

CHAPTER - III

SWARAJ - SWADESHI MOVEMENT IN KRISHNA DISTRICT

The Partition of Bengal in 1905 created "a profound and far reaching influence on the public life of Bengal and the future of the country".<sup>1</sup> Anti-British sentiment was on the increase. Prof. S. Gopal remarks that "Curzon's partition of Bengal gave the unwitting initiative to events of magnitude and returned many years later to port with the cargo of freedom."<sup>2</sup>

The widespread resentment and the ideal of Swarajya enunciated in 1906 Congress session at Calcutta, acquired considerable influence all over India. In 1905 the students from Krishna District who were studying at Madras were greatly influenced and they are A.Kaleswara Rao, G. Sitarama Sastri, G. Hari Sarvottama Rao organised students conference. G. Subrahmanya Iyer presided over this meeting and exhorted the students to struggle for the attainment of Swaraj. To the 1906 Congress session at Calcutta, the delegates from Bezwada, P. Lakshmee Narayana, Munagala Raja, K. Lakshmana Rao & G. Hari Sarvottama Rao attended and alligned themselves with Bipin Chandra Pal, Lala Lajapat Rai, Bala Gangadhar Tilak etc. Due to the influence of these leaders extremist ideas influenced the movement. The local leaders like M.Krishna Rao of Masulipatam and T. Prakasam of Rajahmundry were influential in spreading radical ideas. 'Krishna Patrika'

the Telugu paper from Masulipatam became the chief organ of the movement.

The emergence of Vandemataram movement is seen from 11th February, 1907 the day on which Bala Bharathi Samiti was founded.<sup>3</sup> On this day, which happened to be the Mahasivarathri festival, a procession was taken out in the streets of Rajahmundry, carrying the flags written with 'Vandemataram'. The meeting was addressed by G. Hari Sarvottama Rao, a teacher trainee here and Ch. Veera bhadra Rao spoke on Swadeshi. In this connection mention may be made of Gunneswara Rao, the Karanam of Rajahmundry who helped in placing his press at the disposal of Bala Bharathi Samiti and also helped the movement either by financing or by helping in the organisation of processions and meetings in Rajahmundry.

The student community of Rajahmundry, specially the Government Arts College and Training College, were influenced by the ideals of Bala Bharati Samiti to spread Vandemataram, began to take active part in the movement. The students being aggressive by nature jeered at the Europeans and government officials and shouted 'Vande mataram'. The principal, Mark Hunter who did not wish to interfere with the students agitation at the beginning, later under the orders of Sub-Collector Braidwood decided to stop the activities of the students of the Bala Bharati Samiti.<sup>4</sup>

The principal declared that wearing badges of Vandemataram and participation in Bala Bharati activities was a punishable offence. On 19th March, 1907, when J. Ramachandra Rao, a student of B.A., class accompanied by Gunneswara Rao visited the hostel and asked the inmates to help the members of the Samiti in conducting the night schools. For this action the principal suspended them. Later on tendering apology, they were readmitted. The intelligentsia of Rajahmundry interceded in the affair and requested the principal to reconsider his order. The principal accepted the students to remain as members of the Bala Bharati Samiti but prohibited them from participating in its processions and wearing badges inside the college.

But the orders of the Principal were transgressed when Bipin Chandra Pal visited Rajahmundry on 19th and left Rajahmundry on 24th April, 1907. Here Harisarovvottama Rao, a teacher trainee of the Rajahmundry Arts College addressed the meeting. Students began to wear the Vandemataram badges, and on 25th April, the principal found the students wearing the Vandemataram badges writing the half yearly examinations. He ordered them to remove their badges and they complied including J. Ramachandra Rao. Then the principal went to another room, where also he ordered to remove the badges. But one of the students cried 'Vandemataram'. Immediately the students in the

examination hall and also in other rooms took up the cry and rushed out of the classes. Even the B.A., Class students who removed the badges, again put them on.

The Principal asked the defiant students to remove the badges or leave the college within two minutes. The students left the college. The principal thereupon passed orders dismissing Gadicherla Harisarvottama Rao and debarring J. Ramachandra Rao. They were not only debarred from college, but also were made ineligible to any government service. Other students in B.A., class were debarred for two years and the students in F.A. Class were debarred for one year. By this order of the government about 138 students were affected out of a total number 222 in the College.

At Kakinada, the students who returned from Rajahmundry distributed the Vandemataram leaflets and started the Vandemataram protection league. This vigorous propaganda swayed even the feelings of coolies who began to shout publicly the Vandemataram slogan.

The incident of beating Kopalle Krishna Rao on shouting Vandemataram, which resulted in mob fury, was a notable one.

The Swadeshi movement in Krishna District had a far reaching effect on the overall development of the movement in Andhra. With Bipin Chandra Pal's visit to Vijayawada and Machilipatnam on 25th, 26th, 27th and 28th

April 1907 at the invitation of M. Krishna Rao had far reaching effect in the Krishna District.

At Vijayawada a reception committee was formed with Munagala Raja as Chairman and A. Kaleswara Rao as Secretary.<sup>5</sup> He gave two speeches in the meetings conducted in Venkateswara Town Hall. From here he proceeded to Machilipatnam, where he was received by Pattabhi Seeramaiah, M. Krishna Rao and K. Hanumantha Rao, M. Narasimham, Suryanarayana Rao and others. He stayed in the house of Ramdas Nayudu, a brahmo samajist. On 26th Sri Krishnamachari, headmaster of the Hindu High School presided. On 27th, P. Venkatappaiah, ex-chairman of the Machilipatnam Municipality presided.<sup>6</sup>

'The Hindu' paper reported that Mr. Bipin Chandra Pal arrived here this morning and was met with a large crowd, consisting of volunteers, general public and the local gentry-pleaders and merchants of the town.

A large and imposing procession was formed with music and it passed through the main streets with repeated cries of 'Vandemataram', 'Swadeshi-Ki-Jai', 'Akhanda-Bharat-Ki-Varsha-Ki-Jai', 'Bipin Chandra Pal-Ki-Jai'.<sup>7</sup>

The visit of Bipin Chandra Pal to Masulipatam is an epoch making event in the history of Krishna District.

Never before had there been such a grandeur and a more spontaneously enthusiastic welcome. The surging crowds that flocked to do him honour and the hearty cheering with which he was greeted in the course of his lectures had amply justified the statement, made by Mr. M. Krishna Rao joint editor of 'Krishna Patrika', that inspite of the pious horrors of a few title hunters, Madras was wedded to the principle of boycott no less than Bengal.

The lecture on the 'Matru Murti' into which was imported all religious fervour that was in him, and wherein he explained the origin and meaning of 'Bande Mataram' and the historie significance of Kali and Durga ended with a stirring appeal for funds in aid of national education.

Two good things have came out of Sri Bipin Chandra Pal's visit, that is, the formation of 'Youngmen's Swaraj Samiti' and that of a committee to act in conjunction with that at Rajahmundry. Proposals were also put forward for National School at Masulipatam, a strong plea for which was put in by Mr. K. Sri Rama Sastry, the Swadeshi preacher of Masulipatam. Mr. I. Venkata Chalapathi Rao also urged the establishment of National School at Masulipatam and promised a donation of Rs.1000/- and an annual subscription of Rs.100/- and a site for the school building.<sup>8</sup>

Thus the public and political leaders having received fillip from the visit and speeches given by Bipin Chandra Pal in Vijayawada and Masulipatam, held a series of meetings to popularise the Swadeshi Movement. Firstly in the Krishna Guntur District Conference held at Nandigama on May 17th, 1907 Nayani Venkata Ranga Rao, Zamindar of Munagala, came out in clear terms in a speech and condemned the unconstitutional arrest of Lala Lajpat Roy. The Chairman observed that Swadeshi, Swaraj, boycott and national education are the four Vedas.<sup>9</sup>

The Swadeshi, boycott resolutions prepared by Rao Bahaddur Puranam Venkatappaiah were accepted. Anti government meetings were held regularly in Masulipatam.<sup>10</sup>

In a meeting held at Robertsonpet Square at Masulipatam Sri Rama Sastry and S. Srinivasa Rao spoke. K. Sri Rama Sastry said previously the kings viewed their subjects as sons. But our king who is controlled by House of Commons are merchants and selfish, cannot do any good to the people. Hence boycott of foreign goods is the only means. The government specially, the secretary Mr. Morley was trying to create disturbances by creating caste and creed differences to divide the people. He appealed for Unity. S. Sreenivasa Rao emphasised the need to encourage native industries for the prosperity of our nation. A meeting was held on 20th instant at Robertsonpet.

K.V. Venkatachalam in his speech stressed the need for boycott of foreign goods and appealed to fight for the Swaraj. A. Narayana Rao said "Boycott is the best weapon of Swaraj, and should be advocated by all means, and this only gives us the Swaraj."

At Bezwada on 30th June 1907 Venkatachalam, son of Satyanandam of Masulipatam a graduate, dressed as a sadhu delivered an address on boycott.

Several meetings were held at Machilipatnam, Challapalle, Mucherla Chavidi etc.

In 1908 mobilisation was mainly through the conduct of public meetings in which Harisarvottama Rao, <sup>and</sup> Narayana Rao took a leading part.<sup>11</sup>

Further, C.I.D. Reports reveal that a play was enacted at Buttayyapet and a goldsmith company gave a performance depicting how Hindus and Muslims hating each other gave scope for foreigners to exploit Indians by thrusting foreign goods and the scene ended with a note 'unite and boycott foreign goods'. The second and third scene showed how Lala Lajapat Roy went to the District Magistrate, Rawalpindi and got arrested there. The play brought to the audience the deceptive nature of the foreigners.<sup>12</sup>

The Krishna Guntur Conferences held at Tenali, Guntur and Narsapur referred to the Swadeshi and boycott

slogans, but did not make any commitment for direct involvement as in Bengal.

The Conference held at Guntur on 1st, 2nd and 3rd June, 1910, passed a resolution strongly advocating the use of Swadeshi articles. The Conference was also closed with the singing of Vande Mataram.<sup>13</sup> Even in the Krishna Guntur Conference held at Narsapur on 13th and 14th April, 1911 referred to the Swadeshi movement and passed the resolutions to that effect. C.I.D. reports also reveal the list of agitators that were under their watch.<sup>14</sup>

Thus while on the one side the meetings and the deliberations of the leaders to spread the ideals of Swadeshi and Swaraj were on full swing, the government began its actions for suppression of the movement. In Krishna District this could be seen in the action of government in charging the sedition case against 'Swaraj' paper and imprisoning G. Harisarvottama Rao and B. Narayana Rao.

'Swaraj' paper was ~~new~~ weekly published from Bezwada. Its proprietor and editor were G. Harisarvottama Rao and B. Narayana Rao. Both these people were active participants in Swadeshi and Swaraj movement. The government under the pretext of the publications given below levelled charges of sedition against the paper.<sup>15</sup>

March 26	Strange proceedings
April 2	Are we armed or unarmed
May 14	Disturbances at Calcutta
June 11	Failure of passive resistance
- do -	Interview with Mother India.

The Hindu reported on the police searches of the houses of the accused and proceedings of the case in the District Courts.

Finally the sessions judge, Machilipatnam delivered judgement on 8th November convicting B. Narayana Rao and G. Hari Sarvottama Rao to imprisonment for six to nine months. The petition submitted by them and the memorandum of Bezwada citizens for release were turned down.

The Hindu commented that "It seems to us that it is a matter of great regret Sir Arthur Lawley has not deemed fit to give a more sympathetic and less ungracious response to Sarvottama Rao's representation and plea for clemency. Sir Arthur Lawley government has, in our opinion, throughout all the proceedings in the case taken in exaggerated estimate of its gravity."<sup>16</sup>

In Kowtavaram Village posters displaying Vande mataram and Swarajya were pasted and people were mobilised by Bobba Padmanabhaiah. When the police searched the

houses in Bezwada , anonymous letters were posted to the District Collector threatening his life.

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The Swadeshi spirit was thus fast spreading with the political activity. In this newspapers and pamphlets played a great role. These pamphlets and newspapers brought home to the masses the real nature and intentions of the British in their attitude towards India. Besides, the newspapers disseminating the knowledge, the pamphlets and warning letters created horror among foreigners.

A stanza that was written in a railway carriage was published in Krishna Patrika reads "Within six years between the years of Nandana and Ananda the British government will come to an end. I worship thee, Mother Earth give us our native land."<sup>17</sup>

In Machilipatnam town Inspector reports on 1st instant that a boy shouted Vandemataram at Post Office. Mr. Carly on while he was going along the road near Paraspeta which annoyed him. It is not known who the boy was.<sup>18</sup>

In a 'warning' pamphlet the people were requested to oppose the government designs and not to co-operate with the government by purchasing bonds.<sup>19</sup>

The tone of the newspapers either published from Krishna District or that belonging to the Veteran leaders of the district, was during the time of the Swadeshi

movement, praiseworthy by bringing to the notice of the public boldly the actions of the government and the motives behind those actions.

The Swaraj, Navayuga, Desabhimani, <sup>and</sup> Krishna Patrika, during 1905-10 highlighted the transval incidents in Africa need for encouraging home industries, police atrocities and the activities of leaders of the movement.

#### NATIONAL EDUCATION:

The cult of national education was gaining ground in Bengal. Bharata Jateeya Vidya Parishad was established. This organisation established 24 National High Schools in Bengal. These institutions imparted education on national lines and under the control of the national movement, directed towards the realization of national identity. In Andhra this seed of National Education was sown by Bipin Chandra Pal in 1907 at Machilipatnam. In consonance with the ideals of nationalism a public meeting of the citizens of Machilipatnam was convened in Machilipatnam to consider measures for organising a National College on lines similar to those followed by Bengal Society. Pattabhi Sitaramayya and K. Hanumantha Rao were chosen secretaries of the Committee. Meanwhile, wide publicity was given in support of the ideals of National Education.

Pattabhi Seetaramaiah and K. Hanumantha Rao founded the National College in February in 1910 and named it

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Andhra Jateeya Kalasala.<sup>20</sup> This Jateeya Kalasala strove to achieve the ideals of national Renaissance. Instruction was given to pupils in technical disciplines and handicrafts. The constructive programmes launched in the Kalasala yielded good results. Harijans were admitted in the College from 1912. Toddy tapping from palmyra trees in the Kalasala Compound was stopped, even at the expense of losing Rs.500/- income per year. Drinking and untouchability were totally abolished,

LITERATURE:

Nayani Venkata Ranga Rao, the Zamindar was a well versed in English, Sanskrit, Telugu and Urdu. It is fortunate that K. Venkata Lakshmana Rao a great literary figure was the diwan in this estate. The Zamindar and his diwan along with R. Ranga Rao of Hyderabad in 1900 established "Sree Krishna Devaraya Andhra Bhasha Nilayam". In Hanumakonda in 1902 they also established "Sree Raja Rajendra Bhasha Nilayam". The Zamindar worked as the President for the former language institution for over a period of 50 years and donated liberally whenever the institutions were in financial need.

During this time with the help of the Zamindar two more institutions 'Vignana Chandrika Parishad' and 'Vignana Chandrika Grandha Mandali' were established to which he contributed Rs.2000/-.

On the ideas conceived by K. Lakshmana Rao, Munagala Raja and R. Ranga Rao, Vignana Chandrika Mandali was established in 1906.<sup>21</sup> The ideas behind the establishment of this Mandali were : 1. In Andhra there is desire everywhere for Swaraj. 2. Without caste and creed every major right to vote is 'Swaraj'. 3. Swaraj cannot be attained without removing untouchability. 4. Women should progress in all walks of life. 5. If India has to attain Independence, the knowledge of Physics, History and Politics should be within the reach of common man. 6. There is ample literature in Telugu, but they should be simple and lucid and understandable to common man.

To attain these objectives the committee decided to bring out four books of hundred pages each every year. The office was established in Hyderabad under the supervision of R. Ranga Rao. The first book published was on 'Abraham Lincoln' translated by G. Harisarvottama Rao.<sup>22</sup> Simultaneous with the publication of this book an appeal was also propagated to the public.

The second book published was 'Great Hindu Period' by K. Lakshmana Rao.<sup>23</sup> The third book on biology written by A. Lakshmeepathy. Fourth book by V. Subba Rao on 'Rani Samyukta'. Books were written on Physics and Chemistry. Later on many books were brought out on

American War of Independence and Turkish Independence written by A. Kaleswara Rao, Adhinivesa Swarajyam by D. Siva Rao etc. Besides these books on political knowledge, written by D. Siva Rao English Constitution and Conditions in British India were published. A.Kaleswara Rao's Nationalism in China and V. Durga Sada Siveswara Prasad's Training in India were brought out from this Mandali.

### INDUSTRIES

Bhavanachari of Guntur suggested the idea of sending Young men to Japan for Industrial Training in order to start industries at home after their return. They appealed to enlightened Zamindars to send these youngmen at their expense. The Sethu brothers, Sreenivasa Rao and Madhava Rao, took a prominent part in this. On account of the influence of K. Hanumantha Rao, the Raja of Challapalli was induced to take interest in the Swadeshi movement.<sup>24</sup>

### STUDENTS SENT TO JAPAN FOR INDUSTRIAL TRAINING:

In accordance with their plans to send students to Japan for receiving industrial training the following students were deputed.

1. M. Venkata Subba Rao of Kakinada. He was sent to Japan in 1906 to learn pencil making. His expenses were borne by the Seva Voyage Fund of Guntur.

2. S. Rama Rao, a student of Bellary was sent in 1906 to learn glass and watch making. His expenses were borne by the Madras National Fund and Industrial Association.<sup>25</sup>

Philonthropic individuals also deputed students at their own cost. One such was that of G. Janaki Ramaiah, He was sent to Okasa to learn the making of card board and straw board boxes. His expenses were borne by A. Bhaskar Ramaiah, a wealthy timber merchant of Rajahmundry, Madras National Fund and Industrial Association donated a sum of Rs.200/- towards his expenses. Another person who was sent abroad during this period was Mamidi Devendram of Rajahmundry. He was sent to learn electroplating and its ancillary industries.<sup>26</sup>

In Krishna District M. Krishna Rao and Puranam Venkatappaiah propagated for the introduction of spinning looms in Pedana, Mallavolu, Chintagunta, lapalem and Kappaladoddi etc. First some trouble arose in spinning. However, the trouble was overcome by adopting new methods.<sup>27</sup>

Under the guidance of P. Lakshmee Narayana and with the financial assistance of Munagala Raja, a loom foundry by name 'Sirampur fly shuttle' was established and popularised in the entire district.<sup>28</sup> In Bezwada P. Lakshmee Narayana established 'Krishna Swadeshi Trading Company' and opened centres for sales.

In East Krishna District, Challapalli Raja helped for Swadeshi movement under the influence of Kopalle Hanumantha Rao. Several fairs were organised to popularise and sell Swadeshi industrial products.

Pingali Venkayya who was in Nayani Venkata Ranga Rao Raja's estate at Nadigudem tried his best for production of Khaddar, manufacturing of spinning wheels and other cottage industries. Raja established a weaving factory at Bezwada.

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13. Madras Mail 1, 2 and 3rd June 1910. State Archives, Hyderabad.
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LIST OF AGITATORS

No.	Name	Profession	Residence
6	M. Krishna Rao		Masulipatam
9	Harisarvottama Rao. G.	Ex. Proprietor of Swaraj paper published in Bezwada.	Now in jail
15	Hanumantha Rao K.	Pleader	Masulipatam
17	Madhava Rao Ch.	--	Masulipatam
18	Narayana Rao A.	Newspaper Proprietor	- do -
19	Narayana Rao B.	Ex-proprietor of the Swaraj paper published in Bezwada.	Bezwada
24	Sita Rama Rao K.	Travelling Lecturer of the Krishna District Association	Masulipatam
26	Sreenivasa Sastry V.S.	Members of the Servants of the Indian Society, Poona.	- do -
27	Sree Rama Sastry Kowta	Proprietor of the dying factory near the Robertsonpet Police Station, Masulipatam.	Masulipatam
29	Surya Narayana Rao. V.	Pleader	Masulipatam
30	Bala Krishna Ayyar	Member of the Servants of Indian Society	Masulipatam
33	Pattabhi Sitaramayya B.	Medical Practitioner	Masulipatam

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22. Ibid. P.141.
23. Ibid. P.145.
24. Sarojini Regani, Highlights of the Freedom Movement in Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, 1972, P.45.
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