Twitter Thread by [redacted]



[redacted]
@From_Himalaya



"The traumatic event of the 1946 Great Calcutta Killing drove many into the underworld. The name which finds constant mention in this context is of Gopal Mukherji (alias Gopal Pantha) of Malanga who raised the 'Bharat Jatiya Bahani' to protect Hindus during the riot. 1/9

The Bahani, to quote a police report, was a 'private army' trained in the use of explosives and firearms. According to Gopal Mukherjee's own
submission the Bahini had at one point 400 activists. 2/9

Most of them were like Krishna who had to abandon their quarters in Muslim majority areas in search of safety. Others like Dinabandhu Datta (alias Andrew, alias Indu) or Santosh Kumar Pal or Bhanu Bose belonged to middle class families and joined the Bahini to avenge... 3/9

the humiliation suffered by their community at Muslim hands.

Sometimes known 'musclemen' such as Basanta of Beadon Street were recruited by Gopal Mukheijee to repulse, what he called, 'Muslim marauders'. 4/9

There were also examples of people like Lakshminarayan Parel (alias Lakha) who joined the Bahini to acquire a skill in manufacturing unlicensed firearms.
The Bahini received liberal financial help from prosperous Hindu
personalities during the communal fury. 5/9

But when rioting subsided the
Bahini lost this support, and the very figures who had been once hailed as saviours from Muslim brutalities were now looked down with social contempt. This probably induced Gopal Mukheijee and his followers to take recourse to...6/9

organized 'crime' as a means of livelihood.

Their involvement with 'lawless acts' now ranged from armed dacoities like the Sonarpur Dacoity case and the Guinea

Mansion Dacoity case, to armed hold ups, house burglaries, smuggling, petty snatching and thefts. 7/9

Many of Gopal’s followers continued to nurse a deep communal antipathy towards Muslims and were ‘energetic participants’ in the 1950 communal clash in Calcutta. A section of Gopal's Bahini also developed a close association with the Congress party. 8/9

But others like Ram Chatterjee
became involved with Left politics and at one time served as a minister in the Left Front government." 9/9