

STORIES

Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Jhalkari Bai (1830–1858)

Place: Jhansi, Uttar Pradesh

When we talk of Rani Lakshmibai of Jhansi, another name comes to the fore – who was as brave as her, and whose story is equally inspiring. She was – **Jhalkari Bai**.

She was born in a Dalit Koli family near Jhansi. From childhood, she was not like ordinary girls – along with working in the fields, she learnt sword fighting, horse riding and shooting. It is said that she once fought a tiger single-handedly.



The queen of Jhansi Rani Laxmibai had decided to fight the British. Her courage and valour demands respect. Along with her regular army, Rani Laxmibai formed an army of women — **Durga Dal** — Jhalkari Bai joined it. Seeing her courage and leadership, the queen started considering her as her confidant.

In 1857, Jhansi was surrounded by the British. It was necessary to take the queen out of the fort so that she could join the rest of the forces.

Then Jhalkari Bai made a unique plan. She looked exactly like the queen. She wore the queen's clothes, wore her jewelry, and went in front of the army and introduced herself as the queen and distracted the British.

The British thought - '**We captured the queen!**' Meanwhile, the real queen escaped safely.

When the British discovered the truth, they were shocked. Jhalkari Bai was either executed, or according to some accounts, she escaped and later lived a long life.

Lesson: Jhalkari Bai teaches us that bravery is not dependent on caste or gender. She changed history by putting her life at stake. Whenever you feel scared, or think "what can I do alone?" - remember the story of Jhalkari Bai.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Uda Devi Pasi - Dalit Daughter, Brave Martyr

Place: Awadh, Uttar Pradesh

It was 1857. Anger was at its peak in North India. Fed up with the injustice and atrocities of the British, rebellions were taking place everywhere. Some kings and some nawabs were entering the fray. But there was one name in this revolution, who was neither from a royal family nor from a rich family - rather she was from a poor Dalit farmer family. Her name was - Uda Devi Pasi.

When the British removed Nawab Wajid Ali Shah of Awadh and occupied Lucknow, his wife Begum Hazrat Mahal took over the leadership. Uda Devi also joined this movement for the independence of the country. She became a part of the Begum's women army. But she was not just a soldier - **she was a leader and a fierce warrior in her own right.**

When Uda's husband Makka Pasi was martyred fighting the British, Uda Devi vowed - "**I will chase these foreigners away from our Awadh.**"

When the British army advanced to capture Lucknow, Uda Devi made a plan. She climbed a big peepal tree, carrying a gun with her. As soon as British soldiers came close, Uda Devi, sitting on the tree would shoot at them. In no time, **Uda Devi killed about eight to ten British soldiers!**

The British couldn't stop wondering who was this Indian soldier killing their soldiers? Eventually, they came to know that someone is shooting their men from the peepal tree. The British officer ordered his men to climb the tree and arrest this man. When the soldiers started going near the tree, Uda Devi **shot herself so that she could not be caught alive by the British.** The British were shocked to know that the Indian soldier who killed their men was a woman! They had never seen such act of bravery by any soldier before!

Lesson: Uda Devi Pasi's story teaches us that courage is never linked to caste or gender. Women are not just meant to take care of the household - they can also pick up a gun, if needed. The passion to die for the country can be in everyone's heart. If people like Uda Devi can risk their lives, then we can at least raise our voice for our rights and our country.



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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

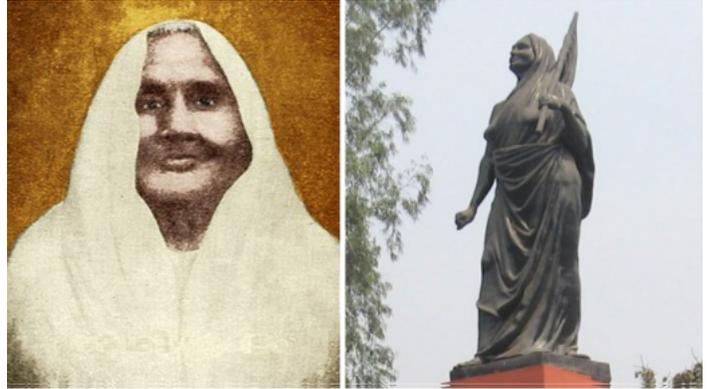
Matangini Hazra

the Grandmother who took Bullets holding the Tricolor

Place: Midnapore, West Bengal

This is the story of an elderly woman who was neither a soldier nor a leader... but she had great **passion for freedom**. Her name was — **Matangi Hazra**.

Matangini was born in 1870 in a small village in Bengal. Poverty and struggle were her companions since childhood. Marriage at a young age, then her husband's death soon after... but these sorrows did not break her, but made her stronger!



Matangini Hazra jumped into the freedom struggle at the age of 60, when Gandhiji started the 'Salt Satyagraha' against the British. She went from village to village and started connecting people to the freedom struggle. For doing this, the British sent her to jail. But this did not stop her from participating in the freedom struggle. She continued to organize people to fight against the British.

The Quit India Movement in 1942. Matangini was now 72 years old, but still young at heart. One day, along with 6000 people of the village, she marched towards a Police Chowki in Midnapore carrying the Tricolour. The objective was to remove the Union Jack and hoist the Tricolour.

The British soldiers got scared – and started firing. Everyone retreated, but Matangini did not stop. **3 bullets hit her body!** But the tricolour kept fluttering in her hand until she fell.

Even in her last breath there was only one word – "Vande Mataram!"

Lesson: Matangini Hazra teaches us that **patriotism doesn't depend on age**. If there is courage and true intention in the heart, then **even a single old woman can shake the roots of an empire**. There are **thousands of unsung heroes like Matangini**. We are indebted for our freedom to such heroes.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Durgabai Deshmukh: Young Age, Big Dream

Place: Rajahmundry, Andhra Pradesh

Long ago, in a city called Rajmundri in Andhra Pradesh, a lovely girl was born in 1909. Her name was **Durgabai Deshmukh**. She did not come from a rich family - her father and mother were from an ordinary family. But Durgabai had big dreams.

At the age of 10, when children play with toys, **Durgabai** had started a school for the women in Kakinada city. Here, she taught Hindi alongwith her mother to more than 500 women from the nearby villages, so that they could join the freedom struggle.

One day, **Mahatma Gandhi and Kasturba Gandhi** came to this school. After seeing the courage and hard work of such a small girl, he said - "*She is a true patriot!*" Gandihji told her about the swadeshi movement. From that day onwards **Durgabai started wearing khadi** to boycott the foreign clothes.

Here's another daring anecdote. Durgabai got married at the **age of 8 years**. But when she grew up, she decided to **leave her husband to complete her studies**. She completed her BA & MA and went on to become a Lawyer at Madras (present day Chennai).

But becoming a lawyer wasn't just her dream — her dream was **serving the country**. She actively took part in the **Salt Satyagraha & Quit India Movement** and was **jailed several times**.

After independence, she founded the '**Andhra Mahila Sabha**', which continues to run schools, hospitals, and orphanages to this day. She became a **member of the Constituent Assembly** and raised her voice **against child marriage, dowry, and the purdah system**.

For her work, she was honored with the *Padma Vibhushan* in 1975.

Lesson: Durgabai teaches us that if one's determination is strong, any girl — no matter how young — can bring about great change. Through education, courage, and hard work, she can change the course of the nation. Durgabai's story is an inspiration for every child.



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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Mallu Akka

Place: Warangal, Andhra Pradesh

Many years ago, in a small village in Andhra Pradesh, there lived a girl named Mallu. Her father was a farmer, but the exploitation by landlords had made life very difficult for the family. From childhood, Mallu had seen how poor farmers were forced to pay heavy taxes and how those who protested were beaten.

At just 11 years old, she raised slogans against the British government and the landlords. By

the time she was 13, she had joined the

Telangana Movement. Gradually, Mallu Akka became a leader in the struggle for people's rights — attending secret meetings, spreading awareness, and, **when necessary, even picking up a gun.**

Once, Mallu and her companions took grain from a landlord's house and distributed it among the poor. When some people called it theft, Mallu replied: **"The British and landlords loot everything from us. We take it away from them and distribute it among the poor and hungry. How can this be theft?"**

When Mallu was 15, she was arrested. But **even in prison, she did not give up.** She began teaching the inmates and encouraging them. Later, Mallu Akka became a member of the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. She always said — **"I am not a leader, I am a companion of the people."**

Lesson: Whether young or old, it is important to raise your voice against injustice. Courage, truth, and the spirit of living for others are the real strength. To bring change, you don't need a high position — you need a big heart and strong determination.



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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Kartar Singh Sarabha

The Boy who went to the Gallows Laughing

Place: Ludhiana, Punjab

Kartar Singh Sarabha was born in Punjab in 1896. He was very smart and stubborn since childhood. But the deepest thing in his heart was love for the country. When he was just 15 years old, the spark of freedom had already ignited in his heart.

At the age of 18, he went to America for studies. There he saw that many Indian immigrants were also trying to liberate their country. It was here that he joined the **Ghadar Party**. This party was preparing to bring revolution in India while staying on foreign soil.



Kartar Singh fearlessly started working against British rule. He secretly prepared people for freedom, wrote patriotic articles and poems and secretly printed pamphlets.

In 1914, he returned to India and started planning the rebellion. But soon the British got the news. Kartar Singh was arrested. When he was asked to apologize in court for working against the British, he thundered – **"Why should I apologize? You all should apologize for making us slaves. Freeing our country is not a crime. If I had 100 lives, I would sacrifice them all for the country!"**

He was hanged at the age of just 19. Kartar Singh sacrificed his life at a very young age. He could not see India becoming independent, but his sacrifice did not go in vain. His martyrdom inspired thousands of youth to follow the path of freedom – one of them was none other than **Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh**, who considered him as his inspiration.

Lesson: Kartar Singh's story teaches us that age never matters - what matters is intention, courage and love for our country. We all owe this freedom to those youth who sacrificed themselves for the country. They sacrificed their lives **for our freedom.**

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

The Story of Veerbala Kanaklata

Place: Barangbari, Assam

Many years ago, in a small village in Assam, a brave girl was born – her name was Kanaklata Barua. At just 17, her heart brimmed with love for her country and unshakable courage.

When Kanaklata was very young, her mother passed away, and a few years later, her father too. Orphaned, she was lovingly raised by her grandmother. She did well in studies and helped with household chores, yet one thought kept returning – ***“Why is my country not free?”***



In 1942, when Gandhiji launched the Quit India Movement, the entire nation stirred. In Assam, it was decided to hoist the tricolour at British police stations.

Kanaklata resolved – ***“I will not stay at home. I must fight for freedom.”***

Early one morning, she set out on foot with her companions to hoist the flag at Gohpur police station, 80 miles away. The tricolour was in their hands, the cry of ***“Do or die!”*** on their lips.

As they reached the station, policemen shouted – ***“One more step and we shoot!”*** But Kanaklata stood firm. Like a lioness she said – ***“We are souls; the body is mortal. The guilty fear – we fight for what is right.”*** She stepped forward... a bullet struck her chest. Then, another! And yet, another!

As she fell, the tricolour did not. Seeing this, a young Mukund ran to seize it; he too was shot and martyred. Still, their friends pressed on – and finally, the flag was raised!

Lesson: Kanaklata never saw the dawn of freedom, but her sacrifice lit the flame in thousands of young hearts. Our liberty is the gift of such heroes – who embraced death for the nation. Girls like Kanaklata prove that patriotism knows no age, only passion.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Shirish Kumar Mehta

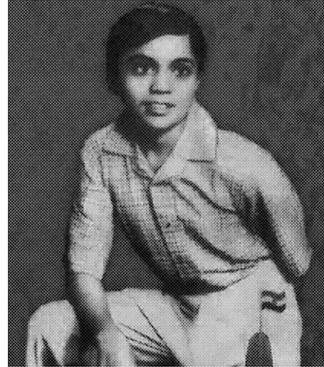
The fearless boy who sacrificed his life for the Tricolor

Place: Nandurbar, Maharashtra

This is the story of a teenager, only 15 years old, whose heart blazed with a volcano of courage and patriotism. His name was Shirish Kumar.

The year was 1942. The Quit India Movement had swept across the nation. Everywhere, people were pulling down the Union Jack from British offices, police stations and government buildings,

replacing it with the Tricolour. In Nandurbar, Maharashtra, a large procession of children and youth was taken out – **led by the 15-year old Shirish Kumar.**



As the procession reached the British office, police blocked their way. They warned – ***"Step back, or we will shoot!"*** But Shirish stood firm. He shouted – ***"We don't care. We are here for the freedom of our beloved country!"*** and marched ahead, chest held high, flag held tight.

A shot rang out... Shirish Kumar fell on the spot – yet the tricolour never left his grasp. At just 15, he did what even the bravest could only dream of. The whole region shook with his sacrifice. People lifted him on their shoulders, shouting – ***"Long live Shirish Kumar!"***

In his memory, the Child Martyr Shirish Kumar Memorial stands in Nandurbar.

Lesson: Shirish Kumar's story proves that patriotism demands courage, not age. When one fearlessly stands for what is right, they create history. The freedom we cherish today is the gift of such young martyrs. The tricolour they guarded with their lives must always be honoured.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

The Story of Narayan Dabhade

Place: Pune, Maharashtra

Have you ever wondered — what would happen if you shouted slogans against the British while walking to school?

Today we can speak freely — but in 1942, even raising a single slogan could mean jail... or death! And in those days, there was a college student — Narayan Dabhade. Not a big leader, not a minister — just an Indian youth with patriotism flowing through his veins.



This is the story of the Quit India Movement, when Gandhiji told the people — ***“Enough is enough! The British must quit India!”***

That day, it felt as if lightning had swept across the country. Old men, young people, even small schoolchildren poured into the streets. Narayan Dabhade was one such brave student — studying at Garware College in Pune. But that day, he closed his books. On his shoulder was not a schoolbag, but courage. And he set out into the streets, shouting, ***“British, Quit India!”***

The lanes of Tilak Road echoed with their voices. He and his companions marched fearlessly. Then the British blocked their way. ***“Move aside!”*** they ordered. But Narayan Dabhade did not step back. He said — ***“We are demanding our country’s freedom — and it is our right!”***

And then... bang! A bullet was fired! Straight into Narayan’s chest. He staggered... but before falling, he shouted once more — ***“Bharat Mata ki Jai!”***

Only 19 years old — yet with a courage that left even the British stunned.

Lesson: Courage does not depend on age. One who stands firmly for what is right becomes immortal, even in death. And the freedom that today feels so easy — was earned through such sacrifices.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Bhagat Singh Jhuggiyan

Place: Hoshiarpur, Punjab

This is another deeply inspiring story of Bhagat Singh Jhuggian, who, at a very young age, amazed the British with his remarkable courage and patriotism. Born in Punjab's Hoshiarpur district, he was in the fourth grade, yet in spirit and bravery he was no less than a great warrior.



Once, during a school assembly, a British officer ordered him to shout, “**Long live British rule.**” Only eleven years old, Bhagat Singh Jhuggian loudly declared before the whole gathering — “**Down with British rule, long live Hindustan!**”

The officer beat him on the spot and ensured that no school in the region would admit him.

But Bhagat Singh did not give up. He became a **secret messenger and press operator** in the freedom struggle. On dark nights, he would carry heavy parts of a machine called ‘**Udara Press**’ in sacks to hidden revolutionary bases, returning days later with supplies of fertilizer, grain, and rations — his courage even made the police fear him!

He not only contributed to the freedom movement but also worked for farmers and workers after independence. In 1945, he founded the **Azadi Committee** to spread awareness about peace, patriotism, and cooperation. The British took strict action against him, yet he neither feared nor retreated.

Lesson: Age never matters; with passion and courage, even a child can achieve great deeds. True freedom is not only rebellion, but also service, unity, and love for the nation. Such people are the true soldiers of independence. Their names may be little known, but in inspiring others, they are the greatest.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Begum Hazrat Mahal - A Queen Who Never Bowed

Place: Ludhiana, Punjab

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine — the year is 1857, and there is unrest all around. People of India have risen to drive away the British. In Jhansi, Lakshmibai stands in the battlefield with her sword, and on the other side — in Lucknow — another queen stands tall and unyielding. Her name is **Begum Hazrat Mahal**.



The British had deposed her husband, Nawab Wajid Ali Shah, and sent him away to Calcutta. At such a time, Begum Hazrat Mahal decided to fight.

She declared her young son — only 11 years old at the time — the ruler of Lucknow, and **herself became the commander of the army**. She united the common people of Lucknow, trained soldiers, and confronted the British head-on. Her leadership was so powerful that, **for a while, the British were forced to abandon Lucknow**.

But the British returned with a larger army and shrewd diplomacy. They attacked Lucknow once again. Did Begum lose courage? No! Riding on horseback, sword in hand, she went from village to village, boosting the morale of the people. She brought Hindus & Muslims together to fight as one.

When the British's final assault destroyed everything, she moved to Nepal and took refuge there — but she never sought the British's pardon, never begged to be reinstated as queen, and never betrayed her country.

Lesson: True leadership stands firm even in the face of crisis. A woman can lead an army and fight the British. Patriotism means never giving up the fight for your country, no matter how dire the situation.

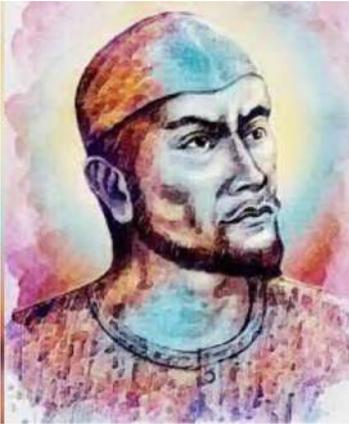
Today, as we breathe freely in open air, we must remember that our independence was won not only through the sacrifices of men, but also through the equal courage and contributions of brave women.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Peer Ali Khan: The Revolutionary Bookseller

Place: Patna, Bihar



Many years ago, there lived a brave bookseller — Peer Ali Khan. He sold books, but in his heart burned the flame of freedom.

Born in 1812 in Patna, Peer Ali Khan was a trader and ran a small bookshop. Outwardly, he appeared to be an ordinary man, but within, he was like a volcano — ready to erupt against British injustice.

In 1857, when the wave of rebellion swept across the country — what we now call the ***First War of Independence*** — Peer Ali Khan began uniting people against the British. He **delivered secret messages, spread awareness among the people, and planned revolutionary activities**. He was a close associate of Maulvi Ahmadullah Shah of Faizabad and had built a strong network of revolutionaries from Bihar to North India.

But the British grew suspicious. They raided his shop in Patna and found revolutionary pamphlets, letters, and plans. Peer Ali was arrested and charged with treason.

When presented in court, he fearlessly declared: ***“I have worked for India’s independence. It was my duty — not a crime.”***

On July 18, 1857, he was executed by hanging in front of the public in Patna. This was done to instill fear in the people. But instead, his death sparked even more uprisings in Patna. Today, his name might not appear in history books — but in the story of India’s freedom struggle, Peer Ali Khan remains immortal.

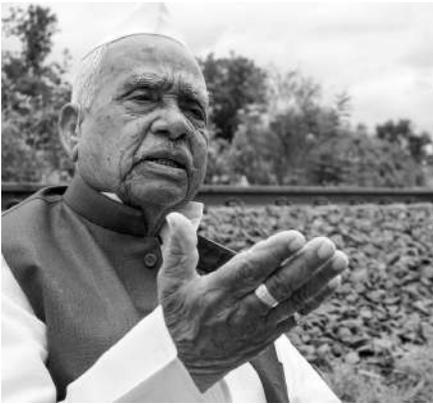
Lesson: His courage teaches us that if one’s heart holds bravery and love for the country, even an ordinary bookseller can change the course of history.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Captain Bhau and the Toofan Sena

Place: Satara, Maharashtra



Many years ago, when India was under British rule, the British were looting our country's wealth, and anyone who dared to oppose them was thrown into jail.

But there was one place — Satara — where some brave people refused to remain silent. There, a secret government was formed, called the ***Prati Sarkar*** (parallel government). This government worked underground, helped the poor, and outwitted the British.

In this government, there was a courageous young man named Ramchandra Shripati Lad, lovingly called *Captain Bhau*. Captain Bhau was no ordinary leader. He organised a group of children and teenagers, which he named the ***Toofan Sena*** (Storm Army). This army consisted of boys and girls aged 10 to 16, who fearlessly worked against the British — delivering letters, passing secret messages to warn people, and, when needed, even transporting weapons. The Toofan Sena didn't only have children — teenagers, young adults, and even a few elderly people were also part of it.

One night, on June 7, 1943, Bhau and his companions stopped a train at the Shenoli railway station. That train was carrying British treasure and important goods. Bhau and his team took out the money, and handed it over to the *Prati Sarkar*. This money was used for schools, grains and supporting revolutionaries.

When someone asked him, “*Why did you steal?*” Bhau laughed and replied: “***We did not steal. The British have been looting us for years. We only took a little back for our own people — why call that stealing?***”

Captain Bhau had a big heart. He never let fear come near him. Even after India's independence, he continued to serve society. He lived to be 100 years old and bid farewell to the world in 2022.

Lesson: There is no age limit to serving your country. No weapon is greater than truth and courage. In difficult times, even small children can become heroes! Thanks to people like Captain Bhau, we can breathe freely today. His Toofan Sena may have been made up of children, but their deeds were greater than those of many adults.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi

Place: Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh

This is the story of a hero who fought neither with a sword nor with a gun — yet whose courage is remembered as an example for all. His name was **Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi** — a warrior who made the pen his weapon and fought for truth and humanity.



Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi was born in 1890 in the Allahabad district of Uttar Pradesh. Bright in studies, clear in thought, and with a heart burning with love for the country, he turned to journalism at a very young age and soon started a newspaper called ***Pratap***.

Through this paper, he raised his voice against British atrocities, the plight of farmers, and social injustice. The British could not tolerate this and imprisoned him several times, but Vidyarthi never gave up.

He was not just a journalist, but also a true social worker.

To weaken the freedom movement, the British followed their “**divide and rule**” policy. They deliberately incited clashes between Hindu and Muslim communities. In 1931, terrible riots broke out in Kanpur. Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi himself took to the streets to stop the violence. **Though he was a Hindu, he saved the lives of many Muslims.**

In this effort, **he was killed by a mob** and became a martyr.

His sacrifice proved that a true patriot is one who works to unite people — even if it means giving up his own life.

Lesson: Ganesh Shankar Vidyarthi's story teaches us that to bring about social change, slogans alone are not enough — sacrifice is also necessary. People like him will always remain alive in our hearts, like lamps that light the way even in the darkest times.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

The Brave Commander of Delhi – Bakht Khan

Place: Delhi

The year was 1857. Across India, the spark of rebellion against the British had ignited. Meerut, Kanpur, Jhansi, Lucknow... everywhere, soldiers were revolting. At that time, from Bareilly, a tall, strong, and intelligent officer marched toward Delhi with hundreds of his soldiers. His name was — **Bakht Khan**.

Bakht Khan was no ordinary soldier. He held the high rank of **Subedar Major** in the East India Company's army. But witnessing British tyranny, exploitation, and the plunder of the country, a volcano of rebellion erupted in his heart.



Upon reaching Delhi, he met the Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar and said firmly, "**Maharaj, give me command over your soldiers. I will drive the British out of Delhi.**"

Bakht Khan reorganized the army, took charge of the artillery, and launched fierce attacks on the British. He was a courageous, disciplined, and farsighted commander. But unfortunately, some members of the royal court ignored his advice — and that proved to be the gravest mistake.

Eventually, the British recaptured Delhi. Bakht Khan fought bravely, retreated when necessary, but never surrendered. In the years that followed, he continued to fight against the British. In the end, he **attained martyrdom on the battlefield**. His death brought relief to the British — for a hero like Bakht Khan was their greatest threat.

Today, no one knows where his final resting place is. But as a valiant warrior of the First War of Independence in 1857, his name is immortal in history. Many soldiers and common people drew inspiration from him to fight the British.

Lesson: Patriotism is not proven through speeches — it is proven through action and sacrifice. Bakht Khan dreamt of freedom and fought for it until his last breath. If we live in a free India today, it is largely because of the countless unknown heroes like him. By remembering his sacrifice, we too must work for our country with honesty, courage, and a spirit of service.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Babu Genu – The 22-Year-Old Fearless Revolutionary

Place: Pune, Maharashtra

Today, I am going to tell you the story of a young man — only 22 years old, yet so courageous that the British Raj itself was shaken!

His name was **Babu Genu**. He was born in 1908 in a poor Dalit family in Pune. The family's financial condition was extremely difficult. From childhood, he worked as a laborer in a textile mill. He could not complete his education, but in his heart, the flame of patriotism always burned brightly.



Mahatma Gandhi's **Swadeshi Movement** deeply influenced him. He developed a strong opposition towards foreign goods. In 1930, the boycott of foreign goods was in full swing across India. People wore khadi and burned foreign cloth in protest.

One day, a truck was passing through the streets of Pune. It was carrying cloth imported from England, guarded by British officers. At that moment, Babu Genu arrived there. He stopped the truck and said in a firm voice — ***"This foreign, treacherous cloth will not be sold on our land! If you want to sell it, you will have to crush me first!"***

The British officer was enraged. He ordered the truck driver to move forward, but the driver refused. In a fit of anger, the officer climbed onto the truck himself and shouted — ***"I will crush this Indian under the wheels!"*** And then, he drove the truck over Babu Genu. He was martyred on the spot!

The news spread like wildfire. Thousands of people took to the streets, burning foreign cloth in protest. **The sacrifice of an ordinary laborer stirred the entire city of Pune.**

Lesson: Babu Genu teaches us that patriotism does not require wealth or high status — it comes from the heart. If a simple laborer could give his life to stop the British, then surely, we too can do something for our country.

Today, when you wear khadi or use any Swadeshi product, remember — you are carrying forward the unfinished dream of Babu Genu.

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Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Ashfaqullah Khan

Place: Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh

India was under British rule — it was a time long ago. In 1900, in the city of Shahjahanpur, Uttar Pradesh, a brave boy was born — his name was Ashfaqulla Khan. He came from a Pathan Muslim family, but in his heart, love for the nation was far greater than any religion.

From childhood, the dream of a free India fascinated him. The injustices of the British deeply disturbed him, and his greatest wish was to see India independent.

Gradually, he came into contact with revolutionaries like Shaheed-e-Azam Bhagat Singh and Ram Prasad Bismil, and joined the revolutionary organisation *Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)*.

In 1925, he and his companions made a daring plan — to loot the British treasury and raise funds for the revolution. This plan became famous in history as the Kakori Conspiracy. On 9th August, **they stopped a train and looted the British treasure.** This bold act shook the British, who intensified their search for the revolutionaries.

A few months later, Ashfaqulla Khan was betrayed by one of his own acquaintances and arrested. In prison, he faced inhuman torture, yet despite all interrogations, he never revealed the name of any comrade. He was kept in Faizabad Jail.

On 19th December 1927, he was hanged. Before his execution, he firmly declared: ***"I am a Muslim, and I do not believe in rebirth. But still, I wish to be born in India again and again, and each time, I want to sacrifice my life for the nation."***

Lesson: Ashfaqulla Khan proved that a true patriot rises above religion, caste, or creed — he lives only for the motherland and lays down his life for her.



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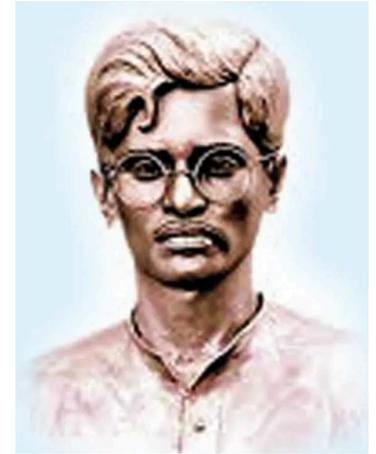
Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Bhai Kotwal – The Revolutionary of Matheran

Place: Matheran, Maharashtra

In the lap of the mountains lay the village of Matheran, where a brave young man named Bhai Kotwal was born. His heart beat not only for Matheran, but for the whole of India.

Bhai Kotwal was an intelligent student, a lawyer, and a social worker. To help farmers and poor families, **he started schools**, and **opened grain shops** so that the needy could get food at affordable prices. He inspired people to forget the walls of caste and religion and to become friends with one another.



At that time, British atrocities were increasing day by day, and anger was rising in the hearts of the youth. Bhai Kotwal decided — ***“Enough is enough! Now we must raise our voice!”*** He joined the Quit India Movement and began working underground in Thane district against the British.

His greatest contributions included delivering secret information, cutting British telephone lines, and disrupting British vehicles — acts that gave new energy to the freedom struggle. The British were chasing him, but Bhai Kotwal kept working, sometimes hiding in the forest, sometimes in the hills, and sometimes in villages.

One day, however, due to betrayal, the British caught him and threw him into Thane jail. **They thought that fear of death would make Bhai Kotwal reveal everything.** But he did not utter a single word, keeping all secrets buried in his heart. Frustrated, the British sentenced him to death.

On 22 August 1943, his death sentence was announced, and on 10 May 1945, Bhai Kotwal kissed the hangman's noose with a smile — but never let the tricolour bow.

Lesson: Bhai Kotwal taught that the fight for freedom is not won only with swords, but also with courage, intelligence, and loyalty. He is a true unsung hero — whose sacrifice allows us to breathe freely today.

STORIES

Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan - Frontier Gandhi

Place: North West Frontier, Pakistan

Many years ago, in what is now Pakistan, a Pathan warrior was born — not one who wished to fight with the sword, but with peace and love. His name was Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan, affectionately called **Frontier Gandhi**.



At the time, Pathans were often stereotyped as hot-tempered and quarrelsome. But Khan Sahib told his people — ***“True courage is not in raising the sword, but in keeping one’s anger under control.”***

He dedicated his entire life to the path of non-violence and service. He formed an organisation called ***Khudai Khidmatgar*** — meaning **Servants of God**. Its members did not carry weapons; they wore red shirts and spread the message of service, truth, and brotherhood. Thousands of Pathans joined — **including children!**

These children were fearless. They moved from village to village, keeping watch on British officials’ movements, making people aware, and troubling the British through satyagraha — without any violence! They were unafraid of going to jail or being beaten by the police. Once, a British officer even remarked, ***“We have never seen anyone as brave as these children!”***

The British were astonished — such courageous people, yet without weapons! But Khan Sahib stood firm — ***“We don’t want revenge, we want change.”***

His philosophy transformed the image of the Pathans. He showed the world that the real test of bravery lies in forgiving others and fighting for the country through peaceful means.

Lesson: Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan teaches us — when the heart is big, there is never any need for violence.

STORIES

Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Allah Bux Soomro

Place: Sindh



It was a difficult time. India was under British rule. Every corner of the country yearned for freedom. Protests were erupting in some places, slogans were being raised in others. But alongside this struggle, another dangerous shadow was spreading — some people were speaking of dividing India in the name of religion.

At such a time, a fearless leader stepped forward — **Allah Bux Soomro**. He was born in 1890 in a simple family in Sindh province. He was neither from a royal family nor a big landlord.

But in his heart burned a deep love for the country and immense courage to fight for justice. At a young age, he entered politics. Through honesty and hard work, he became the Prime Minister of Sindh province. Yet power never went to his head. He always mingled with the people, listened to their troubles, and said, ***“I am not a leader, I am a servant of the people!”***

When the country needed freedom the most, some tried to build walls between Hindus and Muslims. But Allah Bux did not remain silent. He founded the **Azad Party** and declared clearly — ***“India is one, no one can divide it! Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians — all are children of this soil.”***

As a protest against British rule, **he renounced all titles and awards given by the British**. He joined the Quit India Movement of 1942. Like Gandhi, he firmly believed in non-violence and unity. His dream was an independent and undivided India.

He led many Muslim rallies opposing the partition of India. Millions of Hindus and Muslims came together in his movement. This angered those who wanted India to be divided.

On **14 May 1943**, while going to attend a programme, he was shot dead by two armed men... and the country lost a true son.

Lesson: Allah Bux Soomro showed that true patriotism goes beyond religion, caste, or language. If the heart is brave and the intention pure, no force can break us. His story still tells us today —

“Fear not, speak the truth! Do not fight among yourselves, walk together!”

STORIES

Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

The Story of Magician Shobharam

Place: Ajmer, Rajasthan

In a small village in Ajmer, there lived a simple and straightforward boy — Shobharam Geharwar. He came from the Dalit community. He looked ordinary, but in his heart burned an intense flame of freedom.

By the age of just 14–15, he had plunged into the freedom struggle. He had no weapons, no high education. But he had a different kind of power — **the art of blending in under any disguise!** Sometimes a farmer, sometimes a laborer, sometimes a saint — changing his appearance, he would evade the eyes of the British police.

Once, none other than Chandrashekhar Azad took him to a secret forest location where bombs were being made. Even when the police were nearby, Shobharam would slip away quietly — like a magician! That's why people called him **'The Magician of Ajmer.'**

One amusing yet dangerous incident occurred in his life. His companions once set off an explosion of gunpowder by the riverside, and just then, by chance, a tiger came to drink water. The sound of the blast scared the tiger away... but it threw the British police party into total confusion! In that chaos, Shobharam and his companions escaped unharmed.

Shobharam also **worked as a human postman.** Since the British government used to inspect letters, contacting underground revolutionaries had become difficult. But he bravely carried messages — often risking his life. Once, the police even shot him in the leg, yet he still managed to escape!

After independence, Shobharam never sought any position, award, or publicity. He always said — **"I worked for the country, not for my name."**

It is because of brave, clever, and selfless patriots like Shobharam that we are free today. They had no greed for power — only the longing to live for the nation.

Lesson: Whether young or old — it is important to speak out against injustice. True strength does not lie in a high chair, but in a big heart, courage, and firm determination.



STORIES

Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Hausa Patil: The Brave Sister of the Forest

Place: Satara, Maharashtra



Have you ever imagined someone fighting the British without a gun, without an army, and without fear? Hausa Patil was one such courageous woman — by day she would plough her fields, and by night she would fight for freedom in the forests! From a small village in Maharashtra, she openly challenged British rule — without stopping, without fear.

At that time, a secret parallel government called *Prati Sarkar* had been set up to fight against the British — the people's own government! Hausa Didi worked tirelessly for this cause — carrying messages under the cover of darkness, giving medicines to injured comrades, secretly bringing food and clothes away from the eyes of the British... She would often say, "***The soil of my village has fed me; now it's time to give something back to it!***"

Hausa Didi's greatest strength was her courage and cleverness. Once, when British soldiers came to her village to capture her, the local women hid her in different places — sometimes in the rice fields, sometimes near the village well, sometimes along forest trails.

One of her most thrilling adventures was crossing the Krishna River. It was a dark night, the river was in full flood, and there was no bridge. But Hausa Didi did not lose courage. She and her companions crossed the river bravely — sometimes on wooden planks, sometimes on the broken wheel of a bullock cart. The current was strong, the water was ice-cold — but the fire in their hearts burned hotter!

In the history of our freedom struggle, we hear many great names, but we must never forget simple yet extraordinary women like Hausa Patil. She often said, "***We didn't do anything big; we only did what was needed.***"

Lesson: Hausa Patil was not a queen; she had neither sword nor army. Yet she was a true warrior. She showed that even small acts, when done with sincerity, can play a big role in freeing a nation. Today, we can go to school and express our thoughts freely because Hausa Didi and thousands like her won that freedom for us. We too should strive to be fearless, bold, and true patriots like her.

STORIES

Unsung Heroes of India's Freedom Struggle

Usha Mehta - The Quietest Yet the Loudest Voice

Place: Surat, Gujarat

The year was 1920. The place — Surat city in Gujarat. There, a tiny, adorable baby girl was born. Her name was Usha Mehta. While other children enjoyed playing in the courtyard, a blazing flame of patriotism already burned in Usha's heart.

Once, when she was just 8 years old, she took part in Gandhiji's Civil Disobedience

Movement. Little Usha shouted powerful slogans — ***“British, Quit India!”***

In 1942, Gandhiji launched the Quit India Movement. The British government panicked and arrested all major leaders, including Gandhiji and Nehruji. A big question now arose — how would Gandhiji's message and the real news reach the people?

At this crucial moment, **Usha Didi devised a daring plan**. Along with a few trusted companions, she started a **secret radio station** — *“Congress Radio.”* Broadcasting from a hidden room, every day Usha Didi would send out real news about the movement, Gandhiji's and other leaders' speeches, and instructions on the next steps to take.

The British police got wind of it and began an investigation. Many times, Usha Didi and her team had to run from place to place, hiding with their radio equipment, but they never gave up. Finally, on 12 August 1942, the British caught her. She was subjected to intense interrogation and threats — but Usha Didi stood firm like a rock. **She never revealed the names of any of her companions.** She was sentenced to prison, but in her heart she carried only one dream — ***“My India must be free!”***

After independence, Usha Mehta devoted her life to education, women's empowerment, and social service. The Government of India honoured her with several awards, including the ***Padma Vibhushan***.

Lesson: Serving the country has no age limit — it only needs courage. Even a young girl can raise her voice and make history. There is no power greater than truth and courage.

