

Contributions of Karnataka Vidhya Vardhak Sangha (1890) – Dharwad

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Abstract

BACKGROUND:

The concept of integrated India is possible by after the Britishraj system of administration in the country, hence the dream of integrated Karnataka was come true by the effort of a unique dias namely Karnataka Vidya Vardhaka Sangha (KVVS) at Dharwad, established in 1890. After downfall of Vijayanagar empire, the geographical divisions of Karnataka was dispersed in the hands of native rulers, Palegars, Nayakas, Nizams, Sultans, Adilshahis and Peshwas. In the last decade of nineteenth century, Karnataka had flown into the hands of above twenty two administrative divisions. Till now the sangha played an important role to develop the Kannada and Kannadatva and made Kannadigas feel unity and integrity of Karnataka.

KEYWORDS: Integrity, Unity, Kannadatva, Sangha.

Establishment of KVVS:

At the first time Rao Saheb R. H. Deshpande had sown the seed of KVVS on the lines of Gujarathi Vernacular society, which was established in 1884. Also in Mysore State 'Karnataka Bhashojjivini Sabha' was worked for encourage to honour the Kannada writers, was begun in 1887. R. H. Deshpande as KVVS founding secretary, M. R. Shamarao Vithal, the then high court lawyer of Mumbai made as Chairman. Venkata Rango Katti was Vice Chairman, Gurusiddappa, Shrinivas Rodda, Ramarao, Shantaveerappa, Sheshagiri Rao, Guracharya, Dhondo Narasimha were nominated as the founding managers of KVVS.

Contributions of KVVS:

Since 1890, the sangha has been working for the nurturing and development of classical Kannada language, script and works, by encouraging to publication of Kannada books and writers.

- **Defender of Kannada Aspirations:** The sangha didn't have the aim of unification of Karnataka in its initial stages, as like Indian National Congress in 1885. These were intended to as some privileges and facilities to the people of Karnataka as particular and India in general. Sangha only intended to save Kannada language, literature, culture, kannadatva and awareness of Karnataka from Marathi dominance. But it was a quite natural at that time. The predecessors of sangha were most of them from British government's servants and they adorned the titles of Rava Bahadur, Diwan Buhadur and Rao Saheb from the government. They served for Kannada and Kannadatva as pro activists. Krishnarao Mudhuvadkar and Alur Venkatrao organized the Deepotsava programme in auspices of sangha on the occasion of coronation of King George V in 1911 A.D.
- **Kannada Sahitya Parishat 1915:** In the Mysore economic conference held at Mysore in 1914, a sub committee was set up for the fulfillment of a demand that, the sangha is only the state level dias for the Kannada writers on the recommendation of R. H. Deshpande. As a result on 05.05.1915 'Kannada Sahitya Parishat' was started by the efforts of H. V. Nanjundaiah, K. P. Puttanna Shetty and Karpura Shrinivas Rao. Now it has crossed a long saga as the pride of

Kannadigas. So, sangha played a vital role to start the parishad as stood in mother place.

- **KVVS and Unification:** Sangha put a step forward to emotional unification from its initial stages it of political unification. In a way sangha produce a vast dias to continuous exchange of thoughts in between the thinkers writers and freedom fighters of Mysore, Madras, Hyderabad, Solapur, Kolhapur and Mangalore. Vagbhushana, the mouth piece paper of KVVS often published the proficient articles about political unification of Karnataka as back as in 1907, i.e., a half century before of its unification.

Sangha formed a committee namely the British Karnataka Committee, to represent the needs and aspirations of the people of British Karnataka before the governments of India (especially the Bombay and Madras presidencies). Many of active members of sangha were involved in the freedom and unification movements simultaneously. With the influence of KVVS in 1920, Karnataka political parishad was set up in Dharwad, it had initiated the “unification conferences” across the state to rose the awareness of unification. All the leaders of Karnataka, irrespective of the political parties they came out from the Gymnasia of KVVS. The intellectual gamut of north Karnataka was grown by the sangha. So, from 1890, until the rise of new Mysore state in 1956 KVVS is the inspiring, injecting and encouraging power behind unification.

- **Safeguard of the Interests of Kannadatsva:** The aims and objectives of KVVS yet to be walk in the straight direction of safeguarding the interests of Kannada land, language, culture and Kannadigas in all facets. Whenever the question of Kannada and culture has risen, the sangha had been pressurizing, protesting and struggling by all means as the unified voice of Kannadigas. The major issues observed and followed by KVVS as listed below:

“There was no need to teach the Balabhode alphabets in Marathi language in the Kannada schools”, the decision of KVVS has sent to the then Director of Public Instruction of Mumbai presidency. Sangha terminated Venkatarango Katti from his seat of Vice President of KVVS, due to his voice towards the permission of Marathi language in Kannada schools.

- **Demand for Kannada:** Sangha insisted to place Kannada language as second language in Mumbai University with the Marathi and Gujarati as early as in 1901.

KVVS also protested against the plight condition of government employees in Mumbai presidency. Sangha had sent a demand regarding extermination of Prof. K. G. Kundangar from the Karnataka College of Dharwad. In another instance sangha emphatically protested against the Dharwar Training College, has reason to view with grave concern the probability of the transfer of the Kanareese Pandit Mr. M. P. Pujar from Dharwad, and prayed to be spared him at Dharwad.

- **Protest against Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad:** In 1929, Prof. S. S. Basavanala was the then Chairman of sangha passed a resolution in the executive body of the KVVS that, the intention of Maharashtra Sahitya parishad go to summon its conference in Belgaum was the thing of misfortune to the Kannadigas while the Belgaum was the pure Kannada district. Sangha published its protest letter in all daily news paper and sent a copy of the letter to chairman and secretary of the Marathi Sahitya Sammelan. Hence, the sangha protested against the Maratha dominance in the frontier of Karnataka.

- KVVS insisted the government to give permission to the Lingaraj College of Arts at Belgavi for the development of education in 1929.

- In 1934, the Andhras demanded the Madras government to subdue the Bellary and surroundings of Hampi to the span of Andhra University. Then, the KVVS prayed the Madras government to withheld the consent to these attempts as encroachment on the part of Andhras and allow these Kannada regions to remain in the Madras University until proper university be constituted to serve their needs.
- Sangha Started a struggle for independent university in Karnataka like Andhra and Maratha universities. Initially the Karnataka regional university parishad started its activities in the premises of KVVS in 1944.
- It was a Hindi film based on Prof. K. M. Muni's novel '**Prithvi Vallabha**', produced by Mr. Sohrab Modi. In the film an insult was made to the king of Karnataka. Immediate after release of the film sangha passed a resolution as sign of protest and a copy was sent to Munshi to stop the story is conceived and developed in a manner detrimental to the history and culture of Karnataka.
- **Frontier Problem:** Although Karnataka unified in 1956 as new Mysore state, sangha has yet to be in mist of problems. Those are frontier problems with surrounding states, problem of river water distribution, problem of Kannada as administrative language and its place in state education and so on. Sangha has been continuously indulged in the all around implementation of Kannada language. The sangha was unitary voiced against the implementation of Mahajan report.
- **Gokak Report:** At the first time sangha protested and raised the question of implementation of the Gokak report in 1982. For the cause KVVS instigated the 'All Karnataka Central Kannada working Committee and extended the movement across the state to effect Kannada as medium of education in middle school level. Government makes Patil Puttappa, the then chairman of sangha as President of Kannada Kavalu Samiti. So, KVVS crossed the prolonged saga of hindrance to the Kannada land and language which are irrigation facilities, railway progress, development of industry, frontier problem and other obstacles handled by the manner of protest and pray are the heart pulsing efforts of KVVS to the Kannadigas from the last 125 years.

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