



SOLAPUR MARTIAL LAW: 1930

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Received: January 09, 2012; Accepted: February 02, 2012

Abstract- The national movement for freedom was fought all over the country through urban as well as rural areas. For India's freedom, the Nationalist Movement was fought throughout the length and breadth of the nation. In this great movement, Solapur city also has a big share. This city has created a unique place in the Nationalist Movement through important incidents, events and deeds. Many people from Solapur were participated in this movement. Obviously, there was a lion's share of the mill workers because the mill workers were in the forefront of the movement.

Citation: Kodalkar A.V. (2012) Solapur Martial Law: 1930. Journal of Arts and Culture, ISSN: 0976-9862 & E-ISSN: 0976-9870, Volume 3, Issue 1, pp-102-104.

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Introduction

Solapur is a historical city. When the British were discussing about the rising of Marathi Empire among the three districts, Britishers have recorded the name of Solapur. The last fights which were fought against the British Empire by Marathi Empire, Solapur District also fought up to the last moment.

At the end of 19th Century, due to English education there was political and social awareness among the middle class people. In the contemporary era, the thoughts of Justice Ranade and Lokmanya Tilak were very impressive in Maharashtra. There was also a class of people in Solapur city inspired by the extremist thoughts of these people, which included- Rambhau Rajwade, Mallappa Warad, Raobahadur Sathe, Dr. Kirloskar, Shri. Rambhau Sane etc. These were the leading personalities in Solapur politics. In the civil field of Solapur, Shri. Hirachand Nemchandand the old newspaper 'Kalpataru' edited by Shri. Kakade were taken into consideration.

Though Nationalist Movement was started before 1920, it spread very fast from 1920 onwards. As there was political awareness and revolts in other parts of the country, there was impact of these in Solapur and Municipal Corporation. The mill workers had went on 'hartal' in Solapur in 1890, 1902 & 1904. The Extremist leader Lok-

manya Tilak addressed the people in Solapur in 1908. And in the same year the British Government banned 'Rajaswa' newspaper and the chief editor of this paper Shri. Limaya and the publisher Shri. Ganla were arrested.

In 1920, there was strong uprising from the mill workers against Government and the capitalist mill workers. This revolt took place continuously three months under the leadership of mill worker Bhimrao. The Government crushed the revolt ruthlessly. The British Govt. fired at the workers and 7 workers were killed and hundreds of workers wounded. This revolt like 'hartal' is supposed as one of the important steps in Mill workers' movement in the country.

Offering the 'Manapatra' to Indians was first introduced in India by Solapur Municipal Council by offering 'Manpatra' to Mahatma Gandhi on 26/05/1921 and showed its nationality. National leaders in Solapur opposed for offering 'Maanpatra' to the Governor from 1925 to 1929.

In 1928, the mill workers observed a great 'hartal' nationwide. This 'hartal' brought Solapur in limelight. During this 'hartal' the leaders of the workers-Com. Sane, Com. Minakshi Sane, and Com. Karhadkar were arrested.

Taking into consideration Mahatma Gandhi's Dandi March in 1930, a bill was passed with greater majority to hoist National flag on Municipal Council on 6th April 1930. On the same day 'National symbol' was hoisted on Municipal council with a great ceremony. Thus Solapur was the pioneer in hoisting Nation flag on Municipal council in Maharashtra. After this month, whatever the incidents & events took place in Solapur, they were unique. It is a golden page in the history of freedom movement.

The news of Mahatma Gandhi's arrest spread in Solapur on 5th May 1930 at mid night. The congress leaders immediately determined to spread this news throughout Solapur. People arranged protest rally's giving shouts and singing national songs. Early in the Morning when the mill workers left for their duty, they heard the news and started condemning the act of Government. Mills were closed. People stopped railways and broken the railway buggies. The 'Shindi' trees were fallen by the people. Police ruthlessly opened unrestrained fire. After this, on 7th April the workers were made a great rebellion. People threw stones at police. People set the police stations on fire. In this riot many police and the magistrate were wounded. At the evening the leaders pleaded to run the movement peacefully.

On 8th May 1930, the Government arrested the leaders-veer Nariman and Bajaj. People condemned strongly when the news spread in the city. Nariman was the favorite leader of youths, so the young leaders Shri. Jagannath Shinde and A. urban Hussain decided to arrange a large procession of the images of their favorite leaders and they really arranged a big procession.

There was no one's control over the procession. Some youth from the procession returned to Rupa Bhavani area to fall the 'Shindhi' trees. Others had no pdea about this. When the youths started falling 'Shindi' trees at Rupabhavani, Police vans arrived there. The mob of youths threw stones. So the enraged police ruthlessly opened unrestrained fire. So the people become furious. When the bullets were over, people caught the police & threw stones on them. At the time the public leader Mallappa Dhanshetti arrived there. The collector knight surrendered & pleaded him to let him free from the clutches of enraged mob. Mallappa Dhanshetti made the mob silent & released the collector. Mr. Knight from the clutches of enraged mob. But instead of keeping in mind the help assisted by the mob, they started firing at mob when they were let free from the clutches of mob. Innocent men, women, children were died. People got enraged due to this act. Jalapa Dhanshetti went to hospital along with the wounded. Shankar Shivdar died & he became the first martyr in the city.

The enraged mob became furious and started breaking the government buildings and vans. This enraged mob demolished police stations & set the stations on fire. This mob was in the position of taking the revenge of collector's firing. Many police were beaten; even two policemen were burnt alive. This mob also set the court on fire. Many government offices were also set on fire. Mr. Knight ignored all these incidents & he was engaged in moving the English women and children to a safe place.

When the situation in the city became calm and peaceful, suddenly the police started firing at people through their police vans. From 12 P.M. to 7.00 P.M. the police fired at people through every road in the city. 50 innocent people were killed and hundreds were wounded. The detail of this incident were published in Rambhau

Rajwade's 'Karmyogi' weekly (10th May 1930) and criticized the despotism of the government. Differenment newspaper in the state and country concerned the act of government.

People were feared of these incidents. They started leaving Solapur supposing that it is dangerous to live in Solapur. Within two days near about 25000 people left Solapur. All the transactions & business were stopped. Mills were also closed. The police also quitted Solapur. In this situation some national leaders declared freedom in Solapur.

Solapur city was under the revolutions for 3 days. During this, the local political leaders established their own administration system. They served the wounded people in firing. In brief, Solapur enjoyed the freedom. This is compared with 1871's Paris communs.

Mr. Knight took the assistance of retired policed officer Khan Imamsaheb to crush the revolt in Solapur. Mr. Khan has also to take revenge on the leaders in Solapur. He started arresting reputed leaders under different crimes. Then he discussed with the home minister, Hotson and decided to impose Martial law in Solapur. Thus for the first time in Maharashtra, Martial law was imposed in Solapur.

As it was the first Martial law in Solapur, people had to suffer a lot. The person seen on the roads were beaten ruthlessly, Gandhi cap was being removed from the heads of the people. The mill workers suffered a lot of Martial law.

Many people were arrested for hoisting the National flags. The Municipal president Manikohand shah was arrested for denying removing the national flag from Municipal council. Many people were arrested for setting the court on fire, riot at rupabhawani and Murder of two policemen. The police arranged the procession by beating Shri. Dhanshetti, Shri. Shinde, Shri. Sarda and Shri. Kurban Husain ruthlessly. A congress leader Tulshidas Jadhav was beaten ruthlessly for not removing Gandhi Cap and 10 years punishment was announced. Along with these people so many workers, leaders & students were arrested.

During the military rule, the soldiers in Solapur city were very cruel to the people. The people were being beaten ruthlessly for wearing Gandhi cap, Khadi cloths. The police, soldiers and the officers looted the shops. Even some have raped the women. But the government ignored to all these incidents. Workers were compulsorily sent to work. Shri. Mallapa Dhanshetti, Shri. Kisan Sarda, Shri. Jagannath Shinde and Shri. Kurban Husain were charged by selecting the session judge from pune for the death of the police on the 8th May. After reading the charge sheet, on 6th June 1930 the judge announcement hangdeath.

The crimes of these people were false. The information of the four martyrs is as follows.

- **Shri. Mallappa Dhanshetti-** He was an accountant in 'Pandharkar Pedhi'. He was supposed as a congress leader. He was charged due to to his job. He has saved the life of Mr. Knight. His personality was very effective. He was punished under military law.
- **Shri. Jagannath Shinde-** He was supposed as the leader of Youths. He did efforts to make Hindu society strong. His speech was effective. He was also punished under military law. He was the leader of congress youth forum.
- **Shri. Kisan Sarda-** He was a rich Marwari. He had no strong

relation with politics. But he was the follower of Hindu society. He helped Hindu people and their rituals. He was also punished under military law.

- **Shri. A. Qurban Hussain-** He was known as the leader of mill workers. He was the secretary of youth forum. He was the most loving leader due to effective speech, during and Hindu-Muslim unity. He was a reformative leaders were in anper. He had run 'Gazanfar' newspaper. He was also arrested under Military law.

There was a ban for National flag when there was Martial law in Solapur. A Nationalist leader shri. V.V. Sathe proclaimed to condemn this. So he arrived at Solapur with his colleague, a national flag in their hands. They were arrested on station. After this many groups of people through the country started arriving at Solapur for zenda satyagriha. They were treated with despotism but to respect the national symbol, the workers, businessmen and thousands of young men jumped into this movement. We should not forget this incident.

This newas in focus. Then Mumbai government's publicity department brought a declaration that it was decisive. It was also seriously criticized. So to find out the actual situation in Solapur. The Governor-sir Fredrick Siex arrived at Solapur on 18th June 1920. He observed the whole city. He was requested to withdraw the military law by millowners businessmen to withdraw martial law from 30th June. In this way it was withdrawn after 48 days.

The result of the 'setting court on fire' was declared on 18th Oct. 1930. Shri. Jagannath Pardeshi, Shri. Channusing Chande, Dr. Antrolikar was accused and declared punishment. 23 people were accused for the revolt of Rupabhavani. 60 people had left Solapur who were the criminals in these two cases.

The people throughout India were eagerly waiting for the declaring of 'hangdeath'. The decision of the preview council was also decisive. Finally 'hangdeath' was finalized for these four people. The Indian leaders – Barrister Jaykar, Dr. Muje who were at 'Round table conference' pleaded the Indian Prime minister Wejwood to withdraw the 'hang death' in London Barrister Wilson arranged protest rallies and applied for withdrawing hang death from India hundreds of religions priests telegrammed Shri. Venn to cancel the hang death. The eminent leaders in India tried their level best. Barrister Chagla sent an application having 2 lac signatures to voicerai and Mumbai women sent application of 1 lack women's signature. All in all the people from different strata of society were fighting against the 'hang death'. The mill workers closed mills and arranged public addresses throughout the nation for withdrawing the hang death. Sheth Walchand Hirachand and Shri. Tatyasaheb Kelkar personally met Hotson and requested to cancel the 'hangdeath'. But it was of no use.

Solapur Municipal council passed a bill with majority for withdrawing the 'hangdeath' but it was also of no use.

At the end, on 11th Jan. 1931 the four were hanged to death at 3.00 p.m. They shouted-Jayhind-Vande Mataram. Even the government denied to handover the dead bodies of these martyres.

Thus the British Govt., which was the best supporters of democracy, killed 4 persons brutally. So the people throughout the nation because furious. In pune thousand of people arranged rallies for handing over the dead bodies of martyrs. To condemn the 'hangdeath' rally in hundred of cities in India were arranged e.g. Pune, Jalgaon, Panvel, Penn, Belgaum, Hubali, Dharwad, Calcutta,

Indore, Ujjain, Gwalior, Nagpur, Vardha, Nagpur, Kolhapur, Badoda, Surat etc. The Govt. tried to crush these rallies brutally. The govt. opened unrestrained fire and lathi charge against people. But there were many rally arranged throughout the nation opposing the despotism of the govt. to pay homage to the mastyr.

There was a pindrop silence in Solapur when the news of 'hangdeath' spread in Solapur. The whole city was closed spontaneously. On the second day after the hangdeath i.e. 13th Jan. 1931, a/c the newspapers in the country condemned the act. The famous Bengali poet-Rabindranath Tagore condemned in 'London Times'

The Municipal Council passed a bill to release the arrested under Martial law. But it was of no use. According to Gandhi-Irwin pact, Dr. Antrolikar was released. But Lord Irwin hesitated to release Shri. Rambhau Rajwade. When Mahatma Gandhi announced that unless and until Rajwade is released, he won't attend the round table conference, immediately Lord Irwin ordered to release Rajwade. The signature on the Gandhi-Irwin pact was made when the Voiceri ordered the release of Rajwade and then the pact was completed.

To take the revenge of Solapur, Shri. Vasudeo Gogate, a student in pune fired at Hotson. Hotson was saved due to the iron coat but Gogate was arrested. Hotson asked him "Why did you fire at me?" Gogate answered without fear "As against your tyrannical administration in Solapur"

Thus the martial law in Solapur has a unique place in India's freedom movement; In this movement the people in Solapur put their lives on stake. In this way through the hopes, Sacrifies a prosperous day came to rise-15th Aug. 1947.

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