

C H A P T E R - I XQUIT INDIA MOVEMENTANDHRA CIRCULARKURNOOL CIRCULAR:

At the end of 1941 and the beginning of 1942 the political air was thick with the hazards of Japan's invasion on one hand, and on the other hand there was the internal dissensions among the political leaders on the issue of 'people's war'. Congress was pressing for immediate declaration of independence. Leftists mainly communists supported the government for participation in World War which was directed against the U.S.S.R. by Hitler to wipe out the socialist regime. Some sections of the political leaders decided to throw out the British by violence and Subhash Chandra Bose was the leader in this regard.

Under these circumstances the A.I.C.C. Working Committee felt that it was impossible to stop Japan's progress in War. The A.I.C.C. Committee supported Gandhiji's 'Quit India' proposal and on 14th July, 1942 accepted Gandhiji's theme. But the A.I.C.C. acceptance to 'Quit India' movement received approval only on August 8th, 1942 in Bombay.¹

Under these circumstances the political organization was not sound. Firstly, Japan's threat on one hand, secondly, Zinnah's adamant pressure for seperation of Pakistan, thirdly, the rise of communists especially in Andhra and fourthly, Japan's bombing on Kakinada and Vizag Ports. The Congress leaders who participated in the individual satyagraha were released. They determined to reorganise the Congress to revitalise it. Andhra area was divided into four divisions and entrusted to leaders for re-organization. The leaders and people were awaiting Gandhiji's message. Under these circumstances, at this juncture Andhra Congress Committee then headed by Pattabhi Sitaramayya as President and K. Venkata Rao as Secretary drafted a circular and communicated it to all district Congress Committees. This circular is called 'Kurnool Circular', because a copy of this circular was traced in Kurnool District Congress Office.²

The drafted circular was taken by Pattabhi Sitaramayya to the A.I.C.C. held on August 8th, 1942, Bombay. The same circular is believed to

have been accepted by the A.I.C.C. for future programme in 'Quit India Movement' of 'Do or Die' as called by Gandhiji.³

The Kurnool Circular was envisaged and drafted on 29th July, 1942 on the basis of 14th July 1942 A.I.C.C. Committee resolution to support 'Quit India'.

This circular which was envisaged and drafted earlier before A.I.C.C. met in Bombay. It requires particular attention to know the details.

1. The movement is to be followed on the German 'Blitz Krieg' pattern.
2. It is to be followed non-violently, strictly according to law.
3. To defy prohibitory orders.
4. Lawyers to give up practice.
5. Students to leave colleges.
6. Picketing salt and foreign trade and industry.
7. Cutting Communications.

8. Cutting spathes.
9. Travelling without tickets.
10. Pulling chains in trains.
11. To blow up bridges so as to retard the movement of military.
12. Cutting up telegraph and telephone wires.
13. Non payment of taxes except municipal taxes.
14. Picketing of recruitment offices.
15. Hoisting national flags on all government buildings.
16. It expects business to withdraw their deposits from banks and to demand rupee payment so that they would be drain on British finance.
17. All people outside congress were asked to participate in the struggle.⁴

In this connection all leaders were arrested and later volunteers were also arrested. The leaders who were arrested were Pattabhi Sitaramayya, A. Kaleswara Rao, T. Prakasam, N. Sanjeeva Reddy, Bezwada Gopala Reddy, K. Venkataratnam, B.V. Subba Reddy, K. Brahmananda Reddy, M. Annapurnaiah, G. Brahmayya, M. Venkata Raju, K. Anjaneyulu,

Dr. P. Tirumala Rao, P. Ramachary, Ananta Sayanam Ayyangar, M. Tirumala Rao and V.V. Giri etc.⁵

The 'Quit India' movement in Krishna District like in all other parts of India has far reaching consequences that contributed for the dawn of independence. The series of activities that developed in Krishna District from August, 1942 are as follows:

On August 9th at Bezwada the Congress leaders including A. Kaleswara Rao were arrested.⁶ Protest meetings were held both by the congressmen and the communists.

At Machilipatnam an eventful procession and a public meeting were organised by communists.⁷ On August 10th, complete hartal was organised at Bezwada. Hartals were also organised at Machilipatnam and Gudivada. Students abstained from attending classes.⁸ On 11th August a public meeting was organized at Gudivada and Machilipatnam.⁹

At Machilipatnam in a meeting T. Veeraraghavaiah spoke "when a system of that has enslaved for 200 years

is being destroyed. The police friends will not help the government. They will join us as in Bombay. The police servants are of the government that is tumbling down."¹⁰

On August 12th a meeting of 200 was held at Gudivada exhorting the students from abstaining classes and asking village officers to resign their posts.¹¹ On 13th August, in the morning at Gudivada, pamphlets asking the employees to resign were distributed in government offices.¹² In the evening there was also a meeting in which the speaker was arrested. The people pelted stones on home guards and police. Telegraph wires were also disconnected. At Kankipadu police Station was stoned. Police party moving from Machilipatnam to Bezwada rescued the sub Inspector.¹³

At Machilipatnam a public meeting of 1000, mostly students were held. After the meeting they moved to the railway station and threw rocks on railways goods shed. With the intervention of the police the mob dispersed. In the evening a meeting was conducted and the students resolved not to attend classes.¹⁴

T.P. Alwar told the gathering that the time was most propitious "To beat officers and to raid salt factories". He further said "Violence to property is no violence and the district collector should be asked to Quit the office."¹⁵

On 14th August at Uppalur a crowd in the morning at 2 A.M. set fire to the Uppalur Station.¹⁶ The railway lines between Gudlavalleru and Nuzella and also near Kowtavaram were removed.¹⁷ Telegraph wires between Bezwada and Machilipatnam and between Gudivada and Kaikalur were cut.¹⁸ In the evening, at Gudivada, Paidayya conducted a public meeting. He was arrested and sentenced to six months rigorous imprisonment.¹⁹

At Pedana, people tried to attack the railway station.²⁰ But it was averted by the intervention of S.D.O., Machilipatnam.²¹

Generally people living on either side of the railway lines participated in sabotage. Government withdrew irrigation facilities and began imposing collective fines.²²

On August 15th at Repalle, a public meeting was held where anti-zamindari and anti-government slogans were given. At night some people visited Gandigunta project tool shed and assaulted the watchman and took away tools. At Bezwada telephone wires were cut connecting the ARP Depot. On 16th at Bezwada hartal was observed on the death of Desai.²³ A procession consisting of 100 people condoled the death of Desai.

On 17th at Nezvid, K. Narasimha Murthy, an active Congress man was arrested and local high school students went on strike.²⁴ In the evening at Machilipatnam, a public meeting at Robertsonpet was held and police lathicharged when the assembled pelted stones.²⁵ At night a rag was spread over the railway bridge across the Uppateru drain and was set fire. On 17th at Bezwada students went on strike picketing at two high schools. There was also a meeting and procession.

On 18th students organised a strike at Nuzvid. They picketed toddy shops and intercepted public motor buses.²⁶ On 19th there was hartal at Nuzvid for arresting a teacher.²⁷

On 21st telephone wires were cut between Dosapadu and Indupalle.²⁸ At Pamarru, leaflets containing appeal to motor drivers, mechanics and others to disrupt roads, bridges and other things were found along the road side.²⁹ At Varahapatnam, Y. Subrahmanyam distributed pamphlets containing 25 instructions to attain swaraj.³⁰

On 23rd August village servants in Nandigama taluq resigned their posts as a mark of protest against the treatment given by the government to the congress leaders.³¹

On 25th August cyclostyled pamphlets exhorting village officers to resign their posts were distributed. On 25th fish plates of the railway track between Nuzvid and Waltair were removed. On 29th at Kondapalle two persons tampering with telegraphic wires were arrested. At Konakanchi two village servants resigned their posts in response to the Congress call.³²

At the end of the month i.e. on August 30th two boys set fire to a palmyra shed in local high

school. Furniture lost in the fire is estimated at Rs.500.00. Fish plates and bolts and bolts were removed between Nuzella and Gudivada railway track.

This tempo of agitation continued during the month of September also. At Bezwada Volunteers picketed at toddy and arrack shops. However the 'Quit India' day on 6th, September passed off peacefully except for a few posters at Bezwada. On 9th, September telephone wires were cut between Jandrapet and Bonakal road.³³

At Komaravolu on 10th spathes of toddy yielding trees were cut.³⁴ On 12th, telephone wires were cut at Meerjapuram village. Meetings were held at Meduru, Pamidimukkala, and Polukonda Villages.

At Punadipadu, on 14th September a thatched shed attached to the local high school was set to fire. Six rooms were completely burnt. Records in headmaster's room were also set to fire.³⁵

On 16th night at Konakanchi telegraphic wires were cut and 122 yards of wire was taken away and in the same manner at Pedamaddali a telegraphic post was removed.³⁶

On 18th September fish plates and bolts were removed at a place between Gudivada and Moturu.³⁷ On 20th September there was an attempt at Bezvada to picket at Vakil's house.³⁸

20.9.42 is a day the special mention of which is to be made for the extremist activities came into picture at ~~Taggipeta~~ while he was witnessing the play 'Chintamani' collector Mahanti was attacked, ~~who~~ he came to ~~there~~ to collect funds for war. The collector however escaped the incident, though Mahankali Venkateswarlu was injured.

In the case that followed the following were convicted and imprisoned.

T. Yogananda Charyulu	..	7 years
Malla Nagaiah	..	7 years
D. Viswanadham	..	4½ years
Dr. K. Sobhanadri	..	3 years
P. Nagabhushanam	..	1 year
N. Krishna Murthy	..	1 year
A. Rama Murthy	..	1 year

Dr. Sobhanadri escaped from the sub jail and led underground life for some time. However when he was rearrested he was sentenced for six more months of imprisonment.³⁹

On 22nd September P.W.D. and government wires were cut at a number of places.⁴⁰ On 23rd a spike was inserted into a railway joint between Puttacheruvu and Mandavalle railway stations.⁴¹

On 24th the District Magistrate received two letters threatening that he would be shot dead. At Katur, a batch of eight persons paraded the streets and held a meeting asking to resort to sabotage.⁴² On 25th also the above persons conducted a meeting at Mundur also. The government in return prohibited demonstrations and processions.⁴³

The DSP raided Chowtapalli and Pedapalaparru villages and arrested 19 persons.⁴⁴ Despite this, the agitation continued during the month of October also. At Bezwada, Goparaju Rama Rao, E. Ramesh and his father were arrested. Leaflets were seized. On 2nd October at Gudivada a few people singing national songs on the streets were arrested.⁴⁵

At Mantada national songs were sung mostly by boys. At Kaikalur, Achyutaramaiah was arrested for distributing printed leaflets. At Thadanki, an attempt to set fire a thatched house was made.

At Bezwada, in the evening some people under the leadership of Mrs. Zoolinger (a Swiss lady married to a brahmin of Vijayawada) hoisted the Congress flag and distributed the pamphlets and tried to conduct a meeting.

On 3rd October, 1942 at Kasunur some tried to conduct a meeting to celebrate 'Gandhi Jayanti'.

On 5th October, 1942 two persons in Machilipatnam were arrested for distributing pamphlets and at Angalur 4 women who tried to take a procession were arrested.

At Srikakulam P.W.D. Resthouse was set on fire. Anti government slogans were written on the walls at Inampudi and Kuchikayalapudi. On 6th at Kondapalle, Kannayya who tried to cut railway wires was arrested.

On 10th October four ladies belonging to Gandhi Ashram of Komaravolu who entered S.D.O. office asking them to resign, were driven away by the government peon.⁴⁶

On 11th at Meduru telephone wires were cut and two pairs of fish plates between Bezwada and Gunadala railway track were removed. On 12th at Meduru a letter box was found removed. On 16th October telephone posts were found tampered with at Kolavennu. A spike was also inserted in the railway joint between Gudivada and Bhimavaram line.⁴⁷

On 17th October in Movva an attempt was made to set fire a cow-shed and between 20th October to 19th November many attempts were made to cut telegraph wires.⁴⁸ The district magistrate instructed the village servants to patrol and promised rewards for detecting.

During the month of November also there were some instances of sabotage. At Pottelanka on 11th November police arrested some people in possession of a cyclostyle machine and prejudicial matter. On 21st November night at Cheruvupalli Ashram six rails of the District board bridge over Chitram drain canal were removed.⁴⁹

In December also people exhibited their anguish. On 3rd December at Moturu, railway telegraph

wires were cut. At Vissannapet, the local fund travellers bungalow was set fire and some furniture burnt. Some rafters and reapers were also scorched and the total damage estimated at Rs.3000/-. Here three people were arrested. On 5th December telephone wires were also cut at Nimmagadda.⁵⁰

On 6th December morning P.W.D. wires between Pamarru and Kowtavaram were also cut. On the same day in the evening at Bezwada temporary thatched houses were burnt. Between 9th to 15th December cutting telegraph and telephone wires was very common everywhere.

In the agitation the total number of people detained were 12 and the number of people convicted were 56.⁵¹

Here are the particulars of imposition of collective fines in Krishna District.⁵²

<u>Name of the Village</u>	<u>Amount</u>
1. Gudivada	2,000-00
2. Jujjavaram	300-00
3. Nemmalur and other villages	7,400-00

4. Urutur	400-00
5. Kaikalur	500-00
6. Pamarru	2,000-00
7. Mallavolu	300-00
8. Tarakatur	200-00
9. Pothapalli	200-00
10. Singanapudi and three other villages	5,000-00
11. Vakkapathivaripalem	500-00
12. Bandalaya Cheruvu	400-00
13. Avanigadda	600-00
14. Mopidevi	750-00
15. Lankapalli	1,200-00
16. Nagayatippa	750-00
17. Velivolu	1,000-00
18. Patamata	1,500-00
19. Kowtavaram	200-00
20. Kondapalli	250-00
21. Penamalur	750-00
22. Penamakur	1,000-00
23. Vallur (including hamlets of Valluripalem and Bhadrirajupalem)	3,000-00
24. Punadipadu	1,500-00
25. Kankipadu	1,500-00

26. Nidamanuru	300-00
27. 16 villages in Divi and Gannavaram taluqs .	8,550-00
28. Vemenda	1,650-00
29. Gangoor and Edupugallu	1,300-00
Total	Rs. <u>42,250/-</u>

The Bezwada Municipal Council was to be superseded for six months for passing a resolution on 25th August and 21st September protesting against the action of the government and deprecating the repressive policy by the government and directing for closure of schools for one month.⁵³

Three prisoners were sentenced to two weeks rigorous imprisonment each by the sub divisional magistrate, Bellary, for going on hunger strike.

Political activity during the repression time is no less important. Among those things that related to All India extremist activities is the one regarding Ranganadha Kulkarni. Achuta Patwardhan on behalf of the Congress Socialist party conducted his anti-government activities from Madras secretly. He sent Ranganadha Kulakarni to Mudunur. He along with district natives Bhupati Koteswara Rao, Rama Kumar Varma, Mineni Ramakotaiah and K.Suryaprakasa Rao

toured the district. One night he was arrested and he was subjected to several ~~he~~ cruel tests by the police to extract secrets from him. He was kept in dark room for six months without trial. While he was being taken to Bezwada munsif court, he made a miraculous escape.⁵⁴

During those days, Mudunur was the centre of secret political activity. The District Congress Committee assembled in this village and decided to run the 'Quit India movement'. 'Congress' paper was being circulated from here with the help of the rotary machine. This press was being shifted from one place to the other so that its whereabouts may not be noticed by the government. Tenneti Chalapati Rao of Bezwada was supplying material for the paper. Later the police were posted in the village where the police carried their activities of thieving poultry, beating people indiscriminately in the fields and raiding the houses of suspected people. Pedaparupudi, Chinaparupudi, Kanumuru, Gopavaripalem, Kunderu and Kasaranenivari Palem were some of the villages where secret meetings were held. The main

participants in these meetings were K. Venkatachalam, Y. Bhaskara Rao, P. Satyanarayana Reddy, K. Gopala Krishnaiah, P. Nageswara Rao and K. Venkataratnam etc. State leaders like Ranga, Latchanna and Chandramouli used to meet the district workers.

A meeting with 200 workers was also held at Komaravolu Gandhi Ashram on August 25th. A meeting was also held at Uruturu. Punadipadu was selected as centre of secret meetings.

Secret meetings were also held at Kesaranenivaripalem, Chodavaram, Valluripalem, Vanukuru and Koyyagurapadu.

On August 16th Uppaluru station was burnt. M. Jagannadham was arrested. At Nidamanuru, under the leadership of Ch. Ramakotiah the railway lines were removed. There after they were arrested.

At Kondapalle, V. Purnachandrayya and V. Subba Rao tried to blast a bridge with a dynamite but failed.

At Nidumolu, the trunk road between Machilipatnam and Bezwada was cut. In this regard a Report

from the Krishna District magistrate, the Chief Secretary to government of Madras reads as follows.⁵⁵

"On the night of 15th August or early hours of 14th the Machilipatnam Bezwada Road, was cut at the 10th mile from Machilipatnam and the traffic was held up till the road was repaired. A few days prior to that incident the sign board near Nimmalur on the same road was also damaged. The place of offence within the limits of Nimmalur village which had another village called Korimerla as its hamlet. Both the villages are close to the scene of damage and the villagers must have even aware of the culprits. At about 6.30 A.M. on 16th, I was held up at the beach. I was going to Bezwada to meet a military officer. On seeing my car about 50 persons who were at the breach hurriedly went away to Nimmalur village and did not care to come back and help me in having the breach repaired. Unless they have a guilty consciousness, they would not have run away on seeing my car. The road is their road and considering the width and depth of the breach, I am of the opinion that no less than 50 persons must have done it by working continuously for about 2 or 3 hours. Such an act must have attracted the notice of the villagers and I am sure that the villagers are aware of the offenders".

2. The tahsildar of Gudivada made an enquiry in the villages and published a notice. He called the villagers to give evidence about the offenders. But there was no response. The tahsildar of the opinion that the villagers of Nimmalur and Korimala are responsible for the offence and that they ~~falling to~~ render all the assistance in their power to discover or apprehend the offenders. I agree with him and recommend that a fine of Rs.500/- may be imposed on the two villages of Nimmalur and Korimala of Gudivada taluq in the ratio of 1:2.

Both the villages are delta villages and the latter village is richer of the two. The total cost of the damage is assessed at Rs.33/-. But considering that it is a daring Act which must have even committed by a number of villagers with the object of cutting an important road communication."

Thus the anguish and disciplined agitation with remarkable acts of sabotage was seen throughout the district. There was sabotage and secret meetings everywhere in the district i.e. Dosapadu, Indupalle, Guntupalle, Polukonda, Challapalle, Avanigadda, Konakanchi, Nandivada, Gudivada, Chowtapalle,

Kowtavaram, Akunuru, Nuzvid, Godavarru, Mylavaram, Vissannapet and Tiruvur. There was large scale loss to government property either by cutting telephone and telegraphic wires or by burning government property and cutting railway lines etc.

The tempo of political activity continued during the year of 1943. A Report from the special branch criminal investigation department reveals the following information.

"On reliable information, that a meeting of the national youth league was to be held in the house of E. Ratnamba of Penamalur, Krishna District. On the night of 24.7.43 in order to draw out a programme for the Congress anniversary on 9.8.43, the Madras special branch inspector raided her house during the early hours of 25.7.43. In that house, S. Ramaseshagiri Rao, a member of National Youth League concerned in the crime No.S 68/43 and 45/43 of the Governorpet Police Station under Rule No.396 of the Defence India Rules and 224 IPC respecting who had been absconding for a long time was arrested. A search of the house was thus made

and when among several other prejudicial documents, a copy of the special programme for the 9th August, 1943 issued by the Indian National Congress Central directorate sent to government under my endorse No.3690/C of the 3rd July, 1943 was found. There were five other members of the National Youth League in the house too at that time". This confirms the view of the special branch that the objects of the National Youth League are allied to those of the congress and that after the subsidence of the congress rebellion and elimination of important congress leaders, this youth league was started to revive the Congress programme working underground.

E. Ratnamba, president of the Panchayat Board, Penamakur and a member of the superseded District Board Krishna is the wife of E. Kodandaramayya, government Sub-Registrar, Kovvur, Nellore District. She is liable under Rule 39.6 of the defence India rules, she had been arrested.⁵⁶

During the time of repressive policy of government, the political activity in the district did not die out. The more the government's *concentration* ~~action~~ was to suppress the inborn desire for

independence, the more was the redoubled energy of the people to attain the cherished desire as early as possible.

QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT - STUDENTS MOVEMENT:

During Quit India Movement students participated at all levels. In 1943 when Gandhiji was fasting most of the students abstained from classes.

The government did not permit to the proposed conferences at Pamarru on 30.10.43 and 31.10.43. A Report of the Crime Branch dated 5.10.42 gives the following information. G. Rama Rao who organised the national student Federation was arrested at Bezwada on 1.10.42 for inciting students for strike. When his house was raided, Ramesh a terrorist was also arrested.

In the 'Quit India' movement the participation of students in Krishna District is quite enormous in magnitude. For instance a C.I.D. Report dated 18.9.42 to Sir George reads "It is reported from Krishna that on the night of 12.9.42 the High School building at Tadanki was broken and some cyclostyle material was

removed. On the night of 14.9.42 a thatched shed attached to the High School at Punadipadu and Kankipadu station limits was burnt down by hooligans at the instance of local congress men."

This was the first session of Andhra Student Congress. It was conducted in the Local Town Hall presided by Prof. Ranga. Mr. N.H. Prasada Rao Secretary All India Student Congress hoisted the national flag and exhorted the students to rally under the banner of Congress. Mrs. Rukmini Lakshmeepathy, Deputy Speaker of the Madras Legislative Assembly recounted the events since 1942. Mr. Krishna Reddy Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the President and the delegates who were almost five hundred in number.

From this time onwards most of the student community coming from the affluent classes, business men and the Ryot Community, who were more in numerical strength among students went into the fold of student Congress Organisation.

DETENUES IN QUIT INDIA MOVEMENT:

1. Dr. Bhogaraju Pattabhi Sitaramayya
2. Mutnuri Krishna Rao

3. Gottipati Brahmayya
4. Kodali Anjaneyulu
5. K. Venkatappayya
6. D. Balarama Krishnayya
7. V. Ramabrahman
8. A. Anjaiiah
9. P. Bapaiah
10. K. Venkataratnam
11. M. Chitti
12. B. Koteswara Rao
13. S. Koteswara Rao
14. M. Sholingar
15. S. Krishnamoorthy
16. P. Panakalu.⁵⁷

The repressive policy of the government did not give any positive results. Instead, people pursued their activities more vigorously and enthusiastically. All the leaders were in jail. However there were only communists left untouched by the government after they propagated that the second world war is a 'People's war'. Immediately they took up the cause of the people and organised the masses with their alround activities that is on

the cultural, political, social and economic fronts. On the political side they propagated that mere political independence would not fetch the people any thing. Economic equality was their main motto. To achieve this end, they propagated that people should not hesitate to take up arms. They organised strikes in factories and mobilised the ryots and agrarian workers to this end. The All India Kisan Congress held at Bezwada in 1944 was a grand success for them.

But with the release of Congress workers from jails the communists lost their edge. The Congress workers formed the district Assemblies and readily consolidated their sympathies with the public. In the elections held in the March and December on 1945 Congress candidates returned with thumping majority.

The 'Quit India' movement in the Krishna District was massive and widespread. The rural areas were largely affected by the movement. Strikes, clashes with the police, destroying communications on a large scale were the characteristic features of the movement. Middle class students were very active

in the movement as is evident from the large number of strikes and meetings organised in the villages and towns. The Kisans - the Kamma and Kapu classes of the peasantry were most active in the rural areas in destroying the communication network. The imposition of fines on a number of villages in Krishna District substantiates the massive participation of the peasantry.

Thus the August revolt was the Zenith of the Indian Freedom Movement which was widespread in 1943 as well. But after 1943 the district did not have any influence on the subsequent stages of the freedom movement like formation of Indian National Army, the Revolt of Indian Navy (Feb, 1946), The Cabinet Mission (March, 1946), the interim government and the direct action of the Muslim league for the division of the country into India and Pakistan.

The transfer of power under Mountbatten plan culminated with the British Parliament's assent to the Indian Independence Bill on July 15, 1947 and India became independent on August 15, 1947.

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