INTRODUCTION

The writer needs no apology for bringing out the present volume. The achievements of the Indian National Army and the story of the bold bid made for the Independence of India by the Indian patriots in East Asia, are so fascinating and soul-stirring that they have created a deep interest and desire in the minds of Indian public to know more and more about them. The Indians in East Asia, first under the able guidance of that veterans revolutionary-Sri Rash Behari Bose and General Mohan Singh and then under the dynamic personality of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose made a novel experience of winning the Freedom India from without. The movement was so wonderfully organized and its achievements, were so glorious that even the worst enemies of India had to acknowledge its force and potentialities. The Indians of all nationalities in East-Asia gave their whole-hearted and willing co-operation and support to the movement. With an unrivalled fervour and zeal, they gladly sacrificed their all, including their lives at the Altar of their country's freedom. When Netaji asked them for the 'total mobilization' of their resources to fight the enemy, the response was magnificent. Millions of dollars were collected in no time, thousands of youngmen offered themselves for national service and not a few families dedicated their all for the cause of their motherland. Never before in our history was so much spirit, enthusiasm or unquenchable thirst for freedom infused in our hearts.

The Indian Independence Movement in East Asia, has made an immense contribution to our struggle for freedom. The political achievements of those three years and eight months (Dec. 1941-Aug. 1945) have enabled the Indians to raise their heads with pride and dignity before the world. For the first time in modern history a Government of Free India was formed and recognized by nine friendly powers. A National Army several thousands strong, armed with modern weapons and trained and officered entirely by Indians was formed and recognized as an Army of Free India. This Army fired by boundless enthusiasm and a desire to 'Do or Die' for India's emancipation, went to battle with slogans of 'Chalo Delhi' and 'Blood, Blood and Blood' on their lips. They proved their mettle on the battle-field and by their personal disregard of dangers and hardships and by their enormous sacrifices left an impress on India's history, which can never be effaced.

The desire to serve in the cause of India's liberation, became such a burning passion with the East-Asia Indians, that even the women-folk came forward and asked to be enlisted as soldiers in the Army of Liberation. So a special regiment known as Rani of Jhansi Regiment was formed. The members of this corps underwent full military training and gave as good an account of themselves as their brothers-in-
They gave a practical proof of the magnificent part, which the Indian women can play in India’s battle of Freedom and became a living example to Indian womanhood in future for patriotism and heroism.

The Azad Hind Fauj had another subsidiary organization called the ‘Balak Sainia.’ Thousands of boys and girls from eight years upwards joined this body and received national training. They were brought up in an atmosphere of patriotism and independence and showed a wonderful spirit of sacrifice, comradeship and enthusiasm in the great cause.

But Nataji did not give his attention to military matters only. With a peculiar organizing capacity, penetrating insight and far-sightedness, he set up an elaborate Government machinery to run the movement. The ‘Azad Hind Bank’, the Civilian Training Centres to train civilians as administrators in liberated areas, the ‘Azad Hind Dal’ and various other departments under the Indian Independence League were efficiently organized and bore an eloquent testimony to the remarkable resourcefulness and the magnificent administrative and organizing capacity of the Indians.

The marvellous sacrifices of the East-Asia Indians and the Azad Hind Fauj have not gone in vain. They have left many lessons for us and have instilled in us faith and confidence in our mission as well as in our capabilities. No doubt, the movement failed to achieve its immediate object but the bold struggle and innumerable sacrifices form a glorious chapter of the Indian Independence Movement and deserve to be written in letters of gold. Their amazing sacrifices would serve as a beacon-light to inspire and guide the nationalist India in its fight for freedom.

A true, authentic and comprehensive account of the whole movement was, therefore, a hard necessity. During the days of the struggle itself, true facts did not come to light due to the strict censorship by the Indian Government. No doubt, there were regular broadcasts from the Azad-Hind Radio Stations at Saigon, Singapore and Bangkok, but very little was known about these to the general Indian public. Instead incorrect and distorted accounts of the movement were given out by the British Broadcasting stations and All India Radio, in which it was stressed that the Indian National Army was Japanese-sponsored Army and a puppet in their hands. No stone was left unturned to discredit the movement and lower the liberators of India in the eyes of the Indian public.

The cessation of war has brought to light the true and bright side of the Indian Independence Movement in East Asia to some extent. The personal contact of the leaders of the movement with the Indian public and the facts placed before the Court-Martial in the first trial of the officers of the Indian National Army, have helped to dispel many a doubt and suspicions. Quite a large number of books have been published on this subject, but due to their zeal to be first in the market or to their ignorance of facts, most of the writers have indulged in half-truths and have produced reading matter, which gives very meagre and scanty knowledge and mostly incorrect and incomplete information about the
movement. An all-comprehensive and exhaustive account of the whole movement was urgently needed in order to appease the thirst of the Indian public for a true and fuller information about this glorious movement. It is with this object in view that I have made this humble attempt to set forth, the history of the movement in detail.

I went to Malaya in 1936 and from the very beginning associated myself with the Indian patriots there and began to work for the movement in my own humble way. Just after the attack of the Japanese on Malaya I along with some other friends, started a paper called 'Azad Hind' and we began to do active propaganda in the British Indian Army and Malai Indians to fight for the freedom of India. The paper was made over to the Indian Independence League, after the fall of Singapore and later on became its official organ. I was all along actively connected with the movement and had therefore had the opportunity of having first-hand and inner knowledge about it. In the later stages, I was selected as a member of the Azad Hind Sewak Dal, which was trained for the civil administration of the liberated areas. In that capacity, I had the privilege of marching along with the Azad Hind Fauj upto the Arakan and Imphal Fronts and work in the liberated areas of Manipur. I returned to Malaya with Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, when he left Burma on the 24th April, 1945.

Much of the account of the Indian Independence Movement was available to the general public in East Asia in the form of official reports, statements, speeches and Govt. documents, newspapers, pamphlets, books and propaganda leaflets, published on a large scale, during the period of active operations. But I had also the benefit of have personal knowledge and the rare privilege of having access to some of the private and secret documents of the Indian Independence League. After the surrender of the Japanese, I had to go underground for about one year. During this period the available material was sifted and sorted and it is with this authentic material that the present volume has been compiled.

I have set forth the bare facts about the movement in a chronological order and have purposely refrained from giving any colour to these or commenting upon controvertial matters. I do not claim to have any degree of command over English language or to have presented the reader with a literary treaties. But I hope the book would give the reader a true picture of the eventful four years of Indian Independence Movement in East Asia.

About the disruptions and ruptures between the Indian leaders during the first stages of the movement, my personal view is that they were due to honest differences of opinion and so I have refrained from apportioning the blame.

India is passing through the most critical stage in her Independence struggle. The stage is being set for the final battle to free India. The pious hope of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose, "India would be free and before long" is going to materialize and more than ever India needs now the soul-stirring story of Netaji’s achievements. I hope, this book will be read with deep interest by all the patriotic Indians,
In the end, I have to thank my numerous friends for helping me to collect and preserve the records, more especially Mr. Ranbir Singh and S. Tarjit Singh of Messrs Boor Singh Inder Singh Bangkok for making available to me numerous valuable and rare photographs. I have also to thank Giani Lal Singh B. A. of Gujranwala, without whose active help and indefatigable efforts, this book would not have seen the light of the day. He kindly undertook to help me in sifting and arranging the matter and go through the proofs. My special thanks are due to Sriyut Sarat Chandara Bose, who very kindly spared time from his multifarious engagements to go through the book and write a foreword to it.

Mohini Road
Lahore
Jan. 18, 1947.

K. S. Giani.
Sri Rash Behari Bose

The firm freedom is necessary absolutely for the peace of the world and happiness of mankind.

26/6/42

General Mohan Singh

President Council of Action
Indian Independence League

General Officer Commanding
Indian National Army