



Hindustan Republican Association and the Kakori Train Action

[Source: IE](#)

Why in News?

Ninety-six years ago, in **December, 1927**, four revolutionaries of the **Indian independence movement** were hanged 2 years after the **Kakori Train Action**, in which members of the [Hindustan Republican Association \(HRA\)](#) had looted a train transporting money to the British treasury.

- It serves as a poignant reminder of their **sacrifice and bravery**, reigniting reflections on their pivotal roles in **shaping the course of [India's fight for freedom](#)**.

What are the Key Points Related to Hindustan Republican Association?

- **Background:** Mahatma Gandhi initiated the [Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920](#), advocating non-violence and urging Indians to withdraw support from British activities in India.
 - However, the **movement's trajectory shifted after the [Chauri Chaura Incident in 1922](#)**, where police firing led to protesters' deaths and a subsequent mob attack resulted in the death of policemen.
 - Gandhi, despite internal dissent within the INC, abruptly halted the movement.
- **Foundation:** The decision to halt Non-Cooperation Movement disillusioned a group of young men who founded the **Hindustan Republican Association (HRA)**.
 - **Ram Prasad Bismil and Ashfaqulla Khan**, both of whom had a flair for poetry, were among the group's founders. Others included **Sachindra Nath Bakshi** and trade unionist **Jogesh Chandra Chatterjee**.
 - Figures such as [Chandra Shekhar Azad](#) and [Bhagat Singh](#) also joined the HRA.
- **Manifesto:** Their manifesto released on **1st January, 1925**, was titled **Krantikari (Revolutionary)**. It proclaimed the revolutionary party's aim: to establish a **federal Republic of the United States of India** through an organized, armed revolution.
 - It **characterized the revolutionaries as neither terrorists nor anarchists**, rejecting terrorism for its own sake while considering it as a potent retaliatory measure when necessary.
- **HRA's Vision:** They envisioned a **republic grounded in universal suffrage** and socialist principles, prioritizing the abolition of systems enabling human exploitation.
- **Evolution of HRA:** HRA transformed into the **Hindustan Socialist Republican Association (HSRA) in 1928** due to a shift toward socialist ideologies, broadening its focus from political independence to encompass socio-economic equality.
 - Led by figures like **Bhagat Singh**, the HSRA merged nationalist aspirations with socialist principles, altering the trajectory of India's freedom struggle.

What was the Kakori Train Action Incident?

- The **train robbery at Kakori was the HRA's first major action**, in August 1925. The **Number 8 Down Train** ran between **Shahjahanpur and Lucknow**.
- As the train approached Kakori, a revolutionary (**Rajendranath Lahiri**) pulled the emergency

chain to stop the train and overpowered the guard. The train was carrying **treasury bags containing government funds** that were to be deposited in the British treasury in Lucknow.

- The revolutionaries planned to rob this money, which **they believed legitimately belonged to Indians anyway.**
- Their objective was **both to fund the HRA and garner public attention** for their work and mission.
- The British authorities launched a **harsh crackdown**, leading to the arrest of numerous HRA members.
 - Among the forty arrested individuals, **four received death sentences (Rajendranath Lahiri on 17th December and Ashfaqullah Khan, Ram Prasad Bismil, Thakur Roshan Singh on 19th December)** and others faced lengthy imprisonments.
 - **Chandrashekar Azad** was the only prominent HRA leader who managed to evade capture.

PDF Reference URL: <https://www.drishtias.com/printpdf/hindustan-republican-association-and-the-kakori-train-action>

