



Belgaum Congress session in the Karnataka freedom struggle

Ravi S Rathod^{1*}

^{1*}Assistant professor Department of History ,Swami Vivekananda Arts, Commerce and Science Degree College , Muddebihal

Citation: Ravi S Rathod , (2023) Belgaum Congress session in the Karnataka freedom struggle, *Educational Administration: Theory And Practice*, 29(2), 627-628

Doi: 10.53555/kuey.v29i2.7697

The Belgaum Congress Session was a golden chapter in the stages of Karnataka's freedom struggle .the 39th session of the Indian National Congress was the only session in which the father of the Nation Mahatma Gandhi presided, which was the source of inspiration for Karnataka's freedom struggle.

The freedom movement here was transformed into a mass struggle by organizing the session of the Indian National Congress in Karnataka.

Thousands of people were inspired by seeing and hearing the speeches of Gandhi and many national leaders who participated with him. Through this conference, Gandhi had the objectives of creating unity between Hindus and Muslims, eradicating untouchability and popularizing khadi and successfully achieved them and then undertook several constructive programmers.

Background:-

The 38th National Congress session of Kakinada was held in 1923 under the presidency of Muhammad Ali .Congress in this conference Secretary, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, nicknamed the "Saffron of Karnataka ", was present. His insistence was to hold the next conference in Karnataka .during the 38th Session, Mahatma Gandhi was Yerwada Jail, Pune, suffering from appendicitis and underwent Surgery as a result of his illness. A preliminary meeting was held in Hubali to hold the 39th Congress Session in Karnataka. Karnad sadashivaraya suggested that Gangadhar Rao Deshpande hold a session in Mangalore and Belgaum. On the same occasion, the Congress workers of Dharwad and Vijayapura (Bijapura) demanded to be held in their cities, Belagaum his home to two faction of the Congress and is the place visited by Balgangadhar Thilak. It was as suggested by Deshpande it was decided to the hold the session in Belagaum. When the Karnataka Congress Committee invited Mahatma Gandhi to preside over the session, he agreed after much deliberation. Several committees were formed and preparatory measures were taken the successful conduct of this session.

Belagaum Congress Session December 26 and 27, 1924:

1. The venue for the session was named "vijayanagar".A 70 feet high platform was built in front of the Virupaksha temple in vijayangara (present day Hampe), which was the golden kingdom of karnataka.
2. For the convenience of drinking water, an open well was drilled in the vicinity of the session as a result of continuous efforts of the workers. It was named as "pampa lake", today this well known as Congress Well.
3. Mahatma Gandhi arrived five days before the session and artist Khimajirao Godder built a simple hut in the form of shrine for him.
4. Belgaum railway station was beautified and the important national leaders who arrived were warmly received.
5. A tent (hut) was constructed using bamboo canes and khadi for arriving leaders and various delegates who arrived.
6. Gandhi was called to the Congress camp by Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, chairman of the reception committee, accompanied by a procession of art troupes depicting the culture and history of the country. It was special that of this it he paid his respects to the soil of this land as soon as he landed in Belgaum.
7. Latin and pteroma lamps were brought from Mumbai for lighting the lamp .kitchens were systematically built to feed the thousands who attended.
8. Na.su to maintain peace and order in the session. The manner in which the 1700 trained volunteers of the Hindustani Seva Dal established by Hardekar performed their duties in a neat manner won the admiration of Mahatma Gandhi.
9. Led by chairman of the reception Committee, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande ,Mahatma Gandhi ,national leaders like Muhammad Ali ,shaukat Ali ,Sarojininaidu ,Jawaharlal Nehru ,sardar vallabhbhi Patel

- ,rajagopalahari ,jamal bajaj ,shaukat Qureshi etc. were Welcomed to the stage with huge applause and shower of flowers.
10. The session started with the song “vandemataram”. On this occasion, Huilagola Narayana Rao sang the song “Udaya Vagali Namma Cheluva Kannada Nadu”.Gangubai Hanagal, a little girl, sang in the chorus.
 11. Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, the Maharaja of Mysore state, also provided financial cooperation. His Diwan A.R.Banerjee not only granted permission from the industries Department for the Congress exhibition, but also donated to the conference .Musician Veena Seshanna performed a concert in this session .
 12. Mahatma Gandhi in his presidential address advocated the need for Muslim unity .After the khilafat Movement, the struggle for Hindu –Muslim reconciliation collapsed and communal riots continued, so he also went on a fast. He expressed the confidence of getting independence if Hindu-Muslim is fought effectively. Explaining the idea of Satyagraha and its important, he declared that “Satyagraha is a birth right”. Explaining the importance of Charka and Khadi, he said, “I think Swaraj will not come as long as millions of people in my country do not spin with Charka and those who do not wear Khadi”. “Khadi is a symbol of Indian independent life. He called for boycott of foreign material .He opposed Harijans emancipation measures and practice of untouchability. He urged the government to ban alcohol .he advocated the ideas of women getting education and abolishing the caste system to build a universal society .he promoted several constructive programs for this.
 13. Several during the Belgaum Congress session itself parallel conference were held .they are:-
 - a) First Karnataka Unification Conference
 - b) All India Khilafat Conference
 - c) All the Social Conference
 - d) All India Hindu Mahasabha Conference
 - f) All India Non- Brahmin Conference

Consequences of the Belgaum Congress Session

Due to the impact of this session, the national struggle was shaped into a mass movement .Mahatma Gandhi’s call for constructive programs was responded positivity and confidently by the people of the whole of Karnataka including the state of Mysore. The struggle of the people of Karnataka become two-fold. This further inspired the unification of Karnataka. Khadi and Village Industries centers were established across the state country. The khadi movement was popular and widely used by the people during the Mysore monarchy. Many organizations were established of the welfare of Harijans. Karnataka freedom fighters and Gandhi followers like Hardikar Manjappa, N.S. Hardekar, Gangadhar Rao Deshpande, Srinivasa Kaujalagi, Karnad Sadashivarao, Hanumanta Rao kaujalagi, Kadappa Raghavendra Raya, Mudavidu Krishna Raya, and R.R.Diwarakar etc. He Intensified the flame of struggle .this later became the foundation for the Karnataka Unification Movement. It also allowed the lower strata of society to participate widely in the struggle and in Movements led by the Congress .After this session ,national leaders like Gandhi ,Rajagopalachari ,Lala Lajpat Roy ,Pattabhi Sitaramaiah etc. toured all over Karnataka and gave impetus to the national struggle. The Belgaum Congress session of 1924 is something that not only in the Karnataka independence struggle but also in Indian history will remain forever and something that all Kannadigas are proud of.

Akara Grath:-

- 1) KNA-Compressive History of karnataka
- 2) pro-Muttanna Goudar –Shodha Sankathana