



# REVIEW OF RESEARCH

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## MAHATMA GANDHI AND KARNTAKA

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### ABSTRACTS

*“Mahatma Gandhi was leading the nation towards its freedom, he had toured along the length and breadth of the country to gather people's support. He had visited Karnataka 18 times during the freedom struggle, and this establishes his special bond with the state. Be it non-cooperation movement, khalifa movement, swadeshi movement or campaign to raise funds for harijan, Gandhi many districts, at least more than once. Like elsewhere, people of Karnataka were highly inspired by Gandhi and donated their money and jewellery for his various causes. Seventy years ago, when. In fact, the state”*



**KEY WORDS** : non-cooperation movement, khalifa movement, swadeshi movement.

### INTRODUCTION

The karnatak state has contributed a lot for the freedom struggle. They believed and continue to believe that freedom is more valuable than their life. Seventy years ago, when Mahatma Gandhi was leading the nation towards its freedom, he had toured along the length and breadth of the country to gather people's support. He had visited Karnataka 18 times during the freedom struggle, and this establishes his special bond with the state. In fact, the state celebrated the centenary year of Gandhi's visit last year to mark his first visit to Karnataka on May 8, 1915. Karnataka Bhavan held an exhibition of rare photographs of Gandhi's visit to the state. Besides, programmes were held throughout the year to mark the occasion.

### BANGALUR

Glimpse of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi's personality was on display during his first visit to the city in 1915, just after his return from South Africa. On May 8, 1915, Gandhi made his first visit to Bangalore. He and his wife, Kasturba, reached here from Madras by rail. They had traveled first class since their friend, GA Natesan, the famous publisher, was in poor health. DV Gundappa, the Kannada writer, had taken Natesan's help to arrange Gandhi's visit to Bangalore. Donations from Mysore state towards Gandhi's satyagraha in South Africa had been routed through Natesan, the co-ordinator of fund raising in South India. The welcome party, as a result, did not recognise him straightaway. The excitement was real: large crowds had turned up at the station to see Gandhi. He had returned to India from South Africa only the previous year. His political struggles there had already registered a presence for him. News of Gandhi's displeasure at the grand reception in Madras made the local organisers replace the banners on the streets with the thorana (festoons) made with leaves from mango trees. And

a western music band made way for nadaswara musicians. Gandhi as a consciousness, it is easy to see, was already provoking minds in the city. A fully decorated horse carriage waited to take Gandhi and Kasturba in a procession towards their host's house. Unfastening the horses from the carriage, overzealous students took their place: "Please sit inside. We will draw the carriage." Not going along with their plea, he asked how far his host's home was from there. "Half a mile," they replied. He suggested, "Let us all walk then." Social Club, which had been founded by Gundappa, had arranged a meeting on the outdoor premises of the Government High School (the Government Arts and Science College has taken its place since). A recitation of Tagore's poem from the Gitanjali, "Leave this Chanting and Singing and Telling of Beads," in English started off the programme. After Gandhi and Kasturba were felicitated, the organisers asked Gandhi to unveil a portrait of Gopala Krishna Gokhale. Before unveiling it, a visibly delighted Gandhi spoke at length, in English, about the many virtues of Gokhale, who - he reminded his audience - was his guru in his political life. He also let them know that Gokhale loved John Henry Newman's hymn, Lead, Kindly Light. This hymn, Gandhi explained, held that great work began with small steps. On the way back to his host's home, Gandhi asked that they take a route through the poorer areas of the city. In a lengthy meeting with the "notables" of the city, Gandhi dwelt on issues that preoccupied him till the end: the importance of Indian languages and of local handloom production, among others. War, he asserted, was a manifestation of modern civilisation. The removal of untouchability, which was the focal point of his later visits to the state, did not weigh heavily on his mind in this visit. A large meeting was held at the Lalbagh Glass House in the evening. Poems in Kannada, Urdu and Telugu were read out to commence the programme. In his speech, Gandhi explained why he did not climb into the carriage: "We should not spoil public servants with processions. Let them work quietly and not hanker after public recognition. Realising, instead, that people can pelt stones at them for their work and treat them like dirt, they should devote themselves to service." As Gandhi came out of the Glass House, the jubilant crowd outside became restless. A seven-year-old girl from Chamarajpet, who had also come for a glimpse of the leader, was pushed down by the crowd. Gandhi rushed in to lift her up. The crowds became still as he held her and took her over to her brother. Arriving from Mysore around 7 pm, Dewan Visvesvaraya had an hour long meeting with Gandhi. Later, he asked the hosts to book first class train tickets for the guests. Gandhi demurred: "Even If I took the first class now, due to your insistence, please know that I will get off the train at the very first stop and move into a third class compartment." The hosts did not press further. Gandhi was to visit Bangalore on a few more occasions in subsequent years

### NANDIHILLS

Not many know that Gandhi frequented Nandi Hills whenever he visited Bangalore. Gandhiji who was ailing from asthma and high blood pressure had stayed at Nandi Hills for 45 days in 1936, and the hills indeed did magic on him, it is reported. During his stay, Gandhiji visited Madaku Hosahall village at the foothills of Nandi and conducted bhajans. To commemorate his visit, the village has been renamed as Gandhipura. While at Nandi Hills, he was advised to be on a diet of fresh goat milk, fruits and homemade bread. His physician Dr Jivraj Mehta had also ordered him yoga asanas and pranayama. The place where Gandhi stayed at Nandi Hills is still called as Gandhi Nilaya.

### MYSURU

Gandhi's campaign against untouchability also brought him to Mysore on January 5, 1934. He visited Tagadur, Ramchandra Rao Badanval and Nanjangud urging people against untouchability. In fact, Gandhiji had visited Mysore before this also but as a guest of Nalwadi Krishnaraja Wadiyar. There was severe opposition from British rule, but Nalwadi hosted Gandhi in 1927 and 1936. Impressed by the Mysore State's progress in education, agriculture and art, Gandhiji had famously remarked that Maharaja was a 'Rajarshi (a saintly king).

## BELAGAVI

The Belgaum hosted the 39th session of the Indian National Congress on December 26 and 27 in 1924. Gandhiji presided the Congress, despite opposition. In fact, it was the only session chaired by Gandhi. There have been reports that Gandhi touched its soil after landing here and it was on the same occasion, he declared non-violence non-cooperation as main objectives of freedom. In fact, he had famously said that "Only my death can prevent me from attending the session in Belgaum." Gandhiji had visited the city earlier too on 1916.

On February 5th 1924, Gandhiji was released from prison following an operation for appendicitis. The Hindu-Muslim cooperation for which he had striven so zealously had nearly vanished. With the abolition of Khilafat in Turkey, no encouragement was left for preponderance of the Indian Muslims to collaborate & work together with the Hindus. The Muslim League eclipsed during the Khilafat agitation found a breathing space once again. Thus with the passage of time the incongruity between the Hindus and the Muslims began to appear and communal riots occurred at regular intervals. To compensate for the sins of his erring countrymen, Gandhiji undertook a fast of 21 days from September 18 to October 8. This was his desperate effort to solve the communal tangle. The Council entry programme of the Swarajists was not welcomed by Gandhiji. But the circumstances as they were, it was impossible for anybody to bring back the masses to an active non-cooperation and therefore as sort of compromise was reached. The Congressmen were given freedom to decide for themselves either to work for the Council entry or to carry on the constructive work outside the Council. It was in this background that Gandhiji presided over the Belgaum session in December 1924 with the objective of restoring unity between Congressmen who were for Council entry and those against it and between Hindus and Muslims. Removal of untouchability and spread of Chakra and Khadi were the other objectives. (Mahatma Gandhi used to refer to Khadi as "The livery of freedom").

### Session were also held at Belgaum on the occasion like the

1. All-India Khilafat Conference,
2. All-India Hindu Mahasabha Conference,
3. All-India Non-Brahmin Conference,
4. All-India Social Conference
5. The first Karnataka Unification Conference.

## MANGALURU

Gandhi visited Mangalore which was under the thrice - in 1920, 1927 and 1934. During the Khilafat tour, Gandhi addressed people at Centaral Maidan (1920), and at least 10,000 people had turned up for the programme. Gandhi was accompanied by Shaukat Ali, and they were taken in a procession through Hampankatta, Car Street, Market and Bunder. At Canara Girls High School, he laid a foundation for Krishna Mandir.

Gandhi also answered the questions put by the local leaders and workers in another meeting to clear their doubts. Gandhi spoke on the possibility and feasibility of the concept of Non-Cooperation. One could feel the stress given by Gandhi for the National unity. The Gujarati Community of Mangalore also actively cooperated to make Gandhi's programme in Mangalore a successful one. They were hosts to Gandhi and Ali. Gandhiji and his party left for Salem by train.

The guidance given by Gandhiji proved very inspiring and motivating to the people who would later work to reach out to every corner of South Kanara and the adjoining districts to convey the message of Gandhi. In 1920 Karnad Sadashiva Rao participated in the special session of the Calcutta Congress. Karnad Sadashiva Rao toured all over Karnataka for the cause of non-co-operation movement. Kasargod, Puttur, Bantwal, Mangalore, Mulki, Udupi, Kundapur and Karkal emerged as active centres of Freedom Movement. Speech made by Mahatma Gandhi on 'Non-co-operation' during his first visit to Mangalore (19-08-1920)"

"The first stage in my humble opinion is incredibly easy inasmuch as it does not involve any very great sacrifice. If your Khan Bahadurs and other title-holders were to renounce their titles I

venture to submit that whilst the renunciation will stand to the credit and honour of the nation it will involve a little or no sacrifice. On the contrary, they will not only have surrendered no earthly riches, but they will have gained the applause of the nation. Let us see what it means, this first step. The able editor of The Hindu, Mr. Kasturi Ranga Iyengar, and almost every journalist in the country are agreed that the renunciation of titles is a necessary and a desirable step. And if these chosen people of the Government were without exception to surrender their titles to Government giving notice that the heart of India is doubly wounded in that the honour of India and of Muslim religion is at stake and that therefore they can no longer retain their titles I venture to

### UDUPI

As part of his tour to raise funds for the uplift of Harijan, Gandhiji also paid a visit to Udupi on February 25, 1934. During his address at the Ajjarkad ground where 3,000 people had gathered, Gandhi exhorted people to allow of weaker sections into the temples. Gandhiji had inaugurated khadi Bhandar at Kadabettu.

Gandhi had visited udupi in 25<sup>th</sup> Feb 1934. Gandhi tour that was popularly known as Horijin Tour. He had embarked on that tour to create awareness about the eradication of untouchability and raise funds for the up life the downtrodden. He also began raising funds for Bihar earthquake relief as Bihar was hit by a massive earthquake on 1934.

In the meeting, Tlirupama, a 10 yrs old girl offered her gold Banges as Gandhiji noticed that she was also wearing gold necklaces and ear rings as well. She did so without any haste. But Gandhiji returned her ornaments she made her promise that she never wear them again. At the end of the meeting the presents were presented and etched RQ312.

### TUMAKURU

Gandhiji paid a visit to Tumakuru in on July 14, 1927, along with his wife and others. He visited Panchama Boarding School and addressed the gathering at Prani Daya Sangha. He also addressed the gathering at Madhugiri and surrounding areas during his tour to raise funds for weaker section of the people.

### CONCLUSION-

The contribution of Karnataka was great to the movement of India. Even though there were some loopholes in the post Congress Session programs there was a widening of the spirit among peasants of this region who started participating in Congress led Movements. The Salt Satyagraha held in Sirsi Ankola, Siddapura & Mangalore were projected by the peasantry & promoted by the Indian National Congress leaders. The High inclusion of peasantry in this movement was a affirmative indication of the awareness among peasantry.

Thus, Mahatma Gandhi visit to Karnataka but at the time non cooperation movement, khilafa movement, swadeshi movement, or campaign to raise funds for Harijan, Gandhi many districts, at least more than once. Like elsewhere, Karnataka people were highly inspired by Gandhi. The people of Karnataka could not tolerate the imposition of an alien rule and alien culture. So many decided to fight against British Government of India. The movement continued for further India got her independence. The dream was fulfilled at last by our freedom fighters.

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