

Free Mysore Gazette brought out during Palace Satyagraha

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Palace Satyagraha, The people's movement for the formation of a Responsible Government in the princely state of Mysore is considered as final National Movement. Freedom fighters followed the same weapons which were used in the Quit India Movement of 1942 viz. organizing programs, taking out processions, defying government orders, setting fire to government offices, cutting of telephone cables, picketing, stopping of trains etc. K.C. Reddy in his speech at Bangalore in the sixth session of Mysore State Congress held on 2 and 3rd November 1946 informed the Congress workers to follow these techniques to gain responsible government. It was indirectly indicated that to reach their goal i.e. to establish responsible government whatever the means can be used and that brought impetus in the minds of people. (MRACC 1881-1981: 23)

Reforms Committee- the mirage

When the independence came nearer, His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore Sri Jayachamarajendra Wodeyar issued a public notice on 8th August 1947 in an intention that people should not go for any movement. He declared as "I have instructed to the Dewan to take further steps for constitutional reforms after consulting the leaders of various political parties in the state". Point to be noted here is that earlier officers formed constitutional reforms committee and four positions were given to the congress but congress rejected it (*The Hindu* 12-01-1947, also vide *Tai Nadu*, 10-08-1947)

Cabinet Mission and Princely States

Before this, Mysore congress rejected Cabinet Mission's suggestions related to princely states. Cabinet Mission's Suggestions were as follows:

1. British power will come to an end after the formation of new constitution.
2. All the rights which were given to British by the states will be returned to all states.

3. After that States may have parliamentary relations with British India government or governments or they may be alone or states may constitute a political setup among themselves.

Against this, Mysore Congress submitted a memorandum stating that the suggestions made by the Cabinet Mission are not satisfactory and these suggestions destroy the unity of the nation. It also urged that princely states should join Union of India. They should participate in constituent assembly. This representation should be given to the citizens of states. Elected members only should become the member of constituent assembly. Congress suggested that recommendations should be amended as mentioned above otherwise these are not acceptable.

Dewan's statement

On 29th April 1947 Dewan issued a statement which reads “with reference to the said matter point has been noted, to adjust with this, I believed that in the Mysore state one type of responsible government will be formed which will not affected to the paramountcy of His Highness”.

The term ‘one type of responsible government used in this statement pushed the people of state into an unhappy. It mocked the congress leaders and made them angry. Mysore congress had decided to start agitation from May 1st of 1947 itself. But as Dewan of Mysore Sir Arcot Ramaswamy Mudaliyar went to Delhi, the date of agitation was postponed and it demanded for formation of Interim council of ministers. (Doreswamy H S 2006: 106-107)

Prologue to Satyagraha

In the meantime Dewan said that, The Mysore state had decided to join the Constituent Assembly of India. Legislative Assembly and Legislative Council conducted meeting in the month of July and elected four members to the constituent assembly, but did not say anything about the formation and responsible government.

Next month i.e. August 9th All Mysore Congress Committee met at Rangacharlu Convention Hall. K.C. Reddy presided over the meeting and spoke in his presidential remarks. He declared that “waiting is over, only

one mean is left and that is Satyagraha". This has become the fore step for Palace Satyagraha or Mysore Chalo Satyagraha which turned the Mysore politics towards democracy.

Council of Action

In the meeting, Mysore Congress declared of Palace Satyagraha or Mysore Chalo movement. It put various demands before Mysore government. It urged to form responsible government immediately, to form constituent assembly consisting of elected members, to form Interim government for time being until constitution is drafted by the said constituent assembly, to release all the political prisoners who were arrested during the freedom movement. It also decided to organize procession to World famous Mysore Palace from September 1. (Ramaiah P R 1961: 85-86)

There was no room for National flag to be hoisted on palace and government offices on 15 August 1947 when India became independent. Attempts were made to hoist national flag on government offices at some places. To give impetus to the movement the freedom lovers established a Council of Action and imbibed freedom fighters and workers to plunge into arena by circulating information through free Mysore gazette.

Free Mysore Gazette

Free Mysore Gazette was a news bulletin of Council of Action. Topics like what are the need of the people, how to carry out the agitation, how the movement is going on at different places were reporting in the Free Mysore Gazette. Council of Action issued its first gazette on 09-09-1947.

FREE MYSORE GAZETTE (ISSUED BY THE COUNCIL OF ACTION)

NO-1

9—9—1947.

Mysore's struggle for Full Responsible Government began in the year 1937. The struggle has passed through many stages and it will never end till the goal is reached. The Mysore congress led the campaigns in 1938, 39 and 1942. Today, the congress is engaged in an aggressive and last fight.

The Congress repeatedly demanded for the establishment of Full Responsible Government. The Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, however, has treated the overtures of the Congress with

perfect indifference and has been playing the old crafty game of 'divide and rule' with vague promises for the future. The last attempt to hoodwink was made by Sir A. Ramaswamy Mudaliar whose proposals were rightly rejected by the Congress. Its Working Committee therefore, decided on the 20th August to shake off the present Government at any cost and declared to launch the 'CHALO MYSORE' struggle on the 1st September.

Struggle is started. The 1st of September 1947 gave birth to a new spirit of resistance and put fresh life into the struggle. The imprisonment of all Congress Leaders was a challenge and served as a signal for the release of pent up energies to fight the battle. The response of the people of the State on the very first day has been splendid. All classes of people threw themselves into the fight.

Today Mysore is passing through a rebellion. This rebellion is not intended to break this law or that, as in previous struggles but to destroy all those centers from where the present administration practices his tyrannies, misnamed laws. It is a unique revolution, unparalleled, in which the Killing is all on one side. This revolution must succeed. Arms are not necessary. Let arms be for the sole use of the government. These will soon be powerless, when the majority of our districts and of the taluks, hoblis and villages in the districts rise up in simultaneous revolt. It is this simultaneous revolt that we must prepare for.

Preparations for this simultaneous revolt should not be by propaganda alone but by action, whose one item is worth thousand sheets of the former.

This time our fight will be waged on all fronts. The forces of law and order which are being used to lathi charge and teargas people into submission are to be paralysed by all means. The Courts of Law set up to administer laws made by the autocrats to suppress our people are to be rendered functionless. Work in manufacturing industries to be stopped till our goal is reached. It will be the task of all students, as leaders of the struggle to canalise the energy and enthusiasm of the people and divert it into fruitful channels. The revolutionary spirit must be kept up. The message of the Mysore Congress should reach every village and each hamlet. The rural Mysore has to be roused into a spirit of open rebellion.

The struggle is hardly a few days old and yet we have many reports of the heroic and bold fight of the people. It is heartening to note that our people have faced the indecent and indiscriminate violence boldly. They have endured the lathi charges and firings as true soldiers of Free Mysore.

His Highness the Maharaja has called upon the people for loyal co-operation with the administration, in his message to the people issued on the 8th September. The message has nothing new to say except for the praises for the Dewan, his constitutional progress and vague assurances for the future. The right of determining the future and preparing the constitution of Free Mysore vests in the people. Any assurance which does not accept the above fact cannot satisfy the people. The message of the Maharaja has not altered the position. The fight should continue till our goal is reached.

Our struggle is thickening with each passing day. There can be no slackening, no relaxation of our work. There is no going back on the decision the Congress has taken. If we live we live as free men in Free Mysore else we die in the attempt.

PROGRAMME FOR THE PEOPLE.

1. Sathyagraha Jathas should proceed to Mysore Palace from every town and village.
2. Processions and Meetings should form a daily feature of the struggle.
3. Factories, Mines, Railways, Colleges and schools should strike work completely.
4. Less active Villages and Towns should be roused by the Freedom marches.
5. Toddy and Sandal Trees should be cut down.
6. *Guerilla* action should be taken on communication.
7. The entry of the Police and Military forces should be prevented.
8. Policemen and sepoy should be disarmed wherever Possible.
9. All seats of Government Power like Offices, Courts, and Police stations should be occupied.

10. The disappearance of the existing apparatus of administration should synchronise with the establishment of our own Raj in every Village and Town where the Raj will have behind, the united will and strength of the people

“Inquilab Jindabad Pukarke Chalo Mysore”

(Nagabhushanagoud P 1999: 305)

Another Free Mysore Gazette

There were many members in the council, some names have been mentioned here- K.B. Shrinivasan who was a member of KPCC, BTC Laborers Association and Secretary of State Press Club, B. Srikanthappa, General Secretary of student wing of Karnataka Congress, K. Govindaraj, president of youth congress Bangalore Cantonment and others lead the action successfully and effectively. Already we have observed that council had issued its 1st Free Mysore Gazette on 09-09-1947. Another Gazette of such bulletin was issued by the council on 24-09-1947. It published report about Mysore Chalo Moment.

F.M (NO..2)

FREE MYSORE GAZETTE

(ISSUED BY THE COUNCIL OF ACTION)

24—9—47

[The council of action while feeling proud for the lead it gave to the people at the right moment congratulates all the fighters of freedom for their magnificent battle against the government's tyranny. The Council assures them of its help both men and material for carrying the struggle on.]

The people's freedom movement is spreading fast from district to district. The Government according to their past tradition are making use of all kinds of inhuman. Vulgar and brutal methods to crush the brave resistance of the people, but instead of crushing the people the Government atrocities have helped to draw the sympathisers of the entire people of the state and a powerful popular resistance is growing.

From the districts of Chitaldurga, Kolar and Shimoga comes the news of brave and fearless resistance by the people and the fast dwindling authority of the goonda administration which is being openly challenged all over the State.

The account of the wonderful fight that the people and peasants of Kolar district have given to this administration during the last 3 weeks is now available to us. The mass of the villages are marching from one village to the other with the freedom banner. Accounts of organised mass apprising come from Davangare and Chitaldrug. The people's organisation has conscripted one adult from each family. These along with other volunteers form a guerilla band. They have brought the administration almost to a standstill. The police stations and other Government institutions have been destroyed.

Tremendous enthusiasm for the movement prevails in the other districts. The people have risen in a body and are hoisting the tricolour on all the institutions, the District Offices, Taluk Offices, the Police Stations and Courts.

Shocking reports of police atrocities have come from all parts of the State. The police officers are indulging in unspeakable barbarities. Persons are subjected to torture, people in the lock up are taken to rooms and left with legs and hands tied, kicks and assaults on persons by shoes on them are common; young boys mercilessly beaten in the stations; food given to the Satyagrahis is poisoned, women with babies are taken to the far off places and are left in the thick of the forests. The Government forces are trying their worst to crush out the people's resistances by all the brutal methods at their command.

The people still continue the struggle. The will to resist and to ultimately destroy the opponents is shared by the determined groups at every place. The masses are suffering but they are capable of resisting to the end. When full reports of the happenings are available, they will justify this and strengthen our faith in the common man's revolutionary potentialities. This faith and the faith in the righteousness of our cause should not desert us if we mean to overcome our enemies. Let them be relentlessly brutal. rebel in reckless lawlessness. We must despise them. We must pursue them with our determination to free ourselves, to suffer and, sacrifice for our ideals and wait the judgment of history.

The reactionary forces are raising their heads against the movement. The rank communalists who have stood always in the way of progress are active in condemning the movement and defending the Dewan. The Maharaja is being praised and tributes are paid for his recent announcement and the proclamation. Tireless attempts are made to divert the people's attention. The council warns all these reactionaries for these acts of treachery. The common man is revolting today against the tyranny of one man's rule. Workers in both factories and field are rebelling against the authority of the reactionary administration. They are facing the bullets fearlessly. They did not do it for the cause of the Brahmins or the Non-Brahmins. No attempt on the part of the communalists to canvass for 'His Highness will yield fruit today. The people who were forced to believe and accept by the ruling class the distinction between man and man the highness and lowness can never to brake this in future. The cry of the communalists to save the Devine Right of the Royal Throne will never go to the ears of the common man. The bogey of communal issues will never present the masses from marching ahead.

The Mysore Congress launched the struggle to achieve Responsible Government, today the people have gone a step further. They wish to establish republic Government in Mysore which will occupy its rightful place in the Free Indian Republic. The slogans raised by the men in the streets are proofs to this. The Broken statue of His Late Highness in Bangalore speaks the truth of this. If the orgy of Repression let loose by the Government continues to sway in the same speed the movement will raise to a higher pitch and will sure end the monarchy. The lessons of the Great French and Russians Revolutions are there. Let not men waste their lungs in worthless praises for 'The Highness' of the man on the throne. Let not the communalists continue the treacherous part they are playing against the people. Let not a single dog bask against the people movement.

Press reports have come about the various committees and councils formed by the Mysore Congressmen outside the state to control and guide struggle. The council appreciates their efforts to strengthen the struggle but at the same time appeals to them to return to the State and join the people in their battle against the terrorist regime. It should be noted that the movement cannot be run by issuing statements from outside. Enlisting support for the movement from the neighboring provinces should be done by important few. All those who remain outside will be strengthening the movement if they join hands with other fighters who are active in the fight. Today the immediate tasks before all the fighters are (a) to strengthen the organisational structure for a

prolonged struggle (b) to harden the revolutionary will of those patriots who are in the thick of the fight. The council hopes that all will come forward to fulfil the above tasks.

Many comrades have been pressing us to publish the names of those who constitute the council. Knowing fully well the consequences we dare publish here below the names of only a few to avoid confusion among the workers and to prevent the exploitation of the situation by some pseudo undergrounders. Names of the other innumerable comrades will be published later as and when found necessary.

G.V Challam, President, B. T. C. Labour Assn, member, Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee

K.B Srinivasan, Secretary, Mysore State Journalists Assn, Secretary Binny Mills Labour Assn.

M.C.Perumal, President, K.G.F, Externed workers Committee Vice President, Govt.Electric F.L. Assn.

K.Govindraj, President, Youth Congress Bangalore Contonment.

Basu Krishnamurthy , Secretary, Bangalore Students' Congress.

M.Palanivelu, Secretary, Press Workers Union.

K.Kaliah, Secretary, Mysore Silk Filature Labour Assn.

B.Srikantappa, General Secretary, All Karnataka Students Congress.

S. Nagabhushana, Secretary, Minerva Mill Labour Assn.

K.Kannan, Secretary, Socialist Party (India) Mysore State Unit, Secretary, Mysore Congress Progressive Party (Convener) (P.Nagabhushanagoud, 2016:.406)

Reforms slogan on one hand curfew on the other

Despite of all the efforts done by government to stop the movement, the movement found a persistent imperative. that's why the Maharajas declaration came out, given a statement constitutional change for state, but we already know that declaration did not clearly state the full responsibility the people need. It indicated that there would be a cabinet responsible for the legislature, but there was no clarity and details about the nature of the cabinet, the power of delegation. Eighty six hours curfew was imposed in Bengaluru on the same day that the reform was announced. Meanwhile, the Dewan gave a press conference detailing the upcoming reforms and promised to release the detained congress leaders and other political leaders.

The government issued a revocation of restrictions imposed on local newspapers and ban on certain newspapers coming from out of state. (Ramaiah P R 1961: 85-86)

But the Satyagraha committee decided not to accept the declaration as the demands of the congress not met. It wanted to establish a people-backed government. There was a reason for the opposition. People were saying that, Dewan sir Arcot Ramaswamy Mudaliyer by whom the Mysore became a battlefield, should be overthrown from Dewan post. Then only peasants will become peaceful and fight could be stopped. But Maharaja of Mysore called him again and told him to prepare the constitution. Thus the people had no choice but to oppose the above publication of the Dewan (Prime Minister). Newspaper resumed publishing on 29th following an agreement.

Government issued an order on 2nd October stating there is no restriction on hoisting national flag parallel to the Mysore flag. For the first time authorities allowed to fly national flag in the state.

Mudaliyar forgot his word

There is a point to be mentioned here in this connection. Previously in 1929 a non-Brahmin session was presided over by Arcot Ramaswamy Mudaliyar. Arcot also spoke on that day. At that meeting, the demand for the establishment of a responsible government in the state of Mysore was passed. The matter was recited by A.S.Rudrappa at Tripurantakara Basappa hostel in Hindupur. At the meeting that was held the day before Satyagraha leaders like M.N. Jois, A.M. Linganna, Annapurnamma and others were present. The meeting chaired by Kallur Subburaya, Mr. A.S. Rudrappa had criticized Arcot, He called for a final victory over the tyranny of the monarchy, now was time for success. (Viratappa K. 1985.105)

It was necessary to put an end to the political instability in Mysore. The Dewan realized that this was possible only through dialogue with the congress.

On 1 October he invited K.C. Reddy, the congress president for talks. The Dewan had asked Reddy to discuss the issues of implementing the Maharaja's declaration. When Reddy presented the matter to the congress working committee, the committee which had been deliberating on all matters gave the congress president the power to meet and speak with Dewan.

The committee wanted their demands fulfilled. As a result dialogues held between the Dewan and the state congress president an agreement was reached between the government and president on October 11.

A press release was issued on the same day. Longer reports were published in “The Hindu” English daily on 11, 12 and 15th. During the negotiations a decision was taken about the formation of cabinet and structure of cabinet. During the two days of negotiations a consensus was reached on the constitution of constitutional bill that would give the responsible government.

His Highness Maharaja also agreed. The government released all the political prisoners, lifted the restrictions on newspapers. The H.H Maharaja agreed to form interim Government of people representatives including Arcot until the constitutional assembly’s decisions were passed. This government agreed to adopt a fully responsible government in the constitution. Congress President K.C. Reddy signed for this agreement with government (Govt. order dated 13.10.1947) As a result of the agreement the executive committee of the congress withdrew its 41 days Mysore Chalo Satyagraha addressing the public meeting in Mysore, K.C. Reddy declared that the Palace Satyagraha had withdrawn as the congress demands and the aspirations of the people were fully met by the H.H Maharaja. (Viratappa K. 1985.106)

Vijayadashami festival, which is believed to be the festival of sign of victory falls on 1947 October 24. A new cabinet of Mysore state was formed on that day. (Gazette extraordinary 24.10.1947) K.C. Reddy was elected as Chief Minister. The role of Free Mysore Gazette brought out during Palace Satyagraha by Council of Action could not be forgotten.

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