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# Role of Martyr Kamala Miri in the freedom struggle of India

✶ Taron Loring

Those persons who have fearlessly sacrificed their lives for the freedom of their motherland from the bondage of the colonial rulers are seen to be worshipped as God. The contribution of the martyrs who thought that their motherland is much superior than the heaven, have become the source of inspiration for the younger generation. One of such martyrs was Kamal Chandra Loring, who is also known as Kamala Miri. Kamala Miri was born in Opor Ternera village of Rangamati Mouza in Shovangar district (at present Golaghat district) in the year 1894. Later, the Opor Ternera village was divided into many parts and the village in which Kamala Miri was born is nowadays known as Golung Ternera. Kamala Miri's father was Chikou Loring and mother was Mangali Loring. At that time there was no educational institution in the village Opor Ternera, and therefore Kamala Miri move had to Bhalaguri for his education. It is known at Bhalaguri he became friendly with a famous freedom fighter Aspitam Gogoi. According to some people, Kamala Loring took his primary education from a person named Sorasam Mitra who knew Bangla. Kamala's partner Sondhan Pegu, a freedom fighter of Pathari village also took his education from Sorasam Mitra.

The freedom struggle started under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and succeeded to spread the message of patriotism in every nook and corner of India. The message of patriotism also encouraged Mising youths like Kamala Miri and his friends in Golaghat district (at that time Shovangar district) of Assam. By getting inspiration from the slogans, thousands of youths came forward to free India from the shackles of British

rulers. Though it is not known exactly since when Kamala Miri started participating in the freedom struggle of India for the first time, but a well-known Mising writer named Tankeshwar Loring took an interview from the closest associate freedom fighter of Kamala Miri, Sondhan Pegu in the year 1966 and mentioned in his writing 'congressor nijatio' and mentioned in his writing 'congressor nijatio' that from the year 1926, including Kamala Miri, Baloran Loring, Bepung Pathari, Korddik Morang etc participated in the freedom struggle of India actively. After coming in contact with Rajendra Baroa, Sankar Barua etc, Kamala Miri, specially in four Mouzas, joined the freedom struggle of India against the British inspiring the common people with the slogans of patriotism. In this matter, Kamala Miri took the responsibility of organizing the Mising tribe villages. Specially in the villages like Opor Ternera, Dauri Makh, Morongjal, Narmani, Nam Ternera, Seleg Gao, Bhakar Sapori, Pathari Gao, Golung Gao, Meduk Gao of Rangamati Mouza, Na Bhanga Mising Gao, Sarah Gao, Birma Gao, Goramora Sapori, Dabi Gao of Misamora Mouza, Dhanan, Bantikhal, Bortika, Sagari, Nam Ternera, Gomang, Nilon Gao of Mahura Mouza, Dhemaji, Bahguri, Tayung village of Dergam Mouza and Bihia village of Bokakhar Mouza, he went for the mission of admission of members. He admitted more than 700 people as members in the villages including the Mising Gao, Nepali Gao, the village of tea tribes in Barham etc and also he prepared a list of members in a copy book.

Under the leadership of Kamala Miri, Bikaram Miri, Bejia Loring, Bhutai Loring, Dhaturam Pegu, Bouda Loring, Shambhurasam Miri and many

... who participated in the freedom struggle of India in honour of Mahatma Motilal. Moreover, even among women named Pramila Medok of Medok village and Bogimola Mirang of Borika village also actively participated in the movements of freedom movement. At that time, Kamala Miri devoted himself fully for the freedom struggle by giving all the responsibilities of his family to his wife Kanika Loying. It was very difficult and needed hard work to manage the family matters with her five children in the absence of her husband. But Kanika Loying did it very efficiently. For this devotion to her husband and family Kanika Loying can be recognized as a real lady woman. The notes preserved in the house of Kamala Miri gives clear indication of the role of Kamala Miri in the freedom struggle. Sometimes, he could not admit members after holding meetings in some villages for eight days. For example, in the copy dated 16<sup>th</sup> August, 1938 titled 'Proposal of Golaghat Miri Congress Committee', it is written as 'ishale rajok bijoye jai' and 'khalo rajok bijoye mare dare jakhilo jai' on the date of 27<sup>th</sup> August, 1938. At that time the fee of admission of members was 4 annas mentioned in the notes. It is also mentioned from that Kamala Miri also visited Tezpur for spreading the cause of independence struggle on 10<sup>th</sup> March 1939. It is further stated that he had a stay in Tezpur from 30<sup>th</sup> March, 1939 to 2<sup>nd</sup> April, 1939.

At that time, there was no train and the roads were also not good enough. People had to go to Golaghat located at about 20 miles away from Opor Temera village on foot. At that time, it was very difficult to cross hazardous roads to contact the Central Committee members. But those things were not anything for a patriot. The documents were taken by central workers and these official documents were given to Bolotam Loying, Secretary from Golaghat. These documents were checked by Bolotam Loying and if some changes were needed then he would do the before sending it through Kamala Miri. At

that time, the shelter house for the revolutionary leaders like Shankar Baruah, Rajendranath Baruah was located at Mising tribal villages. One day, the spy found out the hiding place of Shankar Baruah in Opor Temera village and surrounded the house where Kamala Miri, President and Bolotam Loying, Secretary were hiding up. Then the revolutionaries courageously defied Shankar Baruah and Kamala Miri in Golaghat-Palhati village by crossing dense forest. At that time the British announced a reward of 5000 rupees to any one who would help them in catching Shankar Baruah. The police hatched all the pets of the villagers in the house of Kamala Miri. At that time the villagers were very much afraid of the police and they considered entry of outsiders inside their household and Muzam (Kitchen) would cost them their own caste superiority. Two police personnel wanted to forcibly enter into the house of Kamala Miri. Four young girls who were pounding the rice nearby the house, warned the policemen and prevented them from entering the house. At that time there was a folk belief that when four young girls pound rice in more than four acres area of land shakes. It is believed that the police did not dare to enter the house that day after getting the warning of the girls.

It is also known that Kamala Miri held meetings on flood, land issues etc including admission of members into the party. At that time the villages from Opor Temera to the north of Gelahid were badly affected by drugs like opium, cannabis etc. Specially, the village Opor Temera was filled with drug addict people, Kamala Miri and his associates evicted those junkies from the village and till today people fondly remember that this was the achievement of Kamala Miri and his associates.

On 8<sup>th</sup> August, 1942, 'All India Congress Committee' under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi announced Quit India Movement against the British. Reacting to this announcement the British authorities the British authorities arrested several Congress leaders including Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru and later sent them all

to jail. To register protest against hasty action of the British against a team named as Peace Troops was formed in the village Opor Ternera of Ronggarudi Masara on 18th August, 1942 and 18 people out of them were selected for picketing under the leadership of Kamala Miri in Golaghat. As per decision taken in the meeting Kamala Miri was entrusted the leadership and Soudhan Pega, Mahidhar Pega, Balaram Loying (Secretary), Bepung Pathoni (Hans), Jarnon Motang, Kordikh Mirang, Bomba Bari, Fedela Loying, Thugi Bari, Behm Loying, Mekona Loying, Bhan Bari, Dosoys Bari, Komol Loying, Alok Pathoni, Nadiram Loying, Menang Bari etc were given the responsibility of performing other activities of Peace Troops. After this, another meeting was held at Opor Ternera on 22 August, 1942 under the presidency of Naji Miri. All the members present in the meeting fully supported the decision taken in the meeting of All India Congress Committee held on 8th August, 1942. They also demanded immediate release of Mahatma Gandhi from jail through this meeting. In the meeting held next day on 23rd August, Kamala Miri called upon the people of Ronggarudi and Dūchani Mukh to hold protest demonstration and observe Hard on 30th August, 1942. Another meeting was held in Opor Ternera village under the leadership of Kamala Miri and presidency of Fedela Loying on 29th August, 1942 where four proposals of Peace Troops of Miri Conference were presented. The proposals were-

- 1) To extend full support to the programmes of Quit India movement of All India Congress Committee held on 8th August 1942 in Bombay.
- 2) To protest against the colonial policies of the British.
- 3) To free the leaders including Mahatma Gandhi from jail.
- 4) To participate in the programme of Hartal on 30th August by the peace troops.

Kamala Miri had leadership qualities in him. He was therefore given the responsibility of

Presidency of Congress Committee of Ronggarudi Masara. His responsibility had increased after becoming the president of a messara. In the last part of the September, 1942, while he was working in the office of congress party, the British police arrested him and his associates. On 8th October, 1942, Kamala Miri and his associates were sentenced to 8 month jail term and sent them to Jorhat Central Jail. In the jail, Kamala Miri met leaders like Gopinath Boodolo, Fakaruddin Ali Ahmed, Mohammad Tarbulla, Aniya Kumar Das, Hem Barua etc. In the jail, Kamala Miri learned how to read Hindi from Gopinath Boodolo, and make cotton thread in spinning wheel. The health of Kamala Miri deteriorated during his prison term and he was admitted in the jail hospital. His health condition was not improving rather deteriorating fast. The jail authorities wanted to get rid of very sick Kamala Miri. They offered Kamala release from hospital provided he promises in writing that he will not be would not join the movement again. To this Kamala replied fearlessly that- 'I am not in prison for doing anything wrong. I will prefer to die in jail than to give any written promise. If at all I am to promise anything I will give my promise to God only' Due to his worsening health condition, the jail authority decided to release Kamala Miri on 23rd April, 1943. To celebrate this good news, Gopinath Boodolo gifted Kamala a spinning wheel on that day. That spinning wheel is still preserved in a very dilapidated condition at Kamala Miri's home. Though he was about to be freed from the jail, but this great patriot died as prisoner at 12:30 AM of 22nd April, 1943, just few hours before his scheduled release. If he wished, Kamala Miri, who owned huge property, could live a life of comfort and luxury. But the real patriot that he was, Kamala Miri, loved his country as his own mother and never compromised his patriotism for any material gain. He could understand very well that if he deviates from his path of true patriotism, it could destroy his country. India could gain independent only because of the great patriot-like Kamala Miri and because of their great

sacrifices for the country. Sudhankar Bhupen Hazarika therefore musically paid his tributes to this hero.

"... if my weeping mother asks again and again  
what you have done for me?  
What I will say?  
What I will say?"

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- 4) Sri Arun Pathori : Teacher, Opor Temera Government Lower Elementary School

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