

Madam Bhikaji Cama, Contribution in Freedom Struggle, Legacy

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Madam Bhikaji Cama was a prominent figure in the Indian independence movement. In 1902, her involvement deepened as she moved to London for medical treatment and connected with leaders like Dadabhai Naoroji and Shyamji Krishna Varma. There she co-founded the **Paris Indian Society** and published the newspaper **Bande Mataram**, advocating for Indian independence and inspiring unity.

Madam Cama is remembered for raising the "Flag of Indian Independence" in 1907 at the **International Socialist Conference** in Stuttgart, Germany.

About Madam Bhikaji Cama

Born on September 24, 1861, in **Bombay** (now Mumbai), Bhikaji Cama hailed from a Parsi family. Educated at the Alexandra Girls' English Institution, she was deeply influenced by her environment, where the struggle for independence was beginning to take shape.

- She married **Rustom Cama**, a wealthy lawyer with strong pro-British views, which caused differences due to her opposing nationalist stance.

- In 1896, during the **plague outbreak** in Bombay, she contracted the disease while working to aid the sick, which significantly impacted her health.
- **In 1902**, Bhikaji Cama travelled to London for medical treatment, where her engagement with the independence movement deepened.
- She interacted with prominent leaders like **Dadabhai Naoroji** and **Shyamji Krishna Varma**, solidifying her resolve to work against British rule.

Madam Bhikaji Cama's Contribution in Freedom Struggle

Madam Cama is most recognized for her historic act of raising the "Flag of Indian Independence" on **August 22, 1907**, at the **International Socialist Conference in Stuttgart, Germany**.

- Inspired by the earlier **Calcutta Flag**, the tricolour design included green, yellow, and red fields symbolizing Islam, Hinduism, and Buddhism, respectively.
- By raising this flag on international soil, Madam Cama boldly conveyed India's desire for self-rule, drawing global attention to its struggle against British colonial rule.
- Beyond her role as a flag bearer, in 1905, Cama co-founded the **Paris Indian Society** with Munchers Shah Burjorji Godrej and S.R. Rana.
 - This organization aimed to support Indian revolutionaries in exile and disseminate revolutionary literature, including the banned poem "**Vande Mataram**."
- Bhikaji Cama published the newspaper **Bande Mataram**, advocating for Indian independence and inspiring unity.
- She also founded the nationalist magazine **Madan's Talwar**, later known as The Talvar, in Berlin, in memory of the executed revolutionary Madan Lal Dhingra.

Madam Bhikaji Cama Legacy

Madam Bhikaji Cama is often hailed as the "**Mother of the Indian Revolution**." She is remembered for her unwavering commitment to India's freedom struggle and her pioneering efforts. Her contributions are celebrated across India, with streets and institutions named in her honour.

- On **January 26, 1962**, India issued a commemorative stamp recognizing her impact on the nation's independence movement.
- In tribute to her legacy, the Indian Coast Guard named a patrol vessel ICGS Bhikaji Cama after her in 1997.
- In her will, she generously allocated much of her estate to the **Avabai Petit Trust** to support orphaned girls, reflecting her dedication to social causes beyond her lifetime.
- Madam Cama passed away on **August 13, 1936**, but her life continues to inspire future generations in their quest for justice, equality, and freedom.

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