

The Unsung Warriors of Independence

(Author)

Laxmikant Rukmaji Yelgandrawar

3rd Year B.tech Student

(G.H. Rasoni College of Engineering and Management Pune-412207.)

1.1 Abstract:

When we hear Indian Independence, the first thing that comes to our mind is the fight of decades fought for getting freedom from the shackles of the Britishers (East India Company). The Britishers ruled over our land for more than a century. The heroes who have brought this revolution are the ones who had bloodshed and sacrificed their lives to bring the change.

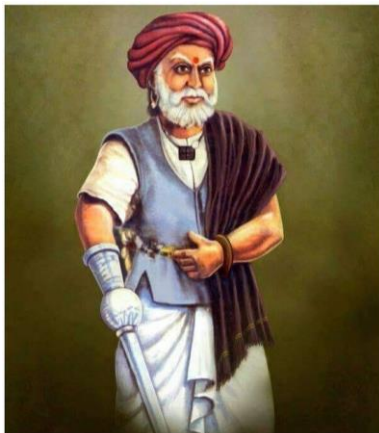
There are numerous freedom warriors who have contributed for freedom movement. Some came to the limelight, while some stayed in the dark. Those who contributed equally to the freedom movement but never got the spotlight simply they never cared about gaining fame. Their vision was to see India Independent. They fought the Freedom moment with true Spirit and Impeccable Courage. There were several freedom fighters that looked into the eye of the tyrannical British rulers and dared to raise slogans of an independent India. Some of them are celebrated all across the world among the Indian community while there are others whose names despite being worthy of all the glory that there is, remain anonymous to the world. As we are the citizens of India we should know their role in Freedom Movement and admire their work.

Keywords: Lahuji Raghoba Vastad | Umaji Naik | Vasudev Balwant Phadke | Sheshrao Ghatge.

1.2 Introduction:

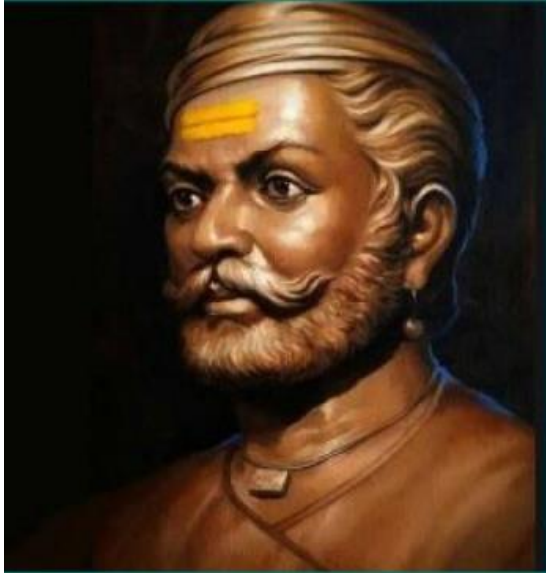
It is our duty to recognize and pay tribute to the Unsung Freedom warriors of India who have significantly contributed to India's freedom. The Story of Some of the Unsung Freedom warriors of India is presented in this Article.

Lahuji Raghoba Vastad :



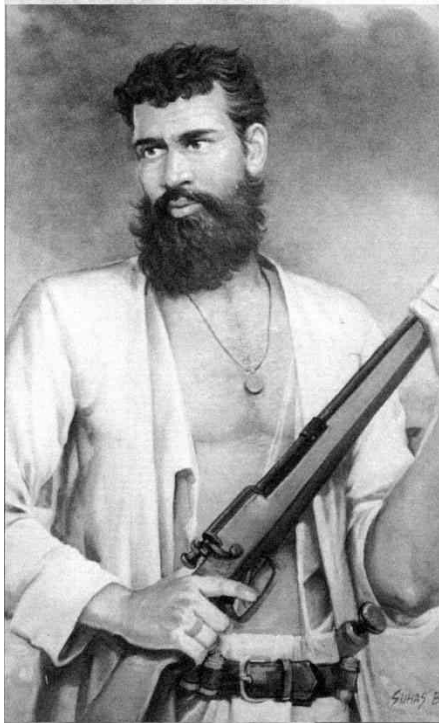
Lahuji Vastad was a Dalit activist, preacher and freedom fighter. He was born on 14th November 1794 in Mang Community near Purandar in Maharashtra, India. Lahuji was called "Lahujibuwa Mang" and also titled "Vastad" because of his excellent martial skills. Lahuji had mastery and skill in a particular weapon called Dandpatta. Lahuji taught martial arts to many great personalities; Bal Gangadhar Tilak and Jyotiba Phule. He was also the Mang mentor of Vasudev Balwant Phadke, who is known as the Father of the Indian Armed Revolution. Lahuji played a significant role in influencing the people and preaching the need for Indian freedom from British Raj. His citation says he showed outstanding and exemplary courage for the upliftment of the Untouchables.

Umaji Naik :



Umaji Naik was born on 7th September 1791 in Purandar taluka, Pune in Ramoshi tribe. He was an Indian revolutionary from Pune who challenged and fought against the east India Company. Naik raised a tiny army against the British soon after the fall of the Maratha Empire. he induced the spark in people to be aware of the need for Independence from the British raj. He provoked the people to fight against foreign rules. The British government had announced a Bounty of Rs.10, 000 for the capture of Umaji Naik. The Umaji Naik was betrayed by Nana Raghu Chavan who belonged to the same tribe "Ramoshi". Umaji was prisoned and kept at Mamledar Kacheri and soon he was hanged till death on 3rd Feb 1834 at Pune.

Vasudev Balwant Phadke :



Vasudev Balwant Phadke, 'The Father of Indian Armed Rebellion' was born on the 4th of November 1845 in Shirdhaon village of Panvel taluka, dist. Raigad Maharashtra. He was fond of wrestling and riding since childhood times. He worked as a clerk with the military accounts department in Pune. Phadke was influenced by the martial and wrestling techniques of krantiveer Lahuji Vastad Salve. Lahuji was a prominent Social Figure from Pune and also the mentor of Phadke. Phadke graduated from a British established institution in Bombay Presidency in the early stage. Phadke co-founded the Poona Native Institution (PNI) in 1860 along with the Social reformers and revolutionaries Laxman Narhar Indapurkar and Waman Prabhakar Bhawe. Later on, it was named Maharashtra Education Society (MES).

In 1875, after the Gaikwad ruler of Baroda was deposed by the colonial government, Phadke was against this and he launched protest speeches against the government. He gathered a group of people from the ramoshi caste. Later on kolis, Bhills and Dhangaras were joined. He taught himself to shoot, ride and fence. He organised around 300 men's into an insurgent group that aimed at giving Indian Independence from British Colonial rule. Phadke intended to build his own army but they were lacking funds. So, they decided to break into British government treasuries. The main purpose of these raids was to feed famine-affected farmer communities.

Reportedly, the attacks were organised by Phadke on the British government but got limited success. On July 1879, someone betrayed phadke and he was captured in a temple to the district of Kaladigi. He was taken to pune for trial. Phadke and his comrades were housed in the district session court jail building presently it is known as C.I.D. building. Phadke was successful in escaping the prison at Aden in Yeman by taking the door off from its hinges on 13th feb 1883. But soon after he was recaptured and then went on a hunger strike. He was declared dead on 17th Feb 1883.

Shesh Rao Ghatge : (1911- 1945)

Sheshrao Daulatrao Ghatge was born on 1st June 1911 in Nerpinglai, Ta Morshi Dist Amravati, Maharashtra. He married to Lakshmibai Lade at the age of 12 as per the past customs. Those times were not conducive to Education. In Pune, there was war between Jahals and Mawals over the education of girls. Satyashodhaka samaj had made efforts to universalize education. He was enlightened by the efforts of Savitribai Phule, Satyashodhaka Samaji and the efforts made by Ranade for Ramabai Ranade's education. Sheshrao thought of his wife getting an education and becoming literate. It was constantly creeping into his Broad-minded thoughts. He kept on giving the examples of Kasturibai Gandhi, and Ramabai Ranade to his wife. It is evident from the letters written to his wife while he was studying in Kolkata. The image of a true love hero to a Social philanthropist stands out from the Letters. Sheshrao's Letter depicts the openness in relationships and women's educational approach during the time when husband-wife interaction was not accepted in the Bahujan Society.

Kolkata is also famous for sports. The world-class cricket and Football matches were held in Kolkata. Sheshrao was always fond of Sports and Physical Exercise. He attained the matches held at Kolkata between 1927- 1928 with great enthusiasm.

He was greatly influenced by the Freedom Movement at a very young age. While pursuing the doctorate in Dentistry at Kolkata he felt the need to join the Freedom Movement. Soon after completing the first year he drop out of college at Kolkata and returned back to the village. He engrossed himself in the Freedom Movement. From 1929 to 1945 he was involved in several freedom Movements. During this 17 years of tenure, he worked for bringing awareness about the importance of freedom through various forms such as Prabhatferi, Provincial Congress sessions, Salt Satyagraha, And Achalpur Mill worker's struggle. Shesh Rao used to take out morning processions in Nerpinglai to awaken the people for freedom. People used to flock to the meetings to hear Sheshrao. He pursued the dream of doing 'National service' and also been a reformist. Sheshrao was more inclined towards communist thoughts. Due to the influence of Bengali in Nerpinglai, Sheshrao also acted as a Bengali revolutionary for some time.



Sheshrao also attended the important meetings of Mahatma Gandhi in the Amravati district.

[Type here]

The third session of the Vidarbha Provincial Congress Council was held on 5th and 6th February 1938 at Shendurjana Ghat. It was held under the chairmanship of Gangadharrao Deshpande. The convention was inaugurated by the famous leader of Bengal, Babu Sharad Chandra Bose. This session was attended by prominent leader Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru. Mr Sheshrao Ghatge was the minister of Vidharbha Provincial Farmers Council held on 6th February 1938 under the chairmanship of Swami Sahajanand, a famous leader of Bihar.

In 1931 Sheshrao Ghatge formed an organization of mill workers in Achalpur. During the strike of mill workers of Achalpur, M.L. Jaywant and Sheshrao were prisoned for six months. Sheshrao was offered the job of Tehsildar by the British government at that time but he refused the job offer of the British government knowing that the freedom struggle is more important.

On 10th October 1945, a British government army vehicle hit Sheshrao's Damani and he was martyred before seeing the dawn of Independence.

1.3 References :

1. **Dictionary of Martyrs** , India's Freedom Struggle (1857 – 1947) *printed by* MINISTRY OF CULTURE Government of India and INDIAN COUNCIL OF HISTORICAL RESEARCH 35, Ferozeshah Road, New Delhi - 110 001
2. [Martyrs Vol 4 06 03 2019.pdf](#) ISBN 978-81-938176-0-5
3. VASUDEV BALWANT PHADKE 'Father of the Indian Armed Rebellion' article published by govt. of India. <https://indianculture.gov.in/node/2801303>
4. Hebbar, Prajakta (7 April 2013). "[Forgotten freedom fighter](#)". *The Indian Express*. Retrieved 29 April 2020
5. "[Marathi film to show Nana as revolutionary](#)". *Hindustan Times*. 22 March 2012. Retrieved 31 July 2021.
6. A Book written on Sheshrao Ghatge. [Sheshrao Ghatge \(1911 - 1945 \).pdf](#) .