

# Freedom Fighter Sukhdev Biography

- He showed a defiant spirit from an early age itself. During his school days, he would refuse to salute the British officers who visited his school.
- Having lost his father at an early age, Sukhdev was raised by his uncle. It was the arrest of his uncle that led him to revolutionary activities for freedom from colonial rule.
- Sukhdev joined the Naujawan Bharat Seva, which had been started by Bhagat Singh in 1926. The two became close friends and associates.
- He participated in many activities to promote national consciousness among the country's young people in the Punjab area.
- He was also an active member of the Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA). The HSRA was a radical organisation actively involved in revolutionary activities against the British government.
- Sukhdev, while in college, studied the various revolutions of the world, particularly the Russian Revolution.
- In an anti-Simon Commission rally in 1928, veteran Congress leader Lala Lajpat Rai was cruelly beaten by a lathi by a British police officer named James A Scott. Lajpat Rai succumbed to injuries sustained a few days later.
- The young revolutionaries including Sukhdev decided to avenge Lajpat Rai's death. As per Bhagat Singh's biographer, it was Sukhdev who chose Bhagat Singh to assassinate Scott.
- However, on 17<sup>th</sup> December 1928, Bhagat Singh and his accomplices Sukhdev and Rajguru killed an Assistant Superintendent of Police, John P. Saunders in a case of mistaken identity.
- They still declared that Lajpat Rai's death had been avenged. After committing the act, the trio escaped.
- They fled from Lahore by rail to Lucknow. Rajguru went on to Benares from Lucknow. He returned to Lahore a few days later.
- The British government managed to capture all the people involved in the assassination. Rajguru was arrested while he was in a bomb factory in Lahore in March 1929. All three were sentenced to death by hanging in the trial that ensued.
- While lodged in prison, Rajguru and his friends went on a hunger strike demanding improved conditions for political prisoners.
- He also wrote and sent a letter to Mahatma Gandhi while in prison.
- Despite tremendous pressure on the government to spare the youngsters, the trio was executed by hanging on 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1931.
- Rajguru was just 23 years old. He will always be remembered for his patriotism and courage. His story, as that of his accomplices, continues to inspire Indians.