



Life and Legacy of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee

(6 JULY 1901 - 23 JUNE 1953)



Ministry of Culture
Government of India

सत्यमेव जयते

Birth and Early Years of Syama Prasad Mookerjee



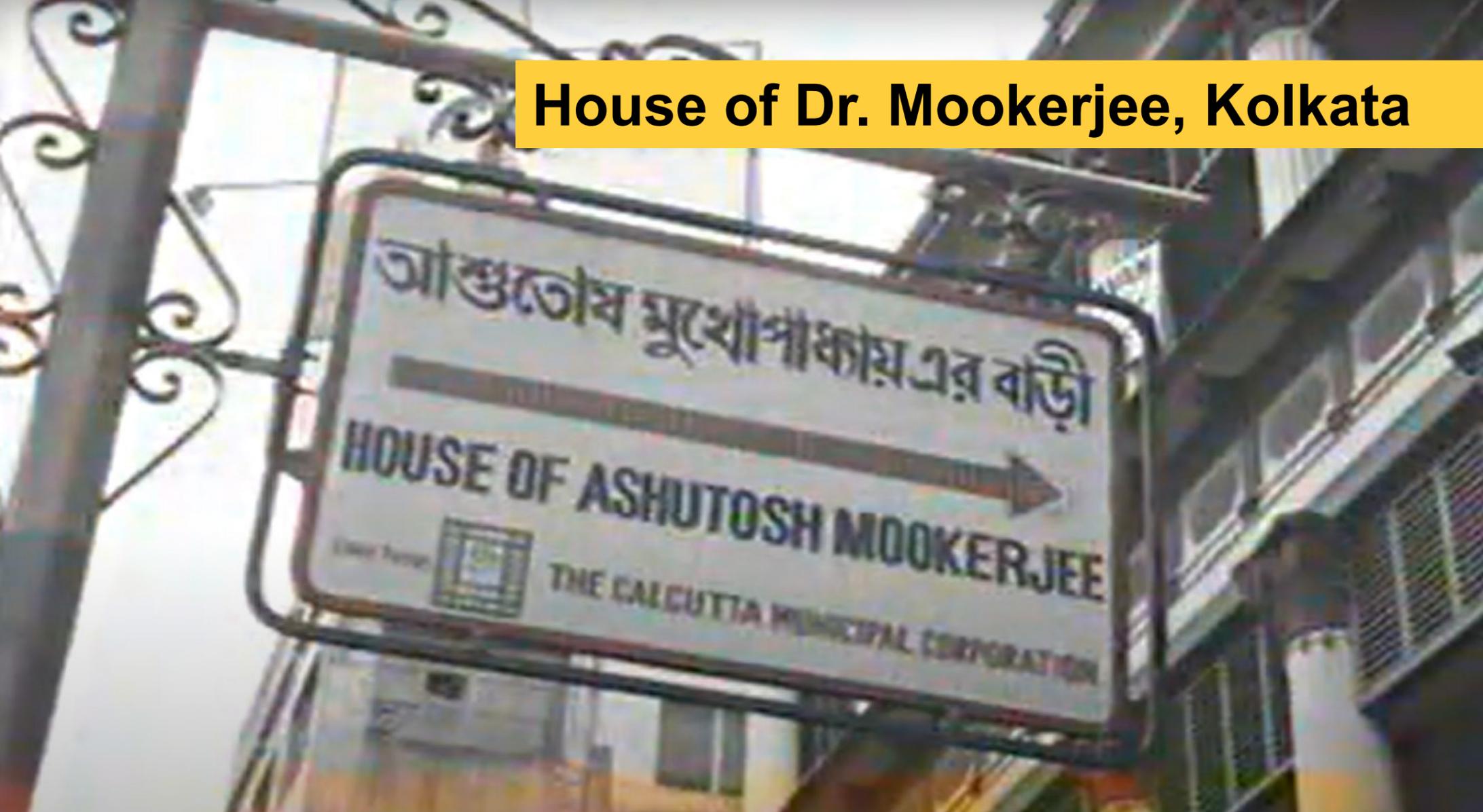
Date of Birth: 6 July 1901

- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was born to Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee and Smti. Jogmaya Debi.
- He was born in Calcutta (now Kolkata), in the Bengal Presidency of British India on 6 July 1901.
- He had four siblings

Formative Influence of Family

- His father, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee, was a judge at the Calcutta High Court and was one of the most revered figures in Indian education who twice served as Vice-Chancellor of Calcutta University.
- The family's deep involvement in education and cultural leadership instilled in him a strong commitment to knowledge, national identity, and public life.

House of Dr. Mookerjee, Kolkata



Home Office of Dr. Mookerjee, Kolkata

Personal Life

Date of marriage: 16 April 1922



Marriage in his early twenties

- While pursuing his M.A., Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee married Sudha Devi, the granddaughter of poet Behari Lal Chakravarty and related to Rabindranath Tagore through her uncle Sarat Kumar Chakravarty.

An Union Cut Short by Tragedy

- In 1934, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee suffered a deep personal loss when his wife, Sudha Devi, passed away at the age of 24 due to double pneumonia.
- He was just 32 and left with the responsibility of raising their four young children. His sister-in-law, Tara Devi, helped raise the children with affection and discipline.

Unwavering commitment to public life

- Despite this devastating loss, Dr. Mookerjee balanced his duties as a father with an unwavering commitment to public service.

Educational Milestones

An erudite scholar (1)

1906

Joined Mitra Institution, Bhawanipore Branch, in class II (23 July)

1917

Passed Matriculation Exam from Mitra Institution with Merit scholarship of Rs. 10/- per month.

1919

Passed Intermediate Examination in Arts in first division from Presidency College, Calcutta.

1921

Passed B.A., First Class First in English Honours, Presidency College, Calcutta.

1923

Passed M.A., First Class First in Bengali Language and Literature from Calcutta University.



Educational Milestones

An erudite scholar (2)

1924

- He was elected a Fellow of the University of Calcutta at 23 years of age. He was appointed to the University Syndicate, filling the vacancy created by the passing of his father, Sir Ashutosh Mookerjee.

1926

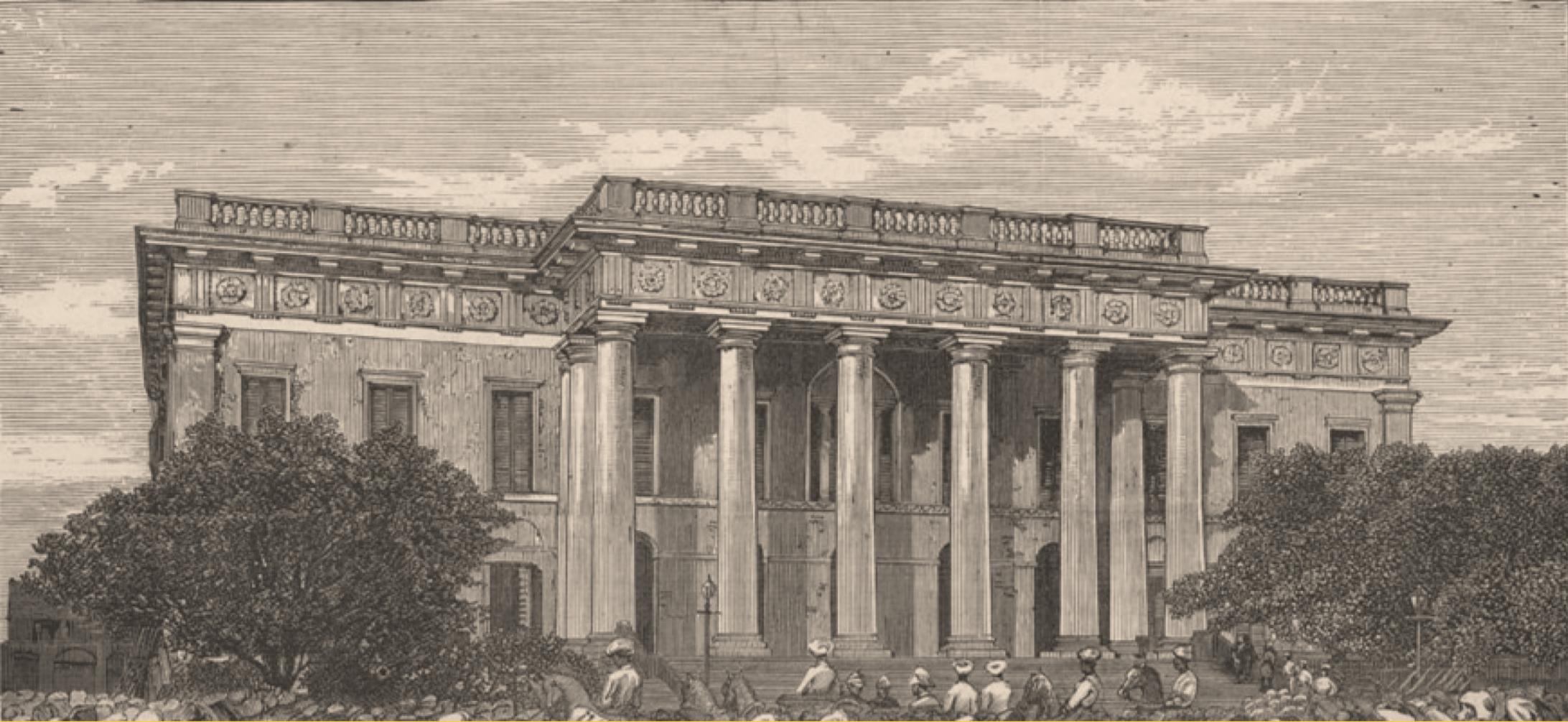
- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee travelled to London to study law at Lincoln's Inn. He quickly distinguished himself by representing Calcutta University at the Conference of Universities of the British Empire.

1927

- He was called to the Bar and returned to India to begin legal practice at the Calcutta High Court, first as a Vakil and later as a Barrister.

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First Steps into Public Life

Elected on Congress ticket

- In 1929, at just 28, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was elected to the Bengal Legislative Council from the Calcutta University constituency as a Congress nominee.
- He took this plunge not out of political ambition, but to safeguard the interest of the University and the future of the students.
- When Congress decided to boycott legislatures in 1930, he resigned on principle.

Re elected as an independent candidate. Guided by conviction, not party lines

- That same year, he was re-elected as an independent, marking the beginning of his independent public life. guided by conviction, not party lines.



“Generally speaking, an Indian university must regard itself as one of the living organs of national reconstruction. It must discover the best means of blending together both the spiritual and the material aspects of life. It must equip its alumni irrespective of caste, creed or sex, with individual fitness, not for its own sake, not for merely adorning varied occupations and professions, but in order to teach them how to merge their individuality in the common cause of advancing the progress and prosperity of their motherland and upholding the highest traditions of human civilisation.”

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee

Youngest Vice Chancellor (33)

Educational Reforms

Curriculum & Language Policy



Priority & focus on Indian languages

- He was the first to introduce Indian vernacular language as a subject for the highest examination in Calcutta University when it was dominated by English alone.
- He introduced Hindi, Bengali, Urdu Honours and Hindi in B.A and also allowed Ph.D. in Bengali.
- He standardized Bengali spellings; developed scientific terminology.

Introduced new subjects for academic enquiry

- During his tenure as VC of Calcutta University, he launched Diploma course in Agriculture.
- He not only set up departments for Chinese & Tibetan Studies but also introduced Geography and Islamic History as academic disciplines.

Set up institutions to support studies into the past

- Founded the Asutosh Museum, initiated archaeological work.



A Historic First: Convocation Address in বাংলা

Use of Local Language

- On 17 February, 1937, for the first time in the history of the University of Calcutta, the Convocation Address was delivered in the local language. (বাংলা/Bengali)

Nobel Laureate Tagore gave the convocation address

- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, persuaded Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore to speak to the graduates in their mother tongue.

Spotlight on Indian Language

- This symbolic moment marked a cultural assertion of Indian identity in an institution shaped by colonial traditions.
- It was a bold affirmation that Indian languages were not just vehicles of emotion, but of scholarship, dignity, and intellect.



Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee as Vice Chancellor of Calcutta University with Lord Brabourne Chancellor and Governor of Bengal in 1937.

Educational Reforms

Student Welfare and Inclusion



More chances for a successful future

- Framed the first College Code, removed age limits.
- Introduced compartmental exams.
- Built a modern Central Library.

Focused on capacity building & empowerment

- Started coaching for civil services aspirants.
- Set up Teachers' Training Department.
- Introduced short-term courses.
- Promoted women's education.
- Created Placement Cell to facilitate jobs for students.

Student Welfare: Healthy and Inclusive

- Dr. Syama Prasad abolished segregated hostels; promoted social integration.
- He expanded health and welfare programs.

Sense of pride and fraternity

- He instituted University Foundation Day (January 24) to strengthen student–teacher ties.

His love for the mother tongue was intrinsic to his vision of connecting to the motherland



Travel and Experiences in Assam

- Dr. Mookerjee travelled across Assam, immersed himself in its culture, and worked tirelessly for social unity and linguistic pride.
- He advocated for Assamese language to be the official language of the state.
- Dr. Mookerjee urged all communities in Assam to embrace the Assamese language, believing it would foster understanding, harmony, and shared identity across regions and faiths.

Introduced Assamese in Calcutta University

- As Vice Chancellor of Calcutta University in 1935, he introduced Assamese language believing every Indian should know Assam's history, heritage, and contribution to the freedom struggle.
- He selected Birinchi Kumar Barua, the first Assamese as a teacher at Calcutta University.



Transition to Politics: Influential Voice in the Opposition

Elected as an Independent Candidate

- In the 1937 Provincial Elections, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was elected as an Independent to the Bengal Legislative Assembly from the Calcutta University seat.

Declined to join Government

- He declined to join the government as the Muslim League formed the ministry after Congress refused to ally with the Krishak Praja Party.

Strong voice in Opposition

- From the opposition, he emerged as a strong voice for constitutional nationalism, exposing the League's sectarian governance and erosion of democratic norms. This marked his clear transition from academia to national politics.



A Nationalist Platform ***Entry to Hindu Mahasabha***

Drawn to nationalist ideals

- Between 1939 -1940, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee joined the All-India Hindu Mahasabha, drawn by its nationalist ideals.
- He played a key role at the 21st Session in Calcutta under Veer Savarkar's leadership and served as Working President (1940–44) and Bengal unit head.

First to declare complete independence

- Under his leadership, the Mahasabha became the first party to declare complete independence from British rule even before the Congress.



Finance Minister of Bengal (1941-1942)

Finance Minister in the Government of Fazlul Haq

- In December 1941, after the fall of the Muslim League government, a Progressive Coalition took charge in Bengal under Fazlul Haq.
- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee became its Finance Minister, the sole Hindu Mahasabha member in the cabinet.

Fair and practical approach rooted in national interest

- He upheld fiscal discipline and institutional integrity while navigating wartime economic pressures.
- Firmly opposing communal bias in policy, his leadership was widely respected for being practical, fair, and rooted in national interest.

When Poet Nazrul wrote a letter of Gratitude to Dr. Syama Prasad



July 1942

Poet Nazrul was ailing and despite his family members seeking help from a number of leading figures of the era who were in the Government they had to return with empty platitudes.

Dr Mookerjee, then Bengal's Finance Minister in the Syama-Huq coalition ministry, on hearing Nazrul's acute distress, rushed to his rescue.

Not only did he support his treatment but also arranged for Nazrul and his family to spend months convalescing at the Mookerjee's country retreat in Madhupur, then in Bihar, now in Jharkhand.

A grateful Nazrul wrote to him, on how he respected him most among the members of the coalition ministry.

He wrote , *"I know that it is we who shall completely free India, and on that day, [when India will be completely independent], Bengalis will remember you and Subhas Babu, before everyone else, you will be the true leaders of this nation."*



**Dr. Syama Prasad at his
retreat in Madhupur**

Resignation from the Bengal Cabinet



Finance Minister in the Government of Fazlul Haq

- As Finance Minister of Undivided Bengal, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee stood firmly against British repression during the Quit India Movement, particularly in Midnapore.

Resigned from the Bengal Cabinet as an act of principle

- In a letter to Viceroy Linlithgow on 12 August 1942, he wrote: “The demand of the Congress... constitutes the national demand of India as a whole... Repression is not the remedy at this critical hour.”
- He resigned on 20 November 1942, declaring: “Provincial autonomy under British rule is a mere farce.”
- He later clarified: “*My resignation was not due to any difference with the Chief Minister or any colleague but was an act of principle.*”

Bengal Famine in 1943: Largest citizen-led relief effort



Death and Destruction

- Over 3 million people died in Bengal, not by flood or drought, but by British wartime policies, disaster cover-ups, and criminal neglect by the then Muslim League government.

Mismanagement of funds

- Minister H.S. Suhrawardy, in charge of Civil Supplies, was widely condemned for gross mismanagement and communal favoritism.

Largest citizen led relief effort

- As the state failed, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee rose alone launching Bengal's largest citizen-led relief effort without holding office.
- He set up free kitchens, milk stations, mobile hospitals, and shelters across the province, from Midnapore to Jalpaiguri.
- When Mahatma Gandhi personally thanked him for his service, he simply said: "I have only done my duty."

Dawn

Founded by QAED-E-AZAM JINNAH
Edited by ALTAF HUSAIN

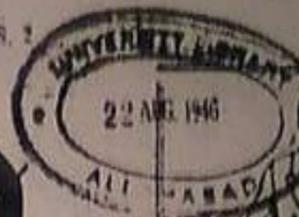
DELHI: SUNDAY, AUGUST 19, 1946. 20 RAMAZAN, 1365 A.H.

MAC



FOR COOL BREEZE

MAC WORKS
GADIAN



MUSLIM INDIA OBSERVES DIRECT ACTION DAY

"Never, Never" NO RUSSIAN SHARE IN THE STRAITS

ANKARA, Thursday.
SHOUTS of "never, never," from
Deputies greeted the announce-
ment in the Turkish Assembly of the
Soviet request for a direct share in
the defence of the Dardanelles.

90 DEAD, 900 INJURED IN CALCUTTA CLASHES

MILITARY CALLED OUT IN BENGAL CAPITAL & BOMBAY TRAFFIC IN BOTH THE

LIAQUAT ALI'S PAKISTAN- EFFORT CALL

M. Liaquat Ali Khan in an after-
noon Juma written appeal called on the
Muslims to be prepared to resist by
every means the Government imposed
against our will.

A large gathering heard local Mus-
lim League leaders explain the back-
ground in the League's Bombay resis-
tance. League's green flag and pla-
cards calling on the Muslims to be
ready for the night adorned the walls

PT. NEHRU THREATENS TO SUPPRESS MUSLIM LEAGUE'S DIRECT ACTION CONGRESS DETERMINED TO FORM INTERIM GOVT.

BOMBAY, Friday.
PANDIT Jawaharlal Nehru, President of the Indian National

Newspaper clippings of Calcutta Killings 1946



"DIRECT ACTION" DAY ASSAULTS

WIDESPREAD LOOTING & INCENDIARISM

FROM OUR CALCUTTA OFFICE

AUGUST 16.—STABBING, ARSON, LOOTING AND
WILFUL DESTRUCTION ON A LARGE SCALE WERE
WIDESPREAD IN CALCUTTA TODAY, WHICH HAD BEEN
DECLARED "DIRECT ACTION DAY" BY THE MUSLIM
LEAGUE.

Over 120 persons were killed and over 1,000 injured during the
day, about 75 per cent of the latter having been admitted into one
of the main hospitals in the city.

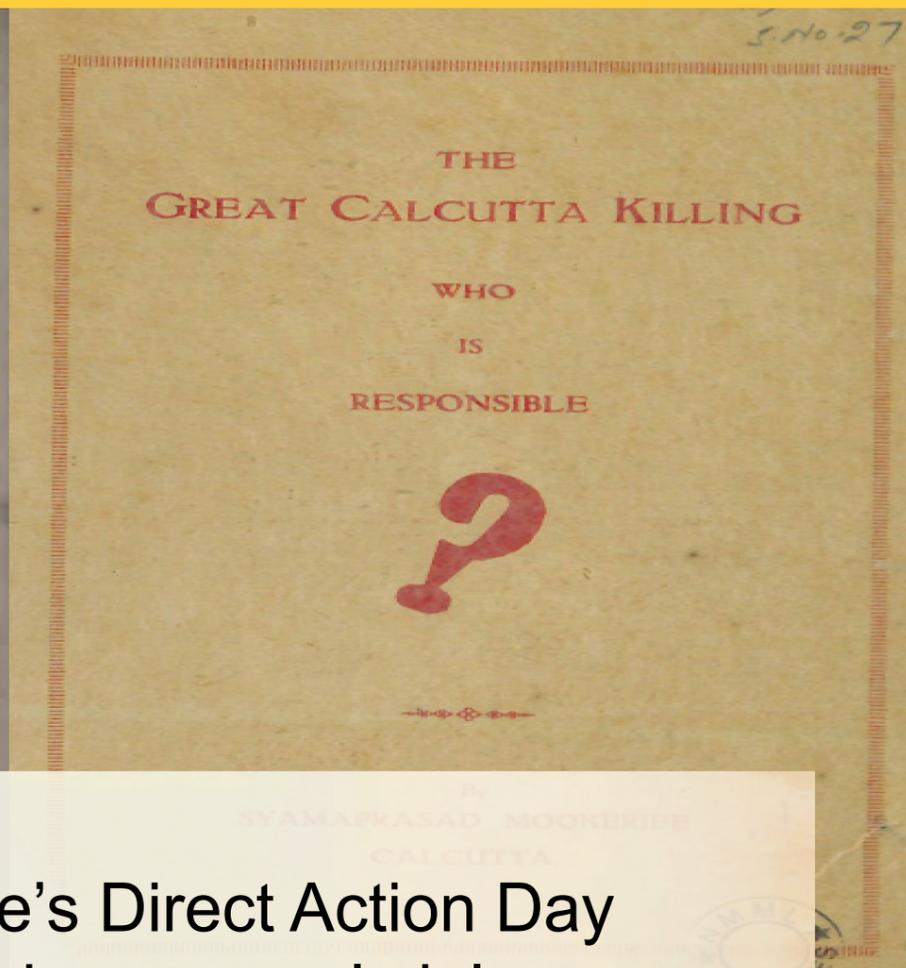
CURFEW was declared from 9 p.m. to 4 a.m., but in spite of this
incidents continued throughout the night. Mobile police
patrols toured the city throughout the day, dispersing crowds bent
on mischief. Police are reported to have fired on a number of
occasions, and about a dozen deaths in the hospitals were due to
bullet wounds.

The Calcutta Fire Brigade worked at full pressure and dealt
with more than 200 fires, large and small, under police protection.
Many fires, especially in the bazaar areas, could not be tackled as
crowds prevented the Fire Brigade men from reaching them.

Apart from the damage caused by arson, the financial loss in-
curred by shopkeepers and private individuals through looting alone
may total scores of lakhs.

Public transport services, including taxis, gharris and rickshaws
were at a complete standstill, vehicular traffic on the roads being
confined mainly to ambulances, police patrol vans and a few private
cars.

Dr. Syama Prasad's Leadership During Events Related to Direct Action Day in Bengal



Spread of violence and mayhem

- On 16 August 1946, Muslim League's Direct Action Day unleashed four days of orchestrated communal violence.
- Under H.S. Suhrawardy, the Muslim League government declared a public holiday enabling mobs to loot, burn, and kill, as the state stood silent. British officials described it as "unbridled savagery."
- The horror soon spread to Noakhali with massacres, rapes, and forced conversions.

Dr. Syama Prasad championed relief efforts

- In the face of government complicity and collapse, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee did not retreat.
- He stepped forward:
 - Formed the Hindustan National Guard.
 - Led rescue, relief, and protection efforts.
 - Personally visited riot-hit areas.
 - Mobilized civil defense.

Partition of Bengal and role of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee



Efforts ensured part of Bengal stayed with India

- Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Mukherjee West Bengal was created and remained an integral part of the Indian Union with Kolkata as its capital.
- Dr. Mookerjee opposed the inclusion of the whole of Bengal in Pakistan and advocated the creation of a province as homeland for Bengali Hindus.
- His forceful, cogent and timely advocacy of the scheme for the partition of Bengal succeeded in winning over a large number of his side.

Mobilized public opinion and support of intellectuals

- Dr. Mookerjee met Viceroy Mountbatten and also mobilized public opinion in favour of the creation of West Bengal by meeting cross sections of Bengali society including the leading intellectuals such as R. C Majumdar, Jadunath Sarkar, Radhakumud Mukherjee, Meghnad Saha, P.R. Thakur and G. D Birla and others.
- The creation of West Bengal was undoubtedly one of the greatest achievements of Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

1946: A Nationalist Voice in the Constituent Assembly



Elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal,

- In the wake of Bengal's collapse and the Calcutta Killings, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee moved to Delhi, stepping onto the national stage.
- Elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal, he became a leading voice for Hindus of East Bengal and a defender of constitutional nationalism.

Elected to the Constituent Assembly from Bengal,

- He initially opposed Partition, argued for a strong and sovereign Centre, and warned against federal weaknesses.
- He rejected special rights based on religion, supported equal citizenship, and opposed separate electorates.
- A firm advocate of civil liberties, education reform, and a Uniform Civil Code, he stood for a united India rooted in justice, equality, and cultural integrity.

India's First Industry Minister



Architect of Industrial Vision

- On 15 August 1947, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee became India's first Minister for Industry & Supply in First Cabinet of Independent India.
- He focused on industrial self-reliance, refugee rehabilitation, and economic stability in a newly independent India.

Industrial First Industrial Policy

- On 6 April 1948, he introduced India's First Industrial Policy, defining a balanced mixed-economy model.
- Landmark PSUs launched during the tenure of Dr. Mookerjee launched.



Chittaranjan Locomotive
Works



Sindari Fertilizer
Corporation Ltd.



Hindustan Aeronautics
Limited

New Delhi,
6th April 1950.

My dear Panditji,

I hereby tender my resignation of my office as Minister. I hope you will kindly relieve me as early as possible.

The reason for my resignation, as I have communicated to you, arises out of the policy pursued regarding Indo-Pakistan relationship, specially relating to Bengal. The Agreement which, I suppose, will be finalised today does not touch the basic problem and is not likely to offer any solution. I can under no circumstances be a party to it. Apart from the fact that it will bring little solace to the sufferers, it has certain features which are bound to give rise to fresh communal and political problems in India, the consequences of which we cannot foresee today. In my humble opinion the policy you are following will fail. Time alone can prove this.

It has been a privilege to work in the first Cabinet of Free India for two and a half years and may I thank you for the opportunity you gave me to do so?

Yours sincerely,

Sd/- Syama Prasad Mookerjee.

Hon'ble Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister,
New Delhi.

On 8 April 1950, India and Pakistan signed the Nehru–Liaquat Pact, pledging equal rights, religious freedom, and protection for minorities in both countries.

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, then Minister for Industry & Supply, found the pact insufficient in addressing the urgent plight of Hindu refugees from East Bengal and resigned.

Resignation Letter of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee



Addressing a gathering in Calcutta

Parliamentary debates of Dr. Mookerjee

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Statement by Dr. S.P. Mookerjee on his resignation as Minister of Industry and Supply

Sir, in accordance with parliamentary convention I rise to make a statement explaining the reasons which have led to my resignation from the Cabinet. Let me assure the House that I have not taken the step on the spur of the moment but after deep and deliberate thought. It has been a matter of regret to me that I have not been able to reconsider my decision, although pressed to do so by many for whom I entertain the deepest personal regard. For over 2½ years it has been my proud privilege to work as a Minister of the first National Cabinet of Free India and I have not spared myself in the discharge of the duties that fell upon me. To me the experience has been of great value and it has been my privilege to work in an atmosphere of friendliness and co-operation during one of the most critical periods in the history of our country. To all sections of the House I convey my gratitude for the confidence reposed in me and to Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel I specially tender my grateful thanks for the opportunity they gave me to serve the country under their leadership. There is nothing of a personal character which has prompted me to resign and I do hope that those with whom I have disagreed will appreciate the depth of my convictions just as I have unhesitatingly appreciated their own. My differences are fundamental and it is not fair or honourable for me to continue as a member of the Government whose policy I

Parliamentary Debates, 19 April, 1950

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cannot approve of. In all fairness to the Prime Minister I should state that when I communicated my decision to him on 1st April, even before the Prime Minister of Pakistan arrived in India, he readily appreciated my standpoint, acknowledged our differences and agreed to release me from the burden of my office. Any withdrawal at a subsequent stage would not have been fair to him or to me.

I have never felt happy about our attitude towards Pakistan. It has been weak, halting and inconsistent. Our goodness or inaction has been interpreted as weakness by Pakistan. It has made Pakistan more and more intransigent and has made us suffer all the greater and even lowered us in the estimation of our own people. On every important occasion we have remained on the defensive and failed to expose or counteract the designs of Pakistan aimed at us. I am not, however, dealing today with general Indo-Pakistan relationship, for the circumstances that have led to my resignation are primarily concerned with the treatment of minorities in Pakistan, specially in East Bengal. Let me say at once the Bengal problem is not a provincial one. It raises issues of an all-India character and on its proper solution will depend the peace and prosperity, both economic and political, of the entire nation. There is an important difference in the approach to the problem of minorities in India and Pakistan. The vast majority of Muslims in India wanted the partition of the country on a communal basis, although I gladly recognise there has been a small section of patriotic Muslims who consistently have identified themselves with national interests and suffered for it. The Hindus on the other hand were almost to a man definitely opposed to partition. When the partition of India became inevitable, I played a very large part in creating public opinion in favour of the partition of Bengal, for I felt that if that was not done, the whole of Bengal and also perhaps Assam would fall into Pakistan. At that time little knowing that I would join the first Central Cabinet, I along with others, gave assurances to the Hindus of East Bengal, stating that if they suffered at the hands of the future Pakistan Government, if they were denied elementary rights of citizen-

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ship, if their lives and honour were jeopardised or attacked, Free India would not remain an idle spectator and their just cause would be boldly taken up by the Government and people of India. During the last 2½ years their sufferings have been of a sufficiently tragic character. Today I have no hesitation in acknowledging that in spite of all efforts on my part, I have not been able to redeem my pledge and on this ground alone — if on no other — I have no moral right to be associated with Government any longer. Recent happenings in East Bengal have however overshadowed all their past woes and humiliation. Let us not forget that the Hindus of East Bengal are entitled to the protection of India, not on humanitarian considerations alone, but by virtue of their sufferings and sacrifices, made cheerfully for generations, not for advancing their own parochial interests, but for laying the foundations of India's political freedom and intellectual progress. It is the united voice of the leaders that are dead and of the youth that smilingly walked up to the gallows for India's cause that calls for justice and fairplay at the hands of Free India of today.

The recent Agreement, to my mind, offers no solution to the basic problem. The evil is far deeper and no patchwork can lead to peace. The establishment of a homogeneous Islamic State is Pakistan's creed and a planned extermination of Hindus and Sikhs and expropriation of their properties constitute its settled policy. As a result of this policy, life for the minorities in Pakistan has become "nasty, brutish and short". Let us not be forgetful of the lessons of history. We will do so at our own peril. I am not talking of by-gone times; but if anyone analyses the course of events in Pakistan since its creation, it will be manifest that there is no honourable place for Hindus within that State. The problem is not communal. It is essentially political. The Agreement unfortunately tries to ignore the implications of an Islamic State. But anyone, who refers carefully to the Objectives Resolution passed by the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan and to the speech of its Prime Minister, will find that while talking in one place of protection of minority rights, the Resolution in another place emphatically declares "that the

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principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and special justice as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed". The Prime Minister of Pakistan while moving the Resolution thus spoke:

"You would also notice that the State is not to play the part of a neutral observer wherein the Muslims may be merely free to profess and practice their religion, because such an attitude on the part of the State would be the very negation of the ideals which prompted the demand of Pakistan and it is these ideals which should be the cornerstone of the State which we want to build. The State will create such conditions as are conducive to the building up of a truly Islamic Society which means that the State will have to play a positive part in this effort. You would remember that the Quaid-e-Azam and other leaders of the Muslim League always made unequivocal declarations that the Muslim demand for Pakistan was based upon the fact that the Muslims had their own way of life and a code of conduct. Indeed, Islam lays down specific directions for social behaviour and seeks to guide society in its attitude towards the problems which confront it day to day. Islam is not just a matter of private beliefs and conduct."

In such a Society, let me ask in all seriousness, can any Hindu expect to live with any sense of security in respect of his cultural, religious, economic and political rights. Indeed our Prime Minister analysed the basic difference between India and Pakistan only a few weeks ago on the floor of the House and his words will bear repetition:

"The people of Pakistan are of the same stock as we are and have the same virtues and failings. But the basic difficulty of the situation is that the policy of a religious and communal State followed by the Pakistan Government inevitably produces a sense of lack of full citizenship and a continuous insecurity among those who do not belong to the majority community".

It is not the ideology preached by Pakistan that is the only disturbing factor. Its performances have been in full accord with its ideology and the minorities have had bitter experiences times without number of the true character and functioning of an Islamic State. The Agreement has totally failed to deal with this basic problem.



NEW DELHI.

April 6.

My dear Sardarji

I enclose copy of my letter of resignation to the Prime Minister.

May I express to you my deep gratitude for the confidence and affection I have all along received at your hands? Whatever I may do in future, your life and idealism will be a source of inspiration to me.

May you remain hale and active for some years at least so that our hardwon freedom may not become jeopardised.

Yours
Syama Prasad

**Letter of Dr. Syama Prasad
Mookerjee to Sardar Patel**



His efforts towards sparking a national awakening of Indian consciousness continued ...



Founded Bharatiya Jana Sangh & India's First Opposition Bloc



Object

The object of the Bharatiya Jana Sangh is the rebuilding of Bharat on the basis of Bharatiya '*Sanskriti*' and '*Maryada*' and as a political, social, and economic democracy granting equality of opportunity and liberty of individual so as to make her a prosperous, powerful and united nation progressive, modern and enlightened, able to withstand the aggressive designs of others and to pull her weight in the council of nations for the establishment of the world peace.

Formation of new political party

- After resigning over the Delhi Pact, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee founded the Bharatiya Jana Sangh on 21 October 1951.
- He became its first President, adopting the 'Deepak' symbol as its identity.
- In the 1952 elections, Jana Sangh won 3 Lok Sabha seats, including Mookerjee's own.

Creation of structured opposition

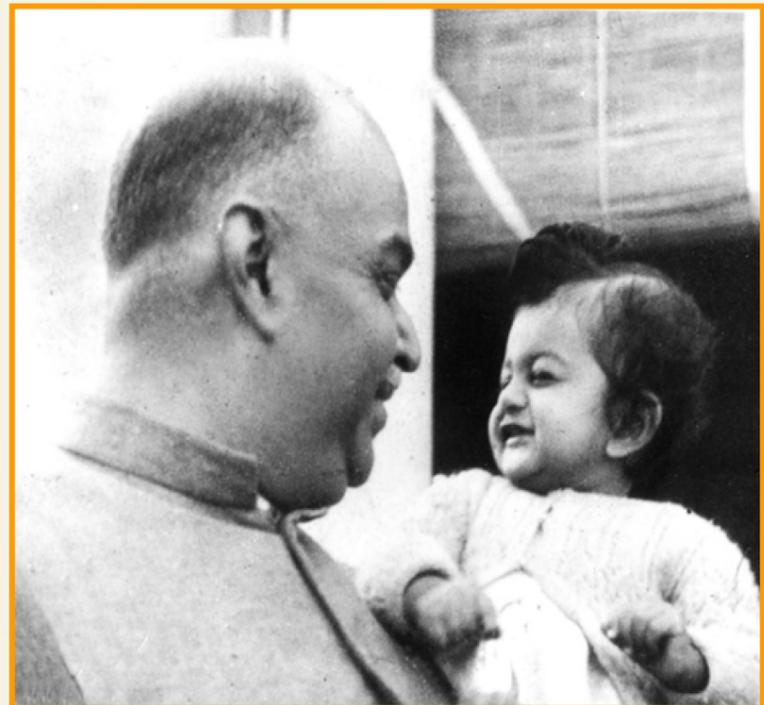
- He then united anti-Congress forces to form the National Democratic Party (NDP) — India's first structured opposition bloc.
- This model laid the foundation for future alliances like today's National Democratic Alliance (NDA).

Construct of Integral Humanism

Integral Humanism presents a **balanced vision of human development** that integrates physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.

Deendayal Upadhyaya's conception of the human being is not limited to economic utility but is seen as a holistic entity comprising the body, mind, intellect, and soul.

This approach sought to **harmonize** individual freedom with social responsibility, material prosperity with spiritual growth, and national advancement with cultural integrity.



Dr. Syama Prasad's vision and speeches reflected a worldview anchored in the fundamentals of Integral Humanism. **He consistently stressed that India's progress must not imitate the West blindly, but should draw strength from her own cultural and ethical foundations.**

In 1951, when Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee founded the Bhartiya Jana Sangh, Deendayal Ji became the first General Secretary of its U.P. branch. He was also chosen as All India General Secretary.

Antyodaya: Reaching those at the bottom of the pyramid

“Political and social justice... means equality of opportunity for all, genuine freedom for self-fulfillment, irrespective of caste or creed.”

Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee

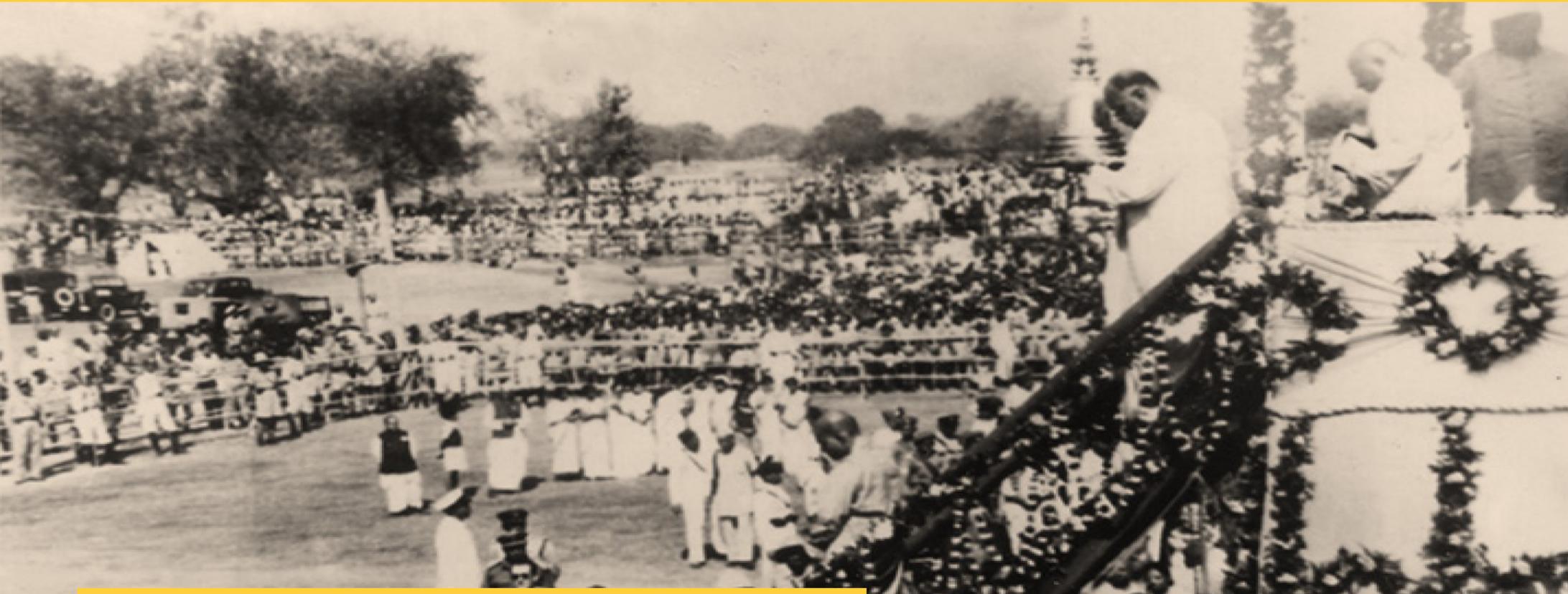
Agra University, 1940



Focus on inclusion and access

- The philosophy of Antyodaya, was central to the social vision of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi and later, Deendayal Upadhyaya.
- While Dr. Mukherjee did not use the term directly, his political and educational work emphasized the need for justice, equality, and inclusion, especially for marginalized communities.
- His belief in ensuring equal access to opportunity and development for all citizens reflected the core essence of Antyodaya.

Dr. Mookerjee and Dhamma Diplomacy



President of Mahabodhi Society

- In 1942, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee became President of the Mahabodhi Society of India, championing India's civilizational legacy.

Received Buddhist relics at Calcutta Maidan

- In 1949, he received the relics of Sariputra and Maudgalyayana at Calcutta Maidan, handed over by PM Nehru from the British Museum.

Escorted Buddhist relics to South-East Asi

- In March 1952, he escorted the relics to Myanmar, Cambodia, Thailand, and Vietnam, fostering India's spiritual ties with Southeast Asia.

Re-enshrined relics at Sanchi

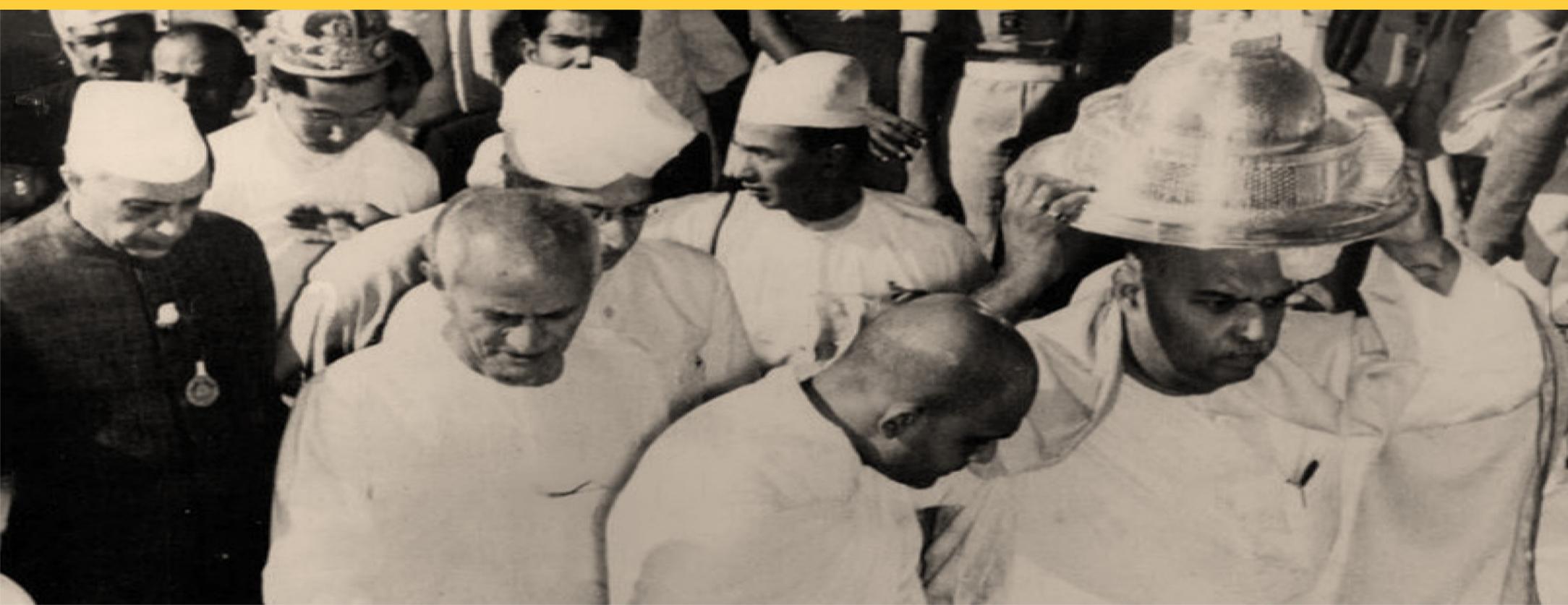
- On returning towards the end of 1952, he re-enshrined them at Sanchi, during the International Buddhist Conference being held, restoring India's custodianship of Buddha's heritage on the global stage.



Dr. Mookerjee holding Buddhist relics with President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan at Mahabodhi Society, Calcutta.



Escorted Buddhist relics to South-East Asia



Kashmir and Role of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee (1)

Focus on Jammu and Kashmir

- Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee's efforts during the last fifteen months of his life was focused on ensuring full accessibility of Constitutional rights conferred on citizens of India to the people of Jammu and Kashmir.

Focus on Constitution & Flag binding us all

- Dr. Mookerjee believed that the Constitution, the national flag and the elected head of Government were central to the idea of democracy in India and gave the rallying cry of 'Ek Desh Mein Do Vidhan, Do Pradhan Aur Do Nishaan Nahin Challenge.'

Supported peaceful satyagraha

- The Jammu-Kashmir Government unleashed unprecedented oppression on the Satyagrahis, jailing most of its leaders.
- Dr. Mookerjee identified himself with the Jammu-Kashmir Praja Parishad led by Prem Nath Dogra which had launched a peaceful Satyagraha in support of its demand for the full integration of the State of Jammu-Kashmir with the Indian Union.

Kashmir and Role of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee (2)



Met with leaders from Jammu and Kashmir

- In a true democratic spirit, Dr. Mookerjee called for talks and met Sheikh Abdullah in August 1952 and Yuvraj Karan Singh to find an amicable solution to the problem.

Continuous Communication

- During January and February 1953 He wrote a series of letters to Sheikh Abdullah and Jawaharlal Nehru to ensure a fruitful resolution to this issue.

Statement in Parliament

- On 16 March 1953, Dr. Mookerjee in a statement in Parliament appealed to settle the issue of Jammu and Kashmir in a manner which is fair and just not only to the people of Jammu and Kashmir but also to the people of India.

Now, take the movement which is going on. This is not the occasion when I am going to refer to the details. In fact, I was looking forward to a special debate on that question which the Prime Minister very kindly offered a few days ago when we were absent from this House. It would have been better if that debate could have taken place when we were present here, so that we could have spoken to each other, not in private but on the floor of this House, and understood each other's viewpoints. But the crux of the problem on the basis of which the movement is going on is the finality of the accession of the Jammu and Kashmir State to India. And that question has got to be settled in a manner which is fair and just not only to the people of Jammu and Kashmir but also to the people of India.

Kashmir and Role of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee (3)

Planned to visit Jammu and Kashmir

- Dr. Mookerjee then decided to visit Jammu and Kashmir in May 1953 to personally survey the situation.

Left from Delhi with Atalji and others

- On 8 May 1953, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee left Delhi for Jammu, joined by Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji and others, on a mission to oppose Article 370 and uphold one nation, one constitution.

Sent telegram to Sheikh Abdullah

- He telegraphed Sheikh Abdullah and the Prime Minister: *"My object in going to Jammu is solely to acquaint myself with what exactly had happened there and the present state of affairs. It will be my endeavour to ascertain what the intention of the people of Jammu is, and to find out if at all there is any possibility of the movement being brought to a peaceful and honourable end, which will be fair and just not only to the people of the State but also to the whole of India."*

Addressed large gatherings along the route

- He travelled through Shahabad, Karnal, Panipat, Phagwara, Pathankot making unscheduled stops to address large gatherings and reinforcing the purpose of his visit.

Kashmir and Role of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee (4)



Expected to be stopped

- At that time, it was illegal to enter Jammu and Kashmir without a permit, so Dr. Syama Prasad anticipated that he will be stopped.

Allowed to proceed ahead to Jammu and Kashmir

- However, contrary to his expectations, at Pathankot the Deputy Commissioner of Gurdaspur informed him that he has been instructed to allow him proceed to Jammu and Kashmir.

Allowed to enter Jammu and Kashmir but later arrested

- At first, he was allowed to enter Jammu & Kashmir without permit but was later arrested by on 11 May 1953 at Lakhapur (Madhopur Checkpost), midway between Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir for entering J&K without a permit under the Public Safety Act.

DR. MOOKERJEE ARRESTED AT JAMMU BORDER

AMRITSAR, MAY 11.

DR. SHYAMA PRASAD MOOKERJEE, PRESIDENT OF THE BHARATIYA JAN SANGH, WAS ARRESTED THIS EVENING AT LAKHIMPUR, 2 MILES INSIDE THE KASHMIR STATE FROM THE PATHANKOT-JAMMU BORDER AND TAKEN TO JAMMU SOON AFTER, ACCORDING TO OFFICIAL INFORMATION AVAILABLE HERE.

Mr. Gurudut Vaid, Delhi Jan Sangh leader, and Mr. Tara Chand, Private Secretary to Dr. Mookerjee, were also arrested along with Dr. Mookerjee by the Jammu police.

Soon after Dr. Mookerjee and party crossed the Madhopur check post and had gone half way over the bridge, their jeep was stopped by a police party headed by the Superintendent of Police of Kathua District in Jammu. Dr. Mookerjee was served with an order that his entry was prejudicial to the security of the State and that he would not be permitted to enter the State.

The Inspector-General of Police, Jammu and Kashmir Government, and Maulana Masudi, General Secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir National Conference, who were present, advised Dr. Mookerjee not to break the law and requested him to return.

Dr. Mookerjee, however, said that he had come on a specific mission and he was determined to enter the State. Dr. Mookerjee, Mr. Vaid and Mr. Tara Chand were then taken into custody.

POLICE PATROL JAMMU
CITY

JAMMU, May 11.—Strong police reinforcement began patrolling Jammu city today, following the arrest of Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee and two others at the Pathankot-Jammu border.

—P.T.I.



Dr. Mookerjee was kept in detention in a small cottage in Srinagar. It was here that he fell seriously ill and received indifferent medical attention till his condition rapidly deteriorated and he eventually died on 23 June 1953.



Extract from Press Communique (issued by J&K Govt.)

- 2 -

At 9 P.M. his general condition was fairly good except for low blood-pressure and rapid pulse.

At 11 P.M. oxygen was given to allay restlessness which started at that time. His blood-pressure fell to 100/80. Glucose with aminophylline was given intravenously.

At 1 A.M. he got pain in the heart area and became restless. Pulse was feeble and blood-pressure 90/70. Oxygen was continued. To relieve pain, Pethidine, one cc, was given.

At 2.30 A.M. his condition was as above. Respiration and pulse became imperceptible. Coramine and Aminophylline given intravenously.

3 A.M. condition as above. Pulse was slightly perceptible. Oxygen was continued with intravenous coramine given again.

At 3.20 A.M. pulse was again imperceptible; Respiration feeble and irregular. Oxygen was continued.

3.40 A.M. respiration and pulse stopped."

During his detention, Dr. Mookerjee ^{had} been given all amenities and medical care. At 2.30 P.M. yesterday he informed his family and friends telegraphically that his condition was satisfactory. He sent the following telegram to his brother, Justice Mookerjee, in Calcutta:

"Sudden dry pleurisy three days ago. Better today. Fever pain much less. Removed hospital. Satisfactory medical arrangements made. No anxiety. Specially tell mother."

The body of Dr. Mookerjee ^{has} been flown to Calcutta. Shri Ved Guru Dutt and Shri Tek Chand, who were in detention and were staying along with Dr. Mookerjee, have been released and they are accompanying the body. Pt. Prem Nath Dogra who had been brought to Srinagar earlier and was also staying with Dr. Mookerjee in the same bungalow has also been released and is accompanying the party.

The Prime Minister, Sheikh Mohammad Abdullah, and other members of the Cabinet were present at the airport when the body was brought in by an ambulance.

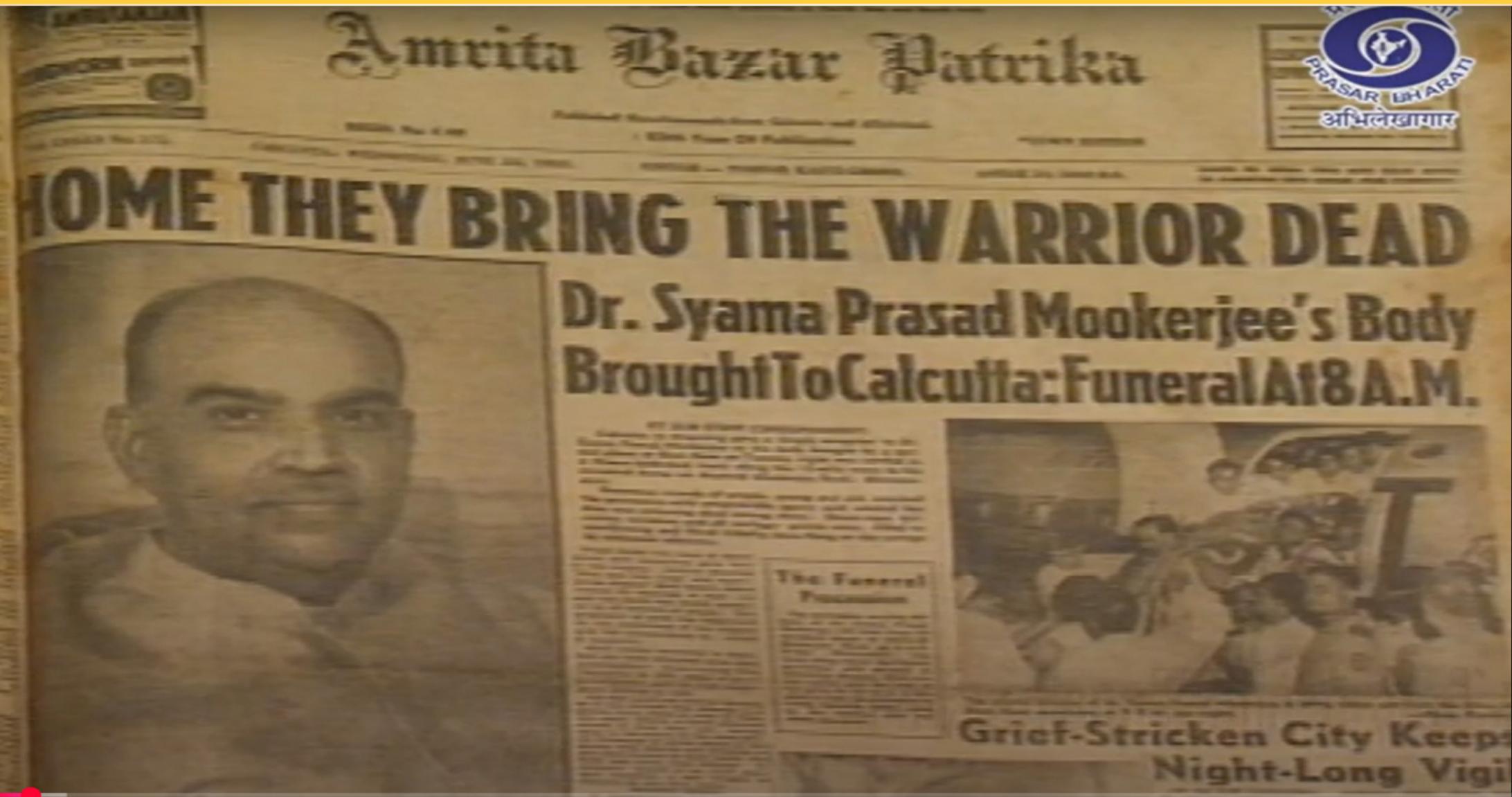
A death that shook the Nation's conscience



Cremation in Calcutta



A nation in mourning, Growing demands for enquiry



MINISTRY OF STATES
New Delhi
(16)
25 JUN 1953
19/95 28/153

INDIAN POSTS AND TELEGRAPHS DEPARTMENT

Received here at _____

X L JAMMU MKT 24
HOME MINISTER WD

DR MUKERJEE'S SAD DEMISE IN SHROUDED CIRCUMSTANCES IN SRINAGAR JAIL HAS CAUSED GREAT SHOCK TO THE PEOPLE AND SOME FOUL PLAY IN THE MYSTERIOUS DEATH IS APPREHENDED AND RESENTMENT IS RUNNING HIGH THROUGHOUT THE STATE AND URGENT ENQUIRY IN THE MATTER DEMANDED OTHERWISE SITUATION SERIOUS AND.

BURGADASS VARMA GENERAL SECRETARY ALL JAMMU AND KASHMIR PRAJA PERISHAD.

AGS, 1515

D3578-K/53

D. 424-V0/53
to
D. 428-V0/53

Five petitions placed below from the people of condolence meetings, held in different parts of the country in the memory of Dr. Mookerjee, relate to the condolence messages and ~~state~~ ^{request} that an enquiry Committee consisting of impartial persons ~~be~~ be set up to bring the true cause of Dr. Mookerjee's death into light. These may be transferred to K Section for disposal.

K/53
4/53

4/53

D. 3785-K/53 (1)
D. 3786-K/53 (2)
D. 3787-K/53 (3)
D. 3788-K/53 (4)
D. 3789-K/53 (5)

Refc. above. As the facts relating to Dr. Mookerjee's death have come out in the newspapers, no action need perhaps be taken. May be filed, etc.

Levi
7.7.53
7.7.53

Please see para contents bearing up this point.

low number

9/53

mch 30/6

24/6/53

D. 3655-K/53
SECRET/IMMEDIATE.

INTELLIGENCE BUREAU
(Ministry of Home Affairs)

It has since been ascertained that Prem Nath Dogra, Guru Dutt Vaid, and Tek Chand were all released today from Srinagar, and that they too left at about 10.40 a.m. in the I.A.P. plane carrying the body of Dr. Mukherji. This plane was scheduled to land at Adampur in Jullundur district, from where the journey to Calcutta would be continued in a civil aircraft of the Indian National Airways. Another passenger in this plane was U.M. Trivedi, M.P., who was allowed to visit Srinagar some time ago for consultations with Dr. S.P. Mukherji.

Information
(P.V. BHASKARAN)
Deputy Director
23.6.53

M.H.A. - (Mr. Pai)
Min. of States - (Mr. Viswanathan)

DIB u.o. No. *25105* dated 23 JUN 1953

Extract of letter written by mother of Dr. Syama Prasad

৭৭ আশুতোষ মুখার্জী রোড
কলিকাতা

৪ঠা জুলাই, ১৯৫৩

প্রিয় শ্রীনেহরু,

আপনার ৩০শে জুন তারিখের চিঠি ডাঃ বিধানচন্দ্র রায় আমার কাছে ২রা জুলাই তারিখে পাঠিয়েছেন।

আপনার সাহসনা ও সমবেদনার জন্য আপনাকে ধন্যবাদ জানাই।

আমার প্রিয় সন্তানের তিরোধানে সমস্ত জাতি শোকমগ্ন। সে শহীদের মৃত্যু বরণ করেছে। আমি তার মা, আমার কাছে এই দুঃখ এত গভীর ও পবিত্র যে তা প্রকাশ করা সম্ভব নয়। আমি আপনার কাছ থেকে কোন সাহসনা পাবার জন্য এ চিঠি লিখছি না। আপনার কাছে আমার যেটা দাবি সেটা হচ্ছে ন্যায়বিচার। আমার পুত্র বন্দীদশায় মারা গেছে—যে বন্দীদশার আগে কোন বিচার হয় নি। আপনার চিঠিতে আপনি বোঝাতে চেঁটা করেছেন যে, কাশ্মীর সরকারের যা যা করা উচিত ছিল সবই করেছিল। কাশ্মীর সরকার আপনাকে যে সংবাদ দিয়েছে তারই ভিত্তিতে আপনি ও-কথা বলেছেন।

আমি প্রশ্ন করি, যেসব লোকদের নিজেদের বিচারের কাঠগড়ায় দাঁড়ানোর কথা, তাদের কাছ থেকে পাওয়া সেই সংবাদের মূল্য কি? আপনি বলেছেন, আমার পুত্রের বন্দিত্বকালে আপনি কাশ্মীর গিয়েছিলেন। তার প্রতি আপনার ভালবাসা ছিল তাও বলেছেন। আমি জানি না, আপনার তার সঙ্গে দেখা করে তার স্বাস্থ্য ও তার জন্য কিরূপ ব্যবস্থা করা হয়েছে সে সম্বন্ধে খোঁজখবর নিয়ে নিশ্চিত হতে কি বাধা ছিল?

তার মৃত্যু রহস্যবৃত্ত। এটা কি অত্যন্ত বিশ্বয়কর ও আঘাতজনক নয় যে তার বন্দী হওয়ার পরে তার প্রথম সংবাদ কাশ্মীর সরকারের কাছ থেকে আমি তার মা যা পেলাম তা হোল যে আমার ছেলে আর নেই, এবং সে সংবাদও পেলাম সব শেষ হয়ে যাবার দুই ঘণ্টা পরে? আর কি নিষ্ঠুর সংক্ষিপ্ত ভাবেই না সংবাদটি পাঠানো হয়েছিল। হাসপাতালে ভর্তি করার পর আমার পুত্র যে টেলিগ্রাম করেছিল সেটাও আমাদের কাছে এসে পৌঁছিল তার নিদারুণ মৃত্যুসংবাদের পর। বন্দী হওয়ার পর থেকেই যে আমার পুত্রের শরীর খারাপ যাচ্ছিল এ ব্যাপারে নিশ্চিত ও সঠিক সংবাদ আছে। সে পর পর কয়েকবারই এবং বেশ কিছুদিনের জন্যে নিশ্চিতভাবেই অসুস্থ হয়ে পড়ে। আমি জিজ্ঞাসা করি, কাশ্মীর সরকার অথবা আপনার সরকার কোন সংবাদই আমাকে বা আমাদের আত্মীয়বর্গের কাউকে পাঠায় নি কেন?

যখন তাকে হাসপাতালে পাঠানো হল, তখনও তারা খবরটি আমাদের বা ডাঃ বিধানচন্দ্র রায়কে অবিলম্বে জানানো প্রয়োজন বোধ করে নি। এটাও দেখা যাচ্ছে যে, কাশ্মীর সরকার শ্যামাপ্রসাদের স্বাস্থ্যের পূর্ব ইতিহাস জানার এবং তার সেবা ও প্রয়োজনের সময়ে আপৎকালীন চিকিৎসার ব্যবস্থা নিতে কোন গা করে নি। তার পুনঃ পুনঃ অসুস্থতার ধাক্কাতেও গুরুত্ব দেওয়া হয় নি। এর ফল হল মারাত্মক। আমি স্পষ্ট সাক্ষ্য প্রমাণ দিয়ে প্রতিপন্ন করতে পারি, আমার পুত্রের নিজের কথাতেই, ২২ তারিখ ভোরবেলায় সে অবসন্ন বোধ করেছিল। আর সরকার কি করেছিলেন? চিকিৎসার ব্যবস্থা হতে অযথা বিলম্ব, অত্যন্ত অবিবেচকের মত ব্যবস্থা করে তাকে হাসপাতালে পাঠানো, হাসপাতালে তার কাছে তার দুই সহবন্দীকেও থাকতে না দেওয়া সংশ্লিষ্ট কর্তৃপক্ষের হৃদয়হীন আচরণের কয়েকটি জ্বলন্ত নিদর্শন।

শ্যামাপ্রসাদের চিঠিগুলি থেকে এলোমেলো ভাবে কতকগুলি বেছে নিয়ে, তার থেকে



Life and Legacy of Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee

(6 JULY 1901 - 23 JUNE 1953)



Ministry of Culture
Government of India

सत्यमेव जयते