



THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN COMMUNIST MOVEMENT: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO KRISHNA DISTRICT

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The main objective of this paper is how women were treated and how they were supported by the communists and what kind of contribution the women have given to the widespread of communist movement.

The establishment of Communist Party of India: It was in 1920 on 17th of India was formally established in Taskant of previous the USSR. M.N. Roy and his wife Evelen Roy Abany Mukhrji and his wife Roja, Mahammad Shaphic, Massod Alisha were instrumental in the historical event. The first elected General Secretary of the newly formed party was Mahammad Shaphic. According to Mujafar Ahammad, Mahammad and Ali Abdul Rob from Pheshawar and prathivde Bhayankarachari from South India were some of the participants in the foundation meeting. The third Communist International (COMINTERN) recognized the newly born Indian Communist party as its affiliated organization; this news was published by the “Vanguard”.

In addition to the settled in the USSR since 1920, several stalwarts like Sripada Amrutha Dange and Mujphar Ahammad also contributed for the establishment and expansion of the party with in the country.

Communist party in Andhra: It was in 1934, that the communist party was origin spreading in Andhra region under the abele leadership Sri Puchalapalli Sundaraiah. He toured in Andhra area widely with concentration and attracted the youth of congress party especially those who are inculcated the Left ideology. At Sri Katragadda Narayana Rao’s Gardens, Patamata Lanka, Vijayawada, he organized a meeting with the newly attracted cadre in the September of 1934. The meeting resulted in the formation of an organizing committee with 7 members as Secretary and members respectively Sri Puchalapalli Sundaraiah and Maddukuri Chandrasekhara Rao, Polepeddi Narasimha Murthy, Sri Chalasani Vasudeva Rao, Sri Thanikella Venkata Chalapathi, Sri Kosaraju Seshaiyah and Alluri Satyanarayana.



Communist Movement Strengthening the Social Reform Movement:

The leaders I have just mentioned hugely propagated the aims of social reformers. Women education and widow remarriages were encouraged inter caste marriages were also initiated. They tried hard to reduce the in exorbitant expenditure money in marriage occasions. They encouraged garland marriages. Some of them married widows and some others went for inter caste marriages though they faced so many problems from the society. They faced it with strong determination and probed as they are Ideal persons.

Attracted by the ideology of communist, which is giving priority to the social justice equality of women in all aspects and fight against the castism, some of the women attracted communism. Some of them played a vital role to spread this moment in society.

The Women Leaders in Communist Moment:

Smt. Kondapalli Koteswaramma

Smt. Kondapalli koteswaramma was born in a farmer's family at Pamarru in Krishna District. She married her maternal uncle at very early age. Her husband died of tuberculosis. She became child Widow. Her parents set her to school. Tamma Nagi Reddy and Gadiyaram Sambaiah held "Vandemataram" processions in her village. At that moment police charged them with lathies and put them in Jail. She was inspired by this incident. Through Gadiyaram Sambaiah was an intellectual he used to wear Khadi and burned foreign clothes. Patriotic feelings developed in her child hood.

Impact of National Movement:

Congress Mahila members Vallabhaneni Sitha Maha Lakshamma, Bharahi Devi Ranga, Vasireddy Hanumayamma came to sell Khadi and conducted meetings in Smt. Kondapalli Koteswaramma's village. They inspired the village women with their meetings and patriotic songs, i.e., 'Makoddu Ee Telladora Tanam', 'Bhartha Khandambu Chakkani Padiaavu'. Wavers were strongly waving in her village. The members of her family were also attracted by the patriotic songs and inspiring meetings.

Sprouting the seeds of Social Reforms:

Seeds of Social reforms Sprouted in her village social reformer Kandukuri Veeresalingam performed widow remarriages. Widow Remarriages were started in her village. Her marriage decided with kondapalli sitharmaiah. Communist party renowned leaders supported and



attended her marriage and celebrated it in an innovative way in Ventrprgada village. After marriage of her family members were social boycotted to take to the villagers and she was scolded by them. At that youth of Communist Party supported her family. In this way she was attracted by the party and its agitation. She also started to participate in the party activities.

The Second World War:-

The party's secret paper named 'Swatantra Bharat' published in Bundar. It was sent by brother secretly to her mother's in-law house. She also took copies of the paper. So many comrades were arrested and they were forced to tell where the paper was publishing. But they did not reveal, they faced many problems. Communists were ready to face any kind of problems to reach their goal. By these all activities she had been attracted to this Soviet Russia announced the war against Nazis, communists said that it was peoples war. Many renowned leaders sacrificed their property's and lives. She thought that they were all sacrificing their lives for the freedom of nation. Then she also decided to sacrifice anything for the sake of the party.

She attended political school in 1943. She acted as a widow in 'Kanya Sulkam' in the character of Savithri, the drama. The party introduced a new tradition that the women giving stage performance. To give new inspiration in the fields like social, political, literal and cultural etc, she used to promote the party's papers and magazines. Many people rejected and attacked her. But she sold and improved the circulation of the magazines. Her mother helped and protected the needy and the comrades who participated in agitations.

Many women fighters were arrested, attacked and imprisoned. The police filed a case against kondpalli Koteswaramma and others. She helped and supported the party in many ways. She canvassed for the party. She praised and sang songs about the greatness of the comrades. When communists won in 1952 elections she felt very happy, this was the sign of the sincerity of the party. She was inspired by the party's ideas like joy, happiness, sacrifice, honesty, simplicity etc.,

Smt. Manikonda Suryavathi

Women were not allowed to come out side of the house in those days women's political training classes were held in katuru form 1936 -1937. These training classes were helpful to awaken the women in all sorts. Chandra rajewara Rao gaturu, Anne Anjaiah garu, Kadiyala Gopalarao garu taught the lessons. What is nation? What about women and their status?



How women were developed in Soviet Russia. Women got freedom when they really got socialism. Mainikonda Suryavath learned and inspired by these classes.

State level women political school was held in 1943. Women participated and they learnt self protection. Suryavathi married comrade M. Subbarao at kothapatnam political school in 1937. Who worked as teacher in residential school at Mantenavaripalem.

Spreading of women movement to Rural areas:-

Krishna district Mahila Sangam was started in 1936. In those days there were no women associations. Through congress women Associations were there rich and the wives of the employees had in that only the opportunity to participate in the clubs. Communist Party awakens the village women, poor and agriculture women workers. So the communist party started Krishna District Mahila Sangam in 1936.

Suryavathi became the member of the party in 1939. Nandamuru was her native place, where the party opened a secret District party office in her house. Her husband M. Subbarao worked as a communist party member secretly. Her house was observed by the police so the party office was changed.

Suryavathi elected as the district Mahila Sangham secretary in 1941. They established many Mahila Sanghams in villages. They moved simply with ordinary women. In those days the party had a rule; active members should have only six sarees. Their life style and character must be discipline simply they must be ideal in all aspects.

Women organization were formed and encouraged social reforms like widow re-marriages, right to divorce and property right. Though they were opposed, they motivated the village people by the inspiration of social reformers like raja Ramamohana Roy and Veerasalingam.

B. N Rao committee came to Vijayawada. They gave a memorandum to the committee that adaption, heredity and women rights must be in the bill which was going to introduce in the Loksabha. Because of B.N. Rao's committee, for the first time women got the right to get her husband's property.



When Mahila Sangams were performing widow marriages, they were opposed and attacked physically by the rowdy sheeters. But all the party members faced bravely without any hesitation. When the resolution taken that every party member should not have own property, if they had that should be donated to the party. They should lead simple life with what the party would provide to them.

In those days the party celebrated the garland marriage very simply. After marriage they wore only Mangalsutrams. There was a belief in those days that the communists were highly principled that they never entertained taking alcohol, harassing women and having relations with other women. If any was found like that he suspended from the party. Some of the congress people were also wanted to give their daughter to communist party members.

The Mahila Sangham is decided to spread the women revolution in each and every village of Guntur, West Godavari, East Godavari, Vishakhapatnam, Nellore, Chittor, Cuddapa and Kurnool. They inspired and awakened the women with patience and hard work they eradicated superstitions, obstacles of development and casteism.

A Remarkable Women Gathering:-

All India farmers meeting held at Vijayawada in 1944 for which 25 thousand of women gathered and this was a great mile stone in the history of women movement. Suryavathi worked as a woman volunteer committee commander. The meeting was a good sign to state women revolution in all aspects like socially and politically. All sorts of women got inspiration.

Arrests and Detentions:-

On behalf of State Women Association, “Andhra Vanitha”. News paper was running in the ‘Prajasakthi’ press. It was stopped there. So an Agitation had started with thousand women against the stopping of the news paper. The government imposed 144 section and they used tear gas to control the women. They were arrested and sent to Nandigama and Eluru Sub Jails. In the Jail also they fought for minimum facilities. Suryavathi and Achamambha were detained and they were sent to Royavellur Jail.

Smt. Chandra Savithri Devi:

She was born in Chevuru village, kaikaluru Taluk. Her father name is Yalamanchili Naga Bhushanam and mother’s name is Y. Manikyamma Gandhiji visited her village. The villagers and she was inspired by Gandhiji. They gave away their gold and wealth. She was also inspired and she gave



two bangles and her rings. She was praised by her relatives due to the sacrificing all the wealth for the sake of nation. In this way patriotic views started at her childhood days onwards.

Her uncle named Seshaiah and Maddukuri Chandradekhar participated in Gandhiji's non-co operation movement. She was really attracted and interested to participate in non co operation movement. In those days her uncles seshaiah and chandram published the party paper named "Swatantra Bharat" secretly in her house. She served tea to her uncle and to other employees. She understood and started to think that all these were working and sacrificing for the welfare of the nation.

Her uncle seshaiah inspiration she actively participated in politics. She wanted to go to shantiniketan for her education during the starting period of 1937. Because of her uncle's inspiration she went to summer political school to kothapatnam in may. All her family members thought that she was going to school except her uncle. He took her to Bejawada and the socialist party leaders like Sri Alluri Satyanarayana raju and his wife Annapurnamma. She lived with them. At that time, Sir Kurma Venkat Reddy Nadiu was the Prime minister of the Government of Madras Presidency. Sri Annapargada Kameswara Rao was the principal of the political school; Sri Chandra Rajeswara Rao was the P.E.T., and shooting teacher. Actually he was a student of 2nd year medicine in Visakhapatnam.

Government banned the political school and imposed 144 Section. But the socialist party leaders and Savitri Devi wanted to oppose this. The principal and the leaders sent away the ladies to avoid lathi charge; they decided to send her also. But she and Puchalapalli Sundarayya's sisters P. Govindamma and some other ladies fought against them. On that day all the women wear Kahdi Sarees to protest against the lathi charge.

Women were punished to walk with bare foot on the burning sand and kept them in the sub-jail of Ongole. The Government filed cases against the women communist leaders. All her family members had known this through news papers. They felt very much. Seshaiah and her relatives came to the sub-jail and they made her to release. At that moment Seshaiah met Rajeswara Rao for the first time they met in the jail.

During this period Rajeswara Rao decided to make reformatory marriage and her family members accepted it. Sri Madduri Annapurnaiah was a priest to her marriage. As it was the first reformatory marriage, all the



surrounding village people came to see the unique occasion. According to the party rule her own house in Ventrapragada became the party office. Comrade Chandra Rajeswara Rao took the party responsibilities. Savithri Devi took the youth and mahila societies responsibilities. They sold all their property and spent it for the sake of the party in a constructive way.

C. Rajeswara Rao and Savithri Devi went to Mumbai to attend the first meeting of the party. Comrade Rajeswara Rao took a lot of money from her and brought a band. They brought that band to the village and made a troop. They banded it and made a parade with the members. C. Rajeswara Rao was the captain of the male members and Savithri Devi was the captain of the female members. She took a charge of the secretary of Mahila Sangam, Krishna district. In those days they worked and canvassed for the party. They moved to different villages on foot and buy bullock carts. Their children were looked after by the family members. Usually they went to canvas from morning to evening and they returned to home in the night. They visited and stayed in the village during the election time. They were hosted by their relatives and friends. Sometimes they faced problems but they accepted them with their willpower and courage. They were helped by the local people. Savithri Devi attended both for the third socialist party meeting and summer political school meeting in Manthenavari Palem.

In today's society we can see the casteism, religious differences, rowdyism, selfishness, women humiliation, suicides and murders among the youth. I strongly believe that Communist Renaissance is needed to eradicate all these things.

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