

## **Revolutionary Activities among the Hindi-speaking People of Calcutta with Special Reference to Dumka, (1904-1915)**

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During the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Calcutta, especially, Burrabazar became the beating heart of Hindi-speaking people of “Up Country” and Marwaris as an epicenter of their involvement with commercial, cultural, social and political activities. According to some estimates slightly less than half the population of Calcutta is Hindi or Urdu-speaking. But the political and cultural spaces of Calcutta have been decisively dominated by Bengali elites so much so that the contribution of people from other regions has never been taken seriously. Scholars like Thomas Timberg, Anne Hardgrove has written books about the contribution of these Hindi-speaking people (especially the Marwaris) respectively in the economic and social sphere of Calcutta. Therefore, it is obvious that the political history of these Hindi-speaking people of Calcutta is a less researched area. With the consultation of various primary and secondary sources, this article tries to seek how these Hindi-speaking communities were implicated in politics of Calcutta and started revolutionary activities with a strong connection of the various revolutionaries of Dumka (now it is a district of Bihar, then it was a part of undivided Bengal) against the British Government during the period of 1905 to 1914. Through this article various attempts has been taken to narrate some important trajectories such as how the political development of these communities emerged during the final decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century; secondly, how several socio-political organizations established in Calcutta; thirdly, how these Calcutta based Hindi-speaking people made a strong connection with Dumka to conduct various revolutionary activities against the British; fourthly, how the Hindi-print media of Calcutta helped them in constructing their political ideologies and last but not the least, how their political activities changed

after a conspiracy occurred in the year 1914, which brought a fundamental change in their political strategies also.

### **Introduction:**

During the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in Calcutta, there was a period for consolidation for the Hindi-speaking people<sup>i</sup>. In Calcutta, Burrabazar became the beating heart of Hindi-speaking people of “Up Country” and Marwaris as an epicenter of their involvement with commercial, cultural, social and political activities. These social groups started increasing their interest in the political arena. Initially their organizations were cast in the form of literary societies, but they were soon transformed into associations with distinct political roles. After coming to Calcutta as a migrant community these Hindi-speaking people did not go with a direct conflict with the Colonial Government because they then worked in the British firm as the collaborators. After a certain period of time in Calcutta, when the Marwaris started their own business (sometimes in joint venture with the British), then they started to oppose the policy of the Government.<sup>ii</sup> By this time, the up-country people came in Calcutta and worked as the labourers in the Marwari business firm and sometime they did different types of household work under the Marwaris. However, in Calcutta, these Hindi-speaking people joined politics in order to make their position strong for themselves in Burrabazar. But their role in the field of politics does not hold a position in the Bengali political scenario as well as Indian politics.

In the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century revolutionary nationalism emerged as a strong political force in Bengal in the wake of the Swadeshi Movement. By that time, an increasing sense of impatience among sections of Bengalis including some leaders of the Congress Party because they felt that the Congress policy of pleading and petitioning the government was completely ineffective. During this time not only the Bengalis, but some Hindi-speaking people of Calcutta had played a significant role to advance the revolutionary activities and made strong contact with the revolutionaries of Dumka district. Through the analysis of various primary and secondary sources, this article seeks to document some aspects of the Hindi-speaking people of Calcutta

and Dumka who had played an important role in the various revolutionary activities against the British Government during the period of 1905 to 1914.

In the social field, a new interest for reform and organization developed in the Marwari community and several associations such as 'Marwari Panchayat' (1828), the 'Pinjrapole Society' (1880), the 'Bharat Chamber of Commerce' (1895), the 'Marwari Association' (1898) were sprang up soon in Calcutta. It is also noted that in Calcutta Marwari youths were divided into two groups: Pro-Government Group which was referred as 'Chapkania Group' (or *Sanatani*) and the Nationalist Group (or *Sudharwadi*) which was well represented by dynamic youths who were trying to bring changes in Marwari society and making the community sensitive for growing national movements.<sup>iii</sup> As we came to know that in the year of 1890, the Marwaris got importance in the public life of Calcutta. They knew that, as they were the outsiders, they would have to create their own identity to live together with the native people of Calcutta. It is noted that it was after the rain gambling<sup>iv</sup> fiasco, as a community, Marwaris took a number of strategies to gain a prominent place in the socio-economic and political life of Calcutta. As the conservatives section were not listening to the worth saying of them, the reluctant younger generation formed a secret organization in which there were four sub-committees. The first was the SamajSudharSamiti, the second committee was the nationalist committee, the third was a political action committee, and the fourth made contact with revolutionaries.<sup>v</sup>

During the period of 1905, the Partition of Bengal would have the fringe benefit of weakening the Bengali *Bhadrolok* political integration. By giving a majority to Muslims in the new Eastern Province and to Biharis and Oriyas in the West, it was hoped 'to encourage the growth of local centers of opinion' and to destroy the ability of Bengali *Bhadrolok* Political groups in Calcutta to influence *muffussil* opinion.<sup>vi</sup> On the other hand, in this period, in Calcutta, the Marwaris had established itself their socio-economic and political force.<sup>vii</sup> In particular, it was hoped to cut short *bhadrolok* nationalist attempts to find allies in other communities. Besides, when the Partition of Bengal succeeded in uniting the Bengali *Bhadrolok* in protest against the British Government, it also revealed their unpopularity with other communities in Calcutta.<sup>viii</sup> Oriya, Bihari and Eastern Bengal Muslim politicians welcomed the

measure as their chance to escape from Bengali Bhadrolok domination, while the Assamese condemned it for their closer association with the Bengalis. Within Congress Party, first the Banerjee group (Dadabhai Naoroji, W. C. Banerjee, Feroze Shah Mehta, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Malaviya, Badruddin Tyabji, Ranade, G. Subramanyam Aiyaretc) and then the radicals (Lala Lajpat Rai, Tilak, Bipin Chandra Pal, Aswini Kumar Dutt, Aurobindo Ghosh, Rajnarayan Basuetc), who had displaced them found to their dissatisfaction that the social, economic, and political activities, or to provide large number of followers with a constructive and sustained political role.<sup>ix</sup> Overall, these dissenting voices were the main factor for the evolution of new kind of agitational modes of politics and the creation of organization established by different communities in Calcutta to facilitate popular political participation.

### **Changing Political Atmosphere in Calcutta with the connection of Dumka:**

During the period of the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (1910-1913) in Calcutta there had been occurred a very important change in the general political atmosphere. 'The quiet prevailing amongst political agitators and the improvement in the tone of the more violent sections of the political press rendered it extremely unlikely that the criminals were in any way in touch with, or receiving active sympathy from persons outside their immediate circle.'<sup>x</sup> By this time, there was no community division in the political activities against the British Government. In Calcutta Bengali and Hindi-speaking political leaders together used to do anti-British political activities. During the period of 1910 some Bengalis of Calcutta and its adjoining districts formed a secret samiti, named 'MatriSebakSamiti'<sup>xi</sup> with the help of the Hindi-speaking people of Benaras. Pandit Jag Narayan Missra, a member of the Arya Samaj and was reported to be a political agitator in anti-British activities and was also well-known to several Marwaris in Calcutta, who helped these Bengali revolutionists in Benaras.<sup>xii</sup> After the case of Rodda and World War- I broke out, in Calcutta there was a new kind of politics emerged, where the political connection between the up-country Hindi-speaking people and the Bengalis of Calcutta had started to isolate. Instead the growing political

relationship between the Marwaris and Hindi-speaking people became strong for their own political interest in Calcutta street politics.

During the period of 1907 to 1914, there was a strong relationship between the Bengali revolutionaries of Calcutta and Hindi-speaking revolutionary people of outside Calcutta. In the year of 1907, a society called the 'VratriSammilani' was started in Dumka by some senior students of DumkaZilla School, such as KunjaBehari Mandal, Baidyanath Biswas, Noni GopalBuxi, PrabhuDayalHimmatsinghka, Debi Babu or Debi Marwari, Krishna PrasannaHalder, RajibLochanChakrabortti, Abinash Chakraborty, Abinash Roy, Harihar Banerjee, Sudhansu Mohan Banerjee etc.<sup>xiii</sup> They used to assemble at the house of KunjaBehariMandol. The society had a library. Though poor, the Late PanditSakharamGoneshDeuskar presented the students of the DumkaZilla School with a copy of his *Desher Katha* and two other books and this along with a few others formed the library of the Society. Weekly meetings were held to consider what steps should be taken to preach Swadeshi amongst the masses. To improve the health of the members by the introduction of *lathi* play and other forms of exercises, BabuRajibLochanChakrabortti permitted the society to use of his house.<sup>xiv</sup>

According to the recorded copy of the Superintendent of the Police, Rajshahi, we came to know that 'It used to subscribe for the *Nava Shakti*, an extremist daily newspaper published then in Calcutta, the *Prabasi*, the vernacular monthly which used to publish half-tone pictures of Khudiram Bose, Barindra Ghosh and other 'so called' martyrs for the revolutionary cause. PrabhuDayal Marwari, who was then a student in the Bhagalpur College, used to come during the vacation periods and take great interest in the society used to receive subscription from the members, donations from the friends and sympathizers. On an occasion, PrabhuDayal brought a rich Bhagalpur Marwari named Devi Babu, who encouraged them by paying Rs 10/- as donation.'<sup>xv</sup> The subscriptions and donations received were spent in subscribing for papers and in feeding the poor on occasions such as the release from prison of Bipin Chandra Pal and so on. This organization was a public affair till the Government Act prohibiting such assemblies were passed, after which it became a secret society. Only trusted persons were allowed and what was done was done in great secrecy. However it was Dumka, 'where the revolutionaries from Calcutta and other places had been hiding

themselves from the British Government. Dumka was intended to be used as a safe place for concealing objectionable matters. It was not only the place used for hiding absconders, but also used for repairing revolvers and making daggers etc.’<sup>xvi</sup>

In the second decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several new Marwari associations emerged with nationalist and reformist hue. A well known Marwari in Calcutta PrabhuDayalHimmatsinghka set up the ‘Marwari SamajChatrabas’ and helped to establish the GyanVardhini Sabha in 1912.<sup>xvii</sup> In the year of 1913 the ‘Marwari SahayakSamiti’ was founded by both sub caste Aggarwal and Maheshwari in response to the issues of Indian immigrants indentured labour as well as the lack of medical facilities in Burrabazar. This gave the community another chance to criticize the colonial government and promote its own image in the pages of the Hindi press. In October and November of 1913, the daily ‘*Bharatmitra*’ reported the stories of 14 illegally recruited indentured workers who were rescued by the Marwaris and released from bondage.<sup>xviii</sup> Within the ‘Hindu Club’ extension of the ‘Marwari SahayakSamiti’ was the ‘SahityaSambandhini Sabha’ (literary wing), which aimed to publish quality Hindi literature at low rates and promote religion as a means to further social reform and nationalist awareness.<sup>xix</sup> By 1914, the Maheshwari Sabha was founded, which within two years had a school, named MaheshwariVidyalaya<sup>xx</sup> and library to help promote Hindi. The *Sabha* and the *Samiti* established a political link between the Marwaris and major political figures like Malaviya and Gandhi, who were guests at the 1915 and 1916 annual functions of the Sabha respectively. In 1916 Gandhi toured through the streets of Burrabazar until in the center of the crowded business district, two young Marwari G.D.Birla, Jamnalal Bajaj unyoked the horses from his carriage and pulled it themselves, symbolizing the beginning of strong bonds of support and patronage that Gandhi would forge with the Marwari community.<sup>xxi</sup> Under Gandhi’s leadership Marwaris were encouraged to reform themselves so as to appear as ‘trustees’ rather than ‘owners’ of their enterprises and they had to take interest in charities, promoting Khadi and other social reforms. Yet these developments were restricted to a short period of adventurism and revolutionism that appealed to the younger members of the community around the time of the First World War.

## **Hindi-speaking People's Connection with the Other Revolutionary Parties of Bengal:**

Before economic nationalism became the fixed party line of the progressive Marwaris, there was a brief period of revolutionary adventurism. Some of the members of the 'Sudharwadi' group of the Marwaris in Calcutta had forged linked with the Bengali revolutionaries and occasionally helped them financially.<sup>xxii</sup> Hanuman Prasad Poddar was a prominent member of the 'AnushilanSamiti' and he helped the organization financially and regularly participated in its meetings. OnkarmalSaraf was known to be a close associate of AshutoshLahiri, a famous Bengali revolutionary of that time.<sup>xxiii</sup> Another famous Marwari in Calcutta G. D. Birla joined the 'terrorist' nationalists because of his resentment of racial discrimination in British business houses in India.<sup>xxiv</sup> Some famous Bengali revolutionaries such as Aurobindo Ghosh, BipinGanguly, and other extremists were known to patronize the 'Marwari SahayakSamiti'. It was rumored that the extremists even addressed the meetings of this Samiti.<sup>xxv</sup> So one thing is clear, that in Calcutta before the First World War, the Hindi-speaking people and the Bengali freedom fighters had a strong bonding against the Colonial Government and they formed some secret organizations and helped them each other wholeheartedly.

## **Involvement of the Hindi-speaking People in Rodda Conspiracy Case of August, 1914:**

There were several young Marwaris, who were the warrants of the case of Rodda Conspiracy Case of August 1914<sup>xxvi</sup> such as Hanuman Prasad Poddar<sup>xxvii</sup>, PrabhuDayalHimmatsinghka,<sup>xxviii</sup>OmKarmalSaraf,<sup>xxix</sup>Ghanshayam Das Birla,<sup>xxx</sup>Phoolchand Chowdhury,<sup>xxxi</sup>JwalaprasadKanodia,<sup>xxxii</sup>KanhaiyalalChitlangiya<sup>xxxiii</sup> etc. who had developed their links with several revolutionary activities on that period. Messrs, Rodda and Company, a firm of gunmakers, placed an order for weapons in a foreign

country and in the third week of August, 1914, the consignment of 202 cases reached the Calcutta port. A revolutionary group of BipinGanguly was aware of this transaction. A staff of Rodda and Co. named Srischandra was associated with this group. He was deputed to release the goods from the Custom Office. On that day some other arms cases had arrived from England. He took the first delivery of 192 cases and left office by loading them on a bullock cart. There were many carts. On the cart which carried cases from Germany the cartman was Haridas Dutta, who was associated with BipinGanguly. Other 6 or 7 carts carried goods from England. He took that cart to revolutionaries placed at Malanga Lane and disappeared. The pistols and some rounds of ammunition were distributed immediately and the remaining materials were handed over to a Marwari youngmanPrabhuDayalHimmatsinghka. As he lived in a hostel himself he decided to hire a *godam*, pretending as a Bengali Kannulal Sen. After 2-3 days when the cases from Germany was found missing the police was intimated but the culprits remained untraced. The lost cases contained 50 Mauser pistols (large sized .300 bore) and 46,000 rounds of ammunition.<sup>xxxiv</sup> They were “so made and packed that by attaching to the butt the box containing the pistols, a weapon was produced which could be fired from the shoulder in the same way as the rifle”.<sup>xxxv</sup> In March, 1915 on the basis of confession of a Bengali youth the conspiracy was exposed. The names that were taken in his confession included Hanuman Prasad Poddar, PrabhuDayalHimmatsinghka, OmkarmalSaraf, G. D. Birla, Phoolchand Chowdhury, JwalaprasadKanodia, KanhaiyalalChitlangiya etc. A greedy police inspector met Phoolchand Chowdhury to demand 10,000 rupees to destroy evidences. As the accused belonged to wealthy families, the Bengali inspector expected to get this amount. But after careful considerations the youth decided not to give the amount. Later, when the whole issue was disclosed the inspector was suspended and these youths were prosecuted. But Phoolchand Chowdhury was lucky to be released due to unavailability of evidences.<sup>xxxvi</sup> On 26<sup>th</sup> February, 1915, the police covered 23,200 rounds of ammunition when Haridas Dutta went to collect the ammunition from the *godam* which had been hired by PrabhuDayalHimmatsinghka. When the enquiry had started Haridas left Calcutta in May 1914 and he had been to Dumka where he passed his life as Atul Nag. He then started to live at Dumka in the

house of PrabhuDayal Marwari from June to July of 1914 as a *fitter mistry* in the mill of RamrikhHimmatsinghka, father of PrabhuDayal Marwari.<sup>xxxvii</sup> By that time in Calcutta, the police had captured the cartman and he had disclosed the address where the cases had been hidden. The police was waiting for the person who was to come and collect the ammunition. By the middle of 1918, no less than 31 pistols were seized by the police from different places.<sup>xxxviii</sup> In the years of First World War, the entire Marwari leadership in Calcutta was seen as suspects to the Rodda Case. 'Marwari Panchayat' and the conservative leadership of the 'Marwari Association' now decided to take matter in their hands and reassert control.<sup>xxxix</sup>

### **Role of the Hindi Print Media in Calcutta:**

During the period of the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, newspapers like *Bharatmitra* (1878), *Sarsudhanidhi* (1879), *UchitWakta* (1880), *Marwari Gazette* (1890-1898) etc were published from Calcutta. Most of these contributed a lot in propagating the cause of freedom movement. The Calcutta based for fortnightly *Marwari Gazette* (1890-1898) highlighted the problems of Rajasthan in general and Marwaris in particular. Its focus was on education for Marwaris, social and religious solidarity and societal control to contain the growing streak of individualism among members of the community.<sup>xl</sup> Through these Hindi language newspapers the Hindi-speaking people in Calcutta were able to engage with reform movements and intellectual ideas coming out of the Bengali renaissance in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as they were able to politicize and became active members of the Swadeshi Movement in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. These publications were mostly philanthropic or business efforts of individual wealthy Marwaris and other Hindi-speaking people of Calcutta. In the first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Marwari patronage for Hindi newspapers, journals increased massively not least because the emergence of conservative and reformist groups of the Marwari community required print

organs to extend their respective programs. From the time of the Swadeshi Movement (1905) to the outbreak of the First World War (1914), several papers such as *Vaishya opkarak* which was started in 1904 by ShivchandraBharatiya and it would occasionally carry political and Swadeshi movement issues, journals such as *Marwari Bandhu* (1904-1907) which was edited by Durga Prasad Mishra, *Nrisingh* (1906-1907) which was edited by Ambika Prasad Bajpeyi, emerged in Calcutta to advise the business community of commercial and political developments.<sup>xli</sup> During the time of the First World War *KalkattaSamachar* (1914-1922), edited by AmritalalChakravarty and *Viswamitra* (1916- present in various forms), edited by Mulchand Aggarwal, were two leading papers which carried commercial and war news, but their respective politics expected the split that was emerging between the conservative and the reformist group of the Marwari community. *KalkattaSamachar* was heavily influenced by the conservative sector and was in regular conflict with *Bharatmitra* and *Viswamitra*.<sup>xlii</sup> The Hindi press in Calcutta shared cultural and geographical space with these two communities. All the newspapers and presses were located in Burrabazar, the neighbourhood associated with Marwaris and Hindusthanis and therefore functioned as a public forum for local concerns and reforms. It is also important to note that these Hindi-speaking people kept alive their political strategies in the minds of the common people through their writings which were published in various Hindi newspapers, periodicals, journals etc.

### **Conclusion:**

The Marwaris were business minded from the beginning. Apparently, it seems that their main interest was to develop their economic background. But the real picture is different. In Calcutta, during the last decade of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the contest between the Marwaris and the colonial government over the issues of 'rain gambling'

proved to be a rallying point for the emergence of Marwari political solidarity. By that time, it can be said more clearly that after the formation of 'Marwari Association' in 1898, they were associated with the process of being directly involved in politics. The uprising of Hindi press had a great impact to nurture their sense of solidarity and they started organising themselves and modernizing their community. By the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several organizations were established by the Marwaris in Calcutta. They started showing an increasing interest in social works and were ready to donate for social issues as well as for nationalist issues. Not only this, it is noticed that within Burrabazar area, the population of Hindi-speaking people congregated into self-contained areas of linguistic and religious settlement, and sometimes they were susceptible to religious appeals to promote their political and social doctrine.<sup>xliii</sup> Between the years of 1910 to 1913, these Hindi-speaking people of Calcutta and Dumka joined in various revolutionary activities to oppose the British Government and they coexisted with the Bengali revolutionary members and their organisations. But this relationship did not remain permanent. While discussing the activities of the Marwaris in Rodda Case, one should have noticed that there was no evidence against Marwaris associated with this case. So one can easily say that in Calcutta, they had a strong community sense and they thought that the problem of one of them seemed to be the problem of their entire community and for this they tried hard to overcome their problems. Sometime their Bengali associates also were discharged with them.<sup>xliv</sup> To conclude this article one thing has to be mentioned that in the year of 1914, after the Case of Rodda in Calcutta, we can see an emergence of new political atmosphere in which the political connection between up-country Hindi-Urdu-speaking people and the Bengalis of Calcutta had started to isolate and the Marwaris and the up-country Hindi-speaking people came closer in political arena of Calcutta. However, it can be said that these Hindi-speaking people were able to engage themselves with the multi-dimensional political process at different period of time. It turns out that with the changes of different socio-economic and political activities in all India level, they changed their strategies of politics and in this process they were successful to keep their stronghold in national level as well as in the local level politics.

## Notes and References:

- In this article, the term 'Hindi-speaking people' has been used to refer all those people who had been coming from Rajasthan and its adjoining areas, "Upper India" such as Bihar, United provinces and other states. They used Hindi (or sometime Urdu) as their language. Here, one thing is noticeable that, generally, the people from Rajasthan used Rajasthani language for communication in their respective households but for the outside world, their language was Hindi. On the other hand, the people who came from "Upper India" used their regional language at home. But in general they used Hindi to communicate with others in Calcutta. For further details of 'Hindi-speaking people of Calcutta' see Patel, Hitendra. K. (2010-2011). Social Reforms, National and Communal Mobilization Among the Hindi-Speaking People of Calcutta in the Early Twentieth Century. *Proceeding of the Indian History Congress*, Vol. 71, 774-783; also see Patel, Hitendra. K. (2020). Aspects of the History of Hindi-Speaking People of Early Twentieth-Century Calcutta. In Sabyasachi Bhattacharya (Ed.), *A Comprehensive History of Modern Bengal 1700-1950*, Vol. III, (pp. 723-750). Primus Books in Association with The Asiatic Society. Kolkata
- <sup>ii</sup> Singhi, Bhawarmal (Ed.). (1974). *Padmabhushan Shree Sitaram Sekseriya Abhinandan Granth*, Shree Sitaram Sekseriya Abhinandan Samiti. Calcutta. p. 260
- <sup>iii</sup> Modi, Balchand. (1940). *Desh Ke Itihas Mein Marwari Jati Ka Sthan*. Raghunath Prasad Singhania. Calcutta. pp. 608-609; also see Patel, Hitendra. K. (2010-2011). pp. 774-783
- <sup>iv</sup> Rain gambling was introduced to Calcutta public life by the Marwaris sometime in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. There are two types of opinions. As Marwaris claimed it was introduced by the 1820s and on the other hand the colonial government claimed the period 1870s. This gambling was limited to the cotton street in the heart of Burrabazar in northern Calcutta at the courtyard No. 67. Bets on the rainfall were affixed during three periods of a whole day, from 5 A.M. to 9 A.M, or from noon to 9 P.M. and sometimes until midnight. For further details see Hardgrove, Anne. (2004). *Community and Public Culture: The Marwaris in Calcutta, 1897-1997*, Columbia University Press. pp. 127-128
- <sup>v</sup> Hortsmann, Monika. (1995). Towards a Universal Dharma. In Vasudha, Dalmia (Ed.), *Religious Hinduism: The Construction of Religious Traditions and National Identity*. Sage Publications. New Delhi. p. 300
- <sup>vi</sup> Broomfield, J. H. (1968). *Elite Conflict in a Plural Society: Twentieth Century Bengal*. University of California Press. Berkeley and Los Angeles. p. 28
- <sup>vii</sup> Ibid., p. 120
- <sup>viii</sup> Ibid., p. 61
- <sup>ix</sup> Ibid., pp. 31-32
- <sup>x</sup> *The Political Situation In Bengal (1913-1914)*. I. B. File (File Number 9 of 1914, Serial Number 40 of 1914). West Bengal State Archives, p. 254
- <sup>xi</sup> During the year of 1910, from Calcutta, Lalit Mohan Chakravarty, Harendra Nath Banerji, and Behari Lal Rai went to Benaras and stayed there at the house of Ambica Charan Bhattacharji. After their stay there for 7 days, they met Taranath Rai Choudhuri, who appeared there as Shayamsundar Babaji. They went there to form a samiti under the name of Matri Sevak Samiti which was formed there to take part in the revolutionary activities in Calcutta. The other members of this secret samiti were Surendra Nath Chatterji, Tarak Nath Bose, Bhushan Ch. Bhattacharji, Harijado De, Debendranath Bhattacharji, Annada Prasad Bhattacharji, Atul Chatterji, Dr. Benoyendra Nath Chatterji. In the house of Taranath there was an 'Akhara' of Baishnavis, in which all the gang members of this organization used to have their *lathi* play, sword fighting and other kinds of physical exercises. For further details of the fact see *Howrah Gang Case*. I. B. File (File Number 1078 of 1910, Serial Number 10 of 1910, Packet I, ii, iii, iv, v, vi, vii, viii, ix). West Bengal State Archives, pp. 250-267
- <sup>xii</sup> Ibid., p. 267
- <sup>xiii</sup> 'Vatri Sanmilani' – A Political Society of Dumka, Santhal Parganas. I. B. File (File Number 1846 of 1917, Serial Number 81 Of 1917). West Bengal State Archives, pp. 16-18
- <sup>xiv</sup> Ibid., pp. 19-20
- <sup>xv</sup> Ibid., pp. 20-22
- <sup>xvi</sup> Ibid., p. 25
- <sup>xvii</sup> Kudaisya, Medha. (2003). *The Life and Times of G. D. Birla*. Oxford University Press. New Delhi. p. 52
- <sup>xviii</sup> Hardgrove, (2004). p. 193
- <sup>xix</sup> Kudaisya, (2003). p. 33
- <sup>xx</sup> The school's principal, Babu Moolchand Aggarwal was the editor and publisher of the Hindi paper 'Aaj' and 'Viswamitra'. For further details see Modi, (1940). p. 601
- <sup>xxi</sup> Kudaisya, (2003). p. 39
- <sup>xxii</sup> Ibid., p. 30
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Ibid., p. 35
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Timberg, Thomas, A. (2014). *The Marwaris From Jagat Seth to the Birlas*. Allen Lane by Books India. New Delhi. p. 82
- <sup>xxv</sup> Modi, (1940). p. 610; also see Kudaisya, (2003). pp. 30-31
- <sup>xxvi</sup> For further details see *Rodda Arms Theft Case, 1914*. I. B. File (File Number 1030 of 1914) West Bengal State Archives; also see *The Political Situation in Bengal (1914-1915)*. I. B. File (File Number 253 of 1915) West Bengal State Archives; also see, *The Political Situation in Bengal (1915-1916)*. I. B. File (File Number 2382A of 1916) West Bengal State Archives; also see, Ghosh, Kalicharan. (1965). *The Role of Honour*. Vidya Bharati. Calcutta. pp. 246-247; also see Newatia, Radha Krishna. & Jaithalia, Jugal Kishore. (Eds.). (1984). *Shri Prabhu Dayal Himmat Singhka Abhinandan Granth*. Shri Prabhu Dayal Himmat Singhka Abhinandan Samiti. Calcutta. pp. 38-39; also see Patel, (2010-2011). pp. 774-783.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Hanuman Prasad Poddar (1892-1971) was born in Shillong and spent a considerable time in Ratangarh in the Shekhawati region of Rajasthan into a Marwari trading family belonging to the mercantile Aggarwal caste. When he was in his 20s he made success in his family business and came to Calcutta. In those days he was a prominent member of the 'Anushilan Samiti' and he helped the organization financially and regularly participated in its meetings. The hostel, in which he lived in Calcutta, began to be used as a safe house by certain revolutionaries. When the police raided the hostel, he and every other young men living there was tarred with the same brush as the revolutionaries. Although he was not accused in court of having committed any violent act, the British authorities jailed him for several months, pending trial, merely for having been in contact with the nationalist revolutionaries. This term in jail, for no actual offence, proved to be a turning point in his life. After being released from the jail he started publishing and editing a monthly magazine, named 'Kalyan' in Hindi from 1927 to reach the spiritual glory and high value oriented heroic deeds of heroes of the 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' to each and every Indian to feel them spiritually free and proud of their achievements in the past as a source of inspiration to fight for the freedom of India against the British. For further details See Newatia, Radhakrishna. (Ed.) (1948). *Rajnitik Kshetra Mein Marwari Samaj Ki Ahutiya*. Akhil Bhartiya Sammelan. Calcutta. pp. 86-87; also see Kudaisya, (2003). pp. 36-38

<sup>xxxiii</sup>Prabhu Dayal Himmatsinghka (1889, 16<sup>th</sup> August- 1991, 1<sup>st</sup> June) was born in Dumka, Bihar, moving to Calcutta in 1911. He was closely associated in National freedom movement and established many Marwari organizations. He was arrested in the Rodda Arms Case in 1914 and in 1916 he was exonerated from Bengal and interned in his house in Dumka, Bihar for 4 years. He became an attorney in 1921 and subsequently joined in Manuel Aggarwal & co. as a partner. In the year 1925, he started P.D.Himmatsinghka &Co., a leading solicitor and advocacy firm in Bengal. He co-founded 'Forward', an English magazine in 1924, and a daily 'Liberty in 1926'. A prominent freedom fighter P.D.Himmatsinghka was closely associated with Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhas Chandra Bose and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. For further details See Ibid., p. 83; also see Ibid., p. 37

<sup>xxxiv</sup>Onkarmal Sarf was known to be a close associate Ashutosh Lahiri, a famous Bengali revolutionary. In the month of February, 1913, he had helplessly witnessed the distress of a mason after he fell from a building under the construction and was grievously injured. In those days, there was no provision for the immediate treatment in Burrabazar. He tried hard to redress the situation but no one was willing to help till he met Harakchandji Mohta, who introduced him to Seth Jugalkishore Birla and Kishanlalji Pachisiya. They planned to start an organization called 'Marwari Relief Society' to help the people in need of urgent medical aid in the area. They had discussed the matter with Loknathji Dhandhaniya and the organization was formed on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1913. In the year of 1916, he was imprisoned under the Act of Indian Security. For further details See Newatia, (Ed.) (1948). p. 87

<sup>xxxv</sup>G.D.Birla (1894, 10<sup>th</sup> April- 1983, 11<sup>th</sup> June) was born at Pilani village in Rajputana as a member of a Marwari community. He, one of India's foremost business entrepreneurs, played a crucial role in shaping the Marwari community. He challenged the colonial domination of the Indian economy and was an industrial pioneer. In 1914, he was smeared in Rodda Conspiracy Case, but he managed to escape to the South. As a result of P.D.Himmatsinghka's prior information, he managed to avoid arrest and escaped first to Ooty (Ootacamund), in South India, then to Nathdwara and finally to Pushkar in Rajputana. For the connection with Sir Kailash Chandra Bose who had contacts with high level British officials and Charles Tegart, a senior official in the Calcutta Police, the warrant of G.D.Birla for Rodda Case was finally withdrawn. His political initiatives helped to create a climate in which Indian enterprise could flourish. Born in Victorian time, Birla lived through two World Wars, an epic struggle for freedom, the Nehru era of economic planning and the beginning of India's experiment with economic liberalization. For further details see Kudaisya, (2003). pp. 5-15

<sup>xxxvi</sup>Phoolchand Chowdhury was born in East Punjab in the year 1883 in Hissar district, village Gawad. He was arrested and sent to the jail for a term of 5 years in connection with Rodda Conspiracy Case. He was one of the founders behind Marwari Relief Society. He also founded the orphanage in Liluah, and Vishudhanand Saraswati Vidyalaya. He died in March, 1933. For further details see Newatia, (Ed.) (1948).p. 85

<sup>xxxvii</sup>Jwalaprasad Kanodia was born on 1847. He took part actively in Non-cooperation movement. But, before that he was involved in revolutionary activity against the British rule in India. see Ibid., p. 86

<sup>xxxviii</sup>Kanhaiyalal Chitlangiya was a resident of Fatehpur in Rajputana province. He was a well educated, simple, down to earth person who was used to keep himself away from the limelight. He had taken to politics from an early time in his life. He got arrested in the year 1916 under the India Security Act. see Ibid., p. 85

<sup>xxxix</sup>For case details see *Rodda Arms Theft Case*. I. B. File (File Number 933 of 1915, Serial Number 32 of 1914) West Bengal State Archives, p. 321; also see *Empire*, 4<sup>th</sup> August, 31<sup>st</sup> August, 1915; also see *Englishman*, 6<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 17<sup>th</sup> August, 1915; also see *The Statesman*, 7<sup>th</sup> August, 1915; also see Patel, (2010-2011). pp. 774-783; also see Ghosh, (1965). pp. 246-247; also see Newatia & Jathaliya (Eds.) (1984). pp. 38-39

<sup>xl</sup>*Report of the Sedition Committee*, 1918, p. 66 (<https://archive.org/details/seditionreport00indirich>)

<sup>xli</sup>*The Political Situation in Bengal (1915-1916)* I. B. File (File Number 2382A of 1916, Serial Number- Not Found) West Bengal State Archives, pp. 65-67; also see Ghosh, (1965). pp. 246-247; also see Newatia & Jathaliya (Eds.) (1984). pp. 38-39

<sup>xlii</sup>*Rodda Arms Theft Case*. I. B. File (File Number 933 of 1915, Serial Number 32 of 1914) West Bengal State Archives, pp. 143-144

<sup>xliiii</sup>*The Political Situation in Bengal (1915-1916)* I. B. File (File Number 2382A of 1916, Serial Number- Not Found) West Bengal State Archives, pp. 68-73

<sup>xliiiii</sup>Kudaisya, (2003). pp. 37-38

<sup>xl</sup> Saraogi, Alka. (2002). *Kali-Katha: Via Bypass*. Rupa & Co. Kolkata. p. 48

<sup>xli</sup> Bajpeyi, Ambika Prasad. (1953). *Samachar Patronka Itihas*. Gyayanmandala. Benaras. p. 236

<sup>xlii</sup> Nevatiya, Radhakrishna. (Ed.) (1982). *Barabajar Ke Karyakartta- Smaran Evam Abhinandan*. Jwahir Press. Calcutta. p. 25

<sup>xliiii</sup> Mcpherson, Kenneth. (1974). *The Muslim Microcosm: Calcutta, 1918 to 1935*. Franz Steiner Verlag. Wiesbaden. pp. 50-51

<sup>xliiv</sup> The three persons Baidyanath Biswas of Dumka, who was a professor of Presidency College in Calcutta and constant associate of the Marwaris in Calcutta, Prabhu Dayal Marwari, Upendra Nath Sen had also been put upon their trial but on the 12<sup>th</sup> November, 1914, the case against them was withdrawn and they were discharged. For further details see *Rodda Arms Theft Case*. I. B. File (File Number 933 of 1915, Serial Number 32 of 1914) West Bengal State Archives, p. 129