

Contribution of Zambian Women and Indian Women to the Struggle for Freedom: A legend of Courage and Compassion

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Women in politics is an important and interesting topical subject all over the world. Women have generally remained the silent voices of history, and have not been featured as an important partner in the struggle for freedom of their countries, mainly because of two factors: one, inequality and culture and two, until the recent past all the written works were by men. Therefore, it should not surprise women today, that whatever, roles they played in society (political, social and economic) appeared to have remained down played.

In this paper an attempt has been made to investigate the participation of women, as many as possible, in the struggle for freedom in Zambia and India and to study the nature and level of participation in these two countries. However, it will not be wrong to say that without women participation in the struggle for independence, the histories of Zambia and India could have been very different from the one from today and their men could have not achieved much of their own. The authors confess that in this paper those who have been left out are not less important.

The paper has been divided into four parts. The first part of the paper **examines** the historiographical perspective of Zambian and Indian women. The second part, **highlights** the position of women in both countries before and during the early colonial period. The third part of the paper **reports** the brief history of nationalist movement where as the fourth part of the paper **focuses** on the participation of women in the struggle for freedom in their respective countries

WOMEN OF ZAMBIA AND INDIA FROM HISTORIOGRAPHICAL PERSPECTIVE:

It has been reported by some scholars that women in Zambia and India were only active in politics, during the late colonial period, which does not seem to be true. The early and mediaeval literatures reveal a realistic picture of women at that time. According to these literatures women were quite active in all spheres that include economic, social, political and cultural activities of their countries.

An early law giver in India, Manu, once said: where women are honoured, God rejoices; where they are not, all rights are fruitless.¹ Panini, an ancient Indian grammarian, reports that women during the Vedic period (1200-800 B.C.), also performed the responsibilities of teaching in schools.² The Old Testament is full of women's deeds who have been unrivalled even by men. They were living examples of bravery and courage as well as beauty, chivalry and sacrifice.³ Islam proclaims the

equality of men and women, but customs alien to the orthodox doctrine have masked this aspect of Islam. Moslem women have always had the right to go to a court of law without referring to their husbands and to administer their property independently.⁴

Modern scholars from both countries have written on nationalist movements and even brought references of women, who were active in the struggle for freedom but that cannot be accepted as justifiable. Chandra in his book *'Indian Struggle for Independence'* mentions few names of women who were active in the freedom struggle but this does not give them the required appreciation. Chand's book *'History of Freedom Movement in India'* highlights the freedom movement in general. Rotberg's book *"Nationalism in Central Africa"* has a scanty approach towards the women's' contribution. It has been noticed that above and many other historians have ignored the participation of Zambian and Indian women in their freedom struggle. The idea of writing this paper was initiated (generated) from the above left out work. Since it was felt that not much had been written in this area, this paper, therefore, will try to fill this gap.

THE POSITION OF ZAMBIAN AND INDIAN WOMEN UP TO EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY

Due to the shortage of written records before the colonization of the country, reconstructing the history of women in Zambia, before the colonization, is not very easy. Ethnographic works, written during the colonial period include comparatively little data on women as political actresses.⁵ Historians have used works of missionaries, administrators and anthropologists sources in an attempt to understand women during this period. Most of such records depend on the 'Oral Traditions'.

Although, Zambia is a country of about seventy-five different ethnic groups. the paper has considered only the history of some of the ethnic groups. Roberts stated in his article *'Age of Transition'* that we know more about the history of Lozi, Bemba and eastern Lunda, than about the history of most other people.⁶

Since the early period, women in Zambia were quite active in political, religious, social and economic fields. Throughout pre-colonial Zambian history women have played very important role in the economy. They took part in the economy as marketeers, potters, mine workers, cultivators and so on. Women in the mine sector is an amazing topic where a great number of women were engaged to wash coal.⁷ Hall reported that it was the women who made the clay pots, in the same way as the men smelted iron and copper.⁸ The men were needed to pollard trees and clean the bush but the women had always done the actual cultivation.

In addition to their economic role, women held important political positions in society. Roberts suggests that probably in the late sixteenth century Kabinda Ilunga, the great son of Kalala, married Lueji, a chieftainess among the Lunda people.⁹ Poewe mentions that in the Luapula province of Zambia, even before the Lunda migration female chieftainess were not uncommon.¹⁰ In Eastern Province, Chewa women became Mfumu (chiefs) heads of their matrilineages, in the absence of suitable males.¹¹ Sometime in mid 1600 the Lozi settled near Zambezi Valley under the

leadership of a woman, the semi-mythical Mwambwa. She was succeeded by her daughter, Mbuyamwambwa, and they conquered Mongu after sometime.¹²

Before the Kololo invasion of 1831-32 there was a counsel of women in Lozi Kingdom, known as '*anatambunu*'. They would participate in the running of government affairs and would even preside over the Mankishi (mother of the King and queen).¹³ In a special raid by the royal family called Lifunga, girls were specially chosen as per their tradition, to be an '*anatambunu*.'

When Roberts interviewed Nshilika Mwenya, he learnt that in c.1827 the original rulers of the Bisa were two women named Chanda Upapwa and Mumbi Mukasa.¹⁴ Women were also appointed as supervisors. Sometime around 1850 one Ngoni group under Mupezeni and Mperembe, moved down to the eastern border of Bemba country and this prompted Makasa I, to assert himself in Nkweto's country, Chilinda. For the same he sent one of his wives to supervise it.¹⁵

Roberts reports that by the end of the nineteenth century nearly everyone [Zambian] was governed either by chiefs-by individual men and occasionally by individual women.¹⁶ This indicates that in the Zambian society, chiefs of either sex were accepted. Women were also widely involved in priesthood. Langworthy informs us that rain shrine and spiritual centre for all Chewa people were at Msinja in the district of Lilongwe.⁷ During 1700 the important task of praying for rain was mostly reserved for special priests under the supreme authority of the priestess Makewana.¹⁸

But the above scenario changed in the Zambian society when able bodied men were tactfully forced to leave their homes to become migrant labourers. This enabled them to earn extra wages to pay different taxes which were imposed on them by the colonial authorities. Meebelo mentions that the introduction of hut tax in 1901 drove hundreds of young men to places of employment outside their home area.¹⁹ Gann argued that the effects of labour migration were far reaching.²⁰ Due to the same reason Zambian homes were left with old men, young children, and women. Consequently the responsibilities of the entire family fell on the shoulders of women. Rodney also says that under colonization African women lost their right to social, religious, constitutional and political privileges, while the economic exploitation continued and often intensified.²¹ As such women in Zambia, forgetting every other right, involved themselves in farming growing more food and looking after cattle. It has been established that the colonial period was marked by a decline in the participation of women in traditional processes.²² Even the colonial authorities assigned local rule and responsibilities to men only.

During early period in India, history reveals that women enjoyed high status in the society. Girls were educated like boys and married after they reached maturity. The evil institution of Sati (self-immolation with her dead husband) did not prevail and widows were allowed to remarry. Women could move about freely as there was no seclusion.²³ However, this scenario changed upon Muslim conquest in India that started around 1000 A.D. This was particularly harsh to the women. They were the greatest sufferer in the aftermath of wars. It became a normal practice to carry away Hindu women as captives, slaves and mistresses by the Muslims. The veil (purdah)

which was introduced in India after the Muslim conquest was adopted easily, because it offered some kind of protection to women secluding them from Muslim conquerors.

During mid eighteenth century, India was gradually conquered by the British East India Company. Having been ill treated, tortured and mercilessly used by the Muslim invaders and by majority of Muslim rulers the Indians had pre-conceived idea about invaders. They idealised them as ruthless maniacs who accomplished their mission by sheer deceit and folly. It is this conception about foreign rule that made Indians seclude their girls from the few educational institutions which were set up by the invaders. The other underlying factor was, the fact that some schools run by missionaries carried out conversion of Hindus to Christian. The Indians, who jealously guarded their religion and culture, were extremely appalled by this act and felt that their culture and rich heritage was being threatened and therefore strictly denounced female education. A very prominent social reformer and scholar of mid-nineteenth century, in India, Raja Ram Mohan Roy' was among the first scholars to denounce a few evil practices in the society inflicted on women and campaigned for the appraisal of women in all circles.²⁴ During this time women gradually started receiving education and other rights. The use of English language provided a gateway to the ideology of liberalism that enshrined the value of liberty, equality and respect for individual secularism. Under the leadership of *Mahatma* (Great Soul) Gandhi, who returned to India from South Africa in 1915, a movement to do away with many of the old customs and give Indian women equal opportunities in every wake of life, grew stronger.

The above evidence is enough not to accept the concept that women of Zambia and India were not active in politics during the early colonial period. In reality they were very active before the arrival of outsiders (invaders) in their countries. Zambian women were somehow forced to be in the farm to look after agriculture and cattle whereas Indian women were to be in *purdah* . But as time ripened women from both countries came out from their traditional hideout to support their men both directly and indirectly. They participated in their countries nationalist movements along with their domestic responsibilities.

NATIONALIST MOVEMENTS IN ZAMBIA AND INDIA:

Africa was gradually colonized by the Europeans and was shared amongst themselves at a conference held in Berlin (Germany) in 1884-85. Right from the first day of the arrival of Europeans, Africans resisted them but because of the better weapons [of Europeans], Africans could not succeed in their motives of resisting Europeans. The extent of colonization of Africa varied from one country to the other. European rule was imposed on Zambia only at the extreme end of the nineteenth century.²⁵ It lasted for almost seventy years. When Europeans were conquering and sharing Africa, Africa was divided in many small kingdoms and chiefdoms.

Zambia was ruled by British South Africa Company until 1923 and was then taken over by the British Crown in April 1924. The World's richest deposit of copper at that time, drew large number of Europeans in Zambia. During 1930s, the exploitation of copper reached to its height.

In Zambia, before the creation of any other well established organization, in 1907 Donald Siwale and David Kaunda (father of Kenneth Kaunda) formed Mwenzo Welfare Association to bring African views to the attention of the government.²⁶ Both were educated in the Bible and here they learnt that every human being was the same.²⁷ Due to the World War One this association was dissolved but later revived in 1923. By 1931, different welfare associations were formed in several towns mostly along the railway line.

A. Roberts elaborated the spread of associations as follows:

from 1942 African welfare societies were formed in the mining on the Copperbelt led mostly by teachers, clerks and few men... encouraged migrant workers to revive them in the rural areas. By 1946 there were a network of societies spread over most part of the territories.... The welfare societies now formed federation of African Societies. Two years later this became the Northern Rhodesia Congress, a forerunner of the national political parties.... The rapid growth of welfare societies proved the government into providing its own large scale structures for African Political discussion...²⁸

It can be argued that the national welfare association, in a way was the origine of later nationalist parties. Rotberg acknowledged these organizations as associational activities, which provided training for future politicians. He also added that in many ways association may thus be considered the logical progenitors of the nationalist minded political parties of the 1940's and 1950's.²⁹ According to Meebelo the African National Congress itself was born of the country's Native Welfare Association.³⁰ Tordoff also supported above arguments when he writes:

These societies became widespread with the urbanization of the 1930s and amalgamated into the Federation of African Societies in 1946; within two years the Federation had transformed itself into the Northern Rhodesia African National Congress (NRANC). The African National Congress(ANC)-as NRANC soon became...led the unsuccessful anti-Federation struggle of the early 1950s. But a more militant offshoot, the Zambia National Congress(succeeded by UNIP after it was banned in 1959), spearheaded the final stages of the independence struggle which was victorious in 1964.³¹

To show their grievances mine workers in 1935, for the first time, went on strike at Mufulira, Nkana and Roan Antelope. At Roan Antelope, incautious use of the police provoked rioting, and six strikers were killed.³² Due to colonial harsh actions strike was called off quickly by mine workers but served as eye openers for colonial authorities. According to Roberts though the strikes were brief and ineffective, they served to show the mine workers concerns of a common interest and to prove capacity

of an organizing consented resistance with the urban environment.³³ Rotberg acknowledged strike of Mufulira as Zambia's first important industrial unrest.³⁴ Even after three decades, a Zambian newspaper Patriot, called the strike of Copperbelt as the beginning of the African mine workers long struggle against racist exploitation.³⁵

All four mines established their own unions by 1945, which was amalgamated under the Presidentship of Laurance Katilungu in the Northern Rhodesia African Worker's Union in 1949. In the meantime D. Konkola of the Trade Union Congress formed a political Action Sub Committee in October 1955, which had no intention to work with ANC.³⁶

Konkola had tried to pursue a political career and tried to turn the African Railway Workers Movement in Zambia into a political movement. Towards the end of 1957 a women's guide was formed as a branch of the union.³⁷ On 26th October 1958, some members of the ANC broke away after disagreeing with Nkumbula, in a split which was said to have involved personalities rather than policies.³⁸

Konkola, who was still President of RAWA, was one of the men who broke away from Nkumbula to form ZANC.³⁹ When elections were held in ZANC, Konkola stood against Kaunda for the post of President. He was defeated, but was subsequently elected Vice President of ZANC. He refused to take up the post because according to him he did not want to serve under Kaunda.⁴⁰ The ZANC was banned in March 1959 because it allegedly planned a campaign of violence, to enforce a boycott of election, to be held in that month under the Benson constituency.⁴¹ Several ZANC leaders were arrested which resulted in stiffening African resistance.

New political parties were immediately formed to replace ZANC.⁴²

About this time Paul Kalichini formed a new party, the African National Independence Party (ANIP). This was renamed United National Independence Party (UNIP) in September 1959 after amalgamating with United National Freedom party (UNFP) led by Konkola. In January, 1960, Kaunda was released from prison, he was greeted as a popular hero and took the leadership of UNIP.⁴³ The biggest victory was achieved in 1962 called 'Cha Cha Cha' campaign which forced the British Government to revise the new constitution so as to clear the way for majority rule.⁴⁴

In the election of October 1962, UNIP and ANC secured over two-third of the total vote, hence taking over a number of government departments. The Federation was now doomed and it was finally broken up at the end of 1963.⁴⁵ Northern Rhodesia became Zambia in 1964 peacefully and evolutionary and UNIP formed its first cabinet under Kenneth Kaunda as the President of the country.

India was captured in mid eighteenth Century by the British East India Company. Company rule lasted until 1857 and in 1858 it went directly under the protection of British Crown but about 600 princely states were left to rule themselves under the supervision of the colonial authority. The majority of the Indians from the very beginning, were against the idea of foreign rule being imposed on them. However, the small kingdoms and the different languages across the Indian subcontinent and the vast span of land from coast to coast made it extremely difficult for them to organise an uprising against the British intruders.

The introduction of English as an official language and medium of instruction changed the entire political scenario, proving to be a blessing in disguise as it helped to overcome the language barrier mentioned earlier. A retired English civil servant in India, A.O. Hume, in consultation with the Indian leaders, launched the scheme of the Indian National Union in 1884. It will be wrong to state that, this was the first time Indians thought of freedom struggle. British East India Company had already experienced military uprising in 1857 which was then known as 'Sepoy (army) mutiny.' In the real sense this was a nationalist movement which failed due to its disorganised approach. Chand commented that second half of the nineteenth century was the period of formation and evolution of Indian nationalism.⁴⁶ Indian National Congress started with only seventy people in 1884 which met once every year in different cities. Soon its number grew rapidly. The party gradually included a few Moslem members. The first twenty years of the Congress Party is generally described as the 'moderate phase.'

With the start of the *Swadeshi (self-government)* Movement (1903-08), the anti partition Movement, which was started to oppose the British decision for the partition of Bengal had began. Bengal was divided in 1905 on the basis of two prominent religious followers, Hindus and Moslems and this plot of English rule was called 'Divide and Conquer'. Chandra considered this movement as the 'first round' in the national popular struggle against colonialism.⁴⁷ In the meantime all Indian Moslem League was formed in 1906.

Indians were profoundly influenced by the 'Russian Revolution' of 1917 and felt that if people of Russia could overthrow an imperial regime, the same could be done by the Indians in their own country. During this time they realised their fruitless involvement in World War One and also the lie uttered by the secretary of state for India, Montagu, who had promised self government in India.

Gandhi returned to India in 1915 and plunged himself in the struggle against the British Government. Gandhi's efforts were two-folds: non-violent resistance to the British rule in the form of civil disobedience and non-cooperation with the British authority. When he launched the non-cooperation movement (1920-22), he asked students, women and the general mass to boycott schools and colleges and plunge into the struggle. Gandhi, along with his thousands of supporters broke the government law by making salt from sea water in April 1930, [which is known as 'Salt Satyagraha].

The 'Quit India Movement' was launched in July 1942. India, at that time had a fear of being invaded by Japan. A lot of harshness was used by the British government to suppress strikes, boycotts and other non-violent protests. Most of the leaders along with Gandhi were arrested and put behind bars. The All India Congress Committee and the Provisional Committee were banned and their properties were seized.

Another development in the struggle for freedom during World War Two was the formation and activities of the Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army). The founder of this army, Subhash Chandra Bose, popularly known as '*Netaji*' (a leader) wanted to liberate India with the help of Germany and Japan. When Germany and Japan lost the

war and *Netaji* died in a plane crash, INA was declared illegal and their officers were tried. For the same reason the Royal Indian Navy revolted in February 1946, 300 casualties were reported. In the meantime, the war-shaken British Government, announced its desire to end its rule over India. The British were in a hurry to settle the problems of India. During this time the Muslim League in India pressed its demand for a separate state of Pakistan. Indians had to face a new problem and got more involved in domestic quarrel. British were blamed for sowing this seed long ago when they divided Bengal in 1905 on the basis of religion. The efforts of the congress to have a united independent India proved futile. India and Pakistan were declared independent on 14 and 15 August 1947, respectively, which had remained under the colonial rule for approximately for 190 years.

It has been argued that the Indian National Movement that galvanised millions of people of different classes and ideologies into political action, was undoubtedly one of the biggest mass movements modern society had ever seen. It was indeed a strong movement that brought a mighty colonial empire to its knees.

Zambia and India, though, belonging to two different continents, went through similar experiences. Both were colonized by the British for a common reason i.e. the economic one. The British plundered both countries for man- power and raw materials. Roberts commented that company rule was essentially an instrument for economic exploitation.⁴⁸ At the early stage both countries were ruled by the British merchants who had blessings from their home country. Colonialism thrived in these two nations owing to among others, three major reasons: (i) The two countries were divided into smaller fractions each governed by chiefs or Rajas (king) (ii) In order to expand their rule these rulers often wedged wars with one another. Because there existed rivalry among these smaller kingdoms, the country had little unity, thus making it easier for the entrance and expansion of colonial rule. (iii) language stood as a barrier towards unity as there were several different languages spoken in the two countries and not one of them was predominantly used for communication. This hindered integration of different communities much needed for the aversion of foreign rule.

ZAMBIAN AND INDIAN WOMEN IN THE STUGGLE FOR FREEDOM

The contribution of women, both in Zambia and India , in their nationalist movement cannot be underestimated. Acknowledging all women who had participated both directly and indirectly is some how not possible. When we try to look into the names of all women martyrs women, as usual, history fails to bring all of them in picture. Participation by women in the struggle against the colonial authorities can be traced from the early twentieth century, from every part of Africa. M. Mathabane reported that women, after all are the unsung heroines of many a liberation struggle that rid Africa of the galling yoke of colonialism and white oppression. Again he said that unfortunately many of their exploits accomplishment and sacrifices have gone unrecognised. Yet without such women, victory would have been impossible⁴⁹

In South Africa women had defined movements of civil disobedience in 1906 to the rebellions efforts of Mahatma Ghadhi.⁵⁰ Davenport mentioned about Charlotte Marke, science graduate of an African College wife of A.M.E.C. (African Methodist

Episcopal Church).. had conducted a moderate successful campaign against the carrying of passes by African women in the Orange Free State in 1913.⁵¹ Devenport again wrote that on 9 August, 1956, 20,000 black, white and coloured women from many parts of South Africa went on a peaceful march to the union building to protest against the decision... there was wide spread act of protest, accomplished by the burning of reference books.⁵² The Hurutse reserve in the Western Transvaal was prominent in the women's anti-pass campaign in 1957-58.⁵³ Furthermore Mazrui reported that women were among dead both the martyrdom of Sharperville of 1960 and the martyrdom of Soweto in 1956.⁵⁴

B. Freund reported that dissatisfaction was felt by the colonizers when they experienced Igbo women's confront due to the deterioration in commodity price in 1929.⁵⁵ Curtin reported that more than 10,000 women...their faces covered with blue paint and fern stick in their hands symbolizing unity and change.⁵⁶ In Eastern Nigeria Igbo women attacked the canteens of the metropolises and defied state authority in a series of riots, the women's was of 1929.⁵⁷

Mazrui has acknowledged about a statue of Martyred female warrior - women in Mogadishu, fatally wounded and yet still fighting. Again he praised about Hawa Ismens Ali who paid her own life in 1948 who stood up against the return of Italian colonialism after the second world war.⁵⁸ He argued that there is a little doubt that the 'Mau Mau' struggle in Kenya would have fizzled out much sooner of the Kikuyu, Meru and Eribu women in the Central Province had not risked their lives to send in food and information to the male fighters in the Aberdaira forest⁵⁹

The bodies of armed female comrades had precedent in FRELIMO during the struggle against the Portuguese. B. Davidson has stated that on 2nd March 1967, when 20 MPLA militant returned to the Congo.... Among them were five young ladies leading of OMA (Angola Women's Organisation) including Deolinda Rotrigue (de Almeida).⁶⁰

According to Mazrui in Zimbabwe the liberation army of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) probably involved more women on the frontline that did the army of the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU)⁶¹. Here it becomes clear that the women were even in army combat in the forefront.

Here, it's worth knowing that it did not take long for Zambian women to move from 'farming to the struggle for freedom'. When towns grew around the mines in Northern Province, it attracted Zambian male labourers from rural villages. Gradually women and children joined the men in town. But Zambian women were denied legal employment in addition to the loss of their traditional status, frustrating them further.

When the colonial government started to bring education to Zambia, it was noticed that they positively discriminated in favour of girls. School education started slowly for men then for women. But even the with little education women of Zambia were able to understand, and they learnt the attitude of the colonial authorities. Women in Zambia, during the dawn of independence, stood firmly behind men, realising their future destiny as equal partner in the task ahead. Some of the methods adopted by the Zambian women in the struggle for independence were: blocking roads using logs for

stopping police and soldiers from entering and disrupting their public meetings, demonstrating half naked before the colonial authorities, civil disobedience and fighting against discrimination. They came forward carrying posters, and boycotted shops which were meant for serving Zambians only through the windows. They involved themselves in cooking food for the in men folk, to keep them strong enough for the same struggle. When the men burnt their situpas (identity cards), the women also burnt their imichato (marriage certificates) to show their dislike and displeasure that they had. Dr. Kenneth Kaunda by involving his wife Betty Kaunda in politics, encouraged other women to come forward.

Now it is clear that in Zambia, women were free to join political parties. By 1961 Mama Kankasa was one of the first women to become regional secretary.⁶² Although, several women have contributed to the freedom struggle of Zambia, a few prominent personalities have been focused on for their extremely significant contribution that changed the entire course of the struggle for freedom.

One of the most dynamic personalities in the history of Zambian women in struggle for freedom is Mrs. Muthike Betty Kaunda, the wife of President Kaunda. She was one of the privileged few woman of the time who could complete a teacher's training course, a rare achievement for a young lady at that time.⁶³ In 1946 she met and married Kenneth Kaunda who was also a school master and from there on her life has been at the side of her husband, a determined freedom fighter. She always considered all freedom fighters as part of her family. She participated in women's active efforts to help their male politicians with providing them food demonstrating, picketing and boycotting, which was indeed a stony road to struggle of freedom.

Another popular vigilant and gallant personality being acknowledged here is the traditional aristocrat, Princess Nakatindi Nganga Yeta. She was the great granddaughter of the Lozi king Litunga Lewanika who was a high spirited strong willed personality and was the first member of the ruling family in the former Barotseland to join the United National Independent Party. The princess broke many traditional ways of life, by entering the struggle for freedom. She faced stiff opposition from the Barotse Royal family because, already a British protectorate, she was to be succeeded from the entire Northern Rhodesia at anytime.

Kaunda described Nakatindi as a brave woman who was totally committed to serving her people and nation as a chieftainess. Kaunda once said that she helped to make an impact on UNIP's penetration into Barotseland, where the party had a difficult time initially in convincing the people of the need to fight against colonialism.⁶⁴

The participation of women in struggle for freedom in Zambia cannot be complete unless we pay homage to Mrs. Julia Mulenga, popularly known as 'Mama Chikamoneka' or 'Mama UNIP'. She is a rare example of a brave, proud, fearless and active spirit in political circles. She could stand and argue with a white man or women, when it was a taboo for a black person to do so. She was extremely competent at recruiting more women members and sensitising them about the discrimination and ill treatment by Europeans towards Zambians. While running her small food-shop, she would organise women and map out protest marches, and lead them in boycotting shops and butcheries. In this way women showed their total support for fellow male freedom fighters.

Mrs. Mulenga had started her real career in politics in 1951 and was even arrested in 1953 on a charge of public incitement and leading a protest march. She formed a Women's Brigade in 1953, in an effort to contain the unprecedented upsurge of militant nationalism. In 1959 when the Zambia African National Congress (ZANC) leaders were in restriction from public life, freedom fighters met in her house and formed a new party called African National Independent Party (ANIP)⁶⁵. The party was later renamed "United National Independent Party" (UNIP). She mobilised nearly three quarters of the women in the country to take part in the cutting down of trees to barricade roads with, they also prepared meals for freedom fighters to enable them to work hard. She walked through the streets at night rattling a tin with stones in it in order to call women for politically oriented meetings organised demonstrations and compose tunes for freedom songs and slogans. She was not only an organiser but was always in the fore front of these demonstrations.

In arch 1960, when Ian Macleod (Secretary of States for the Colonies), visited Zambia, Mama Chikamoneka along with her friends demanded immediate independence and self-rule and showed their displeasure by baring their breasts. When Macleod was surrounded by the half naked and weeping women, he began to cry, which she quoted in the press as a most amusing incident in her life to see, a white man cry.⁶⁶ Her high spirit and optimism were a great encouragement to everyone during the pre independent days. The heroism of Mama Chikamoneka is legendary in the history of Zambia.

When Zambia was declared independent in 1964, most women who participated in the nationalist movement were honoured adequately. A few women were nominated in Parliament at the time of the formation of the new cabinet. Princes Nakatindi was elected in 1969 and became the first woman Junior Minister. Mama Chikamoneka was honoured with a decoration in 1969 and when she died in 1986, the government declared a national day of mourning and accorded her a state funeral.

Now the paper looks into the emergence of Indian women from Purdah to politics. The paper starts from the history of a brave queen who revolted against the British rule. She was the *Rani* (queen) of Jhansi. Lord Dalhousie, the Governor General refused to allow her to adopt a son to succeed to the throne after her husband died, and annex the state by the application of the doctrine of lapse. She had become one of the most formidable enemies, the British had to contend with.⁶⁷ She was driven out of Jhansi by the British forces after a fierce battle in which, women too were keenly involved by distributing ammunitions.⁶⁸ She is a symbol of a brave lady who dressed in male attire defied the British rule and died a soldier's death in June 1858. In the same year when Lucknow fell to the British troops, *Begum* (queen) Hazrat Mahal, refusing to surrender, escaped to Nepal.

At the turn of the century (1900), when *Swadeshi* (self) movement started (1903-08), the Indian society and British authority experienced this as a major national movement. Women, students and a large section of the urban and rural population of India came forward to take part in politics and further actively involved themselves in the cause. Women came out of their homes, for the first time, and joined processions and picketings.⁶⁹

Women organised themselves into groups and participated in a procession, faced police firing and did not hesitate to go to prison for civil disobedience. Women who had never stepped unescorted out of their homes, women who had stayed in *Purdah*, young mothers, widows and unmarried girls became a familiar sight as they stood from morning to night outside liquor shops and opium dens and stores selling foreign clothes. They quietly but firmly pursued the customers and shop-keepers alike to change their ways.⁷⁰

By 1916, a university exclusively for women was established by Prof. Karve was later transferred to Bombay in 1936⁷¹ to encourage more women into higher education. A lady from Ireland, Mrs. Annie Besant significantly contributed to the nationalist movement in India. She was involved in awakening the women of India. Once Tilak mentioned during the Home Rule League meeting in 1917 that ladies marched in procession when the men were stopped and their [women] prayers in the temples set the internal captive free.⁷²

In 1923, the Women Association was formed, with many branches, in a children's homes in Madras (now Chennai). In December 1924 when the Indian Nation Congress was held in Nelgaom, it was attended by over 5000 men and 1000 women. On May 21, 1930, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu became the first Indian woman President of the Congress Committee.

Mahatma Gandhi was also for the emancipation of women. He believed in women's equal rights with men. He said that women are companions of men, gifted with equal mental capacities. He advocated for women and said that they have the right to participate in every manifest detail in the activities of men who have equal rights to freedom and liberty to them (men). According to Basham 'one can safely attribute his (Gandhi's) view on the place of women in society to the influence of Western feminism.'⁷³ Gandhi encouraged women to come out of their homes and contribute to the national struggle.⁷⁴

Women were actually encouraged to participate in the struggle for freedom under Gandhi's leadership. By 1930 women had began participating actively against the British law by distributing nationalist literature and news pamphlets prohibited by the law. They carried messages verbally to and from nationalist leaders when other means of contact were prevented by the police. They also saved as underground leaders.⁷⁵ Payne reported that women and young girls in *Purda* threw themselves into salt gathering [during the salt *satyagraha*] as though they had spent their lives waiting for this moment.⁷⁶ A number of women were with Gandhi when he walked 240 miles to reach the sea coast and manufactured salt on 6 April 1930. As a result of their participation in Gandhi's salt march approximately 17,000 women were imprisoned.⁷⁷

Large scale participation by young women in Bengal was a remarkable aspect of a new phase of the terrorist movement. Pritilata Wadden died while conducting a raid, while Kalpana Dutta was arrested and tried along with Suryasen both of whom were given life sentences. No one can forget two school girls of Comilla, Santi Ghosh and Suniti Chaudhin who shot dead the district magistrate in December 1931. The entire country was surprised when they heard about Bina Das who fired point blank at the

Governor in February 1932 while receiving her degree at the convocation. This was an indication of hatred towards the British regime.

In the year 1938, Mrs. R. Subramanyam became the first woman members of Council of the State.⁷⁸ This was a great achievement for Indian women and by this time they were already recognised in various sectors of Indian politics. When World War Two started, women in India along with their men folk, participated actively in their demand for free India. In 1939 the Kasturba, wife of Gandhi, was moved by the State of Women in Rajkot, where she had been raised. In spite of her poor health and against everybody's advice she went to Rajkot with Maniben, Sardar Patel's daughter. On arrival, both of them were arrested and detained in a village.

In October 1942, a batch of women offered Satyagraha (struggle for truth) in Hyderabad city where Sarojini Naidu was arrested with other fellow women. By 1943 Mrs. Renuka Ray became the first privileged woman to sit in the Central Legislative Assembly. When in 1943, the Indian National Army was formed, Captain Lackshmi Swaminathan became Commander of a women's regiment which was called Rani Jhansi Regiment.

Between the end of World War Two and the independence of India, i.e. 1947, the period can be referred to as a dark period in Indian history. Demand of separate Moslem state. Pakistan, by the Moslem League, flared up Hindu-Moslem riots. In a few months about 500,000 people, Hindus and Muslims, were killed and millions became homeless. Such wanton killing of innocent people had never occurred in the history of India. During this period, women acted as voluntary social workers taking care of both communities.

Independent India honoured her women by appointing Sarojani Naidu as governor of the United Province (new Uttar Pradesh) Vijyalackshmi Pandit as Ambassador in Moscow and Amrit Kaur as a Minister in the central government. There are however, several unnamed, unsung women martyrs who contributed in one way or another in the struggle for freedom making the entire movement a success.

CONCLUSION

The paper has established a very significant contribution of Zambian and Indian Women in the nationalist movement in their countries. The paper indicates that the women in Zambia and those in India were not very active during the early colonial period, but gradually they started participating with full vigour and proved worthy. Zambian women and Indian women apart from participating in freedom struggle also took care of their families. They were mother, wife, cook and even freedom fighters. Successfully playing these various and difficult roles at the same time they simultaneously achieved their goal. Though, their approach in their countries were different, their goal was common to bring freedom to their countries and people. After independence, both countries honoured their women by appointing them in several important political positions. A remarkable coincidence in the history of post independent Zambia and that of India was the introduction of women in politics not through election but through nomination as perhaps because women in both nations showed little interest in contesting the first election held in these new independent

nations. The level of political maturity had been thus displayed by this gesture towards women by both nations although each one of them gained independence at different times. India in 1947 and Zambia in 1964.

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