

Noor Inayat Khan, the spy princess

Noor Inayat Khan was a British spy during World War II. She was the first Indian-origin woman to be **awarded** with the Blue Plaque in the UK. She is also THE FIRST AND ONLY Muslim woman to get a statue in her honour in Britain.



Khan was born in 1914 in Moscow. Her father was a descendant from a Sultan and was working as a musician and teacher for the Tzars. Her mother was an American poet who met her father during one of his travels. When Noor was still a child, all the family moved to France after World War I.

She studied child psychology at the Sorbonne University, but her real passions were music and writing. In fact, while she was still studying at the university, she published a children's book called *Twenty Jātaka Tales*. However, after the **outbreak** of WWII, the family had to **flee** to the UK.

Noor was a true pacifist, but she hated totalitarianism and was really **outspoken** about it, even criticising the British control over India. Despite this, she joined the Women's Auxiliary Air Force as a wireless operator to help the UK against the Germans.

At the age of 26, she volunteered to go **undercover** as a radio operator to Nazi-occupied France to send information between France and the UK. This job was extremely dangerous and nobody thought she would survive for longer than two weeks, but she wanted to help.



The pilot who flew her to France was a double agent who **betrayed** all their team and they were captured in a week, except for her. She did a **remarkable** job, hiding and moving constantly to avoid the Germans. They knew who she was and still couldn't get her, even when she was travelling with her radio equipment inside a big suitcase. She was asked to return to London, but she **refused** as the job she was doing was extremely valuable.

Unfortunately, she was captured in the end, but it took the Germans three months to do so. She was tortured for 10 months and said nothing, even the Nazis wrote about her incredible courage. She was killed in a concentration camp while she was screaming *liberté*.

1. Read the text and answer the questions.

- a. Why is Noor Inayat Khan important?

- b. Why did the German say that she was extremely courageous?

2. Look at the words in purple and match them to their definitions.

- a. gave information about somebody to the enemy:
- b. received some recognition or a prize:
- c. beginning:
- d. under a false identity:
- e. saying what you think, even if some get offended:
- f. said no to something:
- g. impressive:
- h. escape: