

## THE ROLE OF THE KARNATAKA PEOPLE IN THE FREEDOM MOVEMENT

**Manjunatha .C**

Department of History and Archaeological Research Studies, Tumkur University, Tumakuru

**L.P. Raju**

Senior Professor

Department of History and Archaeological Research Studies, Tumkur University, Tumakuru

---

### ABSTRACT

Both in Pre-Gandhian period and during the Gandhian period, Karnataka people participated very actively and sacrificed their lives for the cause of their motherland. The Gandhian era of freedom struggle in Karnataka began roughly from 1920. Gandhiji's visit to Belgaum in 1924 left everlasting impression upon the freedom fighters. They also participated in individual Satyagraha, salt Satyagraha and No Tax Campaign. Women freedom fighters along with men fought for socio-economic values and to popularize democratic ideas. Queen Channamma of Kittur started an era of revolt against the British in India.

**Keywords:** Women freedom fighters, Satyagraha, socio-economic background, princely states of Karnataka, British rule in Karnataka

### INTRODUCTION

The Indian independence movement was a series of political efforts from the middle of the nineteenth century to 1947, that took place in the Indian subcontinent with the aim of ending British colonial rule.

The first nationalistic movement took root when the Indian National Congress was formed in 1885. Prominent moderate leaders of the INC worked on such demands as the right to appear for Indian Civil Service examinations in British India, more economic rights for the Indians, among other rights.

The first half of the 20th century saw a progressively radical approach towards self-rule. From the protests against the Partition of Bengal (1905) that exposed the limits of the reformist agenda of the moderate leaders to the Non cooperation movement (1919-1922) that saw demands for not cooperating with the colonial authorities through the Civil Disobedience Movement (1929-1931) that called for active disobedience to the colonial government to the Quit India Movement (1942) that categorically demanded the end of British colonial presence in India, the independence movement gathered momentum steadily and ultimately resulted in the transfer of power in 1947.

The stages of the independence struggle in the 1920s were characterised by the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi and Congress's adoption of Gandhi's policy of non-violence and civil disobedience. Some of the leading followers of Gandhi's ideology were Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel, Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Maulana Azad, and others. Intellectuals such as Rabindranath Tagore, Subramania Bharati, and Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay spread patriotic awareness. Female leaders like Sarojini Naidu, Vijaya Lakshmi Pandit, Pritilata Waddedar, and Kasturba Gandhi promoted the emancipation of Indian women and their participation in the freedom struggle.

Few leaders followed a more violent approach, which became especially popular after the Rowlatt Act, which permitted indefinite detention. The Act sparked protests across India, especially in the Punjab Province, where they were violently suppressed in the Jallianwala Bagh massacre.

The Indian independence movement was in constant ideological evolution. Essentially anti-colonial, it was supplemented by visions of independent, economic development with a secular, democratic, republican, and civil-libertarian political structure. After the 1930s, the movement took on a strong socialist orientation. It culminated in the Indian Independence Act 1947, which ended Crown suzerainty and partitioned British India into the Dominion of India and the Dominion of Pakistan. On 26 January 1950, the Constitution of India established the Republic of India. Pakistan adopted its first constitution in 1956. In 1971, East Pakistan declared its own independence as Bangladesh.

### **ROLE OF KARNATAKA PEOPLE IN INDIA'S FREEDOM STRUGGLE**

Karnataka too was influenced by national leaders and had visionary leaders like any other Indian State. This is reflected in the fact that the first village to declare Independence from colonial rule was the small village of Issuru, which was part of a larger area.

Karnataka was not a single state when India's freedom was achieved in 1947. It was then divided into 20 different administrative blocks, kingdoms, and departments.

Leaders from Karnataka played a vital role in India's freedom movement in one way or the other. Many freedom fighters came from Karnataka and played a crucial role in India's independence struggle against British Raj. NPS Sarjapur, the best school in Bangalore salutes the contribution of millions to the freedom struggle. Some of the prominent leaders from Karnataka are the following.

#### **KITTUR RANI CHENNAMMA**

Kittur Rani Chennamma was born on 23 October 1778 in Belgaum, India. She died on 2 February 1829 in Bailhongala, India. Rani was the first woman freedom fighter. She was the queen of the Princely State of Kittur, Karnataka. She fought against British rule and although she did not succeed in defeating them, she inspired many women freedom fighters to take up arms against the British rule in India.

#### **Tipu Sultan**

Tipu Sultan was born on November 20, 1750, in Devanahalli, and died on May 4, 1799, in Srirangapatana. He is also known as Mysore Tiger. Tipu ruled the kingdom of Mysore from 1782-1799. He was a great scholar, a great soldier, and a great poet. Tipu is the first son of the first ruler of Mysore, Hyder Ali, and his first wife. Tipu fought many battles against the British and initially took French support.

#### **Hyder Ali**

Nawab of Mysore, born: Budikote, died: December 7th, 1782, in Chittoor. He was the ruler of Mysore Kingdom and the father of Tipu Sultan, who was a revolutionary leader. He resisted British East India Company forces during the first and second Anglo-Mysorean wars and was the first to introduce the military use of Mysorean iron-shell rockets.

#### **M. Krishna Rao**

Krishna Rao was born in 1879 in the Madras Presidency. He passed away on 25 June 1945. He was a well-known journalist who contributed to the unity of the people in Karnataka by spreading awareness

through his writings and thoughts. He used to write editorials criticising the British government and educating people about what they were doing.

### **R.S. Hukkerikar**

Date of birth: 22nd October 1886, Bangalore. Place of birth: Belgaum. Professorship: Journalist and Social Worker. R.S. Hakkerikar is one of the people who worked for the development of the state of Karnataka. He had good oratory skills in addition to his profession.

### **Bellary Siddamma**

Siddamma was born in 1903 in the Indian state of Maharashtra, Bellary. She was a devotee of Mahatma Gandhi and a spiritual leader who devoted her entire life to public affairs. Despite the valiant efforts of freedom fighters, they were summarily executed.

### **Abbakka Chowta**

Rani was born in 1525 and died in 1570. Before the British settled India, there were a lot of different groups trying to take over the country. One of those groups was the Portuguese, and Rani was one of the first women freedom fighters to fight against them. In the 16th century, the Portuguese tried to take over Ullal because it was in a good spot, but Abbakka fought them off for over 40 years.

## **CONCLUSION**

Karnataka boasts a rich history of iconic freedom fighters who courageously fought for India's independence and thus played a significant role. From the valiant Kittur Rani Chennamma to the visionary Kittur Sainik School cadets, their sacrifice and determination inspire generations. Their legacy serves as a reminder of the enduring spirit of freedom and unity. NPS Sarjapur, Bangalore's best school teaches its students about the freedom fighters with emphasis on those from Karnataka. Students are encouraged to dress up like them (freedom fighters) speak about their contributions to the freedom fight and remember them.

## **REFERENCES**

1. Chandra, B., Mukherjee, M., Mukherjee, A., Panikkar, K. N., & Mahajan, S. (2016). *India's struggle for independence*. Penguin UK.
2. Hutchins, F. G. (2015). *The illusion of permanence: British imperialism in India*. Princeton University Press.
3. Maclean, K. (2016). *A revolutionary history of interwar India: Violence, image, voice and text*. Penguin UK.
4. Maclean, K., & Elam, J. D. (Eds.). (2016). *Revolutionary Lives in South Asia: Acts and afterlives of anticolonial political action*. Routledge.
5. Sharma, D. (2014). *Revolutionary Movements in Modern India: Assessing Ideologies, Strategies, and Historical Significance*. IJCRT, Volume 2, Issue 4, ISSN: 2320-2882.