CHAPTER – V

SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL DYNAMICS
DURING KENGAL HANUMANTHAIAH’S PERIOD

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The efficient administration of the government is directly related to the development of the state. In this respect, Karnataka has achieved phenomenal growth in the past decades establishes the role played by various personalities from time-to-time. Kengal Hanumanthaiah was one of the politicians who played a crucial role in ushering in the development of state in socio-economic and political front. In the capacity of chief minister of state, he transformed the way his government functions resulting in total characteristic change in the mind-set of the bureaucrats and the politicians alike. Even after becoming union minister, his focus was never diverted but looked at ways of improving the economy of the government. The chapter discusses the various characteristics of Kengal Hanumanthaiah, with special mention of his involvement in economic development, his socialistic attitude and his role in bringing about political stability. The chapter analyses the political stature of Kengal Hanumanthaiah in the light of economic reforms brought about by him. An analyses has been made to understand his orientation toward socialistic attitude that brought development of the overall state and not leaving out the needy section of the society.

5.2 POLITICAL TRANSFORMATION IN KARNATAKA

The old Mysore state did not have an integrated structure either before the independence or after the independence. A disconnect existed between the leaders
at the grassroots level of the political party with the overall state political leaders. The functioning of the leaders at these spheres were not coordinated; the attitude of the state political leaders was detached from those who worked in the field among the masses. James Manor has chosen this theme to study about Karnataka politics. According to him, “there existed a clear cut discontinuity between state political system or arena (which in special terms did not extend much beyond the outskirts of the cities and towns) and many small rural political arenas at the local level”.

The discontinuity between the state and local political arenas can be attributed to the historical factors. The princely regime deliberately or perhaps tactically did not choose to pervade into local politics because of the inherent fear that local political interests would disturb the state power. In the early 17th century, agrarian revolt was witnessed by the princely regime, therefore, the princely authorities became very sensitive about the negative consequences of the unnecessary intrusion into local affairs. Hence, they were extremely cautious and as a consequence, the link between two spheres of political power became weak.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah led a massive political mobilization in order to connect these two spheres of political units both in the rural and in the urban areas. As noted earlier, Kengal Hanumanthaiah, especially in the early years of independence, was engaged in severe opposition to the state interim regime headed by the then chief minister K.C. Reddy. He strongly believed that no solutions could be found for challenges if it relied upon the existing congress delegation in the assembly. He realized that “legislators were not the stuff of

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which parliamentary revolts are made. Many of them had been loyal friends and supporters of individual ministers since their youth and such bonds could not be easily broken. All of them were veterans of the lean years of struggle against the princely government and thus came to accept the oligarchic ways of the men who dominated the cabinet, as well as the lack of access to political spoils”.2

In the light of this perception, Kengal Hanumanthaiah realized that he would have to go outside the congress legislative forums and draw new local political resources. During that time, he had an opportunity to undertake extensive tours in the state. He was then appointed as Chairman of the Mysore Pradesh Congress Committee, which had been assigned the job of drawing up the boundaries of the new assembly constituencies. He was the head of the party’s fund raising Committee. He undertook official tours to various parts of the state. It was during this time he became aware that the ministers in power had little political links with the grass roots of the party organisation. Besides, he realised that many veterans who waged struggle against the British power were not part of the main political mainstream and, thus, they were alienated. They were prepared to go to any extent to overtake the existing political regime. Kengal Hanumanthaiah also observed that many youth were interested in joining state congress organisation. They had a strong appetite for political venture and confront civil servants in the districts and taluks who were unresponsive to pressure from politicians since 1947.3

After the first general elections, the state legislatures were to be reconstituted under the universal adult franchise system. Using this opportunity

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2 Ibid, p. 185.
3 Venkappa Gowda Konandur, Nava Mysore Shilpi, Yashasvi Prakashana, (Kannada), Bangalore, 1985, p. 126.
Kengal Hanumanthaiah employed new mobilisation technique which served as a basis for establishing link between state level politics and the local centres of political power. As a first step he supported the dissatisfied veterans and ambitious new comers and nurtured them to support his ideals. His aim was to see that a majority of congress candidates in the coming elections where men who were loyal to him and who would not shirk from opposing K.C. Reddy. In fact, his main objective was to acquire political power, but it is also true that, this objectively helped for establishing links with local centres of powers, which had been hither to neglected by state regime under K.C. Reddy’s chief ministership.

When Kengal Hanumanthaiah began touring the state in 1951 to establish alliances with the potential candidates, he discovered that the issues of urban interests were not properly addressed by the K.C. Reddy regime and dissatisfaction among the urban administrators was increasing day-by-day. The aloofness of ministers from party rank was the main reason for such alienation. The centre was very cautious in enforcing its power over the state governance. As a result, the distribution of patronages was left to the state’s control and state’s main political leaders distributed the power according to their personal whims. This led to discontent among the party workers and leaders many of whom were supporters of the chief minister and they greatly felt alienated in the process.

The K.C. Reddy’s regime was not firm in dealing with some of the issues. Uncertainty over the handling of trade unions continued to give rise to disruptions in industry. Preferential treatment of lingayats and vokkaligas produced frustration among the ambitious members of these groups. New taluk boards were appointed; however, ministers refused to abandon their powers to appoint members to district
and municipal boards, which sharply increased the discontent among the new appointees. A lack of clarity in revenue policy led to serious depletion of the states resources. On top of this, the chief minister’s indecision and delay had became a bitter public joke by 1951. Promises such as appointing parliamentary secretaries to all ministers were never kept. The cabinet appointed investigative committees on such crucial policies, such as land policy and local self government which took years to produce reports.

It was during such political crisis, Kengal Hanumanthaiah became politically very active. He began to politically mobilise urban discontented sections and opponents of the regime. He recognized during the time that an awareness of state politics was not strictly restricted to urban areas, it has also penetrated into rural areas. He felt that as a result of the increase in government expenditure and the extension of public sector, state level politics was beginning to infringe upon rural areas. This was mainly due to the fact that the funds were channelised into agricultural development for re-implementation of some of the schemes besides schools and public health facilities in rural areas contributed for enhanced awareness of the local units about the state politics. Other factors such as official control over food grain purchases and its distribution, the award of licenses, starting of cooperative societies had at least some influence on rural life. The penetration of cash economy into rural areas and entrepreneurial efforts by local magnets, mainly lingayats and vokkaligas increased and these entrepreneurs sought entry to supra-political realms. The members of the rural elite thus realised that state/local politics offered tangible rewards to them.
By 1951, Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s tireless political effort in mobilizing people paid rich dividends, as a result around 300,000 people enrolled as party members. Competition was keen for the posts of Congress Committees at taluk level and even sub-taluk levels. The landed elite, who belonged to dominant castes like lingayats and vokkaligas, were predominant and sought entry into state politics. Kengal Hanumanthaiah held a strong principle that opposed caste favouritism. However, he was pragmatic enough to see their exclusion as unfair and began to include them too in political posts. During the first state assembly elections, he included many of them as his potential assembly candidates.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah was the first state-level leader to identify the interests of influential local people who sought entry into politics, and he worked hard to infused these men into state political system. He found that rural leaders and to a considerable extent urban leaders had partial understanding of the dynamics of state polity, and he focused their attention to the patronage networks and assured them that if they support him in the forthcoming elections, he would in return would repay them adequately after the elections. With an eye on capturing state power, he consciously helped in networking state political units with the local areas. This bridged the disconnection between these two spheres of state political system which was prevalent in the pre-independence era. This is an important contribution of Kengal Hanumanthaiah in the political mobilization of people. To quote James Manor, “Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s electoral victory in 1952 and his style of leadership during his tenure in office greatly accelerated the transformation of politics in Mysore. His decisions in 1952 to select as legislative

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candidates men who came from local areas or who had close ties at the local level hastened the integration of local areas into state political system. His development of transitional alliances with these new recruits by means of generous grants of patronage altered the logic of political relations”.

5.3 KENGAL HANUMANTHAIAH’S ROLE AS AN EMINENT PARLIAMENTARIAN

Concerning the eminent parliamentarianship, it has been rightly observed that Kengal Hanumanthaiah spent three decades in the state politics as well as central politics. This characteristic of Kengal Hanumanthaiah requires a special mention, hence an attempt has been made to discuss his role and participation in the legislature at various stages. While analyzing this a deeper understanding of the historical dimension can be observed.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s leadership quality and style were unique, which can be observed even while he was young and a student, which could be witnessed in action while he was in parliament. Sometimes this may lead us to raise several questions because it is necessary to understand the proper vision of a person. The success in political leadership and the role he played could be attained through knowledge and experience. It could also be the best platform for his spokespersonship. This opinion will be strengthened by addressing to certain activities. Those activities can be traced by considering the different efforts put-forth by Kengal Hanumanthaiah.

The first and foremost effort is Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s representation in various seminars and conferences as an Indian representator. He attended the

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5 Ibid, p. 125.
inter-parliamentary board conference which was held in Stockholm in the year 1949. Again he went for a conference in 1950 as a President to unitary board of inter-parliamentarian session. He also participated in the Ottawa Conference as an Indian delegate. All these activities helped Kengal Hanumanthaiah to gain immense knowledge on political activism. The aspect of a parliamentarianship can be understood at two levels, namely in the State Legislature and in the Parliament.

1. State Assembly

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s political carrier took the real turn when he entered in to the Representative Assembly as a member in 1941. From 1941-1962, he was a member of the State Assembly along with various eminent leaders. When he was a member of Representative Assembly, he was appreciated for being an active participant in the activities of the Legislative Council. He was more focused on the several important issues like selecting foreigners to the higher posts, sidelining of minorities and various other matters. Later he was appointed to more responsible positions. Afterwards he occupied Legislative Assembly seat till 1962 and he was a part of the house. His outspokenness became to be well known among his counterparts, and his speeches were highly knowledgeable. Many times he succeeded in convincing majority of members through his knowledge on the subject. Even after he resigned from chief minister post, he did not quit politics but involved dynamically.

2. Role in Parliament

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s political journey took a progressive dimension when he was elected to the Parliament from Bangalore constituency. Even in

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7 K.S. Bhagawan, Kengalara Bashanagatu, (Kannada), Kannada and Culture department, Bangalore, 2006, p. 11.
Lok Sabha, he was identified for his courage in dealing the essential matters and for his outspokenness.\textsuperscript{8} Later several responsibilities made him to play an active role as a responsible man. Dedication and hard work brought more and more opportunities to Kengal Hanumanthaiah. As a result when he was a parliamentarian he got minister post twice.

He became social welfare minister and next he occupied railway minister position. He was diligent in discharging his duties. His diligence brought out reforms within the department. The honours and accolades that he received stands as a testimony for his leadership skill. He was recognized as a able leader who could be entrusted upon with higher positions. The positions that he held is proof that he was recognized by the party leaders. Though he was offered responsible positions by Lal Bahadur Shastri and Smt. Indira Gandhi, he turned them down to remain connected with the people to understand their needs and bring about solutions that would emphatically affect their lives.

The above analysis implies that Kengal Hanumanthaiah was very active and efficient in dealing with different situations through many positions that he held. One of the respondents, who was contacted to get his opinion about Kengal Hanumanthaiah expressed the belief that for Kengal Hanumanthaiah “Politics is not an activity between the political parties but it is the real opportunity to do something for the well-being of a society as well as state”.\textsuperscript{9}

\textsuperscript{8} Ibid., p. 9.

\textsuperscript{9} A point narrated by a respondent in the time of interview on 6.11.2010 in Bangalore.
5.4 KENGAL HANUMANTHAIAH’S CONTRIBUTION AS CENTRAL CABINET MINISTER

As indicated earlier, Kengal Hanumanthaiah was a union cabinet minister twice, once in 1970 and again after the parliamentary elections in 1971. He was the union minister of Law and Social Welfare for eight months from June 1970 to March 1971. He held the portfolio of Railways from March 1971 to August 1972, i.e., for almost seventeen months.

Though Kengal Hanumanthaiah held the position of union minister for a short span of time, he left his mark in the department and thereafter particularly during his tenure as the minister of Railways which is appreciated even today by many people. Speaking about him, Mr. V.V. Giri, the then President of India, said, “When I was President of India, he was appointed as Minister of Railways. His administration was most successful, and as one connected with railway workers and their organization, I have admired his courage, initiative, and drive. He was the first railway minister who saw to it that railways were punctual and kept up to their timings. The workers in the different departments of railways were careful to do their duties in an exemplary manner”.10

The following achievements of Kengal Hanumanthaiah as railway minister speak volumes about his administrative capabilities.

1. Deficit Turned Surplus

When Kengal Hanumanthaiah took charge of the railway ministry, the financial situation of the Railway was not sound and faced deficit. Before 1965-1966, the railways used to meet all their financial obligations and

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10 V.V. Giri, An appreciation note Rajakeyapatu, Kengal Sanmana Grantha, (Kannada), Bangalore, 1975, p. 83.
contributed dividend to the general revenues. But due to mismanagement, the revenues of the Railways slumped resulting in deficit. When Kengal Hanumanthaiah donned the mantle of railway minister, his role was already cut out for him; he first aim was to cut down the deficit and turn the loss making department into profit making department. He framed several strategies in consultation with all the appropriate officials and chalked out a roadmap that would put railways back on its track. His reputation for being an able administrator and administrative reforms that were recommended through ARC helped him to gain respect from the others, which in turn helped him to implement reform measures in Railways. The results were rewarding and the estimates given below illustrate the difference that he made in the Railway Ministry.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Before the tenure of Kengal Hanumanthaiah, 1970-71</th>
<th>During the tenure of Kengal Hanumanthaiah, 1971-72</th>
<th>After the tenure of Kengal Hanumanthaiah, 1972-73</th>
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<tr>
<td>Estimate</td>
<td>Revised Estimate</td>
<td>Actual</td>
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<tr>
<td>-16.62</td>
<td>-3.69</td>
<td>-19.84</td>
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Source: K.N. Chennabasappa, Kengal Hanumanthaiah as Railway Minister, Rajakeyapatu, Kengal Sanmana Grantha, (Kannada), Bangalore, 1975

Thus during his tenure the revised estimate increased from -6.87 to +9.07 with actual finances increased to +17.84.11 In reality, at a time when the Railways encountered deficit of 28 crores, Kengal Hanumanthaiah could bring profit of Rs. 30 crores. This was a remarkable achievement given the situation in which he took charge of the Railways.12

11 Chennabasappa K.N., Kengal Hanumanthaiah as a railway minister, An appreciation note Rajakeyapatu, Kengal Sanmana Grantha, Bangalore, 1975, p. 78.
12 Prathibavantha Samsadhiya Patugala Badhuku Baraha Malike Kengal Hanumanthaiah, op.cit., p. 83.
2. Trains Made To Run On Time

Another noted contribution of Kengal Hanumanthaiah as Railway Minster was that he adopted certain swift measures to maintain punctuality in the running of trains. Special punctuality drive was initiated for a period of one month from 11th June to 10th July 1971. Instructions were issued that in each case of avoidable detention, individual responsibility would be fixed even for the officers. The general managers were made accountable for the punctuality of train services. Because of the drive, the percentage of mail and express trains arriving and departing in right time improved to around 90% as against 64% earlier.

3. Controlling Ticketless Travelling

Ticketless traveling was one of the main problem hindering the mobilization of railway finances. Kengal Hanumanthaiah made the management to realise that with the full cooperation of state governments this evil could be effectively tackled. The Haryana Chief Minister suggested during one of his meetings with Kengal Hanumanthaiah that meetings of chief ministers with the union railway minister be held periodically.\(^\text{13}\) As a result, a joint committee of railway officers and state governments was set up to advice on the procedure and strategy to tackle the issue of ticketless traveling. A combined drive was started as a result of which positive results were attained.

4. Controlling Strikes

It was the time that law and order situation in the eastern and north-eastern parts of country posed serious problems to the working of Railways. Zonal systems were plagued by continuing strikes and indiscipline. Kengal Hanumanthaiah

\(^{13}\) Ibid., p. 83.
brought together the Home and Labour Ministry along with the management and the states concerned and convinced all the concerned parties about the dangers of the agitations in jeopardizing vital national interests. He met the Chief Ministers and the union leaders and enlisted their cooperation, particularly by the state police to overcome the law and order problem.\textsuperscript{14}

5. Activating The Uni-Gauge Concept

It was during Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s time that the decision of extending the network of uni-gauge system was taken up seriously. Immediately after taking over as railway minister, Kengal Hanumanthaiah ordered conversion of nearly 1,000 km of railway line and prepared a prospective plan for completing conversion of 2,330 km of important meter gauge trunk routes within the next ten years.\textsuperscript{15}

In so far as Karnataka was concerned, it was during his time that the Guntakal-Bangalore meter gauge route was converted into broad gauge covering Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, spanning over 280 kms. Similarly in other states, Uttar Pradesh and Bihar Barabenki-Sameethipura route (550 kms), Kerala Ernakulam-Trivandrum route (217 kms) and Gujarat, Virangoen-Kuhe Porbander route (557 kms) were constructed.\textsuperscript{16}

6. Substitution Of Rail-Road Crossings

Railway crossings on roads particularly in big cities are not only a source of irritant but also posed enormous danger. Kengal Hanumanthaiah undertook the stupendous task of constructing road over/under bridges in order to avoid road rail level crossings. “The number of bridges sanctioned during his short tenure was so

\textsuperscript{14} Ibid, p. 84.
\textsuperscript{15} Ibid, p. 85.
\textsuperscript{16} Ibid, p. 86.
many that they were much more than what had been sanctioned during the previous decade or decades and a half all put together”.\(^{17}\)

In southern regions, 110 bridges were sanctioned. In Karnataka, 43 under/over bridges were constructed, which was the highest in comparison with any other state, followed by 31 in Tamil Nadu, 30 in Kerala 30 and 6 in Andhra Pradesh.

These bridges were constructed in a record time, which motivated the other states to undertake such constructions.

7. During Indo-Pak War

The leadership displayed by Kengal Hanumanthaiah during 14-day Indo-Pakistan war in 1971 was highly significant and needs to be noted. The railways ran well over 2,000 special trains for defence forces and equipment. Even after the war, some 800 trains ran to move the personnel and refugees. There was hardly any accident or derailment despite such high movements of trains all over. Further, a programme of restoring the damaged railway system in Bangladesh was achieved. The Indian Railways in association with the Bangladesh railways made expeditious restoration of traffic on important sections within a few weeks, involving repair or replacement of four major bridges, which had been blown-up during the war, owing to the leadership showed by Kengal Hanumanthaiah.

As an administrator, Kengal Hanumanthaiah chose to fix targets to general managers and never interfered in the day-to-day administration. K.N. Chennabasappa, who had the privilege of working with him, says, “during his entire tenure there was not a single instance in which he tried to influence

\(^{17}\) Ibid, p. 86.
decisions or ask for a personal favour to anybody”. During his inspections, even improper cement concreting of platform surfaces and differences in step heights of stairs attracted his attention.

8. Perspective Plan

Kengal Hanumanthaiah had an ambitious plan to provide direct broad-gauge connection from Kanyakumari to Delhi and to the northern most points touching Himalayas. As an initial step, he sanctioned construction of new railway line from Kanyakumari to Tirunelveli, which was inaugurated by the then Prime Minister. In addition, he recognized the need for mass rapid transport systems for all big cities in the country apart from Calcutta, Bombay, Madras and Delhi. In that direction, he initiated studies for rapid mass transport systems for Bangalore, Hyderabad, Poona, Kanpur and Ahmedabad. The Bangalore plan is being discussed and debated even today.

During his tenure, Kengal Hanumanthaiah never tolerated slackness, inefficiency and in indiscipline. Instances such as thefts, pilferage and failures in respect of railways always disturbed him. He initiated drives, such as Railway Protection Force. The value of stolen property recovered and arrests made in that regard increased by nearly 100 per cent. In the southern region alone, the losses recovered amounted to Rs. 1 crore. Kengal Hanumanthaiah also tried his best to inculcate the right kind of attitudes and orientation among the railway staff. He

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18 This is said by most of the political leaders, who were associated with Kengal Hanumanthaiah. For instance, D. Devaraja Urs once said that in addition to his other notable achievements, Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s tenure as union railway minister constitutes a memorable chapter in the history of the state and the nation.
19 Kengal Hanumanthaiah had a record of legislative experience. It should be noted that he entered the legislature in 1941 and until 1977, he was not defeated in any elections. This indicates his immense popularity among the masses.
frequently cited the example of the Japanese and the Chinese and their sense of
duty, discipline and hard work.

The above are some of the outstanding achievements Kengal Hanumanthaiah had attained during his tenure as Central Minister of Railways. Attaining these, within the seventeen months is something that speaks of his dedication and commitment to the cause of streamlining the railway system.\(^{21}\)

As noted earlier, prior to his tenure as Railway Minister, Kengal Hanumanthaiah was (Central) Cabinet Minister of Law and Social Welfare for nine months. There is very little material available about his performance during that time. He was a committed lawyer by profession and developed sensitivity to the cause of the poor and that perhaps made him suitable for handling the job assigned to him.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah undertook a series of legal reforms. He was nominated by the Government of India as a Member of the Permanent Court of Arbitration in Hague in June 1970. Besides he was the leader of Indian delegation to the XV International Conference on Social Welfare, held at Philippines, Manila from September 6 to 12, 1970. He had the privilege of presiding over the Commission of the Conference.\(^{22}\)

Kengal Hanumanthaiah attended the first Conference of Asian Ministers responsible for social welfare held in Philippines in Manila from 14 to 16 September 1970. He was elected as the vice-president of the conference. Later, he was the leader of Indian Delegation to the conference of Ministers of Law and

\(^{21}\) Ibid, p. 175.
\(^{22}\) Prathibavantha Samsadhiya Patugala Badhuku Baraha Malike Kengal Hanumanthaiah, op.cit., p. 141.
Justice, Attorney General and Solicitors-General in New Delhi on 8th January, 1971, where he was elected as the Chairman of the conference.23

Kengal Hanumanthaiah had to step down as the Central Minister of Law and Social Welfare in view of the Lok Sabha General elections, which were held in March 1971. However, he left behind a very strong impression about the series of activities he initiated as the Central Minister. In fact, it could be said that because of his considerable image, he was again assigned the cabinet rank immediately after the March 1991 parliamentary elections and this time assigned the portfolio as Minister of Railways.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s political capabilities were recognised beyond doubt. In recognition of that he was given opportunities to serve in political capacities during different period of times. He was a member of the AICC since 1944, besides being a member its working committee during 1969 to 1972. As noted earlier, Kengal Hanumanthaiah was a member of the Mysore Representative Assembly during 1940 to 1944 and the party leader of the Mysore Assembly during 1944 to 1949. He was elected member of the Executive Committee of Congress Party from 1949 to 1952 and again from 1962 to 1963.24

More importantly, Kengal Hanumanthaiah was the member and Deputy Leader of Mysore Constituent Assembly. He was chosen as Member of the Constituent Assembly of India from 1947 to 1952 when it was dissolved. As recognition of his legal skills, he was made a member of the Drafting Committee to draft a model Constitution for the Indian states.

23 Ibid, p. 146.
24 Ibid, p. 175.
5.5 KENGAL HANUMANTHAIAH AND THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE STATE

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s wide range of social experience combined with his understanding about the Indian rural situation enabled him to articulate perspectives on socio-economic issues. He took some significant initiatives in promoting the state’s socio-economic development. The following analysis of his view points on socio-economic issues and what he actually did for the state’s socio-economic development, especially after the independence are therefore noteworthy.

In so far as socio-economic issues are concerned Kengal Hanumanthaiah laid much emphasis on initiating reforms in education. He categorically said that as a chief minister, he would give much attention to the twin issues of unification of Karnataka and bringing about reforms in the existing pattern of education. He was greatly concerned about educational reforms because of his own experiences in his early education. As noted elsewhere in this thesis, Kengal Hanumanthaiah had to face considerable difficulties in his pursuit of early education.

5.5.1 Educational Reforms

It is noteworthy that the first task Kengal Hanumanthaiah set for himself after he became Chief Minister of Karnataka was to constitute an Education Reforms Commission. To inject seriousness to the task, he himself became the Chairman of the Commission. The objectivity of the Commission was reflected in its composition, among the 40 members, five were vice-chancellors, eight represented teaching profession, four were drawn from medical and two from engineering profession. Among the others, twelve represented education experts,
two were ministers and seven members, who were eminent personalities belonging to all walks of life.\textsuperscript{25} This was done mainly with a view to induce expertise into the reform proposals. The Commission also sought opinions from other experts and none other than Dr. S. Radhakrishnan was consulted on educational reforms. The educational conventions held in various districts and the kind of discussions held and the recommendations arrived at the conventions served as important inputs into the educational reform proposals. As a Chairman, Kengal Hanumanthaiah placed the report of Education Reforms Commission on 6\textsuperscript{th} August 1953 in the State Assembly. It would be relevant here to summarise the thematic points so as to enable us to understand the kind of perspectives he advocated on various issues concerning educational reforms.

Coming from a rural background, Kengal Hanumanthaiah emphasized that the nature of education should take into account the rural realities that prevailed in the countryside. It should not be merely urban in orientation. He emphatically said that though much momentum was created to activate the process of urbanization, it could not, however, basically change Indian rural character. Hence, the nature of education should be in tune with the problems that were prevalent in the countryside. In such a context, he raised the issue of education vis-à-vis employment. He advocated that employment opportunities should be primarily created in rural setting. He wanted that more emphasis should be given to agro-processing industries, cottage industries and handicrafts. The local artisans should be encouraged in their multifarious activities. He was of the opinion that 60 per cent of the youth should be engaged in rural-based activities and

\textsuperscript{25} Venkappa Gowda Konandur, \textit{Nava Mysore Shilpi}, op.cit., p. 127.
40 per cent must pursue urban-based occupations. The educational system should be devised, taking into account these rural urban differentials. Kengal Hanumanthaiah further said that this should not be misunderstood implying occupational rigidity that some should pursue the same type of occupation. This only means that our educational system should be patterned taking into account needs of the populace particularly of the rural people.26

Kengal Hanumanthaiah emphatically proposed the importance of manual labour as part of educational reforms. He said that this should be inculcated as the right of students right from the level of primary education. He had his own reservations on mere conventional formal classroom type of education where the teacher teaches in a mechanical manner and students learn in close room situation. He said that students should be made to learn demonstratively the practical aspects of life and wherever it is necessary to make them to work may be in the agricultural fields or growing trees, etc. By doing this, students would learn the value of work, which is relevant to the rural surrounding. He cited the example of how in the past students were taught the skill of woodcutting. Kengal Hanumanthaiah lamented that those who introduced this type of learning later abolished it themselves.27

Kengal Hanumanthaiah advocated that the aptitudes/interest of the students should be identified right during the childhood, and that they should be encouraged according to their aptitudes, which help them to develop skill. He said, for example that students should be taken to the nearby cotton mills and taught the

27 Kengal Hanumanthaiah was much concerned about philosophy underlying education. He not only emphasized moral education but according to him the objectives of education should be defined in terms of its relevance to individual needs and social development.
process of making textile products. They should be paid small remuneration for the work performed by them. This will actualize the principle of “earn while learn”. This will help their family with additional income and reduce school dropouts. He observed that school dropout rate was very high especially among low income groups. Kengal Hanumanthaiah even recommended that the annual schedule for schools should be framed keeping in mind the agricultural seasons. He was of the view that poor students should be allowed to combine both household activities like cultivation, construction and pursuit of education.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah cited the example of the case of Hesaragatta, where 50 acres of fruit plantations were grown both by concerned students and teachers and the income earned were shared among them. Another incident he referred to was where students themselves constructed the school building without the help of contractors. He drew inspiration from the discussion which he had with John Mathai, a well known novelist, mentioned about how the students themselves in Japan take active interest in the maintenance of environment in school surrounding without the help of any staff.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah considered simplicity as a basis for educational system. He believed that schools should continue to provide education even when infrastructure like buildings are not available; instead classes can be conducted in huts. What is more important according to him was the pursuit of education for knowledge. While infrastructure is only secondary with respect to education. On his visit to Madanapalle, he observed the college founded by Anne Besant, the great educationist, was run in huts and sometimes classes were conducted under

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trees amidst natural surroundings. This college has produced some distinguished students, like Kotla Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy who became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh later. However, this should not be misunderstood that infrastructure is not necessary. What this implies is that even in simple conditions, education could be pursued and continued. Education should not be stopped merely for want of provision of infrastructure facilities.

While talking about physical or manual labour, Kengal Hanumanthaiah expressed his opinion on child labour. He felt that physical labour should be encouraged at proper age, say after 12 or 13 years of age and not below. He further said that provision for social service should be made obligatory in the existing pattern of education. At least one year should be devoted for such service. Dr. Rajendra Prasad and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru too had advocated this thought. They had argued that one year of national service should be made compulsory for any category of students – diploma, degree, engineering, medical, arts and science students. Further, there should be provision for these degree holders to teach in schools at primary level for one year.

Teachers play a critical role in imparting education and building the characters of the students. The efforts put by the teachers were recognized by Kengal Hanumanthaiah. He insisted that teachers should build the foundation for forming right kind of attitude towards moral values, knowledge building and national service. To attain these goals, a very comprehensive uniform teacher-training programme should be formulated. This training would help the teachers to become enlightened citizens who could impart the knowledge and values to the

29 Ibid, p. 128.
students, thus contribute to the nation building. It is in this context that he defined the main objective of education as shaping the individual personality which, in turn, would lead to development of the nation.\textsuperscript{30}

Recognizing the importance of teachers, Kengal Hanumanthaiah initiated some important steps aimed at benefiting them. He keenly wanted to improve the conditions of teachers and provide them a respectable status in society. He always felt that teachers should be free from political interference and saw to it that the recruitment of teachers was done on non-political considerations. He advocated that politics in education should be replaced and that teaching should be recognized as an academic task and its main aim should be to inculcate the sense of idealism and promotion of moral values in building future generation. He even attempted to raise the retirement age of those teachers who were found true to their profession. This created a controversy and was debated in the Legislative Assembly. He defended this in the Assembly by saying that he initiated this step because of their ability and character and that students themselves suggested enhancing their retirement age.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s keen interest in education was displayed by the fact that he himself used to visit the schools and occasionally teach the students despite his busy schedule as Chief Minister of the state. He used to pay surprise visits to some nearby schools. Once he felt very sorry that in some schools students could not answer simple questions like who is the Prime Minister of India and Chief Minister of Mysore state.

\textsuperscript{30} Ibid, p. 129.
Kengal Hanumanthaiah felt the need for right curriculum for the right age. He argued that curriculum should be framed keeping in mind the age of students and those small children of the age of 8 or 9 years should not be overburdened with heavy syllabus. He abolished public examination for children below the age of nine. He insisted that there should be enough space around the school to construct play grounds for each school. Being aware that land is a precious and scare resource, Kengal Hanumanthaiah started Bhoodan (Gift of land) movement which attracted considerable enthusiasm.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah sought to nominate eminent educationists and literary personalities to the Legislative Council. Persons like Ramaswamy Iyengar, and famous dramatist Gubbi Veeranna were nominated to the Legislative Council. He appointed K.V. Puttappa (Kuvempu) as Vice-Chancellor of Mysore University and the latter handled the assignment with extraordinary prestige and dignity.31

5.5.2 Promotion of Indian Culture

Kengal Hanumanthaiah was a great protagonist of Indian culture. He was convinced about the strong roots of Indian culture as it has been historically-evolved and morally-derived. This according to him had contributed to its sustenance over the years and still it is a potent force. He was immensely interested in preservation of Indian culture, its traditional forms and literature. Kengal Hanumanthaiah was basically a nature lover which added to the richness of his personality. He appreciated Kumar Vyasa’s work titled “Janam Bharat”, besides other poetic constructions, like Harrishchandra and the epic Bhagavad-Gita, influenced him.

31 Ibid, p. 130.
One interesting incident may be worth mentioning here. Once as a Chief
Minister, he visited a nearby place called Gorur for attending a public function.
There was still time for inauguration of the programme. He decided to visit nearby
Hemavathi River. He was much inspired by the natural surrounding there,
especially the sun rays falling on river attracted him. He completely got absorbed
by the natural surrounding presented there. He also saw some small children
playing on the river shore and showed interest in playing with those children. In
the process he forgot the programme for which he had come. In this context,
Goruru Ramaswamy said, “forgetting everything and getting absorbed in nature
and children’s innocence and displaying a poetic mind which was exceptional to a
person like Kengal Hanumanthaiah”\(^\text{32}\).

Kengal Hanumanthaiah developed deep interest in Indian classical music.
He was fascinated by Lalitha Ubbaykar Veena music and often appreciated
B. Sarojadevi as a classical dancer and Subbalakshmi’s Karnatak music. He
had close acquaintance with persons like Kuvempu, Maruthi Rammiya and
A.V. Krishna Rao (the eminent literary figures). He often said that men become
complete human beings only when they acquire culture. According to him, culture
helps people to cultivate social values which strengthens democratic polity, good
governance and nation building\(^\text{33}\).

Recognizing the immense value of culture, he strived to include it into the
social mainstream. Kengal Hanumanthaiah initiated a cultural revolution by
encouraging cultural programmes. The cultural luminaries, like Masti Venkatesha
Iyengar, D.V. Gundappa, B. Shiva Murthy Shastry, A.N. Murthy Rao and

\(^{32}\) Ibid, p. 137.
\(^{33}\) Ibid, p. 137.
Shri Devudu, were encouraged and honoured. C.V. Venkataramayya was chosen as the leader of these cultural groups. Eminent cultural personalities, classical musicians, poets, literary figures were actively involved in the conduct of cultural programmes which were arranged both in urban and rural areas. In such programmes, poetry readings, lectures, dramas, Harikathas, folklores and musical concerts were arranged in different parts of the state. People enthusiastically attended such programmes and were exposed to the nuances of the Indian cultural heritage.

**5.6 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

Kengal Hanumanthaiah was closely associated with the economic development of the state. When he came to power as Chief Minister, the rate of growth of state income was 5 per cent per annum. Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s government fulfilled the national target of economic development with 15%.³⁴ Indirectly it reflected the effectiveness of his administration. There were no contractors lobby to inflict shoddy developmental works on the state. Kengal Hanumanthaiah never allowed any such lobbies near him. Even the huge construction work of Vidhana Soudha was entrusted to the State Public Works Department. It should be remembered that Kengal Hanumanthaiah allowed for spending 33 per cent of the planned budget on irrigation and 29 per cent on the famous Sharavathi Hydro Electric Project for electricity generation. Kengal Hanumanthaiah laid the foundation for future development of the state.

If one examines the other indicators of development, which has more relevance for the welfare of the people, it becomes clear that the net irrigated area

which was 10.51 lakh hectares in 1951-52 was increased to 17.80 lakh hectares in 1955-56. During Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s rule, food grains production, which was 25.50 lakh tones in 1951-52, increased to 37-83 lakh tonnes by 1955-56 when he left the office.

When Kengal Hanumanthaiah became the Chief Minister, it should be remembered that most of the major developmental policies were formulated by the central government as part of the five-year plan resulting in the state government taking up only the implementation work. Kengal Hanumanthaiah implemented them with great earnestness, though he had differences with Jawaharlal Nehru on many occasions on the issue of national plans robbing the state leaders of an opportunity to formulate their own vision for the future of their state.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah had subscribed to an integrated concept of development which envisaged proper coordination with agricultural development with economic development besides enhancing opportunities for employment. That is why he, as noted earlier, brought about an increase in spending on irrigation which had its impact on agricultural output while laying the foundations for strong industrial development. Princely regime too had given great importance for agricultural development, which was later taken over by the Karnataka government. The visionary administration of Mirza Ismail and Sir M. Visveswarayya, as Diwans of Mysore, who invested in irrigation dams, construction of roads and more importantly the starting of public sector industries like iron and steel, porcelain factory, Mysore Sandal factory, electrical goods manufacturing industry, etc., all of which helped Kengal Hanumanthaiah to lay the

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35 Ibid. Also see his Power politics and social change, Sage Publications, New Delhi, 1994.
36 G. Thimaiah, Political leadership and economic development in Karnataka, op.cit., p. 10.
37 Ibid, p. 11.
firm foundations for Karnataka’s (the then Mysore state) overall development. Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s decision to nationalize the Kolar Gold Fields not only reflected his socialist philosophy and orientation, but also helped significantly in enhancing employment opportunities.

5.6.1 Prohibition

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s social sensitivity and boldness was reflected again in his advocacy of an important social policy, prohibition of liquor. The Gandhian influence on him was vividly exemplified by the adoption of such a policy. It may be recalled that Gandhiji consistently endorsed prohibition and made that an important agenda of his social action relating to abolition of untouchability. It should be also remembered that Kengal Hanumanthaiah was the secretary of Harijan Seva Sangh during his student days.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah was aware of the social consequences of drinking of liquor and smoking. According to him, this particularly affects the poor people by destroying their families and their inner self. According to Kengal Hanumanthaiah, the ultimate aim of life was not only good standard of living but better quality of life. To Kengal Hanumanthaiah, drinking or smoking takes away the quality of life.38

Kengal Hanumanthaiah laid much emphasis on creating social awareness about the evil consequences of drinking. He advocated state sponsored publicity to attain this goal. He was also aware of the fact that it is not enough to create social awareness, but should be supplemented by legal protection and legislation on prohibition. Kengal Hanumanthaiah made this aspect clear during a legislative

38 Prathibavantha Samsadhiya Patugala Badhuku Baraha Malike Kengal Hanumanthaiah, op.cit., p. 17.
debate in the Legislative Assembly. To quote Kengal Hanumanthaiah, “There is need for mental transformation, besides it is also necessary to create an informed opinion about the evil consequences of drinking. In addition, there should be some legal imposition in order to create some fear in the minds of its users and this would keep them away from getting into its habit formation”.39

Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s advocacy of prohibition turned out to be a controversial matter during the time mainly because of the so called realistic/pragmatic considerations that was concerned about the loss of revenue to the state, if prohibition was imposed. The strong liquor lobby in the state also pressurized the government in power not to adopt such a policy. Bold as he was, Kengal Hanumanthaiah took a very clear stand on the issue and consistently worked in favour of the policy of prohibition.

After Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s tenure, prohibition however was not implemented during Nijalingappa’s Chief Ministership. Ramakrishna Hegde, who was the then finance minister, did not endorse this policy measure enacted by Kengal Hanumanthaiah. A golden opportunity which was available to protect the poor people was lost. Ramakrishna Hegde’s guru Tippananayakaru (who was a staunch Gandhian) exerted moral pressure on Ramakrishna Hegde to enact prohibition policy. However, Hegde did not accept even his Guru’s advice though he is otherwise remembered as a leader who often talked of value based politics”.

5.6.2 Industrial And Urban Development

As noted earlier, Kengal Hanumanthaiah was Chief Minister for a short span of time. Despite this fact, he made sincere attempts to contribute to the economic development of the state. He was of the view that it was pertinent to hasten the process of industrial development along with agricultural modernization. In fact, once he said, “Industry is just like temple in the new age of modernization and urbanization”.\textsuperscript{40} By saying so, he was also thinking on the lines of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru.

Kengal Hanumanthaiah had a vision of transforming Bangalore city into a cosmopolitan city. Kempe Gowda had built this city and Diwan Mirza Ismail had modernized it. Kengal Hanumanthaiah purported to continue this process of modernization. A clear-cut industrial policy to invite foreign industrialists to invest in the industrial development of the state was enacted. He was also aware of the fact that there was a need to promote infrastructure to boost the industrial development. He accorded high priority to water management and electricity generation. It was during his time that Sharavathi Hydro-Electric Project was started in the state. Today, this project has become a major source of hydro-electric power generation, which in turn facilitated industrial development especially in the Malnad region of the state.

Coming from a rural background and fully aware of the problems in agriculture, Kengal Hanumanthaiah took initiatives to promote rural development. He constantly held the view that development of agriculture and industry should go hand in hand. He was clear in his mind that they have complimentary role to

\textsuperscript{40} Thimaiah G. and Aziz Abdul, \textit{The political economy of Karnataka}, Ashish Publication House, New Delhi, 1981, p. 50.
perform; each in mutual interaction could hasten the process of economic development. In other words, he had the vision of advocating the process of rural-urban continuum, which negates the concept of rural urban divide.

Against such backdrop, Kengal Hanumanthaiah initiated steps to promote rural industries. He created a department exclusively for Rural Industries. He made Shri Bhimappanavar as the director of the department.41 Further, he encouraged income generating and job oriented vocational type of rural industries like oil manufacturing, shoe-making, carpentry, and pottery enterprises. He also encouraged animal husbandry and gave prime importance to poultry.

In overall terms, Kengal Hanumanthaiah subscribed to a holistic concept of economic development, where the two sectors of economy, i.e., agriculture and industry, should mutually supplement each other. He therefore felt that any policy framework should provide conditions under which they play mutually complementary and even supplementary roles.

5.6.3 Nationalization Of Kolar Gold Mines

Indian state, soon after the independence, was declared to be a welfare state, wherein welfare of all the sections of the society including workers received prominence. The principles underlying socialism, which were proclaimed as part of Indian national movement, influenced the post-independence development process. The application of such principle assumes relevance in Karnataka with specific reference to the peculiar situation that prevailed in Kolar Gold Mines. Kengal Hanumanthaiah was the first elected chief minister, who had to intervene to meet the grievances of workers who were oppressed by foreign management.

41 Ibid, p. 54.
There were many gold mines that existed in Kolar district. Some of the important ones were Uregoan Gold Mine, Marikoppa Gold Mine, Champion Reef Gold Mine, Nandidurga Gold Mine and Balgath Gold Mine. These were then managed by a British Company. Sir John Taylor was its principal manager. The management of these gold mines had 200 years of history. Extraction of gold on a large scale has been taking place since 1880. Since 1885, the company also used to pay royalty to Mysore kings. An estimated 80,000 people were residing in that area and of which 27,000 were mine workers. The gold was extracted from about ten thousand meters deep. The company did not extend minimum civic amenities to these residents. The workers received 6 annas as daily wages for such dangerous and hazardous task. In case of their death, the company did not pay any compensation. The workers had to depend upon whatever meagre wages they used to get. This was the kind of exploitation that was resorted by Taylor’s management. The company, on the other hand, used to get huge profit, sometimes exceeding 200 times of their investment.

Under such circumstances, agitations in favour of workers took place against the management. In one such agitation, the trade union leader Ratnamala took the lead in organising the people to confront the management. The company hatched conspiracy against him and he was thrown out of the area. This aroused mass revolt and a new momentum was enthused into mass agitations.

Several movements started in favour of workers to protest against the management. Some of the prominent leaders including K.C. Reddy, A.C. Perumal, A.T. Laxman Mudaliyar, T. Ramalingam and V.V. Giri put forward some 21 demands before the management and the agitation went on for 80 days.
The workers abstained from work during the period. The agitation, besides creating public awareness about the situation, also resulted in a social acceptability of the workers interests. It was during this time that a proposal was put forward that the gold mines should be handed over to the Government for overall management. In the aftermath of independence, a decision was taken to take over the management from the British company by the Indian Government.

There were dramatic changes after the independence. The British company was overburdened and thus it had difficulty in managing the Kolar Gold Mines. Added to this, it has stopped paying royalty to the state. Moreover, gold being an important economic resource had implications on economic development of the state or nation. The profits obtained used to reach England. Especially after independence, it was rather embarrassing to see foreigners looking after the Indian gold mines. Overall, the conditions that prevailed after independence were compelling to take over the ownership of the gold mines from the British by the Indian government. Earlier, the Gundappa Gowda Committee had already made far-reaching recommendations in this regard. The report of the Committee was yet to be considered by the Indian government. It was during this time, the problem relating to Kolar Gold Mines was debated in the Legislative Assembly of the Karnataka State. A resolution was passed by the majority of the State Assembly that the Kolar Gold Mines should be nationalized in the interest of the nation. Kengal Hanumanthaiah as the Chief Minister strongly endorsed the resolution. However, it was not merely a state issue, but the implementation of the resolution required the consent of the Indian government. It is here that Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s role in nationalising Kolar Gold Mines was considered to be
noteworthy. He endeavoured this task to the best of his capacity to convince the Indian government regarding the viability of the resolution passed by the State Assembly. He made sustained efforts and ultimately was successful in obtaining the consent of the Indian government. Kolar Gold Mines, which was a long pending issue, was thus nationalized. Credit should be given to Kengal Hanumanthaiah for accomplishing a task which was in the interests of the workers, the state and the nation as a whole.

5.6.4 Land Reforms

Land reform was one of the most important development issues, which emerged during the time of independence. This issue had the potential for national mobilisation during the freedom movement to address the interests of small, marginal and landless farmers. The British and even the earlier political regimes created an agrarian structure wherein there was skewed land distribution pattern of agricultural holdings (small segment of agricultural population owned or controlled large acres of land and majority were landless. These landless farmers worked for their subsistence on the land of others). A historical pattern was also set, where by those who actually cultivated the land did not own the land.

The British evolved a large chain of intermediaries who used to collect the land revenue from the farmers to be handed over to the British administration. These intermediaries, in return for their services were gifted lands (inam lands). In some cases, the priests who used to look after the temples were given surrounding and nearby lands (religious and charitable lands). In addition, jagirs favoured their own community (jagirdars). In course of time, these segments became the owners of large tracts of land.
The majority of these inamdars, religious land owners and jagirdars were absentee landlord. They were not residents of the villages where they owned their lands as they only leased out land to the cultivators (tenants). It is a well-established fact that these intermediaries were the supporters of the British colonial rule obviously because they had received lands from the British. Hence, after independence, they were the targets for bringing about agrarian change in India. Thus, the abolition of intermediaries or zamindari system was much echoed as part of policy changes after independence.

Primarily, this was the kind of agrarian situation that was found in Karnataka (the then Mysore state). The inamdars, jagirdars religious land owners and other zamindars owned most of the land, which was one of the issues that was under debate. Abolition of these intermediaries were raised and debated in the state. The government under the Chief-Minister Kengal Hanumanthaiah took some important initiatives. The abolition of inams was taken up during his time. It may be recalled that the Gundappa Gowda Committee, way back in 1945, recommended that all inam lands should be acquired by the government and tenants of those lands should be conferred ownership rights. It was only during Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s time that the government brought legislation for the abolition of inams. This was a major step as different types of inams prevalent during the time were abolished. The Act abolished personal inams, inam villages (known as kayamgatta villages), inams known as kodazi and lastly miscellaneous service inams. In the following year, another Act was passed to abolish inams granted to religious and charitable institutions. This was known as the Mysore

(Religious and Charitable) Inam Abolition Act, 1955. This Act covered all religious inams.

Overall the land reforms that spread across India abolished all the absentee landowners and intermediaries, and their lands were redistributed. It may be noted that land reforms implementation in post-independence Karnataka may be demarcated into three phases: (a) abolition of intermediaries, (b) tenancy reforms and (c) ceiling on agricultural land holdings. The first phase was completed during Kengal Hanumanthaiah’s regime. The other phases were implemented in the sixties and late seventies. From an overall perspective, it is demonstrated that Kengal Hanumanthaiah made a significant contribution in the land reforms initiative in the state. His initiatives served as the basis for the implementation of other land reform measures which were subsequently taken up during sixties and seventies in the state.