

A Depiction of Karnataka Women's Participation in India's Freedom Struggle

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Abstract:

The role of women in the freedom movement in Karnataka is unique. In the pre-Gandhi period as well as during the Gandhi period, women participated very actively and sacrificed their lives for their motherland. The Gandhian era of freedom struggle in Karnataka started from around 1920. Gandhiji's visit to Belgaum in 1924 left a lasting impression on the freedom fighters. He participated in Personal Satyagraha, Salt Satyagraha and No Tax campaign. Women freedom fighters fought alongside men for socio-economic values and to popularize democratic ideas. Rani Channamma of Kittur started the era of rebellion against the British in India. This article presents how women engaged in freedom struggles despite social opposition.

Key Words: Women Freedom fighters, Satyagraha, socio-economic background, princely state of the Karnataka, British rule in Karnataka.

Introduction:

In the development of modernity, women have left their footprints in various fields. Today's women are able to achieve so much because of the abundant opportunities, facilities and open environment available to them. But ancient women did not have such independent opportunities. She was only confined to the house and her existence was hidden there from the historical period. Yet in such an environment one can see that one has cherished its existence. Even at a time when struggle was only the property of men, some brave women who were confined to the family voluntarily took part in the independent struggle and made their lives worthwhile. In this article an attempt has been made to introduce the image of the struggle of some heroic women of Karnataka.

Objectives:

The main objectives of this article are

1. About introducing women's identity.
2. Aim to introduce the role played by the women of Karnataka in the freedom struggle.

Women Freedom Fighters Of Karnataka

Chandabibi, Belavadi Mallamma, Rani Abbakka, Keladi Chennamma, Kittur Chennamma etc. can be considered as freedom fighters before the Gandhi era. But to be specific, it is not wrong that they were administrators who fought with the British to maintain their power rather than freedom fighters. That is, the kingdoms of Maharani Chandabibi, Belavadi Mallamma, Keladi Chennamma of Ahmed Nagar were independent. Chennamma of Kittur's struggle was an attempt to retain the succession to his adopted son Shivalingarudrasarjan. The Peshwas of Bijapur were later a vassal state of the British. So it was a perpetual struggle. Also Hyderali and Tipu Sultan who fought for independence were not freedom fighters but leaders who fought for the independence of their power. Thus, when we look at the pages of history, we cannot find Mahilamanis in

the freedom struggle that took place between 1824 and 1900.

After 1920, in the Gandhian era, women became involved in the freedom struggle as a common struggle. How Bhavani Kanagola, Gangabai Mirjankar, Umabai Kundapur etc. played a role in non-cooperation movement and civil disobedience movements due to Gandhiji's influence. A few Karnataka Mahilamanis who were close relatives of well-educated middle-class political elites volunteered for Gandhiji's principles and engaged in the independence struggle. Prominent among them are, Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay of Mangalore, Umabai Kundapura of Hubballi, Nagamma Patila, Leelavati Magadi, Bellari Siddamma of Haveri, Yashodharamma Dasappa of Bangalore, Rajamma Theertha Sharma, Laxmmamma Emmar, Jayadevi mother Jomamma Ligade of Solapur, Bhagirathamma of Tumkur, Sunandamma, Devamma of Sirsi Siddapur, Harijan Seethabai, Madam. , Bhavani Bai of Kanagodu, Gangabai Mirjankar,, Kurtakoti Shakuntala of Belgaum, Ramabai, Siddamma of Easor, Parvatamma, Halamma, Nagaratamma Hiremath of Chitradurga etc. Let's have a short introduction about some of these women heroes.

Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay : 1903-88

Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay is the daughter of District Officer Anantaiah of Sureshwar, Mangalore. Educated in Mangalore, Madras and London, Kamaladevi married a close relative. But she lost her husband in a short time and later married Harindranath Chattopadhyay, brother of Sarojininaidu. Kamaladevi Sarojini Naidu, a fine artist. Participated in the independence movement due to the influence of Anibesant and Gandhiji. She played a role as a member of "Mahila Seva Sadan" and "Servants of India Society" founded by Gopalkrishna Gokhale in Poona. Later she became the leader of "All India Women's Conference". 1930's Civil Disobedience Movement- Played a

leading role in the Dandi Salt Satyagraha. In 1930, the Congress organized the women of Mangalore for Satyagraha. He also visited America, Japan, Europe, Canada and sought their support for India's independence movement. She Played an active role in the Quit India Movement of 1942.

Kamaladevi was a staunch freedom fighter. He had the courage to criticize leaders like Jawaharlal Nehru and Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel. He did not want India to be divided. As a favorite of Gandhiji, he persuaded women to participate in the Salt Satyagraha. Kamaladevi in the congress session held in Belgaum, the way Seva Dal workers grew up as one of the national leaders is amazing. His personality was made bright by service, sacrifice, perseverance and kindness. After independence, She served as the President of '**Central Handicraft Board**' and '**Sangeetha Natak Akademi**' in Delhi. Her service in women's development programs in all these fields is outstanding. Thus, he won the prestigious Magsaysay Award of the Philippines and brought glory to the entire country. **Deshik of Santiniketan** was well respected and awarded the Ratna membership of the Sangeet Natak Akademi for his work for the development of fine arts by freedom fighters. Awards will be recognized by Kamaladevi. There is a national level drama award in her name.

Kamaladevi is a renowned author whose books include Awakening of Indian Womanhood, Inwar Tours China, Uncle Samsa's Empire, America Land of Superlatives, India Hut the Cross Roads, Reflections After Sixty, The Spirit's Pilgrimage, Handy Crups of India, Indian Handy Crups etc. . In his last days the autobiography Inner Recesses Outer Spaces was published. It is a very rich autobiography. The Government of India honored him with the Padma Vibhushan in recognition of his exemplary service.

Kamaladevi could have gained power in independent India. Swataha Nehru invited him to the cabinet. Governor said to make the degree old. Go abroad as an ambassador, he said. But Kamaladevi did not like this and replied, "**When I joined the independence movement, I did not have any high positions in front of me. I started my public life as a volunteer. Therefore, I want to remain a social worker.**" Hearing this, it is clear that she is such an ideal woman. It was like a mirror held up to his selfless service who was engaged in the work of building the country even after independence without being bound by any desire for power.

Umabai Kundapur : 1892-1991.

Among the freedom fighters of Karnataka, Umabai Kundapur was unique and an unparalleled patriot. Born in Bombay in 1892, she settled in Hubli in 1973 and married Kumar Ananda

Rao. She lost her husband in an unfortunate year and became a widow. Later he started his education and passed Echelon after learning English and French. Sushila Naik, who was already busy in the field of women's education, came under the influence of Kashibai Navaranga and participated in the independence struggle. After 1919 Saraswati Mahila Samaj formed after 1919 after Jallianwala Bagh Tragedy under the influence of Gandhiji and M.S Aradikar as Congressmen collected 100000 funds and started **Tilak Kanyashala** for girls in Hubli under the leadership of **Bhagini Samaj**. In 1924, after coming to Belgaum session, Gandhi toured the entire Karnataka and led the women's wing of M.S Aradikar's Hindustani Seva Dal and worked hard for the freedom struggle. He played an active role in the salt satyagraha of Karnataka and led the **Ankola salt satyagraha**. He participated in the illegal movement along with his relative Anandrao and served jail time. Later, he engaged in adult education program and did immense service and collected money for Kasturi Trust and Gandhi Trusts for Mr. Education. Gandhiji's influence on her was deep as can be seen from her words saying "**Gandhiji is my living God**".

Bellary Siddamma : 1903-1982

Bellari Siddamma, one of the foremost freedom fighters, was the daughter of Basappan, a trader from Dudisi village in Haveri taluk. Her husband was Murigappa, a trader and freedom fighter from Davangere. Although he did not acquire higher education, she engaged in the independence struggle under the influence of **S Nijalingappa, T Siddalingaiah and Veeranna Gowda Patil**. In 1938, he played an active role in the Flag Satyagraha held at Shivpur. On the third day of the program here, she hoisted the flag and was arrested. She was the first woman to become Dastagiri in Mysore State. On hearing this, the slogan of **Bellari Siddamma Zindabad** was heard all over India. After his release from prison, he started promoting the Khadi movement like the whole of Karnataka. He conducted public speeches related to its significance with enthusiasm. Thus he emphasized the need for freedom and progress. Along with Nagaratnamma Hiremath and Lakshamma Reddy, she played an active role in the fight against widow making in Chitradurga district under the leadership of S Nijalingappa. Echal set a record by cutting trees. He was jailed on the same occasion. After that, he left India and engaged in underground activities in the Tolagi movement and achieved unprecedented feats. After independence, she established **Matrumandir-Mahila Seva Sanghs in Davanagere, Chitradurga** and became active for the development of women. The common people recognized his service and elected him to the Legislative Assembly in 1951

from Davangere Constituency. The government honored her with a copper letter.

Nagamma Patila-1902

Nagamma Patil was the godmother of Veeranna Gowda Patil of Hubli. Being a teacher, she was influenced by Gandhi and plunged into the freedom struggle. Actively participated in the activities of **Harijan Ashrams in Sabarmati and Hubli**. He played an important role in the Belgaum Congress session and worked tirelessly in Harijanodhara programs along with the independence struggle.

He left India and participated in the Tolagi movement and spent time in prison with his young child. Even after independence, she continuously worked for the development of women through Hubli Mahila Vidyapeeth.

Yashodharamma Dasappa: 1905-1981.

Yashodharamma Dasappa is the daughter of K.H Ramaiah who founded the **Okkaligar Sangha** in Bangalore. Yashodhara Dasappa, who got higher education and developed patriotism, participated in the 1938 Shivpur Flag Satyagraha. Later freedom fighters who were lawyers Married to H. C Dasappa, she continuously served in the independence movement and unification of Karnataka. His role in the Palace Satyagraha or **Mysore Chalo movement** for responsible government in Mysore State is memorable. Along with T Sunandamma, Subbamma Joysa etc., they burnt copies of **Jwalamukhi newspaper** and drew people's attention. In 1938, during the Flag Satyagraha held at Vidurashwath, he took care of the victims of police firing and the injured and shared their pain. She was the first woman member of the Working Committee of the Mysore Congress and was encouraged by Kasturi Ba Gandhi when she visited Gandhiji's Seva Village in Wardha. She later served as the first woman minister of the Social Welfare Department in S. Nijalingappa's cabinet. He also adopted a Harijan girl and became a role model for the entire society. He insisted that the Madhya ban should be strictly enforced. When he failed to achieve this, he resigned from his ministerial post and portrayed his selfless value-added political personality.

Jayadevi Mother Ligade : 1912-1986.

Jayadevi mother of Kannada Kanmania Ligader was the granddaughter of Mallappan of Solapur. The beloved daughter of a potter. Born in 1912, she rose to prominence in the independence struggle and unification movement of Karnataka. His family members were close friends of **Balgangadhar Tilak and Ranade**. Born in a wealthy family, Jayadevi Ligadeya married Savarkar Chennamallappa Mahadeva Raya Ligadeya of Sollapur and enjoyed all the comforts as a mother of 5 children. Although he studied

Marathi, he learned Kannada under the influence of his mother Sangamma. Thus influenced by **Shiva Sharan's vachana literature**, he became interested in their study. She lost her husband in 1946. After this he devoted himself to the development of Kannada, Marathi and Hindi literature. He also played an active role in the freedom struggle and expressed his patriotism.

In Hyderabad, the **Rajakars** burst into the midst of the fanaticism and fought for them. He succeeded in pacifying them by feeding them rice. Thus his role was important in the unification movement of Karnataka. He worked hard for the success of the Kannada Sahitya Sammelna held in Solapur in 1950. In 1952, at the Kannada Sahitya Sammelan held in Belur, he strongly condemned the creation of two Karnatakas. He cultivated a lot in Kannada, Marathi and Hindi literature. He created more than 55 works. It is because of them that Kannada – Jaya Gita, Mother Words, Siddarameshwar Purana, Taraka Tamburi etc. The poem 'Higgutide Vishva' from Jayagita Samkalana has been translated into fourteen languages. His epic poem Siddarameshwar Purana won the **Central and State Sahitya Akademi awards** in 1968. He is credited with introducing Kannada verses to the people of Maharashtra in 1968. In Marathi, Siddavani Basava Darshan, Mahayogini Siddaramaiah, Tripadi, Basava Vachanamrita, Nuya Sampadane etc. Zero editing work has been published by the Government of Maharashtra. As the President of the 48th Kannada **Sahitya Sammelna** held in Mandya in 1974, she became famous as the **first woman president of the Kannada Sahitya Sammelna**. Considering such a great spirit, Karnataka University honored him with an honorary doctorate degree. A very simple being, Jayadevitai Ligade was a Gandhian who like Shivsharan became the cause of the transformation of the society.

Lilavati Magadi – 1910

Leelavati, the daughter of Veeranna Gowda Patil of Hubballi, is one of the prominent freedom fighters of today. Educated in Kanya Mahavidyalaya, Jalandhar, Santiniketan, he developed great patriotism and participated in the freedom struggle. As a student, he actively participated in Satyagraha programs like Charaka program, Prabhat Peri, picketing etc. On the same occasion, she got married to Venkatesh Magadi, a young Congress worker, and participated in the independence struggle with her husband as an inter-caste marriage. He left India and became a Satipati who participated in the Tolagi movement. Dastgiri was sentenced to prison in Hubli. Her husband was Deputy Minister in B.D Jatti's cabinet. Even later, she worked hard for the development of women through Mahila Vidyapeeth- Hubli.

Bhagirathamma Changalaradhy

Bhagirathamma, the daughter of Changalaradhy, a freedom fighter from Tumkur, was a true patriot who left India in 1942 and took part in the Quit India Movement. When Changalaradhy went to jail as a Dastgiri, Bhagirathamma followed her husband and participated in the freedom struggle. While in prison, he met Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay, Ratnamma Madhavrao, Kamala Krishnappa, Bhadravati Lakshmidevi and others. Under his influence, he took an active part in the freedom struggle and had to spend several times in prison. And then as a result he was elected as a member of the Legislative Assembly. Commemorating his service, the government honored him with a copper letter. His biography was released in 1988 and honored.

Sunandamma

Sunandamma from Tumkur settled in Bangalore and served the country as a writer, freedom fighter and teacher. Through the influence of the Theosophical Society, she gained national pride in her school stage and married Narasimhaiah of Doddaballapur and played an active role in the Mysore Congress through the acquaintance of T Siddalingaiah of Doddaballapur. Under the influence of Tagadoor Ramachandra Rao and Veerkesari Sitaramashastri, a senior freedom fighter and Gandhian of that time, he participated in Shivpur Flag Satyagraha and Quit India Movements and was jailed several times.

Devamma Harijan

Devamma Harijan is a farm laborer of Nagesh Hegade of Pilimane village in Siddapur taluk. All his family members were farm labourers. There was no lack of patriotism in the heat of poverty. Even the illiterates responded to Gandhiji's call and joined the movement by leaving their menial jobs. Thus, he participated in Gandhiji's satyagraha and fell under the crooked view of the British. Nagesh Hegde was also a unique patriot. Nagesh Hegde's plantation was confiscated by the British government due to his participation in the anti-war movement. As a result, he was unemployed and suffered hardships. On the other hand, life became difficult after losing her husband. However, such an ardent patriot Devamma Harijan passed away in 1966, although she was the only woman who flaunted the pride of patriotism by rejecting the check given to her by the state government.

Sitabai Madgavankar

The family of Sitabai Madgavankar, one of the patriotic families of Siddapur, was one of the freedom fighters. His father-in-law Ramakrishna Madgavankar was also a selfless social worker and freedom fighter. He was influenced and participated in Congress flag satyagrahas and movements and

was jailed several times. Along with Kamaladevi Chattopadhyay and Sarojini Naidu, he participated in the freedom struggle.

Jayalakshmi Bai

Hailing from Harihara taluk, Jayalakshmi Bai was a socialite with social concerns. She is the wife of TB Keshav Rao, who is known as a freedom fighter and social worker in Bellary. This couple adopted a Harijan boy. Participated in the non-cooperation movement of 1930 and served imprisonment in Belur Jail. Sati's husband and wife served prison terms for actively participating in the Quit India Movement of 1942.

Subamma Jois

Subamma Jois was from Sirasi - Siddapur who actively participated in Salt Satyagraha, Forest Satyagraha, and Kar Rejection Movements. Subamma was active in the freedom struggle, associating with women activists like Bellari Siddamma and Umabai Kundapur. He participated in the Shivpur flag satyagraha of 1938 and had to spend time in prison.

Krishnabai Panjekar

Krishnabai Panjekar, the son-in-law of Honnavar, was the wife of Gulwadi. She lost her husband at a young age and dedicated herself to the service of the country. Later she came to Dharwad and continuously participated in the activities of Congress like Salt Satyagraha, Flag Satyagraha and settled here. Krishnabai Panjekar rendered his valuable service for freedom struggle for the liberation of the country and became immortal.

Conclusion:

If you look at all the women who were involved in the freedom struggle, you can clearly see that no matter how many reforms, struggles, and growth a woman is willing to take, she cannot be freed from her family responsibilities, child care, and the wishes of the elders. However, it is highly commendable that you, a woman who carries all the responsibilities, has left the marks of her existence from ancient times to the present without knowing anything. Thus, the important role played by women in making a country independent by participating with several fighters in the continuous efforts for freedom is presented through this article.

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