ROLE OF PRESS IN INDIAN NATIONALIST MOVEMENT IN KARNATAKA - (1556-1947).

"Let Knowledge Grow more to more and thus be Human life enriched." 1

"Fact is sacred: comment is free"- C. P. Scott. 2

"Read not to contradict and confute nor to believe and take for granted not to find talk and discourse but to weigh and consider."- Francis Bacon.

Synopsis:

A. An introduction to the topic

B. Aims of the Research undertaken

C. Nature

D. Method

E. Scope

F. Limitations

G. Sources

H. Chapterisation

1 This quotation is used in the opening page of The New Encyclopedia Britannica Inc., Vol.26, Toronto, 1988, p.1.

2 This quotation is used on the cover page of the book Vrita Patke Adara Charitre, Adara Kartavya adara Swatantrya by D V G, 1988.
A. **An Introduction to the topic:**

The Press is an indispensable instrument for exchange of Views, Information and Opinions in a Democratic Country. The Press is usually identified with Newspapers when we speak of the Role of Press. According to the general concept a Newspaper means any printed periodical work catering public news or comments or public views. It may relate to any subject for the information of the general readers such as political, scientific, social, moral, religious or other matter of public interest local or foreign. Moreover, it is published and issued at equal intervals of time.

The Press which is called the FOURTH ESTATE and the soul of Democracy, does play vital role in reshaping the mankind in the civilized world. Freedom of the Press is one of the great bulwarks of liberty and can never be restrained but by the despotic governments. The peculiar evil of silencing the expression of an opinion is as bad as robbing the human race ot its soul. Every free man has an unalienable Right to express the sentiments he pleases to put forth before the public; to forbid this is to destroy the freedom of the Press; but if he publishes what is improper, or illegal, not favouring the general good, he must take the consequences of his own temerity.

The origin of the concept of Freedom of Press took place there in England, the land where Democracy was originated, tested and developed over centuries. In spite of the fact that, from the earliest times in the west, persecution for the expression of opinion in the matter relating to Science, Religion and Philosophy was resorted to both by the Church and by the State to suppress alleged heresy corruption of the people or act of sedition by the Instruments of Restraint. In other words, the freedom of the Press, in England means the right to
print and publish anything which is not prohibited by law or made an offence such as: sedition, contempt, obscenity, defamation and blasphemy.

In Indian concept, the colonial rule imposed restraint on the freedom of press in the interest of British Empire. In the said existing circumstances, the press as an instrument of truth was effectively used by the Nationalists in the Freedom Movement in India. It is the fact that Nationalist in Karnataka were in the mainstream of Indian Nationalist Movement. Whether, the Press had its role to play in Nationalist Movement in Karnataka by inculcating in them the spirit of Nationalism is the subject matter of obscurity. As a matter of fact, the present study bearing the title *Role of Press in Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Areas* is to explore the Role of Press in Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Areas

B. Aims of the Research undertaken:

The intensity of the freedom struggle in India varied from place to place; region to region due to the restraints imposed by the colonial rulers. To add to this, lack of communication, transportation, education, poverty and natural calamity hindered the course of the freedom struggle. Moreover various methods were employed by the Nationalists for the freedom struggle such as: hartal; strike, picketing, processions, breaking the law, Swedish movement and non-violence movement etc. What prompted me to take up the study of Role of Press in Indian Nationalist movement in Karnataka Areas is the peculiar condition prevailed in Karnataka Area as such, which responded much later, as far as the press is concerned, to the national movement which had already made headway in other parts of India. Mangalore, the seat of educational activities carried out by the Christian Missionaries, introduced the printing establishment meant for
beauty and quality, engaged in the propagation of religious literatures and vernacular grammar. The Press here was used for the welfare of the people at the grassroots level. While in Mysore state, the Press was making headway to ascertain the Right of Expression, at the same time, The Bombay Presidency asserted the Right to Expression against the repressive rule of colonial authority. The Press was yet to establish in Hyderabad Karnataka. The net result of the role of Press in Indian Nationalist Movement is required to be established. To compare the role of Press in Karnataka with National scenario is entirely different. Therefore, an attempt has been made here to trace the exact role played by the Press in Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Area.

C. Nature:

The act of polarization of Kannadigas started as a part and parcel of Indian National Movement on the principle of linguistic basis which was the much appreciated process in the making of Unification of Karnataka. Karnataka got the status of the state as per the State Re-organization Act-1953, on 1st Nov. 1956 much later than India got Independence. During the period of Indian National Movement, Karnataka Area was parcelled into various political units. The Kannada-speaking people were subjected to 20 administrative units during the days of the British Raj. The Units were as follows:

1. The Princely State of Mysore.
2. The Madras Presidency with the Kannada districts of the Nilgiris, Daksina Kannada and Bellary, and the taluks of Kollegal, Krishnagiri, Hosur and Madakasira.
3. The Bombay Presidency with the Kannada Districts of Uttar Kannada, Belgaum, Dharwad and Bijapur and the Taluks of South and North Sholapur, Mangalavedhe and other neighbourig Kannada territories.
4. The Territory of Kodagu (ruled by the Chief Commissioner.)
5. The Hyderabad State with the Kannada districts of Gulbarga, Bidar and Raichur.
6. Raibag, Katkol, Togal and other Kannada territories in the Kolhapur State.
8. The State of Miraj with other belongings like Lakshmeshwar.
9. Junior Miraj (Budhgaon) and its other territories like Gudageri.
10. Kurundawad Senior.
11. Kurundawad Junior or Vadgaon.
12. The State of Jamakhandi with Kundgol, Chippalkatti etc.
13. The State of Mudhol
14. The State of Jatt
15. The State of Akkalkot
16. Gunandal group of villages belonging to the Aundh State.
17. The State of Ramdurga
18. The State of Sandur
19. The State of Savanur and
20. The Cantonments of Belgaum, Bangalore and Bellary under the Central Government.

The above said political units were administered by five different administrations and more than fourteen other Princely States. Though, Kannadigas were unevenly distributed in Karnataka Area, they effectively responded to the political awakening as much they voluntarily participated in the activities framed by the Indian National Congress leading to the Indian National Movement. The Press played a leading Role in the making of the freedom struggle in the Bombay Presidency which consisted of four Kannada speaking Districts such as: Belgaum, Dharwad, Bijapur; and North Canara district. The result was that the people of these districts reflected their aspirations for the Nationalism being they devoted to the Freedom struggle. It is the fact that the
four districts i.e. Belgaum, Dharwad, Bijapur, and North Canara of the Bombay Presidency were more in picture than others as far as the role of Press was concerned. Thus the people responded to the national call.

The Nizam State, which included Gulburga District, Raichur District, and Bidar District, were under the clutches of the ruler of Hyderabad State so much so that no newspaper could establish to challenge the Nizam’s rule till late in the forties after Independence when by Police Action on this state incorporated it into the Indian Union.

Dakshina Kannada District and Bellary District was administered by the Madras Presidency. The Press was very much enlightened here but being far away from the Madras Authority, resulted in diverse results as far as National Movement was concerned. The people of Kodagu were isolated for the reason that it was administered by the centre. Still, Newspaper in Kodagu did commendable role favouring the Indian National Movement.

Mysore state was an Enlightened State. It imposed restraint on the Press. In spite of the act of the state, the Press played eminent role in inculcating the spirit of Nationalism in the people thereby making them to respond to the National Call.

D. Method:

The multidimensional activities of the Press are not constant but subject to the various conditions lay down by the colonial state from time to time. Newspaper will come up and survive for certain period; sometime extinguish if not replaced by newspapers. The Press was the instrument both in the hands of nationalists and colonial administrators to reach their cherished goals definitely varied from person to person as far as their views were concerned. Because of this variable
nature of the Press, the following method is employed to find out the role of
Press in Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Area.

The data of newspapers of India from the origin of newspapers in India to
the period of Independence of India was collected, classified and coded. The
density of Newspapers in India in general and Karnataka Area in particular has
been traced. The course of Nationalist Movement in consonance with the
Newspapers was studied. Scientific method has been employed taking into
account the literacy and other factors and the growth of newspapers at various
places of Karnataka Area is thoroughly studied. The Govt. policy such as
restraint on newspapers was examined. The degree of influence of newspapers
exerted on Nationalist Movement in Karnataka has been traced.

E. Scope:
The Role of Press can not be pinned down to a particular area. The medium of
expression finds no barriers. Still, an attempt has been made to focus the Role of
Press in Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Area of Kannada speaking
people, which got into the making of Unification of Karnataka. The state
Karnataka is located in the Southern part of India and it spreads from 11 ½° NL
to 18 ½° NL and 75° EL to & 78 ½° EL. The total area of Karnataka as on date is
1,91,791 Sq.Kms. Moreover from the origin of Press in Karnataka up to the
period of Independence of India is the range of the study undertaken.

F. Limitations:
➢ The Terms: Press, newspaper, pamphlet and book have been defined in
The Press and Registration of Books Act, 1867. In terms thereof these
terms are treated as defined in the said Act. in this research work.
➢ This research work covers the period from 1556 to 1947. During the
said period Karnataka State was not existing. Karnataka state came into
being on 1st Nov. 1956. As a matter of fact, the term “Karnataka Area” is used in the current research work.

The office of the Registrar of Newspapers for India, more popularly known as RNI came into being on 1st July, 1956, on the recommendation of the First Press Commission in 1953 and by amending the Press and Registration of Books Act 1867.

The Press and Registration of Books Act contain the duties and functions of the RNI. On account of some more responsibilities entrusted upon RNI during all these years, the office is performing both statutory as well as some non-statutory functions.

Under Statutory Functions, the following jobs are covered:

a) Compilation and maintenance of a Register of Newspapers containing particulars about all the newspapers published.

b) Issue of certificate of registration to the newspapers published under valid declaration;

c) Scrutiny and analysis of annual statements sent by the publishers of newspapers every year under Section 19-D of the Press and Registration of Books Act of 1967 containing information on circulation, ownership etc;

d) Informing the District Magistrates about availability of titles, to intending publishers for filing declaration;

e) Ensuring that newspapers are published in accordance with the provisions of the Press and Registration of Books Act 1867 and the Rules made there under.

f) Verification under Section 19-F of the PRB Act, of circulation claims furnished by the publishers in their Annual Statements, and

g) Preparation and submission to the Government on or before 31st December each year, a report containing all available information and statistics about the press in India with particular reference to the
emerging trends in circulation and in the direction of common ownership units etc.

The following items fall under the non-statutory functions:
Formulation of Newsprint Allocation policy-Guidelines and issue of Eligibility Certificate to the newspapers to enable them to import newsprint and to procure indigenous newsprint.

a) Assessing and certifying the essential need and requirement of newspaper establishments to import printing and composing machinery and allied materials.

In absence of the supra statutory body of information, requisite information are collected from all available sources in the current research work

In Indian context, during the British regime newspapers were not beautiful in appearance. The text of the newspapers usually contained- gossip regarding the important people, their personal life, and stolen news of the foreign newspapers- no norms, no code of conduct on the part of the editors of the newspapers. In short, the earliest newspaper in India did not observe any norms of modern newspapers. Newspaper was an instrument to defame the reputation of important personalities for personal reasons.

There were varieties of press functioned during the freedom struggle of India such as *

- The Press on corruption
- The Press on the position of women/dowry system
- The Press on law and order
- Press on European dress
- The Press on reforms
- The Press on Communal Riots/ Communal Harmony
- The Press on Early marriage

* K. V. Nagaraj; Patrika Vritti; Bangalore; Published by KPA; 1989.
• The Press on inter-caste marriage
• The Press on Sharada Bill (Child marriage restraint Bill)
• The Press on removal of Untouchability
• The Press and the Economic condition.

G. Sources:
Gazetteer of India- Dist. Gazetteers of Karnataka; Govt. documents; various publications pertaining to the Indian National Movement; History of Karnataka as well as various Publications on The Press in the western world and of India; Publications on the Press by the Karnataka Patrika Academy; number of Year Books, old books, and requisite Acts pertaining to the Press Laws and major newspapers; periodicals, the proceedings of INC and Internet Sources etc. are expensively used in writing of this Thesis: Role of Press in Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Area.

H. Chapterisation:

1. The First Chapter: Origin and Evolution of Press in British India. An attempt has been made to bring out the origin and evolution of press in India, the Philosophy behind the evolution of Press in India examined

2. The Second Chapter: Press and Indian National Movement: This chapter deals with how the Press and Indian National Movement were interwoven phenomenon, leading to the desired goal, and the freedom of India.

3. The Third Chapter: Origin and evolution of Press in Karnataka Areas. This chapter deals with the main objectives as well as the factors favouring for the growth of Press is traced.

4. The Fourth Chapter: Role of Press in Indian Nationalist movement in Karnataka Areas. This chapter deals with role of
press for the promotion of Nationalism in Karnataka Area par with Indian National movement in other parts of India has been traced.

5. The Fifth Chapter: Critical analysis of Role of Press in Karnataka Area. (during Nationalist Movement) – This Chapter deals with the factors which led for Indian Nationalist Movement in Karnataka Area: the Role of Public sphere; Press laws and restraint imposed on the Press by the colonial authority and the counter act of the Press against the Govt.- Critically analyzed.

6. The Sixth Chapter: Result: Conclusion- This Chapter deals with the findings of the research work undertaken.