



A convincing response to a Colonial upsurge: Karnataka's Devices to the appliance of Swadeshi Tenets

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Abstract

The Swadeshi movement was a great leap in Indian national Movement which involved all the people of India in Nationalist struggle. Whole of India came under the influence of Swadeshi movement Indians found different & vivid means of supporting Swadeshi movement & the region of Mysore responded to the call of Swadeshi in a innovative manner. This paper examines the various methods of Swadeshi movement in this region & addresses the reasons behind Swadeshi becoming a popular movement even amidst political suppression.

Key words: Swadeshi movement, National struggle, leaders, freedom movement

Introduction:

The Swadeshi movement was a befitting reply to an upward colonial power. It became relevant because the British government could be constrained only through economic precariousness. Whole of India find its own means of supporting Swadeshi movement & the state of Karnataka including the dissimilar political divisions enthusiastically responded to the call of Swadeshi. Though the scale of success in this movement was not identical with the accomplishment of the movement at All India level, but the movement though with a timid initiation gained momentum gradually¹

Reflections on political Consciousness:

On 5th May 1905 a public meeting was held presided by Gurunatha Rao Patak was held in the Victoria Theatre at Dharwad to protest against the partition of Bengal and to encourage the establishment of Local & Swadeshi industries². The meeting resolved that everyone should vow not to use foreign cloth, except in inevitable circumstances in order to encourage Indian artisans and trade in Indian goods.& manifested to make people use only Swadeshi goods. To spread the message of Swadeshi and boycott, Bal Ganghadhara Tilak toured North Karnataka during 1905-06 which helped the cause of



Swadeshi in Mysore region as well. Following the National leader, Local leaders such as Alur Venkata Rao, Sakkari Balachar, Krishna Rao Mudvedkar, Anantha Rao Dabade and others undertook extensive tours and delivered speeches on Swarajya, Swadeshi, Boycott and National Education.

Reflection on industries:

Swadeshi industries arose in many places. Vittal Rao Deshpande of Hebbal started a weaving factory at Kittur. Another factory was built in Badami. Cloths made here were sent even to Bengal. Rama Rao Alagvadi opened a Match factory at Dharwad, while in Lakshmeshwara a Porcelain factory was established. Factories for manufacturing bangles, pencils and many other articles of common use arose in many places. A Karnataka Industrial Conference met at Dharwad in 1907 to chalk out plans to develop Swadeshi industries in Karnataka. New Banks were established to help this industries. Boycott of British goods: Apart from wide support to swadeshi movement, people of Karnataka wholeheartedly participated in the boycott of British goods. Ranibennur witnessed one of the biggest bonfires of foreign cloth³.

Reflection on textile industry:

Textile dealers in Belgaum decided not to import foreign cloth and in Dharwad, grocers decided not to purchase Daboti and Johnson sugar⁴. It was decided to smoke batti's instead of bidis and anyone found breaking the rule was fined. Hoteliers stopped the sale of tea and people poured kerosene into gutters and instead began to use indigenous oil for lighting. In one instance after it was noticed that a bangle seller had sold foreign bangles saying that it was Indian, the bangle seller was not only abused but also had to forego money.

Reflections on prohibition:

In Belgaum, along with Swadeshi movement, prohibition was also advocated and toddy contractors had to incur heavy loss. For picketing liquor shops in Belgaum nine persons were awarded one-week imprisonment and fined Rs 680 in June 1908.⁵ Though a prominent person of Belgaum offered to pay the fine, the youths refused his help and preferred imprisonment. On 8th August 1908 a public meeting was held in Bagalkote, which was addressed by Jayarao Nargund, Jainapur, Yalagurdrao, Dharwadkar and others. It was proposed to establish a Swadeshi Vyaparottejak Samshtha in Bagalkot⁶



Reflections on Education:

The movement also saw the establishment of National Schools in various parts of Karnataka. Alur Venkata Rao started the Nutana Vidyalaya at Dharwad with arts and crafts also as subjects in the curriculum. Another national school arose at Naval Gund by the efforts of Dundopanth Sahasrabudde. In Belgaum Kaka Kalelkar established the Ganesh Vidyalaya, while Jaya Rao Nargund started another at Bagalkot. Similar schools were established at Hanagal, Agadi and other places. The government however saw that these schools close down one by one. In South Kanara district, Ammembala Srinivasa Pai was the moving spirit in the boycott of foreign goods and the spread of Swadeshi. Men like K.P.Rao and Panje Mangesha Rao assisted him, while Kolachalam Venkata Rao and Sabhapathi Mudaliar were the leaders of the freedom movement in Bellary⁷.

Reflections on Unification:

Though Tilak had aroused the spirit of patriotism of the people of Karnataka the Kannadigas had no separate political entity, which would have been a spur to concerted action. This was realized and keenly felt by leaders from the early years of

the century⁸. In 1915 the Kannada Sahithya Parishad had been established at Bangalore with the object of bringing together all Kannada-speaking people in order to create a sense of political and cultural community among them⁹. In 1916 Alur Venkata Rao and Kadapa Raghavendra Rao founded the Karnataka Ekikarana Sabha with the avowed object of achieving a united Karnataka. It was felt that the fight for freedom would be strengthened and sanctified if there were the consciousness of kinship among the people of Karnataka. Kadapa Raghavendra Rao toured all over Karnataka and roused the people into enthusiasm for Karnataka unity. Memorials were submitted to the Secretary of State for India, Montagu demanding a separate province for Kannada speaking people. In 1920, the All-Karnataka Political Conference was held at Dharwad under the president-ship of V.P.Madhava Rao, a former Diwan of Mysore. Here delegates from all parts of the state participated and it was decided to send maximum number of delegates from Karnataka to the Nagpur Congress session to plea for a separate Congress province, which should include all Kannada-speaking areas¹⁰. The Nagpur Congress session¹¹ presided by C.Vijiaraghavachariar permitted



Karnataka to have a separate Pradesh Congress Committee (P.C.C.) and Gangadhar Rao Deshpande became the first K.P.C.C. president. A District Congress Committee was founded for Mysore state with Justice Setlur as president and local committees were started at Tumkur, Bangalore, Mysore and other places in the state.

Reflections on social consciousness:

Cow protection movement in Mysore state Anti untouchability movement made many temples to open their doors to Dalits Anti conversion drive in Mysore state against the conversion by missionaries. Instrumental in

admitting many lower caste people into schools Ramachandra Rao was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi, deeply influenced by Satyagraha movement. He was called "Father of Political Unrest" in princely Mysore. Ramachandra Rao was arrested for opposing the visit of the Simon commission to India in 1928 and became the first political prisoner in Mysore State. He was popularly known as Mysore Gandhi. Ramachandra Rao founded the Khaddar Sahakara Sangha in 1925. Because of his influence and efforts of Mahatma Gandhi made his visit to Mysore State. He visited Badanavalu village in Nanjanagudu in Mysore region.

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