



Revolutionary ideas that live on

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Bhagat Singh's intellectual bequest should be a beacon of light to build a new India

- Bhagat Singh stands out in bold relief as someone who, at a young age, defined nation and nationalism for us.
- Bhagat Singh had an alternative framework of governance, which is strongly reflected in the corpus of writings that he has left behind.
- Sadly, we hardly care to revisit this serious intellectual inheritance and only venerate him as a martyr which is laudable but incomplete.

Incisive commentary

- Singh was barely 17 when he published his first article, in 1924, in Matwala, a Hindi magazine from Calcutta.
- The subject was 'Universal Brotherhood', which was not a very easy issue to write on at such a young age.
- Among the heroes of our freedom struggle, Bhagat Singh was perhaps the only one who had this vision at such a young age.
- Bhagat Singh's strongest critique was of untouchability and communalism, which continue to torment us as a nation.
- Bhagat was also conscious of the international revolutionary struggles and ideologies, which is evident in a series of articles he wrote on 'Anarchism'.
- Bhagat was aghast that we claimed to be a spiritual country, yet discriminated against fellow human beings while the materialist West had done away with such inhuman obscenities long ago.

Inclusiveness came first

- The decade of the 1920s saw a rise in communal politics, from both Hindu and Muslim groups.
- However, Bhagat Singh steadfastly remained committed to the idea of a plural and inclusive India.

- He founded the Naujawan Bharat Sabha in Lahore in 1926, whose manifesto said, "Religious superstitions and bigotry are a great hindrance in our progress. They have proved an obstacle in our way and we must do away with them. 'The thing that cannot bear free thought must perish'."
- We feel that the true well-wishers of India would follow these principles and save India from the suicidal path it is on at present." None cared to listen to this voice of sanity then.
- Even now, many of us continue to peddle religion to promote political prospects.
- Bhagat Singh expressed his disenchantment with the politics of Lala Lajpat Rai, whom he and other youth otherwise venerated.
- Today, we need to remember Bhagat's revolutionary ideas.
- Mere valorisation of his nationalism and ultimate sacrifice is true but sadly incomplete.
- In these rancorous times, Bhagat Singh's intellectual bequest should be a beacon to build a new India.

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