

SHAHEED UDHAM SINGH

ANSWER KEY

Freedom Fighter

December 28, 1899 – July 31, 1940 (40 years old)

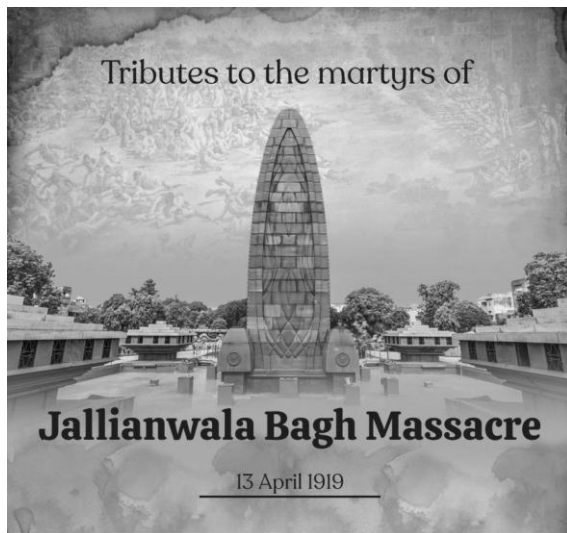
Early Life

Udham Singh, a militant Sikh nationalist, was born Sher Singh on 26 December 1899, at Sunam, in the then princely state of Patiala. His father, Tahal Singh, was at that time working as a watchman on a railway crossing in the neighboring village of Upall.

Sher Singh lost his parents before he was seven years old and was admitted along with his brother Mukta Singh to the Central Khalsa Orphanage at Amritsar on 24 October 1907. As both brothers received the blessing of Amrit at the Orphanage, they received new names, Sher Singh becoming Udham Singh and Mukta Singh being named Sadhu Singh.

In 1917, Udham Singh's brother also died, leaving him alone in the world. Udham Singh left the Orphanage after passing the matriculation examination in 1918.

The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre



Udham Singh was present in the Jallianwala Bag on the fateful Vaisakhi day, 13 April 1919, when a peaceful assembly of people was fired upon by General Reginald Edward Harry Dyer, killing over one thousand people. The event which Udham Singh used to recall with anger and sorrow, turned him to the path of revolution.

JALLIANWALA BAGH MASSACRE involved the killing of hundreds of unarmed, defenseless Indians by a senior British military officer. It took place on 13 April 1919 in the heart of Amritsar, the holiest city of the Sikhs, on a day sacred to them as the birth

anniversary of the Khalsa. Jallianwala Bagh, a garden belonging to the Jalla, derives name from that of the owners of this piece of land in Sikh times. It was then the property of the family of Sardar Himmat Singh (d.1829), a noble in the court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780–1839), who originally came from the village of Jalla, now in Fatehgarh Sahib district of the Punjab. The site, once a garden or garden house, was in 1919 an uneven and unoccupied space.



Revolutionary Activities

Soon after the massacre, Udham Singh left India and went to the United States of America. He felt thrilled to learn about the militant activities of the Babbar Akalis in the early 1920's, and returned home. He had secretly brought with him some revolvers and was arrested by the police in Amritsar, and sentenced to four years imprisonment under the Arms Act.

On release in 1931, he returned to his native Sunam, but harassed by the local police, he once again returned to Amritsar and opened a shop as a signboard painter, assuming the name of Ram Muhammad Singh Azad. This name, which he was to use later in England, was adopted to emphasize the unity of all the religious communities in India in their struggle for political freedom.

Udham Singh was deeply influenced by the activities of Bhagat Singh and his revolutionary group. He invariably referred to him as his guru. He loved to sing political songs, and was very fond of Ram Prasad Bismal, who was the leading poet of the revolutionaries.

After staying for some months in Kashmir, Udham Singh left India. He wandered about the continent for some time, and reached England by the mid-thirties. He was on the lookout for an opportunity to avenge the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy.

Assassination of Sir Michael O'Dwyer

The long-awaited moment at last came on 13 March 1940. On that day, at 4.30 p.m., in the Caxton Hall, London, where a meeting of the East India Association was being held in conjunction with the Royal Central Asian Society, Udham Singh fired five to six shots from his pistol at Sir Michael O'Dwyer, who was governor of



ਜਨਰਲ ਓਡਵਾਇਰ ਨੂੰ ਗੋਲੀ ਮਾਰਨ ਤੋਂ ਬਾਅਦ ਗ੍ਰਿਫਤਾਰੀ ਸਮੇਂ ਸ.ਉਧਮ ਸਿੰਘ
ਮਿਤੀ 13 ਮਾਰਚ 1940 ਸਥਾਨ :- ਕੈਕਸਟਨ ਹਾਲ ਲੰਡਨ
S. Udham Singh Handcuffed after Shooting Dead General O'Dwyer
Date : 13 March 1940 Place : Caxton hall, London

the Punjab when the Amritsar massacre had taken place. O'Dwyer was hit twice and fell to the ground dead and Lord Zetland, the Secretary of State for India, who was presiding over the meeting was injured.

Udham Singh was overpowered with a smoke spewing revolver. He in fact made no attempt to escape and continued saying that he had done his duty for the country.

Trial and Execution

On 1 April 1940, Udham Singh was formally charged with the murder of Sir Michael O'Dwyer. On 4 June 1940, he was committed to trial, at the Central Criminal Court, Old Bailey, before Justice Atkinson, who sentenced him to death. An appeal was filed on his behalf which was dismissed on 15 July 1940.

On 31 July 1940, Udham Singh was hanged in Pentonville Prison in London.

During the trial, Udham Singh had made a request that his ashes be sent back to his country, but this was not allowed. In 1975, however, the Government of India, at the instance of the Punjab Government, finally succeeded in bringing his ashes home. Lakhs of people gathered on the occasion to pay homage to his memory.

His Words and Final Statements

Echoes of Kartar Singh Sarabha and Bhagat Singh may be found in the words of Udham Singh in the wake of the assassination of O'Dwyer.

'I don't care, I don't mind dying. What is the use of waiting till you get old? This is no good. You want to die when you are young. That is good, that is what I am doing'.

After a pause he added:

'I am dying for my country'.

In a statement given on March 13th, 1940 he said:

'I just shot to make protest. I have seen people starving in India under British Imperialism. I done it, the pistol went off three or four times. I am not sorry for protesting. It was my duty to do so. Put some more. Just for the sake of my country to protest. I do not mind my sentence. Ten, twenty, or fifty years or to be hanged. I done my duty.'

In a letter from Brixton Prison of 30th March, 1940, Udham Singh refers to Bhagat Singh in the following terms:

'I never afraid of dying so soon I will be getting married with execution. I am not sorry as I am a soldier of my country it is since 10 years when my friend has left me behind and I am sure after my death I will see him as he is waiting for me it was 23rd and I hope they will hang me on the same date as he was.'

Shorthand notes of the Statement made by Udham Singh after the Judge had asked him if he had anything to say as to why sentence should not be passed upon him according to Law:

'I say down with British Imperialism. You say India do not have peace. We have only slavery. Generations of so called civilization has brought for us everything filthy and degenerating known to the human race. All you have to do is read your own history. If you have any human decency about you, you should die with shame. The brutality and bloodthirsty way in which the so called intellectuals who call themselves rulers of civilization in the world are of bastard blood...'

'I have to say this. I wanted to protest.'

'I do not care about sentence of death. It means nothing at all. I do not care about dying or anything. I do not worry about it at all. I am dying for a purpose.'

'We are suffering from the British Empire.'

'I am not afraid to die. I am proud to die, to have to free my native land and I hope that when I am gone, I hope that in my place will come thousands of my countrymen to drive you dirty dogs out; to free my country.'

'I am standing before an English jury. I am in an English court. You people go to India and when you come back you are given a prize and put in the House of Commons. We come to England and we are sentenced to death.'

'I never meant anything; but I will take it. I do not care anything about it, but when you dirty dogs come to India there comes a time when you will be cleaned out of India. All your British Imperialism will be smashed.'

'Machine guns on the streets of India mow down thousands of poor women and children wherever your so-called flag of democracy and Christianity flies.'

'Your conduct, your conduct - I am talking about the British government. I have nothing against the English people at all. I have more English friends living in England than I have in India. I have great sympathy with the workers of England. I am against the Imperialist Government.'

'You people are suffering - workers. Everyone are suffering through these dirty dogs; these mad beasts. India is only slavery. Killing, mutilating and destroying - British Imperialism. People do not read about it in the papers. We know what is going on in India.'

'Inqlab, Inqlab, Inqlab'

'Down with British Imperialism! Down with British dirty dogs!'



Commemorative postage stamp for
SHAHEED UDHAM SINGH

(26 Dec 1899 – 31 July 1940)

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Category: Personality

Indian Revolutionary & A Brave Hearted Man,
Best Known For Assassinating Michael O'dwyer
On 13TH March 1940 Taking Revenge Of The
JALLIANWALLA BAGH MASSACRE.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

1. Who was Udham Singh, and what was his original name? **Udham Singh was a Sikh freedom fighter who fought against British rule in India. His original name was Sher Singh.**
2. What happened to Udham Singh when he was a young child, and where did he grow up afterward? **Udham Singh lost both of his parents at a young age. He then grew up in the Central Khalsa Orphanage in Amritsar.**
3. What was the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre, and how did it affect Udham Singh? **The Jallianwala Bagh Massacre was when British soldiers killed hundreds of unarmed people in Amritsar in 1919. This event made Udham Singh very angry and motivated him to fight for freedom.**
4. Why did Udham Singh travel to other countries like the United States and England? **Udham Singh traveled to learn about revolutionary movements and to find an opportunity to take revenge for the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.**
5. Who did Udham Singh assassinate, and why did he do it? **Udham Singh assassinated Sir Michael O'Dwyer because he wanted to take revenge for the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre.**
6. What name did Udham Singh use to show unity among different religions in India? **He used the name Ram Muhammad Singh Azad to show unity among Hindus, Muslims, and Sikhs.**
7. What were Udham Singh's feelings about his death sentence, based on his final statements? **Udham Singh was not afraid of death. He felt proud to die for his country and believed he had done his duty.**

