JAPANESE CONFIRM NETAJI’S DEATH

(FREE PRESS OF INDIA)

Fourteen months ago the Japanese News Agency announced to the world that the plane in which Netaji was flying from Singapore to Tokio had crashed in Fornosa. Allied India was rudely shaken by this sad news. But she was tantalised all the more by the state of conflicting reports appearing in the press about his supposed secret flight to Germany to seek haven in Hitler’s Reich. Pandit Nehru’s recent statement about the death of this Apostle of Indian Freedom provoked a reply from a Forward Blocist. (All the way from Singapore, new coins news, from our own Correspondent, that the Allied Military Authorities in Tokio, after careful interrogation of Japanese High-ups have been able to confirm his death.

SINGAPORE: Oct. 29 (The Age) --- Details of the investigation, conducted by the Allied Military Authorities in Tokio, of the plane crash in which Subhas Bose was reported to be killed are now available.

The following Press Note has been issued:

A very thorough investigation has been conducted in Tokio, at the request of SACSEA, to establish the precise details of the circumstances surrounding the reported death of Subhas Chandra Bose. The United Kingdom Liaison Mission in Japan conducted these investigations and it has been informed that Subhas Chandra Bose died in a Talhoku Military Hospital (Nammon Ward) some time between 19.00 hours and 20.00 hours, local time, on August 18,1945. The cause of death was heart failure resulting from multiple burns and shock.

All the persons named below were interrogated at different times but the several accounts of the event agree both in substance and detail at all points where the knowledge of the subjects could have been deemed to be based on common experience. The possibility of a pre-arranged fabrication must be excluded since most of the individuals concerned had no opportunity of contact with one and her prior interroga tion.

FELLOW PASSENGER TELLS TALE

LT.-COL. NONOGAKI: This person was a passenger on the same plane with Bose from Saigon onwards. He related the story of the crash in great detail and drew a sketch showing the position of the crew and passengers. The aircraft was a K.21 Heavy Bomber (Sally). Just after taking off from the Tac hibaka strip on route to Tokio at about 1450 hours on August 18, 1945, there was a sudden explosion in the port engine, which broke off from the main plane causing the plane to go into a spin and crash to the ground just off the runway. The fuselage burst open and the petrol tanks exploded in impact with the ground. According to Nonogaki, the following persons were killed instantly:

- Three engineers (names unknown)
- Wireless Operator (name unknown)
- Major Takizawa
- and Subhas Chandra Bose.

The following were very seriously injured:
- Hidemaro Rahman (28) and also to Bose
- and Lt.-Col. Sakai.

NETAJI SUSTAINS BURNS

Nonogaki gave as the reason for Bose sustaining such severe injuries that he was sitting next to the petrol tank and owing to the cold had just previously donned a rather tight-fitting type of jacket, which could not easily be removed after the crash and Bose was lying on the ground in flames. Hidemaro Rahman and Nonogaki then succeeded in beating out the flames and Bose was removed immediately to a nearby emergency dressing station where the burnt clothing was cut away from his body. He was then taken in a Japanese Army truck in a prostrate condition, but still conscious, to the nearest Army Hospital, known as the ‘Talhoku Military Hospital (Nammon Ward) where he arrived shortly after.

Lt.-Col. Nonogaki supervised the admission of Bose to the hospital and heard the report of his subsequent treatment. He himself remained any more as he returned to Tokio by the next departing aircraft.

HE CARRIED BOSE’S ASHES

LT.-COL. SAKAI: Sakai was a passenger sitting immediately behind Nonogaki in the aircraft. He was somewhat shaken by the scene and shifted his position and told no one of what happened immediately after the crash, but told no one of what happened immediately after the crash, but told Nonogaki that he had been able to carry Bose’s ashes to Tokyo but did not mention Bose had ever been alive before or after death.

BODY CREMATED

LT.-COL. SHIBUVA MASANORI: This officer was on the staff of Tai--

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SAT WITH NETAJI ALL NIGHT
SUB.-LT. (MEDICAL) TSURUTA TOYOSHI

At the time of the air accident, Tsuruta held the rank of Probationary Officer and was on duty in the Naman Ward of the Taihoku Military Hospital. About 3 o’clock in the afternoon of August 18, he was informed that a V.I.P. suffering from severe injuries had been brought in to the hospital in a truck. Tsuruta supervised the removal of Bose, who was lying on a stretcher without any clothes on and had him taken into the Naman Ward. Bose was conscious but suffering from terrible third degree burns on his face and all over his body. The doctor administered a camphor injection and dressed the burns. He says that at the time he recognized Bose had small chance of surviving. After attending to Bose, Tsuruta dressed the wounds of Habibur Rahman who was burned on the hands and had a superficial head wound. During this time Bose made no conversation except to ask for water, but after he had rested for a little while he asked to talk to Rahman and they carried on a conversation together in an Indian language for some fifteen or twenty minutes. Tsuruta went for his evening meal about 5:30 p.m. and when he returned to the ward shortly after six o’clock, Bose asked him in English if he would sit with him throughout the night. However, about after 7 o’clock p.m. he suffered a relapse and although the doctor once again administered a camphor injection, he sank into a coma and died shortly afterwards.

DEATH CERTIFICATE

Later that evening there was a discussion between Tsuruta, Habibur Rahman and another officer, who Tsuruta thinks was probably Lt.-Col. Shibuya, as to the possibility of embalming the body and taking it on to Tokyo, but the doctor expressed doubts as to his ability to ensure preservation in the extreme heat. Towards midnight a hastily made coffin arrived from the headquarters of the Taiwan Army and the body was placed in the coffin and covered with a sheet. The following morning the coffin was taken away and Tsuruta understands that it was cremated although he was not an eyewitness of the process. The death certificate which was issued by Tsuruta showed death to be due to heart failure resulting from multiple burns and shock.

When taxed with the question of positive identification of the victim of the accident, Tsuruta stated that there was of course no documentary evidence since all the clothes and personal papers were a matter of common knowledge that Bose was in the aircraft and that there could not possibly be any error in identity.

Tsuruta produced papers to show that he qualified as a medical practitioner from Kyoto Imperial University in September 1943, specializing in surgery.