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**Chronology of Events in the Life of Jose Rizal**

**1861 - Jose Rizal was born on June 19, 1861 in the town of Calamba in Laguna. His parents were Francisco Mercado Rizal and Teodora Alonzo Realonda.**

**1864 - Young Jose learned the alphabet at the age of three. His first teacher was his mother.**

**1867 - At the age of five, Rizal manifested his artistic talents through sketching and wax-and-clay molding. Before the age of six, he acquired the skills to read and write.**

**1869 - Rizal wrote his first poem in Filipino which was entitled, "Sa Aking mga Kababata" ("To My Fellow Children"). The main theme of the poem was love of one's native language and it was Rizal's earliest expression of nationalistic sentiment.**

**1876 - Young Rizal remembered his hometown with fondness while he was studying in a school located in another town of Laguna and wrote the poem, "In Memory of My Hometown."**

**1877 - Rizal earned his Bachelor of Arts degree with the highest honor at Ateneo. During the following year, he passed the licensure examination in surveying.**

**1879 - Rizal won the first prize in a literary contest. The prize-winning poem, "La Juventud Filipina" ("To the Filipino Youth"), was an inspirational poem which strongly encouraged the Filipino youth to apply their genius in the various fields of human work since they were the hope of the Fatherland. The poem was the first great poem in Spanish written by a Filipino.**

**1882 - Rizal completed his medical course at the University of Santo Tomas.**

**1884 - Dr. Jose Rizal earned a medical degree at the Universidad Central de Madrid. One year later, he completed his course in philosophy and letters.**

**1886 - Dr. Rizal left Spain for Germany to study ophthalmology at the University of Heidelberg. In spring of 1886, he wrote the poem, "To the Flowers of Heidelberg."**

**1887 - The first novel of Dr. Rizal was published in Berlin, Germany. The novel, "Noli Me Tangere" ("Touch Me Not"), was a critical socio-political study of Philippine society under Spanish colonial administration. For having written the book, Rizal won the admiration and respect of the Filipino people; at the same time, he became an enemy of the Spanish friars and colonial administrators.**

**1889 - Dr. Rizal's article, "Los Agricultores Filipinos" ("The Filipino Farmers"), was published in La Solidaridad which was the official newspaper of the Filipino Propaganda Movement in Spain. La Solidaridad was organized by Filipino reformists who advocated for socio-political reforms in the Philippines and representation of the Philippines in the Spanish Cortes.**

**1891 - Dr. Rizal's second novel, "El Filibusterismo," was published in Ghent, Belgium.**

**1892 - Dr. Rizal organized the Liga Filipina in Tondo, Manila. The Liga's aims were the following: 1) Unite the whole archipelago into one compact, vigorous and homogenous body; 2) Mutual protection in every want and necessity; 3) Defense against all violence and injustice; 4) Encouragement of instruction, agriculture and commerce; and 5) Study and application of reforms. One of the founders of the Liga was Andres Bonifacio who was to become a revolutionary hero. Three days after the Liga was formed, Rizal was arrested by Spanish authorities. Eight days later, he was deported to Dapitan in Mindanao where he remained for four years.**

**1896 - In a military court, Rizal was falsely accused of leading the Philippine revolution by Spanish officials. The court's decision was a death penalty sentence for Rizal. On December 30, 1896, Dr. Jose Rizal was executed by firing squad in Bagumbayan field.**

**Bonifacio and Rizal: Of Oil and Water and Men of Conviction**

**July 3, 1892: Jose Rizal organized the Liga Filipina in Tondo, Manila. He met a man named Andres Bonifacio who became one of the founding members of the organization.**

***Jose Rizal was born on June 19, 1861 in Calamba, Laguna. His family belonged to the upper middle class of Philippine society, which was a colony of Spain. Like all Filipinos during this period in Philippine history, Rizal was a second-class citizen in his own country. However, the socio-economic status of his family afforded him the kind of education which he needed. He was a mentally-gifted individual. He completed his elementary education at the top of his class and, during this stage in his development, he wrote a poem on love of one's native language, which was Rizal's earliest expression of nationalistic sentiment. He obtained a bachelor of arts degree with the highest honor, wrote a patriotic poem in which he exhorted the Filipino youth to apply their genius to the various fields of human work since they (the youth) were the hope of the Fatherland, and earned a medical degree at the University of Santo Tomas.***

***He continued to study abroad. He went to Spain and he obtained degrees in medicine and philosophy and letters at Universidad Central de Madrid. He went to Germany in 1886 in order to specialize in ophthalmology. During his stay abroad, he involved himself with the work of the Filipino Propaganda Movement which was composed of Filipino reformists who advocated for reforms in the Philippines. Among the Filipino reformists in Spain and the Philippines, Rizal produced the most outstanding literary pieces on Philippine nationalism and, consequently, exerted a profound influence on it. It was the novel, "Noli Me Tangere" (Touch Me Not") which made Rizal an enemy of the Spanish friars and political administrators. The novel was a socio-political study of the Philippine society under Spanish colonial administration.***

***When Rizal returned to the Philippines in August, 1887, he was forced to leave the country due to harassment and intimidation from Spanish friars and officials and unidentified individuals. He left the country for a second time and lived abroad for more than 4 years. During this time, he wrote a sequel to his first novel, entitled: "El Filibusterismo." It was published in 1891 in Ghent, Belgium. In June, 1892, Rizal made a second homecoming after working as an eye surgeon in Hong Kong.***

**July 3, 1892: Rizal presided over a meeting of Filipino patriots in Tondo, Manila. The objective of the meeting was to establish a civil society. The Liga Filipina was formed, and during the meeting, Rizal met a man named Andres Bonifacio, who was one of the founders of the Liga. It was a meeting of two men with different family backgrounds, different personalities and different views on life, yet they shared the same burning desire to see a reformed and democratic Philippines.**

***Andres Bonifacio was born on November 30, 1863 in Tondo, Manila. His parents were ordinary working people, although at one time his father served as "tiniente mayor" (vice-mayor) of Tondo. In 1881, his mother died of tuberculosis and in 1882, his father died of poor health. The early deaths of his parents and the poverty attendant to such misfortune forced Bonifacio to leave school and find work in order to support his brothers and sisters and himself.***

***He started working as a self-employed market peddler; he sold walking canes and paper fans which he and his brothers and sisters made. To augment his income, he made posters for business firms on a part-time basis. Later, he found employment in commercial firms. He was a messenger-clerk for Fleming and Company, a salesman for Fressell and Company, and a warehouse keeper for a tile factory. For Andres, it was a struggle to make a living but he found time to educate himself. He was a smart person who had a passion for knowledge. He read books and articles on politics, law, religion and revolution. He read articles published in La Solidaridad, which was the official newspaper of the Filipino Propaganda Movement based in Spain. He read biographies of U.S. presidents, books on the French revolution and Rizal's two novels, "Noli Me Tangere"  and "El Filibusterismo."***

**July 3, 1892: Andres Bonifacio attended a meeting of Filipino patriots in Tondo, Manila and met a man named Jose Rizal. The meeting was called because Rizal wanted to form a civil association. The Filipino patriots agreed on the plan and the Liga Filipina was established. It had a constitution which Rizal prepared while he was in Hong Kong, and the constitution contained the aims of the Liga which were the following:**

1. **Unite the whole archipelago into one compact, vigorous and homogeneous body;**
2. **Mutual protection in every want and necessity;**
3. **Defense against all violence and injustice;**
4. **Encouragement of instruction, agriculture and commerce; and**
5. **Study and application of reforms**

**On the night of July 6, 1892, Rizal was secretly arrested by Spanish authorities. On the following day, Governor-General Eulogio Despujol executed the order for Rizal's deportation to one of the islands in the south. A week later, Rizal was escorted to a ship bound for Dapitan in Mindanao where he lived in exile for the next four years. The members of the Liga tried to carry out the plans of the organization even after Rizal was deported to Mindanao. One of its plans was to provide financial support for La Solidaridad. Bonifacio continued to work hard for the Liga, although on the day Rizal was arrested, he and some Filipino patriots organized an association called "Kataastaasan Kagalanggalangang Katipunan ng mga Anak ng Bayan"  ("Highest and Most Respected Sons of the People") or the Katipunan. Rizal's arrest shocked the people --- including Bonifacio --- who saw Rizal as a symbol of reform and freedom. A few months later, the Liga ceased to be an organization.**

**With the demise of the Liga, Bonifacio dedicated himself to the task of strengthening the Katipunan as a revolutionary society. He and the original members of the Katipunan vowed to win members for the organization. All new members were asked to swear in the name of God and the people to defend the aims of the society, one of which was to establish an independent Philippine state, and to sign the membership papers with their own blood. The society grew, and by 1896 it had recruited thousands of members.**

**Meanwhile, in Dapitan, Rizal lived the kind of adult life he had led wherever and whenever he was: a lifestyle that was intense, creative and community-oriented. He provided free medical treatment for the poor, established a school for young boys and built a water-work system for the community. He collected specimen of animals which he sent to the Dresden Museum, planted fruit trees and wrote letters. His four years in exile were spent on extremely productive ventures.**

**In June, 1896, the leaders of the Katipunan decided to inform Rizal of the society's plan to start a revolution. Dr. Pio Valenzuela was chosen as the emissary to Dapitan. On June 21, 1896, Dr. Valenzuela met Rizal in Dapitan and informed the latter of the society's plan. He also told Rizal of the Katipunan's plan to rescue him from his exile. Rizal did not agree with both plans. He believed that it was premature to start a revolution because the people were not prepared for a revolution and the Katipunan did not have the money and war machinery to sustain the armed struggle and win the war. He refused the offer of the Katipunan to rescue him because he had given his word of honor to the Spanish authorities. Valenzuela returned to Manila and informed Bonifacio of the outcomes of the secret meeting.**

**Months before the secret meeting, Rizal received a letter from a longtime Austrian friend Ferdinand Blumentritt who informed him of the revolution and yellow fever epidemic in Cuba, which was a colony of Spain. Blumentritt advised him to volunteer as a medical doctor. Heeding his friend's advice, Rizal sent a letter to Governor-General Ramon Blanco in December, 1895. The letter contained Rizal's offer to work as a volunteer medical doctor in Cuba. More than six months passed before a letter of reply was sent to him on July 1, 1896. The letter notified him of the acceptance of the offer. Rizal's exile in Dapitan ended on July 31 when he boarded a ship bound for Manila.**

**Rizal arrived in Manila on the sixth day of August, missing the ship that was supposed to take him to Spain. He, then, informed the governor-general of his wish to be placed in an isolated location. He wanted to be isolated from everyone except for his family because he feared that his prolonged stay in Manila would create troubles for him. He was given accommodation in a Spanish cruiser and stayed there for nearly a month. While he was staying on the cruise, the revolution erupted.**

**On August 19, an employee of a Spanish-owned publication (Diaro de Manila) named Teodoro Patino reported the existence of the Katipunan to Father Mariano Gil. The priest, together with the owner of the printing shop, immediately searched the place and found the lithographic stone used to print the Katipunan's receipt. The incriminating evidence was handed over to the Spanish authorities. Mass arrests followed and Manila became a troubled city. Bonifacio called for an emergency meeting of the katipunero (revolutionaries). On August 23, they went to Pugadlawin and gathered at the yard of Juan A. Ramos, the son of Melchora Aquino. (Aquino was an old woman who provided all kinds of support to the Katipunan members and her stature as a Filipino patriot grew to legendary proportion.) The meeting was held and the katipunero made their decision to fight for independence, and they shouted: "Long live Philippine independence!"**

**Rizal learned about the revolution. He was worried but he kept his plan to leave for abroad. He had committed himself to the volunteer job in Cuba and he had given his word of honor to Governor-General Blanco who was to betray him. On September 2, Rizal left Manila for Barcelona, Spain where he was supposed to receive instructions for the volunteer work in Cuba. What he got when he reached Barcelona was an arrest order from Governor-General Blanco who regarded Rizal as a dangerous Filipino and considered him as the leader of the Philippine revolution. Rizal was sent back to Manila and imprisoned.**

**In Manila, many Filipino patriots were already incarcerated. They were brutally tortured in order to get a confession that Rizal was the leader of the revolution. Spanish officials were on the witch-hunt. In December, Rizal was tried in a military court. He was accused of leading the Philippine revolution which he flatly denied. When the trial was over, Rizal was sentenced to die by musketry. On December 30, 1896, he was executed in Bagumbayan field, which was the place where the executions of captured katipunero and Filipino patriots were carried out.**

**Bonifacio and the katipunero (revolutionaries) continued to wage their armed struggle, losing battle after battle. It was only their unbelievable courage and inexplicable desire to see a free Philippines that sustained the struggle. Many months later, Bonifacio lost the leadership of the Katipunan in a power struggle. He was executed for a crime he did not commit. One year later, Philippine independence was achieved not because there was a change of leadership in the revolutionary government. It was achieved because there were Bonifacio and Rizal and countless Filipinos who held the belief that a free Philippines was worth dying for.**