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# MAULANA ABUL KALAM AZAD INSTITUTE OF ASIAN STUDIES

(An Autonomous Body under the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India)

*Celebrating 75<sup>th</sup> year of India's Independence*

Under the MAKAIAS Special Lecture Series

**“75<sup>th</sup> SWADHINATAR AMRITO MAHOTSAV”**

Lecture Series No- 10

On

**The INA's Secret Service in South East Asia**

By



**Dr. Tapan Chattopadhyay**  
IPS (RTD.)

**On 27th December, 2021 from 11:30 AM Onwards  
Through Cisco WebEx Online Platform**

*You are cordially invited to join with us*

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Director



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## About the author

Dr. Tapan Chattopadhyay, Ph.D. and D.Litt. in History, is the author of *The Story of Lalbazar – Its Origin and Growth* (Kolkata, 1982), *Lepchas and Their Heritage* (New Delhi, 1990, fifth reprint, 2013), *The INA's Secret Service in Southeast Asia – Its Background, Infrastructure, Resources and Activities During World War II* (Kolkata, 2011, third reprint 2014), *Kolkata and Its Police – A History of City Police from Charnock's to Present Day* (Kolkata, 2013) and *The Horizon of Hope* (San Bernadino, 2017). He has also contributed articles to various literary magazines and written poems, novels and short stories in Bengali. He has received the Michael Madhusudan Award and the Uttar Banga Natya Jagat Award for his literary works. Following a brief stint in teaching and research, Dr. Chattopadhyay joined the IPS in 1970 and retired in the rank of Director General of Police in 2006 after a peripatetic career in six organizations and seven states. He was awarded the President's Medal twice for meritorious and distinguished service respectively and the MHA's Special Duty Medal for performing a sensitive task. After superannuation, he was appointed Member, West Bengal Public Service Commission, from where he retired in 2008. He is presently engaged in academic work.

## ABSTRACT

The Secret Service of the Indian National Army (INA) was organized by Subhas Chandra Bose in August 1943 with the help of the expatriate revolutionary outfits of Southeast Asia. The first INA, with Mohan Singh in charge, had an intelligence unit set up in February 1942, but it mainly kept tab on dissident activities among the POWs. When Singh was arrested for prejudicial activities in December 1942, the organization ceased to exist. Bose put together the far-flung revolutionary outfits and made them operational in about eight months. His knowledge of intelligence tradecraft and his close association with Abwehr, which had trained some selected Indian Legionaries in intelligence work in Germany, came to his help. He had brought five of them to Southeast Asia. Of them, N. G. Swamy, a technocrat, became the intelligence chief in the INA. Bose gave a revolutionary character to the INA by intensive training, indoctrination, and induction of civilian volunteers. He strove to make the intelligence operatives self-sufficient and flexible in their thinking and action. Their job was to subvert the loyalty of Indian soldiers at the border, organize partisan warfare inside India with the help of Congress and Forward Bloc activists, and win over tribesmen in Nagaland, Manipur and Arakan, where the combined offensive was contemplated. Three categories of spies - land-based, parachuted behind the enemy lines, and transported to Indian shores by submarine - were in the organization. Two special groups, the Bahadur Group and the Intelligence Group, took part in specific commando operations and subversion. The Reinforcement Group indoctrinated POWs to join the INA. The structure of the units was kept operationally simple. A powerful wireless headquarters operated in Penang, having receiving stations in Rangoon, Port Blair, and northern Burma, close to the border of Manipur, Assam and Bengal. Two operational zones, Burma and Malaya, were selected for training and launching of operations. Over a thousand operatives were trained and deployed from here during the war. Notwithstanding some drawbacks, mostly caused by hurry in the war situation, the tremendous panic it had created for the Empire is testimony to its success.



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