CONTRIBUTION OF INDIAN WOMEN IN INDIA’S STRUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

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ABSTRACT

In Indian struggle for freedom there was not only role of the men but Indian women had played great role. They strengthened the movement by providing their energy and contribution to men compagin of the freedom. The contribution of women in freedom struggle is significant they also participated in Indian struggle for freedom. The list of great women whose names have taken down in history for their dedication and service of India’s freedom struggle. Lakshmi Bai is a great women was an example for All independence movement. Begham Hazrat mahal had played a major role during India’s first war of independence. Madam Kama unfolded the the first national flag in germany in 1907. She declared the flag, is Indian. Kasturaba Gandhi was a leader of women’s Satyagrah. Aruna Asaf Ali played an outstanding role in the historic Quit India Movement in 1942.

INTRODUCTION

Indian struggle would be incomplete without describing the role’s of women. They fought with courage and faced various difficulties, exploitation to get us freedom when some great leaders were in prison. The women took charge of the struggle and they came forward. The list of the great women is long one. Rani Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi was an outstanding example of real patriotism. There was great role of Begham Hazrat Mahal in first Indian’s in dependace war. Kasturba Gandhi, Madam Kama, Vijay Lakshmi Pandit, Sarojini Naidu and Indira Gandhi etc. in the 20” century are the remembered name for their contribution both in battlefield and in political field.

Rani Lakshmi Bai- Rani of Jhansi, Rani Lakshmi whose great leadership laid an important example for all future generation of women. She was married to Gangadhar Rao head of the state of Jhansi. According to lapse policy she was not allowed to adopt a successor after her husband death and Jhansi was annexed. She fought against the British bravely. She used to go into the battlefield dressed as a man. Rani ‘s troop showed great courage. She used the sword with both hands. The british her as the best and bravest military leader of rebels. Dressed in the man’s clothes she motivated and led her soldiers to war against the British. She fought bravely and although beaten she refuse to surrender. She fell fighting the enemy to the last. Her remarkable courage inspired many women in India.

Begham Hazrat Mahal- She was a great Indian freedom fighter. She played a major role in first war of independence in 1857. She was also known as the wife of Nawab Wajid Ali Shah.
ruler of Lakhnow. She fought against the British. She was also associated with other leaders of India's first war of independence, including Nana Sahab. When the British force recaptured Lucknow and the most of the part of Awadh she was forced to retreat. She organized soldiers again in other places. At last she took refuge in Nepal and died in 1857.

**Madam Kama** - Madam Kama fought for the freedom in her own way. She helped many organization and revolutionaries with money and materials. She was the first lady who unfolded the first national flag at the international, socialist, conference in Stuttgart (Germany) in 1907. She declared, "The flag is of Indian independence! Behold it is born! It has been made sacred by the blood of young Indians who sacrificed their lives. I call upon you, gentlemen to rise and salute this flag of Indians independence. In the name of this flag, I appeal to lovers of freedom all over the world to support this flag." She travelled many countries about Indian struggle for independence. The government of India issued stamp on 10 may, 1984.

**Annie Besant** - One of them was Annie Besant, the leader of the Theosophical Movement in India. She advocated emancipation of Indian women. In fact, many Indian women joined her Home Rule Movement. According to her, the Home Rule Movement was rendered tenfold more effective by the involvement of a large number of women, who brought to it the uncalculating heroism, the endurance, and the self-sacrifice of the feminine nature (Neera Desai, p. 135). She considered child marriage to be a social evil and wanted its removal from the Indian society. For this, she suggested that boys should not marry at an immature age. She also supported the remarriage of child and young widows. She wholeheartedly supported the drive to educate women and believed that this would assist in successfully solving the vital problems of national life.

**Kasturba Gandhi** – Kasturba Gandhi was Mahatma Gandhi’s wife. She joined her husband while he was in South Africa and worked with him for many years there. She was a leader of women’s Satyagraha. She was imprisoned many times. She helped her husband in the case of Indigo workers in Campanar (Bihar) and NO TAX campaign in Khira (Gujrat). She participated in the Rajkot Satyagraha in 1939.

**Aruna Asaf Ali** - She played a great role in the historic Quit India movement launched by Mahatma Gandhi on August 9, 1942. She was prominent leader of the underground movement. She went from place to place and published bulletins. She edited Inquilab a monhly journal of the INC.

**Vijay Lakshmi Pandit** - Vijay Luxmi Pandit was a daughter of Moti Lal Nehru. Her brother name was Jawaher Lal Nehru India’s first prime minister. She was inspired and impressed by Rani Lakshmi Bai and
Sarojini Naidu. She joined the NON CO-OPERATION movement in 1920-22. She represented India in many of the conference abroad. She attended numerous public lectures. She was great freedom fighter and took part many of the freedom movement. She was arrested in 1932 and imprisoned to one year. She was also arrested in 1940 and again during the Quit India movement in 1942. She was first Indian women who became president of UNO maha sabha.

CONCLUSION:– After hundred years of struggle, blood shedding, Satyagarahas and sacrifices India finally achieved independence on August 15, 1947. The Hindus, The Muslims, The Christians, The Sikh and all other brave sons and daughter of India fought to through out the British.

Perhaps for the first time in world history the power of mighty global empire on which the never set had never been challenged and overcomeby the moral might of a people armed only with peace, ideals and courage.

Women took responsibilities in India’s struggle for freedom. They held meetings, boycotted the shops, selling foreign alcohol and articles. They sold KHADI and participated in national movement. They bravely faced the police and went to jail. Thousands of Indains women dedicated theirs lives achieving freedom of their motherland. Only very few could include in this research paper due to space restriction.

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