

National Movement and the RSS

Dr. Gopal Parshad

Associate Professor, University College, Kurukshetra
University Kurukshetra

I. Introduction

The role of RSS in the national movement against the British rule was not an issue in the first five decades of the independence of India. This issue became hot for the critics of the RSS when Atal Bihari Vajpayee issued a postage stamp commemorating Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, the founder of the RSS, as a great freedom fighter, on 18th March 1999. Some writers like Shamsul Islam argue that RSS never took part in the anti-imperialist struggle. A prominent Communist Party of India (Marxist) leader Sita Ram Yechuri in his write-up „*What is Hindu Rashtra?*” said that „it virtually boycotted and at times opposed the freedom struggle.” Almost similar claims were also made by Sumit Sarkar (Marxist historian) and many other Communist leaders and some Congress leaders of India. It is believed that these leaders and historians have manipulated the truth, distorted facts and misinterpreted historical events.

The RSS as an organization or any individual *swayamsevak* never cooperated or integrated with the colonial government. Even Bipan Chandra, a Marxist historian, conceded though in a distorted manner to this fact when he writes, “Hedgewar never integrated with the colonial regime.”¹ Many leaders like Dr. Hedgewar, M. S. Golwalkar, V. D. Savarkar, etc. were staunch nationalists, suffered imprisonment during the colonial rule and directed all RSS *shakhas* to celebrate the Congress’s resolution on total independence by hoisting national flag on 26 January 1930 on its offices. Most of the RSS *swayamsevaks* not only participated in Salt Satyagraha and Quit India Movement but also helped the people during the communal violence which erupted during and after the partition of the country.²

Indian nationalists had acquired faith in their capacity to govern themselves and in the future development of the country. Leaders like Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Aurobindo Ghose, Damoder Chapekar, Shyamaji Krishna, V. D. Savarkar, Keshav Baliram Hedgewar, etc. preached the message of self-respect and asked the nationalists to rely on the character and capacity of Indian people. They had deep faith in the strength of the masses, and they planned to achieve Swaraj through mass action. They pressed for political for political work among the masses and for direct political action by the masses.³

During the last decade of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century, Maharashtra emerged as a big centre of Hindu nationalism. Particularly, Bal Gangadhar Tilak united people against the British by celebrating Ganpati Utsav in 1893 and Shivaji Utsav in 1895 as well as by publishing two newspapers, one in Marathi called *Kesari* and the other in English called *Maratha*. He was the first to tell the farmers of Maharashtra to withhold the payment of land revenue when their crops failed owing to famine and other natural calamities. He gave a call for the use of Swadeshi and the boycott of foreign goods when Elgin, the Viceroy, imposed an excise duty on Indian cloth.⁴ Consequently, British arrested Tilak in 1897 and charged him with spreading hatred and disaffection against the colonial government which led to the killing of plague officer, Mr. Rand and Mr. Ayerst. He was put in prison for eighteen months.⁵

After his return from South Africa to India, Dr. Balakrishna Shivram Moonje, who emerged as an inspirational figure for the young radicals in Nagpur, was a great admirer of Tilak and joined the Indian National Congress. Hedgewar also enjoyed his tutelage.⁶ Apart from this, Antaji Kale, a school teacher in Nagpur, not only collected funds for the relief of plague affected people in 1902, but also motivated young boys including Hedgewar to plunge into the fund-collection drive. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay writes, “...The young boy (Hedgewar) began visiting his neighbourhood and would seek out every person in religious congregations and festivals to make a donation of just one paisa each. Unlike the time when he had encouraged his friends to hoist Shivaji’s standard on top of local front, keshav’s Paisa Fund pitch was a larger initiative and was aimed at the average householder to become part of India’s struggle for independence.”⁷

On 20 July 1905, Lord Curzon issued an order dividing Bengal into two parts – Eastern Bengal and Assam with a population of 31 million, and the rest of Bengal with a population of 54 million, of whom 18 million were Bengalis and 36 million Biharis and Oriyas. It was argued by the British that the existing Bengal province was too large for a single provincial government to administer it efficiently. But according to Hindu nationalists the plan of the partition of Bengal was designed and implemented on communal lines. Consequently, the nationalists and Indian national Congress firmly opposed the partition. Anti-partition movement was initiated on 7 August 1905, and a massive demonstration against the partition was organized in

the Town Hall in Calcutta. After that, delegates were asked to spread the movement in other provinces also. 16 October, the day on which the partition was made effective was observed as the day of national mourning. There was a complete strike, and people went bare foot to take bath in the Ganga river, shouting *Vande Mataram* and singing patriotic songs. Soon after, Swadeshi and Boycott movement against the British rule developed rapidly throughout the country. Anand Mohan Bose, Gopal Krishan Gokhle, Bipin Chandra Pal, Bal Gangadhar Tilak, Lala Lajpat Rai, Arbindo Ghose, etc. participated in this movement.⁸ In Nagpur, the spirit of Swadeshi and Boycott movement spread like a bush fire beyond Bengal and soon it reached the shore of western parts of the country. Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar participated in the movement very enthusiastically and regularly. He said, "Bengal is the part of our motherland and we will never allow it to be divided." He not only led the procession against the British but also sang the patriotic song *Vande Mataram* composed by B. C. Chatterjee.⁹ In fact, he was very much inspired by the electrifying speeches made by the political leaders which had strengthened his resolve to learn the art of public speaking.¹⁰

After the formation of Muslim League in 1906, Hindu communalism also started sprouting up, and Hindu communal ideas were expounded and propagated stridently. Many Hindus favoured the adoption and execution of the ideas and programmes on the pattern of Muslim communalism and Muslim League. To counter Muslim communalism, the Punjab Hindu Sabha was founded in 1909 and its leaders asked the Congress to unite Indians, especially, Hindus into a nation. Its prominent leader Lal Chand announced that a Hindu should keep in his mind that he was „a Hindu first and an Indian later“. The first session of All India Hindu Mahasabha was held in April 1915 under the leadership of Maharaj Manindra Chandra Nandi. In this session, a decision was taken to promote greater unity and solidarity among all sections of Hindu Community, to unite them more closely as part of one organic whole and to protect and promote Hindu interests, whenever and wherever necessary.¹¹

Besides, on the advice of Moonje, Hedgewar went to Calcutta for medical education in the middle of 1910. This was the year when V. D. Savarkar was imprisoned in the Andaman and Nicobar Island's Cellular Jail, Hedgewar landed in Calcutta. During his stay there, he usually met students from different regions of the country. Apart from this, he was very much inspired by revolutionaries. It is believed that he not only took membership of *Yugantar* or *Anushilan Samiti*, a secret revolutionary group but also became a member of the core group of the *Samiti*.¹² His code name was „*Koken*‘. Even after his return from Calcutta to Nagpur in 1916, he established a revolutionary group with his friend Bhauji Krve and planned to spread the revolutionary movement across Maharashtra. This group was known as *Kranti Dal*.¹³ Dr. Hedgewar and many Hindu leaders also opposed the Lucknow Pact which was signed between Congress and Muslim League in 1916.¹⁴

In 1918, Hedgewar decided to join Indian National Congress in Nagpur, and established the Rashtriya Mandal to organize political campaigns in the city. At that time, most of the Congress leaders thought that India could only be a part of the British Empire. In contrast to this opinion, Hedgewar unequivocally demanded complete independence from colonial rule. The Rashtriya Mandal published a Hindi journal called *Sankalp* to unite Hindus and to achieve freedom from British rule.¹⁵ In the same year, Hedgewar formed the Rashtriya Utsav Mandal to organize cultural functions such as the birth and coronation anniversary of Shivaji, Ganesh Chaturthi, Shastra (weapon) puja, Vijaydasmi and Sankranti. The main purpose to celebrate these festivals was to unite Hindus and to strengthen the ideology of *Hindutva*.¹⁶

In February 1919, political climate turned grim with the introduction of Rowlatt Bills. The British government presented two Bills in imperial Legislative Council for the suppression of sedition and revolutionary activities. On this issue, Gandhi convened a meeting in his ashram. At this meeting, Vallabhbhai Patel, Sarojini Naidu, the Bombay merchant Umar Sobani, B. G. Horniman, Jamnadas Dwarkadas and the British-born and editor of nationalist newspaper, *The Bombay Chronicle*, signed a Satyagraha Pledge.¹⁷ When out of two Rowlatt Bills one was passed on 12 March 1919, despite unanimous Indian opposition, Gandhi's patience ran out. The new Act was enacted by the government with a view to curtailing civil liberties of the common people. The Act was obviously draconian since it authorized the police to search or arrest any Indian without warrant or confine suspects without trial for a renewable period of two years. Consequently, Gandhi announced that Sunday, 6 April would witness a nationwide general *hartal* (strike) in protest against the Rowlatt Act. He also appealed to the people to observe a day-long fast as well as to hold meetings and protest against the Bills.¹⁸

On 6 April 1919, *hartals* took place all over India. It was a unique success, but police firing on a Delhi crowd caused a number of casualties. Gandhi decided to lead *hartal* in Bombay, and he arrived at the Chowpatti beach where 1,50,000 people including Hindus, many Muslims, Parsis etc. were present. Cries of „*Bande Mataram*‘ filled the air. In his speech, Gandhi referred to the police firing on the Satyagrahi in Delhi, and he asked the people to promise that they would continue to suffer by civil disobedience till the hearts of the British were softened.¹⁹ Apart from this, in Karachi businessmen closed their shops, Hindus and Muslims, Parsis, Khojas, and Jains observed fast on that day.²⁰ In Patna, all shops remained closed on 6 April, and a meeting in the evening was attended by more than 10,000 people. In Bengal, a large number of people took part in Rowlatt

Satyagraha in Dacca, Murshidabad and Midnapore and Calcutta. Madras also observed complete *hartal*, and in the evening, more than 1,00,000 people attended a meeting.²¹ Shops were also closed in Lahore and Amritsar. Unity was seen between Hindus and Muslims. Gandhi was very much aware about Punjab. On 8 April, he boarded a train to Delhi from where he hoped to visit Punjab, but at Palwal railway station he was taken in police custody and sent back to Bombay. One hour after his arrest, the shops and markets in Lahore were closed. On the evening of 9 April, an order for peaceful demonstration was issued by two prominent congress leaders of Amritsar, Satyapal and Dr. Saifuddin Kitchlew. They were arrested by the police. When the news of Gandhi's arrest reached Amritsar, a large crowd gathered on the streets. Government banks were set on fire and three bank managers were murdered. A woman missionary was beaten up and left for dead. Moreover, crowds stoned a train, and set fire to bridges, the telephone office and post office. Violence continued on 10th and the 11th April.²² After that, Martial Law was imposed on Amritsar, and O' Dwyer sent forces, and some people were killed in police firing.²³

On 13 April 1919, General Dyer issued a proclamation banning meetings and gatherings. Some policemen were also sent with megaphones into streets to warn the people against attending any meeting. A large number of people gathered in Jallianwala Bagh on the afternoon of 13 April. General Dyer reached the place and ordered his troops to open fire without warning on the unnamed crowd in the park from which there was no way out. As a result, 1,000 people were killed and thousands injured.²⁴ There was a widespread anger in the whole country at the cruelty meted out in Punjab. At Allahabad Congress Committee meeting, Gandhi suspended civil disobedience because the governor of Bombay had issued him a threat of violence if civil disobedience was resumed. Rabindranath Tagore renounced his knighthood in protest against the Jallianwala Bagh massacre. He said: "The time has come when badges of honour make our shame glaring in their incongruous context of humiliation, and, I for my part, wish to stand shorn of all special distinction, by the side of my countrymen who, for their so-called insignificance are liable to suffer degradation not fit for human beings."²⁵

After Jallianwala massacre, 34th annual session of the Congress was held at Amritsar on 27 December 1919. More than 10,000 delegates from all over India including Dr. Hedgewar attended the session. Dr. Hedgewar also went to see the blood-stained site of Jallianwala Bagh. In Amritsar session, C. R. Das was in favour of rejecting the Reforms, but Tilak was for responsive cooperation. In the end, there was a compromise, and the Congress agreed to do work in reforms as to secure an early establishment of full responsible government.²⁶ On his return to Nagpur in 1920, Hedgewar began preparations to hold the next Congress session in the city. It is pertinent to mention here that after Tilak's demise, Dr. Balakrishna Shivram Moonje and Dr. Hedgewar went to Pondicherry to invite Aurobindo Ghose and urged him to preside over the session. However, Aurobindo Ghose did not accept their invitation.²⁷

Nagpur session of the Congress took place in December 1920, which was attended by over 3,000 members of the reception committee, 15,000 delegates and thousands of common men. Dr. Hedgewar and Dr. Paranjpe were in charge of lodging and boarding committee for the delegates. Gandhi and Shaikat Ali arrived for the session of the Congress in Nagpur on 20 October 1920. The prominent leaders including Dr. Balakrishna Shivram Moonje and Dr. Hedgewar addressed the delegates. The volunteers of Dr. Hedgewar reached this session wearing uniform: khaki shirt, khaki shorts, a black khaki cap, long socks and boots. On 30 December, Gandhi spoke to the Congress on non-cooperation resolution, and asked for the establishment of an Indian republic through the programme already outlined in the Calcutta session of the Congress i.e. boycotting of Government schools and colleges by the students, of courts by lawyers, of foreign goods by merchants, etc. He also appealed to the government servants to tender their resignation following the call of the nation, and stressed Hindu-Muslim unity in his resolution of non-cooperation. He gave assurance to the Indians if these programmes were adopted seriously, freedom would be attained within one year.²⁸ During this session, Dr. Hedgewar and some other leaders met Gandhi and asked him to adopt a resolution declaring complete independence. But Gandhi refused to accept their suggestion.²⁹ Nilanjan Mukhopadhyaya writes, "Although the young man (Dr. Hedgewar) insignificant in the Congress hierarchy, his open disagreement with Gandhi was the first step towards his distancing himself from the Indian National Congress..."³⁰

In January 1921, non-cooperation movement started in full swing. Ali brothers travelled all over India and delivered a number of speeches at public meetings. More than 90,000 students dropped out of schools and colleges and joined national educational institutions. At that time, there were about 800 schools in the country. C. R. Das, Hedgewar, Dr. Balakrishna Shivram Moonje, etc. inspired the students for non-cooperation movement. Till 1921 about 20 headmasters and teachers resigned per month. Lawyers including C. R. Das, Motilal Nehru, M. R. Jaikar, Kitchlew Khan, Vallabhbai Patel, C. Rajgopalachari, T. Parkasham, and Ashaf Ali boycotted the courts on a large scale. By March 1921, over 180 lawyers had resigned from the courts. In Bihar hundreds of cases were taken away from government courts in a single day. Bengal came up with 86 arbitration courts between February 1921 and April 1922.³¹ Some leaders also returned medals or honours bestowed upon them by the British government. Teachers in government schools stayed away from teaching work. Members of

provincial legislative councils resigned. So did those who served town municipalities and other institutions. People boycotted foreign goods. Dr. Hedgewar also boycotted British goods and led a procession in Nagpur. Gandhi himself inaugurated a nationwide campaign, lighting a bonfire of British cloth in Bombay.³²

The most remarkable success of the non-cooperation movement was the boycott of the visit of Prince of Wales on 17 November 1921. The satyagrahis of Bombay observed *hartal* and also arranged a meeting on the beach where Gandhi made a bonfire of foreign cloth.³³ When Gandhi called for a boycott, Indians loyal to the Raj enthusiastically welcomed the visitor. This led to clashes in streets between the non-cooperators burning cloth, and the empire loyalists (Parsis and Christians) chanting slogans in praise of the prince. The prominent rioters, who were mostly mill workers, raised the slogan „*Mhatma Gandhi ki Jai*“. There was police firing and riots in which 53 persons were killed. Gandhi appealed for non-violence. He went on fast from 19 November till the violence had subsided.³⁴

Hundreds of leaders were arrested by the police. In 1921, Dr. Hedgewar was arrested on the charge of sedition for participating in the movement. He decided to plead his own case and said, “India belongs to Indians. We, therefore, demand Independence. This is the content of all my speeches. People have to be told how to secure independence, and also how to conduct themselves after securing it. Otherwise, it is quite likely that our people may imitate the British in independent India. The British, though they are aggressing on other nations and governing them through repressive measures, but the very same British people are ready to shed blood when their own country’s independence is threatened. The recent war bears testimony to it. We, are, therefore, obliged to advise our people, „Dear countrymen don’t imitate the aggressive ways of the British. Secure independence by peaceful means, and be happy and content with your own country without hungering for others’ territories“. In order to explain this idea, I cannot avoid referring to the current political issues. That the British have been carrying on their despotic rule in our beloved country is obvious to everyone. What law is there that gives one country the right to rule over another? ... We demand nothing short of complete independence. Till we achieve it we cannot be at peace.”³⁵

Dr. Hedgewar was found guilty and sentenced to one year imprisonment. It is said, after the judgement came, he went outside the court where a large number of people were gathered and addressed, “As you are aware, I have defended myself in this case of sedition against me. However, these days, there is an impression going round that arguing in one’s defense is an act of treachery to the national movement. But I feel it is highly unwise to merely get crushed like a bug when a case is foisted upon us. It is our duty to expose to the whole world the wickedness of the foreign rulers. This would indeed be an act of patriotism. And not to defend ourselves, on the other hand, would be a suicidal policy. You may, if you so choose, refuse to defend yourself, but for God’s sake, don’t consider those who disagree with you as being less patriotic. If, in the course of our patriotic duty, we are called upon to enter the prison or be transported to Andaman, or even face the gallows, we shall have to willingly do so. But let us not be under the illusion that jail-going is all in all, that it is the only path for achieving freedom. There are, in fact, so many fields of national service awaiting us outside the prison. I would be back amongst you after one year. Till then, of course, I will not be in touch with the national development, but I am confident that by then, the movement for „complete independence“ will have gained the added momentum. Now, it is no more possible to keep down Hindusthan under the heels of foreign domination. I offer my gratitude to you all and bid you good-bye.”³⁶ After that, he went to Ajani jail on 19 August 1921.

On 1 February 1922, Gandhi announced that he would start mass civil disobedience including non-payment of taxes unless within seven days the political prisoners were released and press freed from the British control. But before mass civil disobedience was started, a police station in Chauri Chaura in the Gorakhpur district of United Provinces had been burnt by the nationalists. On 4 February 1922, a large number, of volunteers marched through the streets shouting in praise of Gandhi and the Khilafat and they had a clash with the police. Resultantly, they attacked a police station in which twenty two policemen perished in the conflagration. The Working Committee of the Congress was called at Bardoli, in which Gandhi announced to suspend the non-cooperation movement because this was the third time he had received the news of violence during the mass civil disobedience.³⁷

After the failure of non-cooperation movement, there was a deep rift within the Congress. Many leaders like C. R. Dass, Motilal Nehru, Jawaharlal Nehru, Subhash Chandra Bose, etc. criticized Mahatma Gandhi’s decision of the withdrawal of the movement. In between, Dr. Hedgewar was released from jail in July 1922, and the same evening a public reception was organized in which many senior Congress leaders, who differed with Gandhi’s decision, such as Motilal Nehru, Hakim Ajmal Khan, etc. were present. All these leaders not only welcomed Dr. Hedgewar but also addressed the gathering. Besides, Dr. Hedgewar was dismayed by the lack of organization in the Indian National Congress volunteer organizations.³⁸ He thought that without a disciplined organization, the patriotic youth could never achieve freedom from the British rule. Moreover, he felt that a non-violent movement would not capture the imagination of the youth.³⁹ Despite this, he was elected to the Central Province’s Provincial Congress Committee and was appointed its Joint Secretary.⁴⁰

After the formation of Swaraj Party by C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru in 1922, Dr. Hedgewar favoured joining legislative assemblies and joined the responsivists in the internal Congress controversy on this issue. Actually, most of his close friends had joined Swaraj Party. However, the new party was to function as a group within the Congress. It accepted all the programmes of the Congress except for that it would take part in legislative council elections.⁴¹ At that time, Dr. Hedgewar thought that a necessary condition to independence of the country was a dedicated cadre inspired by the nation's tradition and history. Consequently, he organized several meetings with the prominent leaders of the Congress and Hindu Mahasabha in Nagpur on ways and means to bring about such an organization. He also visited Gandhi Ashram near Wardha in 1924 and discussed this issue and other policies of the Congress. Walter Andersen writes, "He is reported to have disagreed with Gandhi on his support of the Khilafat Movement and maintained it had created a separatist tendency in the Muslim Community. He left Wardha to ponder on how to unite the often antagonist Hindu groups into a common nationalist movement."⁴²

On 20 August 1923, Hindu Mahasabha called a meeting to Benaras in which many prominent leaders of the Congress were also invited. It was one of the rare occasions when Hindus of different ideology met on a common Hindu platform. At this meeting, the Congress alliance with Khilafatists was not approved by many Hindu leaders, who were no longer willing to support the Khilafat issue. Moreover, the views expressed at the meeting were most important, as they reflected the concerns of much of Hindu India about deteriorating Hindu-Muslim relations, and also the weakness in the Hindu community. The main theme was division among Hindus. Many Hindu leaders felt that Muslims were united and able to inflict punishment on Hindus. Madan Mohan Malaviya said that friendship could exist between equals. If the Hindus made themselves strong, and the rowdy section among the Muslims were convinced that they could not safely rob and dishonour Hindus, only then would a unity be established on a stable basis.⁴³ His main motive was to educate all Hindus boys and girls, establish *akharas* (gymnasiums), accept untouchables as Hindu and give them rights equal to those of the upper classes, etc. Apart from this, he said that Hindus would not be able to free India from British rule unless they were organized.⁴⁴

In October, 1923, communal tension mounted up in Nagpur on the issue of playing music before mosques. Keeping in view the outbreak of Communal riots, the district collector banned processions during the annual festival honouring the Hindu deity Ganesha, and the Hindus were forced to obey this order. On 30 October, the collector also banned Dindi musical procession in honour of a Hindu deity, but Hindu leaders including Dr. Hedgewar decided to disobey the ban.⁴⁵ A Hindu Sabha was organized under the Presidentship of Raja Laxmanrao Bhonsle. Dr. B. S. Moonje was the Vice-President and Dr. Hedgewar was the Secretary of the Sabha. It was believed that more than 20,000 Hindus organized Dindi procession in defiance of the government order.⁴⁶ Consequently, Communal riots erupted in the city. Hindus reacted by declaring a boycott against Muslim-owned businesses. A two men delegation of Motilal Nehru and Abul Kalam Azad went to Nagpur to restore harmony between Hindu and Muslims, but in vain. In this situation, Dr. Hedgewar started to think about the necessity of a disciplined Hindu organization. In the meantime, as stated earlier, he read a manuscript of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's *Hindutva*, which profoundly affected his thinking about the Hindu nation. In March 1925, he stayed at V. D. Savarkar's house for two days and took advice on the formation of a Hindu organization. Soon thereafter, he formed RSS in Nagpur.⁴⁷

After the formation of RSS in 1925, Dr. Hedgewar focused on strengthening the organization from *Sarsanghchalak* on the top level down to the city or village level with different functionaries. He also decided to organize regular *shakhas*, *boudhik* (intellectual discourses) classes, etc. He wanted to demonstrate the value of discipline both to the *swayamsevaks* (volunteers) and to public. Apart from this, a new code of conduct was formulated by Dr. Hedgewar in which *lathi* wielding and group prayers were also made compulsory in the RSS discipline. A new member was required to take oath as well as to obtain sponsorship of two *swayamsevaks* of good reputation.⁴⁸ The oath was taken before the ochre coloured (*bhagva*) flag which was associated with Shivaji. By 1926, daily *shakha* (branch) meetings became regular activities of the RSS, which popularized the organization considerably. In 1928, RSS had 18 *shakhas* in Nagpur, and in the same year ninety-nine young men joined it as its members. The political class also became a regular feature of the daily *shakhas* under the name of *baudhik* classes.⁴⁹

At Lahore session, the Congress passed a resolution declaring *Poorn Swaraj* (Complete Independence) to be its objective. On 31 December 1929 flag was hoisted, the newly adopted tri-colour flag of freedom, and 26 January was fixed as the Independence Day, which was to be so celebrated every year. The RSS welcomed the Lahore resolution and each *shakha* sent a congratulatory message to the Congress President, Jawaharlal Nehru. Dr. Hedgewar's circular to RSS *shakhas* read, "That the Indian National Congress too has adopted a goal of Independence naturally gives us immense joy. It is our duty to cooperate with any organization working for the cause...Therefore, on the evening of January 26, 1930 all the *shakhas* of the RSS should hold rallies of *swayamsevaks* at their respective places and worship the National flag i.e. the *Bhagwa Dhwaj*. Through

speeches it should be explained what is the meaning of independence and why we should work with this end in view. The rallies should conclude by complimenting Congress for accepting the goal of independence.”⁵⁰

In February 1930, Gandhi wrote a letter to Lord Irwin, the then Viceroy of India, to accept his eleven demands including fifty percent reduction of land revenue, abolition of the salt tax and release of all political prisoners except for those condemned for murder. On 2 March, he wrote to the Viceroy again, and gave him advance warning of civil disobedience. Irwin did not reply to Gandhi’s letter directly, and he sent a two-sentence answer that: “You contemplate a course of action which is clearly bound to involve violation of law and danger to the public peace.”⁵¹

On 7 March, Vallabhbhai Patel was arrested by the police and sentenced to three months’ imprisonment for a speech in Borsad taluka. News of his arrest spread across India. The textile mills of Ahmedabad closed down on the instructions of Anasuya Sarabhai (the President of labour union). On the evening of the next day, Mahatma Gandhi addressed a meeting of about 60,000 people, including many women. He praised Sardar Patel, saying that his services to Gujarat exceeded his (Gandhi’s) a thousand times. If the British government had arrested and removed one Vallabhbhai Patel, he exhorted, the men and women of Ahmedabad, to take his place and work as his representatives. His main aim was to abolish salt taxes. That was for him one step, the first step, towards freedom.⁵² After that, Gandhi decided to break salt laws at Dandi.⁵³ On the night of 11 March, a large number of people came to the Gandgi Ashram and many stayed full night on the river bank. Before starting the Dandi March, Gandhi wrote a letter to Jawaharlal Nehru.⁵⁴

On 12 March 1930, at 6.30 a.m. Gandhi and his 78 selected companions walked out of the ashram on the historic march to Dandi. National consciousness, in general, was electrified when Gandhi began his Dandi march. Men, women, boys and girls, mill workers, peasants etc. had come to see Gandhi on the way to break the salt law, and walked some distance with him. As Gandhi walked past the line of people on either side of the road, he was showered with greetings salutations, flowers, etc. He also addressed massive crowd on the way. At Surat, he addressed 100,000 people, encouraging them to join the civil disobedience movement.⁵⁵ At this meeting, 170 village headmen presented copies of their letters of resignation to Gandhi.⁵⁶ They reached Dandi on 5 April, the twenty fourth day of march.⁵⁷ On 6 April 1930, Gandhi broke the salt law, and similar violations of the law took place in all parts of India. The RSS also actively participated in the Civil Disobedience Movement. Dr. Hedgewar sent a direction to all *shakhas* in which he said, “The Sangh as such has so far not resolved to participate in the movement. However, those who would like to participate in their personal capacity are free to do so after obtaining permission from the *Sarsanghchalak*”.⁵⁸ Dr. Hedgewar himself also took part in Salt Satyagraha.⁵⁹

The RSS also established a medical unit of 100 *swayamsevak*s and imparted training with regard to providing medical care to satyagrahis during the movement. This unit provided immediate medical relief to the victims of the brutalities of the police unleashed in the wake of Civil Disobedience movement. The satyagrahis in Salt Satyagraha who bore the brunt of the brutalities were treated in Nagpur and adjoining areas.⁶⁰

On 4 May 1930, Gandhi was arrested, and the news of this arrest led to *hartal* across India. Meanwhile, on 21 July 1930, thousands of Satyagrahis gathered in the Yavatmal district of Maharashtra to raise their voice against the British. As a result, Dr. Hedgewar was imprisoned with a large number of satyagrahis. He was released from the jail on 14 February 1931. After that, he resigned the membership of the Hindu Mahasabha, and decided to expand and strengthen the RSS.⁶¹ It is pertinent to mention here that Nathuram Godse joined the RSS in 1930, but later in 1934 he gave up the membership of the RSS because it did not participate in Politics. Savarkar who revived the Hindu Mahasabha after being released from jail in 1937, asked Golwalkar for support at a critical time – when the Mahasabha left Congress and became a full-fledged party – but in vain.⁶²

Between 1930 and 1940, the social base of the RSS rapidly expanded beyond its Marathi-speaking areas in Central Provinces. There were only 60 *shakhas* in 1931 which increased up to 200 *shakhas* in 1936 with twenty five thousand *Swayamsevak*s. Further the number increased to 500 *shakhas* in 1939 with 60,000 *swayamsevak*s.⁶³ In 1940, the RSS had 700 branches throughout India with 80,000 *Swayamsevak*s. Dr. Hedgewar made RSS financially sound. Donations and subscriptions were collected from volunteers, supporters and well wishers on the occasion of *Guru Purnima* as *Guru Dakshina*. A. G. Noorani mentions that in 1939 strict control was maintained over the finances of the Sangh and each *shakha* was normally permitted to retain only a sum of Rs. 200 as deposit.⁶⁴

After a prolonged illness Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar died on 21 June 1940. His successor Madhav Sadashiv Golwalkar was made *Sarsanghchalak* on 5 July 1940. It is believed that Appaji Joshi, a senior RSS leader in Wardha, was expected to be the successor of Dr. Hedgewar and that many RSS cadres were surprised at the choice of Golwalkar.⁶⁵ When Golwalkar became *Sarsanghchalak* the Second World War was in progress. The RSS thinking was dominated by two major concerns during the war period – one was the protection of the Hindus, and the other was the preparation for the post-war period and to face the likely communal problems. He decided to avoid participating in the political activities scrupulously to avoid incurring the displeasure and antagonism of the government which could lead to the imposition of ban on the organization. Neither did he

want to extend any help to Hindu Mahasabha. However, many militant *Swayamsevaks* disagreed with this policy of RSS *Sarsanghchalak*.

A rift also occurred between the RSS and Hindu Mahasabha. Nathuram Godse and other militant nationalists felt that the RSS could not protect and promote the interests of the Hindus by adopting the policy of non-participation in political activities. He decided to form Hindu militant group. Consequently, the Hindu Rashtra Dal was formed in 1942.⁶⁶ Apart from this, keeping in view the ban, the RSS *Sarsanghchalak* Golwalkar issued a circular to stop military drill training as well as to abolish military department.⁶⁷ During the Officers' Training Camp at Poona, on 3 May 1942 he said that the Sangh resolved to stand on its feet, notwithstanding any opposition. It was not possible to get Swaraj by begging it from the foreigners and this could only be achieved only using strength.⁶⁸ He further said, "The history of the RSS, spanning more than two decades before India's independence, is one of active participation in the anti-colonial struggle and unconditional cooperation not only with the Congress but also with any other group committed to the liberation of the Motherland."⁶⁹

On 8 August 1942, All India Congress Committee passed the famous „Quit India" resolution, which was moved by Nehru and seconded by Patel. After passing the resolution, Gandhi addressed the assembled delegates: "The actual struggle does not commence this very moment. You have merely placed certain powers in my hand. My first act will be to wait upon His Excellency the Viceroy and plead with him for the acceptance of the Congress demand. This may take two or three weeks. What are you going to do in the meantime? There is the spinning wheel...but there is something more you have to do...Everyone of you should, from this moment, consider himself a free man or woman and even act as if you are free and no longer under the heel of this imperialism."⁷⁰

Next day morning, Gandhi along with Mahadev Desai, Sarojini Naidu and Mira was arrested at 5.30 a.m. from the G. D. Birla House at Bombay where they were staying. They were taken in a police convoy to the station and put in a special train to Poona and detained at the Aga Khan Palace. Meanwhile, big leaders of the Congress including Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, Maulna Abul Kalam Azad etc. were also detained and taken to an unknown destination. Moreover, the British government declared the Congress and its affiliated organizations „unlawful". The offices of the Congress all over India were sealed.⁷¹ On 9 August 1942, the news of the „Quit India" resolution and the arrest of Gandhi and other leaders reached the people. In fact, the arrest of the leaders of the Congress was a clear indication for the outbreak of an open revolt against the British. In Bombay, itself where the famous meeting of All India Congress Committee was held, people started to gather in streets. A big crowd mainly comprising students got into the local trains, broke glass windows, destroyed seat covers of the compartments and pulled out chains. Telephone wires were also cut and post offices broken into. Consequently, Markets, Bazars, schools and colleges were closed. There were similar protests in other cities like Ahmadabad, Surat, Bombay, Poona, Calcutta, Madras, Assam, Central Provinces, United Provinces, Delhi, Kanpur and Amritsar.⁷²

Some writers hold the view that the RSS did not take part in Quit India movement. Shamsul Islam writes that M. S. Golwalkar never claimed that the RSS had been opposed to the British.⁷³ This view is somewhat away from the truth. Dattopant Thengadi, who established trade union for the RSS said, "The 1942 movement had created turmoil in the minds of many *swayamsevaks* and even *pracharaks*. The question troubling them was – if the Sangh was to do nothing even at such a crucial junction what was the use of all its strength built up so far?"⁷⁴ Apart from this, Mahatma Gandhi and other senior Congress leaders did not consult the RSS and other organizations before launching Quit India Movement. Duties and responsibilities were also not given according to the capacity and linkages of the organizations.⁷⁵ The RSS's decision not to participate directly in Quit India Movement was to avoid any confrontation with the British. The RSS also suspended military drills as well as directed *swayamsevaks* and *pracharaks* not to wear uniform. Golwalkar also circulated a note on 29 April 1943 in which he directed the RSS cadres to do their work clearly within the bounds of law.⁷⁶ Even then, a large number of RSS volunteers without uniform actively participated in Quit India Movement.

In fact, the RSS *Sarsanghchalak* Golwalkar was forced to make a strategic choice as to whether to join the Quit India Movement or stay away from it. According to him, clear directions regarding the movement were not given by the Congress or Mahatma Gandhi, and there was lack of a single command for the movement so that the RSS *Sarsanghchalak* decided to stay away from the movement. However, he allowed *swayamsevaks* and even *pracharaks* to participate in the movement in their personal capacity. A large number of *swayamsevaks* took part in Quit India movement as patriotic citizens. In Vidarbha, *swayamsevaks* of Chimur launched a strong agitation under the leadership of Ramakant Deshpande. Soon thereafter, this movement turned violent and some Britishers were killed in the violence. A similar incident was known as Chimur Ashti episode.⁷⁷ A similar agitation was launched in Sakkhar in Sindh where *swayamsevaks* removed fishplates from the railway track. After this incident, Hemu Kalani was arrested by the police and awarded death sentence. Apart from such activities, many *swayamsevaks* helped the underground leaders of the movement. The house of Delhi *Sanghchalak*, Lala Hansraj became the hideout of several leaders like Aruna Asaf Ali.⁷⁸

The Quit India movement was spearheaded by students, workers and peasants. There was a complete strike in factories, colleges and schools. A large number of factory workers and students organized demonstrations and *hartals* against the British. There was resentment among the peasants against the colonial government. In many areas they set up alternative regimes, where the writ of the Government did not run for days and weeks. In Balia, local leaders took over the town and had to be driven out by the army. In Maharashtra and Karnataka, the peasants started guerilla war against the British rule, which continued till 1944. Some prominent Congress leaders such as Jai Parkash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohia, Aruna Asaf Ali, etc. went underground, and from there they guided the movement. Moreover, many prominent leaders of the Congress along with hundreds of volunteers were arrested by the police.⁷⁹

As stated earlier, the RSS continued to expand its social base rapidly during the war period. The British sources reveal that in 1944 more than 76,000 *swayamsevaks* regularly attended *shakha* in the Central Provinces, Bombay and Punjab.⁸⁰ Between 1945 and 1948, the RSS succeeded in increasing its social base, especially in Muslim majority areas and Delhi. It was also successful in attracting boys from lower castes in northern India where the Hindu orientation of the RSS did not arouse the opposition of non-Brahmins as it did in Maharashtra. This shows that the membership centre of the RSS shifted from Maharashtra to the Hindi speaking regions of India; however, top leadership remained in the hands of Maharashtrian Brahmins from Nagpur. As a matter of fact, Maharashtra had a great tradition of Hinduism. That was the reason why the RSS leadership was usually dominated by Maharashtrian Brahmins.⁸¹

After 1945, the expansion of the RSS in Delhi, Punjab and North West Frontier Provinces coincided with the deteriorating communal relations between Muslims and Hindus. The Muslim League started campaigning for the creation of Pakistan, declaring a „Direct Action Day“ on 16 August 1946. Soon thereafter, communal riots broke out in Bengal and North West Frontier Provinces. This incident provided an ideal opportunity for the RSS to prove that Hindu and Muslim could not live together. The RSS *Sarsanghchalak* said, “If that spirit (fiery and heroic aspect of devotion to our motherland) had been there in our leaders and in our common folk, could partition have taken place? Would they not have risen uncompromisingly, heroically as one man against all such machinations of the British and the Muslim, prepared to shed their last drop of blood for maintaining the sacred integrity of the motherland? Alas, that did not happen. On the contrary, people, led by the leaders, were busy in celebrations of the advent of so-called independence.”⁸²

The Hindu and Muslim communalists blamed each other for starting the perpetration of heinous killings and they fought each other very ruthlessly. Consequently, in Punjab the RSS was able to garner considerable Hindu support against the creation of Pakistan. Further on 3 March 1947, Tiwana ministry resigned and Muslim League formed the government in Punjab. But Sikh and Hindu leaders refused to support it, and protested against the Muslim League Ministry. Communal riots erupted in Punjab again. Keeping in view the communal riots, on 18 May 1947, Mountbatten left for London to finalize the partition plan. The Congress leaders accepted Mountbatten’s plan within three days of his return as it was announced on 3rd June, 1947. Next day, he announced that the transfer of power would take place on 15th August, 1947 and on that very day Punjab would be divided.⁸³

RSS was not involved in politics in a newly-created nation, but it ensured that it earned goodwill for its humanitarian role – running relief camps for Hindu and Sikh refugees from across the border; setting up of Hindu paramilitary groups to protect Hindus from the Muslims of Pakistan. In fact, millions of people migrated from both sides after the partition. It was one of the most terrible and largest forced migration of people in the world, and unprecedented violence, loot and rapes were witnessed on the both sides of the border. In this situation, a large number of the RSS volunteers came out to help refugees. *Swayamsevaks* were assigned duties to guard Hindu homes. They also collected weapons to use during anticipated attacks of the Muslims.⁸⁴

After the partition of India, the growing popularity and activism of the RSS was even acknowledged by Mahatma Gandhi, when he visited a *shakha* in Delhi on 16 September 1947. On this occasion, Gandhi appealed to the *swayamsevaks* to let the government handle law and order in Delhi where communal tension was escalating.⁸⁵ Golwalkar responded that „the RSS was purely defensive, though he could not vouch the actions of every *swayamsevak*.”⁸⁶ At the same time, the then Home Minister Vallabhbhai Patel secured Golwalkar’s help to convince Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir to merge his princely state with India. In October 1947, Golwalkar met Maharaja and requested him to recruit Punjabi Hindus and Sikhs in his Army. When Indian troops were invited by Maharaja, the Indian military provided arms to *swayamsevaks* and to the members of National Conference (Organization of Sheikh Abdullah). The military commander of Delhi region also took the help of the RSS in maintaining law and order in September 1947.⁸⁷ Impressed by the social activities of the RSS a large number of refugees became members of the RSS. Thousands of *swayamsevaks* were recruited to provide food, medicines, and to build temporary residences for the refugees when they arrived in India. In Delhi and present Haryana region, more than four large camps were being run by the RSS. As a result, by the beginning of 1948, the RSS had become very popular throughout the country. At that time, approximately *swayamsevaks*, ranging from 600,000 to 700,000 attended about 7,000 daily *shakhas* across India.

Gandhi was very upset at the communal riots which erupted in Delhi just after independence, and made a passionate appeal to stop violence. He also started observing fast on 12 January 1948, which was ended after six days. The Sikh and Hindu leaders of Delhi including *Sanghchalak* of the RSS (Hans Raj Gupta), promised to accept his formula designed to end the violence. However, it is believed that this agreement was opposed by many Sikhs and Hindus.⁸⁸ In this communally charged social atmosphere, Gandhi was assassinated on 30 January 1948 at 5.30 p.m. by Nathuram Vinayak Godse. As stated earlier, Godse had previously been a member of the RSS, and at the time of Gandhi's assassination, he was the editor of a pro-Hindu Mahasabha newspaper in

Pune. Government suspected that both the Hindu Mahasabha and the RSS were involved in the conspiracy to assassinate Gandhi. Many leaders of both the organizations were arrested. On 2 February 1948, the chief of the RSS Golwalkar was also arrested. The Nehru government banned the RSS on 4 February 1948. After that, all the activities of the RSS were temporarily suspended. Jawaharlal Nehru suggested to Patel that he should initiate a move to curb the Hindu nationalist movement. Patel assured him that a wing of Hindu Mahasabha was responsible for assassinating Gandhi, and the RSS was not involved in the operation. But Nehru still suspected the involvement of the RSS.⁸⁹ When a drive for repression was launched, about 20,000 *swayamsevak*s were arrested after imposing a ban on the RSS. But, the government could not establish the involvement of the RSS in

Gandhi's murder. By August 1948, most of the arrested *swayamsevak*s had been released from prison; Golwalkar himself was also released on 5 August with several conditions including restricting his movement within the municipality limit of Nagpur. He continued his correspondence with Nehru and Patel seeking to lift ban from the RSS. But Nehru reacted even more aggressively, and Golwalkar was arrested second time on the

midnight of 12 November 1948 at Barakhamba Road in Delhi. He was brought to Nagpur on 15 November and to Central jail.⁹⁰ Consequently, Golwalkar gave a call to the RSS *swayamsevak*s to launch a non-violent protest against the Nehru government. The Satyagraha was carried out for 45 days, and more than 77,000 *swayamsevak*s courted arrest and were put into jail. Golwalkar was also shifted from Sivni sub-jail to Baitul jail.

On 9 December 1948, the RSS launched its first civil disobedience Satyagraha campaign against the Nehru government. It is said that more than 60,000 *swayamsevak*s took part in the protest. More than 6,500 and 4,500 *swayamsevak*s were arrested in the Central Provinces and United Provinces respectively. The *swayamsevak*s of Maharashtra, Bengal and Gujarat also participated in the protest. The *satyagraha* was

suspended on 20 January 1949 when the RSS was invited by the government for negotiations. At the same time, three leaders of the RSS, Eknath Ranade, P. D. Dani and Balasaheb Deoras, wrote the Constitution of the organization. After the approval of the Constitution by Patel in June 1949, ban on the RSS was lifted unconditionally on 11 July 1949, and Golwalkar was released from prison on 13 July 1949.⁹¹

This chapter may be concluded with the remarks that the RSS played a significant role in freedom movement and national integration of India. After its inception in 1925, it actively took part in Gandhian movements and many leaders and *swayamsevak*s suffered imprisonment. Dr. Hedgewar and Dr. Golwalkar not only expanded the organization during the national movement but also set an example of discipline among the *swayamsevak*s who were always prepared to sacrifice their lives for a national cause. The then Home Minister Vallabhbhai Patel secured Golwalkar's help to convince Maharaja Hari Singh of Kashmir to merge his princely state with India. When Indian troops were invited by Maharaja, the Indian military provided arms to *swayamsevak*s. The military commander of Delhi region also took the help of the RSS in maintaining law and order in September 1947. But when Gandhi was assassinated by Nathuram Godse on 30 January 1948 the Nehru government suspected the involvement of the RSS in this conspiracy. Many leaders of the RSS along with *Sarsanghchalak* were arrested, and it was banned. But the government could not establish the involvement of the RSS in the conspiracy of Gandhi assassination. Consequently, the ban on the RSS was lifted by the government.

References and Notes:

- [1]. Bipan Chandra, *Communalism in Modern India*, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, p. 332.
- [2]. See Rakesh Sinah, *Understanding RSS*, Har-anand Publications Pvt. Ltd. New Delhi, 2019.
- [3]. Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India*, Orient BlackSwan, New Delhi, 2019, Reprint, pp. 245-48.
- [4]. Bipan Chandra, Amal Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, New Delhi, 2005, Reprint, pp. 79-80.
- [5]. *Ibid.*
- [6]. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, Westland Publications Private Limited, Chennai, 2019, pp. 3-4.
- [7]. *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.
- [8]. Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India*, pp. 250-51.
- [9]. Rameshbhai Mahta, *Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh*, Lotus Publications, Mumbai, 2019, pp. 45-46.
- [10]. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 5.
- [11]. Ram Lal Wadhwa, *Hindu Maha Sabha, 1928-1947*, Radha Publications, New Delhi, 1999, pp. 8-9.
- [12]. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 6-7.
- [13]. Arun Anand, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, Prabhat Paperbacks, New Delhi, 2019, pp. 18-19.
- [14]. Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India*, p. 273-75.
- [15]. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, pp. 13-14.

- [16]. *Ibid.*
- [17]. In Satyagraha Dwarkadas wrote, there is no hatred, no bitterness of any kind. The government's action (in bringing about the Rowlatt Bills) shows that their conscience is sleeping, so the satyagrahi tries to awaken the conscience of the government...by civilly disobeying some laws and inviting punishment on himself. A number of people doing that will make the rulers realize that they have done a grievous wrong, and ultimately will have to give in. Gandhi thinks that this is a weapon patient to India, and will teach a lesson not to our rulers only, but to the world, and will enable us to proclaim ourselves as supreme teachers of spirituality." Quoted from Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi the Years That Changed the World*, pp. 74-75; C. W. M. G, XV, pp. 101-103.
- [18]. Ravinder Kumar, *Essays on Gandhian Politics, The Rowlatt Satyagraha of 1919*, p. 277; CWMG, XV, pp. 128-166.
- [19]. CWMG, XV, pp. 183-188.
- [20]. *New Times*, 8 April, 1919.
- [21]. Proceedings Nos. 284-300, April 1919, Home (Political-B), NAI; Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi the Years That Changed the World*, pp 78-79.
- [22]. Anthony Read and David Fisher, *The Proudest Day: India's Long Road to Independence*, Norton, New York, 1997, p. 165.
- [23]. Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi That the Years Changed the World*, pp 81-83.
- [24]. Stanley Wolpert, *A New History India*, Reprint, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1997, pp. 286-300; Amales Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 125; Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi the Years That Changed the World*, pp. 81-83.
- [25]. D. C. Tendulkar, *Mahatma: Life of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi*, Vol. I, p. 263; Krishna Dutta and Andrew Robinson, eds., *Selected Letters of Rabindranath Tagore*, p.223.
- [26]. Amales Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 126.
- [27]. Arun Anand, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, pp. 24-25.
- [28]. Amales Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 131.
- [29]. Arun Anand, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, pp. 24-25.
- [30]. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 15.
- [31]. Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, Macmillan, Madras, 1983, p. 209.
- [32]. P. C. Bamford, *Histories of Non Cooperation and Khilafat Movement*, Deep Publications, Delhi 1974, pp. 279-80; Sumit Sarkar, *Modern India*, pp. 203-206..
- [33]. CWMG, XX, p. 350f.
- [34]. CWMG, XXI, pp. 418 and 462-64.
- [35]. Arun Anand, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, p. 27; Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 17; B. V. Deshpande and S. R. Ramaswamy, *Dr. Hedgewar, the Epoch Maker: A Biography*, Sahitya Sindhu, Bengaluru, 1981, p. 29.
- [36]. Quoted from *Ibid.*
- [37]. CWMG, XXII, pp. 350-51.
- [38]. Jawaharlal Nehru, *An Autobiography*, Bombay, 1962, pp. 120-21.
- [39]. Walter Andersen, „The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: I: Early Concerns“, *Economic Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, March 11, 1972, pp. 589+591-597; Narayan Hari Palkar, *Dr. K. B. Hedgewar*, Translated from Marathi by Mrinalini Dhavale, Poona, 1964, pp. 64-65.
- [40]. *Ibid.*
- [41]. Bipan Chandra, *History of Modern India*, p. 295.
- [42]. Walter Andersen, „The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: I: Early Concerns“, *Economic Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, March 11, 1972, pp. 589+591-597.
- [43]. *Ibid.*; Dharendra Mohan Datta, „Some Philosophical Aspects of Indian Political, Legal and Economic Thought“, *The Indian Mind: Essentials of Indian Philosophy and Culture*, ed. by Charles A. Moore, University Press of Hawaii, Honolulu, 1967, pp. 277-78.
- [44]. *Ibid.*
- [45]. Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, Penguin Books, Delhi, 2019, First Published, Westview Press, Boulder, 1987, p. 27; Narayan Hari Palkar, *Dr. K. B. Hedgewar*, pp. 115-116.
- [46]. *Ibid.*
- [47]. Narayan Hari Palkar, *Dr. K. B. Hedgewar*, p. 120; Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, p. 29.
- [48]. National Archives of India, *Home (Political I)*, File No. 28/3/43, p. 11; *Ibid.*
- [49]. Walter Andersen, „The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh“, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, (Mar. 11, 1972), pp. 589+591-597.
- [50]. Rakesh Sinha, *Understanding RSS*, p. 67.
- [51]. Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi That the Years Changed the World*, pp. 331-332.
- [52]. *Ibid.*, p. 333.
- [53]. *Ibid.*, p. 333-34.
- [54]. Gandhi wrote letters to Jawaharlal Nehru and Satish Chandra Gupta that: „this may be my last letter –before my arrest at any rate. Tomorrow I feel they are bound to arrest me.“ See CWMG, XLIII, pp. 48-49
- [55]. *Partap*, Kanpur, 16 March 1930;
- [56]. *Amrit Bazar Patrika*, 4 April 1930; Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi That the Years Changed the World*, pp. 342-344.
- [57]. CWMG, XLIII, pp. 219-221 and 248-49.
- [58]. Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, pp. 38-39; Arun Anand, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, pp. 44-45.
- [59]. *Ibid.*
- [60]. *Ibid.*
- [61]. *Ibid.*
- [62]. Christophe Jaffrelot, (ed.) *Hindu Nationalism: A Reader*, p. 16.
- [63]. See Narayan Hari Palkar, *Dr. K. B. Hedgewar*; Walter Andersen, „The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: I: Early Concerns“, *Economic Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, March 11, 1972, pp. 589+591-597.
- [64]. A. G. Noorani, *The RSS: A Menace to India*, LeftWorld Books, New Delhi, 2019, p.62.

- [65]. Walter Andersen, „The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh: I: Early Concerns“, *Economic Political Weekly*, Vol. 7, No. 11, March 11, 1972, pp. 589+591-597.
- [66]. *Ibid.*
- [67]. National Archive of India, Home Political, File (I), No. 28/3/43.
- [68]. Rakesh Sinha, *Understanding RSS*, p. 73
- [69]. *Ibid.*
- [70]. Quoted from Bipan Chandra, Amales Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 211.
- [71]. *Ibid.*; *Bombay Chronicle*, 10 August 1942.
- [72]. Ramchandra Guha, *Gandhi That the Years Changed the World*, p. 684.
- [73]. Shamsul Islam, *Indian Freedom Movement and RSS: A Story of Betrayal*, Pharos Media & Publishing Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 2018, p. 25.
- [74]. Quoted from Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 126.
- [75]. *Ibid.*; Sanjeev Kelkar, *Lost Years of the RSS*, Sage Publications, Delhi, 2011, p. 69.
- [76]. *Frontline*, 1 December 1995.
- [77]. Arun Kumar, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, p. 84.
- [78]. *Ibid.*, p. 85.
- [79]. Amales Tripathi and Barun De, *Freedom Struggle*, p. 213.
- [80]. *Ibid.*
- [81]. Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, p. 46; Mahender Kumar Saini and Walter K. Andersen, „The Basti Julahan Bye-Election,“ *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 30 (July-September, 1969), pp. 260-276.
- [82]. See Golwalkar, *Bunch of Thoughts*.
- [83]. Amarjit Singh, *Punjab Divided: Politics of Muslim League and Partition 1935-1947*, p. 196; Satya M. Rai, *Partition of the Punjab: A Study of Its Effects on the Politics and Administration of the Punjab, 1947-56*, pp.42-43.
- [84]. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, p. 67; Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 131.
- [85]. Pyarelal Nayar, *Mahatma Gandhi: The Last Phase*, Vol. 2, Publishing House, Ahemdabad, 1958, pp. 438-441.
- [86]. CWMG, Vol. 96, pp. 380-81; Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, p. 49; Nilanjan Mukhopadhyay, *The RSS: Icons of the Indian Right*, p. 131.
- [87]. Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh, *Sixty Years of the RSS*, Suruchi Prakashan, Delhi, 1985, p. 22; D. R. Goyal, *R. S. S: Poisonous Tree*, Kamleshwar Prakashan, Delhi, 1979, p. 98; Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, p. 46.
- [88]. D. P. Mishra, *Living an Era*, Vol. 2, Vikash Publication, Delhi, 1978, pp. 57-58; Walter K. Andersen and Shridhar D. Damle, *The Brotherhood in Saffron: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism*, p. 54; Kewalram Lalchand Punjabi, *The Indomitable Sardar: A Political Biography of Sardar Vallabhbai Patel*, Bharatiya Vidhya Bhavan, Bombay, 1962, p. 131; Abdul Kalam Aazad, *India Wins Freedom: An Autobiographical Narrative*, Orient Longman, Bombay, 1959, pp. 213-222.
- [89]. Arun Kumar, *The Saffron Surge: Untold Story of RSS Leadership*, pp. 91-92; V. D. Shankar (ed.), *Sardar Patel's Select Correspondence, 1945-1950*, Navajivan Publishing House, 1976, p. 282
- [90]. *Ibid.*, pp. 93-94.
- [91]. *Ibid.*