN AND STRANGE FUNERAL

A Taiwanese witness Chang Chuen appeared before the Commission, with a service token and identification card of the Japanese days. He claimed that a day or two after August 18, 1945, he was posted at a military hospital to guard a big coffin placed in the middle of a room along with other patients under treatment over which was written in big Japanese letters the name of 'Chandra Bose'. After two or three days, a few Japanese soldiers under a junior officer, came to carry the coffin in a truck to the crematorium. During cross-examination, he said no wreath was placed over the coffin, and no funeral ceremony was held at the crematorium. They were under strict orders not to open the blanket-covered body or try to see the face of the deceased, but to put the covered body as it was into the furnace for which the door of the furnace had to be widened. He further said that no Indian accompanied them and soon after lighting the furnace all of them left the place.

Mr. Khosla in his Report cited the evidence of this Taiwanese witness as corroboration of the report of Netaji's death. But he did not care to analyse the unusual features of the strange story narrated by this witness. Why the unusual step was taken to write in big letters the name of 'Chandra Bose' over the coffin? Why the coffin was kept on display, rather very demonstratively, for two-three days in the middle of a room along with other patients instead of keeping the dead body inside the morgue of the hospital? Why strict orders were issued not to open the coffin and the blanket-covered body or not to try to see its face? Why the security men were asked to put the whole coffin inside the furnace? What happened to Habibur Rahman who stated that he was present at the time of cremation? Why no wreath was placed or no honour was shown, if it was the body of the Head of a State, recognised by Japan? All these very pertinent yet intriguing questions mattered little with Mr. Khosla. The only one important thing



he found in this strange story of the strange coffin was that it corroborated the story of Netaji's death.

*[The mystery about this coffin discussed in the last chapter].*

#### A PLANE CRASH — NOT IN 1945 BUT IN 1944

Another Taiwanese witness Y. R. Tseng appeared before the Commission on the last day of its sitting. He told the Commission that in 1944 he was a student of a school which was located near the old railway track and the Japanese temple. He said, some time either in the month of September or October, 1944, a Japanese plane crashed over the old railway track near the Japanese temple while it was landing. All the passengers in it perished. He, together with about 15 of his classmates, were asked by Japanese military police to help them in the work of clearing the wreckage of the ruined plane.

Mr. Khosla was found unusually annoyed with this witness. All these Japanese witnesses stated before Shah Nawaz Committee as well as Khosla Commission that the plane crashed exactly in the same place on August 18, 1945. But this Taiwanese witness fixed the year of accident as 1944 and not 1945. Now, if the evidence of this Taiwanese witness was to be believed then the whole story of the air crash involving Netaji would have also crashed. Mr. Khosla, therefore, made every effort to ridicule his evidence. This attitude of the Chairman extremely piqued the Taiwanese witness who sharply challenged Mr. Khosla to give him only one day's time to produce before the Commission at least 10 others of his classmates who also participated in the work of wreckage clearance.

The National Committee made a fervent appeal to Mr. Khosla for extension of the date of sitting of the Commission by a day. A written request was also made to that effect. The Chairman was further told that Dr. S. N. Sinha and Dr. Sisir Bose who had visited Taiwan earlier had also confirmed the evidence of the Taiwanese witness, but Mr. Khosla brusquely turned down our formal appeal. It was a very important occasion for Mr. Khosla to verify from other Taiwanese witnesses as well whether any plane crashed near the old railway track

in 1944 while it was landing. But he stoutly declined to utilise it. Mr. Khosla, thus, deliberately bypassed another opportunity to find out whether the alleged air crash at Taihoku took place in 1944 or 1945. Surprisingly, Mr. Khosla did stay a day more at Taipei, but he spent it wholly for shopping and specially for buying a present for Mrs. Gandhi.

### HARIN SHAH'S BOOK

Mr. Harin Shah, a Bombay journalist, visited Formosa in later part of 1946. Coming back to India, he told Pandit Nehru that he succeeded in collecting much information which verified Netaji's death report. This journalist kept silent about his visit to Formosa till 1956, but after 10 years of his visit he was suddenly found to publish a book named, *Gallant End of Netaji* for submission before Shah Nawaz Committee.

In this book, Harin Shah published photographs of many Taiwanese as corroborating the report of Netaji's 'End'. According to him a Taiwanese nurse, named *Sister Chu Chow Tse* treated injured Netaji in the Japanese hospital and remained by his side till he passed away. During Khosla Commission's visit to Taipei all the Taiwanese newspapers published the photo of this nurse, reprinting it from Harin Shah's book with an appeal to their readers to furnish information about her whereabouts. But even after much effort no such nurse could be traced. We met many other nurses, who worked in the military hospital in 1945, where Netaji was said to have been given medical treatment, but none could confirm the report of Netaji's death nor identify Sister Chu Chow Tse.

Harin Shah in his book published another photo of a person who was identified as cremator of Netaji's body. After visiting the alleged spot of the air crash, Mr. Khosla and the members of the National Committee visited the crematorium. Its old cremator was dead, but his son was found working there in place of his father. When the photo of the said cremator of 1945, as printed in Harin Shah's book, was shown to him, he promptly denied it to be the photo of his father. Mr. Khosla also noted his denial,

Harin Shah quoted statements of many other Taiwanese in his book and printed their photographs in support of his findings. We contacted many of them, all of whom categorically denied the statements attributed to them. Strangely, Pandit Nehru and Shah Nawaz Committee attached much importance to this book which was found to contain so many spurious stories.

#### A CRUCIAL DOCUMENT MISSED

Mr. Khosla wrote in one place of his Report : “...the Commission did not learn that the Government of Taiwan at any time held any inquiry into Bose’s disappearance in August, 1945”. This is another instance of his judicial perjury. H. V. Kamath, Mulka Govinda Reddy and Prakash Vir Shastri—all members of Parliament—pointedly told Mr. Khosla when they appeared before the Commission that the Government officials of Taiwan told them when they earlier visited Taiwan as guests of their Government that the Mayor of Taipei had held inquiry to verify if any plane crashed at all at Taipei on August 18, 1945 involving ‘Chandra Bose’. In his report the Mayor informed the Taiwan Government that no such confirmation was available. These Members of Parliament had met the Mayor at Taipei earlier.

Regarding knowledge of such inquiry by the Mayor of Taipei, what Mr. Khosla denied in one place of his Report he admitted it in other place of the same Report. The truthful ex-judge wrote again : “The official who was in charge of crematorium is dead, so was the Mayor of Taipei who arrived there some time after August 18, 1945 and who is said to have made some sort of inquiry into the matter. Not that the Mayor’s report, if available, would have been admissible in evidence, it would be nothing more than the opinion of an individual.”

No, it was not the opinion of an individual, it was the report of the Chief Administrator of Taipei in 1946, who undertook inquiry under the directive from President Chiang-Kai-Shek. It has been said by some Taiwan officials that Pandit Nehru requested Chiang-Kai-Shek in 1946, for holding such an inquiry.

If Mr. Khosla could induce Mrs. Gandhi's Government to produce the "File No. 12 (226) 56-PM-Investigation into the circumstances leading to the death of Subhas Chandra Bose", probably copies of letters exchanged between Nehru and Chiang-Kai-Shek regarding the matter could be traced. But Khosla Commission was informed by the Government that this extraordinarily important file, containing many vital informations about Netaji, was "destroyed".

If Mr. Khosla had any interest in the report of the Mayor of Taipei, he could perhaps have it from the Government of Taiwan, if he had agreed to our proposal to make a formal request to them.

#### DEATH CERTIFICATE AND CREMATION PERMIT

Mr. Khosla recorded in his Report : "When the Commission visited Taipei, Shri Samar Guha made earnest endeavours to find any hospital or cremation records mentioning Bose's name, but all he could find and produce was photostat copies of the same two documents as were produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee. Shri Guha did not adduce any evidence to authenticate the document." When copies of these two documents were produced formally before the Commission, Mr. Khosla and T. R. Bhasin, Commission's counsel, officially told the Convenor of the National Committee that these documents would be treated as exhibits before the Commission, *and yet*, in order to evade the importance of these two documents, he subsequently raised the dubious issue of adducing evidence in that connection !

The two documents were copies of a death certificate and a cremation permit issued for cremation of a body alleged to be that of 'Chandra Bose'. Harin Shah, the Government of Japan and the National Committee obtained copies of these documents from the same source, namely, the Municipal Bureau of Taipei. In 1945 the Chief of the Health and Hygiene Department used to issue a cremation permit only after production of death certificate issued by a doctor and on physical verification of the body to be cremated.

The highest police officer of Taiwan and the Chief of the Municipal Bureau helped the National Committee, on advice from Dr. Ku, to find out an 85-year-old gentleman Li Chin Qui, who was in charge of Cremation Department of Taipei Municipality in 1945. This old man admitted that copies of death certificate and cremation permit were given by him to Harin Shah in 1946. The Government of Japan, later, also secured them from the same office. He told us that some day in late August, 1945, a Japanese military officer came to his office with a coffin placed in a truck for securing cremation permit from Municipal Bureau. Generally after production of the death certificate, the dead body was required to be physically verified by the concerned officer of the Municipal Bureau. But in this case, the Japanese Military Officer ordered him not to open the coffin for identification of the body but to straightway issue a cremation permit on the basis of the death certificate issued by the doctor of the military hospital. Being a subordinate officer of the Japanese Government of Formosa, he had no other option but to obey the order of the military officer.

We pleaded with this old man to appear before the Commission to tell its Chairman what he told us. But he politely turned down our request, saying that he was a pensioner and did not want to involve himself in any trouble in his old age, unless he was summoned by the Government of Taiwan to appear before the Commission. But as Mr. Khosla refused to have any communication with the Government of Taiwan, the statement of this old man could not be formally recorded as official evidence. However, it will be seen in the last chapter of the book, how these two documents provided vital clues to unearth what actually happened under the cover of the story of the "strange cremation of a strange coffin".

#### WHAT TAIWAN INQUIRY REVEALED

Mr. Khosla almost succeeded in scuttling the crucial inquiry at the place of occurrence of alleged air crash but due to valuable co-operation from many important men of Taiwan, many vitally important facts, unknown hitherto, could be collected from there.

Firstly, comparative examination of the actual hilly features around the Taihoku (Taipei) airport, and that shown in the printed photographs indisputably showed that the three photographs of plane wreckages, supplied by Japan, could not be under any circumstances different cross-sectional photographs of the ruins of a single plane, but they definitely were wreckages of three separate planes. It obviously proved that Japan tried to concoct the story of the alleged air crash on August 18, 1945.

Secondly, the meteorological report produced by the Taipei Airport authority conclusively proved that soon after take-off no plane could crash at the south-end of the runway during the month of August although all Japanese witnesses stated that the plane crashed at the south-end of the runway. The meteorological report provided another positive proof how the crash story involving Netaji was cooked up.

Thirdly, as no bridge existed over the Kee Lung river, reportedly injured Netaji and Habibur Rahman, therefore, could not be promptly taken to military hospital. This is an additional proof of the make-believe nature of the air crash story.

Fourthly, the story of strange coffin and strange funeral and the documents—a death certificate and a cremation permit—provided positive clue to find out what exactly happened at Taipei.

Fifthly, Harin Shah's story of *Gallant End of Netaji* proved to be wholly a fictitious and motivated story.

Had Mr. Khosla undertook inquiry at Taipei seriously, he could have resolved the mystery about the story of Netaji's death at Taihoku. He could find out conclusively that no plane had really crashed at the south-end of the Taihoku runway soon after take-off, because, according to the meteorological report of the month of August such crash immediately after take-off could never have taken place. He could also discover, if he really wanted, that the three photographs of crashed plane were not different cross-sectional photographs of any single plane, but of three different planes. He could examine the Clerk of the Municipal Bureau to unearth the mystery of the cremation

permit. Many other documents like the report on inquiry made by the Mayor of Taipei, he could have availed from the Government of Taiwan, but he declined. He could finally know that a plane actually crashed near the Japanese temple in 1944 while landing, and the Government of Japan tried to pass off the report of his air crash as had happened on August 18, 1945. But Mr. Khosla motivatedly tried to scuttle the inquiry at Taipei. Nevertheless, even after an incomplete inquiry in Taiwan, we heard a different story about the alleged air crash, the implications of which will be discussed in the last chapter.

## 5

### Japanese Evidence : Contradictions Galore

MR. KHOSLA, AFTER four years of inquiry, arrived at conclusions which he set down in the Report of the Commission as 'Findings'. These findings are based exclusively on the evidence of 18 Japanese witnesses. He discarded evidence of about 204 Indian and Taiwanese witnesses as nothing but mere 'hearsay' stories. Out of the Japanese witnesses he preferentially selected evidence of four who claimed to have had travelled in the same plane with Netaji and characterised them as 'most important witnesses'. Another witness, a Japanese doctor, also claimed that he treated Netaji in Taihoku Military Hospital. This doctor too appeared to Mr. Khosla as a 'witness of convincing truth'. Two other Japanese witnesses, one of whom was described by Mr. Khosla as 'Netaji's co-passenger' and the other as a doctor belonging to the same Taihoku hospital, did not receive his attention as their evidence proved too irreconcilable with the evidence of others. In fact, Mr. Khosla altogether relied on the evidence of only five Japanese, and used other Japanese evidence as lending support to the testimonies of these chosen few.

Did the Japanese witnesses produce any document to substantiate authenticity of their evidence ? No.—none of them could produce any kind of document, direct or indirect, in verification of what they said before Khosla Commission. Nevertheless, these



five Japanese witnesses received absolute credence of Mr. Khosla, whereas evidence of confidential secretary of Netaji, his security chief, former Ministers of Azad Hind Government, Generals of INA, many trusted associates of Netaji and other witnesses of similar importance were discarded by him as 'unreliable' telling stories like 'gullibles'.

### A RESUME OF THE STORY OF NETAJI'S DEATH

Four days before Japanese surrender, a special Japanese envoy, Mr. Negishi, rushed to Seramban in Malay on August 12, 1945 with a secret message from the Imperial Headquarters to meet Netaji and communicate to him the undisclosed terms of Japanese surrender. He was further directed to request Netaji to reach Saigon immediately for moving out of the area of South East Asia. Spurning the Japanese request Netaji promptly moved from Seramban to Singapore and Negishi also accompanied him. At Singapore Netaji held series of Cabinet meetings to decide the future course of action to be followed by his Government after Japanese surrender. He withdrew Government funds from the Azad Hind Bank to pay three months' advance salary to INA. On the evening of August 14, he calmly attended a cultural function of the Jhansi Regiment without disclosing to them what was going to happen next day. As Netaji did not arrive at Saigon, Gen. Isoda, the Chief of the Hikari Kikan and Mr. Hachia, Japanese Ambassador to Netaji's Government, anxiously flew to Singapore on August 12 to persuade him to leave for Saigon without any further delay, but Netaji again refused to leave Singapore. It appeared that initially Netaji decided to surrender separately to the British authority at Singapore with his Cabinet Members and INA officers.

On August 15, another special messenger from Imperial Headquarters reached Singapore with another special message for Netaji. Netaji had exclusive meetings with this messenger, Col. Sakai, and finally decided to leave Singapore next day. Nobody knew exactly what transpired in these meetings with Sakai. However, in one of such meetings, he asked Col. Habibur Rahman to attend and then, asked him to hand over the charge of

his office of the Deputy Chief of the Staff of the INA to Major General M. Z. Kiani.

Next day, i.e., on August 16, Netaji left Singapore with Gen. Isoda, Negishi, Sakai, Col. Habibur Rahman, S. A. Iyer, Debnath Das, Pritam Singh, Major Hassan, Gulzara Singh and others for Bangkok. At Bangkok Netaji had secret consultation with Gen. Isoda and another special envoy from F. M. Terachi's headquarters, Col. Tada. This meeting was attended only once, and that too for a short time, by Col. Habibur Rahman. Here Netaji's plan to move out of Saigon area was finally chalked out but what it actually was, he did not disclose to anybody except perhaps partly to Col. Rahman.

On the morning of August 17, Netaji accompanied by Isoda, Hachia, Negishi, S. A. Iyer, Debnath Das, Pritam Singh, Gulzara Singh, Abid Hassan and Habibur Rahman flew to Saigon in two separate planes, one of which was his own aircraft. At Saigon also Netaji held some secret discussions with Isoda. Netaji's colleagues vaguely knew that their leader was going to Tokyo and they were kept guessing as if they would also be asked to accompany Netaji. A few hours before the final flight, Netaji was informed by Gen. Isoda that only one seat will be available in a plane bound for Tokyo, but after some time, another seat was also provided. After a meeting with his colleagues, and having their consent, Netaji boarded the plane in the evening with only Col. Habibur Rahman along with him. A few bags, full of gold bars and jewelleryes, were also placed in the plane.

The plane with Netaji, Lt.Gen. Shidei, Col. Habibur Rahman and some other Japanese military officers left Saigon at 5 p.m. It was said that Gen. Shidei was going to Dairen to assume charge of the Kwantang Army in Manchuria. Although Netaji did not say anything categorically to his colleagues about his destination, they presumed that their leader was going to Russia. The plane reached Tourane, city in North Vietnam, after dusk on the same day.

Next day, i.e., on August 18 the plane left Tourane in the morning for Taihoku (Taipei) in Formosa and landed there at

about 2 p.m. When the plane took off from Taihoku after re-fuelling, it crashed almost immediately. Lt.-Gen. Shidei and some of the members of the crew died instantly and Netaji and Col. Habibur Rahman and five other Japanese co-passengers were injured. These injured persons were taken to military hospital at Taihoku. Netaji had third degree burns and he died in the midnight on the same day. His body was cremated in Taihoku crematorium by the Japanese and the ashes carried to Tokyo during the first week of September, 1945. In Tokyo the ashes were secretly kept in a small temple, known as Renkoji temple in the vicinity of Tokyo and it is said the ashes are still preserved there.

This is, in brief, the story of Netaji's flight from Saigon, air crash at Taihoku, funeral of his alleged body at Taihoku crematorium and preservation of his ashes at the Renkoji temple as was commonly told by the Japanese witnesses before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

Now, how reliable or 'truthful' the evidence is of the Japanese witnesses, especially of the evidence of five 'most important' witnesses of Mr. Khosla's description ? It was not difficult to give out similar outlines of the broad features of the story commonly told by the Japanese witnesses before the Inquiry Commission. However, whether their story was true or tutored, depended on whether they succeeded in narrating all the details about the different events connected with the whole story more or less uniformly and generally in identical terms while these witnesses were subjected to cross-examination. In order to ascertain the extent of reliability of the versions of the Japanese witnesses, 45 relevant questions, relating to different parts of the story of Netaji's flight from Saigon and his reported death at Taihoku have been posed and their answers sought from the documents and evidentiary materials found in possession of Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission. It will be found, even after a casual reading of these questions and answers how the Japanese witnesses, from the beginning to the end, made a ridiculous mess of their narration of the story and how miserably they contradicted themselves in describing some

events which they claimed to have experienced while they travelled with Netaji and of what happened at Taihoku.

The following are the questions and answers which cover the whole story of alleged death of Netaji :

1. **What was the type of the plane which carried Netaji from Saigon to Taihoku ?**

The identification of the type of the plane is very important to understand and ascertain the nature and cause of the alleged air crash at Taihoku airport. Lt.-Gen. Isoda, the Chief of Hikari Kikan, who was known to have had played a key role in preparing Netaji's plan of escape from Saigon, told Shah Nawaz Committee as well as the Khosla Commission that the plane was a '*brand new bomber*'.

Lt.-Col. Nonogaki, Lt.-Col. Sakai, Major Tara Kuno, Major Takahashi and Capt. Arai, who survived the reported air crash, all said before Shah Nawaz Committee that the plane was of the '*newest type*'. However, during cross-examination, Lt.-Col. Nonogaki changed to say that it was an *old plane*. Gen. Isamaya, the Chief of the Japanese Formosan Army, said differently that the '*engine of the plane was worn out*'. The ground engineer, Capt. Nakamura, *alias* Yemamoto of Taihoku airport added a new story. He said that while testing the engine of the plane at Taihoku airport before its take-off, the chief pilot Takizawa told him that the '*port engine had been replaced by a brand new one at Saigon.*'

Finding so many contradictions regarding the description of the plane, Shah Nawaz Committee observed : "There is divergence of opinion on whether it was a new or an old plane".

Lt.-Col. Nonogaki published an article in a Japanese paper, *Emuri Shimbun* in which he wrote : "In 1945, the Airforce wing of the 7th Army was disbanded. We had only one 97-model heavy bomber. General Siragassi, the Chief of the 7th Army, asked us to fly the plane to Japan. It was not easy to fly such a plane to Japan, and, as such, we decided to fly it to Japan via China. In our first hop from Malan, we reached Singapore and then from Singapore to Saigon. We stayed at

the Headquarters of the Southern Army''. [Khosla Commission Exhibit (K.C.E.)]

However, this very Nonogaki told Khosla Commission afterwards "I was told by Major Li that three months before the air crash, the same plane, when it began to land at Saigon, had overstripped the runway and fell in a ditch near the airport and the propellers were broken. At that time the propellers were bent, but there was *no replacement of the propeller at Saigon and the propellers were not repaired or replaced. Then the same plane was given to us.*"

It is clear from these different versions that nobody could say definitely what type of plane it was,—whether it was a brand new bomber, or its engine was damaged or it was replaced. It should also be noted that one of the 'most important witnesses' in Mr. Khosla's view, Col. Nonogaki, gave three different versions about the condition of the plane at different times, i.e., to Shah Nawaz Committee, *Emuri Shimbun* and Khosla Commission. Thus the story of the air crash started with irreconcilable discrepancies from the very beginning. *Mr. Khosla kept completely silent in his Report about the type of the plane or its condition before it took off from Saigon.*

## 2. From where did the Plane come ?

Lt.-General Isoda, a principal architect of Netaji's plan, categorically told both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that the plane which airlifted Netaji from Saigon was '*already stationed at Saigon airport*' as it was a '*brand new bomber*'.

Nonogaki earlier wrote in *Emuri Shimbun* that the *plane came from Malan to Singapore and from there, it moved to Saigon*. However, later he told Khosla Commission that the plane came from Manila. But during cross-examination he admitted, "*I was going to Tokyo on transfer from Saigon*".

Except Nonogaki, who contradicted himself thrice, *no other Japanese witness said that the plane came from Manila* but in his findings, Mr. Khosla wrote that the plane came from Manila to Saigon, relying exclusively on the self-contradictory state-

ment of Nonogaki. It will be seen later why Mr. Khosla deliberately utilised the patently unfounded statement of Nonogaki to use it as a major point in justification of his argument that there was no definite or pre-fixed plan to assist Netaji to move out of Saigon.

### **3. Who were the Chief Pilot and Navigator of the Plane ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee recorded in its report in 1956 that "The crew consisted of five or six persons : Chief Pilot, Major Takizawa, Co-pilot w/o Ayoagi, Navigator Sergeant Okista, Radio Operator, Tominaga". Before Shah Nawaz Committee, Nonogaki claimed that he was the Chief Pilot and Tara Kuno similarly claimed that he was the Navigator. In support of his claim Nonogaki wrote in *Emuri Shimbun* in 1969 : "Lt.-General Shidei had been my instructor in Army Academy. He asked me to operate the plane, so I became the Chief Pilot of the bomber".

Mr. T. Hayashida, who was attached to Hikari Kikan, wrote in his book, which Mr. Khosla quoted in his Report, that W/o Ayoagi was Chief Pilot and Sgt. Okista (Okita) its Navigator. He also mentioned that there was also a gunner in the plane.

Thus, it becomes difficult to say who were actually the pilot and navigator of the plane. But in this case Mr. Khosla discarded the claim of his 'most important witness', Nonogaki and accepted the version of Tara Kuno, although none else said that Tara Kuno was the Navigator. Here also we find discrepancies in ascertaining who was Chief Pilot and who was Navigator, but in his Report Mr. Khosla mentioned Takizawa as the Chief Pilot and Tara Kuno as its Navigator. We shall see later, how miserably Tara Kuno falsified his claim as functioning as the Navigator when he described the alleged incident of air crash.

### **4. Who were the passengers inside the plane ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee listed the names of the passengers as "Major Takizawa, W/o Ayoagi, Sgt. Okista, N.O. Tominagu, all crew ; and five Japanese military officers Lt.-Col. Sakai, Lt.-Col. S. Nonogaki, Major Tara Kuno, Major Takahashi

and Capt. Arai, and Lt.-Gen. Shidei, Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Col. Habibur Rahman",—altogether 12 in number. However, the Japanese witnesses said that the total number of passengers was 13 or 14. Shah Nawaz Committee frankly admitted that there were "one or two other engineers whose names have not come out".

Sergeant Okista and two other survivors could not be produced either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission, nor could anyone say who were the other persons and what happened to them.

Mr. Khosla avoided this very important issue of identification of the 13|14 passengers and in his Report, he only mentioned that "Bose, Habibur, Lt.-Col. Sakai, S. Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, and Takabashi, Takizawa, General Shidei and Ayoagi,—all three of whom were killed" and there were "some others, whose names need not be mentioned" as if he knew the identities of the rest of the passengers and could mention their names if he so wanted!

It would be seen later, how laboriously Mr. Khosla argued that these passengers were so important that none could be dropped to accommodate any other associate of Netaji except Habibur Rahman. He attached extra-ordinary importance to the list of the passengers who boarded the plane without even knowing their names and designations. It was obvious that neither Shah Nawaz Committee nor Khosla Commission, nor the Japanese witnesses could correctly and completely identify the whole list of 13|14 passengers.

##### **5. Who were these military officers in the plane ?**

In his report Mr. Khosla assumed on the basis of variable information given by Nonogaki that the plane came from Manila loaded with military officers who were going on urgent assignment to either Dairen or Tokyo. The plane came to Saigon to carry only Lt. Gen. Shidei, who was to take immediate charge of the most prestigious Japanese Army,—the Kwantang Army—on the Manchurian Front, where fighting with the Russian army was continuing even after August 15, 1945. The plane was so heavily loaded that it could somehow manage to provide

only two additional seats, one for Netaji and the other for Habibur Rahman.

This assumption of Mr. Khosla is totally contradicted by the Report of Shah Nawaz Committee. It said that Tara Kuno was waiting for a few days at Saigon for availing a seat to fly to Tokyo. It also informed that Lt.-Col. Sakai was attached to the Burmese Army. Further, according to information of Nonogaki, given to *Emuri Shimbun*, the 7th Air Division was disbanded in July, 1945. Tara Kuno who belonged to this Air Force could not, therefore, come from Manila. Strangely, an important man like Isoda, told the Khosla Commission that he did not know who else besides Netaji, Gen. Shidei and Habibur Rahman were in the plane. Capt. Arai, another reported co-passenger, said that he was a ground engineer attached to Saigon Headquarters. He also, thus, did not come from Manila.

Shah Nawaz Committee *never said that the plane came from Manila with 6 or 7 military officers*. But Mr. Khosla on the basis of the self-contradictory statements of Nonogaki assumed that the plane came from Manila loaded with unspecified number of military officers who were to move urgently to either Dairen or Tokyo. Why Mr. Khosla made such a motivated assumption will be understood later.

#### **6. What about the flight chart or boarders' list ?**

Capt. Arai told Shah Nawaz Committee that a bomber during the war days did not carry boarders' list. Mr. Khosla did not accept this theory and wishfully recorded in his Report that "the flight chart might have been burnt at Taihoku".

However, Shah Nawaz Committee says that the flight chart was secured by H.K. Roy, an intelligence officer of the Government of India. It wrote: "Soon after the end of the hostilities, the Government of India sent two parties of Intelligence Officers (Police) headed by Messrs. Finney and Davies to the Far East to inquire about the whereabouts of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, and arrest him if possible. The Police Officers,



who were in those parties, Mr. H. K. Roy and Mr. P. K. De, appeared before us and gave evidence. Mr. H. K. Roy worked in Mr. Davies' party and proceeded first to Saigon and then to Taihoku in September, 1945. He says that they interviewed Japanese Military Officers in charge of Saigon aerodrome, and obtained a list of the passengers of the plane. It was the only plane which left Saigon on August 17, 1945. The last two names in the list were of Chandra Bose and H. Rahman''.

Both H. K. Roy and P. K. De appeared before the Shah Nawaz Committee and P. K. De before Khosla Commission as well. A part of Finney's Report was submitted to both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission. A few vital questions, naturally, arise in this connection. Why P. K. De mentioned only the names of Netaji and Rahman and not the whole list of the passengers ? Whether Netaji's name was written as 'Chandra Bose' or 'T' ? It was known from the Japanese signals and other Japanese documents produced before the Commission that the Japanese authorities always used the code name of Netaji as 'T' in all their secret notes. Again why the two teams sent by the Government of India did not visit Tokyo to interrogate Sakai, Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Takahashi, Arai and Okista—if their names were found in the passengers' list ? Why they did not try to get the full list of boarders and verify the story of the air crash from them ? Why Mr. Khosla did not ask the witness, P. K. De, to furnish the list of the passengers ? Why the Chief of Hikari Kikan, who was almost constantly with Netaji till he left Saigon, expressed his complete ignorance about the other names of the passengers except that of Netaji, Gen. Shidei and Rahman ? Further, if the list was found by P. K. De, such a vital document must have been included in Finney's Report, and if so, why either Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission did not ask the Government of India to supply the full Report of Finney including the list of passengers ? Lastly, what happened to Okista, Tominaga and two other reported passengers who appeared to have simply vanished out of the purview of the Committee or the Commission ?

In the absence of any satisfactory answers to these questions, the issue of the list of passengers remained fishy. Whether the so-called air crash survivors actually travelled with Netaji or were planted in the unspecified list, is a very relevant question, as it will be found later that in the whole story, i.e., from take-off stage from Saigon to alleged air crash at Taihoku—the evidence of no two Japanese witnesses concurred, rather their evidence ridiculously differed from one another.

However, the judicial mind of Mr. Khosla did not bother to find answers to any of the above questions. He gullibly believed, without any evidentiary support whatever, the versions of Nonogaki, Sakai, Tara Kuno and Takahashi.

#### **7. When and how Netaji entered into the plane at Saigon ?**

Gen. Isoda, S. A. Iyer and other INA Officers who claimed that they were present at Saigon airport said that Netaji and Rahman came in a car from the city and hurriedly entered the plane, when its propellers were already in motion. But one of the 'most important witnesses' of Mr. Khosla, Major Tara Kuno said—"No, Chandra Bose and Shidei talked in German, and while boarding the plane Shidei followed Netaji". Nonogaki, supporting Tara Kuno, further added that Col. Tada, a very important staff officer at Terauchi's headquarters, identified Netaji to him but at the same time he cautioned him not to address 'Chandra Bose' by his real name but only by the code name. All other Indian and Japanese witnesses told Khosla Commission that Col. Tada was not at all present at the airport.

Nonogaki gave another piece of interesting information. He told Mr. Khosla that Bose did not come to the airport by a car but "Chandra Bose and Shidei landed in the airstrip from a plane an hour before the take-off of the plane". However, every other witness said that Netaji hurriedly came to the airfield by a car straight from the city of Saigon.

Except Takabashi, none of the 'claimed passengers' ever personally knew Netaji or saw him before. But the smart witnesses of Mr. Khosla—Nonogaki and Tara Kuno—to make

their fancied story reliable, informed Mr. Khosla that they came to know from the Saigon airfield officer who Chandra Bose was.

It is, thus, found that the Japanese witnesses gave out completely contradictory accounts about when and how Netaji came to Saigon airport and how he got into the plane.

### **8. What were the arrangements of seats inside the plane ?**

About the sitting arrangements inside the plane every Japanese witness gave his own version completely different from the other. As the plane was a bomber, it had no seat or seat-belt, and, necessarily every passenger had to squat on the floor of the plane. Shah Nawaz Committee at least, honestly admitted that there were serious discrepancies in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses in regard to sitting arrangements. It noted : "They say the same thing about the relative position of Netaji, General Shidei and Col. Habibur Rahman. There are, however, some discrepancies as to the number of crew, some say it was four, others say it was five. There is, however, *an important difference regarding Major Tara Kuno.* According to Col. Habibur Rahman and Capt. Arai, Major Kuno was at the rear, but Major Kuno says, "he sat ahead of Netaji and talked to Netaji during the flight".

Major Kuno claimed before the Khosla Commission that he was the Navigator of the plane and Khosla believed it. If he was a Navigator, his place would have been inside the cockpit of the plane. Besides, can it be believed that a junior officer of the rank of a major would sit before Netaji, a recognised Head of a State and General Shidei, the Commander-in-Chief-designate of the Manchurian Army ? Netaji was known to everybody for his extremely reserved nature, and could it be possible for Tara Kuno, without any earlier introduction to Netaji, to have continued talks with him, sitting close to Gen. Shidei, in utter violation of military discipline ? Other witnesses said that Netaji was found, on occasions, to talk only to Shidei and Rahman.

Shah Nawaz Committee considered the sitting arrangement

as an 'important' matter to note, as it would provide a clue, who among the passengers got chance to escape uninjured and who were otherwise seriously injured.

But Mr. Khosla was so prepossessed with the evidence of Tara Kuno and Nonogaki that he considered it not worthwhile to take any notice of the contradictory sitting arrangement of the passengers. He simply skipped over this very important yet vexatious issue.

[See the various sketches of the sitting arrangements.]

**9. When the plane left Saigon and reached Tourane and which route it followed thereafter ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee felt constrained to observe : "There is some difference about the exact time but most witnesses say that the plane took off between 5 p.m. and 5-30 p.m." However, Nonogaki said before Khosla Commission that a plane arrived at Saigon with Chandra Bose and Gen. Shidei at 4 p.m. and soon after the Taihoku bound plane took off.

But Mr. Khosla found no discrepancies about the take-off time from Saigon. In his Report he wrote that the plane punctually took off from Saigon at 5 p.m.

According to Habibur Rahman the plane reached Tourane, in North Vietnam, *before* dusk, but all other Japanese witnesses said, it reached there *after dusk*.

Shah Nawaz Committee recorded in its Report : "The plane was to follow the following route : Saigon—Tourane—Heito (Formosa)—Taihoku (Formosa)—Dairen (Manchuria)—Tokyo".

However, Habibur Rahman said that the plane was scheduled to go straight to Tokyo and not to Dairen. But why the plane then by-passed Heito airport ? Nonogaki said that they received a wireless message that the Russian Army had already reached Port Arthur, and in an attempt to reach Dairen at the earliest, Heito airport was bypassed. But according to war documents, the Russian Army reached Port Arthur five

days later. There was, thus, no satisfactory explanation why Heito airport was avoided.

By-passing all these divergent views, Mr. Khosla straight-way wrote in his Report.: “The plane left Saigon at 5 p.m. carrying Bose and Rahman and 8 or 9 Japanese officers (Shah Nawaz Committee : passengers—13 or 14) who were to go to Manchuria and arrived at Tourane at 7-45 p.m.”

#### **10. Where Netaji had his night-halt at Tourane ?**

Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee that Netaji stayed in a hotel on 17th August night at Tourane, but he failed to mention the name of the Hotel. According to Shah Nawaz Committee’s Report : “The witnesses examined by the Committee could not give the name of the hotel. There is reason to believe that the hotel in question was Morin Hotel, which the Committee visited”. However, the Committee admitted that the owner of the hotel did not confirm it.

The Japanese witnesses told Shah Nawaz Committee as well as Khosla Commission that they were unable to say definitely where Netaji stayed at Tourane. Some said he stayed in the army barracks, while others said perhaps he passed the night at the airport or he might have stayed in a hotel. Nonogaki first said that “Chandra Bose and Gen. Shidei stayed in the army barracks” but in the course of cross-examination he told “no, they stayed in a hotel”. Tara Kuno admitted that he did not know where Netaji stayed.

Strangely, no Japanese witness said either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission that they saw Netaji boarding the plane on the morning of August 18, 1945, when it left for Taihoku.

Nobody also knew where Netaji and Gen. Shidei stayed at night at Tourane nor did any one of them mention whether they saw either of them boarding the plane on 18th August, morning.

***[Why this matter proved very vital will be discussed later.]***

**11. When the plane left Tourane ?**

Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee that the plane left Tourane at 7 a.m. But Nonogaki said before Khosla Commission that the plane left Tourane before dawn at about 5 a.m., whereas Takahashi, contradicting Nonogaki, told Khosla Commission that the plane really left Tourane at 8 a.m. But Tara Kuno, the Navigator of the plane of Mr. Khosla's description, was cautious in giving the time of leaving Tourane. According to him, as the time of flight from Tourane to Taihoku took six hours, the plane, therefore, left Tourane at 6 a.m.

*Mr. Khosla showed mathematical exactitude in noting timings of different flight charts of the plane as he wrote in his Report : "the plane left Saigon at 5 a.m., reached Tourane at 7-45 a.m. and arrived at Taihoku at 2 p.m." but he carefully avoided mentioning the time of departure of the plane from Tourane, and he simply mentioned in his Report that "on the morning of August 18, the bomber left Tourane." It was necessary for him to avoid the discrepancies about the timing of departure of the plane from Tourane as, he wanted to prove that the plane reached Taihoku (Taipei) exactly at 2 p.m.*

**12. When the plane reached and left Taihoku (Taipei) ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee recorded the time of arrival of the plane at Taihoku as : "The landing time has been stated by different witnesses to be between 11 a.m. and 2 p.m." Nonogaki and Tara Kuno told Khosla Commission that the plane reached Taihoku at 12 noon but Sakai recorded it as 11 a.m. and Takahashi as 11-30 a.m. However, Habibur Rahman said that the plane arrived at Taihoku at 2 p.m. He said that the plane left Tourane at 7 a.m. and reached Taihoku at 2 p.m. i.e., the flight took 7 hours but other Japanese witnesses said flight from Tourane took about 5 or 6 hours to reach Taihoku."

When the plane took off from Taihoku and how long the plane halted there ? About it also the statements of the witnesses were so divergent that the Shah Nawaz Committee remarked : "Different witnesses have given time of halt at Taihoku airfield from half-an-hour to two hours". Nonogaki first told the

Khosla Commission that the plane halted at Taihoku for half-an-hour and then during cross-examination he changed it to one and half hours and finally he said, "no, the plane halted at Taihoku for two and a half hours". All other Japanese witnesses also peculiarly wavered in giving the time of halt at Taihoku.

*Shah Nawaz Committee at least took notice of these divergent views about the timing of arrival and halt at Taihoku, but Mr. Khosla simply overlooked it, and discarded the evidence of his 'most important witnesses' Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Sakai and Takahashi and strangely recorded in his Report what no other Japanese witness but only Habibur Rahman said that the plane reached Taihoku, at 2 p.m. and took off at 2-30 p.m.,—although Khosla refused to take into consideration the recorded statement of Rahman on the plea that he did not appear before the Commission.*

**13. Did any military or civil dignitary come to receive Netaji and General Shidei at the Taihoku airport ?**

All the Japanese witnesses, including Habibur Rahman, said that nobody, not even any airport official, came to receive Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, the Head of a State recognised by Japan, or even Lt.-Gen. Shidei,—the Chief of the General Staff of the Burmese Army in 1945 and the commander-in-chief-designate for the most prestigious Kwantang Army of Japan. According to Nonogaki only a few airport guards were present there. How could there be such an unusual breach of elementary protocol ? Did not the airport authority receive any advance information about the arrival of the plane ? Nonogaki told Khosla Commission that no such information was received by the airport authority, but his close friend Tara Kuno, converting Nonogaki's statement said during cross-examination : "Yes, we had sent information in advance. We had also sent the number of our plane and arrival time as 12 noon."

Mr. Khosla recorded in his Report : "Shigetaka Suriure (Witness No. 66), a staff intelligence officer posted at Taipei, says that he received advance information of the arrival of the

bomber in which Bose was travelling on August 18, 1945". But, although "he *heard* about the air crash, he did not see it, nor did he go to the hospital afterwards to see the injured persons. The importance of the evidence of this witness is that he had advance information of Bose's arrival at Taipei and he deposed before the Commission that the air crash took place the same afternoon".

Shigetaka did not say that Bose was travelling in the plane. Notwithstanding this fact, Mr. Khosla inferred from his evidence that "Bose was travelling in the plane". Further, he did not himself see the air crash, nor did he on receipt of the report visit the airport—yet, Khosla took it as an 'important' corroborative evidence to conclude that "the air crash took place the same afternoon".

Why Netaji was not received at the airport, offering an explanation for this lapse of protocol without, however, any evidentiary support, Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report : "The war had come to an end so had Bose's usefulness to the Japanese ended. They were willing to give some little help to him with a means of escape, but beyond this they were not willing to do anything". He added further that, "after the surrender of Japan conditions were chaotic," and, therefore Mr. Khosla inferred, that "the behaviour of the Japanese command was not unusual".

What about Lt.-Gen. Shidei ? The Japanese Army in the mainland of Japan and Formosa were intact till the second week of September, 1945. General Shidei was, in his rank, superior to Gen. Isamaya, Chief of the Formosan Army. He could, if Mr. Khosla's argument is considered plausible so far as Netaji was concerned, avoid attending him, but how could he violate military protocol in regard to General Shidei ? Mr. Khosla conveniently, overlooked this vital issue.

Shah Nawaz Committee, however, critically observed at two places : "General Tanaka, Chief of the General Staff, Burmese Army, passed through Taihoku a week later *en route* to Tokyo with Dr. Ba Maw of Burma." Shah Nawaz Committee noted that General Isamaya, Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army, and General Ando and others 'went' to Taihoku



airport and “received Dr. Ba Maw, the President of Burma, and General Tanaka . . . who were on their way to Tokyo”. Shah Nawaz Committee, in expressing its surprise, added a critical note to its Report : “*The explanation does not appear very convincing . . . as the plane carried distinguished persons like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and General Shidei*”,

Was the status of Dr. Ba Maw higher than Netaji ? Did General Tanaka hold higher rank than General Shidei ? Nobody except Mr. Khosla could think so. Mr. Khosla’s theory of chaotic conditions was also unacceptable to Shah Nawaz Committee. If the situation after a week permitted General Isamaya and Gen. Ando to go to the airport to receive Dr. Ba Maw and Gen. Tanaka, conditions a week before could not be more chaotic to prevent them to follow similar protocol in regard to Netaji and Gen. Shidei.

*Absence of any important person to receive Netaji and Gen. Shidei is an intriguing issue.* It could not happen, under any circumstances, if Netaji and Gen. Shidei really arrived at Taihoku. It, therefore, appears as very doubtful, if Netaji and Gen. Shidei did at all go to Taihoku. Facts, stated later, further deepened this suspicion. But such probing questions mattered little with Mr. Khosla. Shah Nawaz Committee felt very much constrained over the matter, but for Mr. Khosla, the question of protocol appeared a very trivial or irrelevant issue to attach any importance. If Netaji and Gen. Shidei really arrived at Taihoku on August 18, 1945, the Formosan authority could hardly ignore it.

#### **14. What happened to the plane after take-off ?**

Nonogaki told Khosla Commission : “When we were testing the engine, when it exceeded 2000 rotations, there were vibrations in the left engine. We stopped the engine and then checked it but we could not find any defect.” Except Tara Kuno, no other Japanese witness, not even Habibur Rahman supported the evidence of Nonogaki. All other Japanese witnesses said that normal propeller motion test was done and nothing wrong was noticed.

It has been said that after running about three-fourths of the runway, the plane made a steep take-off almost vertically. What happened then ? Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee : "After getting airborne about 500 ft. above, the plane circled over the airport and after 5|6 minutes he heard a terrible noise of explosion as if some enemy had hit our plane by a cannon shot. Within a few seconds the plane nose-dived and crashed on the ground".

None, not even Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Sakai, Takahashi or Arai agreed at all with Habibur Rahman. They categorically said there was no sound of any explosion. Two of them further said that a propeller and an engine fell down. Capt. Nakamura alias Yemamoto, who claimed to have served as a ground engineer at Taihoku airport in 1945, told the Shah Nawaz Committee : "Immediately on taking-off, the plane tilted to its left side and I saw something fell down from the plane, which I found later to be a propeller." According to Shah Nawaz Committee : "Capt. Nakamura who had the best view had estimated the height between 30 and 40 metres." Other Japanese witnesses, however, said that the plane reached the height of about 20 to 30 metres.

Lt.-Col. Sakai said before the Khosla Commission : "There was no explosion. *I saw the rear wheel broke away.*" During cross-examination before Khosla Commission Nonogaki said : "Immediately after we took off, *the propeller of the left engine fell out and then the engine itself broke off and the plane crashed.*" Takahashi told Mr. Khosla, "I heard noise like crashing, then I thought the plane leaned towards left and crashed on the ground." Tara Kuno supported the version of Nonogaki.

How divergent the descriptions are ! Firstly, nobody said, except Habibur Rahman, that the plane reached a height of 500 ft. and circled over the airfield for about 5|6 minutes but they said that it rose almost vertically to 20—40 metres height and then nose-dived immediately within a few seconds. Secondly, nobody supported the version of Habibur Rahman that there was a loud report as though of a cannon shot. Nonogaki and

Tara Kuno said propeller of the left engine and then the left engine itself fell down, but Nakamura said only a propeller fell down. Takahashi said nothing about any fall of either propeller or engine, but according to him, only the plane leaned towards left side and crashed. Thirdly, Sakai gave a completely different story. He said that he saw the rear wheel broke away. Fourthly, if the left propeller and engine fell down the plane would have leaned or tilted towards right side and not to the left side according to invariable law of dynamics.

Now, whom to believe and what to believe from such totally contradictory statements ? The question naturally arises was there any air crash at all ? *But these contradictory versions did not create any curiosity in the mind of Mr. Khosla. Discarding the evidence of all witnesses, he built up his own theory to conclude in his findings: "The plane took off at 2-15 p.m. but within a few seconds one of the engine flew out and the plane crashed."*

#### 15. How the plane fell and how the Japanese witnesses came out ?

Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee that "after the noise like cannon shot" within a few seconds "the plane nose-dived making a wailing sound."

Lt.-Col. Sakai told Khosla Commission : "The plane leaned towards the ground. Although I am not an expert in navigation, I looked outside to see what had happened. At that time I saw the ground was coming up, so I thought it was *forced landing*, may be inevitable under such circumstances. *Then the rear wheel of the plane struck the ground hard and I saw it moving towards left side. As soon as I saw the rear wheel breaking away, as I was seeing from the cock-pit of the window, I hit the ceiling of the cockpit and became unconscious. I felt very hot and recovered my senses, when I found myself lying on the ground.*"

Nonogaki told Khosla Commission that the propeller of the left side broke away and fell on the ground. He further said the *plane did not nose-dive or fell vertically, but it fell inclined*

*towards the right.* He also fell unconscious, but after regaining consciousness, he jumped out of the plane.

Tara Kuno told the Commission : “The left propeller broke off and the left engine was also torn off and the plane leaned towards right and nose-dived. The plane *hit the right wing* against the dyke . . . . . I broke the *window above* and got out and stood on the *left wing of the plane* just above the broken engine.”

Takahashi did not say a word as to whether the plane nose-dived or not, but told Mr. Khosla that “the plane *leaned towards the left side and broke.* I lost consciousness”. During cross-examination, however, he said the plane “*nose-dived but after falling on the ground it stood in natural position*” enabling him to “*crawl out of the plane*”. It is to be noted that earlier Takahashi had told Shah Nawaz Committee that “after losing consciousness when he regained sense, *he found himself thrown out of the plane*”. During cross-examination he told Mr. Khosla that his statement to Shah Nawaz Committee “*was wrong*”.

Now, analysing the evidence of the ‘most important witnesses’ of Mr. Khosla’s choice what a confusing picture about the fall of the plane and escape of the Japanese passengers out of it emerge ! Firstly, Nonogaki and Tara Kuno earlier said that the left engine, and its propeller broke off and the plane fell leaning towards left. During cross-examination they said, no, it leaned on the right side. Secondly, Sakai earlier said to Shah Nawaz Committee that he saw from inside the cockpit that the rear wheel of the plane broke off, but to Mr. Khosla he said that the rear wheel touched the ground and then broke away. Sakai was not a member of the crew, so how could he get into the cockpit and which version of his statement about the rear wheel was right ? Thirdly, Nonogaki first said that the plane leaned towards left and also fell leaning towards left, but controverting his earlier statement he told Mr. Khosla,—no, the plane leaned towards right and fell on the ground in that position. Fourthly, Tara Kuno similarly changed his version like Nonogaki and made an absurd statement to say that he came out of the burning plane by breaking the window of the

cockpit and stood on the left wing which must have stood vertically inclined upwards making his statement obviously ridiculous. Further Tara Kuno said earlier that the left engine and the propeller broke off, but later he said it broke but did not fly off. Fifthly, Takahashi controverting the statements of Nonogaki, Tara Kuno and Sakai, said that the plane neither leaned right nor left, but it fell down making a belly-like crash-landing and stood in natural position on the ground. Sixthly, most of them said that they fell unconscious and were thrown out of the plane, but later Takahashi said—no, he normally crawled out of the plane. Seventhly, Tara Kuno who earlier claimed that he was sitting before Netaji, displayed his smartness so much that although after the propeller and the engine broke away and the plane fell down within 2|3 minutes, he succeeded not only in having a look at the relative position of the passengers of the crashed aircraft but he also managed to rush into the cockpit to switch off the engine. What a fantastic claim indeed !

But the most important issue is related to the nature of the crash. Only Habibur Rahman said that after the explosion, the plane nose-dived in terrific speed. But all the four star witnesses of Mr. Khosla said ambivalently that the plane did not exactly nose-dive but fell like crash-landing, either leaning towards left or right or stood on the ground after the fall almost in natural position. But during cross-examination all of them straightway said that the plane nose-dived and crashed on the ground.

It has been told by all witnesses at the time of cross-examination that the plane nose-dived. If the plane did nosedive, in such a situation, the plane would have fallen with a terrific speed, by sheer force of the gravity, with the heaviest part of the plane—i.e., the cock-pit with the engines and other machine facing vertically downward. In that eventuality, in a plane having no seats or seat-belts, all the passengers with their baggage would have faced an inevitably chaotic condition and got jumbled before the cock-pit. If this common sense view is accepted, then the statements of all the passengers appear as sheer nonsense. The plane would have perished and perished

instantly to pieces leaving little chance of survival of any of the 14 passengers.

*[We shall see later the inquiry report of the non-official committee of the Japanese experts regarding this aspect of the plane crash].*

*Mr. Khosla used neither common sense nor legal sense or any other sense at all to analyse the reported incident of the plane crash. Had he done so, he would have been left with no option but to discard the statements of all his four 'important' witnesses as nothing but cock and bull story. Mr. Khosla, therefore, conveniently by-passed the whole issue without making any reference whatsoever about the nature of the air crash except preferring to conclude that the plane indeed crashed at Taihoku airport.*

#### **16. Where did the plane crash ?**

Before Shah Nawaz Committee, Habibur Rahman said : "the plane crash took place one or two miles outside the aerodrome". Nonogaki said : "the plane crashed on the concrete runway". Nakamura, the reported ground engineer, said that "the plane crashed about 100 metres beyond the runway". Sakai told : "the plane fell about 20 to 30 metres beyond the runway", while Takahashi informed : "crash took place just outside the concrete runway but within the boundary of the aerodrome." But the most vocal witness, Tara Kuno, whom Shah Nawaz Committee described as a very "alert witness" kept silent about it. Habibur Rahman and some other Japanese witnesses also indicated that the plane crashed near the Japanese temple.

Except on one point, that the plane crashed at or beyond the south-end of the aerodrome, no two witnesses made identical statement about the location of the crash spot. After the alleged plane crash at least 7 survivors waited for quite some time near the crashed plane until rescue team came. Yet they differ so widely from one another in locating the exact crash-spot !

Tara Kuno, who did not say anything about it before Shah Nawaz Committee, told Khosla Commission : "The plane

hit the right-wing against the dyke within the compound of the airport." Takahashi added a new point that "he saw big trees towards the right side" indicating that the plane crashed near the Japanese temple, as on other sides of the airfield, no trees were to be found. Nonogaki also added to say: "the plane crashed at the end of the runway in a bomb crater" and not against a dyke as was told by Tara Kuno.

Thus, it will be seen that neither before Shah Nawaz Committee nor Khosla Commission the Japanese witnesses could uniformly identify the spot where the plane crashed. But all the witnesses agreed on one point i.e., the plane allegedly crashed either within or beyond the south-end of the runway, facing the Japanese temple.

A Taiwanese Lai Min Yee, who worked in the Japanese transport section, told Khosla Commission that "the plane hit the wall of a temporary railway track and got wholly smashed, and it was stretched towards the *Kee Lung* river". Other Taiwanese witnesses also corroborated his statement. Mr. Khosla also visited this spot and recorded the inspection report.

We have already discussed in the earlier chapter that a Taiwanese witness said that a plane crashed over the old railway track while it was landing but not during the time of take-off. And again according to him, the plane crashed not in August 1945, but some time in September-October in the year 1944. About 10 other witnesses agreed to confirm it before the Commission, but Mr. Khosla refused to record their evidence. In that chapter, we have also discussed in details the report of the meteorological expert of Taipei airport. According to the weather charts of the month of August every year, no plane could have crashed at the *south-end of the runway during take-off*. If there had been any such incident, it must have taken place at the *north-end of the runway*. But all Japanese evidence, including that of Habibur Rahman point out that the plane crashed within or outside the south-end of the runway. Although Mr. Khosla refused to accept the meteorological report of the Taipei airport, yet he himself noted down an inspection of the airport in the proceedings of the Commission next day.

But discarding expected judicial discretion, Mr. Khosla, simply preferred to ignore all evidence of the Japanese witnesses regarding the identification of the crash-spot i.e., the evidence of the Taiwanese witness who identified the crash-spot on or near old railway track, the evidence of the Taiwanese witness who told that a plane crashed over the old railway track not in 1945 but in 1944, and even his own inspection report of the alleged crash-spot. Most surprisingly, he completely ignored the report of the meteorological officer of the Taipei airport and his own inspection report about it as well. Why did he ignore all these evidence and inspection reports ? Because, if he discussed them with open judicial mind the whole story of the air crash in 1945 at Taihoku airport itself would have crashed totally.

**17. What was the condition of the plane after crash ?**

In his written statement submitted to Shah Nawaz Committee, Habibur Rahman recalled : “Immediately the plane crashed on the ground and caught fire on both the front and the rear”. However, during cross-examination he said : “*the plane split in the front*” and then added : “*it broke into two parts.*” Nonogaki and Tara Kuno said : “on crashing on the ground the plane broke into two” and “split parts went in different directions on the ground”.

However, Nakamura, who according to Shah Nawaz Committee, “had the best view of the accident”, told the Commission : “*He was positive that the plane was intact and its body was not broken*”. Takahashi said : “the plane crashed and stood in normal position”.

Before Khosla Commission Sakai said : “*the rear wheel of the plane terribly hit the ground*”.

Nonogaki wrote in *Emuri Shimibun*, : “When the plane crashed on the ground, a rear part of it broke away” but before Khosla Commission he said, : “the plane split into two parts.”

Tara Kuno told Mr. Khosla : “The plane was broken into *three parts*.”

Takahashi told the Commission ; “The plane was broken,



and the doors were open". But during cross-examination he changed his earlier statement to say that the plane broke into two parts.

Now, again what to believe and whom to believe ? Habibur Rahman first said that the plane was intact and the front and rear of the plane caught fire, but then he said it broke in two parts. Nonogaki said the rear wheel broke away and then added—no, it broke into two parts. Tara Kuno also said—yes, it broke into two parts. Takahashi said that only its doors were broken and the plane remained in normal standing position. But discarding all evidences 'the most alert witness' of Shah Nawaz Committee, Nakamura said—'no, no, I am positive that the plane was intact'.

Now, if the plane really crashed, could the description of the crashed plane differ so widely ? Does it not appear that every witness fancied an accident to give his own version of what happened to the plane after the alleged crash ?

Does it, or does it not create an impression that the witnesses were labouring hard to describe a plane crash which was more imaginary than real ? But for Mr. Khosla, such contradictory descriptions about the condition of the crashed plane meant nothing. He simply overlooked all these contradictory evidences and maintained his belief that a plane really crashed at Taihoku.

#### **18. How most of the survivors came out of the crashed plane ?**

In order to understand how the survivors could get out of the crashed plane, the inner picture of the plane should be kept in mind. As the bomber had no seats or seat-belts and as finally all witnesses said that the plane nose-dived in terrific speed, by force of sheer gravity all passengers and luggage must have jumbled into a chaotic mess near the cock-pit. Keeping this realistic picture in mind, let us see what the witnesses said before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

Nonogaki always claimed that he was the pilot, and naturally his place would have been inside the cock-pit but at the time

of crash, as he told Shah Nawaz Committee, he was not in the cock-pit but in the "turret" of the plane, and as such, he was fortunate enough to be *thrown out of the plane almost unhurt*, because fortuitously for him the plane broke into two parts exactly at the place where the 'turret' was. Does any kind of turret exist in a plane, almost at the middle portion ? But he first non-challengingly, told Shah Nawaz Committee that he was thrown out of the plane and then changed to say during cross-examination that : "he got up and ran away from the burning plane and took shelter behind a pile of stones, against which the wrecked plane came to halt". However it should be remembered that he told Khosla Commission that the plane crashed into a bomb crater.

Again, Nonogaki told Khosla Commission, "I came out *walking down*, because the plane broke into two parts exactly at the place where I was sitting." Further, he told Mr. Khosla : "I saw the pilot coming out but I did not see Takizawa and the three members of the crew".

How contradictory are his various statements ! He first said that he was thrown out of the plane, then he said he ran away from its turret, and finally told Mr. Khosla that he walked down from the plane. Then he said that soon after the crash, the plane caught fire and yet he was neither hurt nor burnt. Thirdly, if the plane nose-dived, how could he be sitting at the turret where he said he was ? He told Shah Nawaz Committee, however, that he was not in his seat but in the turret. Fourthly, Nonogaki said he saw the pilot coming out, but although Shah Nawaz Committee and Mr. Khosla identified Takizawa as the pilot of the plane, he could not say whether Takizawa was that man. Fifthly, we shall soon see that according to Tara Kuno's evidence pilot Takizawa was hit in his face and forehead and *died in the cock-pit*.

Shah Nawaz Committee observed in its report : "Major Kuno was clearly the alert and observant person. At the moment of crash, instead of being flustered, he had his wits about him and noticed what others were doing. He saw Major Takizawa was hit in his face and forehead by the steering which

he was operating. N.C.O. Ayoagi was hit in his chest, which was bleeding and he leaned forward." He further told Shah Nawaz Committee that : "he switched off the engine" and "there was an engineer between me and Ayoagi. I do not know what happened to him".

He told Khosla Commission and Shah Nawaz Committee as well : "During this time the fire spread greatly and the heat became unbearable. I broke open the plastic cover on the top of the plane and escaped through it. While escaping, the fire was so strong that I had to protect my eyes by covering them with my hands, which as a result, got burnt and my legs and face were also burnt. I got splashed by petrol which was coming out from a pipe which connected the petrol tank with the engine that had been brought down".

Now let us see what this alert man told Mr. Khosla. He said : "I saw many baggages flying against me from the rear. Lt.-Gen. Shidei was sitting by my side and behind him there was a fuel tank, which was broken and hit over the head of Gen. Shidei and I found him dead. Pilot Takizawa had hit his face against the steering-handle and he was injured in the face and he also died. To the left of me there was pilot Ayoagi. He had his both legs stuck in the broken parts of the plane and he was unable to move. Afterwards, I tried to pull out Ayoagi but I could not do it. I think it was 2-3 minutes while I was looking about persons in this way when the plane caught fire and the fire spread towards my side. So, I broke the window shove and got out from there. When I jumped out from that part of the wing, I had the splash of gasoline on me from the broken engine and caught fire."

Let us examine Kuno's evidence. A junior officer of major's rank like him claimed to have been sitting before Netaji and by the side of Gen. Shidei. All the witnesses on the contrary said that he along with Sakai, Takahashi and Arai sat at the rear and Shah Nawaz Committee also recorded it similarly. But although the plane nose-dived, he almost miraculously came to the cockpit to do many heroic acts. According to his own version, he was sitting by the side of Shidei over,

whose head the petrol tank fell and yet he had not any splash of gasoline on him but he was soaked with gasoline only while he was jumping out by forcibly breaking the plastic window. He claimed, he remained inside the plane 2-3 minutes to see Shidei hit over his head, to switch off the engine, to see that Takizawa was pressed by the handle of the steering and was hurt, and he tried even to pull Ayoagi out of the clutches of the broken parts of the cock-pit and after doing all these heroic things, he succeeded in breaking off the very hard plastic cock-pit window and then jumped out. Could any human being do all these things within 2 or 3 minutes inside a plane which nose-dived at terrific speed ?

Habibur Rahman and Nonogaki said that the plane caught fire instantaneously after the crash. But although the petrol tank fell by Tara Kuno's side, he had no sprinkling of petrol on him and he did all these heroic acts without being caught by the fire, and later he got burnt only while escaping. The plastic window of cock-pit of any plane is not so fragile as could be broken by a single blow. If his story had any truth in it, he was required to hit it several times to make a hole through the plastic window to pass through it. He did not tell Shah Nawaz Committee that he found Gen. Shidei dead but he told it to Mr. Khosla. Further, he told Shah Nawaz Committee that fire started when he jumped out of the plane, but on the contrary he told Mr. Khosla that the plane was on fire when he was inside it.

Pointing to such incoherent, inconsistent and self-contradictory statements of Tara Kuno it can be rightly said that only gullible fools could believe such story. (What Mr. Khosla said about the evidence of Indian witnesses).

Absurdity of the story of Tara Kuno did not arouse any doubt in the mind of either Shah Nawaz Khan or Khosla. Shah Nawaz Khan in his report not only praised the wit and alertness of Tara Kuno, but he was so much impressed by seeing the burnt nails of the fingers of Kuno's hands that he took a photograph of his two hands as a testimonial in support of the plane crash story. It did not occur to either Shah Nawaz Khan or Khosla

to inquire from him or from the war records of Japan if during 5 years of active service Tara Kuno had met with any other accident.

Other three claimants as travelling in the same plane, made statements to Shah Nawaz Committee, according to which 'Sakai, Takahashi and Arai became senseless the moment the plane crashed and found themselves on the ground soon after and moved away from the burning plane'. But in describing the sitting arrangement, Shah Nawaz Committee was told that Sakai, Takahashi, Arai and Tara Kuno had their seats in the rear side of the plane, but at the time of being thrown out of the plane in senseless condition, they avoided to include the name of Kuno. Again Takahashi told Shah Nawaz Committee at another place : "As I was seeing from the aeroplane's cockpit window, I hit the ceiling of the window and became unconscious". How could then he be thrown out of the cock-pit, as, according to Tara Kuno, he saw only Takizawa and Ayoagi inside the cockpit and none else and for his escape from inside the cockpit, he had to break open the plastic window ? If Tara Kuno is to be believed, how Takahashi was thrown out of the cockpit unconscious ?

Let us probe further what this truthful witness Takahashi told Khosla Commission : "The plane was broken and the door was open. I lost my consciousness and when I regained my consciousness, I was sitting over the luggage inside the plane. When I got up, the plane was burning. I had my left leg fractured and I crawled out".

This man had told Shah Nawaz Committee that he was thrown out of the plane unconscious. But before Khosla Commission he said he crawled out of the plane through the open door. However, Habibur Rahman's statement before Shah Nawaz Committee contradicts Takahashi's statement as Rahman said : "We (Netaji and Rahman) could not get through the entrance door as it was all blocked and jammed by packages and other things."

But such palpably ridiculous contradictions and discrep-

ancies in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses were of no concern to the Chairman of the Judicial Commission, Mr. Khosla. These witnesses said that the plane crashed and they were in it, and that was enough for Mr. Khosla to conclude that the plane did crash at Taihoku.

### 19. How Netaji came out of the plane ?

Habibur Rahman said before the Shah Nawaz Committee : “Within a few seconds, the plane crashed on the ground and the fore portion of the plane split and caught fire. Netaji turned towards me,—I said, ‘Please get out through the front, there is no way out in the rear . . . (*Augey say nikaleay pichey say rasta nahin hai*).’” We could not get through the entrance door as it was all blocked and jammed by packages and other things . . . So Netaji got out through fire, actually he rushed through the fire”.

Takahashi said the entrance door was open and Tara Kuno told that the front was closed. Now, the question arises, how Netaji got out through the front? What exit door did he use ? Habibur Rahman did not say whether Netaji walked down or jumped out of the plane. There was no staire-case, how then could he get out of the plane ? Habibur Rahman remained silent on all these points.

Tara Kuno said that he could not see Netaji as the petrol tank fell before him. But he said earlier that Shidei sat behind Netaji and Kuno had his seat near Shidei. Yet Kuno said he did not see Netaji. If Kuno’s earlier statement was to be believed then Netaji sat just before him. But in another place he said, he sat in front of Netaji. He had told Shah Nawaz Committee that he could not see ‘Chandra Bose’, although he claimed that he keenly observed what happened inside the plane after crash.

Nonogaki, Sakai and Takahashi said they could not say anything about what happened to Netaji inside the plane. But Takahashi said earlier, that he was thrown out of the plane unconscious, and yet he told Mr. Khosla : “I had my left leg fractured, and I crawled out of the plane. I saw Bose coming

out of the other door. I do not exactly remember whether it was the broken portion of the plane. He came down walking with clothes on fire". How could he walk down of a plane which crashed on the nose ?

Neither Habibur Rahman, nor any other witness answered this question, and even the most flippant among the witnesses, Nonogaki and Tara Kuno, also kept silent about it. Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission also did not consider it worthwhile to examine the issue.

## 20. What happened to Netaji after he came out of the plane ?

In his statement before Shah Nawaz Committee Habibur Rahman said : "Netaji got through the fire : I followed him through the same flames. He was not wearing sweater. He was wearing khaki drill. His clothes were on fire. I rushed and experienced great difficulty in unfastening his bush shirt belt. *His trousers were not so much on fire and it was not necessary to take off.* I laid him down on the ground and noticed a *very deep cut on his head*, probably on the left side. His face had been scorched by fire and singed. *The cut in his head was a long one, about four inches.* I tried to stop the bleeding with handkerchief."

Both before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission, however, Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Takahashi and Nakamura gave completely different versions. Nonogaki said : "I did not see any fire on the body of Netaji". Tara Kuno said he was standing 30 metres away, when he saw Netaji standing "erect with his hands still, like guardian God in Buddhist shrines—only a couple of metres away from the flame". And that was not all what he said. He went further to refute the statement of Habibur Rahman. He claimed—"No, not Habibur Rahman, but I helped Netaji when he was trying to take off his coat".

Takahashi came forward to refute both Habibur and Kuno. Although his legs were fractured, as he told earlier, he claimed that he "went up to Netaji and made him roll on the ground and managed to put out fire from his clothes".

But how can Nakamura, the 'best witness' of Shah Nawaz Khan could miss the opportunity of making some heroic effort to save Netaji ? He knocked down the statements of Habibur Rahman, Kuno and Takahashi to say—"no, no ! none else but it was only he who "rescued the passengers from the burning plane and specially Netaji". He further said, it was none else but he who "stripped off Netaji's clothes from his body".

Then again Nonogaki, Tara Kuno Takahashi and Dr. Yoshimo, who claimed to have medically treated Netaji in the hospital—all said, challenging the statement of Habibur Rahman, that Netaji had no trousers, "*he was completely naked and was wearing only shoes*".

We shall discuss in a separate chapter all the recorded statements of Habibur Rahman to show how faithfully he stuck to his planned story to tell and retell the same story in order to give an air of credence to the reported death of his leader with a view to providing cover to his leader's going underground.

Here we shall raise only one point, if the air crash did really take place and Netaji was involved in it, how and why each witness could give his version quite different from the other ? Whether Netaji had his trousers on or he was stripped completely naked,—how on this vital point those who were themselves involved in it—at the same time and same place of occurrence of the accident, could so irreconcilably differ ? Does it not create the suspicion that there was no plane crash at all, what to speak of Netaji's being involved in it ?

But these contradictions in various statements of the witnesses did not rouse any question in the mind of Shah Nawaz Khan. And for Khosla ? He preferred, as he did in case of other vital questions, to keep completely silent, as it was very difficult for him to explain away these intriguing issues by any kind of ingenuous argument.

## **21. Who died in the plane crash ?**

Who died and who survived after the allegedly nose-dived



air crash ? According to the list furnished by Shah Nawaz Committee—“(1) Lt.-Col. T. Sakai, (2) Lt.-Col. S. Nonogaki (3) Major T. Kuno, (4) Major Takahashi, (5) Capt. K. Arai, (6) Sergeant Okista and (7) Col. Habibur Rahman” survived the alleged air crash. The name of the fifth survivor according to Shah Nawaz Committee, remained unknown and along with him Navigator Okista vanished into unknown. No Japanese witness could say what exactly happened to them and neither Shah Nawaz Committee nor Khosla Commission could trace or cared to trace them. The Government of Japan also could not provide any clue to find them.

Who died in the plane crash ? According to Shah Nawaz Committee “(1) Pilot Takizawa, (2) Co-pilot Ayoagi, (3) Navigator Okista, (4) another crew Tominaga, (5) General Shidei and (6) Netaji died in the air crash or as a sequel to it”.

How w|o Ayoagi died ? Tara Kuno said both before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that although he tried to save Ayoagi, he could not be dragged out as he was trapped by broken parts of the cockpit. Takahashi also supported him. They, therefore, presumed, and Shah Nawaz Committee also believed that Ayoagi died inside the plane along with Takizawa.

But Nakamura “definitely said,” according to the Report of Shah Nawaz Committee that “Pilot Takizawa and co-pilot Ayoagi perished along with Gen. Shidei”.

However, contraverting all this evidence, *Dr. Yoshimi, the doctor of the Taihoku Hospital, told Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that Ayoagi did not perish inside the plane. He was brought alive to the hospital, where he was treated by him but he died afterwards in the hospital.*

Now, let us analyse the list of the dead and the survivors. In a nose-dived air crash it is quite logical to imagine that all the passengers, having no seat belts and no arrangement of seats, were likely to be jumbled up into a chaotic mess before the cockpit. This means that every passenger equally faced similar situation of either being killed or survived.

But who died ? The pilot Takizawa, Co-pilot Ayoagi, Navigator Okista and Tominaga—all the four crew and with them died Gen. Shidei and Netaji. Four crew were absolutely essential to fly the plane to Dairen—and Gen. Shidei, who was specially chosen by the Imperial Headquarters to escort Netaji to Manchuria. Finally to complete this list of dead—died also the principal figure of the whole story—Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. All the other non-essential persons, who had no direct function to discharge—all survived and survived with them the aide of Netaji, Col. Habibur Rahman, to confirm the story of air crash and Netaji's death.

Such extra-ordinary and fortuitous selection of the list of dead and the list of survivors, even the Providence perhaps would not have dared to plan ! But it appeared to Shah Nawaz Khan or Khosla as nothing intriguing or unnatural. They found nothing suspicious in the narration of selective deaths and selective survivals, they simply accepted the list of dead and survivors as factual. No curiosity was roused in them by the story of miraculous death and survival, which baffles the understanding of even a common man !

**22. Whether the actual hilly features around the Taihoku (Taipei) airport and the hilly features shown in the three pictures of the ruined planes were compared ?**

The Government of Japan produced three pictures of the ruined plane, purported to be the pictures of a single plane which crashed on August 18, 1945 at Taihoku airport. They were first given to Figgess Team and were then handed over respectively to Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission, and, as such, they formed part of the Commission's exhibits as well.

Shah Nawaz Committee *was not permitted* by the Indian Government to visit Taipei, so this Committee had no opportunity to verify whether they were actually three pictures of a single ruined plane or not. Khosla Commission visited the airport of Taipei (Taihoku), but when during field inspection it was found that under no circumstances these three pictures

could be the pictures of a single plane, even if they were photographed from different directions, Mr. Khosla bluntly refused to record this inspection report, about which we have already discussed in the preceding chapter.

Mr. Khosla, thus, deliberately avoided to record an extremely valuable piece of direct evidence which clearly contradicted the story of air crash.

### **23. What are the views of aeronautical experts on the report of the plane crash ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee asked Mr. A. M. N. Shastri, an Aircraft Inspector, Accident Investigation Branch of Government of India, to “reconstruct” and not to analyse the probability of such an air accident, as was reported by the Japanese witnesses and Habibur Rahman. Mr. Shastri observed : “It is not possible to establish the exact cause as to how the propeller came off from the engine from the available data. In the absence of details of construction of engine and various control systems and maintenance records, and without examining the wreckage, it is not possible to trace the exact defect causing the crash”. He further added : “It is difficult to predict anything accurately as far as survival of passengers in an aircraft accident is concerned”.

Shah Nawaz Committee, while accepting the report of the air crash as correct, asked Mr. Shastri to “reconstruct” the cause and the effect of the alleged plane crash. But even within this restricted ambit, what Mr. Shastri gave as his expert opinion amounts to virtual rejection of the story of the cause of air crash and possibility of survival of the passengers as rather doubtful, but Shah Nawaz Committee gave no importance to the opinion of this aeronautical expert.

Khosla Commission asked Air Vice Marshal, D.A.R. Nanda to appear before the Commission who also failed to give any clear opinion about the cause of the alleged air crash, as the picture appeared to him from the various versions of the crash as too hazy.

Mr. Hayashida and Frad Saito, co-authors of the book '*A Beacon Across Asia*', "asked a number of leading aeronautical experts of Japan with full knowledge of and experience of flying and maintenance of war-time combat planes to compare the varied versions and try to reconstruct the accident factually".

According to the opinion of this non-official Japanese Expert Committee : "In case of heavy bomber, normally the tail gets lifted half-way down the runway, but in this case according to Nakamura, the tail was not lifted off the ground until it ran three-fourth down the runway. The plane took off and made steep ascent when a loud explosion was heard, and the plane tilted to the left. The propeller and port engine fell out and the plane dived to the ground. . . . *Panel of Experts termed this version as completely irrelevant and illogical*".

The Panel of Experts observed further : "Type 97-2 bombers, fully loaded, normally took off to the air after running approximately three-fourth of the runway. *For two-engined bombers, it was physically impossible to make steep ascent immediately after take-off*".

The Panel of Experts then commented : "That 13 men with personal effects did not exceed the load limit was proven by the standard 7-hour flight from Tourane to Taipei (Taihoku). *Russia's airborne troops began entering Port Arthur on August 22, that is, four days after the accident occurred and Pilot Ayoagi was fully experienced after having flown from Taipei many times in his career*".

The Panel concluded : "*The entire Japanese air-operations before and during Pacific war did not record any other case of propeller falling out during take-off. If the plane dived to the ground, it could have only smashed itself into bits, killing all aboard instantly*".

The Panel of Japanese non-official experts, thus, totally rejected all the evidence either of the Japanese or of Habibur Rahman as untenable, stating that if their evidence were to be believed the plane would have smashed itself into bits, killing

all aboard instantly. What more authoritative opinion is required to reject the whole story of air crash as nothing but fictitious ! However, Mr. Khosla never cared to consider the opinion of the Japanese experts.

#### **24. What happened to Lt. Gen. Shidei ?**

Mr. Khosla tried to make us believe that as Netaji was treated as a “dispensable ally for the Government of Japan after surrender”, they did not bother much to show particular concern for Netaji, but could they show similar indifference to Gen. Shidei ?

Gen. Shidei was appointed Chief of the General Staff of the Burmese Army in place of Gen. Kwabe and he was on transfer to Manchuria as Chief of the General Staff of the most prestigious Kwantang Army of Japan. His status was junior only either to Gen. Sugiyama of the Imperial Headquarters or Field Marshal Terauchi of Saigon Headquarters. But what happened to such a great General of Japan ?

Only Tara Kuno gave an unbelievable story that Gen. Shidei died instantaneously due to fall of a petrol tank on him from the ceiling of the plane during the alleged air crash. However, neither Shah Nawaz Committee, nor Khosla Commission cared to know how Kuno could imagine that a petrol tank of a bomber was placed openly on such an odd position of Kuno’s description.

No other Japanese witness mentioned anything about Gen. Shidei, except Nakamura alias Yemamoto. Only a very Junior Officer like him—a Ground Engineer of Taihoku airport—gave an account of what happened to Gen. Shidei. According to Shah Nawaz Committee : “Capt. Nakamura definitely says that pilot Takizawa and co-pilot Ayaogi perished along with Gen. Shidei, and he helped to bury them and their entrails and put their ashes in three boxes.”

Gen. Isamaya, Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army and Gen. Ando of the same Army told Shah Nawaz Committee that they “did not know anything about the

plane accident till the next day''. Is it to be believed that the body of a very high ranking Gen. like Shidei could be buried or burnt by an officer of the Engineering Corps of the rank of a Captain ? Gen. Isamaya and Gen. Ando went to receive Gen. Tanaka, who took charge of the Burmese Army after Shidei on August 22, 1945, but they did not care to know how his body was cremated, what to speak of showing any funeral honour to him. Could such a story be reasonably believed ?

Since lack of any kind of report about Gen. Shidei was likely to raise serious doubts, the Government of Japan produced a death certificate of Gen. Shidei, stating that he died at Taihoku. It was such a fishy document that in course of argument by Shri Gobindo Mukhoty, Khosla himself admitted that it looked like a 'fraud' document.

*[ We shall discuss it later. ]*

The story of Netaji's death is inseparably linked with the story of Shidei's death and funeral. If Shidei's death proved to be fishy, the story of Netaji's death was also equally fishy. Shah Nawaz Committee at least casually mentioned about it, while Justice Khosla, although he called the death certificate of Gen. Shidei as fraud, did little either to probe in depth to find what exactly happened to Gen. Shidei or analyse the logical implications of the lack of information about him. In his Report, however, Mr. Khosla reproduced this fraudulent death certificate of Gen. Shidei as a proof of the alleged air crash.

### **25. Did the Japanese co-passengers know Netaji before ?**

Japanese authorities in their telegraphic messages or in secret documents always used Netaji's code name as 'T'. Netaji's travel from Saigon was an extremely secret matter—only General Terauchi, Col. Tada of his staff, Lt.-Gen. Isoda, the Chief of the Hikari Kikan, Mr. Hachia, Japanese Ambassador to Netaji's Government and Negishi, a Japanese diplomat, who carried the secret message of Japanese surrender to Netaji knew about Netaji's departure, besides Netaji's own Ministers who were present at Saigon. Even his Ministers did not exactly know where Netaji was going. All this information is found in Khosla Commission's documents.

Except Takahashi, who had earlier met Netaji only once, all other witnesses told both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that they did not know Netaji earlier. Even Takahashi suppressed the fact that he ever knew Netaji.

However, Nonogaki told Mr. Khosla that Col. Tada identified Netaji to him, but at the same time he gave him a warning that he should mention only Netaji's code name, which he could not remember. But Col. Tada was not at all present at the Saigon airport. Nonogaki also falsely claimed that he was the Chief pilot of the plane, but none else believed it or mentioned a word about it at any time. It means that Nonogaki told blatant lies to Mr. Khosla.

Major Taka Kuno claimed to be the Navigator of the plane, but Shah Nawaz Committee categorically mentioned on the positive evidence of the Japanese that Sgt. Okista was the Navigator. In his description about the air crash Kuno himself disclaimed that he was really the Navigator. He was not introduced to Netaji, yet a very junior officer like him claimed to have had his seat before Netaji and Shidei and had continued talk with Netaji.

According to authentic report, Netaji and Habibur Rahman entered the plane when its propellers were in motion and when all other passengers had boarded. Yet, all the Japanese witnesses claimed to know him when Netaji reached Tourane.

However, Mr. Khosla believed the story of the Japanese witnesses that they knew Netaji and travelled with him, although the movement of Netaji was treated by the Japanese authority as a guarded secret.

**26. Was any document produced either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission to prove that the plane carrying Netaji and Gen. Shidei either reached Taihoku or left it ?**

No paper of any kind—a flight chart or a take-off and air crash record—no document whatsoever to prove that the plane carrying Netaji and Gen. Shidei reached Taihoku or took off from its airport or any plane crashed on August 18, 1945—was

produced either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission. Only a news agency, like the Domei Agency, reported the air crash after 5 days and, the Intelligence Bureau of Formosa released a Press Note after 7 days about such an incident.

But Mr. Khosla accepted the oral evidence of Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Sakai and Takahashi as very truthful without any kind of document to support their stories as very reliable.

### **27. How injured Netaji was taken to hospital ?**

Even Shah Nawaz Committee critically remarked : “Whether Netaji was taken in a car, or jeep or truck or ‘shidosha’ and who travelled in which vehicle and who arrived first”,—no definite information was available. However, Mr. Khosla did not care to bother about this missing link of the story.

### **28. In which room of the Nonmon hospital (South-Gate Military Hospital) Netaji was kept ?**

Habibur Rahman said that he only shared a room with Netaji in the Nonmon Hospital but others said there were other patients also in that room. Habibur Rahman told that Netaji was taken to an operation theatre immediately after he was brought to the hospital, but Dr. Yoshimi who claimed to have treated him said that Netaji was not at all removed to any operation theatre.

Nonogaki claimed that he was all along by the side of ‘Bose’ but Takahashi told Khosla Commission that “Sakai, Nonogaki and myself were in the next room”. Nonogaki’s friend Tara Kuno on the other hand said, “that very night he was taken to Hokatu Army hospital, where Nonogaki was also taken”.

However, Mr. Khosla believed that Nonogaki really stayed by the side of Netaji till he breathed his last.

### **29. How the doctors gave medical aid to Netaji ?**

Dr. Yoshimi claimed that, assisted by Dr. Tsuruta, he gave all kinds of medical aids to Netaji. He further said that Netaji was brought completely naked to the hospital only with



shoes on his feet. But Habibur Rahman, in all his statements, repeatedly said that Netaji was never stripped off his trousers, only his bush shirt was taken off. He further said that Netaji's face was scorched, his bush shirt had caught fire and he had a 4-inch cut on his head.

However, Dr. Yoshimi said that Netaji's naked body was found wholly turned grey due to severe burns, but he had no cut on his head. Dr. Yoshimi claimed that he bandaged the whole body of Netaji except his face and he recorded his temperature as 39 degree C and pulse beat as 120. As to when Netaji was brought to the hospital, he gave out different times to different investigating agencies—ranging from 12.30 p.m. to 4 p.m. We shall discuss in the next chapter how the 'most truthful witness' of Mr. Khosla—Dr. Yoshimi—made ridiculously contradictory statements.

### 30. How long Netaji was conscious ?

Dr. Yoshimi told Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that when Netaji was brought to hospital he was completely in his senses. But at another place Dr. Yoshimi said that Netaji was all along inquiring whether some telegrams had been sent and whether inquiries made about his other colleagues. Dr. Yoshimi added that Netaji lost consciousness at 7 p.m., but Takamaya, another Japanese witness, wrote in *Emuri Shimbun* in 1969 that he talked to Netaji between 8 and 9 p.m. Dr. Yoshimi, also wrote same thing in the same paper.

How Netaji talked to Dr. Yoshimi or others ? An interpreter named Nakamura (not Capt. Nakamura) was brought to interpret Netaji's English into Japanese. But controverting Dr. Yoshimi, this Nakamura told Shah Nawaz Committee : "Netaji spoke only three times—the first time, inquiring about other INA officers' arrival at Taihoku, the second time when he was feeling acute pain in his head, and about the third time he did not mention anything."

Habibur Rahman said that Netaji asked for water once or twice and asked once whether Hasan (Abid) was there. He also told Shah Nawaz Committee that before he breathed his

last, he dictated a message to him for the Indian people. But during cross-examination by Shah Nawaz Committee he said that he was lying in the next bed, when a nurse told him that Netaji died at 9 p.m.

*[Habibur Rahman's various statements will be discussed later.]*

What did Nonogaki say ? He told Shah Nawaz and Khosla that all along he was by the side of Netaji and talked to him many times, but Tara Kuno said that Nonogaki and others were removed to another hospital.

Discarding all these contradictory statements, Mr. Khosla believed only the statement of Dr. Yoshimi.

### **31. When Netaji's reported death took place ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee recorded : "Dr. Yoshimi said that Netaji breathed his last after 8 p.m. Dr. Yoshimi, Dr. Tsuruta two nurses, Col. Habibur Rahman, Mr. Nakamura and one military policeman were present at his bed side at the time of Netaji's death. According to Dr. Tsuruta the time was 7 p.m. or 8 p.m. Col. Habibur Rahman mentioned the time as 9 p.m. Dr. Yoshimi, when he was in detention in Stanley jail in Hongkong in 1946, gave the time of death as 11 p.m. to the British Intelligence Officers. According to telegram sent by the Chief of the Staff, Southern Command to O. C. Hikari Kikan on August 20, 1945, the death took place at mid-night. Nonogaki and Tara Kuno said that they were removed to another hospital that same night. Takahashi could only say that Netaji died the same night. Only Captain Arai said that he heard from a nurse that Netaji died at 10 p.m.

Habibur Rahman in his signed statement, which was kept all along with the casket carrying the alleged ashes of Netaji, recorded the time of death as 9 p.m. After the Intelligence Bureau of Formosa in its Press release noted the time of death as 'O' hour of August 19, 1945, Habibur Rahman changed the time to 12 mid-night, and said so to the Figgess team at Tokyo six weeks thereafter. During his interrogation in Red Fort he

said that he was not present by the side of Netaji when he died, but a nurse told him that he had passed away the same night.

*[More about Habibur Rahman in a separate chapter.]*

Baffled by such contradictory statements Shah Nawaz Committee observed : “The evidence of the fellow injured persons does not help to establish the correct hour. So the time of death cannot be established with accuracy ; it could be anytime between 8 p.m. and midnight of August 18, 1945.”

Now what about Khosla Commission’s report ? Although the over-smart witness, Nonogaki, told Shah Nawaz Committee that he and others were removed the same evening to another hospital, he boldly came forward to tell Khosla Commission that he was present at the time of Netaji’s death and it was 11 p.m. Nay, he claimed further that it was he who reported it to the South-East Asia Headquarters at Saigon, as if, he was in charge of the Military Headquarters of Taihoku. No other witness supported his claim.

Takahashi told the Commission that he and Nonogaki were in Nonmon hospital, i.e., where Netaji was reported to be hospitalised *till August 27, 1945*. But Tara Kuno told Shah Nawaz Committee that Nonogaki, himself and others were removed to Hokatu hospital on the same night. But Tara Kuno promptly told Mr. Khosla that Netaji died at 7 p.m. although he told Shah Nawaz Committee that along with other injured persons he heard the news next day. Again this man said during cross-examination that he heard the news of Netaji’s death on August 20, 1945.

Lt.-Col. Shibuya told Shah Nawaz Committee that when he visited the hospital on August 18, in the evening he found Netaji lying dead in his bed. But the same honest gentleman told Khosla Commission that he heard the news about Netaji’s death next day. Dr. Yoshimi and Dr. Tsuruta wrote in *Emuri Shimbun* in 1969 that Netaji died at 10 p.m. However, Dr. Yoshimi told Khosla Commission that Netaji was *brought to hospital at 12-30 p.m.* and he lived for 12 hours i.e., he died at 11-30 p.m. Dr. Yoshimi claimed that he exactly remembered that Netaji was running 39 degree C temperature and his pulse

beat was 120 and he also recollected how many times he gave injections and administered what medicines to Netaji but could not remember the exact time of death of Netaji. Dr. Yoshimi changed the time of death not less than on six occasions as to be any time between 7 p.m. to 11-30 p.m.

Inconsistencies and discrepancies regarding this vital information about the time of Netaji's death were found to be so baffling that Shah Nawaz Committee felt constrained to make sharply critical remarks about it. But it caused little concern to Mr. Khosla. He meticulously recorded in his Report that "the plane left Saigon exactly at 5 p.m., reached Tourane at 7-45 p.m., arrived at Taihoku at 2 p.m. and took off at 2-30 p.m." but about timing of alleged death of Netaji, he vaguely noted in his findings that 'Bose' died at 'midnight'.

### **32. How the Formosan Army Headquarters received the report of Netaji's death ?**

What happened after Netaji was reported to have died ? According to Shah Nawaz Committee : "Dr. Yoshimi informed the Military Headquarters of the sad event." But according to the same Report "no general, not even a lieutenant colonel but only a junior officer of the rank of major, named Nagatomo, was sent down from the Headquarters to the hospital. He came and saw Netaji's body lying on the hospital bed. Major Nagatomo posted soldiers to guard the body".

The Report further recorded : "The Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army, General Isamaya, was candid enough to say that he learnt of the accident when he went to his office next morning. Although Lt.-Col. Nonogaki named two headquarters staff officers who came on receipt of the information when Netaji was alive, the staff officers themselves, namely Col. Miyata and Major Nagatomo said that they arrived after Netaji died. Major Nagatomo says that immediately after receiving information General Ando, Commander of the Formosan Army, went to the hospital to see Netaji. He also says that General Ando attended the subsequent funeral ceremony".

But listen to what General Isamaya said about it ! According to the same Shah Nawaz Committee's Report, "General Isamaya, Chief of the General Staff, gives a completely different story. He says that neither he nor Gen. Ando went either to the hospital to pay respect to Netaji's body or attended any funeral ceremony. He goes on to say that the Army Commander had shut up himself in his house from the day of surrender of Japan and did not come out".

Gen. Isamaya told the Committee that he received the news of accident next day when he was going to office as if he had shut himself up in his room only upto the particular date of August 18. This unsatisfactory plea provoked Shah Nawaz Committee to resentfully remark : "That explanation does not appear very convincing when he himself said that a week later, after the alleged air crash, he went to receive Dr. Ba Maw, President of Burma and General Tanaka, Chief of the General Staff of the Burmese Army, who were on their way to Tokyo. Apparently no particular interest was taken by the local Army Command as to what happened to Netaji's body. A comparatively junior officer was detailed, and thereafter no further interest apparently was taken."

Dr. Yoshimi said further, according to Shah Nawaz Committee, that the doctors, nurses and Habibur Rahman wept and wreaths were placed on the body and they saluted Netaji, but the same Report commented that "however, Habibur Rahman gave no details" about such story.

It is evident from the Report of Shah Nawaz Committee that General Isamaya, Dr. Yoshimi, Major Nagatomo indulged in deliberate lies.

How strange was it that the Formosan Headquarters did not know anything about the air crash and the report of death of Netaji and Gen. Shidei ? They might not care for 'Chandra Bose' as Mr. Khosla assumed that after surrender the Japanese had not shown even scanty regard for Netaji. But what about Gen. Shidei ? If the air crash really took place and Gen. Shidei and Netaji died, could the Headquarters be kept uninformed and when, they received the news of their death later, could they

ignore Gen. Shidei ? These are simple yet very pertinent questions,—nevertheless, they roused no queries either in the mind of Shah Nawaz or Khosla !

**33. Where the alleged body of Netaji was kept ?**

Dr. Yoshimi told Shah Nawaz Committee : “The body was removed to one corner of the room and a screen was put around it, and according to Japanese customs flowers and candles were placed by its side, and Major Nagatomo posted soldiers to guard the body”. But the Committee observed that Habibur Rahman kept completely silent about such details.

How could Major Nagatomo exercise the right of posting guard without instructions from the Army Headquarters ? General Isamaya and General Ando said that they knew nothing about Netaji on August 18. Does it not appear as strange that a Major knew about the arrival of Netaji and his death afterwards but not the Headquarters of Formosa ?

Mr. Khosla quoted Chang Chuen of Taiwan (Witness No. 207) in his report, as a proof of Netaji’s death. He wrote : Chang Chuen was ordered to go to the hospital and stand guard on Bose’s coffin on which was written the name of ‘Chandra Bose’. He also saw some injured persons there. On the following day a truck came and carried the body to the crematorium.”

This story contradicts Dr. Yoshimi’s evidence. Firstly, Dr. Yoshimi said that the reported body of Netaji was kept in a corner behind the cover of a curtain. Secondly, he said to Shah Nawaz : “His lieutenant (Habibur) went away with the body next day.” Dr. Yoshio Ishii also told Mr. Khosla that the next morning the body was taken away in a truck.

Now, to suit his convenience, Mr. Khosla quoted only a part of Chang Chuen’s evidence and skipped other vital parts of the same. Chang Chuen said that he was posted as a guard on August 19 ; secondly, the coffin was placed in the middle of the room ; thirdly, there were no flowers, or candles around the coffin, and fourthly, the coffin was taken away the

next day. The other part of his evidence, we shall discuss later. But all this information given by him wholly contradicted the evidence of Dr. Yoshimi and Dr. Yoshio Ishii.

Mr. Khosla not only suppressed other parts of the evidence of Chang Chuen, it did not even strike him that if he was to believe Chang Chuen, why the coffin, instead of being kept in a mortuary or in a corner covered by a curtain, as told by Dr. Yoshimi, was so demonstratively kept in the middle of the room among other patients ? Why 'Chandra Bose' was written in big Japanese letters on the coffin ? Was it intended to make people believe that the body in the coffin was that of 'Chandra Bose'—although none saw whose body it was ? No such pertinent question troubled Mr. Justice Khosla, he simply recorded it as a proof of Netaji's death.

*[ More about it later ].*

#### **34. Which is the date of cremation of the alleged dead body ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee's Report noted : "In his statement before us Habibur Rahman had given the date of cremation as August 20, but in a statement signed by him dated August 24, 1945, the date was given August 22."

Was it an inadvertent mistake on the part of Habibur Rahman : Facts show that it was not. The Imperial Headquarters at Tokyo, in their telegrams to Formosan and Saigon Headquarters mentioned the alleged date of cremation as August 20. It can be presumed that to avoid contradiction with the date announced by the highest authority, Habibur Rahman suitably changed the date later to August 20. If Netaji had really died, could such a sacrilege be committed by his most trusted aide ? And this is not all, Habibur Rahman did more. At Tokyo, he told the Counter Intelligence Corps of Figgess that the body was cremated on August 21. But during interrogation by the British Intelligence at Red Fort in October, 1945, he said the body was cremated on August 23.

Now, according to the Japanese Headquarters telegram, cremation date was noted as August 20, but although the Military Intelligence Bureau issued a press release for publica-

tion on August 25, it intriguingly avoided the date of cremation.

What about evidence of others? Dr. Yoshimi and Dr. Yoshio Ishi fixed the date as August 20 in corroboration with the date of Imperial Headquarters. Nakamura also supported them. Major Nagatomo, who was said to have been detailed to look after the body and its funeral said that the body was cremated on August 19. And the Taiwanese witness Chang Chuen noted the date as August 21, 1945.

S. A. Iyer was flown to Formosa, along with Col. Tada with an assurance that he would be shown the body of Netaji, but it was not done, although he reached Formosa on August 20, 1945. It means, if really the reported body was there till August 20, it was not cremated.

Then again in Tokyo broadcast on August 23, 1945, it was stated that Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo. Intriguingly, although the Imperial Headquarters' telegram noted the date of cremation as August 20, yet why it was not mentioned in the Tokyo broadcast ?

In the face of such glaring discrepancies Shah Nawaz Committee haltingly made only a vague remark : "The cremation is likely to have taken place sometime later i.e., later than the date, on receipt of second telegram from Imperial Headquarters on August 19, 1945".

According to various evidences, the date of cremation could be August 19, 20, 21, 22 or 23, 1945. Mr. Khosla did not feel any necessity whatsoever in resolving this puzzling issue of such vital importance. These contradictory versions did not rouse any suspicion in his mind. He faithfully corroborated the unconvincing date indirectly given by the Imperial Headquarters. He wrote in his Report : "Bose succumbed to his injuries the same night" and "two days later Bose's body was cremated."

### **35. Who attended the alleged funeral ?**

According to the recorded report of Shah Nawaz Committee : "In one or two trucks the body was carried to the crematorium and Col. Habibur Rahman, Major Nagatomo, J.



Nakamura (interpreter), a Buddhist priest and the crematorium attendant Mr. Chu Tsan were present''. Shah Nawaz Committee included the name of Chu Tsan from the evidence of Harin Shah who appeared before it and produced a photograph to identify the cremator. When shown the photograph of the cremator, the son of Chu Tsan declared in the presence of Mr. Khosla that it was not his father's photograph,—Mr. Khosla noted it in his inspection report of the crematorium. Again, according to Khosla Commission's Taiwanese witness, Chang Chuen, no senior officer attended the funeral ; no priest was there ; no honour of any kind was shown ; no flowers were placed and no Indian was there when the blanket wrapped body with the coffin was placed into the furnace. Habibur Rahman also told the British Intelligence in the course of his interrogation, according to the evidence of B. C. Chakravarty before the Khosla Commission, that he did not accompany the body to crematorium.

Now, what about the four star witnesses of Mr. Khosla ? Although they claimed that they were present in every scene of the story, they conveniently cut themselves off from the funeral scene. Even Lt.-Col. Shibuya, who claimed that he was directed to look after the body, said that he did not attend the funeral. Major Nagatomo said that General Ando attended the funeral, but General Ando denied it before Shah Nawaz Committee.

The same mystery shrouded the reported funeral of General Shidei as well. Only Capt. Nakamura claimed that he buried Gen. Shidei. Similarly Nagatomo claimed that he alone conducted the funeral of 'Chandra Bose'. This extraordinary story did not rouse any question in the judicial mind of Mr. Khosla. He ignored it completely as a matter of no consequence !

### **36. Did anybody see the reported body of Netaji ?**

Habibur Rahman told the interrogating Intelligence Officer at Red Fort in October, 1945 that he was neither allowed to see the body nor allowed to accompany it during funeral.

Mr. Khosla only noted one portion of the evidence of the

Taiwanese witness, Chang Chuen but deliberately suppressed the other very significant portion of his evidence in which he said that they were strictly prohibited from seeing the body, or uncovering it. According to his evidence, the whole body was covered with white clothes and then wholly wrapped by blanket, and it was put into the furnace in the same covered condition. Nagatomo, who claimed that he conducted the funeral and cremation function, also said that the body was not opened and the whole coffin, as it was, put into the furnace, for which the opening of the furnace had to be widened.

The photograph of the covered body, said to be that of Netaji's, corroborated this evidence. This photograph, which was produced by the Government of Japan, looked like a completely covered bundle of an unidentifiable object from which nobody could find or identify whose body it contained.

Why the dead body was not allowed to be shown to anybody? Why the police guards were strictly forbidden to make any attempt to see the dead body? It was an extraordinarily intriguing step. But it evoked no query in the mind of either Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan or Mr. Khosla. They accepted it as fact that Netaji's body was cremated at Taihoku.

*[ We shall discuss later why the body was not allowed to be seen by anybody.]*

**37. Why a photograph of the reported body of Netaji was not taken ?**

The Government of Japan, as documentary proofs of air crash and Netaji's death at Taihoku, produced five photographs,—three photographs of the wreckages of the alleged crashed plane, one photograph of Habibur Rahman sitting beside a casket said to be containing Netaji's ashes and one photograph of a covered object stated to be the body of Netaji.

Habibur Rahman's photograph with that of a casket does not prove in any way that the casket really contained the alleged ashes of Netaji.

As to the photograph of the object said to be that of the

dead body of Netaji, it showed nothing but a canvas-covered object, which could be anything. An inescapable question arises, why a photograph of the body of Netaji was not taken if he had really died ? Dr. Yoshima argued that taking of photograph of a dead body was against Japanese custom. But it is a self-defeating argument, as a photograph of a covered object said to be that of Netaji's dead body was already taken and produced before the investigating team of Figgess.

Habibur Rahman said that he did not allow taking of a photograph of the body as the face was swollen and it got disfigured. But Dr. Yoshimi told that he bandaged the whole body of Netaji, except his face. Had the face been disfigured due to injury, it would also have been bandaged, but it was not. Again, Habibur Rahman in his statement to Shah Nawaz Committee said Netaji had no injury on his face, only it was scorched by heat of the flames. Therefore, Habibur Rahman's argument also did not stand anywhere. Further, he told the British Intelligence at Red Fort that two photographs of the body of Netaji were taken. But both of them proved to be fictitious, or otherwise the Japanese Government would have surely produced them. Further, Habibur Rahman said that he asked the Japanese to carry the body either to Saigon or Singapore, but it was not agreed to.

One single photograph of the body of Netaji, if he really died at Taihoku, would have set at rest all controversies about the air crash and allegedly subsequent death of Netaji. A photograph of the face, disfigured or swollen, would have provided opportunity for scientific identification of the body, if it was really that of Netaji but only a photograph of an unidentifiable bundle was produced.

Japan took special care to take 5 other photographs but avoided the main object, i.e., the alleged dead body of Netaji which unavoidably strengthened the suspicion that they really tried to hide the fact about the story of Netaji's death.

These five photographs were accepted by Shah Nawaz Committee as reliable documents and they were produced as well before Khosla Commission by the Government of India and

Mr. Khosla admitted them as Commission's exhibits. But in his report Mr. Khosla observed :

“The five photographs submitted with Figgess (CSDIC) letter of November 17, 1945, were produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee and formed part of the records of its proceedings. The same photographs were produced before the present Commission, but as they are not relied upon in the absence of who accepted them as part of evidentiary material and all their depicts, they cannot be held to have been proved. *Moreover, they are inadmissible in evidence as they do not constitute direct or primary evidence either of air crash or Bose's death.*”

Figgess team accepted them and Shah Nawaz Committee also accepted them as part of evidentiary materials and all their reports formed part of the exhibits of the Khosla Commission, which he very often quoted as and when they served his convenience to support his findings. But on further scrutiny, as these photographs were likely to explode the whole story of the air crash and Netaji's death, Mr. Khosla on a very fragile legal pretence refused to recognise them as admissible in evidence. No other judge perhaps would have taken recourse to such immoral subterfuge to scuttle an inquiry, which involved the greatest hero of Indian freedom.

**38. Why a wrong report of carrying Netaji's body to Tokyo was circulated by the Imperial Headquarters and why Tokyo Radio had broadcast it ?**

The Tokyo broadcast on August 23, 1945, categorically stated that Netaji in injured condition was flown to Tokyo and he died in Japan. Imperial Headquarters of Tokyo informed Terauchi's Headquarters and the Chief of the Hikari Kikan, Lt.-Gen. Isoda, in a secret message that Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo.

However, neither General Isamaya, nor General Ando but a very junior officer like Capt. Nakamura told Shah Nawaz Committee that on receipt of a second telegram from Tokyo Headquarters the body was cremated at Taihoku. A childish plea for not sending the body to Tokyo was also offered by

stating that no plane was found suitable enough to carry the big coffin containing the body of Netaji to Tokyo.

Lt.-Gen. Isoda, on the basis of Imperial Headquarters' message, insisted during his interrogation by the Anglo-American Intelligence in September, 1945, that Netaji's body was indeed flown to Tokyo and it was not cremated at Taihoku.

According to Imperial Headquarters' indirect report, the body was cremated at Taihoku on August 20, 1945, but even then, why Tokyo broadcast on August 23, stated that Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo and he died in Japan ?

*[The mystery about such misleading report discussed later.]*

The story immediately creates the impression that General Isoda, who was a party to Netaji's plan of escape, persistently said till mid-September, 1945, that Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo, because it was the original plan to so announce. But Khosla attached little importance to this intriguing report from Tokyo that Netaji died in Tokyo.

### **39. Why S. A. Iyer was not taken to Taihoku ?**

Col. Tada, a Staff Officer of Terauchi's Headquarters and Lt.-Gen. Isoda, Chief of the Hikari Kikan were the two principal architects of Netaji's plan of escape from Saigon. Mr. Khosla also did not refute the fact that Isoda and Tada had secret consultation with Netaji before his departure from Saigon.

On August 19, Col. Tada asked S. A. Iyer to fly with him to Tokyo to meet Netaji there. At about 5 p.m., when the plane landed at Canton, Col. Tada told Iyer that Netaji died in an air crash on August 18, 1945. Iyer was completely upset by this unexpected news and he asked Tada that unless he was shown the dead body, no Indian could believe this report. Tada agreed to take him to Taihoku to show him the body of Netaji.

When the plane reached Formosa on August 20, Iyer was surprised to find that it was not Taihoku but Taichu, another airport in Formosa. Iyer flared up in anger, when Tada

consoled him by saying that as it was not safe to land at Taihoku after dusk, and the plane was, therefore, diverted to Taichu airport and he would be taken to Taihoku next day. But next day Iyer was flown not to Taihoku but directly to Tokyo.

Why Iyer was not taken to Taihoku ? He could have seen the body of Netaji and the crashed plane as well if taken to Taihoku. But, although Tada assured him earlier, Iyer was flown not to Taihoku but to Tokyo.

If Netaji really died at Taihoku, Col. Tada would not have deliberately played false with Iyer. He would have been straightway taken to Taihoku and shown the dead body of Netaji. This behaviour of the Japanese with Iyer will create doubts even in the mind of a layman about the veracity of the air crash report and Netaji's death, but it created no reaction in the legal mind of Mr. Khosla.

**40. Why no official communique was issued by the Imperial Headquarters regarding the report of death of Netaji and Gen. Shidei ?**

It was obligatory on the part of the Imperial Headquarters of Tokyo to announce, even just in one line, in an official communique the news, if not of the death of Netaji, at least of Gen. Shidei, if that really happened. The text of August 23 radio-broadcast was reported to have been circulated by the Domei News Agency but startlingly, S. A. Iyer disclosed later, that actually the news was not circulated by that Agency, but on being asked by the Imperial Headquarters, it was Iyer who drafted the text of the news which was falsely circulated in the name of the Domei News Agency. Iyer had no knowledge whether Netaji died in any air crash or not. Yet he was asked to draft the text of the broadcast. Further, according to instructions of the Tokyo Authorities, the broadcast, again falsely stated five days after the alleged crash that Netaji died in Japan.

At Taihoku also, the Formosan Headquarters did not issue any official communique, but a press briefing was circulated by the Intelligence Bureau. It is further seen from the text that *the news was prepared by the Bureau on August 22, but it was*

published on August 25, and that too, giving version of the alleged air crash and death of Netaji and Shidei differently from the version of the Tokyo broadcast.

It is obvious that for reasons of their own, the Imperial Headquarters did not want to directly involve themselves to confirm the report of the alleged death of either Netaji or Gen. Shidei.

**41. Why death news was disclosed five days later and that too falsely ?**

Netaji reportedly died on August 18, 1945 : The Imperial Headquarters had sent secret message to Saigon Headquarters about the alleged incident on August 19. And yet, why the news was disclosed by the Tokyo Radio five days after and that too falsely telling the Anglo-Americans that Netaji died in Japan ?

The Formosan Intelligence Bureau drafted the news on August 22, yet, why the news was given to the press after 7 days of the reported death of Netaji and Shidei ? Why the news about cremation at Taihoku was suppressed ?

It created suspicion in the minds of the British, as noted by Wavell in his *Viceroy's Journal*, that it was deliberately done to provide sufficient time to Netaji to reach his secret underground destination.

**42. Who carried the 'ashes' from Taihoku to Tokyo and then to Renkoji temple ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee recorded : "General Shidei's ashes were sent to Tokyo a week after, through General Tanaka en route to Tokyo with Dr. Ba Maw." How could Shah Nawaz believe it ? According to his own report, no body except Capt. Nakamura, a very junior officer claimed that he cremated Gen. Shidei and entrained his ashes in a box.

According to evidence before Shah Nawaz Committee, Habibur Rahman, Sakai and Hayashida carried the alleged ashes of Netaji to Tokyo on September 5, 1945. Here too three witnesses, according to the report of the Committee, gave three

different versions as to how the alleged ashes were carried to Renkoji temple at Tokyo.

Ramamurthi, the Chief of Indian Independence League, told Shah Nawaz Committee that the alleged ashes were taken to the Renkoji temple on September 12 or 13, 1945. But Shah Nawaz Committee disbelieved it. Relying on the report of another junior person, I. Murti, the Committee, noted that, "all the Tokyo INA Cadets, J. Ramamurthi and his brother, Mrs. Sahay and her family members, INA broadcasting unit and Mr. Iyer took the ashes in a procession to the Renkoji temple. About 10 or 15 Japanese military officers and civilians were also present in the procession".

However, the present priest of the Renkoji temple told the Convener of the National Committee that some time in the first week of September, *only three or four persons after dusk came in a rickshaw and requested him to keep the casket*, telling him further to keep it secretly for which he would be rewarded in future. He also mentioned three names—"Naraina, Virik and Hayashida" who carried the ashes. This was told to the Commission by the Convener during his deposition before it.

Hayashida, on being contacted by the Convener flatly denied it in presence of Gen. Kawabe, Gen. Yakuru and Mrs. Imori, saying that he was then in jail.

Virik in his deposition before the Commission said that he alone carried the ash-casket to the Renkoji temple. 'Naraina' could not be contacted or identified.

Even regarding the final chapters of the story, Shah Nawaz Committee had to remark, "It is true that such precautions as are necessary to prove indisputable identity (i.e., of ashes) were not taken. At no stage was the casket containing the ashes sealed, no formal receipt issued, nor again continuous watch kept over it. So, although there cannot be *absolute* certainty, nevertheless, it can be said that *in all probability* the ashes kept in Renkoji temple are the ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose".

What a strange observation ! Without absolute certainty,



the ashes could be said 'in all probability to be that of Netaji,' as if the identity of ashes of a person like Netaji could be left to be a matter of probability ! Mr. Khosla paid no attention, whatsoever, to this point.

#### **43. What happened to the treasures?**

It has been told by INA witnesses to the Khosla Commission that before leaving Singapore, Netaji withdrew 9 out of 10 crores yen from the Azad Hind Bank deposits. 15,00,000 yen were sent to Tokyo Independence League, and a large part of it was paid to the men and officers of INA and the Azad Hind Government employees as their advance salaries. Netaji carried with him a large amount of yen and four bags of gold and jewellery.

It has been reported that some jewellery were found scattered over the Taihoku aerodrome, and these were collected and deposited with J. Ramamurthi in Tokyo.

Regarding this treasure Mr. Khosla wrote : "I do not propose to say anything about valuables or INA treasures, which Bose was carrying with him. This matter was not inquired into".

If Khosla had a mind to pursue the alternative line of investigation, namely Netaji's safe escape after the fake air crash story, the exact amount of treasure found at Taihoku, would have given him a clue to verify, whether Netaji was really involved in a plane crash or not.

#### **44. Why the crematorium certificate produced by the Government of Japan was rejected by Khosla Commission ?**

Mr. Harin Shah produced a copy of death certificate and a copy of cremation permit issued by the Municipal Bureau of Taihoku (Taipei). The National Committee also produced photostat copies of these two certificates to Khosla Commission at Taipei.

The Government of Japan produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee a copy of cremation permit giving in writing that it was an authentic copy.

But Mr. Khosla straightway refused to consider it as a valid document. Why ? Because, on translation of the Japanese script, it was found that if this certificate was accepted as an official document of the Government of Japan then the whole story of Netaji's death would have turned to be fictitious.

**45. Why either the Imperial Headquarters or the Formosan Headquarters did not hold any inquiry at all ?**

Shah Nawaz Committee's Report resentfully recorded, "Unfortunately, no formal inquiry into the air crash was carried out by the Japanese authorities at that time . . . *One would have expected a formal inquiry into an air crash which is more or less a routine matter. More so, as the plane carried persons like Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose and Lt.-Gen. Shidei*".

Shah Nawaz Committee asked General Isamaya, the Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army, why a formal or even a routine inquiry was not made ? General Isamaya first said, "Since the aeroplane in question did not belong to Formosan Army, the Headquarters of the Formosan Army had no responsibility to hold inquiry into the matter." The General realised soon that it was a very unconvincing reply and he then hastened to add : "It was the duty of the Commander within whose area an air crash took place to enquire and report to the higher authorities. *In this case, a report was submitted to the Imperial Headquarters by my Staff Officer, Lt.-Col. Shibuya through me*".

Shah Nawaz Committee also examined Lt.-Col. Shibuya, but Shibuya flatly "*denied knowledge of any such inquiry, and said that the responsibility of holding it lay with the Air Division concerned.*"

Shah Nawaz Committee pursued the matter further with the Foreign Office of Japan. On behalf of this office, the Committee was informed on June 4, 1956, "*As a result of investigation made at the Operation Section, Repatriation Relief Bureau, Ministry of Health and Welfare, it has been revealed that no*

*official inquiry Commission to determine the causes of the accident was held so far''.*

It is to be noted that a man like Gen. Isamaya, who was the Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army, told lies on two occasions. Firstly, he untruthfully said, that Lt.-Col. Shibuya held an inquiry, and secondly, he falsely implicated the Imperial Headquarters to say that the report of the inquiry was sent to the highest authority through him.

It cannot be taken as a worthwhile excuse to say that inquiry could not be held due to chaotic conditions prevailing either in Japan or Formosa. MacArthur landed at Tokyo on or about September 7, 1945 and even thereafter, except overall control of the Government authority of Japan by him, the administration and military organisation remained in the hands of the Japanese for quite a long time. Formosa was occupied by the Americans and the Chinese much later. *It becomes obvious that the Imperial Headquarters did not deliberately hold any inquiry about the alleged air crash at Taihoku either of formal or routine in nature.*

### MOCKERY OF TWO INQUIRIES

The above chronological analysis of the alleged events connected with the story of Netaji's death in the form of 45 questions and answers, based on the documents and evidence recorded by Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission expose irrefutably how superficially these investigations about the fate of the epic hero of the Indian freedom were made and how they turned to be nothing but mere mockery of inquiries.

Contradictions, discrepancies, divergences and incongruities in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses were so innumerable, attempts at suppression or distortion of facts were so vivid and the narration of the story of flight and alleged death of Netaji appeared so incoherent and fancied that Shah Nawaz Committee could not desist from making many critical observations about the evidence and peculiar behaviour of the Japanese witnesses and that of Habibur Rahman particularly.

It was found that even men like Gen. Isamaya, the Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army and General Ando of the Local Formosan Command, did not hesitate to indulge in deliberate lies before Shah Nawaz Committee.

However, Shah Nawaz Committee, although raised many pertinent questions in regard to the veracity of the evidence of the Japanese witnesses, did not logically pursue the matter to unearth the intriguing causes that led them to make so manifestly contradictory or false statements.

Shah Nawaz Committee, it appeared, did not dare to controvert the public statement of Pandit Nehru in Parliament in which he had categorically stated that the story of "Netaji's death was a settled fact beyond doubt".

The Shah Nawaz Committee queerly concluded that "although there cannot be absolute certainty, nevertheless, it can be said, in all probability that the ashes kept in the Renkoji temple, Tokyo, are the ashes of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose... If the ashes are to be genuine, Renkoji temple cannot obviously be the final resting place". Although the Committee could not be absolutely certain about the identity of the ashes except considering it to be a matter of probability and although the Committee itself questioned that if the ashes were genuine,— nevertheless, it did not feel any constraint to illogically and abruptly conclude that 'Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose died ten years ago'.

The terms of reference of the Khosla Commission were not restricted to inquire into 'alleged death of Netaji', but 'to probe into the circumstances of disappearance of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose'. Its terms were quite comprehensive, and moreover, it was not a 'Committee' like that of Shah Nawaz Committee, but it was constituted as a 'Judicial Commission' with all the powers and judicial authorities of a court vested in it. But the performance of this 'Judicial Commission' turned to be worse than the earlier 'Committee'.

Mr. Khosla did not notice even a single instance of contradiction or discrepancy or incongruity in the evidence of the

Japanese witnesses, nor did he find any lapse of duty on the part of the war-time Government of Japan in regard to their strange manner of broadcasting the story of Netaji's death. He made no critical comment about the intriguing contradictions found in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses in any part of his report. Rather, most solicitously he came forward to offer alibi after alibi to explain away things which appeared as manifestly inexplicable.

In arriving at his findings, Mr. Khosla relied on the hearsay evidence of 18 Japanese, who simply said that they heard about the news of Netaji's death.

The four pillars of the edifice of his findings are the four Japanese witnesses—Lt.-Col. Nonogaki, Lt.-Col. Sakai, Major Tara Kuno and Major Takahashi,—who claimed without any documentary proof that they travelled in the same plane with Netaji. There was a fifth Japanese witness, named Capt. Keikichi Arai, who also claimed to have travelled in the same plane, but as his evidence proved rather very inconvenient to Mr. Khosla, he was left out of the list of his 'most important Japanese witnesses'. The fifth Japanese witness, whom he called 'a witness of convincing truth' was Dr. Yoshima. Here also he dropped the evidence of two other doctors, namely of Dr. Tsuruta and Dr. Yoshio Ishi, who also claimed to have medically treated Netaji at the Nonmon Hospital at Taihoku, as their versions appeared equally inconvenient to Mr. Khosla.

In this chapter it has been shown how truthful and how important these five Japanese witnesses were in deposing before the Khosla Commission. Each of these witnesses contradicted himself ridiculously and belied the evidence of one another on innumerable counts. But these facts of contradiction, falsehood and fancied versions proved to be of no consequences to the judicial discretion of Mr. Khosla, as he was more impressed by the 'frank demeanour'—proverbially enigmatic demeanour of Mongolian homosapiens—than the irreconcilably contradictory version of their evidence.

What these five witnesses really told Khosla Commission ? They unanimously told the same story—outline of which ap-

peared in every press in Japan. They said that a plane left Saigon with Netaji and Gen. Shidei on August 17, 1945 in the evening and reached Tourane after the dusk the same evening. It resumed its flight next morning and reached Taihoku at noon and while it was taking off for its next destination to Dairen or Tokyo, it instantly crashed resulting in injury to Netaji, who was immediately taken to Nonmon Hospital where he died on August 18, 1945.

Any Japanese newspaper reader could tell this story before Shah Nawaz Committee, or Khosla Commission. The veracity of their evidence depended in their capacity to give similar details about the different scenes or aspects of the story. But as it happens in the case of a cooked up story or of a plot of conspiratorial incident—that the tutored witnesses fail to give similar account of the story, and falter, vacillate or prevaricate in the course of cross-examination in regard to details about the happenings of various aspects of such an articulated story—these five Japanese witnesses failed more than miserably to give any concurrent account of any one aspect of the story of flight and death of Netaji. Each witness contradicted his own version of evidence or one contradicted the evidence of another during their cross-examination. Such contradictions, divergence, discrepancies and incongruities in their evidence should have led to the inevitable conclusion that they gave out nothing but fancied or tutored stories in support of the alleged report of Netaji's death.

Even a casual reading of the contradictions in the evidence of the Japanese witnesses, as factually quoted in this chapter from the records of the Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission, will convince anybody that from the beginning to the end—from *A to Z*—the whole report of Netaji's death was nothing but a cooked-up story. After brilliantly analysing the evidence of the Japanese witnesses, continuously for 25 days, the counsel of the National Committee, Shri Gobindo Mukhoty, felt so exasperated by the manifestly queer evidence of the Japanese witnesses that he could not desist from observing in course of his concluding remark : "What to speak of your Lordship, Sir,

even a fool will not believe these stories !” However, a fool may not believe them, but His Lordship, the ex-ICS Chief Justice of the Punjab High Court, varily believed them as ‘evidence of convincing truth’ !

# 6

## The Truthful Four-Plus-One

MR. KHOSLA WROTE in justification of his 'findings': "I reached the conclusion that the story of the air crash at Taihoku airfield in Taiwan and subsequent death of Bose . . . must be believed. The story is substantiated by the testimony of wholly independent witnesses, four of whom were Bose's co-passengers in the plane which crashed, and one is the doctor who attended him and signed his death certificate . . . Most of the witnesses who gave evidence impressed me by their frank and honest demeanour. The doctor, too, appeared to be a most convincing witness of truth".

Mr. Khosla arrived at his findings verily on reliance of the story of four-plus-one. The four witnesses are Lt.-Col. Nonogaki, Lt.-Col. Sakai, Major Tara Kuno and Major Takahashi, who claimed to have travelled in the same plane with Netaji. The fifth very important witness who impressed him most is Dr. Yoshimi who described himself as the doctor of the Nonmon Hospital. But unfortunately for Capt. Arai who also claimed to be Netaji's co-passenger and Dr. Tsuruta and Dr. Ishii who claimed as well to have treated Netaji along with Dr. Yoshimi, they could not impress Mr. Khosla by the frankness of their demeanour. Therefore, their testimony which contradicted the testimony of Mr. Khosla's chosen five, was totally rejected by him.



Scanning the evidence of these chosen five of Mr. Khosla, we have shown how 'truthful' and 'convincing' their evidence proved to be. Dr. Yoshimi has been indeed described by Mr. Khosla as some kind of a *prima dona* witness. His evidence, therefore, needs further scrutiny. But before taking up his testimony, let us keep a few things in mind to see how 'frank and honest' the chosen four-plus-one appeared to be.

*First*, none of the so-called four co-passengers of Netaji could produce a single piece of paper of any kind in support of their claim that they really travelled in the same plane with Netaji.

*Second*, Dr. Yoshimi failed to produce any document to prove that he really attended Netaji in Nonmon Hospital. Dr. Yoshimi did not sign the death certificate, but he signed the cremation permit of a man named as Ichiro Okura.

*[The mystery about it will be discussed in the last Chapter.]*

*Third*, the four comparatively very junior military officers could not show any document to justify their claim that they accompanied Gen. Shidei on very urgent assignment either to Dairen or Tokyo. Only Gen. Shidei was going to Manchuria to assume the command of the Kwantang Army,—and, he had no necessity to take officers of the ranks of LT.-COL., MAJOR or CAPTAIN with him. Such officers were found in hundreds in Manchuria.

*Fourth*, none of these junior officers knew Netaji before except Takahashi, nor they had any knowledge of English. Yet they claimed to identify Netaji and have had talks with him during the flight from Saigon to Taihoku and also after the alleged accident.

*Fifth*, all these five chosen witnesses read out some statements, prepared in advance, before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

*Sixth*, at least two of the five witnesses admitted during cross-examination that they had consultations among themselves prior to appearing before Khosla Commission.

*Seventh*, these five witnesses published written statements in *Emuri Shimbun* in 1969 giving account of this story of the air crash in advance.

*Eighth*, none of these 'most important witnesses' as Mr. Khosla described them, were arrested or interrogated by the Anglo-American investigating teams, except Dr. Yoshimi.

*Ninth*, the Japanese Government did not produce any document in verification of their testimony.

*Tenth*, Mr. Khosla did not give any reason why he totally rejected the evidence of Capt. Arai, Dr. Tsuruta and Dr. Ishii.

### STATEMENTS IN *EMURI SHIMBUN*

It is particularly noteworthy why after 25 years, Lt.-Col. Nonogaki, Lt.-Col. Sakai, Major Tara Kuno, Dr. Yoshimi and Yoshio Ishii made statements almost simultaneously and in the same paper *Emuri Shimbun* in the last part of 1969. Debates on the issue of formation of a fresh Commission were going on in the Parliament of India, and it became almost clear by the middle of 1969 that the Government of India was going to form a judicial commission to inquire into Netaji mystery. It was obvious that these Japanese witnesses wanted either to forestall institution of such a commission or if such a commission was formed, they wanted to inform all probable Japanese witnesses what should be their line of evidence before the Commission. A little probe by Khosla Commission could have discovered the unseen hands of the Foreign Office of Japan in such a concerted move to publish statements in advance by those witnesses who appeared before Shah Nawaz Committee and as such, were likely to be invited as witness by the expected Judicial Commission also.

### MEASURES OF JUDICIAL TRUTHFULNESS

How many lies, told on oath by a witness, make him 'a convincing witness of truth' ? Had Mr. Khosla defined in the preamble of his report any norm of judicial truthfulness it

would have been easier to understand the reasonings behind his findings.

Each of these five 'star' witnesses, whom Mr. Khosla described in his report as 'most important and truthful witnesses' indulged in countless lies in fabrication of their stories. Indeed, each proved himself as nothing but falsehood personified before the Commission.

Let us take the case of Lt.-Col. Nonogaki who claimed to have played an important role in each and every scene of the story, except the last one i.e., the alleged funeral scene of 'Chandra Bose'. He claimed the status of chief pilot of the plane, but both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission recorded that Major Takizawa was the chief pilot. He told that the plane came from Malan *via* Singapore to Saigon, but later said—no, it came from Manila.

He found Netaji and Gen. Shidei landing at Saigon airport at 4 p.m. from a small aircraft,—even Khosla did not accept this story.

He claimed that Col. Tada disclosed to him the code-name of Netaji at the airport, but Tada was not at all present at the airport.

He first said that Netaji and General Shidei spent the night at Tourane in the army barrack and then changed it to say—'no, they stayed in a hotel'.

He denied that any advance message of the flight of the plane to Taihoku airport was sent, but contradicting him the Taihoku airport officer admitted that he received such a message. He gave a description of the air crash and identified the spot of the crash, differently at different times, which other witnesses did not corroborate.

Although all along he claimed to have acted as chief pilot of the plane, at the time of the crash, he claimed to find himself at a convenient place in the turret inside the plane so that he could justify his escape from the accident unhurt.

He appeared to assume the role of almost a supercommand

of Formosa Headquarters to send the message of plane crash from Taihoku to Saigon, but it was found that actually the Imperial Headquarters of Tokyo had sent such a message.

He further claimed that he was present by the side of Netaji till he breathed his last, but neither Shah Nawaz Committee, nor Khosla Commission agreed with him.

This Nonogaki said that he informed the Formosan Army Headquarters about the plane crash and death of Netaji and that General Ando came to see Netaji at the hospital but both these claims of Nonogaki proved totally false.

Nonogaki further said that he, Tara Kuno and Takahashi were shifted to Hokotu Hospital on August 18, but Takahashi told the Commission,—no, he (Takahashi) and Nonogaki were kept at Nonmon Hospital till August 27, 1945.

British Intelligence seriously doubted Lt.-Col. Nonogaki's story so much so that after five years i.e., in 1950, he was examined by them at Tokyo. But, unfortunately, Mr. Khosla made no effort to get this important report of the British Intelligence. A serious question arises here, why after five years, the British Intelligence examined Nonogaki. But the answer remained a mystery, and Mr. Khosla took no notice of it. More instances of such chain of lies indulged in by Lt.-Col. Nonogaki can be added, but the few given above are enough to show how truthfully he gave his evidence before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

#### EVIDENCE OF TARA KUNO AND OTHERS

Shah Nawaz Committee described Major Tara Kuno as 'the most alert and observant witness'. Let us analyse the evidence of Tara Kuno and see how far he deserved to be so described. Tara Kuno said that he saw Netaji and Gen. Shidei talking at the Saigon airport before getting into the plane, and Netaji was the first to enter the plane, but none else corroborated his version. Most other witnesses said that Netaji and Habibur Rahman rushed to the plane when the propellers started moving. Kuno claimed that he was the navigator of the plane, but Shah Nawaz Committee recorded that Sergeant Okista was the navigator.

Like Nonogaki, Tara Kuno also gave out different stories about Netaji's stay at Tourane. While he claimed to be the navigator of the plane, yet instead of sitting inside the cockpit to discharge the navigator's duty, he told both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that at the time of air crash, he was with other passengers and, although his rank was that of a Major, he sat in the front row of the plane before Netaji and Gen. Shidei and talked to them many times during the air journey from Saigon to Taihoku.

All witnesses said that the plane instantly caught fire after the crash, but Kuno found at least 2-3 minutes' time to see in what position other passengers were inside the plane when it nose-dived and crashed on the ground in terrific speed. No, these are not all,—he did other heroics also. He tried after the air crash to pull out Ayoagi, the co-pilot who was caught by broken parts of the cockpit, but failing that he broke open the hard plastic window of the cockpit and jumped out of it easily,—although he said in his earlier statement that the plane had split in the front portion.

Kuno told the Commission that he was very badly burnt and injured but claimed that he alone helped Netaji to put out the fire all over his body. About hospital scenes, he gave different versions to Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

Tara Kuno's close friend Nonogaki claimed that Tara Kuno, Takahashi and himself were shifted to Hokuto hospital that very night of August 18, but Tara Kuno said that they were not shifted from Nonmon hospital till August 27, 1945. It is needless to add more instances of 'truthfulness' of Major Tara Kuno as well.

Lt.-Col. Sakai and Major Takahashi did not claim to have played very significant roles during the flight. However, they also differed in major points in telling the story of the flight and crash of the plane. Nonogaki said that the plane left Tourane before dawn, but Takahashi said it took off at 8 a.m. Col. Sakai first told Khosla Commission that he saw the rear wheel of the plane broke away and then correcting his earlier version,

he said,—no, the propeller of the left engine and the engine itself fell and the plane nose-dived. However, Takahashi said that the plane belly-landed and stood in normal position on the ground. To avoid the complications to describe what happened inside the plane, both Sakai and Takahashi said that they fell unconscious and finally found themselves thrown out of the plane almost uninjured.

Takahashi told the Commission that the plane broke into two parts and the doors were open, but all other witnesses said that the doors were closed and jammed.

Sakai first told the Commission that he saw the rear wheel breaking away from the plane, but before the same Commission he told later, that after the crash the rear wheel struck the ground.

Sakai further told Shah Nawaz Committee that while looking outside through the cockpit-window he struck its ceiling and fell unconscious and was thrown out of the plane. But earlier, in describing the arrangement of seats, he had fixed a rear seat for himself.

However, Sakai told Khosla Commission that at first he fell unconscious but then found himself sitting over the baggages with his left leg fractured and yet he managed to crawl out through the door of the crashed plane.

Habibur Rahman said that he alone came forward to put out the flames burning over the bush-shirt of Netaji, but Tara Kuno said—no, not Habibur Rahman, but he did it. On the contrary, Takahashi cancelling claims of both of them, told Khosla Commission that he alone helped Netaji to roll down on the ground to put out the flames burning all over his dress.

Habibur Rahman said that Netaji's trousers were not much affected by the flames, but Nonogaki, Tara Kuno and Takahashi said that Netaji's trousers and bush-shirt were almost completely burnt and Netaji was made completely naked.

Sakai and Takahashi had themselves cut off from the other scenes of the story, except Takahashi saying that he and Nonogaki were not shifted to Hokuto hospital that day, but remained

in the Nonmon hospital till August 27, 1945. About the time of crash they gave different timings ranging from 12 p.m. to 3 p.m. to both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

Let the reader judge, how 'truthful' and 'convincing' these four 'most important witnesses' proved to be. Nevertheless Mr. Khosla came to his conclusion almost exclusively believing the story of the four-plus-one Japanese witnesses. Now, let us see how Dr. Yoshimi projected himself, in the image of 'most convincing witness of truth' as Mr. Khosla depicted him.

### THE EVIDENCE OF THE PRIMA DONA WITNESS

Dr. Yoshimi made three statements, first one to the Allied Intelligence while he was in Stanley Jail in Hongkong in 1945, second to Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956, and the third to Khosla Commission in 1971.

Shah Nawaz Committee mentioned that in Stanley Jail in Hongkong in 1945, Dr. Yoshimi told the Allied Intelligence that Netaji died at 11 p.m. on August 18, 1945. Although Japanese witnesses had told Shah Nawaz Committee that a number of Japanese and Formosan nurses were present when Netaji died at Nonmon hospital, Shah Nawaz Committee observed, "*None of the Japanese nurses could be traced. Formosan nurse Tsan Pi Shan, who made an 'important' statement before an Indian journalist, Mr. Harin Shah of Indian Free Press Journal in 1946 could not be examined as the Committee did not find it possible to visit Formosa*". However, during Khosla Commission's visit to Formosa, the National Committee tried hard to find out if any nurse by the name of Tsan Pi Shan was there, but none could be traced. [See Chapter 4]

According to Dr. Yoshimi's statement before the Shah Nawaz Committee, "At 2 p.m. on August 18, 1945, Dr. Yoshimi received a telephonic message from Taihoku aerodrome and afterwards Netaji was brought to the hospital completely naked. He found that Netaji had severe burns all over his body and all of it had taken a greyish colour like ash. Even his heart had burnt and his face was swollen. In Dr. Yoshimi's opinion his burns were of severe type i.e., of *third degree*. There was

no injury on his body and no blood came out of it. His eyes were also swollen. He could see, but had difficulty in opening the eyes. He was in his senses when he was brought in. He was in high fever,—his temperature was 39° centigrade. His pulse rate was 120 per minute. The condition of his heart was very weak”.

Now let us see what Habibur Rahman said before Shah Nawaz Committee. He told that Netaji's trousers were not much affected by flames,—only his bush-shirt caught fire. But Dr. Yoshimi said that his whole body was burnt so severely that it turned like greyish ash. If the trousers were not burnt much, how the whole body turned greyish ?

According to Dr. Yoshimi, Netaji had third degree burns and his temperature was as high as 39° centigrade and pulse beat 120, yet he was in his senses. Is it not a miracle in medical science that such an injured person remained in his senses and continued talking with the doctors and nurses for hours ?

Habibur Rahman said Netaji was taken to the operation theatre, but Dr. Yoshimi denied it. Dr. Yoshimi told that Netaji talked to him many times, and of course, to translate into Japanese what Netaji said to Dr. Yoshimi an interpreter named I. Nakamura was promptly called in.

Dr. Yoshimi further told that “Netaji's burns were dressed by Dr. Tsuruta, who applied a white ointment and bandaged him all over his body. He administered four injections to Netaji for stimulating his heart—“one after another of Vita-Camphor and two injections of Digitamene. He also gave him three intravenous injections of Ring Solution of 500 cc each.”

Dr. Yoshimi and Dr. Tsuruta said that only Netaji and Habibur Rahman were in one room. Habibur Rahman said—no, another person was also there. Major Takahashi and Major Kuno said Netaji was kept in a separate room, but Lt.-Col. Nonogaki said—no, all the injured persons were given beds in the same room. In this connection, it should also be kept in mind that Nonogaki claimed that in the hospital he was all along by the side of Netaji. Again, the interpreter, I. Nakamura, told



Shah Nawaz Committee that besides Netaji and Col. Rahman, three other Japanese officers were also in the same ward. Now, whom to believe,—Dr. Yoshimi alone, or all other witnesses ?

Dr. Yoshimi added in his statement “In the case of severe burns of third degree, the blood gets thicker and there is high pressure on the heart. In order to relieve pressure, approximately 200 cc. of Netaji’s blood was let out and 400 cc blood transfusion was given to him, and this blood was obtained from a Japanese soldier. This blood transfusion was made between 4 and 5 p.m. that day”.

What Dr. Tsuruta said about the blood transfusion ? He said, “no blood transfusion was given”. Habibur Rahman also did not see, if any blood transfusion was given. Now, again whom to believe,—Dr. Yoshimi or Dr. Tsuruta in such a vital matter of blood transfusion for a patient having third degree burns ?

Dr. Yoshimi told Shah Nawaz Committee that Netaji died at 8 p.m. but Dr. Tsuruta said that the time should be between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. However, Dr. Yoshimi told the Allied Intelligence in Stanley Jail at Hongkong in 1946 that Netaji died at 11 p.m. but wrote in *Emuri Shimbun* in 1969 that he died at 10 p.m. Dr. Yoshimi, whose memory appeared to be proverbially so sharp that he could keep in mind exactly the temperature, pulse beat, quantity of blood let-out and blood transfusion, names of medicines and how many injections were given to Netaji,—all such details so correctly—but within a few months he forgot the vital point, i.e., the time of death of Netaji.

Again all the doctors and nurses were said to have wept after Netaji expired according to the Shah Nawaz Committee’s report, but none attended the funeral of Netaji, nor could they say exactly what happened to his body after August 18, 1945. Strangely, none of the nurses could be found either in Japan or in Formosa. But what matters, whether any such nurses existed or not,—they were seen to weep at the time of Netaji’s death ! However, according to Shah Nawaz Committee’s report Habibur Rahman did not confirm this mourning scene.

Dr. Yoshimi made three statements successively before (i) the Allied Intelligence in 1946, (ii) Shah Nawaz Committee, and (iii) Khosla Commission. A comparative study of these statements, regarding a few vital points will make it evident how ridiculously Dr. Yoshimi contradicted himself in matters of essential information relating treatment of Netaji.

### 1. WHEN WAS NETAJI BROUGHT TO THE HOSPITAL ?

Dr. Yoshimi told the Allied Intelligence in 1946 that on August 18 at 5 p.m. *Bose with 6 or 7 persons were brought to the hospital.*

To Shah Nawaz Committee he said that on August 18, at about 2 p.m. he received a telephonic message from the airport intimating him about the news of air crash, and 20 minutes thereafter *Bose with 13 or 14 persons* was brought to the hospital.

The same doctor told Khosla Commission that *before noon* he received a telephone call from the airport and 7 persons including 2 Indians, arrived at the hospital *at about 12-30 p.m.* (But Mr. Khosla recorded in his Report that air accident took place exactly at 2-30 p.m.)

### 2. WHO DRESSED AND APPLIED OINTMENT ?

Dr. Yoshimi told the Allied Intelligence (A.I.) in 1946 that *he personally cleaned Bose's injuries with oil and dressed them.*

To Shah Nawaz Committee (S.N.C.) he said,—no, not he, but Dr. Tsuruta applied white ointment on Netaji's burns and bandaged him.

According to his statement to Khosla Commission (K.C.) Dr. Yoshimi said that he treated Netaji's burns all over his body and bandaged him after applying plaster.

### 3. WHAT WAS THE CONDITION OF NETAJI'S BURNS ?

To A.I. : Bose was suffering from extensive burns over the whole body,—*so much so that very little was left for his identification.*

To S.N.C. : Bose was severely burnt. It looked greyish colour like ash. Even his *heart was burnt*. He had third degree burns. His face and eyes were swollen. He was in high fever, his temperature was 39° centigrade. His pulse rate was 120 per minute.

To K.C. : “Chandra Bose” suffered general burns all over the body.

Now, firstly, during cross-examination before Khosla Commission, he told that he made a mistake in his signed statement made before Shah Nawaz Committee to write that Bose’s heart was burnt. Secondly can anyone remain conscious after third degree burns ? But Dr. Yoshimi said that Netaji was conscious for hours, although he had 120 pulse-beat. Thirdly, is it possible to remember so precisely the temperature and pulse beat after so many years ? But Dr. Yoshimi remembered them quite well, although in all other vital matters he forgot to remember what exactly happened.

Dr. Yoshimi made another wonderful exhibition of his truthfulness before Khosla Commission. He admitted earlier that he had never seen Bose before and told Mr. Khosla that when he was brought to the hospital “very little was left of his identification” and “his eyes were swollen, and body turned greyish”, but when he was shown a picture of Netaji by one of the National Committee Counsels Shri Amar Chakravarty in the course of cross-examination at Tokyo, he promptly said,—yes, yes, he is the person whom he treated in the hospital !

#### 4. WHEN NETAJI DIED ?

To A.I. : Dr. Yoshimi said that Netaji died after 9 p.m., Bose was sinking into unconsciousness, *he was in a coma and regained his consciousness and died at 11 p.m.* But Habibur Rahman said that Netaji regained his consciousness before he breathed his last and talked to him to dictate his last message to the Indian people. [More about it later.]

To S.N.C. : Shortly after 8 p.m. Bose breathed his last.

He tried to give artificial respiration to Bose but without success.

To K.C. : He was conscious for 7 or 8 hours. Mr. Bose survived in the hospital for 12 hours and died in his presence.

Now, firstly, he did not say either to Allied Intelligence or Khosla Commission that he tried to revive Bose by giving artificial respiration. Secondly, he told Khosla Commission that his statement before Shah Nawaz Committee that Bose died at 8 p.m. was not correct. Thirdly, he told Allied Intelligence that Bose lapsed into coma after 9 p.m., but the same person told Khosla Commission that he was conscious for 7|8 hours after being brought to the hospital.

#### 5. WHEN HABIBUR RAHMAN LEFT NONMON HOSPITAL ?

To A.I. : Dr. Yoshimi said that after 10 days i.e., on August 28, Habibur Rahman was sent to Hokuto hospital carrying Bose's ashes with him.

To S.N.C. : He said that Habibur Rahman left Nonmon hospital on August 19 and never came back. He also did not know where he went or whether he took with him Bose's ashes.

To K. C. : He told that Habibur Rahman left the hospital with Bose's body day after his death,—and he never came back. No, he further said during cross-examination before the same Commission that the dead body was removed on the morning of August, 19. During cross-examination he told Khosla Commission that he was not sure which of his own statements was correct.

#### 6. WAS BLOOD TRANSFUSION GIVEN ?

AND, IF SO, BY WHOM ?

To A.I. : Dr. Yoshimi did not mention anything about blood transfusion.

To S.N.C. : Dr. Yoshimi said that he himself let out approximately 200 cc of blood and transfused 400 cc fresh blood into Bose's body.

To K.C. : He did not give blood transfusion and did not let out blood from Bose's body.

However, another physician, Dr. Tsuruta, who claimed that he was all along present by the side of Netaji said,—no ! no blood transfusion at all was given to Bose. Secondly, it was then stated by Dr. Yoshimi that an Army Headquarters doctor gave blood transfusion when he found that the nurse failed to find out Bose's vein—however, without knowing anything about treatment of Bose. But who was the doctor who gave blood transfusion to Netaji, without any instruction from either Dr. Yoshimi or Dr. Tsuruta ? None of these doctors could identify either the nurse or the doctor who was said to have given blood transfusion to Netaji.

#### 7. WAS DR. YOSHIMI PRESENT ALL THE TIME BY THE SIDE OF BOSE ?

Dr. Yoshimi told Shah Nawaz Committee that he and Dr. Tsuruta were present all the time by the side of Netaji, but later told—no, he was not present there all the time. When Bose's condition deteriorated he came to see him after being informed by Dr. Tsuruta.

#### HOW TRUTHFUL IS DR. YOSHIMI ?

Let the reader judge what kind of "most important witnesses" are the four Japanese who appeared before the Commission and how 'truthful' is Dr. Yoshimi, whom Mr. Khosla described as a 'witness of convincing truth'. Lt.-Col. Nonogaki, Major Tara Kuno, Col. Sakai, Major Takahashi and Dr. Yoshimi indulged in lies, scores of unabashed lies, whenever they were confronted with any question regarding details of any aspect of the story. Palpably they were tutored only to tell about the broad outlines of the story that was cooked up by the war-time Japanese authorities. The story they told was wholly fictitious, and that explained why they proved ludicrously incoherent during cross-examination. They tried to apply their imagination to answer questions regarding details, and one lie led them to indulge in another lie and

finally each witness differed materially from the other. But who cares for these lies ! Neither Shah Nawaz Committee, nor Khosla Commission made any effort to scan the statements of the Japanese witnesses to resolve the mystery why they contradicted themselves so ridiculously in the course of their cross-examination. These five Japanese told Mr. Khosla that they either had known or seen Netaji dead, and that was enough for him to come to the conclusion that Netaji indeed died at Taihoku hospital !

invariably show that from beginning to end he tried either to suppress facts or distort them in an effort to mislead the intelligence agencies so that they failed to track Netaji in those crucial days after surrender of Japan. [*Habibur Rahman's interrogation reports will be found in Commission's Exhibits, Nos. 28|D, 28|F, 28|V, 28|S, 28|R and 28|G*]. Let us give a few instances to show how deliberately Habibur Rahman tried to mislead the intelligence teams.

### 1. MEETING SINGAPORE

Habibur Rahman told the interrogating British team in late November, 1945 at Red Fort : "Mr. Hachia, the Japanese Ambassador to the Azad Hind Government met Bose on August 14, 1945, at Singapore and told him that Japan has decided to surrender and, as such, whether on behalf of the Azad Hind Government Bose had anything to say. Bose convened a meeting in which Habibur Rahman, S. A. Iyer, Allagappan, Nagar, M. Z. Kiani and A. N. Sarkar were present. Bose read out the message of Hachia and asked their opinion about the next step. It was decided that INA would surrender and all persons should remain at their posts. Then Bose issued orders to make 3 months' payment to all INA men and officers and arrange for 2-3 months provisions in INA camps."

The Intelligence Report continued : "On August 15, at about midnight he (Bose) asked Habibur to see him. Going to Bose's bungalow he found S. A. Iyer and Capt. Gupta present there. Bose directed Habibur Rahman to hand over the charge of INA office to M. Z. Kiani (Col. Rahman was Deputy Chief of the General Staff of INA) and get ready to start for Bangkok next morning. He was told that they are going to Bangkok for only 2-3 days and so only essential things might be taken by them. Bose also ordered Habibur Rahman to destroy all papers regarding INA. Habibur Rahman further said that Iyer told him that the *purpose of going to Bangkok was to discuss with Isoda and Hachia about the procedure of surrender*. Habibur Rahman denied to interrogating authority that Bose had given any secret instructions to anybody."

“On August 16, 1945, Habibur Rahman found S. A. Iyer, M. Z. Kiani, Allagappan, Capt. Shamsheer Singh, Lt.-Col. Mehrotra, a young Japanese Officer of Hikari Kikan and Capt. Pritam. (British ranks mentioned). All of them went to the airport and Bose, Habibur Rahman and others got into the plane.”

Now let us see how Habibur Rahman made calculated effort to mislead the British Intelligence from the very beginning.

- (i) The main issue discussed in the Cabinet meeting on August 14, regarding the plan of Netaji's escape, as told to Khosla Commission by S. A. Iyer, Deb-nath Das, Col. Pritam Singh, Col. Hasan and other INA witnesses, was completely concealed by Habibur Rahman from the British Intelligence.
- (ii) He also suppressed the fact that Negishi communicated the secret message of surrender of Japan to Netaji at Seramban on August 11, and Negishi accompanied Netaji from Seramban to Singapore. He, however, said that Hachia informed Netaji about the decision of surrender by Japan on August 14, and kept the identity of Negishi undisclosed by simply mentioning him as a young Hikari Kikan officer.
- (iii) Habibur Rahman totally denied the fact that Lt.-Gen. Isoda went to Singapore on August 14, and Lt.-Col. Sakai on August 15, to meet Netaji.
- (iv) He did not mention that Lt.-Col. Sakai and Negishi flew with Netaji from Singapore to Bangkok on August 16, 1945.
- (v) Habibur Rahman did not say a single word about the unanimous decision of the Cabinet requesting Netaji to go to Russia which Netaji neither confirmed nor rejected.
- (vi) Habibur Rahman said that Netaji was going to Bangkok only for 2|3 days.



- (vii) Habibur Rahman deliberately told the British Intelligence that Netaji took the decision to come back to Singapore to surrender to the Allies along-with INA.

## 2. WHAT HAPPENED AT BANGKOK ?

At the time of cross-examination by the British team, Habibur Rahman, according to the Intelligence report, said : “General Bhonsle took Netaji to a bungalow from the airport. Isoda and Hachia were present there. They held discussion for sometime. In this discussion Hachia spoke in English. They were discussing about the position of INA after surrender of Japan. Hachia and Isoda informed Bose that they had no instructions from the Government of Japan regarding surrender of INA. It will not be possible, therefore, for them to say anything about the proposal for separate surrender of INA. They suggested that Bose had better discuss the issue with Field Marshal Terauchi at the Japanese Army Headquarters at Saigon. They also told Bose that they are willing to accompany Bose to Terauchi’s Headquarters.”

Habibur Rahman further told the interrogating team, “Thereafter Bose left for his own bungalow, where Major Bhonsle, Iswer Singh, Capt. Gulzara Singh, Hasan, D. M. Khan, Capt. S. A. Malik, Debnath Das, Parmanand and Lt. Rizvi came to see him. They held some general discussions there. *Here Habibur Rahman disclosed this secret to some of them that possibly Bose will go back to Singapore within 2-3 days.*” (British ranks mentioned.)

About happenings at Bangkok, Habibur Rahman resorted to second instalment of suppression and distortion of facts, even indulging in deliberate lies to the British team.

- (i) Habibur Rahman again told the British team that the main purpose of Netaji’s going to Bangkok was to discuss the procedure regarding separate surrender of INA.
- (ii) He re-emphasised that Netaji had decided to go back to Singapore to take necessary steps regarding

surrender of INA,—thus, deliberately suppressing the fact that Netaji's main object was to finalise his plan of escape from South-East Asia.

- (iii) All the Japanese and INA witnesses told Khosla Commission that Netaji held a secret meeting with Isoda and Hachia at Bangkok and later he asked Habibur Rahman to join it. Habibur Rahman totally suppressed this fact from the British Intelligence team. It has been stated by the Japanese witnesses before Khosla Commission, especially by Isoda and Hachia, that at the Bangkok meeting Netaji's plan for moving out of Saigon was finalised. Hachia told Mr. Khosla, 'I met Netaji at Bangkok and told him that I have got a message from the Government of Japan. They said they are very grateful to you (Bose) and they have asked me to know from you, whether the Government of Japan could be of any help to you.' Netaji said that he wanted to go to Japan. Perhaps his intention was to go to Manchuria, but he told that he wanted to go to Japan. General Isoda was also present there." During cross-examination Hachia said that he "*informed Netaji that the Government of Japan was willing to make arrangements for shifting him to some safe area*".

From the evidence of Hachia and, we shall see later, from that of Isoda as well, it becomes absolutely clear that Habibur Rahman totally suppressed the fact from the British Intelligence that Netaji held a secret meeting with Isoda and Hachia at Bangkok.

- (iv) Habibur Rahman intentionally tried to mislead the interrogating team by saying that he secretly told his INA colleagues that Netaji would return to Singapore within 2-3 days. None of his INA colleagues corroborated it before Khosla Commission.

### 3. MORE PUZZLE FOR INTELLIGENCE TEAM

When interrogation of Habibur Rahman was going on in the Red Fort in the months of November and December, 1945, Finney, the Director of Intelligence Bureau of the British Government attached to MacArthur's Headquarters at Tokyo, in an urgent message from Bangkok informed its higher authority in India about something puzzling to them. In his message Finney informed that "on November 12, 1945, he examined a man, named K. Watanabe, who was working as an interpreter in Hikari Kikan. Watanabe told him that on August 16 or 17, 1945 he was asked to work as interpreter in a meeting held at the residence of Isoda, between Isoda and Subhas Chandra Bose, who was accompanied by Major Bhonsle and Lt.-Col. Habibur Rahman. The meeting ended before Watanabe reached there. Isoda talked without any interpreter. *They discussed how Bose could be sent to his destination. Bose's going to Russia was more or less known,—perhaps it was Manchuria.*"

Mr. Finney, in that message, asked his higher authority, *"It was an understood thing in the Embassy and in Hikari Kikan that he (Bose) was going to hand over himself to the Russians in Russia. Watanabe does not know further details nor does he know whether he (Bose) came to any terms with the Russians."* (Exhibit No. 28|V).

After receiving this message, the Intelligence team resumed fresh interrogation of General Bhonsle and Col. Rahman. Regarding interrogation of Gen. Bhonsle the team recorded: "What we feared, it happened exactly so. Bhonsle did not agree to say much about Bangkok meeting. But he admitted that he himself and Habibur Rahman, Lt.-Gen. Isoda and Col. Kagawa had a meeting with Bose. *He also admitted that they discussed how Bose could be sent to his destination. Bhonsle further admitted that Bose had the intention to go to Russia . . .* But it appeared that he was not willing to say much about the matter. Avoiding related questions, he only said, *"If anybody of his trusted men knew anything about the real plan of Netaji then none will say it now."* This

report was made by Lt.-Col. McKwright (Exhibit No. Com|28|S).

On instructions from Lt.-Col. McKwright Habibur Rahman was further interrogated. The report produced before Khosla Commission says, "*Habibur Rahman refused to say anything more than he told earlier. He denied about secret meeting at Bangkok and said that the main topic discussed in that meeting was the issue of surrender of INA. He said this much only that in the course of discussion there, one Japanese Officer wanted to know what was the intention of Bose. They once told him about shifting Bose to Russia, but at the same time they told that in view of the existing relations with Russia it was not possible either for their Government or their Army to have any talk with the Russian authorities in this regard. Bose told the Japanese that he had taken decision to surrender at Singapore along with INA . . . It appears that Habibur Rahman is not willing to come out with the truth.*" [Secret No. 1400|23|S|E|Red Fort|New Delhi/25 March 1946 : Exhibit No. Com|28|R].

Now, the following is what Gen. Isoda told Khosla Commission : "*It was finally decided in that meeting (at Bangkok) that Netaji will go to Russia via Manchuria and the Japanese Government will give him monetary and other help*". He further said, "*He knew it definitely that Netaji was going to Russia*" and added, "*He was going to Russia via Saigon . . . There was no plan to stay at Saigon.*"

According to Khosla Commission's report on Watanabe's evidence before it : "Watanabe . . . conveyed a message to Bose that Japan will be unable to provide aid to him. On this, Bose expressed his desire to fly to Soviet Union . . . He was to fly from Bangkok to Saigon and then to Japan via Formosa. The witness went on to say that Gen. Isoda and Hachia were present when the scheme was formulated".

It is obvious that Watanabe told a lie to British Intelligence because an interpreter like him could not carry the message of his Government when men like Isoda, Hachia and Sakai were directly asked by the Imperial Headquarters to contact Netaji,

In his earlier statement to Finney, Watanabe told him that he reached Isoda's bungalow when the meeting had already ended. He also suppressed from them that Col. Kagawa was also present in that meeting.

Now let us analyse what Habibur Rahman said and how his version vitally differed from the accounts of Isoda, Hachia and Watanabe :

- (i) Habibur Rahman again said that Netaji wanted to go to Japan and come back to Singapore within 2-3 days to surrender with the INA.
- (ii) He mentioned to the British Intelligence Officers that only Isoda and Hachia were present in that meeting, but concealed the fact of Kagawa or Watanabe's presence there.
- (iii) He did not mention exactly where the meeting was held at Bangkok. Isoda told Khosla Commission that it was not held in his office or at his bungalow but at Netaji's bungalow.
- (iv) *Habibur Rahman insisted that although suggestion was made to Netaji for his going to Russia, he turned it down, and insisted that he will return to Singapore and surrender there.*

Failing to extract exact information from Habibur Rahman, the interrogating officer angrily observed, "*It appears that Habibur Rahman is not willing to come out with the truth.*"

#### 4. WHAT HAPPENED AT SAIGON ?

Habibur Rahman again gave such a misleading story about the happenings at Saigon on August 16, 1945 that he succeeded in wholly confusing the British interrogators. He told them, "A number of Japanese Officers were waiting at Saigon and no Indian was there. At the airport Isoda and Hachia talked to an officer sent from the Headquarters of Field Marshal Terauchi. They informed Bose that it will be necessary for

him to go to Terauchi's Headquarters. It will take about half-an-hour to fly from Saigon to Dalat. Bose agreed to go. But after half-an-hour they came back and told Bose that due to prevailing chaotic conditions after surrender, it will be of no use for Bose's going to Terauchi's Headquarters. Bose and the party then went to a vacant house at Saigon. Lt.-Gen. Chatterjee used to stay in this house. At about 3 p.m. in the evening Isoda and Hachia came to inform Bose that they have received no instructions from Terauchi's Headquarters regarding surrender of INA. Therefore, it will not be possible to advise him in any way about the matter. Iyer and Habibur Rahman were present there. Bose then asked the Japanese whether any plane would be available to carry him and his party to Tokyo, so that they could take final decision about surrender of INA there. Bose then held talks with Habibur Rahman, Capt. Gulzara Singh, S. A. Iyer, Capt. Pritam Singh, Col. Hasan and Debnath Das. All of them agreed that it would be possible to go to Tokyo because the area from Saigon to Tokyo was under control of the Japanese. It was decided that if a plane was available Iyer, Habibur Rahman, Capt. Gulzara Singh and Col. Hasan will accompany Netaji." (Exhibit No. 28|H).

Now see how Habibur Rahman gave out a story to the British interrogators completely different from what happened at Saigon. Isoda, Hachia and Negishi, Iyer, Pritam Singh, Gulzara Singh, Hasan and Debnath Das,—all either former ministers of Netaji's Government or top-ranking INA and Japanese officers told Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission almost similar stories about the happenings at Saigon. Their story was almost identical, but it totally differed from the story of Habibur Rahman. Thus Rahman gave out a fourth package of lies to the British team. Why did he do so? Obviously to detract the British team, then visiting Saigon and Taihoku, from getting factual informations so that they might not find out necessary clues to Netaji's plan of escape and pursue the matter timely and effectively.

Let us see again how Habibur Rahman continued in his

deliberate attempts to mislead the British team :

- (i) Habibur Rahman totally suppressed the fact that Netaji had any plan to move out of South-East Asia. On the contrary, he continued persistently to tell his interrogators that Netaji's whole object was to go to Tokyo to decide about the modalities of separate surrender of INA and come back to Singapore within the least possible time.
- (ii) He kept it secret from them that Isoda and Hachia came to Saigon simultaneously with Netaji from Bangkok.
- (iii) He told them a deliberate lie that the talk between Netaji and Isoda and Hachia was held at the airport and not at the bungalow where Netaji stayed.
- (iv) He gave out to them another fictitious story that Netaji agreed to go to Terauchi's Headquarters for settling the issue of INA's surrender.
- (v) *Habibur Rahman tried to create an impression in the mind of the British team that if Terauchi could settle the issue, Netaji would not have proceeded to Tokyo, but would have gone back to Singapore from Saigon.* But Terauchi's inability to advise Netaji compelled him to take an impromptu decision to explore the possibility of going to Tokyo for consultation with the Imperial Headquarters there.
- (vi) He told them that Netaji stayed at Saigon at the bungalow of Lt.-Gen. A. C. Chatterjee, totally concealing the fact that Netaji in reality stayed at the bungalow of Narayan Das. He did it deliberately, so that in the months of November-December the advance British team would fail to locate the exact place of Netaji's stay at Bangkok without succeeding to contact other inmates of the bungalow of Narayan Das.
- (vii) He did not utter a single word about the secret meeting held between Netaji and Isoda and Hachia

in which, at a later stage, he alone was also asked by Netaji to participate.

- (viii) He kept the name of Col. Tada, a staff officer of Terauchi's Headquarters who played a key role in the planning and execution of escape plan of Netaji, a complete secret from the British team. He also did not say a single word to them that Col. Tada also met Netaji.
- (ix) Habibur Rahman never gave an inkling of idea to the interrogating team that he was taken in special confidence by Netaji at Singapore, Bangkok and Saigon and he was asked to participate in secret meetings at Bangkok and Saigon. He tried to create an impression that per chance or rather without any special reason he was asked by Netaji to accompany him. He also told them that Iyer, Col. Gulzara Singh and Col. Hasan were also to accompany Netaji, but as necessary seats were not available, Netaji asked only Habibur Rahman to accompany him leaving instructions to others to follow him in the next available plane.

##### 5. MISLEADING INFORMATION ABOUT FLIGHT FROM SAIGON

Regarding what happened prior to take-off from Saigon, Rahman told the interrogating officers, "Netaji and myself got into the plane. The plane was similar in type to the aircraft in which we flew from Singapore to Saigon. I cannot exactly say what was the number of the plane or it belonged to which Air Division. Besides Netaji and myself, there were the Radio Operator, Pilot, Co-pilot, Japanese General Shidei and inside the turret one Colonel and a Lt.-Colonel of the Japanese Air Force and at the rear one Major and another Military Officer. When Netaji and myself entered the plane, all others were in their seats. Soon after Netaji got into the plane, Gen. Shidei greeted him. Before leaving Saigon, Netaji instructed his colleagues to follow him. *As far as I know Netaji's intention*



*was to come back to Singapore soon after completing discussion at Tokyo about separate surrender of INA.*" [Exhibit No. 28|H].

Here again Habibur Rahman made the same attempt to mislead the British Intelligence team :

- (i) Habibur Rahman tried to create the impression as if Gen. Shidei was surprised to meet Netaji inside the plane. This was intended to disabuse the British team of any suspicion that Netaji and Gen. Shidei were flying together as a part of a plan drawn out earlier and as if, it was some kind of an unexpected meeting between Netaji and Shidei inside the plane. Isoda, Hachia and others had told Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission that it was decided according to plan chalked out at Terauchi's Headquarters that Shidei, the Commander-in-Chief-designate for the Manchurian Army, was specially directed to escort Netaji up to Manchuria. Habibur Rahman did not divulge this fact.

However, when there was no more possibility of any further investigation by the British Government, Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 : "Before the plane started, Gen. Shidei came down from the plane to greet Netaji, whom he knew as being attached to Terauchi's Headquarters. Gen. Shidei first got into the plane, and then Netaji and he followed them."

- (ii) Habibur Rahman did not give any identification of the plane or which Air Division it belonged to, obviously in an effort not to give an opportunity to British team to pursue the matter further.
- (iii) Except that of Gen. Shidei, Habibur Rahman did not mention the name of any other Japanese co-passengers, although he clearly specified their ranks. He also told the British team, that all-told ten persons

boarded the plane. But later in 1956 he told Shah Nawaz Committee that there were 12|13 persons in the plane and he mentioned also the name of Lt.-Col. Nonogaki and Capt. Arai. However, in his statement written on August 24, 1945, he did not mention any name except that of Shidei. It can be reasonably presumed that in November-December, 1945, he withheld other Japanese names, so that the British team could not identify and examine them. Indeed, it was only after about six years, the British authority came to know the name of Nonogaki, Tara Kuno and others, who claimed to have travelled with Netaji.

- (iv) Habibur Rahman persisted for the fifth time to tell the British interrogators that *Netaji wanted to go to Tokyo to finalise INA's surrender term and come back to Singapore.*
- (v) *Contrary to all evidence, either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission, Habibur Rahman never admitted that Netaji's plan was to go to Russia.*

#### WHAT ABOUT INA'S TREASURES?

The interrogating officers tried to extract information about INA fund from Habibur Rahman. According to this report :  
“When Habibur Rahman was asked about very large quantity of gold that was with Bose, he said, that he did not know anything about it. This is very strange. During our cross-examination the Chairman of the Azad Hind Bank told that the Provisional Government of Free India had about Rs. 15 crores worth of property deposited in the Bank. In it 7 crores were in Japanese currency and about seven and half crores worth as properties. In it only gold was about 145 pounds (i.e., about 70 seers). We know that Bose withdrew this gold from Bank in April, 1945. *But Habibur Rahman says that he does not know anything about it. It is indeed strange !*”

However, 11 years after, Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee that Netaji carried with him 2 leather suit cases full

of gold and jewellery. He also said that some amount of burnt gold and jewellery were found at Taihoku airport. They were listed by him and later deposited with Ramamurthy in Tokyo. But the list was not found.

E. Bhaskaran, the confidential secretary of Netaji, told Khosla Commission that Netaji carried 4 suit cases full of gold and ornaments weighing about 30 Kg. including two gold 'garlands'. Other INA witnesses supported his evidence.

Now, the question arises why Habibur Rahman told blatant lies to the British interrogating officers that he did not know whether Netaji was carrying any gold with him ? He was all along telling the interrogating officers that Netaji was going to Tokyo on a very short visit and was to come back to Singapore without any delay, and if he admitted that Netaji carried gold with him, his whole story would have crumbled. Admission of Netaji's carrying gold would have meant that Netaji had no intention to come back. Interestingly, the statement Habibur Rahman wrote on August 24, 1945 for preserving it along with the casket allegedly containing Netaji's ashes, included not a word about the gold. It was because he knew quite well that it would fall in the hands of the British.

#### WHAT HABIBUR RAHMAN NEVER DISCLOSED

All the above interrogation documents revealed that Habibur Rahman was significantly telling the same story over and over again to the British officers that Netaji's intention to visit Tokyo was to discuss the issue of separate surrender of INA with the Imperial Headquarters and then come back within 2-3 days to Singapore to surrender to the British. *At no stage he admitted that Netaji had any plan to go to Manchuria and thereafter to Russian Siberia. His interrogation reports made it clear that Habibur Rahman continued in an unyielding effort to keep it secret from British authority that Netaji had any plan at all to go to Russia.*

#### DIVERGENT ACCOUNTS

Mr. Khosla observed in his Report that "absence of Habibur Rahman's evidence did not adversely affect other's

evidence.” This is wholly contrary to the facts of evidence of other witnesses. The evidence of Nonogaki, Sakai, Tara Kuno, Takahashi and Dr. Yoshimi, which constituted the core of Khosla’s justification for his findings, differed in almost every aspect of the story of Netaji’s death, namely flight from Saigon to Taihoku, alleged air crash, treatment of Netaji at Nonmon Hospital, time of alleged death, funeral etc. Whether these five ‘star’ witnesses of Mr. Khosla at all travelled with Netaji or medically attended Netaji—is a matter of speculation or at least a matter of relying on their testimony, but it is an irrefutable fact that Habibur Rahman accompanied Netaji in his fateful flight from Saigon. If the evidence of any body is to be given highest attention, it is of Habibur Rahman. But, we have already seen in the two preceding chapters that the evidence of all the above five ‘most important witnesses’ of Mr. Khosla’s imagination materially and very vitally differed from the evidence of Habibur Rahman. In fact what Habibur Rahman described as various events connected with the story, in every particular, was controverted by these five witnesses. If Habibur Rahman and five Japanese witnesses equally experienced similar events, connected with the story of Netaji’s death, how could they describe them palpably in such wide divergence?

Habibur Rahman said that only the upper part of Netaji’s body was burnt and his head suffered deep cut injury, but the five Japanese said,—no, his whole body was burnt to greyish ash colour, and Netaji suffered no cut injury at all. All of them said Netaji was brought completely naked to the hospital, but Habibur firmly said,—no, Netaji’s trousers were not removed. Habibur told that the hospital doctor performed an operation on Netaji, but the Doctor himself denied it. Habibur said the plane crashed exactly at 2-35 p.m. but the Japanese witnesses mentioned the time of crash as any time between 11 a.m. to 12-30 p.m. Netaji was found most of the time in a state of coma in the hospital bed, according to Habibur Rahman but Dr. Yoshimi found Netaji in his senses all the time till he passed away. Again when did Netaji die? Habibur Rahman said,—it was precisely at 9 p.m., but Dr. Yoshimi recollected it to be between : 5 p.m. to 11-30 p.m. Now, what about the funeral and the date

of cremation? The Japanese witnesses who claimed themselves to be inseparably involved with every event of the happenings, strangely made themselves aloof from the last scene. They said that they did not attend funeral nor could they remember exactly on which date the body was cremated.

If the story of Netaji's death was true and the Japanese witnesses had personal experiences of all the events connected with the story, how could their accounts so widely differ from the testimony of Habibur Rahman ?

If Netaji really died at Taihoku, was it possible for Habibur Rahman to fail to remember the exact date of cremation ? *Within one month, after the date of alleged death of Netaji, Habibur Rahman gave out four different dates of cremation to four different agencies.*

#### HOW KHOSLA COPIED RAHMAN

Mr. Khosla refused to consider the statements of Habibur Rahman as admissible according to Evidence Act. But Mr. Khosla, almost in mathematical exactitude recorded various events of the narrated story not relying in any way on the evidence of his Japanese witnesses of 'convincing truth', but wholly trusting Habibur Rahman's statements. Habibur Rahman said in his statement that, 'the plane left Saigon on August 17, 1945 at 5-15 p.m., reached Tourane at 7-45 p.m. and left Tourane on August 18 at 7 a.m. ; reached Taihoku at 2 p.m. ; and took off at 2-35 p.m. and Netaji died at 9 p.m. on the same night.' Now, what are the timings recorded by Mr. Khosla in his Report ? He wrote in his Report, "The plane left Saigon on August 17, 1945 at 5 p.m. ; reached Tourane at 7-45 p.m. and left Tourane on the morning of August 18 ; the plane arrived at Taihoku at 2 p.m. and took off at 2-25 p.m. ; and Bose died same night." These timings of different events of the story were not given out by any of the five 'truthful' Japanese witnesses,—they recorded completely different 'times' for different events. Mr. Khosla only avoided to note Habibur Rahman's departure time from Tourane and his time of alleged death of Netaji. Different Japanese witnesses gave out the time

of alleged death of Netaji differing from 5 p.m. to 12 p.m. on August 18, 1945. The doctor, the 'very truthful Yoshimi' gave out the time of alleged death of Netaji as widely varying as 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m., 9 p.m., 10 p.m., 11 p.m. and then 11-30 p.m. to different interrogating agencies at different times. Therefore, Mr. Khosla preferred to be on the safe side, and, thus, vaguely wrote in his Report that "Bose died same night".

#### WHAT HABIBUR RAHMAN REVEALED ?

It should be remembered that 'Habib' was being interrogated at the Red Fort, three search parties with orders to "arrest Bose either dead or alive" were making frantic efforts to find out Netaji and investigate into the links and sources connected with his movement and disappearance. One party was sent by the Government of India to the Far East headed by Figgess and Davies. Another team of military intelligence was ordered by the Headquarters of Mountbatten to track Netaji. This party was led by Col. F. G. Finney, then attached to MacArthur's Headquarters at Tokyo. While investigations were being conducted by these two parties, another party, on behalf of the British Global Counter Intelligence Organisation (CSDIC) was conducting continuous interrogation of Habibur Rahman at the Red Fort during November-December, 1945. *It is most regrettable that except a few pages of Figgess Report, copies of no other investigation reports were produced either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission.*

From the available reports, scrappy though they are, it is quite discernible that Habibur Rahman adopted extra-ordinary precaution either to suppress facts or mislead the interrogating agencies, because, if he revealed any substantive fact, that might have betrayed Netaji's whereabouts and endangered his security. Habib doggedly refused to admit that Netaji had any plan to escape and never said that his destination was Manchuria. On the contrary, he went on harping the same theme over and over again that Netaji intended to go to Tokyo for having consultation with the Imperial Headquarters regarding the procedure of separate surrender of INA and then come back to Singapore to surrender to the British along with his men and officers of INA.

Not a single Japanese or INA witness, either before Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission, supported this story. But Habibur Rahman was so careful during his interrogation that he did not utter a single word about the secret meeting at Bangkok and Saigon with Isoda and Hachia and never mentioned anything about Col. Tada, who played a key role in the planning and execution of Netaji's escape from Saigon. He even told a blatant lie that Netaji stayed in the vacant bungalow of Lt.-Gen. Chatterjee at Saigon, so that the British team could get no clue to locate the bungalow of Narayan Das, the actual place where Netaji stayed. He also did not mention any other Japanese name other than that of Shidei, Isoda and Hachia so that the search party could not trace any other person to find any other clue to understand what exactly happened to Netaji. Habibur Rahman's whole effort, it appears from the reports of his interrogation at Red Fort, was directed to frustrate the effort of the three search parties trying at that time to find the truth about what really happened to Netaji.

In 1956 during his deposition before Shah Nawaz Committee, when the British Government were no longer active in search of Netaji, Habibur Rahman was found to be more communicative with the Committee, but still he never deviated from the main contours of his original story.

#### WHY SHOULD HABIBUR RAHMAN CONCEAL FACTS ?

If Netaji had really died, the whole story ended there, Netaji was then gone and gone for ever. Then Habibur Rahman should have nothing to conceal either from the British Government or from his compatriots. He should have tried by every means to state frankly before the interrogating agencies and to the people of India what happened in reality to Netaji. Even a casual perusal of the reports of his interrogation and the nature of perceptible contradictions found in his various statements unmistakably showed that he tried to conceal all vital facts about Netaji, indicating thereby that he was determined not to divulge truth about his leader. *This attitude of Habibur Rahman compelled the Anglo-American interrogating agency*

to remark that “*Habibur Rahman is unwilling to come out with the truth*”.

### JUDICIAL PERJURY OVER CSDIC REPORT

The British Global Military Intelligence of the war days, called Combined Services Detailed Intelligence Centre (CSDIC), with its headquarters in London, directed its Indian Chief Col. Stevenson to carry thorough interrogation of Habibur Rahman. Stevenson asked B. C. Chakravarty and three other officers to interrogate Habibur Rahman, then detained at Red Fort. After continuous interrogation of Rahman and other INA officers for days together, a 75-page report, counter-signed by Stevenson, was sent to its London Office.

The National Committee pressed hard for this CSIDC report from the Government, but it was not available. However, Shri B. C. Chakravarty, the principal investigating officer of the CSDIC, appeared before Khosla Commission. Shri Chakravarty told the Commission that “. . . after analysing all the reports that were in hands at the time with the CSDIC, it was obvious that Col. Habibur Rahman told lies and the Japanese Government concealed facts. Their reply was nothing other than a product of conspiracy regarding the movement of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose on August 18, 1945 . . . None of them (the British Military Intelligence, or Allied Command) believed that this information about Netaji’s death could be correct because of various discrepancies in the reports and specially the notes pointing out these discrepancies by CSDIC.”

During cross-examination, Shri Chakravarty, *inter alia*, told the Commission :

“Q : What was the substance or the conclusion about the alleged air crash and Netaji’s alleged death which was conveyed to London ?

“A : I will answer as far as I have written and not as far as I have heard. After recording the statement of Habibur Rahman, I myself recorded the answers he gave on cross-examination. I asked him, why he was not anxious to see the face of the dead leader when the doctors announc-



ed that Netaji died on the operation table. His answer was that he was not allowed to stand there for long. Secondly, when he was told that the body would be carried to the furnace, I asked him, "was it not your duty as the second in command of the INA to accompany the dead to the furnace ?" To this, he looked at my face and could not give me any answer. He jumped at his feet and shouted, "I can say with Koran in hand that I was not allowed to accompany the dead from the operation table to the furnace". Thirdly, when on the following morning i.e., on August 19, 1945, a colonel of the Japanese Army and a doctor of the Japanese Base hospital handed over to him a brass pot saying that this pot contained the ashes of Netaji he could not put forward a pertinent answer. He admitted that his only duty was to hand it over to the Commander of the INA Gen. Bhonsle. Fourthly, when I asked him "under whose advice you had been to Tokyo to carry the ashes" he did not give any reply. When I questioned him that he was hiding in Tokyo instead of trying to communicate the information of the death of one of the leading statesmen of our country, he remained mum, he did not give any answer.

**“Q :** Did it occur to you to ask Col. Habibur Rahman that when both of them were in the same plane how Col. Rahman escaped with minor injury and Netaji was alleged to have been burnt ?

**“A :** I did not ask him this question. But I can explain your question. When the body is rather bulky the impact of a crash is more serious on the bulky side. However, Col. Rahman stands on his own statement. There is nobody to say or to contradict what he said.

**“Q :** Am I right or am I wrong that at the time there was no conclusive evidence ?

**“A :** Yes, not at all. The only available evidence was the statement of Lt.-Col. Habibur Rahman. When he was subjected to questions he failed to give pertinent answers

to all the questions. The question was that he was not delivering the truth.

“Q : May I take it, Mr. Chakravarty, that when you submitted your report on December 30, 1945, you covered the entire episode of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose ?

“A : I submitted the report to the Command on December 30, 1945, evening. I sat with three officers at Bahadurgarh. These reports, including the statements I recorded, were combined and a summary report was prepared. This summary report was scrutinised by the officers. There was one from England ; I do not know his name. He was also there. After a thorough scrutiny and after pointing out the defects in the statement a forwarding note was also prepared.

“Q : Did the report cover the incidents in regard to Netaji right upto the time of the alleged air crash ?

“A : Probably this covered their movements for the last three months and the collapse and surrender of the Japanese. There were a few lines here and there which have bearing on the main report but I do not remember those details. If you ask me a specific question perhaps I can say something. This report which I made and which should be available with the Government of England was a very lengthy one covering all the details including the substance of the statements of different important personages of INA.

“Q : Now, leaving aside the report, let me ask you if you did see Col. Rahman's hands ?

“A : Yes I examined the burns of his hands, I got the medical report and I got the report tested by another and re-tested by another surgeon.

“Q : You are an extremely knowledgeable person and so I am asking you to kindly give us the information that supposing the Hon'ble Inquiry Commission wants to requisition and call for a copy of your Report of 75 pages, I understand submitted then, as also such other state-

ments, who should be requisitioned through Government of India for production of the same ?

“A : The then Secretary, War Office, London. C.S.D.I.C. was not under the control of the officers of India and since war was over, it was disbanded and personally I think that such important things were not left behind by the officers who were working in the C.S.D.I.C. May be a few statements, not so important, were left with the Government of India.”

The CSDIC Report was never produced before the Commission and Mr. Khosla also admitted it. Surprisingly, however, Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report, “. . . the file containing a lengthy and detailed interrogation carried out by CSDIC and a 25-page closely typed report was subsequently made available to the Commission”. He further observed, “When examined this argument (of Chakravarty) is seen to be nothing but a string of false assumptions and non-sequitur. The file containing the record of interrogation carried by Shri Chakravarty and his report was produced before the Commission by an officer of the Government and I have carefully perused the long interrogation as well as the report. This report is dated December 31, 1945. I treat the file before the Commission as the report which Shri Chakravarty claimed to have prepared. The record of the statement made by Habibur Rahman does not contain contradictions and discrepancies mentioned by Shri Chakravarty”.

Then Mr. Khosla brusquely observed that the report “gives lie direct to Shri Chakravarty’s report . . . The non-receipt of the file appears to have lent a measure of boldness, bordering on recklessness to Shri Chakravarty’s conduct when he made deposition before the Commission for he anticipated little risk of contradiction of the statement he made.”

At another place Mr. Khosla wrote : “The report prepared by Lt.-Col. Figgess was based on the record of Habibur Rahman’s interrogation carried out by CSDIC.” Then he added : “The report purported to have been submitted to CSDIC as alleged by the witness (Chakravarty)”.

Figgess report could hardly contain CSDIC report. Mr. Khosla glossed over the dates of submission of the two reports. *Figgess report was submitted to the Government of India on October 8, 1945, whereas the CSDIC report was submitted on December 31, 1945.*

It appears from the observations of Mr. Khosla that he believed Figgess report was really the report of CSDIC, but he avoided to mention that Figgess Committee was set up by the Government of India, whereas CSDIC team was appointed by its London Office. Therefore, there could hardly be any question of submission of CSDIC report to Figgess. Mr. Khosla further observed that CSDIC report, as found in Figgess report, categorically accepted Habibur Rahman's statement as true. But Mr. Khosla deliberately created a confusion by not mentioning equally categorically whether he found the original CSDIC report or a part of it as included in Figgess report. Even about Figgess report Mr. Khosla avoided to mention anything about the chart prepared by Figgess about Habibur Rahman's different statements. This chart shows that even Figgess did not believe the story of Habibur Rahman as true.

*[Chart given in the last chapter]*

Shri Gobindo Mukhoty, in the course of his arguments, accused the Government : "The real report of CSDIC is alleged to have been deliberately withheld because it did not affirm the truth of the crash story". Even during Shri Mukhoty's argument before the Commission, Mr. Khosla never disclosed that a Government Officer had shown him the CSDIC report. If it is accepted that Mr. Khosla was shown the original CSDIC report secretly, how without its production before the Commission as an exhibit, he could accept it as a document before the Commission ? No counsel was given any opportunity to see the secret CSDIC report, as mentioned by Khosla to have been secretly shown to him. Could he refer to such a report, surreptitiously shown to him as he claimed in the Report of the Commission ? But he never allowed his conscience to be burdened with such a relevant judicial question !

In one place of his report, Mr. Khosla described Chakra-

varty as a "trusted and reliable officer" but when he felt it necessary to disregard his evidence, he called the witness a "reckless liar". That portion of the Figgess report which Mr. Khosla accepted, without producing it before the Commission as the report of CSDIC,—how could he assume it to be so ? Did the CSDIC report, as claimed by Mr. Khosla to have been found in Figgess report, bear the signature of B. C. Chakravarty with counter-signature of Col. Stevenson ? Did he inquire, how 75-page CSDIC report could be squeezed into 25-page report ? Did he see the original report of the CSDIC or only a few pages of it as reproduced in Figgess report ? If he had seen the CSDIC report, why did he not show the secret document to Shri Gobindo Mukhoty ? Why instead of producing the report before the Commission, it was (if it was really CSDIC report) secretly shown after the conclusion of the argument only to the Chairman alone ? Mr. Khosla did not bother to answer any of these pertinent questions ?

If Mr. Khosla had any unfettered judicial conscience, he should have resummoned Mr. B. C. Chakravarty for re-examination on the basis of the CSDIC report, if it was really found, and he should have given the counsel of the National Committee an opportunity to cross-examine Mr. Chakravarty. CSDIC report, as referred to by B. C. Chakravarty, was so important and it so categorically rejected the story of Habibur Rahman that Mr. Khosla did not hesitate to resort to an act of legally indefensible perjury to scotch the evidence of Shri B. C. Chakravarty. Such performance of the Chairman of a Judicial Commission, perhaps, has no parallel in the judicial history of India.

#### HINTS BY HABIBUR RAHMAN

Habibur Rahman migrated to Pakistan in 1947 when many of his relatives were killed during communal riots. Rahman came to India from Pakistan to appear before Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956. A few days before his arrival at Delhi, a report appeared in the 'Civil and Military Gazette' of Lahore which stated that Habibur Rahman told its correspondent that

Netaji did not die in any plane crash. This news was reproduced in the Bengali newspapers of former East Pakistan. But Habibur Rahman did not contradict it.

Habibur Rahman stayed in the Pakistan High Commission Office in Delhi, where Shri Sunil Gupta and Shri Amar Goswami jointly met him. Shri Goswami appeared before the Khosla Commission to tell what transpired during their meeting with Habibur Rahman. What Shri Goswami told Khosla Commission was summed up by Shri Sunil Gupta, a prominent member of the National Committee, who during four years' sittings of Khosla Commission unfailingly attended them, except during its visit to South-East Asia, as Gupta's passport was not issued by the Government in time. The following is the report of their meeting with Habibur Rahman :

#### COL. RAHMAN ON NETAJI'S DEATH REPORT

“NEW DELHI,—April 6, 1956. It was about 9 o'clock in the morning, Shri Amar Mazumdar and I reached Pakistan High Commissioner's Office in New Delhi. Col. Habibur Rahman, Netaji's aide and co-passenger in that so-called crashed plane, had made the following remarks in reply to our question at Pakistan High Commissioner's Office in New Delhi.”

“While denying his own statement published in Lahore Civil and Military Gazette that Netaji did not die in the plane crash, he made following remarks in reply to our questions.”

“Shri Amar Mazumdar and I put many questions to Col. Rahman. We asked him why he did not contradict the news published in Lahore Civil and Military Gazette. (In reply to Shri Pulin Sil's statement in London, Col. Rahman made a statement that Netaji did not die in the said plane crash. This statement of Col. Rahman was published in Lahore Civil and Military Gazette.) In reply to our question Col. Rahman said that the newspaper had misquoted him. We asked, “Why have you not sent a protest when the news was published ? Have you sent any kind of contradiction till now ?” Col. Rahman replied that he “punctiliously avoided the reporters because they always misquoted him.”

“We asked again, “Why don’t you give a fitting rejoinder ?” Col. Rahman smiled and quipped.—“Oh, they will again misquote me.” Then he further said, “Why are you so anxious to demolish a story which has no basis ? Let them declare that Netaji is dead. It would be our double gain when he will return.” We asked him : “How it will be our double gain ?” He replied, “Firstly, we shall get Netaji amongst us, secondly the people who are trying to establish the plane crash story will be exposed and we will be able to teach them a good lesson.” He requested us not to divulge it to the Press.”

“On the same day Col. Rahman was to go to adduce evidence before the Shah Nawaz Committee. It was about 9-30 a.m., Shah Nawaz Khan came with a car to take him to the Committee’s office. Col. Rahman advised us to go by the back-door so that Shah Nawaz could not see us. Then he left with Mr. Shah Nawaz.”

Dated, New Delhi.

The 6th April, 1956.

SUNIL GUPTA”

This is not the only one instance where Rahman could not always withhold his secrecy about Netaji. He indicated to many of his colleagues that he obeyed the orders from his leader. In 1947, when he was in Alwar, with his uncle and father-in-law, who was then the Prime Minister of the Princely State, he disclosed to the Secretary of the Prime Minister, Mr. Khem Chand, an ICS officer, that the story of Netaji’s death was nothing but cooked up. (Khem Chand reported it to the author in writing).

In 1966, Hayashida, the Japanese author of a biography of Netaji, met Habibur Rahman in Rawalpindi. In his note to Hayashida, Habibur Rahman wrote *inter alia* : “Netaji Subhas Chandra was the greatest revolutionary that the Indian sub-continent produced in the present century . . . Many in Bharat still believe that he is still alive and will turn up someday. How we wish he had come back alive ! If that were to happen, it is more than certain that he would have occupied a dominating position in Indian politics. Then the relations between Bharat and Pakistan might well have been cordial instead of being

embittered as it is today. He was known to be most judicious and a fair-minded leader. *However, the flame of freedom lit by him is still burning and will continue to inspire the freedom-fighters all over the world for all times to come.*”

If Netaji really died at Taihoku, how does the question of his coming back alive arise at all ? In his sub-conscious mind, it appears, Habibur Rahman still prays to Almighty for his leader, Netaji, to come back to his motherland !



## 8

### The Stories of a Watch and Last Testament

MR. KHOSLA NEVER failed to catch even a straw, if it appeared to have even faintly corroborated the story of Netaji's death. The story of a rectangular watch handed over to Pandit Nehru by Habibur Rahman after his release from Red Fort telling Panditji that it was the watch Netaji had on his wrist at the time of the alleged air crash,—is an instance of the kind. About this watch, Mr. Khosla wrote in his report : “. . . the rectangular watch with a slightly damaged rubber strap . . . was removed from Bose's person after his death in the Military Hospital at Taipei . . . *Thus the watch was relied upon as evidence corroborating the story of air crash at Taihoku.*” Did Dr. Yoshimi say anything about removal of such a watch from the person of Netaji at the hospital ? Habibur Rahman said that the watch was given to him by Dr. Yoshimi after Netaji's death. But Dr. Yoshimi categorically denied it.

What did Shah Nawaz Committee say about this watch in its report ? It said, “There has been certain amount of controversy about the watch Col. Habibur Rahman brought with him, which was later handed over by Pandit Jawahar Lal Nehru to late Sarat Chandra Bose, elder brother of Netaji. It was a rectangular watch. Col. Habibur Rahman has stated that it was handed over to him by Dr. Yoshimi as belonging to Netaji, but

Dr. Yoshimi said that he did not remember anything about it. Most of the pictures of Netaji show him wearing a round wrist watch . . . *The point about the watch remains inconclusive.*”

However, ignoring the remark of Shah Nawaz Committee, Mr. Khosla relied upon this rectangular watch as a corroboration of the story of Netaji's death. On the evidence of Shri Amiya Nath Bose, a nephew of Netaji, Mr. Khosla further wrote, quoting from Amiya Bose's evidence, “Panditji brought out this watch and said that Habibur Rahman had given this watch to be handed over to his father. Shri Amiya Nath Bose was inclined to believe the story attributed to Habibur Rahman and accept the fact that the watch, in fact, did belong to Subhas Chandra Bose . . . Shri Amiya Nath Bose has taken great care of this watch . . . It seems, therefore, that despite all the protests and denials by the Bose family, Shri Amiya Bose, at any rate believes that the watch belongs to his uncle, Subhas Chandra Bose and is to be valued and treated with reverence and affection.”

But Mr. Khosla, conveniently avoided to mention the other facts in his Report. A press cutting was submitted to the Commission by the National Committee which appeared in *Hindustan Standard* of Calcutta on the next day after the watch was handed over to Sarat Chandra Bose. According to this press report, Sarat Chandra Bose did not accept it as Netaji's wrist watch.

Mr. Khosla deliberately avoided to mention what Shri Amiya Bose disclosed in the meeting of important members of Parliament, held on December 5, 1969 which was convened by the Home Minister. The report of this meeting was submitted to Khosla Commission by the Government. Shri Amiya Bose said in this meeting that while showing this rectangular watch to Bhulabhai Desai, Habibur Rahman told the former that the watch stopped exactly at the time of the air crash. According to Rahman the plane crashed at 2-35 p.m., but the watch indicated that it stopped an hour earlier. Bhulabhai Desai asked a watch-expert to open the watch in the presence of Habibur Rahman. When the watch was opened, it was found

that the oil inside remained wholly unaffected although Rahman narrated the story that it suffered severe burning. Shri Desai simply smiled and returned the watch to Rahman, obviously disbelieving his story of air crash. In this meeting Amiya Bose also categorically denied it to be the watch of Netaji.

In December 1945, Habibur Rahman told the British interrogators that "Netaji had no watch on his wrist. I cannot say whether he had any in his pocket". (From Khosla Commission's Exhibit). But he told Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 that the watch was given to him by Dr. Yoshimi after the alleged death of Netaji. However, the Japanese doctor denied it before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission.

What type of watch Netaji was found to be using in Europe and South East Asia ? Bhaskaran, the confidential P.A. to Netaji, who almost always stayed with him in S.-E. Asia told Mr. Khosla that Netaji habitually used a round wrist watch. Discarding the evidence of Bhaskaran, who had the opportunity to see Netaji almost every day from close quarters till August 17, 1945, Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report :

"Bhaskaran stated Netaji was wearing a round watch. But Bhaskaran's evidence has been seen to be wholly unreliable. I am not prepared to accept his testimony on this point." It is not easy to understand why Mr. Khosla chose to describe Bhaskaran as an unreliable person whom Netaji accepted as his most reliable assistant to deal with all his confidential files !

Mr. Khosla preferred to ignore the testimony of Netaji's personal valet, Kundan Singh, on this point. According to Shah Nawaz Committee's Report : "Netaji's personal valet, Kundan Singh, also confirms that he habitually wore a round wrist watch". Kundan Singh was the man who looked after Netaji daily at his Singapore residence till August 16, 1945.

Kundan Singh told Shah Nawaz Committee : "Netaji had only one wrist watch i.e., a round silver or nickel wrist watch. He was wearing the same wrist watch on his last journey". When the rectangular watch was shown to him, Kundan Singh told Shah Nawaz : "Netaji was not wearing this watch. He never wore a watch like this."

According to Shah Nawaz Committee, "Most pictures of Netaji show him wearing a round wrist watch." Innumerable photographs of Netaji are found in printed books and also in Netaji Museum in Calcutta, and the National Committee also produced before the Commission over half a dozen pictures of Netaji wearing round a wrist watch,—but not a single picture of Netaji could be found anywhere with any rectangular watch around his wrist. Mr. Khosla, however, wrote, "Evidence in the form of photographs taken at various times and published in books, was produced by Shri Samar Guha. The matter is, however, inconclusive because, according to one statement Bose had more than one watches."

The question under dispute is not whether Netaji had more than one watches,—round or rectangular,—but about the watch he habitually used. Finding it difficult to prove that Netaji had on his wrist a rectangular watch, while the alleged crash took place, although in his report Mr. Khosla categorically cited the burnt rectangular watch as a corroboration of air crash, he subsequently added : "The only direct evidence of the recovery of the watch from Bose's person would have been the statement of Habibur Rahman. In the absence of his evidence, the production of watch cannot be looked upon as a corroboration of crash story." By such observation Mr. Khosla rather by-passed the main issue that the production of a rectangular watch by Habibur Rahman was deliberately intended to mislead the Anglo-American investigating agencies by trying to convince them that the plane crash really occurred.

### THE STORY OF THE LAST TESTAMENT

In his over-anxiety to make the story of Netaji's death reliable, Habibur Rahman rather very naively introduced an over-drawn dramatic element into it. He told Shah Nawaz Committee that after the air crash, when Netaji came out of the burning plane "I laid Netaji on the ground,—I myself lay by his side . . . Just then, Netaji inquired from me in Hindustani —*ap ko ziada to nahi lagi ?* (Hope you have not been badly hurt ?) I replied, I would be alright. About himself he said that he felt that he would not survive. I replied, "Oh ! No, I

don't think so". He used these words : "When you go back to the country, tell the people that upto the last I have been fighting for the liberation of my country ; they should continue the struggle, and I am sure India will be free before long. Nobody can keep India in bondage now. (*Jab apne mulk wapas jayen, to mulki bhaiyon ko batana ki mein akiri dam tak mulk ki Azadi key liyey larta raha hoon ; woh jange-azadi ko jari rakhen. Hindusthan zaroor azad hoga. Us ko koi golam nahi rakh sakta.*)"

Shah Nawaz Committee was so much impressed by this utterings of Rahman that it commented : "In a way this was the last testament and very characteristic of him (Netaji). It was in keeping with the oath he took to fight for the independence of India till his last breath when he established the Provisional Government of Azad Hind on October 21, 1943".

How could Mr. Khosla miss such a telling testimony of the last testament of Netaji to record in his report as a very catching corroboration of the story of Netaji's death ! Shah Nawaz Khan overlooked other similar stories, but Mr. Khosla carefully avoided the trap of such dramatic utterance attributed to Netaji, as he found it difficult to make it believable.

Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 that Netaji gave the above message to him very soon after the alleged air crash, but in most authentic statement recorded by him on August 24, 1945 at Taihoku for keeping it along with the casket containing alleged ashes he wrote that Netaji gave out the above message for his countrymen not after the air crash at the Taihoku airfield, but at the Nonmon hospital. Although Habibur Rahman said to Shah Nawaz Committee that Netaji was in a state of coma almost all the time in the hospital, but he recorded in his written statement, that "Prior to his death he was in his senses and was quite calm. Whenever he talked to me, it was regarding India's independence. Prior to his death he told me that his end was near and asked me to convey a message from him to his countrymen to the following effect :

"I have fought to the last for India's independence and now I am giving my life in the same attempt. Countrymen !

continue the independence fight ! Before long India will be free ! Long Live Azad Hind !”

In September, 1945, Rahman told the same story of the last testament to S. A. Iyer in Tokyo, in which he said : “A moment before his end came, he said to me, “My end is coming very soon. I have fought all my life for my country’s freedom. I am dying for my country’s freedom. Go and tell my countrymen to continue to fight for India’s freedom. India will be free before long.”

Apart from the question of different circumstances and varied language of this so-called last testament as attributed to Netaji, no other Japanese witness like Dr. Yoshimi, Dr. Tsuruta, Nakamura and others who claimed that they were present all the time before his alleged death, confirmed the version of Habibur Rahman that Netaji gave any such message to him just before he allegedly breathed his last. All of them said that Netaji had lost his consciousness much before his alleged death.

The story did not end there. Capt. Arai in his statement before the Shah Nawaz Committee said that ‘Chandra Bose’ gave the above statement neither at the Taihoku Airport after the alleged air crash, nor at the Nonmon hospital, but he heard him say this to Rahman when the plane was flying from Tourane to Taihoku. He claimed that he sat behind Netaji and Habibur Rahman and heard him give the above message to his aide when the plane was flying towards Taihoku.

Lt.-Col. Nonogaki added a new story about Netaji’s last testament. He wrote in *Emuri Shimbun* in 1969 :

“Lt.-Col. Takamiya went to meet Bose in the hospital with an interpreter and Takamiya asked him, if he had anything to say. Bose said that he wanted to convey his regard to the Emperor of Japan and Gen. Terauchi. Bose was asked then, if he had any message for INA. Bose said,—no, he had no message for INA. Takamiya had his talk with Bose between 8 and 9 p.m. on August 18, 1945.”

What did these stories of the rectangular wrist watch and

the last testament proved ? It showed that although Habibur Rahman made every effort to make his story of Netaji's death appear as more reliable before the British Intelligence teams, yet he made himself rather subject to more of suspicion by leaving many inadvertent pitfalls in it.

## 9

### The Plan and Its Execution

LATE SURESH CHANDRA BOSE, an elder brother of Netaji, who submitted a dissentient report against the findings of the Shah Nawaz Committee told Khosla Commission : "The plan was that Netaji would go to Russia . . . He would be removed to Russia with the help of the Japanese. When the victorious Anglo-Americans would call upon the Japanese Government to hand him over to them as a war criminal, they would say that Netaji died in the plane crash".

On hearing this part of Suresh Babu's evidence, Mr. Khosla instantly observed : "If there was a plan like this, it is a very strong argument against the Shah Nawaz Committee . . . and it will go a long way to prove that Netaji did not die in the plane crash".

Was there any such plan to convey Netaji to Russia ? If so, who prepared the plan and how was it executed ? Was the plan prepared by Netaji alone, or was it chalked out by the Japanese authorities with Netaji's consent ? Enough evidence came before Khosla Commission to understand who prepared Netaji's plan, what was the nature of the plan and how it was to be executed. Most of the key men of Japan who maintained liaison with the Azad Hind Government unequivocally told the Inquiry Commission that the plan was to convey Netaji up to Manchuria from where he would cross into the Russian territory on his own. The main theme of such a plan was



supported by all INA witnesses, except Habibur Rahman. Lt.-Gen. Isoda, Lt.-Gen. Takakura, Hachia, Nigeshi, Lt.-Col. Sakai and many other high-ranking Japanese witnesses told Mr. Khosla that Netaji expressed his intention to go to Russia and the plan to convey him to Russia was prepared jointly by the Tokyo Imperial Headquarters and South-East Asian Headquarters at Saigon. The most secret part of the plan was later disclosed by Col. Tada, one of the principal architects of the plan, when S. A. Iyer as Nehru's emissary met him at Tokyo in 1951. He told Iyer that the Imperial Headquarters indeed decided to announce disappearance of 'Chandra Bose' after he crossed into the Russian territory across Manchuria.

After having all the evidence before him about the plan, it was difficult for Mr. Khosla to ignore it and deny the fact that Netaji indeed intended to go to Russia. However, if he accepted the position that the plan was drawn up and executed by the highest military authorities of Japan, then it would have been difficult for him to resist the inference that the story of Netaji's death was fabricated and the Tokyo Radio's announcement of his death was pre-arranged. In order to bypass such an irresistible conclusion, Mr. Khosla developed some kind of a political thesis in which he fancied many postulates without any evidentiary support and in doing so he even stooped to a vulgar portrayal of the revolutionary character of Netaji. The main burden of his thesis was to justify his contention that although the Japanese authorities agreed to convey 'Bose' to Russia, the plan chalked out by them was very 'vague and amorphous' as after surrender of Japan they wanted to get rid of a 'dispensable ally' like Bose, for which, they offered somewhat 'lip service' assistance to him.

In summing up the events preceding Netaji's departure from Saigon on August 17, 1945, Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report : "A messenger was sent to Bose (12th August) informing him of the proposed term of surrender. Bose had to decide quickly what should be his future course of action. He accordingly asked the Japanese to make arrangement for his escape to Russian territory, because he believed that the

Indian aspirations evoked a sympathetic response from the Russians. Bose had already attempted to contact the Russians through diplomatic channels, but the Japanese had not made a favourable response to his request. However, now when the Russians had made a formal declaration of war, to send Bose to Russia would not cause any diplomatic embarrassment *vis-a-vis* the Allies. *Also, the war having ended, Bose had become a dispensable ally. They welcomed the opportunity to be relieved of what must, in the altered circumstances, have been looked upon as a liability. No cut and dried plan of conveying Bose out of the area under Allied control could be prepared, because the Americans had laid strict embargo on all flights by the Japanese and the chaotic conditions prevailing after the defeat and humiliation suffered by the Japanese it was not possible to prescribe an exact schedule of flight. Bose had, therefore, to hold himself in readiness to fly immediately whenever accommodation on a plane flying to or towards Russian territory became available.*"

Mr. Khosla further wrote : "The Commander of Japanese forces in South-East Asia was Field Marshal Count Terauchi, who was at Dalat, not far from Saigon. *Terauchi might have received advice from Tokyo about Bose's future conduct. His (Bose's) plans were vague and amorphous.*"

#### WAS THE CHAOTIC CONDITION SO CHAOTIC ?

Wherever any pertinent question baffled factual answer, Mr. Khosla was always found to offer the blanket *alibi* of 'prevailing chaotic condition after surrender of Japan'. Why the flight-chart was not found at Saigon ? Why no documentary testimonials could be produced by the Japanese witnesses who claimed to have travelled in the same plane with Netaji ? Why the so-called co-passengers could not show a single piece of paper to prove that they were really on transfer to Dairen or Tokyo on unavoidably urgent postings ? Why no official record could be produced to prove that the plane really came from Manila on August 17, 1945 ? Why Taihoku flight chart and weather report could not be found ? Why no record or positive

evidence could be found to prove that Dr. Yoshimi and Dr. Tsuruta gave medical aids to Netaji in the Nonmon hospital at Taihoku ? Why necessary protocol was not followed by the Civil or Military Headquarters of Formosa in receiving Netaji and Gen. Shidei at Taihoku airport ? Why photographs of alleged bodies of Netaji and Gen. Shidei were not taken ? Why practically nothing was known about the alleged funeral of Gen. Shidei at Taihoku ? Why not a single senior officer, except a major, attended the alleged funeral of Netaji ? Why no death certificate or cremation certificate either in the name of Netaji or Gen. Shidei was found which was known to be a 'must' in those days in Taihoku and records of which used to be preserved by the Municipal Bureau ? Why no receipt of the alleged ashes of Netaji was kept ? Why even routine inquiry was not held about the alleged air crash at Taihoku either by the Formosan or Tokyo Headquarters ? Why the news of Netaji's reported death was broadcast five days later ? Why in such a broadcast also it was stated that Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo ? Why the press release was issued by the Intelligence Bureau of Formosan Military Headquarters and that too after seven days ? Why the news circulated by the Domei Agency from Tokyo and the Military Intelligence Bureau of Formosa materially differed ? Why, in two news reports circulated from Tokyo and Taihoku, the date of alleged cremation of the body was not mentioned ? Why Iyer was asked to draft the text of the news of Netaji's death in the name of the Domei Agency of Japan ? Why neither Tokyo Headquarters nor Taihoku authorities officially issued any communique about the alleged air crash at Taihoku and reported death of Netaji and Gen. Shidei ?

For all such and other 'whys' Mr. Khosla found only one blanket answer,—because "a chaotic condition was prevailing after defeat of Japan."

It is a known fact of history, recorded in the evidence of Khosla Commission as well, that till September 7, 1945, Japanese surrender meant only cessation of hostilities. There was no embargo on Japanese civil or military flights, nor

Japanese military planes were ordered by the Allies to be grounded till September 7. Before that date innumerable military planes flew to and from Japan from its various bases.

If the chaotic condition, as presumed by Mr. Khosla, was so chaotic, how on August 25, Gen. Tanaka and Dr. Ba Maw could have passed through Taihoku en route Tokyo ? How Dr. Laurel, President of the Philippines and other South-East Asian leaders reached Tokyo much later and how Hayashida, Sakai and Habibur Rahman left for Tokyo from Taihoku with the alleged ashes of Netaji on September 5 ? In fact, till September 7, 1945, innumerable Japanese planes flew to different places in South-East Asia.

Except a few instances of Harakiri committed by some Japanese officers, there was no sign of large-scale disorders or chaos either in Japan or in any other Japanese territory. The Japanese made orderly withdrawal from every area of East Asia and Formosa was under Japanese administrative control till about the end of September, 1945, before Chiang Kai-shek's army occupied it.

Therefore these historical facts do not support the sweeping assumption of Mr. Khosla that everything in Japan or in territories under its occupation turned overnight chaotic and disorderly immediately after August 15, 1945.

#### ANY PRE-ARRANGED PLAN TO HELP NETAJI?

Mr. Khosla concluded in his Report that there was no '*cut and dried plan*' for Netaji's exit from Saigon and it was '*only amorphous and vague.*' Let us see from the evidence of the Commission how far Mr. Khosla's conclusion is factual.

Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report : "The views expressed by Shah Nawaz Khan are entitled to the greatest respect". Now, about the plan of Netaji's going to Russia,—it is what Shah Nawaz Khan told Khosla Commission : "At this Cabinet meeting held in the month of October, 1944, i.e., 8 months before surrender of Japan, Netaji explained to us that the tide of war was changing and he said, "My own feeling is that

there can be only one end of the war, and that is, the Anglo-Americans will win. That is immaterial to us, because we are fighting for India's liberation. Even if they (Japanese) are defeated and lay down their arms, we will continue the freedom struggle of India till she attains freedom. He said, he would like to seek the assistance of Russia and Communist forces to liberate India. Therefore, he said, he would like to contact Russia."

In reply to a question by Mr. Khosla, inquiring from Shah Nawaz Khan as to when Netaji decided to contact Russia, the latter said, "I think in the month of October, 1944, when Netaji went to Tokyo". In an answer to his next question Shah Nawaz Khan further said that he came to know about it from General Bhonsle, Col. Dr. Raju (Netaji's personal physician) and Shri Anandamohan Sahay. Informing the Commission that some documents were produced in this regard, he continued to say : "Russia had not declared war against Japan in October, 1944. Netaji attempted to contact Jacob Malik, the Russian Ambassador in Tokyo but did not succeed. Then he deputed Anandamohan Sahay to be stationed at Hanoi to contact Ho Chi Minh and his forces. His intention was to fly to Manchuria. His idea was to go to Manchuria behind the Japanese lines in Manchuria and then to just walk across into Russian lines. He was prepared to take this risk".

It is obvious from Shah Nawaz Khan's evidence that Netaji was secretly preparing his plan for shifting his centre of activities to Russia, eight months before the surrender of Japan.

In confirmation of Netaji's plan, E. Bhaskaran, Confidential P.A. to Netaji, also told Khosla Commission : "In January 1945 he (Netaji) sent an officer to the Japanese Headquarters asking them to convey a message to Russia". Bhaskaran further told Mr. Khosla that "in matters of extremely confidential nature, Netaji always used to write in his own hand."

According to (an exhibit) a copy of a telegram found with the Commission,—the British Intelligence Officer stationed at Chungking China of Chiang Kai-shek, intercepted a message

sent from Tokyo Headquarters requesting Netaji to separate himself from INA, when the Japanese Army was evacuating Burma (Report quoted earlier). The telegram was sent to Mountbatten's Headquarters. It shows Japan was preparing a plan to shift Netaji from South-East Asia several months before her surrender.

The purport of the above telegram was definitely confirmed by a high ranking general, Lt.-General Maria Takakura of the Japanese Imperial Headquarters, who was sent to meet Netaji with a special message from the highest military authority of Japan. Takakura in his evidence told Khosla Commission : "Two months before the surrender of Japan, I went to Bangkok where I met General Terauchi, Chandra Bose and Lt.-Gen. Isoda. As a result of our conversation, Mr. Chandra Bose agreed to cooperate with the Japanese forces in the Southern area. There was a decision among the Japanese military circles that it will be better for Chandra Bose to go to some area where he could have freedom of action than coming to Japan because he might have been arrested had he come to Japan. So it would be better for him to go to such a place, for instance Soviet Union—Manchuria border . . . Lt.-Gen. Shidei was on transfer to Kwantang Army . . . that is why Chandra Bose went with him. *The Headquarters of Tokyo accepted the plan for Netaji's going to Russia via Dairen and the Headquarters directed Lt.-Gen. Shidei to accompany him*".

Mr. Khosla remarked about Lt.-Gen. Takakura's evidence in his Report : "Takakura is an entirely disinterested witness, and there is no reason why reliance should not be placed on his testimony".

Three vital points emerged out of Lt.-Gen. Takakura's evidence,—first, at least two months before the surrender of Japan a secret plan about Netaji's going to Russia was drawn up. Secondly, the plan was prepared by the Imperial Headquarters i.e., the highest military authority of Japan. Thirdly, a general holding a very high rank, like Lt.-Gen. Shidei, was selected by the Imperial Headquarters to "accompany Netaji upto the border of Soviet Union—Manchuria".

Lt.-Gen. Takakura's evidence has been further supported by Lt.-Col. Sakai's visit to Singapore on August 14. Mr. Khosla admitted in his Report that Sakai was sent by the Imperial Headquarters of Tokyo three days before the surrender of Japan to contact and communicate to Netaji about the Headquarters' plan for Netaji's going to Russia. On reaching Saigon, Sakai expected Netaji at Bangkok. Negishi was sent on August 11 to meet Netaji at Seramban in Malaya to communicate to him the secret terms of surrender of Japan. Negishi accompanied Netaji from Seramban to Singapore. Finding that Netaji remained unconcerned about himself, Lt.-Gen. Isoda and Hachia, Japanese Ambassador to Netaji's Government, were urgently sent by Terauchi's Headquarters to Singapore to persuade Netaji to arrive at Saigon for going to Russia immediately. But Netaji was still delaying when Sakai was rushed to Singapore on August 14, with a special message from the Imperial Headquarters.

Lt.-Gen. Isoda also told the Commission : "The purpose of his (Netaji's) flight was to go to the Soviet Union. After reaching Dairen, if time allowed, he intended to go to Tokyo to express his gratitude for the Japanese help and also to collect some supplies. I thought he would get no time to go to Tokyo. The main object of Mr. Bose was to go to the Soviet Union and his desire to go to Tokyo was only secondary." During cross-examination Isoda categorically told the Commission that "*He was going to Russia via Saigon . . . There was no plan to stay long at Saigon.*" Hachia, Negishi and Watanabe also supported the evidence of Isoda. Isoda also said in his evidence that Lt.-Gen. Shidei was to accompany Netaji.

From all these Japanese evidence it becomes clear that firstly, the plan of Netaji's going to Russia was firmly drawn up much before Japanese surrender after joint consultations between Netaji on the one side and the Imperial Headquarters and Terauchi's Headquarters on the other ; secondly, the plan was executed so earnestly by the Japanese military authorities that a great General like Shidei was specially deputed to accompany Netaji upto Dairen ; and thirdly, there was no plan for

Netaji's stay at Saigon, but to go straight to Dairen via Saigon without any delay.

### REVELATION OF PLAN FOR ANNOUNCING NETAJI'S DISAPPEARANCE.

It came out clearly from the evidence of important Japanese and INA witnesses that Lt.-Gen. Isoda and Col. Tada, a very important Staff Officer of Terauchi's Headquarters, were the two principal persons who were in charge of execution of the first part of the plan i.e., Netaji's flight from Saigon. When S. A. Iyer was sent by Pandit Nehru to Tokyo in 1951 to secretly inquire about the story of Netaji's death, he met many important Japanese of the war-time days, including Col. Tada.

In his report submitted to Nehru, Iyer enclosed a very important "*confidential note*", in which he made a startling disclosure. Iyer wrote : "*Col. Tada told me that it was arranged that Chandra Bose will fly in the plane in which Shidei was going. General Shidei will look after Chandra Bose upto Dairen, and thereafter he would fall back on his own resources to contact Russians. Japanese would announce to the world that Bose had disappeared from Dairen. That would absolve them of all responsibilities in the eyes of the Allies*".

Terauchi took this decision before arrival of Sakai from Tokyo Headquarters. After that, it is evident, Terauchi's plan coincided with the plan of the Imperial Headquarters. The most important disclosure made by Col. Tada is that the *Japanese Headquarters had planned to make a false announcement of Netaji's disappearance.*

In leaving a cryptic hint to John Thivy, one of his Cabinet Ministers, in a letter written at about 3 a.m. at night on August 17, Netaji informed Thivy that he might be involved in an air crash. He thus secretly indicated in advance to one of his most trusted colleagues about a very significant part of his escape plan. [*More about it later*]

Without knowing anything about the confidential note of Iyer regarding the revelation made by Col. Tada to him, Shri Amiya Nath Bose, a nephew of Netaji, who was then a Member



of Parliament told same thing to the leading members of all parties of Parliament in a meeting held in Parliament House on December 5, 1969. It was presided over by the then Home Minister, Shri Y. B. Chavan. In this meeting, Amiya Bose said: “Regarding the announcement (of Netaji’s death) the Government of Japan admits, it was at this stage (after the atom bomb attack on Hiroshima) the Japanese Government agreed to place *a plane at Netaji’s disposal to take him to Dairen and the Japanese Government would announce his ‘death. Therefore the news of death was pre-arranged’*”.

The note about Col. Tada, and the proceedings of the Home Minister’s meeting with the Members of Parliament were separately produced before the Commission. Mr. Khosla neither analysed the implications of this information, nor did he mention a word about them in his Report.

#### ESTABLISHMENT OF VARIOUS CONTACTS

While deposing before the Commission, late Debnath Das, a former Minister of the Azad Hind Government said: “When we were negotiating with Jacob Malik through the Foreign Minister Shegomatsu, we received a letter from the Japanese Military authorities in Tokyo stating that it would not be possible on the part of Japan to send Netaji to Russia . . . *After that what negotiations were done (by Netaji himself), we do not know.*”

A copy of the Japanese telegram sent to Netaji by the Military Headquarters was produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission. It stated: “Not only the assistance by Nippon Government to Your Excellency, who are firmly determined to co-operate to the last with Nippon, in order to attain the object of Indian independence, remains wholly unchanged but it also desires to still further strengthen this spiritual tie . . . Nippon Government deems it almost without hope of success to get directly in touch with the Soviet Government on behalf of Your Excellency and it has every intention of doing so”.

This telegram was sent to Netaji in the second week of June, 1945. However, the telegram did not deny the scope of contacting Jacob Malik at Tokyo either by the Government of Japan or Netaji. According to other evidence, Netaji did establish secret contact with Jacob Malik much before Japanese surrender.

According to the evidence of Debnath Das, Netaji asked him to secretly work out a plan to trek into India through the territories of Indo-China and Tibet. Even on August 16, Netaji inquired about this plan from Debnath Das.

Netaji also tried to explore an alternative plan to reach either China or Russia through China, and for that purpose the deputed Shri Ananda Mohan Sahay, the Secretary-General of the Indian Independence League to go to Hanoi to establish contact with Ho Chi Minh. Shri Sahay told Khosla Commission: "The instructions to me were to contact Vietnamese revolutionaries, Ho Chi Minh and his lieutenants, who were there. It took me some time to get acquainted with them. . . . Netaji asked me to contact the Chinese Communists through Ho Chi Minh and try to set up Indian Cells at Canton, Shanghai and other places in China as well as in Indo-China." On being questioned by Mr. Khosla whether he could contact them, Shri Sahay replied, "*Yes, I was able to do something. I met Ho Chi Minh and had made arrangements.*"

After all the evidence that came before the Commission in the course of depositions by Isoda, Hachia, Negishi, Takakura, Sakai, Watanabe and other Japanese witnesses and the disclosures made by Col. Tada and as also on the basis of evidence of Shah Nawaz, Bhaskaran, Iyer, Ananda Mohan Sahay, Debnath Das and others of INA,—could the plan of Netaji's going to Soviet Union be described as 'vague and amorphous' as Mr. Khosla imagined quite oblivious of the facts of evidence ?

#### THE PLAN CHANGED OR HURRIEDLY WOVEN ?

Mr. Khosla again exercised his imagination to write in his Report : "From the beginning they (Japanese) had wanted him (Netaji) as their toll, a pawn in their hands, who could" be

made to move in compliance with their plans and wishes. *They have denied him the use of his special plane, which they had earlier placed at his disposal. He was denied accommodation for colleagues in the bomber which was to leave Saigon. Bose was so angry and resentful that he was prepared to stay on and not to go beyond Saigon''.*

He wrote further, "It will be remembered that the two planes which had brought Bose and his companions to Saigon had gone back. The Japanese had, no doubt, agreed in principle to convey Bose to a place of safety such as Manchuria, but they had not assigned him any accommodation on a specific plane before Bose's arrival at Saigon. Nor had they worked out the details of his escape plan . . . So, there is nothing surprising in Bose's co-passengers being total strangers to him, strangers who were in the plane not as his companions, protectors or adjuncts but in their own right, on their own business, on way to their own postings . . . Their respect for Bose began and ended with his usefulness to them. After surrender Bose could be of no help to them. They deprived him of his personal aircraft which they had placed at his disposal. They showed scant respect for him ; *Field Marshal Terauchi did not condescend to admit Bose's emissary to a personal interview.* The war had come to an end and so had Bose's usefulness to the Japanese. *They paid certain amount of lip service to Bose, and offered him an asylum in Japan.* They were willing to give some little help in providing him with a means of escape, but beyond that they were not willing to do anything . . . They agreed to send Bose to Russia at his special request and took steps to carry out his wishes."

*In his effort to cook up a political thesis in justification of his findings, Mr. Khosla in utter disregard of all evidentiary materials produced before the commission, not only made malicious attempts to disparage the national character of Japan but also made every effort to tarnish the magnificent revolutionary image of Netaji. He tried to create an impression that by swallowing all kinds of humiliation at the hands of the Japanese, Netaji did not hesitate to betray his colleagues at the last minute to somehow get two seats in a plane, which came per*

chance at Saigon. In about 5,000 pages of the records of evidence of the Commission there is not an iota of indication anywhere that the Japanese ever considered Netaji as their 'puppet' or 'a dispensable ally'. On the contrary, every Japanese or Indian witness said before Khosla Commission that Netaji was held in highest esteem by the Japanese Government and their Generals. Many documents also irrefutably corroborated this fact. Mr. Khosla's vulgar evaluation of the image of the epic hero of Indian freedom deserves only to be ignored contemptuously. But here, we shall only deal with some relevant points that Mr. Khosla raised to substantiate his arguments regarding Netaji's 'escape plan'.

In support of his contention that 'no details of the plan were prepared' and it was 'woven hurriedly at the last moment', Mr. Khosla argued that :

- (i) No emissary of Netaji was admitted by General Terauchi to see him ;
- (ii) Netaji's personal plane was denied to him ; (Mr. Khosla repeated it at three places in his Report) ;
- (iii) No specific plane was fixed for him, but only two seats were conceded 'to him after much bargaining, in a plane that per chance came from Manila to Saigon en route to or towards Tokyo'.
- (iv) The Japanese refused to 'accommodate five or six of his colleagues in the plane' ; and

Let us examine how far these contentions are supported by the evidence.

#### NO EMISSARY WAS SENT AT ALL BY NETAJI

It is a total fabrication to say that Netaji had sent or asked any emissary to see Gen. Terauchi on August 16 or 17, 1945, as tendentiously imagined by Khosla. Netaji's 'escape plan', as Mr. Khosla called it, was chalked out in strict secrecy principally by Gen. Isoda and Col. Tada, others had very little idea about it. Habibur Rahman during his interrogation at Red Fort once told that Isoda suggested to Netaji that he should better see Terauchi, but Isoda later told that it will be of no use. Habibur

Rahman gave out a story, for his own reason, which no other witness, either Japanese or Indian, supported.

Is it believable that Gen. Terauchi, who sent successively Negishi, Isoda, Hachia and Sakai on August 13 and 14, 1945 to Singapore to request Netaji to come immediately to Saigon for leaving the area without delay and who held Netaji in highest regard,—could refuse to see his emissary if Netaji had really sent any such emissary at all ?

Gen. Isoda very categorically told Khosla Commission that there could be no occasion of refusal to see any messenger from Netaji by General Terauchi, as Chandra Bose was the recognised Head of the Government of Free India and further the Japanese Field Marshal always held Netaji in highest esteem. He further said before the Commission that no question ever arose of Netaji's going to Isoda's or any other Japanese bungalow for official purpose, as all important Japanese officers having connection with the Azad Hind Government would have always gone to Chandra Bose whenever he so required.

#### NETAJI NEVER ASKED FOR HIS PERSONAL PLANE

Mr. Khosla repeatedly wrote in his Report that Netaji's personal plane was denied to him. Isoda told the Commission that the two planes that brought Netaji and his colleagues from Singapore to Bangkok and then lifted them to Saigon were kept back according to Terauchi's plan.

Where did Khosla find that Netaji ever asked for his plane to lift him out of Saigon ? No witness said that Netaji asked for his own plane to fly him to Manchuria. For execution of a very secret plan, how could Netaji ask for his own plane ?

Now, if Netaji travelled in his own plane, how could Gen. Shidei, who was to assume the charge of the Kwantang Army of Manchuria and who was specially selected to accompany Netaji, fly in Netaji's plane ? Could other Japanese accompany Netaji then to tell the world about the last part of the plan that Netaji died after an alleged air crash ? How could Netaji then avoid his other colleagues to accompany him ? How could Japan

explain to the Allies the reason for permitting Netaji to fly in his own plane ? It was not known to any body definitely till August 17, where Netaji was going as Netaji's plan of air-dash was chalked out in complete secrecy. In working out such a secret plan, it was unthinkable that Netaji could ask for his own plane to fly him to Dairen.

#### NO SPECIFIC PLANE AND SCHEDULED FLIGHT

Mr. Khosla wrote that there was no specific plane and scheduled flight for conveying Netaji to Dairen. He had to wait in uncertainty for a plane to come per chance from Manila, in which after much bargaining only two seats were offered to him. It is surprising that imagination of ex-Chief Justice could be so ridiculous. There were more than many dozens military planes with the Japanese South-East Asia Headquarters at Saigon and Lt.-Gen. Shidei was going to urgently assume the command of the Kwantang Army in Manchuria, the only active war field of Japan after August 15, 1945. He was to reach Dairen as expeditiously as was possible without missing a day. Can it be assumed that even a General entrusted with such an important assignment were to wait for a plane to come per chance from Manila ? It is puerile to believe that Field Marshal Terauchi could not find a specific plane for Gen. Shidei and fix a specific time schedule for his flight,—more so when Netaji was also to accompany him, as was jointly planned by Terauchi's Headquarters and Imperial Headquarters of Tokyo.

Who told Mr. Khosla that the plane came from Manila except Nonogaki who proved to be nothing but a flippant liar ? He once said the plane came from Manila and then in the same breath said,—no it came from Malan via Singapore. Nonogaki further said that while landing, the plane was seriously damaged at Saigon and had to be repaired. Can it be believed that the Commander-in-Chief-designate for the most prestigious Kwantang Army was asked to fly on an urgently important assignment in a damaged plane when scores of other military planes were standing in reserve at Dalat ? Again, why the plane would come from Manila to Saigon instead of flying via Formosa to Tokyo ?

Isoda and all other Japanese witnesses, who had much higher ranks than Nonogaki, categorically said that the plane which carried Netaji and Gen. Shidei was a "*brand new bomber*" as it should be, for carrying the Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Manchurian Army,—even if not for Netaji.

NETAJI NEVER WANTED FIVE OR SIX PERSONS TO  
ACCOMPANY HIM

Citing as a telling example how disrespectful and indifferent the Japanese became towards Netaji at the end of the war, Mr. Khosla argued that the Japanese refused to concede to the request of Bose to accommodate five or six of his colleagues to accompany him in the same plane that took off from Saigon on August 17, 1945. It is factually not true and, judging from the very nature of the plan as well, it was quite improbable that Netaji would have asked five or six of his colleagues to accompany him.

Netaji took with him five or six of his colleagues from Singapore to Bangkok in his plane, but according to Iyer's evidence, Netaji only once told Iyer that he (Iyer), Habibur Rahman, and Pritam Singh might have to accompany him. But it was noticed by all the Azad Hind Ministers and the senior INA officers that since August 14, when Netaji decided to leave Saigon, ostensibly for going to Tokyo, he was giving special attention to Habibur Rahman. According to Iyer's evidence, at midnight on August 14, Netaji asked Habibur Rahman to see him, when Habibur Rahman arrived at the residence of Netaji only Iyer and Gupta were present there. Habibur Rahman was the Deputy Chief of Staff of INA and Netaji asked him to hand over his charge to Major-General M. Z. Kiani and get ready to accompany him on his visit to Bangkok next day. Both at Bangkok and Saigon, during Netaji's secret meetings with Isoda at Bangkok, and then with Isoda and Tada at Saigon, none else but only Habibur Rahman was asked to attend. Again when the two planes airlifted the Japanese and INA personnel from Bangkok, to Saigon, Netaji specially asked Habibur Rahman to accompany him in his plane. It is obvious that

Netaji was preparing Habibur Rahman for his task ahead as it was seen that none else than Netaji's favourite 'Habib' received this favoured treatment from leader.

Netaji's letter to Thivy written on August 17, and disclosure made by Col. Tada to Iyer later, indicated that Netaji's escape plan included a plot, that Japan would announce Netaji's death in a fake air crash. This plot was intended to provide a cover for Netaji's going underground across the Manchurian border. In execution of this plot neither Iyer nor Pritam Singh could play any effective role. S. A. Iyer was an apt publicist, but he was misfit for any conspiratorial work. Col. Pritam Singh was very courageous and very loyal to Netaji, but if Netaji took both Habibur Rahman and Pritam Singh with him and if it was announced that in a plane crash at Taihoku Netaji died, but both Habibur Rahman and Pritam Singh escaped death, that would have appeared as very suspicious. Secondly, scar-marks on the dorsels of Habibur Rahman and near his ear indicated that the inquiry was made artificially, though it was stated by him that the burning was caused by gasoline flames of the crashed plane. Could a bearded Sikh with turban on head explain in any way why his turban and beard were spared and only some parts of his hands or legs got burnt in an air crash. If Pritam Singh was involved in the plot, the story would have been obviously incredible.

Habibur Rahman was the Deputy Chief of the Staff, and he had, thus, priority over claims of any other of his colleagues to accompany Netaji as his official aide. His loyalty and devotion to Netaji was also beyond question, and more over, for a clean-shaved and unturbaned INA officer, like Habibur Rahman, it was easier to make his artificial burn appear as real gasoline burn caused due to alleged air crash. Therefore, Habibur Rahman was the inevitable choice for accompanying Netaji. But as Mr. Khosla deliberately avoided to take notice of Col. Tada's note, Netaji's letter to John Thivy and Amiya Bose's statement,—he completely kept out of his judicial purview that part of the plan in which it was decided that a false announcement will be made about Netaji's death in a fake air



crash. He tried to draw the whole picture of Netaji's flight from Saigon as if it was nothing but a hectic open flight.

Who were the other passengers whom Khosla described that "they were proceeding to new posting either at Dairen or Tokyo on their own rights" ? They were five junior officers,—two lieutenant colonels, two majors and a captain. Mr. Khosla assumed without any positive evidence that they came from Manila. But Tara Kuno told Shah Nawaz Committee that he was waiting at Saigon for two weeks to get an accommodation for flying to Tokyo. Major Takahashi was attached to the Burmese Army and Capt. Arai was an Airforce Ground Engineer attached to Dalat Headquarters. Lt.-Col. Sakai never told Mr. Khosla that he came from Manila, on the contrary he categorically told Shah Nawaz Committee that he belonged to the Burmese Army. Only Lt.-Col. Nonogaki said that the plane came from Manila, and in the same breath contradicting himself during cross-examination, he told again,—no, it came from Malan via Singapore. *The press release issued by the Intelligence Bureau of Formosan Army on August 25, 1945, categorically stated that the plane came from Singapore.*

Ignoring all this irrefutable evidence, Mr. Khosla picked up the flickering statement of flippant Nonogaki to assert that the plane came from Manila.

None of these five junior officers produced any kind of credentials to prove that they were really posted on any urgent duty either to Dairen or Tokyo. Could it be imagined that there was really any dearth of such junior Officers either for the Kwantang Army in Manchuria or Imperial Headquarters at Tokyo ? None of them claimed to be a specialist in any field, whose posting at Dairen or Tokyo might have been urgently required. If they really travelled with Netaji and Gen. Shidei from Saigon, they were really grafted from there for telling the cooked up story of air crash at Taihoku.

If Netaji really wanted two more seats in the plane, it is unthinkable that two majors or a captain could not be dropped. If the Japanese behaved so badly with Netaji, as Mr. Khosla

imagined, Netaji would have been the last person to avail only two seats gratuitously given to him. Innumerable instances can be cited when Netaji refused to tolerate any kind of bad manners from any Japanese. In his first scheduled meeting with Netaji, Hachia, the Ambassador appointed to Netaji's Government forgot in a hurry to bring with him his credentials. On hearing this, Netaji forthwith cancelled the fixed interview with him. Not a single instance could be cited in the history of Azad Hind Revolution when Netaji was known to have yielded to any kind of pressure from the Government of Japan. It befits only an ex-I.C.S. Judge like Khosla to tarnish the image of Netaji by suggesting that Netaji bowed down to Japanese refusal to accommodate his colleagues and somehow he managed to get one or two seats for saving his own skin.

#### FURTHER FANCIES BY MR. KHOSLA

In his motivated effort to substantiate his evidently indefensible conclusion that Netaji died at Taihoku, Mr. Khosla indulged in various other political fancies. He again wrote, in justification of his findings : *"In view of the fact that Bose was discussing matters about his future plans repeatedly with his Ministers, it is scarcely possible that he should have observed such secrecy amounting to deception, just before he was leaving Bangkok."* He added more : *"The argument that Bose was prepared to share secret of his plan with a number of Japanese Officers and none, except Habibur Rahman out of his own colleagues and supporters, knew anything about it. Is it possible that Bose could have placed greater trust in the Japanese than in the members of his Cabinet, specially when he remembered that the Japanese had towards the end of the war shown scant respect or regard for him ? . . . He mistrusted the Japanese after their ignominious defeat. In these circumstances, is it possible that he would confide to the Japanese a secret plan which he kept back from his colleagues and would enter into a conspiracy in exclusion of his own men and trusted lieutenants ? The answer to this question must be a categorical and emphatic 'no'."*

In his solicitude to prick the sense of pride of Netaji's colleagues, Mr. Khosla again assumed, without an iota of evidentiary support, that "Japan had shown scant respect for Netaji", and Netaji also "mistrusted" the Japanese towards the end of the war. We shall see later whether secrecy about Netaji's plan could be considered in any way as "amounting to deception" with his colleagues. How hollow Mr. Khosla's arguments are, Netaji's method of execution of his earlier plans of escape, will amply make it evident.

### EXECUTION OF EARLIER PLANS

It is quite known that Netaji was very secretive in nature from the days of his early youth and he was the only outstanding national leader in India, who wonderfully succeeded to master the technique of revolutionary secrecy.

When he left home for the Himalayan areas in his college days, young Subhas told nobody why and where he was going. In 1931 as the Mayor of Calcutta, he decided to hoist the national flag in Calcutta Monument Maidan on January 26, the Independence Day of pre-freedom period violating the prohibitory order of the British Government. When the Police went to arrest him a day before, he was found missing from his house. He told nobody where he took shelter,—not even to those who accompanied him next morning and who faced brutal and bloody assault of the police along with him in hoisting the national flag in Calcutta Maidan.

When Netaji was in Presidency Jail, he fought a bye-election from Dacca constituency and won the seat uncontested for the Central Assembly, to create an impression in the minds of the British Government as if he was thinking to revert back to constitutional politics. When he was not released after the election to the Central Assembly, he resorted to fast unto death in demand of his release. Quite a few prominent Forward Bloc leaders were lodged with him in the Presidency Jail, but he confided none about the ultimate object of his fast.

After release, when Subhas Bose was planning for escape from India, he secretly met many trusted Forward Bloc

leaders, giving them instructions as to their tasks ahead, but he divulged to none his secret plan of going out of India. His Forward Bloc colleagues thought that he was preparing for going back to jail again as he was expected to be re-arrested soon after he regained his health. He apportioned piecemeal duties to a selected few of his family members in secretly preparing his plan, but told nobody what he really intended. He was developing beard, which created a feeling among his family members, perhaps, he was again thinking of renouncing the world as he did once in his younger days. He was found dressed in silken robe and seen to perform *puja* every day. He confided only to his elder brother, Sarat Chandra Bose, a part of his plan, and asked him to send telegrams to Badrinath, Pondicherry, Kamakhya, and other religious places 10 days after his escape from Calcutta to mislead the British Police as if his mysterious destination might be somewhere in some religious places in India. He was a past-master in make-up and travelled from Calcutta to Kabul in Frontier Mail as a perfectly dressed Pathan Muslim.

What he did to camouflage his escape from India in 1941 could be meant that he really deceived his trusted political colleagues and relatives ? British Police submitted a secret report to Delhi that probably, like Rashbehari Bose, he slipped out of India by a Japanese ship. Only after many months they came to know that Bose escaped via Kabul.

Again, while planning his historic three-month submarine journey from Germany to Sumatra, he confided none about it. He entrusted Admiral Doenitz, the war-time Chief of the German Navy, and the Military Attache of Japan in Berlin to draw up his plan of submarine voyage to Singapore. According to an account of the then Japanese Military Attache in Germany, S. Higuchi, published in the book of Hayashida ; "In the middle of February (1943), on the day before departure from Berlin, for submarine base, Mr. Bose invited four or five German friends, Archbishop of Syria, exiled Premier of Iraq, Minister of Afghanistan and me to a luncheon. Nobody except Bose and myself knew anything about Bose's impending departure from

Germany. The luncheon seemed no different from those he used to give occasionally. Mr. Bose casually brought up the subject of independence movement saying, "I want to see more vigorous and active development of our movement. There are several Indian friends residing in Vienna. I may go away from Berlin for about a month". The host and the guest chatted about the subject for a while before the luncheon was brought to a close".

Netaji similarly told his Azad Hind colleagues in Germany that for one or two months he would go on tour of Vienna and other parts of Europe to organise the Indians there. He nominated Nambiar to officiate as Chief of Azad Hind Centre and confided him that he would be leaving Germany, but he told him nothing about when and how he would leave Germany. Major Abid Hasan was asked to accompany him, but he did not know anything about Netaji's plan, before he boarded the submarine at the port of Kiel with his leader.

Although Netaji lost all faith in Germany after the German attack on Russia and in autumn 1942, in a mood of unusual frankness, he told Admiral Canaris, the Chief of Abwehr of the Counter Intelligence Organisation of Germany : "You know, as well as I do that Germany cannot win this war. But this time victorious Britain will lose India." Yet, he trusted the German and Japanese top military personnel to draw up his plan for going to South-East Asia.

By resorting to such secrecy in preparation of his plan of secretly going to South-East Asia,—did Netaji deceive his trusted colleagues in Germany ?

During about 120 days of the submarine journey in German U-boat from Kiel to Madagascar and then from Madagascar to Sumatra by Japanese submarine,—no crew either German or Japanese ever knew, who was the Indian dignitary travelling in their U-boat or submarine. Such was the technique of maintaining strict secrecy that Netaji followed in executing his each revolutionary plan.

In South-East Asia, except those who were concerned, nobody happened to know any schedule of his movements. About his escape from India and his submarine journey from Germany

to South-East Asia, his many comrades asked him to narrate these stories to them, but he politely spurned their requests by saying, "It is not yet time to disclose them, because I may have to adopt the same technique again".

#### WHY EXTRA-CAUTION FOR ESCAPE-PLAN ?

Netaji was known to be extremely reserve in nature and always maintained secrecy in all his revolutionary activities. The situation developing after Japanese retreat from Burma made him more cautious. British spies infiltrated Burma and many attempts on his life were made by them. These spies kept the Allied authorities informed about his movements, which resulted in daily carpet bombing on Netaji and his men and officers, including the Jhansi Regiment, while they were in long march from Moulmein to Bangkok. In such circumstances he had to adopt extra-caution in preparation and execution of his plan for moving out of S.-E. Asia. Usually he did not confide anybody anything that did not concern him. In planning his escape from Saigon mainly Gen. Isoda and Col. Tada and partly Habibur Rahman were concerned and it was no wonder that all other colleagues of Netaji were kept out of the secret conclaves held at Bangkok and Saigon.

In replies to searching questions by Mr. Khosla, Gen. Isoda, and Bhaskaran told the Commission how Netaji held his secret meetings at Bangkok where he finalised his plan.

Mr. Khosla personally cross-examined Isoda and Bhaskaran and made persistent effort to find out whether any other person, like Bhaskaran himself being his confidential secretary, was called in by Netaji during his secret meeting with Gen. Isoda at Bangkok and Gen. Isoda and Col. Tada at Saigon. But both Isoda and Bhaskaran told Khosla straightway that no other person was present in these crucial meetings except Habibur Rahman who was once asked by Netaji to attend Bangkok meeting at a later stage.

The evidence of Bhaskaran, Isoda and Iyer made it absolutely clear that,—firstly, the final and firm decision about the details of Netaji's escape-plan was taken at the Bangkok

meeting and only minor touches were given to it at Saigon ; and secondly, Iyer, Pritam Singh, Debnath Das, Bhaskaran and Abid Hasan were not asked to participate in either of these meetings and Habibur Rahman too was asked to join at Bangkok meeting only at a later stage.

#### DID NETAJI DECEIVE HIS COLLEAGUES ?

Did the Ministers of Netaji's Cabinet or his INA colleagues feel that they were deceived by their leader ? S. A. Iyer categorically told Khosla Commission : "I take this opportunity to say that everyone of Netaji's colleagues felt that he was enjoying Netaji's confidence, but at the same time he was very reticent about the discussion of things that did not concern the particular person. *He would discuss with him the matters of propaganda and would not tell anything about his talks or discussions with the Japanese Government.* . . Netaji was very much reticent about or take into confidence as to what he discussed with the Japanese Government". He added further that Netaji's "*inner plan was not known to most of the Cabinet Ministers*".

Shah Nawaz Khan told Khosla : "It was entirely for Netaji to discuss what he wanted".

T. S. Mehtani, another INA colleague of Netaji also said before the Commission : "Netaji was very secretive person and *never discussed his plans even with his Cabinet Minister. Even till the last moment nobody would know where he was going.*"

Lt.-Gen. Takakura admitted during cross-examination : "Perhaps, nobody knew by what plane he was coming".

Thus, contrary to Mr. Khosla's "categoric and emphatic 'no'," every colleague of Netaji had absolute trust in his leader, and none ever felt annoyed or pricked if he was not consulted. They considered it as the revolutionary prerogative of their leader whom to consult and what to consult about. The very nature of his escape-plan unavoidably required absolute secrecy, which was considered as very necessary and natural by all his trusted colleagues.

Netaji spent a whole night at Bangkok in writing letters to his colleagues whom he could not see either at Singapore or Bangkok. He gave them last minute instructions regarding their duties after surrender of Japan. Bhaskaran and other colleagues beseeched Netaji to take a few hours rest as he was to leave for Saigon next morning and thereafter for Dairen on the same evening. Netaji calmly smiled and said : "I shall have enough time to rest from tomorrow". In the early hours of August 17, at about 3 a.m., he asked Bhaskaran to take dictation of a letter to John Thivy. Thivy was one of his very trusted Ministers. He concluded his letter by giving a hint to Thivy about what will appear to have happened in immediate future, as he wrote : "*I am writing all these to you as I am on the eve of taking a long journey by air, and who knows an accident may not overtake me*". It was a subtle hint to him, and through him to other friends that they should keep themselves mentally prepared for an announcement of Netaji's death in an air accident.

#### HYPERBOLIC PRESUMPTION BY MR. KHOSLA

It appears that not being certain about the validity of his judicial arguments in support of his findings, Mr. Khosla hyperbolically resorted to various conjectures. He wrote in his Report : "*Again is it possible that the Japanese who had begun to behave in a careless manner towards Bose would enmesh themselves in such a web of conspiracy hurriedly woven at the last moment and refuse to emerge from it into the light of the truth for 27 years ? . . . The esteem in which Bose was held by the Japanese was not of an order which would impel them to enter into a nation-wide conspiracy and compel a number of high military officers to perjure themselves. There is no record in history of such conspiracy or of the suborning such extensive testimony in order to give shelter to one individual.*"

Mr. Khosla added further : "They agreed to send Bose to Russia, at his special request and took steps to carry out his wishes. In fact, towards the end, they were entirely unaccommodating, . . . also when the war had ended and when the condition in the Japanese Army was so chaotic, *there could be*



*no question of Japan agreeing to secrecy, subterfuge or dissimulation for a person who was, as far as they were concerned, an alien, who had been useful to them upto a point but whose effort had failed to achieve anything in the war. There was no demand by the Allies that Bose should be handed over to them, and there was absolutely no necessity of inventing and advertising an alibi for him . . . Bose's name was not borne on any list of war criminals''.*

No other Indian, other than Mr. Khosla, could perhaps think that Netaji was treated by Japan as nothing more than an 'alien individual' for whom they intended only to extend a 'lip-service' help and that too in a 'careless manner'. He never cared to know from the documents produced before his Commission that this 'individual' of his imagination was hailed by the Japanese Premier, Tojo, as the "Greatest Revolutionary of Asia" and his Foreign Minister, Shigematsu, called him "Greatest hero of our Age". This ICS ex-Judge viewed the role of Netaji as playing the role of a "puppet" of Japan and, therefore, how could the Japanese leaders enter into a 'conspiracy' to give protection to such a man ? Mr. Khosla purposely ignored the facts that came before the Commission regarding protection given by the Japanese authorities to Dr. Ba Maw of Burma, Dr. Laurel of the Philippines and many other political leaders of South and East Asia whom they treated as their allies. Was Netaji less important than any of them ?

Mr. Khosla argued at length that for protection of an 'alien individual' Japan could not enter into a 'nation-wide conspiracy'. Netaji's escape plan can be divided into three parts,—namely,—(i) his departure from Saigon, (ii) creation of a fictitious story of air crash at Taihoku, and (iii) announcement of his death by the Government of Japan. The second part follows inferentially from the other two parts. Mr. Khosla positively accepted the first part as a fact, but to avoid the second part as the natural corollary of the first and the third part of the plan, he deliberately avoided consideration of the implications of Col. Tada's note to Iyer, and Netaji's letter to John Thivy and other relevant documents.

However, Mr. Khosla denied nowhere that the Imperial Headquarters and Field Marshal Terauchi's Headquarters directly involved themselves, to use the word of Khosla, in a 'conspiracy' to provide Netaji an accommodation in a plane flying 'to or towards Tokyo', and that Lt.-Gen. Shidei was specially directed to accompany Netaji upto Dairen and convey him to Manchuria-Siberia border. He also did not deny that Lt.-Gen. Takakura contacted Netaji under orders from Tokyo two months before the surrender of Japan to assure him of the promise of the Japanese Government to convey him to Soviet Union. He also accepted other facts that under instructions from the Imperial Headquarters as well as Terauchi's Headquarters, Nigeshi, Isoda, Hachia and Sakai successively dashed to Singapore to persuade Netaji to proceed to Saigon without delay and the Japanese authorities provided two planes to Netaji's team for flying from Singapore to Bangkok and then to Saigon. Mr. Khosla also did not challenge the veracity of the evidence of Isoda regarding his secret meeting with Netaji at Bangkok and that again he and Col. Tada met Netaji at Saigon to finalise his 'escape-plan' from Saigon. And Mr. Khosla also admitted as well, that the Japanese plane left the airport of Saigon on August 17, 1945 with Netaji and Gen. Shidei, for the destination of Dairen in Manchuria.

What conclusion any man of common sense will arrive at after perusal of all these facts evidentially accepted by Mr. Khosla himself ? Is it not absolutely clear from these proven facts that the highest military authority of Japan directly got themselves involved of their own into a plan, or call it a 'conspiracy', to convey Netaji to Manchuria ? If it is so, does the hyperbolic observation of Khosla to the effect that "it is impossible to think that Japan entered into a nation-wide conspiracy to give protection to an 'alien individual'," stands any scrutiny to justify itself ?

Not being quite convinced about the truth of evidence of his 'witnesses of convincing truth', Mr. Khosla raised two moral questions,—why the five Japanese witnesses will 'suborn their evidence and even if they did so, why after '27 years' they will

not come out with truth ?” Then he added further that ‘there is no record in history’ of such suborning of facts.

We shall see later how the Japanese left enough hints to understand what exactly happened behind the curtain of the cryptic announcement of Netaji’s death. What Mr. Khosla thought of as suborning of evidence, in patriotic parlance, such acts are known as ‘national duty’. It is a matter of no surprise that five Japanese witnesses, according to their national tradition of *harakiri*, would tell a tutored story about Netaji as desired by their Government. Even after having massive evidence to show how deeply the Tokyo Imperial Headquarters and South-East Asian Headquarters at Saigon felt concerned about the future of Netaji, Mr. Khosla believed that the Japanese had no regard for Netaji and they wanted to somehow bundle him off from the areas of South-East Asia in order to be relieved of their accountability about the rebel leader of India to the Anglo-Americans. All British-American and Japanese authors of Netaji’s biography and ‘top secret’ British documents uniformly admitted that the Japanese authorities and their Generals looked upon the personality of Netaji not only with great respect but with great awe and wonder and as a “superman”. Apart from their high esteem for Netaji and moral obligation towards him, by protecting “the Netaji” of the Indian people, the war-time leaders of Japan hoped further to protect their own future relations with India.— It was, therefore, nothing unusual or extra-ordinary for a few Japanese to tell a cooked-up story before two inquiring bodies for the sake of interest of their own nation.

Mr. Khosla raised his last question to justify his findings,— why after so many years the Japanese would not come out with truth about Netaji if they really gave him protection under the cover of a fake story of an air crash ? Gen. Fuziwara, who was the first Chief of the Hikari Kikan during the early period of war, on being confronted with similar questions, on almost each occasion of his so many visits to Calcutta Netaji Bhavan, sharply replied,—“Why the Japanese will discredit their war-time national leaders ? It is for the Indian Parliament to find out what happened to Chandra Bose”.

Is it not known to hundreds of people in India how our Government and the people helped the Bangla Desh Liberation struggle and where 'Mujibnagar' was and how their 'Mukti Bahini' got training and equipments? Nevertheless, not a single patriotic Indian came out in public with any official secret although they were quite known facts of those days. But this telling fact of Indian history failed to attract attention of Mr. Khosla. For a nation like Japan, enjoying two thousand years of unbroken freedom, it is in the blood of the Japanese people to keep any national secret as secret for decades ahead. This national characteristic of the Japanese is difficult for an ICS ex-Judge, like Mr. Khosla, to understand, and that is why, he spared no effort to fancy all kind of justifications for his 'findings' by making evidentially unsubstantiated remarks and observations in his effort to tarnish the image of the Netaji of the Indian people and distort the character of the Japanese.

# 10

## Plunge into Unknown Again

THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT issued immediate orders to inquire into the report of Netaji's death as soon as Tokyo Radio announced it. They did not believe the Japanese story and as a reaction to it, Lord Wavell the Viceroy of India, noted in his diary on August 24, 1945, that "*. . . it is just what would be given out if he (Bose) meant to go underground.*" Three high-power intelligence teams,—one from Wavell's office at Delhi, one from Mountbatten's Singapore Headquarters and the third from MacArthur's Tokyo Headquarters rushed to trace 'Bose' and "arrest him dead or alive" or otherwise to find out the truth about the report of his death. These three teams ransacked Japanese war offices at Saigon, Bangkok, Singapore, Taihoku (Taipei) and Tokyo and arrested many important Japanese military officers and INA personnel. All-out attempts were made to extract from them all informations about the story of Netaji's departure from Saigon and his alleged death at Taihoku. Habibur Rahman was first interrogated at Tokyo and thereafter at Red Fort. Many arrested Japanese generals were also interrogated at Red Fort. The British Global Counter Intelligence Organisation (CSDIC) examined them under detention for weeks together. The other three teams conducted these inquiries in S.-E. Asia, Tokyo and Taihoku. All the three investigating teams and the CSDIC submitted their reports to their respective authorities by the end of December, 1945.

As the findings by the three investigating teams appeared confusingly inconclusive, the British Government asked for continuance of further probe. One such team submitted a report to Mountbatten on March 1, 1946, in which it was concluded : *“Finally, it can be said that Bose definitely left Saigon, and perhaps an aircraft was cocked up at Taihoku. Possibly, after that Bose escaped somewhere.”* (Full text : 1st Ch.) This is probably the last known report submitted to Mountbatten about disappearance of Netaji. British concern for knowing what exactly happened to Bose persisted even after withdrawal from India. A British intelligence team was sent to Tokyo in 1950, when Japan was still under American control, to interrogate Lt.-Col. Nonogaki and others. The report of this 1950-inquiry was not published by the U.K. Government.

Pandit Nehru came to power almost exactly two years after the Japanese announcement of Netaji's death. Mountbatten was then Viceroy of India, whose intimate relation with Nehru was quite well known. Nehru should have got all the reports of the various investigation teams like those of CSDIC, Figgess, Finney and others. Whether he got further secret reports about Netaji from U.K., U.S.A., Russia and China as well,—was not known, but reports were there that he received some reports from the Russian and Chinese sources and perhaps from MacArthur's Headquarters also. It was quite expected that the Government of India would institute a high power inquiry to know what really happened to Netaji. But strangely, Nehru not only kept silent about the matter, but opposed all public demands for holding any such inquiry. When eminent citizens moved to hold a non-official inquiry under the chairmanship of Dr. Radha Benode Pal, Pandit Nehru suddenly formed in 1956 an Inquiry Committee with Shah Nawaz Khan, as its Chairman.

The Government of India produced some secret documents before Shah Nawaz Committee and later Khosla Commission as well. These documents mainly included a few pages of Mountbatten's Diary, some parts of Figgess report and a small part of the report of CSDIC about interrogation of Habibur Rahman. Some others, rather irrelevant papers, were also

supplied to these inquiry bodies. *Inside the package of the official documents produced before Khosla Commission, a very intriguing official note was found, which enlisted about 30 secret files on issues involving the story of Netaji's death as either "Missing or Papers destroyed."* It was also found that some pages were missing from the files that were supplied to Khosla Commission.

#### LIST OF FILES—MISSING OR DESTROYED

All the secret files carrying reports or informations about all matters relating to disappearance of Netaji and subsequent developments connected therewith were kept by Pandit Nehru himself as Prime Minister's special confidential files. These files were dealt with by Md. Yunus, who was appointed her special envoy later by Mrs. Indira Gandhi. The following are the "Secret files" described by the Government as "Missing or Destroyed". :

**"SECRET**

File No. F. 23(156)/51-PM

#### "PAPERS DESTROYED "

S. Nos.	1A, 2-A, 3-A, 6-A, 8-A.	
S. No.	16-A	U.O. Note No. D/S-8666, dated August 24, 1953, from PM's Sectt. to Shri Mohd. Yunus, MEA (SEA. BR)
S. No.	17-A	U.O. Note No. D. 3788-8EA/53, dated August 27, 1953, from Shri Mohd. Yunus. MEA (SEA BR.) to PM's Sectt.
S. No.	27-A	Memo. No. 2/53/19713/601(151) dated October 13, 1953 from Shri Mohd. Yunus US, MEA (SEA) to PM's Sectt.
S. No.	33-B	Letter No. 20/62 (Accts.) dated April 12, 1954, from the Joint Secretary, All India INA Enquiry and Relief Committee, 82, Daryaganj, Delhi to the President.
S. No.	33-D	Cutting from the Amrita Bazar Patrika, dated April 3, 1954—Property formerly held by INA Custodian at Singapore decides to Dispose of.
S. No.	34-A	Rajya Sabha's Starred Question No. 560, dated September 28, 1954.
S. No.	35-B	Note for supplementaries.
S. No.	37-A	Lok Sabha Starred Question No. 334 dated August 2, 1955.
S. No.	37-BCD	Enclosures to S. No. 37-A."

**"AND NOTES**

**11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, and 29" (destroyed).**

**"PRIME MINISTER'S SECRETARIAT FILES**

1. 23(156)/51-PM                      **Indian National Army (INA) in the Far East.**
2. 23(11)/56-57-PM                      **I.N.A. Treasure.**
3. 12(226)/56-PM                      *Investigation into the circumstances leading to the death of Subhas Chandra Bose.*  
(written in pencil—  
since destroyed)

A careful perusal of the list of the files will show that contrary to official practice, indices of files having serial numbers 1-A, 2-A, 3-A, 4-A, 6-A, 8-A, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 18, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26 and 29 have not been indicated. Again what happened to files having numbers as 7-A, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22 and 27 and 28 and what information and reports these files contained, were not known or disclosed. Such unusual indexing of files, so vitally connected with the reports about Netaji appears to be surprising. All files 'missing or destroyed' contained British and U.S. reports about Netaji from their S.-E. Asia and Tokyo Headquarters. The most important file of the P.M. which included a report on "*Investigation into the circumstances leading to the death of Subhash Chandra Bose*", has also been stated as 'destroyed'. Only a small part of the report of interrogation of Col. Habibur Rahman at Red Fort was produced and his other very important statements were not submitted to Khosla Commission.

It is difficult to think that such important files, concerning the fate of the greatest hero of Indian freedom should be missing from the specially maintained confidential files at the Prime Minister's Secretariat. Rather it will be quite logical to presume that these files have been either deliberately destroyed or purposely removed. These files are documents of great historic importance as source materials for writing history of Indian freedom, and in all probability, therefore, these files have been removed and not destroyed. It will not be wrong to



presume again that these files contained informations contrary to the story of Netaji's death and also some other matters throwing light on why Pandit Nehru did not hold a full-fledged high-power inquiry into the Netaji mystery. It was told by many responsible persons in those days that Mountbatten communicated to Nehru many secret informations about Netaji, after which, Panditji's attitude towards Netaji and INA was very adversely affected. Nehru Government issued instructions to the Defence Establishments not to display Netaji's photo in any army barracks or make any broadcast on Netaji by A.I.R.

It is a historic fact that after his meeting with Mountbatten Nehru was the only Indian leader who did not utter a single word, for years, in appreciation of Netaji's contribution to Indian freedom. He also agreed with the British C-in-C, F.-M. Auchinleck against re-instatement of INA in the Indian Army. It was also reported in those days that Nehru exchanged letters with Chiang Kai-shek seeking informations from him about alleged incident at Taipei (Taihoku) when Formosa went under occupation of Nationalist China. According to intelligence report earlier submitted to the Wavell Government, Nehru was known to have received some extremely important communication from Netaji from Manchuria in 1946 and later he received further informations that Netaji reached Moscow.

*[Secret reports about these informations already  
quoted in the first chapter.]*

Had all the secret files about Netaji specially kept by Pandit Nehru himself were produced before either Shah Nawaz Committee or Khosla Commission, many unknown facts about Netaji and the reasons for Nehru's reluctance to hold inquiry about Netaji-mystery, would have been revealed. Surprisingly, Mr. Khosla did not feel it necessary to summon Mr. Yunus to explain before the Commission under what circumstances such vital files were missing and why files like reports of investigation about alleged death of Netaji were destroyed.

## ENOUGH MATERIAL TO UNDERSTAND THE STORY NOW

If Nehru's secret files were produced before the Commission perhaps the mystery surrounding the alleged air crash at Taihoku would have been solved. Shri K. K. Shah, who was a colleague of Netaji along with Lala Shankar Lal and Sardar Sardul Singh Kavishar, informed the present writer that Nehru told them more than once that he did not believe the story of Netaji's death in Formosa. Although, all reports about inquiries and investigations made by U.K. and U.S. sources were not available with Khosla Commission, but many informations, facts and documents came before it, which are enough to understand what happened behind the curtain of the cryptic announcement of Netaji's death by the Tokyo Radio. Facts as revealed in the course of depositions by the Japanese witnesses; parts of Figgess report; various recorded statements of Habibur Rahman; four signals found in the Hikari Kikan office at Bangkok; intelligence reports submitted to Wavell's Government; information found in Mountbatten's Diary; five photographs connected with the alleged incident of air crash at Taihoku officially submitted first to Figgess team in 1946 by the Government of Japan; copy of the certificate of posthumous promotion of Gen. Shidei and the death certificate and cremation permit reportedly issued for clearance of funeral of alleged body of Netaji,—all these and other facts and documents produced before Shah Nawaz Committee and later to Khosla Commission, if properly scrutinized and analysed, will make it evident that Netaji's death story was nothing but cooked up. Many facts which the Japanese and the INA sources suppressed before the British and American Agencies, were later revealed to Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission. These facts also now helped to correlate various events to have more or less a complete picture of the happenings in Formosa on and after August 18, 1945.

### FOUR SIGNIFICANT SIGNALS

The British intelligence team seized four signals from the office of the Hikari Kikan at Bangkok. Although all their important war documents were destroyed by the Japanese military

authorities before occupation of South-East Asia by the British Army, but these 'top secret' signals were kept intact within easy reach of the British forces. These 'top secret' signals are reproduced below.

"SEATIC SECTION  
INTELLIGENCE ASSAULT UNIT,  
7TH IND DIV ALF SLAM  
24th Sept. 1945.

*Subject* : Translation of messages re : death of Bose found in a file of reports belonging to the HIKARI KIKAN.

**"TOP SECRET**

('T' means Bose)

1. HIKARI KIKAN SIGNAL RE 'T' :  
18 Aug.

To ; OC HIKARI KIKAN,  
From CHIEF of Staff, Southern Army,  
Southern Army Signal 393.

Today at 1700 hrs. (17 Aug) 'T' with Lt.-Gen. Shidei and others left here for TOKYO via FORMOSA and DAIREN  
*Inform Indian community of this.*

Depending on circumstances, I expect to return in two or three days, (from OC KIKAN).

2. TO OC KIKAN  
FROM Chief of Staff Southern Army.  
Southern Army Staff II Signal 66. 20th Aug.

**"TOP SECRET**

'T' while on his way to the Capital, as a result of an accident to his aircraft at TAIHOKU at 1400 hrs. on the 18th was seriously injured and died at midnight on the same date. *His body has been flown to TOKYO by the Formosan Army.*

"I have thanked the Formosan Army for their Kindness. Further I have asked that proof of his death in the plane accident remains, photographs etc. be collected.

“As for the centre, I am getting Staff Officer TADA, who leaves SAIGON on the 20th to take up an appointment, to provide them with a detailed report, I wish secrecy to be maintained in handling the matter.”

3. HIKARI KIKAN SIGNAL RE : ‘T’  
24 Aug 1945.  
To OC MALAY BRANCH  
OC SAIGON EMBARKATION POINT  
Chief of Staff, Southern Army.  
  
FROM OC HIKARI KIKAN

“Re. death of ‘T’ please ensure that Indian Communities are informed of the DOMEI despatch reporting ‘T’s death.’  
reporting ‘T’s death.’

4. HIKARI Message 1020  
27 Aug. 1945,

“To Chief of Staff, Southern Army.  
From OC HIKARI KIKAN

Request urgently the report on the later progress of Col. “HABIB RAHMAN”.

*N.B.* These messages were found in the ordinary file in their proper place and numbered and docketed in the usual manner. There was nothing suspicious about them and they did not appear to be interpolations.

Signals No. 4, 5 and 6  
SEATIC DOCUMENT 128

DM  
pp. S. Hyder  
Capt.  
OC Section”

Analysing the significance of these top secret signals and on the basis of interrogation of important Japanese officers, the British Secret Headquarters reported on October 5, 1945 : “Bose had been trying to persuade the Japanese to allow him to go to Manchuria since October 1944, when they told him that they had no chance of invading India through Burma and that, therefore, *he was prepared to try another road to Delhi via Moscow.* Reference should be made to Hikari’s telegram at the

time Bose arrived in Saigon. Isoda was also there and this fact may be significant *that there was a plan on the part of Hikari Kikan to allow Bose to escape and to publish a false story regarding his death . . . This file of telegrams (mentioned earlier) alongwith numerous other documents must have been purposely left for the British to find them. Although at this stage one cannot rule out the possibility of Bose being still alive, this file of telegrams contains four most important informations which gives an idea of the plan to allow Bose to escape and to publish a false story regarding his death.*"

Referring to the telegram No. 2, the report continued to say "2. To O. C. Kikan, from Chief of Staff Southern Army, Staff II, Signal 66, 20th August (1945). 'Top Secret'—'T' (meaning Bose) while on his way to the capital, as a result of an accident to this aircraft at Taihoku at 14.00 hrs. on the 18th, was seriously injured and died at midnight on the same date. *His body has been flown to Tokyo by the Formosan Army*".

[Main file—16 Misc. INA, 273, Subject : Subhas Chandra Bose : Page— 10 ]

Another 'top secret' record of the "Extract from Allied Land Forces S.-E.A. No. 57 for week ending November 2, 1945" stated "The first news of the alleged death of Bose was contained in a Domei Agency message from Tokyo dated August 23, 1945. *It stated that he was treated in a hospital in Japan where he succumbed to injuries at midnight on August 18-19.*" These contradictory informations regarding location of exact place of Bose's death created deep suspicion in the minds of Allied Intelligence. They, therefore, conducted further inquiries, at Taihoku and Tokyo, and after such probes W. McKwright wrote to Major Countenay Young, Intelligence Division, C.I.C.B., H. G. SACSEA, which, according to the document "No. C-5, Intelligence Bureau (H.D.) New Delhi 3, dated February 19, 1946, Secret," stated :

"My dear Young,

*We have at last completed an examination of the information available here relating to alleged death of Bose, and the result is not entirely clarified, make any definite*

*conclusion on this incident a little doubtful . . . It is beyond doubt that he (Bose) had plans to go underground. The earlier report suggested that the Japanese had undertaken to give Bose necessary protection.*

Intelligence Division  
C.I.C.B., H. G. SACSEA.

Yours sincerely  
W. McKwright''

Mr. Young wrote back to McKwright after 12 days, in which he wrote : "*. . . There are major discrepancies regarding the disposal of the body. Isoda and the captured signals state that he (Bose) died at midnight in Taihoku hospital and that his body was flown to Tokyo by the Formosan Army. Domei, on the other hand states that he died in Japan, while Habibur Rahman states that he was cremated and buried in Taihoku. The discrepancy here is great and appears suspicious. In addition, if it is a deception plan, it is one which has been extremely carefully ingeniously organised . . . In conclusion it can be said definitely that Bose left Saigon and probably that there was a plane crash after the take-off at Taihoku. It is possible that Bose escaped from the crash unhurt and either hid in Formosa on his own initiative or was HIDDEN by local authorities who took an ad hoc decision. I can think no other channel which would be worthwhile exploring.*" Even as late as March, 1946, the British Intelligence could not come to any conclusion and in its report (page 17) *it remarked "Ashes May not be Bose's" and "so the mystery remains unsolved"*. (Extract Top Secret, SLO|CS|1, dt. 1.3.46).

### HABIBUR RAHMAN AGAIN

We have already shown in an earlier chapter how unyieldingly Habibur Rahman denied that Netaji had any plan to go to Russia, and how he concealed identification of all persons, except Isoda and Hachia, at a time when the Allied agencies were making frantic efforts in search of those Japanese who were connected with the story of Netaji's death. But despite his dogged attempts, he failed to tell a consistent story of air crash and alleged death and funeral of his leader.

Innumerable discrepancies and contradictions in his various statements have already been cited earlier. A few more glaring instances of such incoherence are given below :

In a span of 35 days after the alleged air crash, Habibur Rahman made three statements about it,—one written by himself at Taihoku on August 24, i.e., 6 days after August 18, 1945; the second to Mrs. Sahay and S. A. Iyer at the residence of Mrs. Sahay in Tokyo, on September 8 ; and the third to the Counter Intelligence Corps, (CIC) at Tokyo on September 29, 1945.

- (i) Habibur Rahman wrote in his statement signed on August 24, that “Netaji got out of the *left side of the front* (of the crashed plane). I followed him. We had to pass through the fire in doing so.” He almost gave similar version to Mrs. Sahay and Iyer, only adding that for sometime he was ‘unconscious’, which he did not say later to Shah Nawaz Committee. On September 29, according to Counter Intelligence Corps report from Tokyo : “He revealed that he had no knowledge how Bose escaped or was removed from the plane.” This version totally differed from his other statements.
- (ii) About the location of the petrol tank in the plane, Habibur Rahman wrote in his August 24 statement : “On his (Netaji’s) immediate right was the petrol tank. I was behind Netaji”. To the Counter Intelligence Corps he said, “. . . the seat Bose occupied in the aircraft was beside a petrol tank.” He did not say anything about it to Iyer. He made a sketch of the seat of Netaji inside the plane, and located in it the position of his seat also. This sketch he produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee. It wholly differed from the sketch regarding arrangement of seats inside the plane, made out by Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Takahashi and Arai, which were produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee. All these Japanese witnesses showed in their sketches that the petrol tank was by the side of Gen. Shidei and not

of Netaji. Habibur Rahman's sketch shows that the petrol tank was not only far away from Netaji, but from him as well. In order to substantiate his statement that Netaji was soaked with gasoline, he told that the petrol tank was by the right side of Netaji and he was engulfed in the fire instantly. Whereas Tara Kuno and others told Shah Nawaz Khan that the petrol tank fell upon Gen. Shidei causing his instantaneous death.

*(See the sketches given separately)*

- (iii) In his statement of August 24, Habibur Rahman did not say whether his clothes caught fire or not. But in his statement before Shah Nawaz Committee, he said that : "My clothes did not catch fire."

According to Counter Intelligence Corps report : "He stated that upon alighting from the plane, he noticed his own coat on fire." After being released from Red Fort, he showed his woollen sweater to his friends, which he was allegedly wearing at the time of the alleged crash, but it bore no sign of any fire at all.

- (iv) In his August 24 statement Habibur Rahman wrote, "Within 15 minutes we were rushed to the nearest Nippon Army Hospital . . . Prior to his death Netaji was in his senses and quite calm, whenever he talked to me, it was regarding India's independence". He then told Iyer and Mrs. Sahay, only about 15 days after the alleged crash : "I too was exhausted and went and lay down next to him (Netaji) . . . The next thing I know was that I was lying on a hospital bed next to Netaji . . . Netaji lost consciousness almost immediately . . . He revived a little later and relapsed into a state of coma." While the Counter Intelligence Corps noted : "According to Rahman, Bose recovered sufficiently to carry on a conversation."



- (v) In his written statement Habibur Rahman recorded: “ . . . the body was cremated on 22.8.1945 at Taihoku under arrangement of Army authorities. The ashes were collected on 23.8.45.” However, only on the 15th day after this statement, he told Mrs. Sahay and Iyer : “The funeral service with full military honour was held in the shrine attached to the hospital and the cremation took place on 20th.” About this, “full military honour”—he repeated to none else. General Isamaya and General Ando of Formosan Army told Shah Nawaz Committee that only a Major, named Nagatomo, attended the funeral, and the funeral service was held at the cremation. If such a service was held at all, the Deputy Chief of Staff of INA, could hardly describe it as “with full military honour”. On September 29, Habibur Rahman told the Counter Intelligence Corps : “On August 19, 1945 Bose was removed from the Hospital and his remains were placed in a box provided by the Japanese . . . Major Nagatomo, a Japanese Staff Officer, informed Rahman on August 21, 1945 that the body be cremated and Rahman after careful consideration, agreed. On August 22, 1945, the ashes were removed by Nakamura and Major Nagatomo.”

How Col. Habibur Rahman made three different statements during a period of 35 days on such a vital matter, as the date of cremation ? *In his written statement the date was fixed—August 22 ; he told 14 days after to Mrs. Sahay and Iyer that the body was cremated on August 20, and again on the 35th day, he informed the Counter Intelligence Corps that the body was cremated on August 21, and ashes were collected on August 22. Could there be such contradictions only within a period of 35 days, if a cremation really took place ?*

Being baffled by the irreconcilably contradictory statements of Habibur Rahman, Col. Figgess submitted a comparative chart of the statements Rahman made before CIC and CSDIC.

About eight months after submission of Figgess Report,

Intelligence Bureau, New Delhi, on May 19, 1946 (No. C-5 page 5), recorded, "*Habibur Rahman's report is unsatisfactory. The multitude of discrepancies in accounts of actual air crash as given first to CIC in Tokyo and later to CSDIC, is being taken up . . . The Indian (Col. Rahman) who supposedly was with Mr. Bose on the same plane has been seen with his hands and face bruised. But this again is no proof. He might have been involved in some other accident.*"

After continuous examination of Col. Rahman, CSDIC officers commented : "*It is considered that even if Rahman was in the know of Bose's plan, he would not disclose them. His manner is not very convincing. He talks in a secretive way even if one is about.*" [Secret : No. 1400|23|SE ; CSDIC, Red Fort, Delhi : March 25, 1946].

Neither the American nor the British CSDIC officers were convinced by the statements of Habibur Rahman. In order to highlight contradictions and discrepancies in his statements, Figgess prepared a comparative chart to show how Rahman was trying to mislead the investigating teams. In this comparative chart, if the same points that Habibur Rahman made out before Shah Nawaz Committee are included, his motive becomes more explicit. (In the following chart, B.1269 is the code word for Habibur Rahman).

CONTRADICTIONARY STATEMENTS OF COL. HABIBUR RAHMAN

*C.I.C. (Figgess) Report*      *C.S.D.I.C. Report No. 1156*      *Before S. N. Khan Committee on 6-4-56*  
*dated 29-9-45*      *dated 31-12-45*

A

B

C

- A. He revealed that he had no knowledge of how Bose escaped or was removed from the plane. On B.1269's suggestion Bose changed his course and moved towards the front, etc. Netaji turned towards me. I said, "Please get out through the front: there is no way in rear". (*Augay say nikaley peechay say rasta nahin hay*). "My clothes did not catch fire."
- B. He stated that upon alighting from the plane he noticed his own coat on fire. B.1269 wore knee-boots, serge breeches and a serge tunic: his clothes were not burnt at all. (He wears them now at CSDIC (I)).
- C. He then saw "Bose lying by the plane with his clothing afire". B.1269 noticed Bose in a standing position about 12 yards away with smoke coming from his garments. "The moment I got out, I saw him about 10 yards ahead of me standing and looking in the opposite direction to mine towards the West. "His clothes were on fire".
- D. Rahman went to the aid of Bose and removed his burning clothing. Bose was endeavouring to remove his clothes. "I rushed and I experienced great difficulty in unfastening his bush-shirt belt. His trousers were not so much on fire and it was not necessary to take them off."

- E.** He added that the seat Bose occupied in the aircraft was beside a petrol tank and at the time of the crash the tank exploded, spreading the burning fuel on Bose's clothing.
- F.** It was later determined that Bose received serious injuries about the head and neck in addition to his severe burns.
- G.** Rahman received two lacerations on his head, one on his right leg and burns of his hands, arms and face.
- B.1269 stated that Bose's clothes may have been drenched in petrol, as Bose sat under a petrol tank in the plane.
- Bose had sustained serious burns all over his body and when he was laid on the ground B.1269 noticed 2 or 3 fractures on the skull.
- Besides burns on the hands, B.1269's face was slightly burnt on the right side, and he also received two minor wounds on the head and one lacerated wound on the right leg below the knee.
- "There was more fire on bush-shirt. All the same, his trousers had caught fire but my own impression is that since he was sitting in a squatting way in the plane, the petrol spread more on the upper portion of his (Netaji's) clothes and that is why the fire was more on the upper portion."
- "I laid him down on the ground and I noticed a very deep cut on his head probably on the left side. His face had been scorched by heat and his hair also caught fire and singed. The cut on his head was a long one about 4 inches long. He was bleeding profusely. It was a straight cut. I tried to stop his bleeding with my handkerchief".
- "... my both hands were badly burnt. As I came through the fire, the right side of my face was burnt and I noticed I had received a cut in forehead which was bleeding and also the right side of my right knee was also bleeding profusely as it had hit some hard substance. The head cut was caused due to my hitting the floor as the plane crashed. My clothes did not catch fire. My hands were burnt very badly in the attempt to take of Netaji's clothes."

*Point*      *C.I.C. (Figgess) Report*  
                   *dated 29-9-45*  
                   *A*

*C.S.D.I.C. Report No. 1156*  
*dated 31-12-45*  
                   *B*

*Before S. N. Khan Committee on 6-4-56*

*C*

**H. NO MENTION.**

Bose's body was kept in the room where he died, and B.1269 remained there all the night together with Japanese guards and some patients. B.1269 states that he did not keep any 'souvenirs' as none was available on the person of Bose after the accident—all their luggage having been burnt on the plane.

"I sat up the whole night in that room because it was quite hot and I could not sleep. The body was there and a Japanese sentry was guarding it."

**I.** On August 20, 1945 Bose was removed from the Hospital and his remains were placed in a box provided by the Japanese.

A coffin made of sandal wood was brought to the Hospital and Bose's body was placed therein.

"On August 20, 1945, I was informed that arrangements for the cremation had been made and soon after the coffin was put in a Japanese Military lorry or ambulance... after arrival at the crematorium... the Netaji's coffin was removed from the lorry... Body was taken out of the coffin and was taken up by the Japanese inside the crematorium".

J. Rahman requested the remains be flown to Singapore or Tokyo. Major Nagatomo informed Rahman on August 21, 1945 that it would be impossible to transport the remains by air due to the size of the box in which Bose was placed. Major Nagatomo suggested to Rahman at that time that the body be cremated and Rahman, after careful consideration, agreed.

The Japanese staff colonel visited B.1269 who requested him to make arrangements for the dead body to be taken to Singapore. B.1269 was informed that as the coffin was too large it was not possible to transport it by plane and the idea had therefore to be dropped. B.1269 then suggested that the body be cremated as the Japanese had said they were unable to preserve it.

"I told this Japanese officer that he should go and inform the Headquarters and request them on my behalf that I would like Netaji's body to be transported to Singapore where all our Government and Army Officers were present. On the morning of the August 19, at about 9-00 o'clock... I repeated my request to the Japanese Army staff officer that the arrangements for the transportation of Netaji's body to Singapore should be made."

K. According to Rahman, photos were taken at the scene of the crash and also at the Hospital after the death of Bose. The photos are at present in possession of the "Japanese War Office" in Tokyo.

"... two photographs of Bose were taken, one with the body fully covered inside the coffin, and the other with the lid of the coffin closed and B.1269 seated by its side. Fruits and incense were placed on the coffin.

"The face (Netaji's) could be recognised by me. ... The photo of his body (excluding the face) was taken at my request... I learnt that photos of the burnt plane had also been taken... I cannot exactly say why the photographs were not taken on August 18 and 19, 1945.

L. NO MENTION.

On August 22, 1945 at about 10.00 hrs. Bose's body was removed to a crematorium where a Japanese cleric who spoke excellent English, performed a

"On August 20, 1945, I (Rahman) was informed that arrangements for the cremation had been made and soon after the coffin was put in a Japanese military lorry or ambulance. The coffin was

*Point*  
*C.I.C. (Figless) Report*  
*dated 29-9-45*  
*A*

*C.S.D.I.C. Report No. 1156*  
*dated 31-12-45*  
*B*

*Before S. N. Khan Committee on 6-4-56*

*C*

religious ceremony. After this, Bose's body was taken out of the coffin and placed in a furnace. The door of the furnace was locked and the key was kept by a Japanese Military officer. B.1269 had declined to take charge of the key as he was at the time running a temperature and was in a very depressed state of mind. The body was then set alight by the cleric's assistant. At the cremation there were about 30 Japanese medical and military officers present. B.1269 does not recollect any of their names. B.1269 states that he was the only Indian present at that time. About half an hour after the body had been set alight,

escorted by two lorries full of Japanese soldiers and staff of the Hospital and Japanese officers in four staff cars. There were also a few civilians present. In one of the cars, a Japanese General (probably garrison commander) also came... As far as I recollect one car was leading forward by the Lorry carrying Netaji's coffin, followed by escorts and other cars, I was in one of the cars in the rear. After arrival at the crematorium, ... Netaji's coffin was removed from the lorry by the Japanese soldiers and the escort paid compliments according to their customs and all those present also paid compliments. .... As far as I remember a Japanese priest was also present at that time. Body was taken out of the coffin and was taken up by the Japanese inside the crematorium.

B.1269 left the crematorium with others.

“... The body of Netaji was taken out of the coffin and was placed on a stretcher like thing, into the incinerator. ... The door of the incinerator was locked and I kept the key with me overnight. ... This was approximately between 11 and 12 noon. I was brought back to the Hospital from the crematorium after the fire was set on ...”

**M. NO MENTION**

On August 23, 1945, B.1269 in the company of the cleric and staff major and 3 or 4 other Japanese visited the crematorium when the ashes of Bose were collected and placed in a wooden box specially made for the purpose, B.1269 was shown a small piece of gold among the ashes which he believes was part of one of Bose's gold teeth. The box containing the ashes was then taken to a Japanese temple in the city, where a religious ceremony was again performed by the cleric.

“On the morning of August 21, 1945, I went to the crematorium accompanied by two or three Japanese including the civilian and opened the lock of the incinerator with key which was with me. I was present and I saw the ashes of Netaji's body inside it. We had a wooden urn to collect the ashes. We collected some ashes from the head side, nearest to the door, and placed them in the urn. I remember distinctly that a little piece of gold, which was from the filling of one of Netaji's teeth was removed and placed in the urn”.



*C.I.C. (Figgess) Report  
dated 29-9-45*

A

N. On Sept. 4 1945 he (Rahman) accompanied the ashes of Bose to GIFU Honshu, Japan from where he travelled by rail to Tokyo, arriving on Sept. 6, 1945. Rahman was met by Lt. (FNU) Hasegawa, a Japanese representative of the General Staff who took him to Mr. Ramamurti's residence.

*C.S.D.I.C. Report No. 1156  
dated 31-12-45*

B

On Sept. 4, 1945, B.1269 returned to Taihoku and boarded the plane which carried 4 other Japanese passengers including Lt.-Col. Sakamaki and 3 civilians whose names were not known to B.1269. . . . B.1269 carried with him the wooden box containing the ashes of Bose, the two photographs of Bose taken on August 21, 1945, three photographs of the wrecked plane and a rectangular wrist gold watch with a leather strap.

*Before S.N. Khan Committee on 6-4-56*

C

I was brought down to Taihoku airfield, and was flown to an airport, some distance away from Tokyo. Accompanying me at the time were two or three Japanese officers, probably one of them was Col. Nonogaki. The urn containing ashes of Netaji and the wooden boxes containing valuables were also taken charge of by this officer.

" . . . When I left Taihoku I was given a watch by the Officer Commanding of the Hospital who had treated Netaji saying that it was Netaji's watch which was removed from his wrist after his death. . . . Later on, I managed to hand it over to Netaji's family through Mr. Bhulabhai Desai. I was told General Shidei had been killed and 3 other had also been killed. Then 3 or 4 had died in the Hospital later on. Only 4 persons survived. . . . I was told that 4 had survived including myself out of the whole number of 12."

After careful perusal of the contradictions in Rahman's statement one unavoidable question will arise in everyone's mind,—if Netaji really died at Taihoku,—why Habibur made persistent efforts to mislead the Anglo-Americans about the happenings at Taihoku ? Why would he try to conceal or distort facts ? Why within three weeks, he gave three different dates of funeral to different agencies ? If his leader was no more in this world could his dear 'Habib' make the mistake of forgetting the date of funeral over and over again ?

#### CLOUD OF CONFUSION ABOUT DEATH NEWS

The Allied Intelligence team, in one of its reports remarked,—“if the story of Bose's death was a skilfully contrived plot, Taihoku was the ideal place to execute it. Except Habibur Rahman, an accomplice of Bose, there were no foreigner to provide any testimony in verification of the report of Bose's death.” Because the air crash was stated to have taken place at Taihoku, and the news of Netaji's death was couched in confusing language, it took about 45 days for the Allied investigating teams to ascertain whether Taihoku should be located as the place of alleged death of Bose or Tokyo. Taihoku being described later as the alleged place of death of Bose,—it took them a long time to find out who were the persons connected with the story of death of Bose.

Directly or indirectly Netaji's death news was communicated through (i) Bangkok Signal on August 20, (ii) Tokyo Broadcast on August 23, and (iii) press publicity at Taihoku on August 25. The following were the reports :—

- (i) **FOUR SIGNALS** : full text of the signals have already been quoted earlier. (See pages 216-217).
- (ii) **TOKYO BROADCAST** : The Domei Agency's news have also been quoted in the first chapter. It mainly stated : “Bose was seriously injured when his plane crashed at Taihoku airfield at 2 p.m. on August 18. *He was given treatment in Hospital in Japan, where he died at midnight.*”
- (iii) **FORMOSA BULLETIN** : A photostat copy of the only news that was published in the only newspaper

of Formosa in 1945, *Taiwan Shin Pao* about the alleged air crash and death of Netaji was submitted by the National Committee to the Khosla Commission. It was authenticated by the Taiwan Provincial Government.

### THE NEWS

“(TRANSLATION)

“*Taiwan Shin Pao*”—Newspaper

On August 25, 1945, Saturday”

“*Intelligence Bureau Reveal*”

(August 22, 1945, 2 O'clock P.M.)

“The Chief of the Independence Movement of Free India, Mr. Shri Subhas Chandra Bose, wanted to discuss with Japanese authorities, he took plane from Chao Nan (Singapore) en route to Tokyo on August 16. The plane crashed at the vicinity of Taihoku airport at 2 O'clock P.M. on August 18. Mr. Bose suffered from severe injuries and was sent to local hospital for emergency cure. He died at 'O' o'clock on August 19 due to severe injuries. At the same plane, there was high rank officer, Col. Fu Yan Mon who suffered injury too, a Japanese Lieutenant-General Shu Chu Cheing died from severe injury on the airport at that time and other four officers who received either severe or light injuries respectively”.

These are the only three documents that were found from the indirect official sources of Japan in respect of the announcement of death of Netaji. So many contradictions, suppression of facts, distortions of names and misleading informations found in these documents, unavoidably raised the following pertinent questions :

(1) Why a telegram was sent to the Chief of Hikari Kikan at Bangkok office from Saigon Headquarters to inform the Indians about the movement of Netaji, when it was clearly known to them that Hikari Kikan's Chief, Isoda, and the leading Indian associates of Netaji like Iyer, Debnath Das, Hasan, Pritman Singh, Gulzara Singh and others were present at the Saigon airport when Netaji's plane took off on August

17, 1945 at 5 p.m. ? Is it not to prepare the Indian community in advance about the coming announcement of the cooked-up report of air crash ?

(2) All the three documents,—the 2nd signal particularly, the Tokyo Broadcast and *Taiwan Shin Pao* gave out the news as told by Habibur Rahman, that Netaji was going to Tokyo. Why it was done so,—although much later, all the Japanese witnesses unanimously said that Netaji's intention was to go to Soviet Union via Dairen ?

(3) Why the signal sent on August 20, to Hikari Kikan informed that the alleged body of Netaji was flown to Tokyo from Taihoku whereas Tokyo broadcast on August 23, told that Netaji died in Japan, and the Formosa bulletin kept completely silent about it ?

(4) Why these three documents kept silent about the date and place of the alleged cremation of the body of Netaji ? A very junior officer like Capt. Nakamura, and not General Isamaya or General Ando of the Formosan command, told Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 that the alleged body of Netaji was intended to be flown to Tokyo, but as big coffin could not be found to emplane, after an exchange of telegrams between Tokyo and Taihoku on August 19, the body was cremated at Taihoku on August 20. No copies of such telegrams were found or produced before Shah Nawaz Committee. If the body was cremated under orders from Tokyo Headquarters,—why, even on August 23, it was reported in the broadcast from Tokyo that Netaji was flown to Tokyo in injured condition and he died in Japan ? Why *Taiwan Shin Pao*, which published the Formosan bulletin on August 25, did not correct the news that was broadcast by Tokyo Radio and why it kept silent over the date and place of cremation.

(5) S. A. Iyer told Khosla Commission that the text of the Tokyo broadcast was drafted not by any reporter of Domei Agency, but by himself. If it is so, Iyer reached Tokyo on August 22, and whether Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo or not, and whether Netaji allegedly died in Tokyo or at Taihoku and whether cremation, which was officially told to have had

taken place on August 20, must have been known to Iyer, who was then already in Tokyo. If so, how the text drafted by Iyer in the name of Domei Agency, could be broadcast by Tokyo Radio on August 23 stating that Netaji was flown to Tokyo and he died in Japan ?

(6) Why the telegram was sent from Saigon Headquarters to Isoda on August 27 at Bangkok, asking the latter to furnish information about the condition of Habibur Rahman ? Isoda had no better source to know whereabouts of Habibur Rahman than the Saigon Headquarters which received the report of the alleged air crash and death of Netaji either from the Imperial Headquarters or Formosa Headquarters. If so, why Isoda at Bangkok was asked to send news about Habibur Rahman ? Why the Formosan bulletin did not mention whether Habibur Rahman was being treated at Taihoku hospital or not ? Does it not create an impression that the telegram sent by the Saigon Headquarters and secrecy about Habibur Rahman's presence at Taihoku maintained in the news published by the Formosan Intelligence Bureau were intended to avoid immediate location of whereabouts of Habibur Rahman ?

(7) The press report published in *Taiwan Shin Pao* was patently intriguing. The report of air crash or news of the alleged death of Netaji, was it a secret intelligence that had to be issued not by either the Civil or Military authority of Formosa but by "Intelligence Bureau" as something to "reveal" ? Why was it noted that the report was drafted on "August 22, 1945, 2 O'clock p.m." and even so, why was it published two days after the Tokyo broadcast i.e., on August 25 ? Why was it not corrected to state that the alleged body of Netaji was not flown to Tokyo ? Why was it stated that plane carrying Netaji left not Saigon on August 17, but came from Singapore on August 16 ? Why the name of Habibur Rahman was mentioned as *Col. Fu Yan Mon* ? Who was Lt.-Gen. Shu Chu Cheing ? If he was Lt.-Gen. Shidei why it was not written as Tsunamassa Shidei ? Why it was said in the report that only "Mr. Shri Subhash Chandra Bose and Lt.-Gen. Shu Chu Cheing died". and "four Officers were 'injured' ? Why it was not mentioned where the alleged bodies were cremated and on which date ?

All these apparently inexplicable questions lead only to one conclusion, that is,—the cryptic news broadcast by the Tokyo Radio 5 days after the alleged air crash and the news published 2 days after it in *Shin Pao*,—were deliberately done to give enough time to Netaji to reach his destination. Secondly, the 2nd signal of August 20 sent to Bangkok and the Tokyo broadcast of August 23, circulated a misleading news that the alleged body of Netaji was flown to Tokyo. The *Shin Pao* news kept silent over it and deliberately withheld the place of alleged cremation. Can it not be presumed that all this confusion was created to frustrate Allied Intelligence attempt to rush to Taihoku in time and, thus to give further time to Netaji to take his own time to reach his destination ? Thirdly, the signal sent by Saigon Headquarters to Hikari Kikan office at Bangkok on August 27 asked for the information about Habibur Rahman's condition. It was done evidently to mislead the Allied Intelligence so that they could not locate the place in time where Habibur Rahman actually was. Fourthly, names of Habibur Rahman and Lt.-Gen. Shidei were published in *Shin Pao* as "Col. Fu Yan Mon" and "Lieutenant-General Shu Chu Cheing" so that identification of these two persons was delayed. Fifthly, except three names, no other names of the dead and injured were published to avoid immediate identification of the concerned persons for arrest and interrogation by the Allied Intelligence. Sixthly, mentioning of place of cremation was withheld to baffle the Allied Intelligence to reach Taihoku in time for ascertaining whether the alleged bodies of Netaji and Shidei were actually cremated or not ?

This story bears an interesting resemblance with Netaji's escape-plan from India. Netaji escaped on January 16, 1944, but the news was published by Sarat Chandra Bose after 10 days i.e., on January 26. To mislead the British Intelligence, telegrams were sent to Arobindo Ashram, Badrinath, Kamakhya temple and other religious places in North, South and East India, as if Netaji intended to renounce the world to become a sanyasi again. It took several months for the British to come to know that Netaji escaped *via* Kabul to Germany.

Similarly, it took a few months for the Allied Intelligence teams to come to know all about the story connected with the report of air crash and Netaji's 'death'. Till September 29, 1945 they did not know where the alleged body of Netaji was said to have been cremated. By the middle of September, 1945 Isoda and Hachia were arrested, and when Isoda was examined by the Allied Intelligence at Saigon he still continued to say that Netaji's body was flown to Tokyo. Habibur Rahman was arrested in the last week of September, 1945 and during his cross-examination he said that the alleged body of Netaji was cremated at Taihoku (why Isoda and Habibur Rahman gave two different versions, we shall see later). Both Isoda and Habibur Rahman pretended that they did not know the name of the crew who were reported to have died in the alleged air crash, nor of those who survived. In consequence, the Allied Search Parties could not arrest any of those persons like Nonogaki, Tara Kuno, Sakai, Takahashi or Arai. In connection with the report about Netaji, the British succeeded only in arresting Isoda, Hachia, Gen. Fuziwarra and Habibur Rahman and brought them to Red Fort in India in the month of October, 1945 to get details about the alleged air crash. Dr. Yoshimi was arrested after a few months in 1946 and he was kept in Stanley jail in Hongkong. When Figgess team visited Tokyo, the Government of Japan gave it only a few photographs, but did not furnish any list of persons who claimed to have travelled with Netaji or of the doctor who allegedly treated him at Taihoku hospital. Col. Tada was arrested much later in 1946.

The two British teams could not get any details about the alleged plane crash and reported death of Netaji, except the statements of Isoda, Hachia, and Habibur Rahman, till the last week of September, 1945 ; and late in 1946 they could only secure more confusing and contradictory information from Col. Tada and Dr. Yoshimi. Till very late, in 1946, the Japanese continued to say that Netaji's destination was Tokyo, where he wanted to have consultations with the Japanese authorities.

If Netaji really died in the alleged plane crash, why the Japanese authorities tried to mislead the Allied Intelligence, and

confuse them by giving contradictory information and conceal from them all details about the story ?

### MORE THAN A MIRACLE

Full list of the co-passengers was never published till Shah Nawaz Committee visited Tokyo, 11 years after the alleged incident at Taihoku. Neither in Saigon signals nor in Tokyo broadcast any name other than Subhas Chandra Bose, Gen. Shidei and Habibur Rahman was mentioned. Even *Shin Pao* did not publish any additional name. In 1956 Shah Nawaz Committee was told that besides Netaji, Shidei and Habibur, "the crew consisted of five or six persons : Chief Pilot—Major Takizawa ; Co-pilot — W|o Ayaogi ; Navigator — Sergeant Okista ; Radio operator—N.C.O. Tominaga and five other Japanese military officers : Lt.-Col. T. Sakai, a staff officer of the Burma Army ; Lt.-Col. Shiro Nonogaki, an airstaff officer ; Major Tara Kuno, an airstaff officer ; Major Ihaho Takahashi, a staff officer and Capt. Keikichi Arai, an Air Force Engineer and one or two engineers, whose names have not come out",—this was the list of passengers. What happened to Okista, Tominaga and two other engineers,—nobody could say.

Now, as the story was told by five Japanese survivors, the plane crashed soon after it made a steep take-off due to fall of a propeller and a port engine. Most of the witnesses said that the plane nose-dived and vertically crashed on the ground, when the plane split either in two or three parts. The plane was, thereafter, immediately engulfed in fire. In consequence of the crash, five or six crew and Netaji and Shidei died, while all other passengers survived with either minor injury or no injury at all.

Who died and who were the other passengers who escaped death ? *All the crew, who were essential to fly the plane to Dairen died and died with them Netaji and Shidei, while all other non-essential persons survived. How such miracle could happen that all the essential persons died, while all other non-essential passengers survived?* There was no sitting arrangement in the bomber, nor any seat belt to fix them on the floor of the



bomber where all the passengers squatted. When the plane nose-dived what would happen in such a bomber ? By sheer force of gravity, all the passengers and the luggage would have chaotically jumbled before the cock-pit of the plane, with the heads of the boarders in groundward position. The nose of the engine would have crashed first and the passengers amassed before the cock-pit would have equally suffered the terrible impact of such a nose-dived crash.

This should be the natural picture, a terribly chaotic scene inside, when the plane crashed. But what matters ? In spite of the nose-dived crash, a fine selection of death and survival was made,—essential persons died and the non-essential persons survived. Such a miracle even the Providence would not have dared to plan !

No official inquiry about the alleged air crash at Taihoku was made nor even a formal routine investigation. In 1966 some war-time aeronautical experts of Japan, after careful scrutiny of the story of the air crash and examination of the evidence of the survivors bluntly *termed this version* “as *completely irrelevant and illogical*”. The panel of the Japanese experts further observed : “*The entire Japanese air-operation before and during Pacific war did not record any other case of propeller falling out during take-off . . . If the plane dived to the ground, it could have smashed itself into bits, killing all aboard instantly.*”

Yes ! this is the opinion of the experts as to what would have happened if the plane really crashed as described by all the five survivors, Nakamura, a ground engineer of the Taihoku airport and Habibur Rahman. The plane would have smashed into pieces, and all the passengers would have instantly perished and none would have survived to tell the story of air crash before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission !

#### WHAT HAPPENED TO GEN. SHIDEI ?

Was there any record of death of Lt.-Gen. Shidei in the alleged air crash at Taihoku ? The only record about him was found in the *Taiwan Shin Pao* of August 25 where it was written that

“a Japanese Lieutenant-General Shu Chu Cheing died from severe injuries on the airport . . . on August 18.” Who is this *Shu Chu Cheing*? What Army Corps he belonged to? If *Shu Chu Cheing* was Lt.-Gen. Shidei, why his name was not written as *Tsunamassa Shidei* and why it was not mentioned that he was the Commander-in-Chief-designate for the Kwantang Army of Manchuria?

Furthermore, what happened to his dead body? Neither General Isamaya, the Chief of the General Staff of the Formosan Army, who was a classmate of Shidei, nor General Ando, its local Commander, nor Lt.-Col. Shibuya, nor any other senior officer could give any information about the identification or disposal of the body of the Lt.-Gen. Shidei. Only information came, as according to Shah Nawaz Committee's report: “Capt. Nakamura alias Yamamoto definitely says that Pilot Takizawa and Co-pilot Ayoagi perished along with Gen. Shidei and he helped to bring their entrails and put their ashes in three boxes.” Contradicting Nakamura, the same report continued: “But Major Kono says that he heard the co-pilot Ayoagi had been pulled out. The two doctors Yoshimi and Tsuruta, definitely say that they had treated Co-pilot Ayoagi who died later in the hospital”. Shah Nawaz Committee further wrote: “One or two others also died with him (Shidei), but it is not certain who they were. Most likely Major Takizawa, Chief Pilot, was one of them. The rest of the passengers and crew, numbering about a dozen, were removed within a short time to Nonmon Military Hospital”. If this version is true, along with Ayoagi, Navigator Okista, Radio operator Tominaga and one or two engineers also died in the hospital, but no doctor or anybody else said a word about them,—they simply, it appeared, vanished unnoticed.

Leave aside these unimportant men, but what about the most important man, from the Japanese point of view, Gen. Shidei? None, except an ordinary Captain, could give information about him. No General inquired about the Commander-in-Chief-designate for the most prestigious Japanese Army—the Kwantang Army. His body was not taken for post-mortem

examination to the Hospital. No death certificate was issued by any doctor, which was a must for securing crematorium permit in those days from the Health and Hygiene Bureau of Taihoku for cremation. Moreover, these death and cremation certificates, and a certificate from the Military Headquarters were essential for sanctioning of pension to Gen. Shidei's family. Except Nakamura's dubious oral evidence before Shah Nawaz Committee, none could give any information about post-mortem examination, death certificate, crematorium certificate, Military Headquarters' certificate or funeral of a General whose status was in no way inferior to either General Isamaya, or General Ando.

The Government of Japan produced a peculiar document, describing it as "Military Record on the death of the late Lt.-Gen. Shidei", before Shah Nawaz Committee. Shah Nawaz Committee made no effort to scrutinise it,—however, Mr. Khosla, used this document, as a 'positive proof' of death of Gen. Shidei in alleged Taihoku air crash using it as a corroborative evidence of Netaji's death. Before analysing the character and contents of this document, let us reproduce it in toto, with the forwarding note of the Government of Japan :

**MILITARY RECORD ON THE DEATH OF  
THE LATE GEN. T. SHIDEI  
(TRANSLATION)**

**RYU-SEN-MAN No. 483**

*August 4, 1947*

**To  
President of Demobilization Agency**

**From  
Chief,  
Korean & Manchurian Affairs Section,  
First Demobilization Bureau,  
Demobilization Agency.**

*(Subject :—Application for Promotion of War-Dead)*

Whereas the person mentioned below comes under paragraph 5, Article 26 of ICHIFUKU (First Demobilization

Bureau) No. 744 of 1946, the application for his promotion is submitted herewith for your consideration :—

Date of Death	August 18, 1945
Cause of Death	Death by war
Place of Death	Taihoku Airfield
Position	Attached to Military Headquarters in Manchuria.
Military Rank	Lieut-General
Name	Tsunamasa Shidei
Date of birth	January 27, 1895.
Permanent Domicile	No. 24, Oku-onoe-cho-Yamashinalzushi, ma-ku, Kyoto City.

(OFFICIAL SEAL)

*Chief,  
Korean and Manchurian Affairs Section  
First Demobilization Bureau  
Demobilization Agency*

*N.B.*—The promotion applied for was not approved.

**MILITARY CAREER OF LIEUT-GENERAL SHIDEI :**

December 25, 1915	Appointed Sub-Lieutenant of Cavalary
August 1, 1940	Appointed Major-General
October 27, 1943	Appointed Lieut.-General
May 23, 1945	Appointed the Chief of Staff of Japanese Corps in Burma
August 18, 1945	Died by war in Formosa

Examined and authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs

(Seal)

SD/—YASUTERU ASAHINA,  
*Secretary  
Ministry of External Affairs  
(Archives Section)*

On careful analysis of the above document many unusual contradictions and vagueness in the application are found,—namely :

(i) The document which has been noted as a “Military Record” is nothing but a copy of an application for posthumous promotion of Lt.-Gen. Shidei, without any identity of the applicant.

(ii) The application for promotion had been made on August 4, 1947, in which no record of military career of the General was attached, but in it “Military career of Lieut.-General Shidei” was included as a note separate from the application on June 4, 1956 and that too not by the Defence Secretary, but by the Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs.

(iii) In this record also, it has been mentioned that as his last assignment, Gen. Shidei was the Chief of the Staff of Japanese Corps in Burma. Nothing has been mentioned in it, about his appointment as the Chief of the Staff of the Kwantung Army of Manchuria.

(iv) In both the application and the ten-years later ‘military career’ record of the General, it has been stated that Lt.-Gen. Shidei died in Formosa, but in the application the “cause by death” has been attributed to “death by War” at “Taihoku Airfield”. But war ceased in all other areas after August 15, 1945, except in the Manchurian sector, where war between Japan and Russia continued.

(v) If Gen. Shidei really died at Taihoku, the application should have been made to or forwarded by either the Chief of the Southern Command Affairs Section, or by the Chief of the Formosan Command Section. However, the application has been made to or forwarded by “*Chief, Korean and Manchurian Affairs Section, First Demobilisation Bureau, Demobilisation Agency*”. This clearly shows that *Lt.-Gen. Shidei’s death by war was caused definitely within the area under command of “Korean and Manchurian Section of the Japanese Army.”*

(vi) If Lt.-Gen. Shidei really died in Taihoku airport, the application should include verification certificate from the

Formosan Command, and Death Certificate from Nonmon hospital or any other Military doctors of the Formosan Command and a cremation permit from the Health and Hygiene Bureau of Taihoku, because without such authentication no application could be considered by the Government of Japan. But no such certificate was attached to the application. It will be seen later that for cremation of an ordinary soldier, death certificate and cremation permit were considered in those days as 'must'.

(vii) If Lt.-Gen. Shidei died due to air crash at Taihoku, it should have been clearly written so in the application, but it has been vaguely written in it that the cause of death was "death by war."

(viii) In the application it was clearly written that Lt.-Gen. Shidei was "*Attached to Military Headquarters in Manchuria*", but in the record of "*Military career*", of the General, it was not authenticated by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, although the application was made to or forwarded by the "*Korean and Manchurian Section of Demobilisation*"—which clearly indicated an attempt on the part of the Government of Japan to conceal real facts. From what has been mentioned in the application that Lt.-Gen. was "*Attached to Military Headquarters in Manchuria and the forwarding of the application by the Chief, Korean and Manchurian Affairs Section*" unmistakably point out that Lt.-Gen. Shidei reached the active war area and died in Manchuria after assuming his command there, which means that he did not die at Taihoku.

(ix) It was not mentioned or shown anywhere in the copy of the application whether it was made by the widow or son or daughter of Lt.-Gen. Shidei or by the Chief of the Korean and Manchurian Affairs Section. Nowhere the name of the applicant is mentioned, which rendered the application unworthy of any consideration ; and

(x) The application was yet considered and rejected two years after without mentioning anywhere why it was done so.

It is absurd to believe that the Military Archives of Japan failed to preserve the military record of such a high-ranking

General like Shidei, who was the Chief of the General Staff of the most prestigious Kawantang Army of Manchuria. The Government of Japan, instead of providing an authenticated military record of Lt.-Gen. Shidei, provided a posthumous promotion application as his military record. Obviously, the Government of Japan wanted to conceal where Lt.-Gen. Shidei actually died or whether he became a Buddhist Monk after the war by renouncing the world. The real fact could be verified either by Shah Nawaz Khan or Mr. Khosla by taking evidence of Mrs. Shidei or any of his sons and daughters. But neither did so in trying to clear the mystery about the death of Lt.-Gen. Shidei, which would have provided positive clue to the mystery about the alleged death of Netaji as well.

After analysing the manifest contradictions in the promotion application of Lt.-Gen. Shidei and evident attempt on the part of the Government of Japan to conceal real facts about the General, the counsel of the National Committee, Shri Gobindo Mokhoty, could not desist himself from calling this document as nothing but "fraud". Concurring with his remark, Mr. Khosla also observed: "Yes, it appears to be fraud." But, finally, Mr. Khosla accepted this "fraud" document to cite it as a positive confirmation of the report of Netaji's death. He wrote in his report: "The document clearly mentions the date of death (of Lt.-Gen. Shidei) as August 18, 1945 and the place of death as Taihoku Airfield. Therefore, it is clear that, in the application for promotion made on behalf of Gen. Shidei, his death at Taihoku airfield on August 18, 1945, was clearly accepted as a proved fact. This document, therefore, furnishes a clear corroboration of the story of the crash and of Gen. Shidei's death in it." The Government of Japan could not produce any proof except the cursory evidence of a non-descript person like Nakamura—a mere Captain of the Formosan Army,—about death of General Shidei at Taihoku. On the contrary 'military record' of the General furnished by "the Korean and Manchurian Section of the Japanese Defence Department", clearly indicated that if Gen. Shidei died in war, then he was killed in the active war-zone of Manchuria. His 'military record' positively established the

fact that the Chief of the Kawantang Army definitely reached Manchuria. If Gen. Shidei's reported death at Taihoku turned fictitious, can the report of Netaji's death bear any truth ?

### THEY SEPARATED AT TOURANE ?

In all probability, Netaji and Gen. Shidei separated themselves together at Tourane from other passengers who accompanied them from Saigon and did not proceed further in the Taihoku-bound plane. This assumption is strengthened by many facts, namely—(i) no co-passengers of Netaji and Shidei who travelled together from Saigon could definitely say where they stayed at night in Tourane ; (ii) authentication of 'military record' of Gen. Shidei by the Korean and Manchurian Section of the Japanese War Department ; (iii) lack of positive evidence of Shidei's death and funeral at Taihoku ; and (iv) the report of air-port-inspection at Taihoku (Taipei) during the visit of Khosla Commission there, which totally discarded the story of air crash on August 18, 1945.

None of the Japanese witnesses could inform Shah Nawaz Committee where Netaji and Shidei spent the night at Tourane. Some said they stayed in the biggest hotel at Tourane, while others said, they spent the night at the airport. But Sakai said that they had their night halt at the "Supply Base Billet". Some of the Japanese witnesses said that they dined together with Netaji and the General, while others told, they had their meals separately. Thus, the witnesses were not sure where Netaji and Shidei halted at night at Tourane.

The Japanese witnesses were found to be very vocal before both Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission in their attempts to give a vivid description of the situation prior to departure from Saigon and as well of their respective sitting position in the plane. But none uttered a word to say whether any of them saw Netaji and Gen. Shidei boarding the plane, nor did they confirm if the previous seating arrangement was maintained in the second lap of their journey to Taihoku.

Shah Nawaz Committee visited Tourane in 1956 and inquired from all the hotels, continuing there since the days of



war, whether Netaji and Shidei had night halt in any of them. But nobody could furnish any information about night stay of Netaji and Gen. Shidei at Tourane. Alfred Wag, the Canadian journalist told Nehru that he met Netaji near Saigon after the report of the air crash. This report was also confirmed later by the Bishop of Dalat.

From all this evidence, it appeared that Netaji and Gen. Shidei separated themselves from other passengers of the plane and left Tourane under cover of the night on August 17 for Dalat. It is quite likely that after reaching Dalat by a land route, both Netaji and Gen. Shidei left Dalat for Dairen in a separate plane, and on August 18 morning the Saigon—plane left Tourane for Taihoku with Habibur Rahman and others without Netaji and Gen. Shidei with them.

Inspection of old Taihoku airport at Taipei provided positive testimony that on August 18 no plane at all crashed at the Taihoku Airport.

#### A FICTITIOUS AIR CRASH

The analysis of the meteorological report of the Taihoku Airport for the month of August and an inspection of the hilly features around it irrefutably showed that the story of August 18 air crash could not be anything but wholly fictitious. (*This matter is discussed in details in chapter 4*).

Wind blows in the month of August-September along the Taihoku (Taipei) airport from north to south every year. As a plane should inevitably take off against the air-current, then if any plane had taken off from the Taihoku airport on August 18, 1945 and crashed immediately after take-off, the place of accident should be invariably identified at the north-end of the runway. But as it happens in conspiratorial plots, this simple yet very significant point, was ignored by the Japanese witnesses,—all of them, including Habibur Rahman, said that the plane crashed beyond the south-end of the runway. Such crash at the south-end of the runway, soon after take-off, is an absurdity according to meteorological report of the month of

August. This aspect of the story of the air crash was never investigated earlier.

The evidence of the Japanese witnesses only justified the evidence of the Taiwanese witness who told Khosla Commission very emphatically that a plane crashed near the south-end of the runway in the month of September, not in 1945 but in 1944 while it was landing. The story is quite realistic as during this month a plane can never take off from south-end but from north-end and lands at the south-end only.

A comparative study of the airport terrain shown in the three pictures of ruined plane as supplied to Mr. Figgess by the Government of Japan in 1946 with the actual hilly terrain found around the Taihoku (Taipei) airport unmistakably proved that these pictures could never be three pictures of a single crashed plane even if they were taken from different angles. It was stated by a Taiwanese witness to Khosla Commission that an American B-52 bomber and two Japanese fighter-bombers crashed over Taihoku airport in 1945. It is quite likely that the three pictures of the wreckages of these three planes were produced by the Government of Japan as the photographs of the ruins of the alleged plane that was said to have crashed on August 18, 1945. A careful study of the three pictures also shows that they could not be different parts of a single plane.

It is really surprising that no investigating team in 1945-46 made any survey of the Taihoku airport in the light of the weather report of the month of August and the actual hilly features around the airport. Had it been done, it would have irrefutably proved that the plane which actually crashed in 1944 was described as to have crashed in 1945 August and that the three pictures of plane wreckages were actually the pictures of the three planes which crashed over the airport in 1945 on different occasions.

If the story of the air crash is found to be fictitious, what remains to justify the story of the crash involving Netaji and Gen. Shidei on August 18, 1945?

### WHY NO PHOTOGRAPH OF ALLEGED BODY OF NETAJI ?

A single photograph of Netaji's dead body, if he had really died, would have convinced the Anglo-Americans, the three investigating agencies like the Figgess team, Finney's team and the CSDIC team and for that matter everybody else that the story of air crash and Netaji's death was true. However, the Japanese authorities deliberately avoided to preserve and produce any such positive proof in verification of the report of Netaji's death.

Shah Nawaz Committee wrote in its Report : *“Not only were the Japanese initially secretive and delayed in publishing news, but no convincing proof of the death of Netaji was produced before the Indians in South-East Asia. Some pictures were taken two days later after the death, one of which shows Col. Habibur Rahman keeping vigil and another shows a sheet covering some object. From these photographs the dead person cannot be identified. Dr. Yoshimi said that it was against Japanese custom to photograph dead bodies. Col. Habibur Rahman said that he did not allow Netaji's face to be photographed as it had swollen and disfigured. Neither any of his personal belongings were shown as having been recovered at that time.”*

In the course of examination by Shah Nawaz Committee, Habibur Rahman admitted that after *“removing the lid of the coffin he could recognise the face of Netaji”*, but as it was disfigured, he asked the photographer to take two photos of the body one without its face and another with him (Rahman) sitting by the side of the coffin and it was done. It appears too ridiculous to believe that if Habibur Rahman could recognise the face of Netaji, why his face was asked to be excluded ? (*We shall discuss the mystery later.*)

The Counter Intelligence Corps (G.H.O., AFPAC) recorded in its report dated September 29, 1945 at Tokyo, *“According to Habibur Rahman, photos were taken at the scene of the crash and also at the hospital after the death of Bose.*

These photos are at present in possession of the Japanese war office in Tokyo". In this Report it was, then, remarked (Page 18) "*The above story cannot be taken as final until the photographs stated to have been taken at the spot, and the actual remains of Bose have been examined.*"

Rahman said that two photographs of Netaji's body were taken, but the photograph inside the coffin, as described by Habibur Rahman himself, was not produced before either the Shah Nawaz Committee, or Khosla Commission. Five photographs were produced namely, three of alleged crashed plane, one of an unidentifiable covered object and the fifth one of a casket said to be containing ashes with Habibur Rahman sitting beside it with his face and hands bandaged. These photographs actually proved nothing to verify either the story of air crash or death of Netaji.

Now, let us see how Mr. Khosla dealt with these five photographs. He wrote in his Report : "Another independent inquiry was held by the Counter Intelligence Corps, General Headquarters, United States Army Forces. The report of this investigation was submitted by Lt.-Col. Figgess on October 10, 1945, followed by a letter dated November 11, 1945. The report was based on interrogation of Habibur Rahman. With the letter were sent five photographs, *which had been supplied by the Japanese Government.* Three of the photographs showed the wreckage of the aircraft in which Bose was alleged to have been involved, one showed Habibur Rahman with his face and hands bandaged sitting on a chair in the hospital at Taipei, and *one showed an unidentifiable body or object covered with a sheet.* Copies of the report dated October 8, 1945, letter dated November 17, 1945, and the five photographs have also been made available to the Commission."

Mr. Khosla, then, observed in his Report : "The same five photographs . . . are not being relied upon". Giving his explanation for not relying these photographs, Mr. Khosla further wrote : "Since Habibur Rahman has not been examined as a witness and there is no evidence to prove the genuineness of these photographs, I do not propose to rely upon them . . . It

is not known in what circumstances these photographs were taken, who took them, to whom they were handed over and in what manner and through what agency they received publicity." What a strange explanation ! *On page 60 of his Report, Mr. Khosla himself admitted that "the five photographs were supplied by the Japanese Government."*

About these photographs, Mr. Khosla, again wrote : "Some photographs were probably taken and these were produced by Habibur Rahman . . . I shall treat them as documents which have not been proved." However, lest this admission of Khosla support the argument otherwise that these photographs disproved the story of air crash and Netaji's death, he promptly added : "This does not mean that I declare them to be false and therefore contradictory of the story of air crash and Bose's death."

Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee that *two photographs of Netaji's body were taken*. He repeated it earlier to CSDIC team. Quoting CSDIC report Mr. Khosla recorded : "B 1269 (Code name of Habibur Rahman) carried with him the wooden box containing the ashes of Bose, *the two photographs of Bose taken on August 21, 1945*, three photographs of the wrecked plane and a rectangular wrist gold watch with a leather strap." This means in all *six photographs* were taken and these were kept with the Government of Japan, from whom Lt.-Col. Figgess received them. *But what happened to the sixth photograph, which was described by Habibur Rahman as that of the body inside the coffin without its face ? Neither Shah Nawaz Committee, nor Khosla Commission inquired about it.*

Why a picture of the dead body of Netaji, if he really died, was not taken,—this question, even Mr. Khosla said, remains unanswered. What was produced as the photograph of the dead body of Netaji according to Shah Nawaz Committee, ". . . *showed a sheet covering some object ; . . . the dead person cannot be identified*". Khosla also described it as "*as an unidentifiable object.*" But providing an alibi for the failure of not taking a photo of the dead body of Netaji, if it really existed, Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report : "*In any event, it*

*seems that there is no point in taking a photograph of Bose's face, because he had sustained such extensive burns that his face was unrecognisable."* But contradicting himself in the same sentence, he completed it by stating, "*though in the form of his body and his manner of resemblance remained to make identification possible.*"

Then advancing further plea for such serious omissions on the part of the Japanese, Mr. Khosla wrote: "*In the circumstance of the case, these omissions appear to me to be perfectly natural.*" In the same circumstances it was not found to be as anything unnatural, that the Japanese could take three photographs of the alleged wreckages of the plane, a sheet covered bundle depicting it as the covered dead body of Netaji, and a photo of Habibur Rahman sitting by the side of a casket allegedly containing ashes,—but Mr. Khosla found it 'perfectly natural' only in case of not taking a photograph of an uncovered body of Netaji, if such body existed at all, to set at rest all doubts about the story of his death. It was also not considered as unusual why the sixth photograph was withheld by the Government of Japan, which was, according to Habibur Rahman, the photograph of the body of Netaji in a coffin minus his face.

Analysing the reason, why the extraordinarily photo-minded Japanese avoided taking photograph of the alleged body of Netaji, Shri Mukhoty tersely observed,—"*although the Japanese took a few photographs but not a photograph of Netaji's dead body, simply because such a dead body did not exist at all!*" Non-existence of a photograph of Netaji's dead body is another positive proof, though indirect, that the story of air crash was nothing but a 'cooked up' one.

#### **· FAKE DEATH CERTIFICATE AND CREMATORIUM PERMIT**

In the days of Japanese occupation, cremation of any dead body in the only crematorium of Taihoku (Taipei) unavoidably required a death certificate by a doctor and on its basis, a

cremation permit or certificate was needed to be issued by the Officer concerned of the Health and Hygiene Bureau of the Taihoku Municipality. This procedure still exists.

In 1946, a Bombay Journalist, Harin Shah, visited Taipei and with the help of its Municipal Bureau he secured two documents,—one,—a death certificate, signed by Dr. Tsuruta, and the other,—an application for cremation signed by Dr. Yoshimi. These two documents and his report about the story of alleged air crash and death of Netaji were given to S. A. Iyer in 1951. Shri Iyer attached copies of those certificates and Harin Shah's account in his 'Tokyo Report' and sent it to Pandit Nehru. Harin Shah published a book called "*Gallant end of Netaji*" in 1956, almost simultaneously with the appointment of Shah Nawaz Committee. The photostat copies of these documents with their English translations are reproduced. [See photostat copies].

Harin Shah appeared before Shah Nawaz Committee. About his statement, the Committee noted : "Mr. Harin Shah's evidence is all the more valuable, as it was taken on the spot on the strength of his inquiries." Harin Shah told Shah Nawaz Committee that he secured these two documents with the help of the Director of the Municipal Bureau of Taipei. The issuing clerks were *Linchin Qui* and *Tan Chichu*, who were on duty on August 21, 1945. The Bureau was then headed by a Japanese and these two issuing clerks heard from certain Japanese Military Officers, accompanying the body, that it was the body of the Indian leader, Subhas Chandra Bose. *They did not see any Indian in the team, accompanying the body.* They told Harin Shah : "*Normally, we would ourselves check up the body. But we were not allowed to do the routine examination by the Japanese Officers who said that under orders, we were not allowed to inspect the body . . . We had to record the doctor's report and issue the permission for cremation. This permission was necessary for every cremation and that is why the Officers came with the body to the Bureau.*"

Harin Shah told Shah Nawaz Committee that these two certificates were issued not by mentioning the name of Netaji

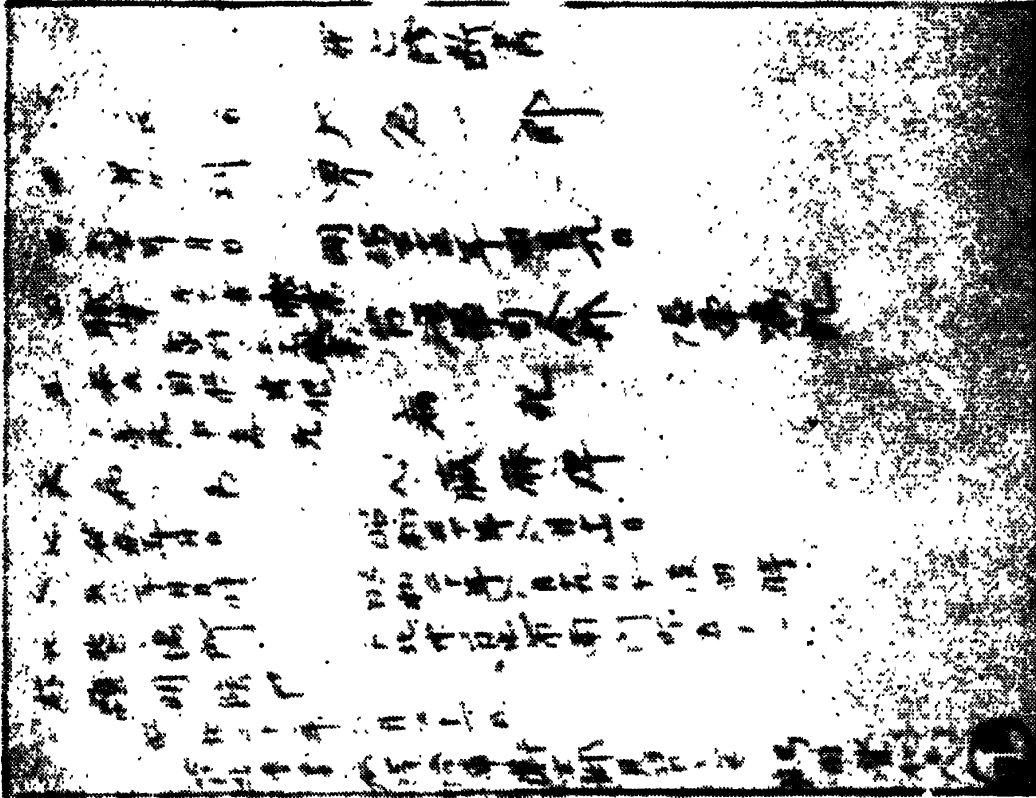


Object covered with a sheet alleged to contain the dead body of Netaji.  
(see page 249)

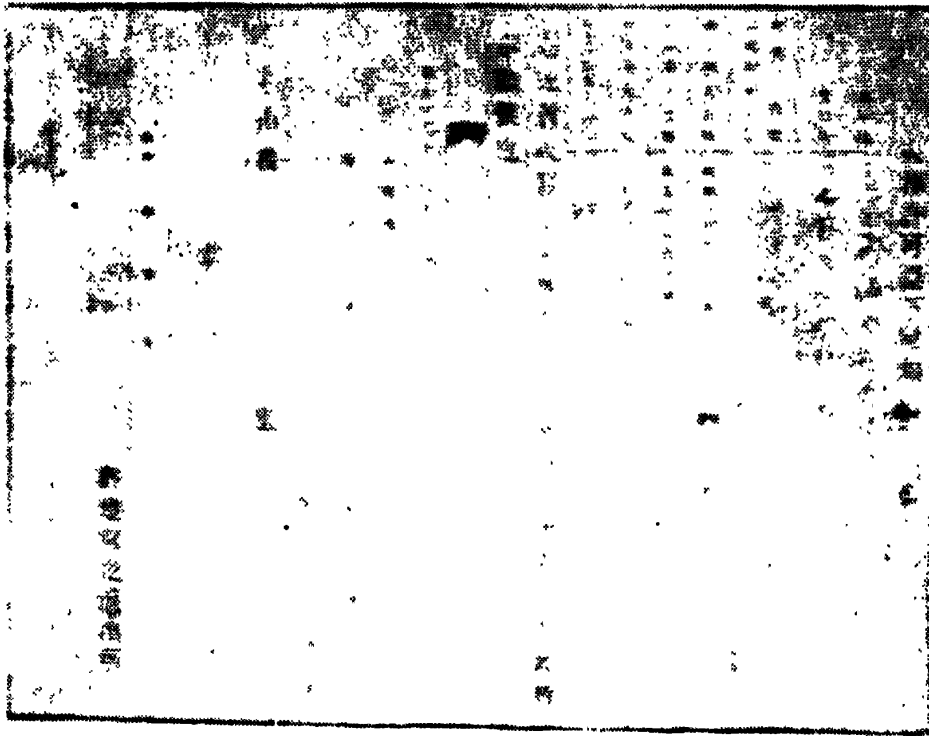


Col. Habibur Rahman sitting by the side of casket alleged to contain ashes of Netaji  
(see page 249)





Photostat of Doctor's report for permission to cremate the alleged dead body of Netaji (see page 252)



Photostat of Cremation Permit issued for cremating the alleged dead body of Netaji

(see page 252)

**DOCTOR'S REPORT READING BOTTOM TO TOP.**

From,  
The Taipeh Army Hospital.  
To,  
City Health and Hygiene Bureau, Taipeh.

**Date of the Report : August 21, 1945.**

- 1st line     *Certificate of death.*
- 2nd line :   *Name : Okura Ichiro (Okura literally means  
big warehouse of food and Ichiro means eldest  
son).*
- 3rd line     *Sex : Male.*
- 4th line     *Birth : Born in Meiji 33rd year, April 9 —  
Ming cha Meiji san mu san nen singachi kunich.*
- 5th line :   *Occupation : He was the obedient Officer of the  
Taiwan Military Government — Taiwan Gun-  
shilepu Dikugun Shoktaku.*
- 6th line     *Cause of death — Suicide, Poison, By sickness  
killed or natural death.*
- 7th line     *Nature of sickness : Heart Attack.*
- 8th line     *Time of sickness : August 17, 1945.*
- 9th line     *Date and time of death : August 19, 1945, 4 p.m.*
- 10th line    *Place of death : Southgate Japanese Army  
Hospital, Taihoku.*
- 11th line    *Writer's Certificate.*
- 12th line    *Date : August 21, 1945.*
- 13th line    *Name of the Doctor and the seal : Chuluta Toyaji  
Chentza. Siskwan (Japanese University).*

**CREMATION PERMIT READING VERTICALLY FROM  
LEFT TO RIGHT**

**No. of Permit 2841**

- 1st line : Permission to burn the body.
- 2nd line : *Native place* : Tokyo — *To Shibu Yaku Shrugen Saka.*  
*Recent address* : Taihoku — *Ski Nogichcho.*
- 3rd line : *Occupation and birthdate* : Same as in Doctor's Report.
- 4th line : *Details of death* : Same as in Doctor's Report.
- 5th line : *Place to burn* : Taipei City Government Crematorium. *Taihoku Skitk'osetse Khasoba.*
- 6th line : *Time and date of burning* : August 22, 1945 at 6 p.m.
- 7th line : *Relationship of the applicant* : His close friend — *Chchaz Civi jin.*
- 8th line : *Application to Government to burn.*
- 9th line : *Date of application* : August 21, 1945.
- 10th line : *Rank in Army* : Formosa Army No. 21123 — *Taiwan Dainichi nichu ruhai.*
- 11th line : *Name of the applying Japanese Officer of the police station* — *Yoshimi Yani Yoshi.*

Subhas Chandra Bose, but in the name of a Japanese soldier, as they were anxious to keep the news of Netaji's death a guarded secret. The Government of Japan officially supported what Shri Shah told Shah Nawaz Committee.

Shah Nawaz Khan officially requested the Government of Japan, through the First Secretary of the Indian Embassy in Tokyo, Shri A. K. Das, to produce before the Inquiry Committee the death certificate and cremation permit issued in the name of Netaji. The Japanese Secretary of the Asian Bureau of the Ministry of External Affairs supplied only the cremation permit, informing Shri Das that death certificate could not be traced. The cremation certificate, supplied by the Government of Japan is exactly the same, as produced by Harin Shah. In its forwarding note the Government of Japan categorically stated that the cremation permit "*must correspond to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.*"

Now let us see, what is the reaction of Mr. Khosla to this official document of the Government of Japan. Mr. Khosla wrote in his Report : "Photostat copies of two documents were produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee. One document purported to be death certificate and the other an application for permission to cremate a dead body. In neither of these the name of the deceased was mentioned as Subhas Chandra Bose, nor does the date of birth of the deceased correspond to the date of Bose's birth. The cause of death was due to heart failure. When the Commission visited Taipei, Shri Samar Guha made earnest endeavours to find any hospital or crematorium records mentioning Bose's name, but all he could find and produce was photostat copies of the same two documents as were produced before the Shah Nawaz Committee."

Mr. Khosla wrote further : "In this connection I may refer to Harin Shah, a newspaper reporter, who paid a visit to Taipei at the end of August, 1946 . . . He claimed to have obtained the above two documents from the Municipal records at Taipei, and handed over to S. A. Iyer in 1951. Iyer mentioned them in the report he submitted to Mr. Nehru. Harin Shah, in 1956, published a book named "Verdict from Formosa :

GALLANT END OF NETAJI Subhas Chandra Bose'' (Harin Shah did not publish the name of the book in capital letters) . . . Harin Shah expressed the view that though the particulars given in the two documents do not, in terms specify Bose, the documents, in fact, relate to him . . . He attributed the discrepancy to a desire on the part of the Japanese to keep the matter of Bose's death a complete secret."

Analysing these discrepancies, Mr. Khosla wrote again: "The death certificate described the deceased as *Ichiro Okura*—male, born on April 9, 1901. The cause of death is mentioned as heart failure. The illness manifested itself on August 17, 1945 and proved fatal at 4 p.m. on August 19, 1945. The occupation of the deceased is mentioned as a non-regular member of the army at Taihoku Army Headquarters. The application for permission to cremate the dead body was made by T. Yoshimi on August 21, 1945, to the crematorium and the time of cremation was stated as 6 p.m. on August 22. The name of the deceased was, as in the Death Certificate, mentioned as *Ichiro Okura* and his date of birth as April 9, 1901. The cause of death was, as in the death certificate, heart attack".

"It is clear that neither the name nor the date of birth of the deceased mentioned in these two documents is truly descriptive of Bose. Neither document mentions the cause of death as burn injuries sustained in an air crash".

As quoted by Mr. Khosla, Dr. Yoshimi told Shah Nawaz Committee as well as Khosla Committee, "On August 18, I had issued a medical certificate of death in respect of the deceased person, writing his name in Japanese (Kata Kana) as 'Chandra Bose' and giving the cause of his death as "Burns of the third degree' . . . There was a diary kept in the hospital in which . . . a record was maintained for Bose, and there his death was also recorded . . . I do not know what happened to the hospital records after the war."

During cross-examination, Dr. Yoshimi repeatedly said that "Chandra Bose" was running a temperature of 39°C with 120 pulse beat and he could exactly remember the names of all the medicines he administered to Bose, but in the death

certificate said to be issued by him, he could not remember any of the particulars about Bose other than his injury, which he noted in the certificate.

Although Shah Nawaz Committee described the documents as "very valuable", Mr. Khosla on the contrary wrote : "The two documents have no evidentiary value at all, neither of them prove or disprove anything. They relate to totally different persons and not Bose at all".

Shri Gobindo Mukhoty argued at length that these two documents disproved the whole story of Netaji's death. Countering his argument, Mr. Khosla wrote further : "The argument is in the nature of non-sequitur, for *what does not relate to an event, cannot be used to disprove it. It is tantamount to raise a phantom and then destroying it.* I do not, therefore, accept the contention that these documents relate to Bose and they disprove the factum of his death". Mr. Khosla is entitled to discard the opinion of Shah Nawaz Committee and the evidence of Harin Shah. He can equally discard the two documents produced before the Commission by the National Committee. But what about the document that has been officially produced by the Government of Japan? Shri Mukhoty did not raise any phantom unrelated to an event, but he positively referred to the *official document of the Government of Japan*. Like other instances of his judicial perjury, Mr. Khosla, completely ignored the fact that the cremation permit was officially produced by the Government of Japan, categorically stating that it "*must correspond to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose*".

According to Exhibit No.—Com.15A, before Khosla Commission, in a letter, dated June 24, 1956, sent through Shri A. K. Das of the Indian Embassy at Tokyo, the Secretary of the Asian Bureau of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of Japan wrote :

"1. 'Doctor's Report' and 'police report' as mentioned in Mr. Das's letter could not be traced at Taipei in spite of all efforts.

*“2. As to ‘cremation permit’ copy of the original document on cremation permit which is held by the Bureau of Health and Hygiene, Taipei, Municipal Office, could be obtained. The document mentions the name of Ichiro Okura as the deceased and that Dr. Yoshimi as the applicant. Since the death of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was kept strictly confidential at that time, it is believed that this cremation permit of Ichiro Okura must correspond to the case of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose. Therefore, I wish to enclose herewith the above mentioned copy of the ‘cremation permit’ together with the translation in English.”*

If Mr. Khosla had taken notice of the document supplied by the Government of Japan, then the whole story of Netaji’s death would have crashed. The document was not a phantom, as Khosla wanted to make it out, but a reality,—an official document of the Government of Japan related to the event of alleged death of Netaji. But Mr. Khosla deliberately ignored or tried to conceal the existence of this official document of Japan and called it “non-sequitur.”

Why the Government of Japan supplied a document, which definitely disproved the whole story of Netaji’s death ? Presumably, they wanted to leave a hint to Shah Nawaz Committee regarding the cooked-up nature of the whole story of Netaji’s death for deeper probe into the matter and come to its own conclusion about the factum of reality behind the story.

Japanese Government secured the ‘cremation permit’ from the Health and Hygiene Bureau of Taipei. This is the same source from which Harin Shah and the National Committee also secured the above two certificates. The cremation permit unavoidably includes death certificate because without producing the death certificate, no cremation permit could be secured. Details of particulars about the deceased are the same in both these documents. If the Government of Japan succeeded in securing the “Cremation Permit”, the “Death Certificate” could also be secured. But the difficulty was that Dr. Yoshimi repeatedly told both Shah Nawaz Committee and

Khosla Commission that he signed the death certificate, but in the documents it was found that the death certificate was signed by Dr. Tsuruta, and cremation application was signed by Dr. Yoshimi. If 'Death Certificate' was produced by the Government of Japan, then Dr. Yoshimi, who proved himself to be a liar many times during his cross-examination before Khosla Commission, would have been proved to be invariably so by an official document of the Government of Japan itself.

Why Ichiro Okura's death certificate and cremation permit were said to be that of Netaji, the mystery about it we shall discuss later.

### THREE VITAL POINTS : TIME OF DEATH AND DATES OF DEATH AND FUNERAL

If Netaji really died in Taihoku hospital, the time of death given by different Japanese witnesses, including Habibur Rahman, would have been at least approximately the same as the dates of death and funeral. But verification of these three vital points turned to be anybody's guess.

The various Japanese witnesses gave out the time of alleged death of Netaji varying from 5 p.m. to 12 p.m. Dr. Yoshimi fixed it flickeringly from 7 p.m. to 10 p.m. and in 1946 he told the British interrogators in Stanley Jail in Hongkong that Netaji died at 11 p.m. Even Habibur Rahman gave out different times to the British interrogators.

Dr. Yoshimi and Habibur Rahman said that Netaji allegedly died on August 18, at about 9 p.m., but Formosa Intelligence Bureau in its press "reveal" fixed the date as August 19, and in crematorium permit produced by the Government of Japan, *categorically recorded the date and time of death as "4 p.m., August 19, 1945.*

Can there be any mistake on the date of cremation ? The dates given by the Japanese witnesses varied from August 19 to August 22. Major Nagatomo, who claimed, and which claim was corroborated as well by General Isamaya, that he was assigned the task of cremation of the alleged body of Netaji



on behalf of the Formosan Headquarters, *gave out the date of cremation as August 19.* According to Shah Nawaz Committee one *Nakamura*, who claimed to have acted as the English interpreter and attended the funeral “*definitely gave the date as August 20*”. The Taiwanese witness Chang Chuan told Khosla that the *date was either August 21 or 22.* Other Japanese witnesses fixed the date varying from August 20 to August 22, 1945.

However, strange prevarications were recorded with regard to the cremation, in the statements of Habibur Rahman. On August 24, 1945, in his signed statement desired to be kept as the documentary proof of Netaji's death along with the casket containing the alleged ashes, he wrote that cremation of the alleged body of Netaji was done ‘*on August 22*’. On reaching Tokyo, he told Mrs. Sahay and S. A. Iyer on September 8, 1945, that is only 15 days after August 23, that “*cremation took place on August 20.*” Again nearly 15 days after this, on September 29, 1945, Habibur Rahman told the Counter Intelligence Corps (G.H.Q. AFPAC) that “*on 20th Bose was removed from the hospital . . . Major Nagatomo . . . informed Rahman on August 21, 1945 that the body be cremated. . . . On August 22, 1945 ashes were removed by Nakamura and Major Nagatomo.*” In the course of his cross-examination at Red Fort in December, 1945, by CSDIC Officers, Habibur Rahman prevaricated again in giving out the dates from August 20 to August 23, 1945. Could it be imagined that if Netaji really died, the date of cremation could vary so inexplicably and so divergently ? Shah Nawaz Committee at least expressed surprise about the discrepancy found regarding the date of cremation, but Mr. Khosla found nothing unusual in it, he rather straightaway wrote : “*Bose succumbed to his injuries the same night (August 18, 1945) . . . Two days later, Bose's body was cremated*”.

Now, Dr. Yoshimi said Netaji's body was ‘kept at a corner behind a curtain.’ Habibur Rahman told that “*Bose's body was removed on August 20.*” Nakamura said, the body was removed on August 19, but the Taiwanese guard said that

it was placed in a coffin and placed demonstratively in the middle of the room and was removed on the morning of August 21 or 22. But the cremator, Chu Tsan, told Harin Shah that it was brought at about 3 p.m. on August 21, 1945.

Shah Nawaz Committee noted that "Col. Habibur Rahman Major Nagatomo, one Nakamura, a Buddhist priest were definitely present at the crematorium." But the Health and Hygiene Bureau Officers said that the coffin was brought in the morning at their office and there was no Indian with the coffin. The Taiwanese guard said, there was no Indian nor was there any priest, when the body was put into the furnace, and every body left immediately after the furnace was lit. Habibur Rahman wrote in his *August 24 statement*: "*On August 21, 1945 a senior Japanese Staff Officer . . . suggested that the body be cremated in Taihoku,— . . . and the body was cremated on August 22, 1945 at Taihoku under the arrangement of Army authorities. The ashes were collected on August 23, 1945*". But on September 29, 1945, he told the Counter Intelligence Corps, "*On August 22, 1945 the ashes were removed by Nakamura and Major Nagatomo.*" He told none, neither to S. A. Iyer nor to Counter Intelligence Corps that he was present at the time of cremation or went to collect the ashes. In December, 1945, he repeated the same story to CSDIC officers. But in 1956 Habibur Rahman told Shah Nawaz Committee that he was present at the time of cremation, and next day went to collect the ashes.

Nobody mentioned a word about the cremation of Gen. Shidei, none—neither Gen. Isamaya nor Gen. Ando knew anything about it,—only a soldier of the rank of a Captain, Nakamura, claimed that he cremated the body of Gen. Shidei. No honour was shown to the dead body of Gen. Shidei and no senior officer attended the funeral of the Commander-in-Chief-designate of the Kwantang Army. Similarly, no senior Army Officer attended the alleged funeral of Netaji, except Major Nagatomo and an 'Interpreter', Nakamura, and no special funeral honour was shown before cremation. Dr. Yoshimi, who told Shah Nawaz Committee, that "he broke down in tears

after death of Bose" also did not attend cremation, nor those four Japanese witnesses, Nonogaki, Kuno, Sakai and Takahashi, who claimed to be present in every scene of the whole story,—every one of them vanished after the alleged death of 'Bose'.

Shah Nawaz Committee felt manifestly angered to comment, without trying to go deep into the mysteries behind the unusual behaviour of the Formosan Army Command : *"Apparently no particular interest was taken by the local Army Command as to what happened to Netaji's body. A comparatively junior officer, a Major was detailed, and therefore, no further interest was apparently taken . . . General Isamaya says, 'I left the matter of disposal of Mr. Bose's ashes to my Staff Officer, and since I did not receive any report from him, I presume everything must have worked smoothly'"*. Gen. Shidei's alleged body was also entrusted to a Captain for cremation, but by whom the Captain was given this special assignment, nobody knew.

This story of inconceivable negligence of elementary duty on the part of the Formosan Army Command regarding disposal of the alleged bodies of Netaji and Gen. Shidei appeared as nothing unusual to Mr. Khosla. He simply wrote, in his Report : *"I do not find any force in the argument that because no photographs were taken, Bose did not die and was not cremated ; nor do I find any force in the argument that lack of flowers or a wreath disproves the entire story of the crash and of Bose's death. In the circumstances of the case, these omissions appear to me to be perfectly normal. Indeed, I should be disinclined to believe a story of formal and ceremonial funeral"*.

#### NOW IT CAN BE SAID

Now it can be said why the story of Netaji's death at Taihoku was found to be riddled with innumerable baffling questions. Series of irresistible and mysterious questions are linked with the story. Why General Isamsya and General Ando did not observe unavoidable military and diplomatic protocol at the Taihoku airport on August 18, 1945

to receive Netaji—the Head of a State recognised by Japan—and the Chief of the Kwantang Army ? Why after the alleged air crash and alleged death of Lt.-Gen. Shidei none of the Generals or even any senior officer from the Formosan Headquarters rushed to the airport ? Why only a mere Captain, a security guard of the airport, Capt. Nakamura, alias Yamamoto claimed that he alone cremated the body of Gen. Shidei about whose funeral the Military Headquarters of Formosa could not provide any information whatsoever ? Why different Japanese witnesses gave the time of arrival of the plane at Taihoku from 11.30 p.m. to 3 p.m. ? Why Habibur Rahman said that Netaji suffered burns only in the upper part of his body and had a 4-inch long injury on his head and his trousers remained practically unaffected, while all other Japanese witnesses said that Netaji had no head injury at all but had third degree burns all over his body and he was brought to the hospital completely naked ? Why after the alleged crash no General or senior officer of the Formosan Headquarters either visited the hospital before and after the news of alleged death of Netaji ? Why the time of alleged death of Netaji, as given out by different witnesses, varied between 5 p.m. to 12 o'clock midnight ? Why the date of alleged death was given out as August 18 or 19 ? Why the alleged body was put in a coffin and kept demonstratively, with the words 'Chandra Bose' written above it in big letters, in the midst of the other patients in the Nonmon Hospital ? Why complete photographs of the alleged dead body were not taken ? Why, although according to Habibur Rahman, two photos—one of a covered object and other of a body without the face were taken yet the latter was not finally produced before the Figgess Team alongwith other five photographs ? Why stern warning was given by the Japanese authorities not to try to see the alleged dead body ? Why the body was put inside the furnace alongwith the coffin ? Why, except a major and Japanese interpreter, no general or even any senior officers,—attended the alleged funeral ? Why no military honour was shown before cremation ? Why Habibur Rahman wrote in his statement recorded on August 24, that the date of funeral was August 22 and then changed it to

August 20 ? Why different Japanese witnesses stated the date of cremation as varying from August 19 to August 22 ? Why Tokyo broadcast on August 23 said that the body was flown to Tokyo ? Why *Taiwan Shin Pao* publishing the press release *kept silent over the date and place of cremation ?* Why this press release was drafted by the Intelligence Bureau ? Why it was mentioned in the press release that the draft was prepared on August 22 ? Why Gen. Isoda told the Allied Intelligence team during the middle of September, 1945 that “Bose’s body was flown to Tokyo” ?

The Anglo-American team could not find satisfactory answers to the plethora of these baffling questions. Absence of enough documents and irreconcilable contradictions and discrepancies in the oral evidence of various witnesses made their task of inquiry more difficult. Their findings about the happenings at Taihoku, therefore, remained inconclusive. Production of two documents i.e., death certificate and cremation permit, later before Shah Nawaz Committee and Khosla Commission rendered the issue rather intriguing, more so because the cremation permit was apparently issued in the name of a Japanese soldier, Ichiro Okura, and the Government of Japan categorically stated that this cremation permit “must correspond to Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose”. Neither Shah Nawaz Committee nor Khosla Commission tried to resolve the mystery behind the cremation permit, they simply glossed over them.

Whatever attitude either Mr. Shah Nawaz Khan or Mr. Khosla might have adopted in regard to the importance of this cremation permit, a careful analysis of the circumstances of its issue and the facts noted in it are of vital significance for understanding what really happened at Taihoku. Indeed, this cremation permit offered the key to resolve all riddles that raised all kinds of baffling questions around the story of air crash and alleged death of Netaji at Taihoku. Before attempting to explain why innumerable lapses were found regarding unavoidable duties of the Formosan High Command, why Habibur Rahman made so many incoherent statements and why Japanese witnesses also gave out almost ridiculously

contradictory accounts about different events,—to understand the reasons behind all the glaring instances of innumerable pitfalls, it is necessary to re-call in outlines, the nature of the plan that was prepared by Japan for giving protection to Netaji.

Lt.-Gen. Isoda, Chief of the Hikari Kikan and Col. Tada, a staff officer of Terauchi's Headquarters were the principal architects of the escape-plan. According to various statements of Gen. Isoda and the disclosure made by Col. Tada to S. A. Iyer in 1951, it can now be said with certainty that the Government of Japan decided, with the consent of Netaji, that accompanied by Lt.-Gen. Shidei, Chief of the Staff-designate for the Kwantang Army, Netaji would be given an airlift to Dairen. Gen. Shidei, would then arrange for Netaji's crossing into the Russian territory along the borders of Manchuria. After Netaji reached his destination, the Government of Japan would announce a fictitious story of Netaji's death in an air crash at Taihoku. This announcement would be sufficiently delayed to ensure that Netaji could reach the Russian territory safely. Accordingly, though the air crash was stated to have had taken place on August 18, the Tokyo Radio announced it, 5 days later, i.e., on August 23, 1945.

This original plan was improvised at Taihoku. On August 19, at 4 p.m., a Japanese soldier, named Ichiro Okura, died at Nonman Hospital. In an effort to create a more realistic impression about the story of Netaji's death, advantage of sudden death of Ichiro Okura was taken. His body was kept in a coffin and it was most demonstratively placed in a room in the Nonman Hospital. Over the coffin was written in big Japanese Kata Kana letters—"Chandra Bose". This was obviously done to give an articulated publicity about the reported death of Netaji. Two photographs of the body of Ichiro Okura were taken,—one under cover of a blanket and the other of the whole body without its face. These two photos were depicted as that of the body of 'Chandra Bose'. For avoiding identification of the real person, photo of the face of Ichiro Okura was avoided. When cremation permission was

sought from the Municipal Bureau, the body inside the coffin was not allowed to be identified and the policemen carrying the body were also warned not to try to see the body kept inside the coffin. As Ichiro Okura's body was cremated by making a guarded demonstration as if it was the body of 'Chandra Bose', an unusual step was taken to put the whole coffin inside the furnace, so that the policemen could not see, actually whose body they cremated. This funeral of Ichiro Okura took place on August 22, 1945. Thus, the dead body of Ichiro Okura was passed off from Nonman Hospital to crematorium as if it was the body of 'Chandra Bose'. If we keep this picture of death of Ichiro Okura and his funeral before us, most of the enigmatic stories which mystified the report of Netaji's death at Taihoku can be reasonably resolved.

OFFICIALLY CERTIFIED COPY OF THE  
CREMATION PERMIT

COM|5-A

THE GAIMUSHO

*June 24, 1956.*

Dear Mr. Dar,

With reference to your letter No. F.5(1) NGO-I of May 30, 1956, and my letter, dated June 14, 1956, I wish to inform you that the following reply has been received from Mr. K. Horiuchi, Ambassador of Japan at Taipei, to our enquiry made on this matter.

1. "Doctor's Report" and "Police Report" as mentioned in Mr. Dar's letter could not be traced at Taipei in spite of all efforts.
2. As to "Cremation Permit" certified copy of the original document on cremation permit which is held by the Bureau of Health and Hygiene, Taipei Municipal Office, could be obtained, the document mentioned the name of ICHIRO OKURA as the deceased and that of TANEYOSHI YOSHIMI as the applicant. Since the death of Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose was kept strictly confidential at that time, it is believed that this cremation permit on

ICHIRO OKURA must correspond to the case of late Mr. Subhas Chandra Bose.'

Therefore, I wish to enclose herewith the above mentioned copy of "Cremation Permit" together with its translation in English.

Yours sincerely,  
HISAJI HATTORI,  
*'Chief of 4th Section,  
Asian Affairs Bureau,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs.*

MR. A. K. DAB,  
FIRST SECRETARY,  
EMBASSY OF INDIA,  
TOKYO.

Firstly, let us take up the behaviour of Lt.-Gen. Isoda. He was arrested in the first week of September, 1945, and subjected to excruciating interrogation by the British intelligence. Even in the second week of September, he was insisting that Netaji's body was flown to Japan and cremated there on August 20. He repeated his statement in conformity with the scheme of the original plan. As communication broke down by the end of August between Saigon and Tokyo, he did not know anything about the improvised plan of taking advantage of Ichiro Okura's death. Again, all the four signals were sent to him at Bangkok from Saigon Headquarters. These four signals were sent to Bangkok Hikari Kikan Office according to the original plan, otherwise why Saigon should ask Bangkok office as late as August 27 for giving information about the condition of Habibur Rahman? By that time Saigon lost all contacts with Taihoku and only Tokyo could gather necessary information about Habibur Rahman. The four signals were deliberately planted to confuse the British authority so that more time could be given to Netaji to reach his destination. These four signals created so much confusion in the mind of the British team that they could reach Taihoku not earlier than later part of September. As Isoda did not know anything



## ANNEXURE—"D"

SEAL

Com/5(B) 25-9-73

No.	Name of Disease	Date of Death	Occupation	Sex	Permanent Domicile Present Address	Name of Deceased	Date of Birth	Applicant Address	Name
2640									
2641	Heart attack	August 19, 1945 August 21, 1945 August 22, 1945	Non-Regular Staff member of Armed Forces	Male	No. 1, 2-Chome, Dogenzaka, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo. No. 2, 3-Chome Nogi-machi, Taipei City	ICHIRO OKURA	April 9, 1900.	Unit No. 21123	Taneyoshi Yoshimi
2642									
2643									
2644									

Examined and authenticated by  
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Sd/-

YASUTERU ASAHINA

Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Archives Section)

It is certified that the above statement, abstracted from document on cremation permit is correct and true.

July 14, 1956.  
Bureau of Health and Hygiene,  
Taipei Municipal Office. (SEALED)

about Taihoku's improvised plan, he continued to confuse the British team according to the schemes of the original plan.

Secondly, the cremation permit of Ichiro Okura unmistakably showed that his body was cremated at about 3 p.m. on August 22. It was for this reason the Taiwanese witness Chaug Chuan and the Clerk of the Health and Hygiene Bureau confirmed this date of cremation. Habibur Rahman also noted in his first written statement on August 24, that Netaji's body was cremated on August 22, because this was the date when Ichiro Okura's body was cremated. Now why the Intelligence Bureau's press hand-out peculiarly mentioned that the draft was prepared at 2 p.m. on August 22? Because, by that time they came to know that Ichiro's body was sent to the crematorium. But all these matters created much difficulty for Habibur Rahman. Reaching Tokyo on September 7, he found that the Tokyo Headquarters did not change the original plan, in which the date of cremation of Netaji's body was fixed as August 20. He, therefore, promptly changed the date, and told Mrs. Sahay and Iyer that the body was cremated on August 20. But a few days later, he told Figgess that the body was cremated not on August 20 but on August 21. He peculiarly prevaricated about the date of cremation as it was difficult for him to re-adjust the date. However, he did not show his written statement, recorded at Taihoku on August 24, either to Iyer or Figgess. As his written statement passed out of his hand, he either forgot or did not get an opportunity to change the date of cremation from August 22 to August 20 written in it.

Thirdly, the Japanese witnesses made a mess about the date of cremation of the alleged body of Netaji. They knew that Ichiro Okura's body was cremated on August 22, but as Tokyo Headquarters fixed the date of cremation of Netaji's body as August 20, it became very difficult for them to stand before cross-examinations by different investigating agencies and they, thus, fumbled to state that the body might have been cremated on any date between August 19 to August 22.

Fourthly, Habibur Rahman, almost made a fool of himself

in describing the circumstances about taking photos of alleged body of Netaji. He knew quite well that the body of Ichiro Okura was photographed and that was why he offered queer explanation for not allowing to take a photograph of the full body. He said to Figgess that two photographs of Netaji's body were taken,—one under cover of a sheet and the other of the body without its face. He explained that although he could recognise the face of Netaji but it was so swollen and disfigured that he asked the photographer to avoid the face of Netaji. However, even this unusual photograph was not finally given to Figgess by the Government of Japan,—only one photograph of an unidentifiable covered object was produced. It can be reasonably presumed that the Government of Japan later realised that even if a photograph of a dead body without its face was produced before the Figgess team, its forensic test would have revealed that it was not the body of the tall figure of 'Chandra Bose' but of a short statured Japanese. To avoid this complication, although Habibur Rahman categorically told Figgess that two photographs of the dead body of Netaji were taken, ultimately the Government of Japan suppressed one photograph and produced only one photograph which looked like a covered bundle of an unidentifiable object which they described as containing the dead body of 'Chandra Bose'.

Fifthly, why Gen. Isamaya, Gen. Ando or any other senior officer of the Formosa Command did not go to receive Netaji and Gen. Shidei at the airport on August 18, although a week after i.e., on August 25 they formally received Dr. Ba Maw, President of Burma and Lt.-Gen. Tanaka, Chief of the Burma Army who arrived at Taihoku *en route* Tokyo and why none of them inquired anything about Gen. Shidei's dead body or went to see allegedly injured Netaji at the hospital, either before or after his reported death,—the answer to all these questions is that they knew quite well that Netaji and Shidei did not arrive at Taihoku at all,—and the person who died in the Nonman hospital was not 'Chandra Bose' but an ordinary Japanese soldier, Ichiro Okura. This was the reason why so

many baseless statements were made regarding their visits to Nonman Hospital by other Japanese officers.

Sixthly, why nobody was allowed to see the dead body, not even the Municipal Bureau officer ; why the body was not brought out of the coffin at any time, why most unusually the coffin as a whole was placed inside the furnace and all the policemen left the crematorium soon after burning started,— all this peculiar behaviour on the part of the Japanese policemen could be explained by pointing out to the single fact that the body that was cremated was of Ichiro Okura and not of 'Chandra Bose'. The Japanese authorities wanted to avoid identification of the dead body, and out of that anxiety they kept the body carefully sealed inside the coffin.

Seventhly, why no military honour was shown, why Gen. Isamaya, Gen. Ando or any senior officer failed to attend the funeral and why funeral arrangement was entrusted to a few very junior officers like Nagatomo and Nakamura. Explanations for all these 'Whys' are very simple. It was known to the Formosan High Command whose body was being cremated. It would have been too much to expect that the Generals, violating all military codes and protocols, attended the funeral of a non-regular soldier, like Ichiro Okura, who died under natural circumstances. This was the reason why no military honour was shown to the deceased. Had Netaji really died along with Gen. Shidei it would have been impossible for them not to show necessary military honour to their dead bodies at the time of their funeral. The condition at Taihoku was not so chaotic at that time, that the Formosan High Command could neglect their unavoidably obligatory duties.

All the lapses of elementary duties on the part of the Formosan High Command strengthened the belief that Netaji and Gen. Shidei did not arrive at Taihoku, and there was no real air crash at the airport and therefore, there could be no question of death of either Gen. Shidei or Netaji at Taihoku. A story was created out of natural death of Ichiro Okura that 'Chandra Bose' died at Taihoku. The cremation permit was also not produced before Figgess Team in 1945, but it was

supplied to Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 at Tokyo. Perhaps, the Government of Japan wanted to give a positive hint to Shah Nawaz Committee after 11 years of the alleged incident to enable it to unearth the real fact behind the fictitious story of Netaji's death at Taihoku.

#### WHY NO OFFICIAL CONFIRMATION OR INQUIRY ?

If Netaji and Lt.-Gen. Shidei really died at Taihoku, why the Government of Japan did not confirm the news by issuing any official communique ? If after surrender of Japan, the Japanese authorities thought it unwise to publicly acknowledge the importance of the Head of the Government of Free India, how could they ignore confirming the death news of Gen. Shidei ? It was a routine duty to officially record the death of the General of the Kwantang Army, but that was also not done. Before MacArthur landed at Tokyo, Imperial Headquarters issued innumerable communiques concerning similar issues. The Government of Japan and its Imperial Headquarters did not want to directly involve themselves in confirming the alleged death news of Netaji and Gen. Shidei but agencies under their direct control like the Domei News Agency, Tokyo Radio and *Taiwan Shin Pao* were advised or instructed to circulate the news in intriguingly cryptic and confusing language. It can be reasonably concluded, thus, that the Japanese authorities knew what really happened at Taihoku and who died there and whose body was cremated under the name of 'Chandra Bose',—and that was why they did not either confirm or deny the death news of Netaji or Gen. Shidei officially.

Again, if the alleged air crash of Taihoku did happen and Netaji and Gen. Shidei died in consequence, then, if not a full, fledged official inquiry, at least holding of a formal routine inquiry by the Formosan Army Command was a 'must'. General Isamaya, Chief of the Staff of the Formosan Army admitted before Shah Nawaz Committee that in such circumstances "the local Army Command was expected to hold an inquiry". The General even went on to say that, indeed, "a

report about the particular plane crash was submitted through him to the Imperial Headquarters by Lt.-Col. Shibuya." But Lt.-Col. Shibuya flatly denied knowledge of any such inquiry. The Government of Japan also informed Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 that "no official inquiry commission was set up to determine the case of the accident."

It is obvious that the Formosan Army Command could not hold any kind of routine inquiry as it was within their direct knowledge that Netaji and Gen. Shidei did not arrive at Taihoku,—no plane crashed there at all and the person who was cremated under the name of 'Chandra Bose' was no other than an ordinary soldier, Ichiro Okura. Even if a routine inquiry was made by the Formosan Army Command that would have immediately exposed the whole plot and created serious complications for the Government of Japan. It was for this reason that no inquiry,—not even formal reporting of air crash or alleged death of Netaji and Shidei was made by the Formosan Army Command.

#### WHAT HAPPENED TO HIS GEETA AND CHANDI ?

Kundan Singh was the personal valet of Netaji since his arrival at Singapore from Germany. He was almost on 24-hour duty on various household services to Netaji. He used to look after his personal comfort, test food before given to his master, manage his clothings, bedroom and his servants. He accompanied him wherever Netaji went on tour. This trusted valet of Netaji, Kundan Singh, was asked by Shah Nawaz Committee to identify some of the charred articles that were supposed to have been collected from the Taihoku airfield after the alleged air crash there. Kundan Singh identified some personal effects of Netaji like a gold cigarette case, a cigarette lighter, a gold case for carrying 'Supari', a star shaped pendant, *a paper knife, a belt buckle etc.* He also identified various charred gold articles and other jewellery that Netaji carried with him in four leather boxes when he left Saigon. Kundan Singh was asked to identify these charred articles as proof of the air crash and subsequent death of Netaji at Taihoku.

When identification of charred articles was completed, Kundan Singh observed that Netaji carried Azad Hind Treasure in four boxes, and told Shah Nawaz Committee : “The weight of the four boxes in which jewellery and other valuables were kept would be approximately 2 to 2½ maunds including the boxes. *The weight of the charred valuables shown to me today would be probably not more than 20 seers.*”

About the treasure carried by Netaji, Kundan Singh said that “after arrival at Bangkok Netaji personally checked the contents of each box. Major Hasan and I were present at the time of checking. These four boxes contained articles of jewellery which are commonly worn by Indian women, such as chains of ladies watches, necklaces, bangles, bracelets, rings, ear-rings etc. They were of gold and precious stone. There were also some gold watches, they were mostly of ladies. There were also *pounds and guineas*. There were some *chains* which had *Guinea pieces* attached to them and *gold wires* and *gold bars*. The contents were arranged and sealed in four boxes.”

Why only 10 per cent of the treasure could be found ? What happened to 90 per cent of the whole treasure ? The charred articles that were shown to Kundan Singh consisted of small rings, ear-rings, nose-rings, small chains, a few bangles, etc. But what happened to solid gold bars, gold necklace and other heavy gold articles ? What about the ‘pounds’ and ‘guineas’ ? Only small articles were found, but all heavy golden articles were missing. Did it not indicate certain well-arranged pattern behind such missing list ? Habibur Rahman, who brought all these charred golden articles from Taihoku to Tokyo never complained that the major part of the treasure and the gold bars, ‘guineas’ and heavy jewellery were stolen. This list of charred golden articles indicated that Netaji carried with him most of the treasure,—only small part of it was left for burning it artificially to create some kind of testimony in support of the alleged air crash story.

Some personal effects of Netaji like gold cigarette case, a cigarette lighter etc. were produced before Shah Nawaz Com-

mittee. How could Netaji carry the gold cigarette case to Russia, which was presented to him by Hitler ? It was, therefore, included in the list of burnt articles purported to be some personal effects of Netaji. As regards lighter and some such things Netaji had many to leave some behind. What about his wrist watch ? Kundan Singh categorically said : "*Netaji had only one round wrist watch. He was wearing the same wrist watch on his last journey.*" How could then Habibur Rahman produce a rectangular wrist watch with burnt leather strap as a testimony in support of the story of air crash ? Kundan Singh further said that "*Netaji used to keep a pocket watch on his bed side table.*" What happened to this pocket watch ?

What about other personal effects of Netaji which he considered as most invaluable treasure for him ? Kundan Singh said : "*Netaji used to keep a copy of Geeta, a copy of Chandi and Rosaries (Kanth mala) which he used when praying. This pocket watch, the Mala and Geeta and Chandi used to go with Netaji wherever he went. These were always kept in Netaji's attache case when he went on tour. And, as usual, when he was proceeding on his last journey from Bangkok, these articles were in his attache case . . . Netaji had another leather box containing his clothings.*"

Now, what happened to Netaji's *Geeta, Chandi, Mala* and pocket watch ? What happened to his clothings ? What happened to his reading glasses ? Were they really burnt to ashes when the plane was reportedly consumed in flame at Taihoku ? Then, how 'a paper knife' 'a pendant', a 'belt buckle' could escape the wrath of the flame ? Even other paper-made, or leather-made or some such thing escaped burning, but nothing,—not a single item of Netaji's personal effect inside his personal attache case was spared. Is it a believable story ?

Netaji had nothing to possess as his own in this world except '*a Geeta, a Chandi, a Mala.*' He would never part with them under any circumstances,—they were the last resort of the soul of the eternal pilgrim in him. They were with him in his



plunge into unknown,—*Geeta, Chandi and Mala*—which he would never leave !

### THE TRUTH IS AT LAST REVEALED

In 1945-46 and even some years after the British left India, all news about the report of alleged incident of Taihoku were found to be very scanty, hazy and highly confused. These news appeared as more misleading than giving any direct clue to find the truth about the report of Netaji's death. The Anglo-American investigating agencies could get hold of only a few documents like the four signals at Bangkok and five photographs from Tokyo. These agencies had, therefore, to rely more on the oral evidence from the Japanese and the INA sources than on positive documents to arrive at any definite conclusion about their findings.

However, in later years, when the post-war political complications receded, more facts came to light first before Shah Nawaz Committee in 1956 and then Khosla Commission in 1970. These facts have been carefully scrutinised and analysed in the foregoing chapters, and briefly summarised in the present one. After what have been found factually uptill now, they lead to one and only one conclusion, that the story of Netaji's death at Taihoku was deliberately concocted by the Japanese authorities to enable him to reach the Russian territory across the Manchurian border.

In 1941 Netaji Bose vanished from British India alone, without leaving any clue for months to know how he escaped. Again in 1943 he befooled the ever vigilant British and American navy and air force, guarding the routes of the Atlantic and Indian Ocean, to reach Singapore from Germany unknown and unnoticed. In his submarine journey he had only one Indian, Abid Hasan, to accompany him. It is no wonder that the Indian pilgrim alone plunged into unknown again, under the shadow of a fiction of death. His revolutionary career remained a mystery all-through his life and in its mysterious trail he jumped into a greater mystery again, which has yet to be unearthed fully.

Until recently, the belief that Netaji did not die in the alleged air crash at Taihoku was more circumstantial than factual. But now after the revelations made in the 'Top Secret' British documents it can be said from the source of the British authority that the story of Netaji's death was nothing but totally concocted. In the sixth volume of the British documents, published after 30 years ("Transfer of Power—1942-47") it has been categorically disclosed that the British authorities in Delhi and London knew quite definitely that "Bose had again escaped" and they knew further where he had gone. This is perhaps the most startling disclosure of a guardedly kept secret for so many years in the recent history of mankind.

After coming to know the fact about Bose's escape, the Wavell Government in Delhi in 1945 faced a serious dilemma regarding the course of their "treatment of Bose". They were confronted with many problems : Will they ask the country which kept Bose in secret custody to surrender him to the British authority ? After getting Bose in their hands will they try and hang him ? Or, will they intern him either in India or in some remote island in the Indian Ocean ? The Home Member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, Sir Mudie, prepared a 'Note' for Wavell incorporating various suggestions for "treatment of Bose". It was prepared on August 23, 1945, i.e. 7 days after the announcement of Bose's death by the Tokyo Radio. The Viceroy of India in 1945 approved this 'Note' and carried it to London for its final approval by the British Cabinet. The U.K. Cabinet, with Mr. Attlee in the chair, cleared this 'Note' on October 25, 1945, i.e. 67 days after the report of Netaji's death. This 'Note' included various alternatives "regarding treatment of Bose :", namely to "(a) bring him back to India and try him either for waging war or under the Enemy Agents Ordinance ; (b) have him tried by a court in Burma or Malaya for waging war against the King in that country ; (c) have him tried by a military court outside India ; (d) intern him in India ; (e) intern him in some British possession i.e. Seychelles Islands".

After analysing the pros and cons of all these suggested measures to punish and execute or intern Bose,—the ‘Note’ finally decided to :

“LEAVE HIM WHERE HE IS AND DON’T ASK FOR HIS SURRENDER . . . IN MANY WAYS THE EASIEST COURSE WOULD BE TO LEAVE HIM WHERE HE IS AND NOT ASK FOR HIS RELEASE. HE MIGHT, OF COURSE, IN CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES BE WELCOMED BY THE RUSSIANS. THIS COURSE WOULD RAISE FEWEST IMMEDIATE POLITICAL DIFFICULTIES”.

Could there be any other more definite revelation than the above ‘Note’ that the British Government knew quite positively where Netaji escaped and where he was kept in prison or in detention or under duress ? Notwithstanding this positive information regarding the whereabouts of Bose, the British Government considered it politically more prudent or expedient for them not to publicly disclose the matter at that time, nor to ask as well for his hand-over to them for his trial for waging war against the ‘king’ but “to leave him where he is”. For 30 years the British Government withheld this explosive information from the Indian people. They must have done it for the sake of their Imperialist interest, but what about our own Government,—the first Government of Free India ? What did they do for Netaji ? Was it unknown to them where Netaji was kept in custody or under duress ?

#### WILL WE UNDO THE BETRAYAL ?

Sarat Chandra Bose said repeatedly that the story of Netaji’s death was nothing but a myth. He also publicly stated that the Government of India knew where Netaji was ? Yes, Nehru came to know, indeed, from Mountbatten, his friend and the Viceroy of the first Government of free India, where Netaji was. The secret British Intelligence report, as found later from the documents produced before Shah Nawaz Committee and

Khosla Commission indicated that Nehru received the report of Netaji's whereabouts. According to the secret report sent to Government under Wavell by the British Intelligence Department, the Russian Ambassador at Kabul and the Russian Vice-Counsel at Teheran publicly disclosed that "Bose reached Moscow" and the intelligence report further stated that Nehru received a communication from 'Bose' requesting him for making necessary arrangement for Bose's repatriation to India. What was the reaction of Nehru to this secret request from Netaji ?

Subhas Bose, in the days of Tripuri crisis in 1939 depicted Pandit Nehru in a letter addressed to him, as like his 'elder brother'. But what this elder brother did about Netaji ? British Government decided to "leave Bose where he was"—Nehru faithfully followed the same policy, a policy of greatest betrayal of the greatest hero of Indian national freedom. Since his return from Singapore after meeting Mountbatten there in 1946,—Nehru suddenly sealed his lips to pursue a policy of stoically maintained silence over the fate of Netaji. He raised a curtain of complete indifference to black out all queries about Netaji. Nehru never uttered a word, of his own, about Netaji since he came to power. For 11 years public demand for probe into the Netaji-mystery was stubbornly resisted by him. Thereafter he and his daughter 11 years and 27 years after the report of the Taihoku incident reluctantly agreed under great public pressure to hold two make-believe inquiries over the fate of the epic hero of Indian freedom once in 1957 and again in 1974 to declare him legally dead.

What a nation we are ? The mightiest revolutionary who plunged himself in total abandon, oblivious of all consequences about himself, to create an epoch-making legend of the Indian Revolution, for him the Government made no worthwhile effort to know what really happened to him ! Could India achieve independence,—the independence of the whole sub-continent,—so soon after the victory of the British Power in the Second World War had its citadel not blasted by the Azad Hind Revolution led by Netaji ? In early 1945, the Congress was

pathetically lost in dismaying wilderness as to its political future. The leaders of the national body were helplessly talking of resuming constructive programme for reviving the drooping morale of the people. It was, at this critical juncture, the legends of the heroic achievements of Netaji and the magnificent martyrdom of the INA suddenly exploded in the still atmosphere of India with a tremendous bang. It suddenly roused the patriotic mood of the Indian people to a seething fury of revolutionary temper. The upsurge of the people in glorification of Netaji and INA sweepingly spread in fiery waves of cyclonic storms in every corner of India, and as the most significant sequel to revolutionary upheaval, the Indian Navy, the Indian Air Force, and the Indian Army explosively joined hands with the fighting people. Since 1857 such a revolutionary convulsion had never happened in India, and never before the People and the Army moved together to fight for Indian independence. It was the last and the greatest occasion when the Hindus, the Muslims, the Sikhs, the Christians,—the people of all communities from all corners of India forged a revolutionary unity of unprecedented dimension for unitedly fighting for their freedom under inspiration of the legends of Netaji and his INA.

Netaji, in his last important broadcast, a few days before the surrender of Japan, assured the Indian people about the imminence of a "Post-War Revolution inside India 'after' the war". The Congress leaders miserably failed to seize the revolutionary mood of the people, but the British Power did not fail to grasp the cataclysmic significance of this post-war uprising during the months of November and December in 1945 and January and February in 1946. Earlier Gandhian mass movements were seen almost to paralyse the British administration once in 1921, again in 1930 and for the last time in 1942—but the British authority ultimately survived each crisis, because the loyalty of the Indian Army to the British Crown on each occasion remained unimpaired. Finally, it was the revolutionary legend of Netaji and his INA and its decisive impact which knocked down for good the traditional loyalty of

the Indian Army to the British Crown. The British Power, under the seismically changed revolutionary circumstances had either to face terrible situation of imminent bloodbath more tremendous in effect than the rebellion of 1857 or to quit India peacefully, and they preferred the last course. Mahatma Gandhi succeeded in awakening the Indian people from the torpor of their subservience to the British authority,—but it was Netaji who finally knocked down the last pivot of the British rule in India. His revolutionary legend magically changed the outlook of the Indian Army to a new spirit of a revolutionary urge for emancipation of their Motherland. The Indian Army was the last bastion of British power in India and it crumbled for ever in 1946. If there had been no Azad Hind Revolution and its unprecedented revolutionary impact on the Indian Army, the victorious British Power would have never quit India so precipitiously and so humbly after their victory in the War.

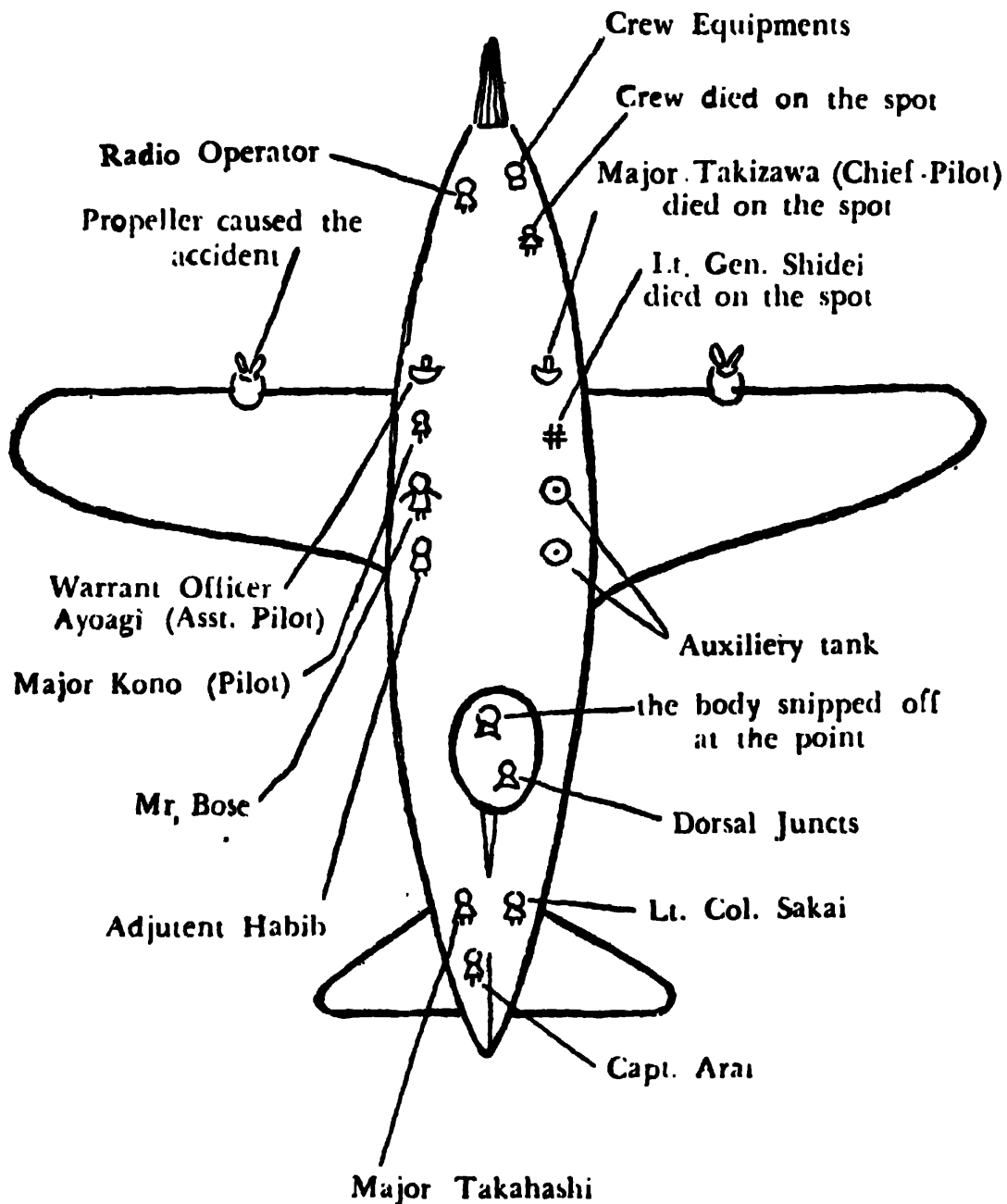
The Indian independence owes its debt as much to Netaji as to the Mahatma. Mahatma Gandhi prepared the background for the emergence of Indian freedom, but it was Netaji who finally compelled the British Power to withdraw from India. When Lord Attlee visited India as a private citizen after transference of power, he was asked by the Governor of West Bengal at Calcutta.—“why the British left India after their victory in the war ?” The former Prime Minister of U.K. who piloted the Indian Independence Bill in the House of Commons straightway replied, “It was because of Subhas Bose.” But how ungrateful the leaders of power in free India proved to be to Netaji ! Not only they did nothing seriously to find out what really happened to him, and make every effort to bring him back to his motherland, they tried to see instead that he was buried alive in the country where he was kept confined under duress, by creating an impression in the minds of the Indian people as if Netaji really died after an air crash at Taihoku.

• What the nation will do now ? How will the Indian people react to the fact of startling revelation made in the ‘Top Secret’ British document to the effect that Netaji did not die in the alleged air crash but escaped to Russia under the cover of false

announcement of his death ? Will the Government of India now make an all-out effort to unearth the mystery shrouding the fate of the greatest national hero of our freedom,—the greatest revolutionary pilgrim of India ? If we fail, the posterity will never forgive us !

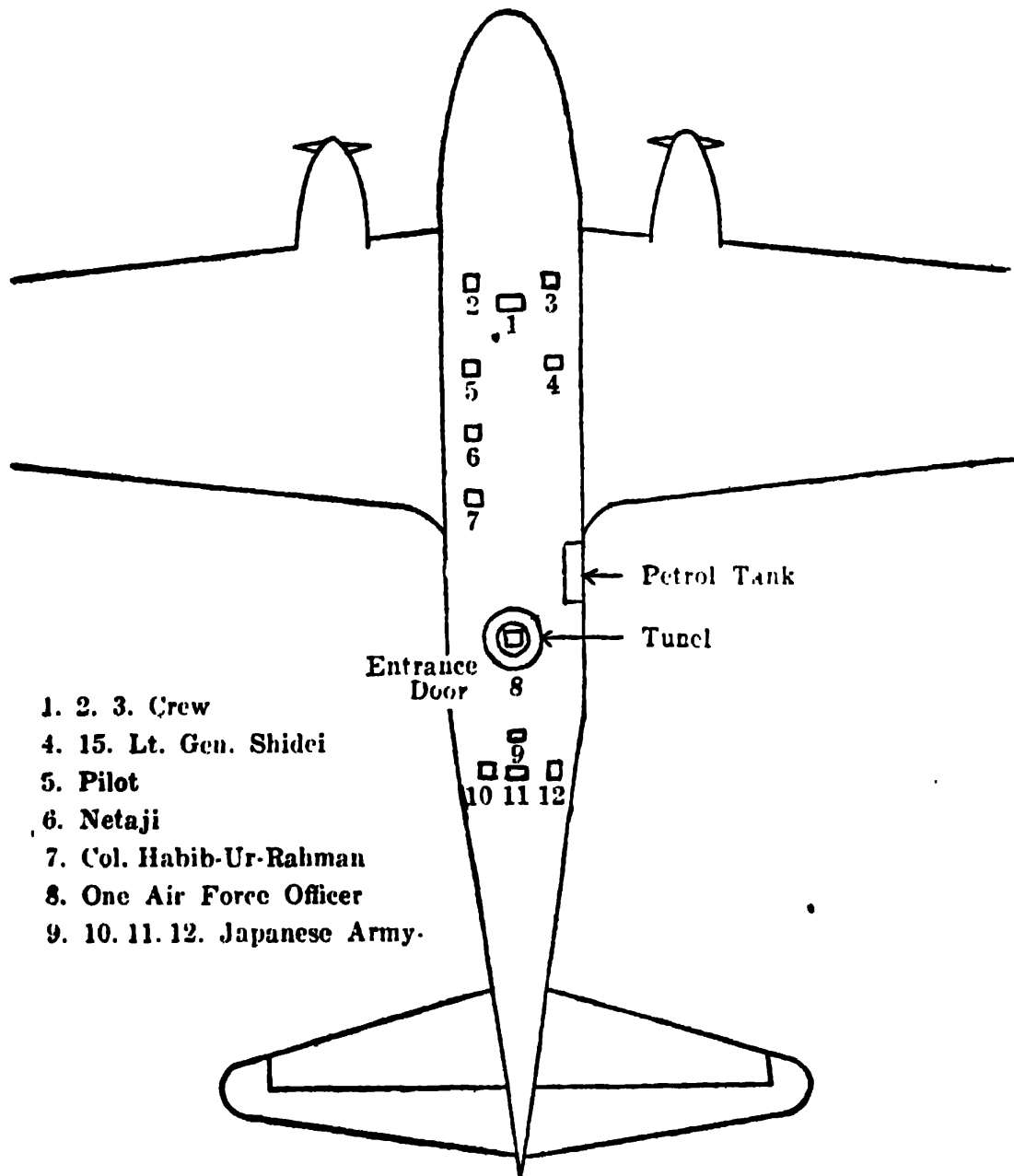
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**DIFFERENT SKETCHES OF JAPANESE BOMBER  
IN WHICH NETAJI TRAVELLED  
FROM SAIGON TO TAIHOKU (FORMOSA)**



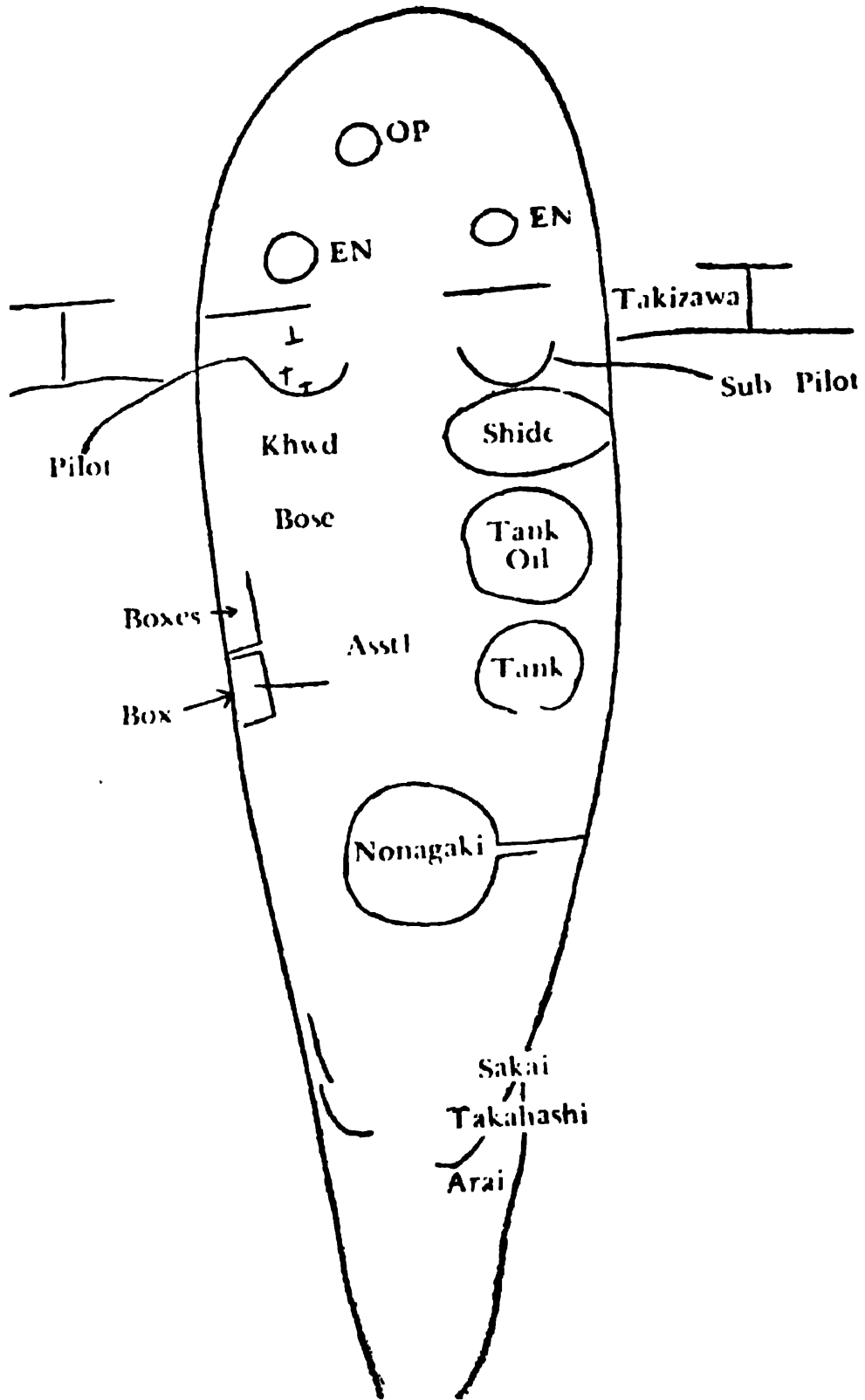
**Sketch of the Plane accompanying the report of the Japanese Government  
(see page 77)**





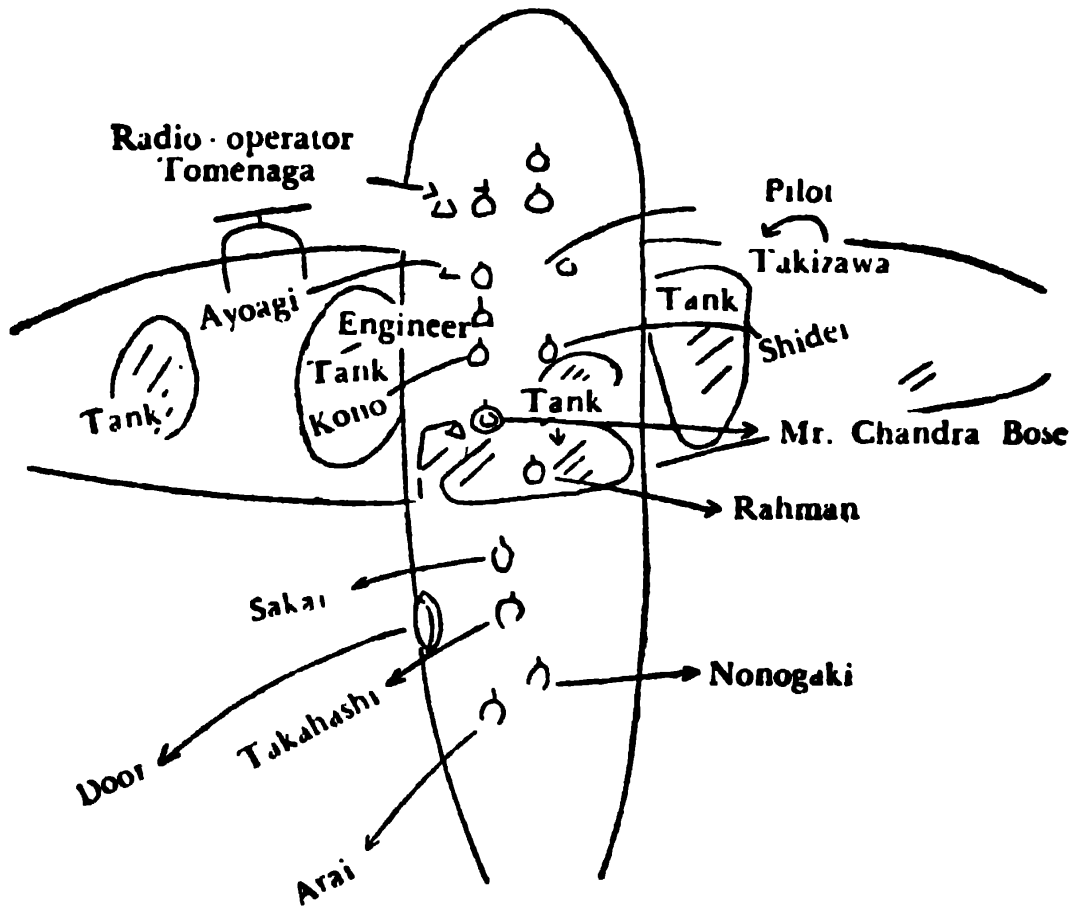
Col. Habibur Rahman's sketch of the Plane

(see page 77)



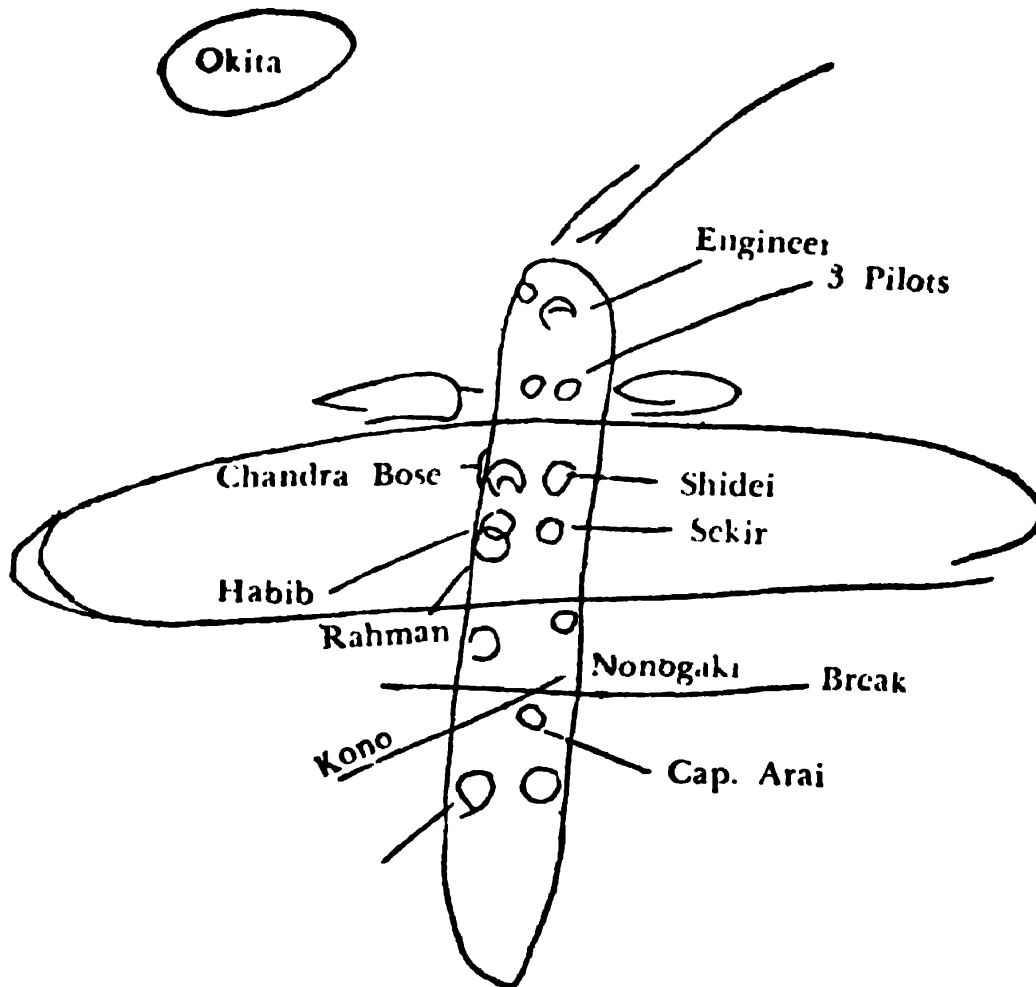
Col. Nonogaki's sketch of the Plane

(see page 77)



Major Kono's sketch of the Plane

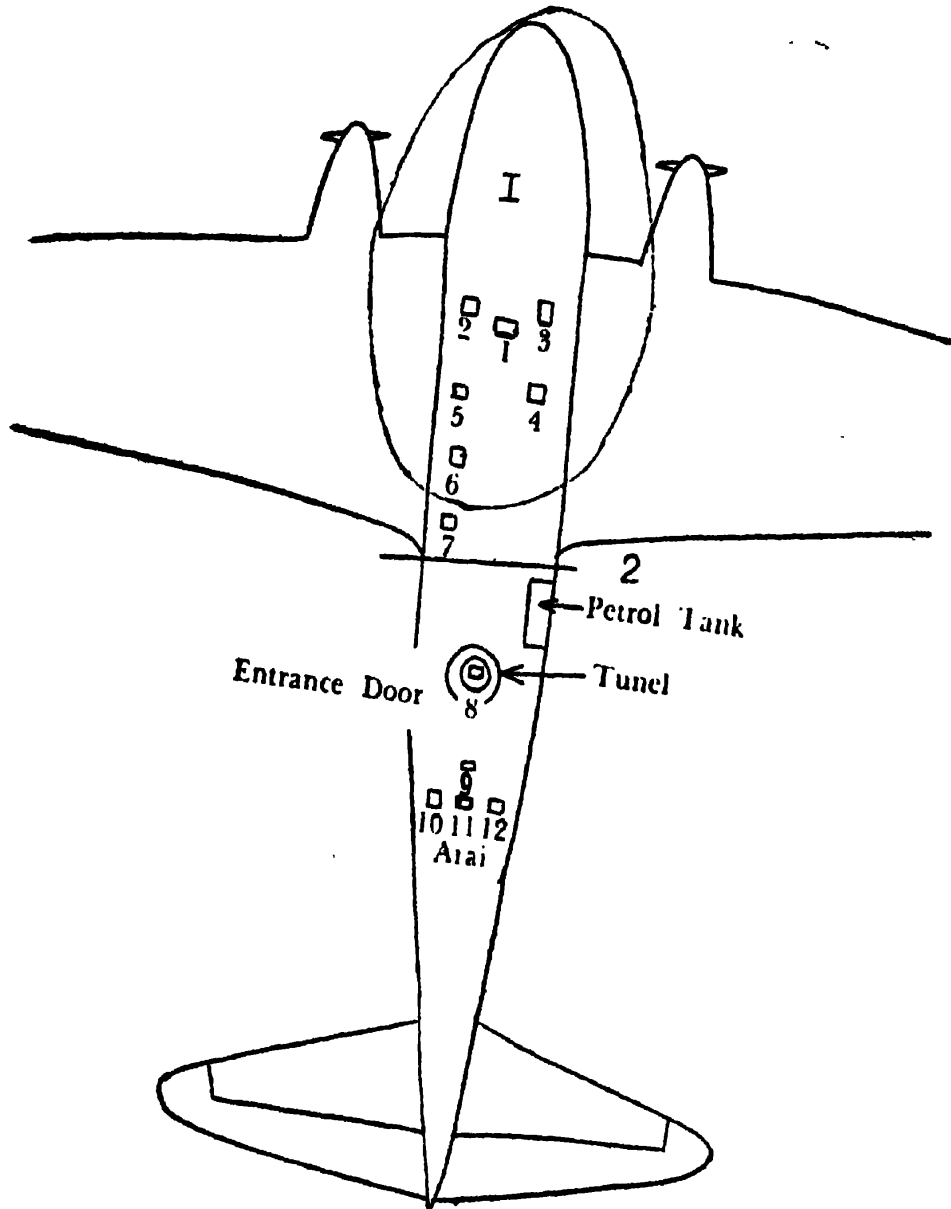
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Capt. Arai's sketch of the Plane

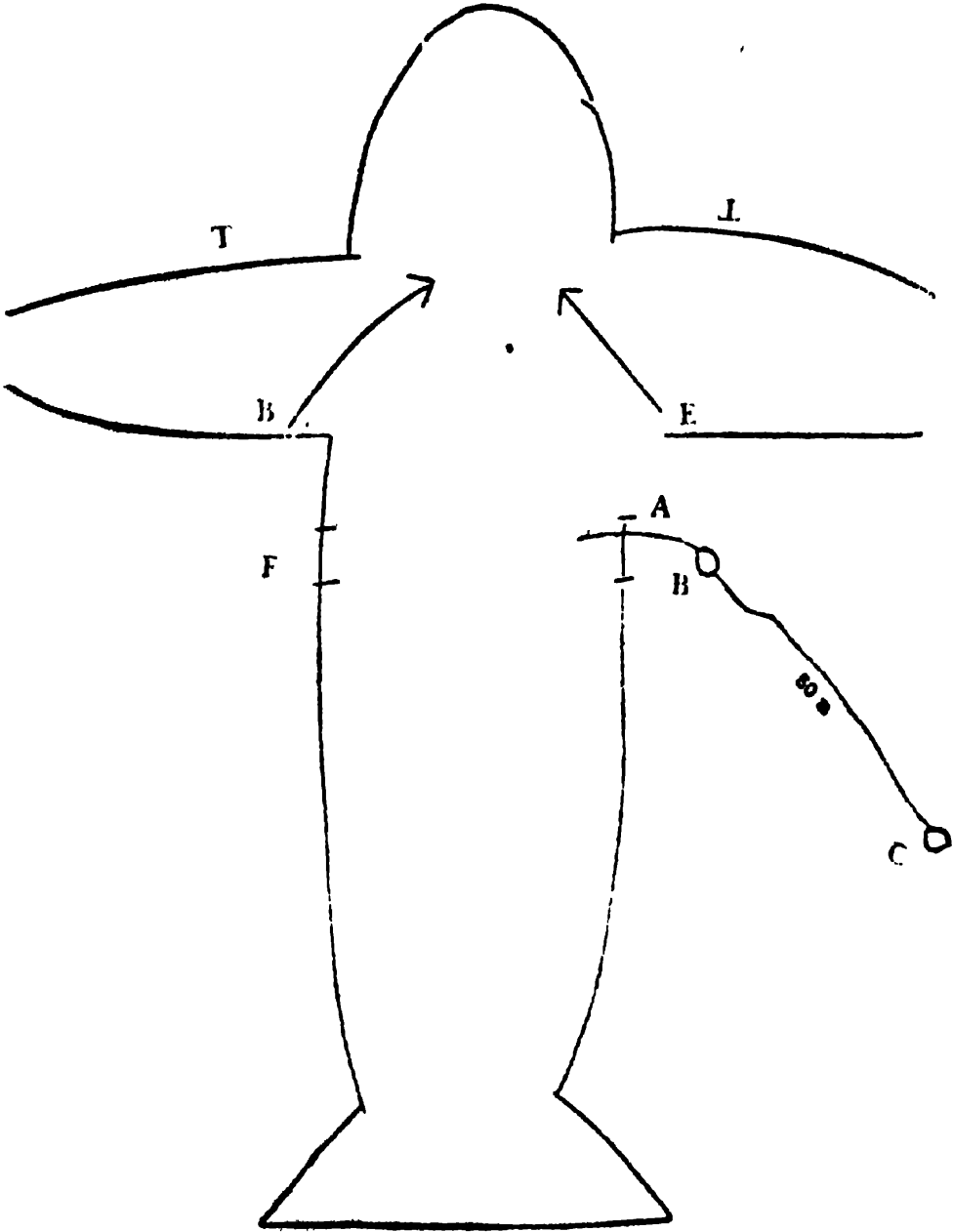
(see page 77)

*Netaji—Dead or Alive ?*



Major K Sakal's sketch of the Plane

(see page 77)



Capt. Nakamura's sketch of the Plane

(see page 77)



