



Chapter 20

● Sir Mirza Ismail

“If K. Sheshadri Iyer dug the foundation of new Mysore and Sir M. Visvesvaraya laid the foundation, Sir Mirza Ismail put up the superstructure,” is the tribute paid by *The Daily News* (14th May 1941) when Sir Mirza retired as Dewan of Mysore. Whatever Sheshadri Iyer and Sir M. Visvesvaraya could achieve amidst a lot of opposition and criticism, “Sir Mirza was able to do in an atmosphere of harmony and peace.” He studded the land of Mysore with many modern industries which paved the way for several central public sector industries that were established in the State after Independence. A successful administrator, Sir Mirza did not recognise the political winds of change blowing over the country, both against the Maharajas and the British. His efforts to suppress the upsurge of the popular feelings created a mood of public unrest during his period of Dewanship and his succeeding Dewans had to reap the whirlwind.

Mirza Mohammad Ismail was born with a silver spoon in his mouth in Bangalore to a family of horse traders and moneylenders who hailed from Persia and domiciled in Bangalore. His grandfather Ali Askar came to Bangalore in 1824 as a horse trader from Shiraj in Persia (Iran) and developed friendly connections with Krishnaraja Wodeyar III, the then ruling monarch. Even after Krishnaraja Wodeyar lost his throne in 1831, he continued his connections with the palace as he was a money lender and the Maharaja still maintained a huge stable.

Ali Askar was acquainted with a large number of European officers as they too were interested in horses, as well as his customers (borrowers) too. He secured a huge plot of land from the British near High Grounds in Bangalore and along with his family lived on the land on a specially created road called Ali Askar Road. He was nicknamed as “*High Grounds Jahagirdar*”, as mentioned

Jewels of Administration

by Sir Mirza in his *My Public Life*. V.S.Narayana Rao, a senior journalist and freedom fighter who wrote a biography of Sir Mirza in Kannada (*Sir Mirza Ismail*) says that Krishnaraja Wodeyar may have taken the help of various European officers in Bangalore who were friendly to Ali Askar to get his throne back to his family (the Rendition). The dethroned Prince also used the offices of Ali Askar to secretly correspond with the European officers in Bangalore and in England.¹

His son Aga Jan continued his father's business after Ali Askar expired in 1891. Aga Jan's friendly contact with the palace continued as he was an expert in the evaluation of horses and the ruling prince Chamarajendra Wodeyar also had a fascination for horses. Aga Jan visited the palace frequently, and at times he took his young son, Mirza Ismail also with him. Mirza Ismail became a friend with the members of the royal family and princes namely Krishnaraja and Narasimharaja.

Mirza Ismail had his early schooling at St. Patrick's and later at the Wesleyan Mission School. To provide education for the prince, Krishnaraja, a school was started in the palace premises and half a dozen boys of the rich and noble families were admitted to the school. One of them was Mirza Ismail. S M Fraser, an ICS officer was one of their teachers.



¹ Narayanrao, V.S. (V.S.N. henceforth) *Sir Mirza Ismail* (kan.) 1995, p.2.

Later Mirza joined the Bangalore Central College and secured a B.A., degree in 1905. Soon after his graduation, he joined Government service in the Police Department at Kolar and by the time he gained experience in administration, the Maharaja (Krishnaraja Wodeyar IV) wanted his friend of the younger days and classmate to work with him. He was appointed Secretary to the Maharaja and later when a European was appointed as the Maharaja's Private Secretary, a special post, Huzur Secretary was created. After Purna Raghavendra Rao held the post for sometime, Mirza was appointed to that position in 1913.



Krishnaraja Wodeyar- IV

The British Private Secretary was appointed by the Supreme Government to keep an eye on the Maharaja. The Huzur Secretary's post was created to help the Maharaja to end his isolation and oversee all developments. In 1923, Private Secretary R.H.Campbell retired from his post and Mirza occupied the post. "It was a very responsible position and next only to the Dewan in status," says V.S.Narayan Rao.² Mirza was very close to the Maharaja and in fact when stories were carried to the Maharaja against Mirza, the Maharaja would ask such complainants to meet Mirza himself and seek explanation from him.

Once a leader of the Hindu Maha Sabha from the North asked the Maharaja how a Muslim could be Dewan to a Hindu Raja in a State where the majority of the subjects were also Hindus. The Maharaja requested the leader to address his question to Mirza himself.

Mirza as Dewan

Mirza Ismail took charge as Dewan on 30th April 1926. Then he was in his early forties and was the youngest among those who held the position of Dewan earlier. In his address to Dasara Assembly in 1926 he expressed his feelings thus, "I am grateful to His Highness for the opportunity now afforded to me for rendering wider service to him and his people. I regard the office of the Dewan less as an appointment and more as a great mission of patriotic service."³ Mirza, no doubt, was a great patriot and he had deep love for Mysore with its rivers, hills, forests, waterfalls and rich resources. Development of the State was love's labour for him. He settled down in Bangalore after his retirement from active service in his ancestral home. So close was Mirza's identity with the State that American journalist John Gunther remarked that Sir Mirza "knows every stick and stone in Mysore."⁴

But during the first year of his administration itself, Mirza had to face an incident of violence. The Binny Mills with more than a labour force of 5000 had not recognised its labour union and therefore, they had no collective bargaining machinery. They organised a registered society, United Federation of Bangalore Textile Workers under the leadership of journalist M.A.Rama

² Ibid., p.6

³ Speeches of Sir Mirza Ismail, T, p.27.

⁴ Sreenivas Aingar, (Sreenivas Aingar henceforth), Amin-ul-Mulk Sir Mirza M.Ismail, 1944, p.8.

Sharma and advocate K.T.Bhashyam, both Congressman, in which labourers from other mills also joined since there was no trade union in their Mills,. There was no provision to organise a trade union in Mysore, though a law in 1926 had allowed the same in British India.

Demand for recognition of their union and amelioration of other grievances caused a labour strike in Binny Mills in 1926, but the Mill owners did not respond to their requests. The labourers turned restive and the situation became unruly. The police resorted to caning, lathi charge and finally firing causing the death of two (four according to other sources). The newspapers highly criticised the firing and there was a demand for judicial enquiry, which fell on deaf ears. Then the Congress itself took the initiative to hold a public enquiry with noted advocate C.V.Narasimha Murthy as the Chairman with half-a-dozen senior public persons as members. This public enquiry continued daily for almost two months and newspapers regularly reported the proceedings. That the police resorted to firing unnecessarily on unarmed labourers, causing deaths was highly unjustified, was the verdict of the committee. Though the government did not take any positive action except demoting an officer, the labour force was very elated by the attention paid by the public and the newspapers in recognising their cause. They became staunch supporters of the Congress Party and turned anti-Mirza. K.Jeevanna Rao, journalist of those days has given an account of these developments.⁵

Subsidy Reduced

In the Representative Assembly, the Dewan said that there was no other alternative except resorting to firing to control the unruly mob, and the officer concerned had to order firing. He also admitted that since he did not appear to have taken the necessary precautionary measures, necessary action (demotion) had been taken against him. Those who had suffered had been paid compensation. "Mirza was the first Indian Officer who had taken action against a European Officer," says V.S.Narayan Rao. V.S.Srinivasa Sastry complimented him.⁶

One of the important achievements of Dewan Mirza's period was the reduction of subsidy payable to the Supreme Government, which amounted to Rs.34 lakhs annually. Viceroy Lord Irwin visited Mysore in July 1927 and was highly impressed by the ovation he received at Bangalore and Mysore. At a banquet arranged by the Maharaja, the Viceroy announced the reduction of the subsidy by Rs.10 ½ lakhs, and Rs.23 ½ lakhs was payable in future. "The remission I now announce might have come more appropriately three or four years thence, the fiftieth anniversary of the Rendition, but it is a matter of real pleasure to me to be able to announce, on the occasion of my first visit to your state, the practical recognition of the regard we have for the spirit in Your Highness has maintained the traditions of Government to which you found

5 Swatantrya Sangamada Smritigalu (kannada; henceforth S.S.S), Ed.Suryanath Kamath, II pp:44-45)

6. V.S.N., pp:31-32.



yourself the heir.” This announcement of the concession was the outcome of a long period of petitioning to Supreme Government.⁷ “Sir Mirza scored what may be called his first great diplomatic victory, a year after his assumption of office,” says Sreenivas Iyengar.⁸

To set right certain anomalies in the Land Revenue system, the Mysore Land Rights Regulation was passed in April 1927 and given a trial in three selected taluks during 1927-28. By this, a Record of Right was to be maintained for every village, giving details on each holding regarding its occupancy status (ownership, tenancy, lease, etc.) including its rent and revenue. Secondly, the rights or interests on the land must be stated up-to-date. Thirdly, only with certified extracts of the Record could a civil suit be filed. Fourthly, the details of plots in the same survey number with particulars, and details of measurement must be recorded in the Register. This was done to check litigation and reduce unnecessary expenditure to farmers to secure its extract. This was necessary to secure loans from the Land Mortgage Banks and help the farmers to avail loans from other sources.⁹

In April 1929, a Central Land Mortgage Bank was founded in Bangalore. Its operation was continued to Malnad Taluks of Sagar, Koppal and Manjarabad (Sakleshpur) and the maidan Taluk of Tumkur. The Bank was under the jurisdiction of the Director of Industries and Commerce and later it was transferred to the Co-operative Department. By 1939 the programme covered 33 Taluks in the State and was of immense help to the coffee planters of Hassan. “By the time Sir Mirza assumed office, recession had set in,” says M.B.Patil.¹⁰

Sericulture

In 1926-27, a regular programme of cross-breeding of silk worms was taken up as sericulture supported 12 percent of the population in the state. But from 1928, for seven years, fall in the price of silk had created a crisis. The export market almost closed and competition from China along with the introduction of artificial silk created problems. The area under silk cultivation reduced from 53,000 acres to 26,500 acres in 1939.

Mysore Sericulture Board and Mysore Sericulture Association were started in 1928 to advise the government on promotion, marketing and diversification of sericulture. Modernization of the silk industry was attempted and new power looms were imported in 1929. A weaving factory and dyeing unit was started at Mysore with the help of Swiss weaving experts and French dyeing experts.

The price of 100 cross-breed layings was reduced from Rs.1 ½ to eight annas, and for Mysore layings to eight annas from Rs.One. Disease-free seeds supply was increased from 1 ½ lakhs to 12 lakhs annually. Thus production of silk was increased by careful policies. Mohan Rao, Superintendent of

7. Shama Rao, *Modern Mysore*, II (Modern Mysore, henceforth), 1936, p .346.

8. Sreenivas Aingar, p.7.

9. Shama Rao, pp:409-10.

10. Dr.Suryanath Kamath (Ed.) *Studies on Dewan Sir Mirza* (henceforth *Studies*) 1998, p.45.

Sericulture designed and patented the Mysore Domestic Basin in 1929 for a highly improved version and demonstrations of its working were held in several places.

A Government spun silk unit was started at Channapatna in 1936 in order to put silk waste to proper use. Its capital was partly paid by the Government. It had 3000 spindles and their number was increased later. The II World War resulted in an increased demand and almost monopolistic purchase of silk by the government which helped to strengthen and stabilise Sericulture as silk cloth for parachutes was in great demand. The careful policy of Mirza saved the industry and paid rich dividends, both by way of rural employment and the State's income.

A rural welfare center was established at Ramnagaram in 1939-40 to set up a Sericulture colony and training center. M.B.Patil has also pointed out that in 1929-40, sericulture was introduced as an optional subject in Government Schools at Malavalli, Kolar, Hassan, Mandya, Mysore and Tumkur districts. Free supply of mulberry cuttings and seedlings was undertaken to encourage ryots to take up mulberry cultivation. In 1940-41, a hill center was started at the B R Hills to improve a foreign race of silkworm and seed production. During the II World War, all filature centers in Mysore State were turned into war production centers as pure silk alone could be used for parachutes.¹¹

Political Developments

Though the Praja Mitra Mandali attempted to secure jobs for Backward Classes, it was not enthusiastic about the constitutional progress. It was opposed to the demand for responsible government and was keen to please the Maharaja and the Dewan, seeking favours rather than sharing political power. The Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms of 1919 and the demand for share in political power had resulted in the introduction of Dyarchy in British Provinces. It was a glaring fact that from the Madras province where private elected persons had become ministers, the Indian National Congress was also demanding responsible government, and the idea of princely states having such an arrangement was put forth in 1918 by D.V.Gundappa, a noted journalist and writer in Bangalore.

Most of the newspapers of Bangalore which were nationalist in outlook, supported Congress, and upheld the slogan "Responsible Government under the aegis of His Highness the Maharaja." The Praja Mitra Mandali "was much more concerned with the furtherance of their own family or personal interests rather than the interest of the caste or community or non-Brahmins in general," says James Manor.¹²

"The moderate and loyal non-Brahmin leaders had been replaced by younger men like H.C.Dasappa, K.C.Reddy, D.H.Chandrashekrariah and others who heckled the Government both inside and outside the Assembly. The growing

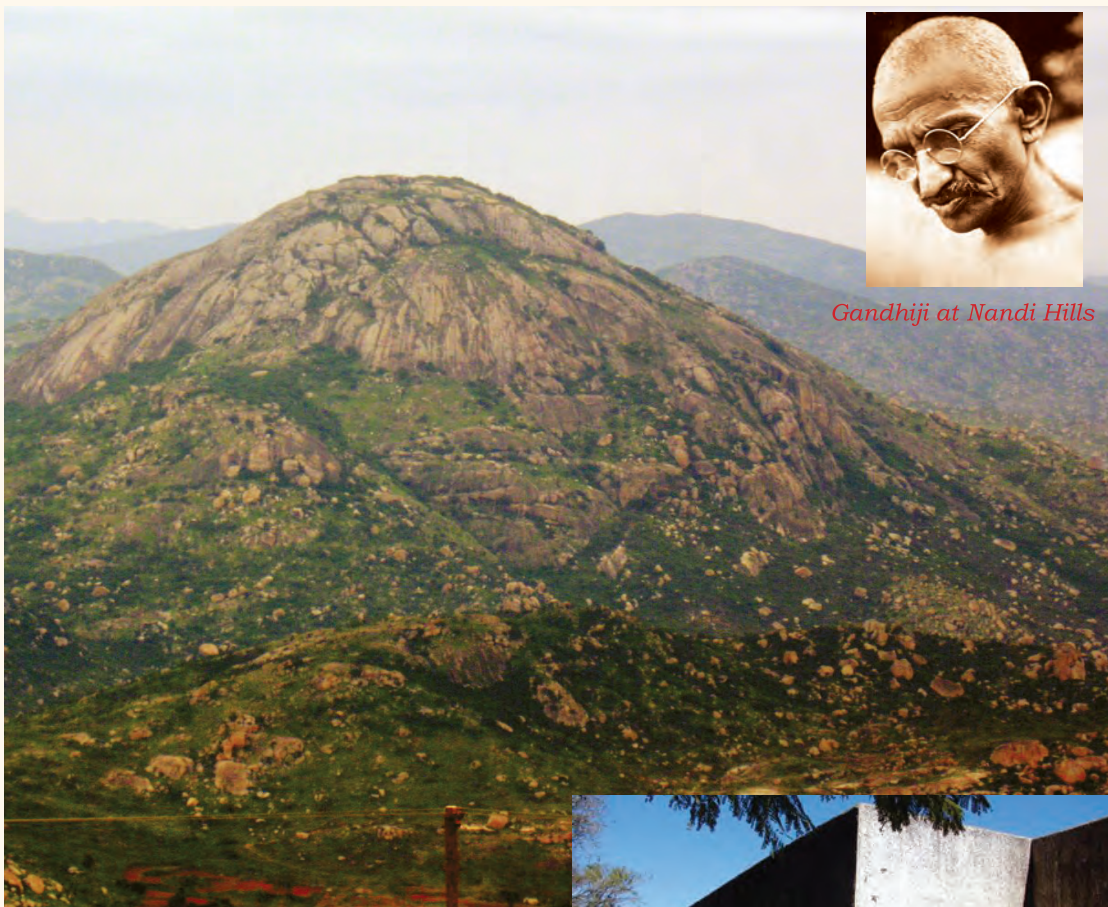
¹¹ Studies, pp: 44-46; Karnataka Gazetteer, I, 1982, pp:898-902.

¹² James Manor, p.64.

popularity and strength of the Congress was another disturbing factor,” says H.P.Shashidhara Murthy.¹³

But an important development during the period was a violent incident called the ‘*Ganapathi Galate*’ in 1928 with its echo in 1929 which helped the Congress in Bangalore. It relegated most of the old leaders of the Praja Mitra Mandali including Abbas Khan, (its leader), a close friend of Sir Mirza to the background and made many young leaders lean towards the Congress as well as join the Congress. “This put an end to whatever was left of the old informal alliance between Muslims and non-Brahmin Hindu politicians,” says James Manor.¹⁴

Dewan Mirza (Sir from 1930) was a patriot and lover of Congress leaders like Mahatma Gandhi. But his loyalty to the Maharaja was stronger because he was his servant and was committed to the development of Mysore. The Maharaja was not willing to share power with any person or party.



In the meanwhile, in 1927 Gandhiji who was on tour of south Maharashtra had a minor stroke. He was advised total rest and Mirza invited him to stay at the Nandi Hills. Though this was



Gandhiji Nilaya - Nandi Hills

13. Studies, pp:88-89.

14. James Manor, p.64.

arranged in the name of a local reception committee headed by Mir Hamza Hussain, a retired Council Member, Mirza was instrumental in arranging the stay. From 7th April 1927, for four months, Gandhiji was in Mysore State, enjoying the hospitality of the State Government. Hundreds of the elite and students from Bangalore and surrounding districts met the Mahatma who insisted on their wearing Khadi. Several rounds of discussion were held on national problems. Sir M.Visvesvaraya and Dewan Mirza also met Gandhiji several times during his stay. In June, Gandhiji came to Bangalore and in July stayed for almost a month in Bangalore at the Kumarakrupa Guest House, where prayer meetings were arranged in the evenings attended by hundreds wearing Khadi. He also visited many organizations in the city as well as the Imperial Dairy Farms run by an Englishman. He received donations for Khadi work wherever he went. A Khadi exhibition and a Hindi Conference were arranged in Bangalore. He also toured the districts of Hassan, Tumkur, Chikkamagalur, Mysore and Chitradurga where the local people raised funds for Khadi work. On 30th August, a public reception was arranged for him in Lalbagh and purse of Rs.10,000 was presented to Gandhiji on behalf of the citizens. His long stay, talks and conversation with men, big and small, had its own impact. "Gandhiji's long stay at Bangalore had created an environment that not only helped the cause of Khadi, but created an atmosphere in favour of nationalism."¹⁵

Youth Towards Nationalism

Thousands of young men attended Gandhiji's meetings and the local newspaper gave wide coverage to his programmes. Gandhiji, met the Maharaja at Mysore and also presented him a spinning wheel. Dewan Mirza promised Gandhiji that there was no objection to Government servants wearing Khadi and started the Badanwal Khadi Production Center in Nanjangud taluk in 1927.¹⁶

M.B.Patil gives details of the Khadi Spinning Center thus: By 1927 the Center provided employment to 2600 spinners and 1200 weavers. Cloth of the value of about Rs.60,000 was produced at the center in 1927, thereby making it almost self-supportive. Branches were opened at Kolar, Gundlupet and Chitradurga. "One of the objectives of this Kendra was the economic development of Harijans, wherein Harijan women were trained in spinning and carding with improved instruments." Hanks of yarn came to be used as a means of exchange (currency) in the markets of Nanjangud and the center was described as weavers' "good angel".¹⁷

The '*Ganapathi Galate*' of 1928 changed the political scenario considerably, if not radically. Though Mirza was a Muslim, he was not termed as communal. But the company he kept and the circumstances in which he was placed made people consider him as one. Some of his close associates like Abbas Khan,

15. Karnataka Gazetteer, Bangalore District, p.100.

16. Ibid., p.101.

17. Studies, p.17.



leader of the Praja Mitra Mandali became the Municipal President. Sir Mirza with Abbas Khan and other officers used to go round the city almost every week on horseback to inspect the development works. This was described by vested interests as a ‘campaign’ of the Muslims. Abbas Khan, being a leader of the Praja Mitra Mandali was hated by the Hindu elite. Under the pretext of broadening roads by the Municipality, he had cut many pipal trees in the city, demolished their platforms (*Katte*) and removed several Naga stones, causing heart burn among the Hindus. They termed Abbas Khan as anti-Hindu and this mud was also slung at Mirza.

A Senior Civil Servant P G D’Souza, who had worked as a Council Member and the Chief Secretary alleges in his autobiography that Mirza took advantage of the provision of 50 percent reservation in appointments for Backward Classes in which Muslims were also included as a result of the Miller Committee recommendation. Mirza helped the recruitment of as many Muslims as possible in government service. Like the Brahmins, the Muslims too were better educated than other castes. Though Mirza “proposed great impartiality, Muslims received extraordinary advancement under him. Being treated as “backward”, they secured a larger number of appointments under the 50 percent Rule.” The ranks of *Amildars* and Assistant Commissioners gradually began to show their preponderance. This produced great discontent, as Sir Mirza was a Muslim, and the “irregularity was attributed to him,” alleges D’Souza.¹⁸ These were some of the reasons which helped to spread the rumours of pro-Muslim leanings of Mirza.

But the worst to happen was the “*Ganapathi Galate*” or violent incident of 1928. A stray Ganapathi image placed in the compound of Bangalore Sultanpet Government School was fixed in a canopy by the contractor while whitewashing the school building. This school and the image happened to be in front of Abbas Khan’s house on the opposite side of the road. Abbas Khan is said to have opposed its installation, and reported it to Dewan Mirza. The image was shifted to the school’s lumber room. The school boys were furious about the removal and protested loudly. Local papers reported the incident. Three Congress workers, Jamkhandi Bhim Rao, Ram Lal Tiwari and H.V. Subrahmanya entered the fray and there was general strike by boys of all schools. Some Muslims in the Sultanpet area turned restless. The three Congress leaders were arrested. As Sir Mirza was out of town, Council Member Mathan promised the restoration of the image to its original place.

The boys assembled in hundreds near Sir Mirza’s residence, shouting slogans. The Dewan returned to the city and tried to reach the Secretariat in his car. Crowds surrounded his vehicle and threw stones at the vehicle, breaking the front screen glass. Mirza proceeded to the Secretariat and the boys and many grown up people also followed him from the Dewan’s residence (Carlton House) to the Secretariat (present High Court building). More joined the mob. The IGP deputed Mysore Lancers numbering 80, to restore order and many boys were not only hit by the charging of the Lancers, but were also

18. Ibid., p.30.

trodden by horses' hoofs and wounded. Arrested persons were released next evening. They were all brought in a huge procession to the school where the image was restored and *pooja* was performed in front of about 5000 people. By then it was late in the night. The jubilant assembly was all of a sudden attacked by the Muslims. A shot was fired on the mob. There was retaliation by the Hindus and the whole area witnessed disturbances. Over 80 Hindus and two Muslims were hurt. The next day there were cases of stabbing in various parts of the city and the bazaars remained closed. This news spread to other places in the State and disturbances occurred elsewhere as well. Bangalore was tense for almost a month. The local newspapers, *Tainadu*, *Vishwa Karnataka*, *Chitragupta*, *Navajeevana*, *Veerakesari* and papers from Mysore city reported the daily developments.

When the news appeared in *The Daily Mail* in London, Sir Mirza was alarmed. The government issued statements saying no shot was fired on the day of the disturbances. *The Indian Daily Mail* from Bombay published the photograph of the boy who had been wounded by the single shot. In the Legislative Council also, there was a demand for an enquiry. The Government appointed an Inquiry Committee headed by Sir M Visvesvaraya to look into the matter. The daily hearing of the Inquiry was held at the Mythic Society Hall and was reported in newspapers in detail.

The Inquiry in its report absolved the Dewan of any offence and condemned the IGP for his behaviour on the day. If the Government enjoyed no moral support of the public, it was difficult for the government to run day-to-day administration, the report opined. To end all such crises, there is a need to establish responsible government in the state, the Sir M Visvesvaraya Inquiry Commission strongly recommended. (*Ibid*)

Sir Mirza in his book *My Public Life* (memoirs) confessed that a Muslim Municipal President was responsible for all the trouble after 4-5 years, and the people's anger against the gentleman was directed against the Dewan, Sir Mirza himself. Though Sir Mirza does not mention Abbas Khan's name, the Visvesvaraya Report does indicate Abbas Khan's name. "There seems to be a disinclination on the part of the police officers to take any action which might cast shadows on Mr. Abbas Khan on account of his position. This may be seen in the lack of action when disturbances occurred near Mr. Khan's house. The District Magistrate and Inspector General of Police and other senior officers were there immediately after the riot and heard all the reports and rumours but did nothing," quoting the report says S R Ramaswamy. He adds that "In the entire episode, it is the Press which played a crucial role."¹⁹ The newspaper reports were against the government, and the nationalist forces demanding responsible government grew very strong. But the repercussion of the '*Ganapathi Galate*' was very serious. The younger followers of the Praja Mitra Mandali lost faith in Abbas Khan.

Again in 1929, there was another disturbance on the occasion of the anniversary of the 1928 incident (installation of the image). The police had permitted only the school boys to hold the programme. But the provocative behaviour of one police officer caused serious disturbances and mill workers also joined the fray. This incident also was communal in nature. The police resorted to firing and one person was killed. A total of 105 persons were arrested and cases filed against them for rioting. After a

19. Studies, p.18.

year, six persons were convicted and the rest were acquitted. The prosecuted men included some journalists too. The newspapers were highly critical of Sir Mirza. An article written by famous journalist 'Veerakesari' Sitarama Shastry in the daily *Navajeevana* criticising the administration as an elephant in rut without any goad to control it, invited prosecution. Author Shastry and the editor of *Navajeevana*, C.Ashwatha Narayana were sentenced to nine months' imprisonment each. H.K.Veeranna Gauda's *Chitragupta* daily had to be closed due to the official situation.²⁰ The highly confidential Visvesvaraya Committee Report was serialised in *Chitragupta*, and it was a 'scoop' in those days, but an insult to the administration. Veeranna Gauda holds the Dewan responsible for its closure.²¹

Congress Growing Strong

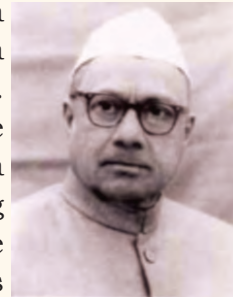
These were the days when Congress leaders from Madras and Bombay Presidencies repeatedly came to Bangalore and Mysore, addressed public meetings and were mobilising public opinion favouring nationalism. Young men attended these meetings in hundreds. So did the labourers.

Many young leaders who were unhappy with the Praja Mitra Mandali after the "*Ganapathi Galate*" started Praja Paksha in 1930 to demand for a responsible government. K.C.Reddy, V.Venkatappa and D.V.Gundappa were its leaders. The last named had put forth the idea of a responsible government from 1918, and was a leading



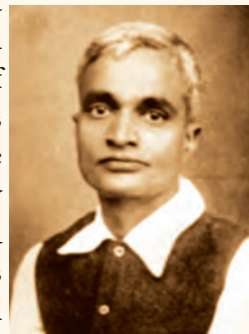
D.V.Gundappa

journalist also. The founders of the Praja Paksha did not join Congress as it was dubbed as the party of the Brahmins. The successful Bardoli Satyagraha in Gujarat (1928) launched by Sardar Patel in favour of the farmers helped Congress to win the sympathies of Mysore farmers.



K.Chengalraya Reddy

The Civil Disobedience movement launched by Congress in 1930 with the Salt Satyagraha and the Dandi March led by Mahatma Gandhi was confined only to the British Presidencies. Scores of Congress volunteers from Mysore State, mostly students (as the movement was launched in April, which was the vacation season) and many elderly workers went to Bombay Presidency-Dharwad, Belgaum, Bijapur and Canara (Uttara Kannada) districts and parts of Madras Presidency. Dozens of them had been trained as volunteers by Hindustani Seva Dal started (1923) by Dr. N.S. Hardikar. They were trained to be 'non-violent soldiers' in the struggle. A unit of the Seva Dal was



Dr. N.S. Hardikar

20. Bangalore Gazetteer., Ibid; SSS, II, p.52, (Account by K.Jivanna Rao).

21. SSS, II, pp: 380-81 (Account by H.K.Veeranna Gowda).

functioning at the National High School of Bangalore where scores of people had been trained. These persons stimulated the movement by leading processions, singing patriotic songs, guiding local folk of the region to participate in the movement for the Salt Satyagraha, Forest Satyagraha, picketing of liquor shops etc. and courted arrest in Bombay Presidency and many underwent imprisonment. When they returned to Mysore and to their houses, either in June or after the Gandhi-Irvin Pact, they worked to strengthen Congress in Mysore. From 1931 to 1942, these persons could spread Congress activities at the grassroot level by undertaking constructive works like Khadi, propagation of Hindi, anti-drink campaign or working for the adult literacy movement, anti-untouchability campaign etc.

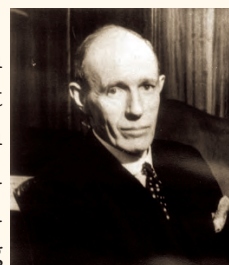
The rump of the Praja Mitra Mandli joined Praja Paksha (Peoples' Party) founded in 1934 with the nomenclature of United Peoples Party or Praja Samyukta Paksha demanding a responsible government. Congress was till then regarded as a 'Brahmins' party' for many leaders. But the younger generation who had participated in the Satyagraha in Bombay and Madras was not bothered about 'responsible government' but only freedom. In 1937, Praja Samyukta Paksha and the Congress merged to form the 'Mysore Congress' as an all-India Congress did not allow its name to be used in princely states. The growing strength of Congress and the peaceful agitational approach that it adopted added to Sir Mirza's woes as an administrator together with the opposition he faced from the Paramount Power over his policy of industrialization.

At the all-India level, the Simon Commission was appointed in 1927 for reviewing constitutional reforms. But as the Commission had no Indian members, the Congress boycotted it and appointed the Motilal Nehru Committee to draft a constitution for India. The Committee gave a call to the Indian Princes that they should declare their intention of establishing



a responsible government and also assure freedom of expression, personal liberty, protection of individual properties, and proper laws to be passed to safeguard these. This gave courage to the Congress or other peoples' organizations working in princely states for people's rights. The Calcutta session of the Congress presided over by Motilal Nehru approved the Nehru Committee Report. The Lahore Congress of 1929 announced 'Poorna Swaraj' as its goal and Civil Disobedience Movement was launched in 1930.

The Civil Disobedience Movement of 1930-31 ended with the Gandhi-Irvin Pact in March 1931. The British Government announced the holding of the Round-Table Conference in London to discuss constitutional changes. Sir Mirza attended all the three Round Table Conferences (in 1930, 1931 and 1932) in London, representing the princely states, including



Lord Edward Irwin



First Round Table Conference - London



Second Round Table Conference - London

Mysore. He supported the idea of a Federal Government which included the princely states as a part. Sir Mirza's active role in the three Conferences added to his reputation. Sir Basil Blacket, a senior English statesman said that Sir Mirza "had a profound influence on the Round Table Conference."²² During this period, Sir M.N.Krishna Rao (1877-1958), who had served earlier as Comptroller and Financial Secretary; became the First member of the Council. Subsequently, he was appointed as Officiating Dewan in 1930. He laid down this office in September 1933.



Sir M.N.Krishna Rao

Deshabhakti Vs. Rajabhakti

"Sir Mirza took pains to develop and foster love for the throne (*Rajabhakti*) as against Nationalism (*Deshabhakti*), and was encouraging reactionary forces," says V.S.Narayana Rao.²³ To win over the influential rich, land owners and merchants," Narayan Rao points out, "they were conferred titles like '*Rajaseva Dhurina*' (Leader in Royal service), '*Rajamantra Praveena*' (Expert in advising

²². Sreenivas Aingar, p.6.

²³. VSN, p.48-49.

the king), '*Lokaseva Nirata*' (Engaged in people's service) etc. with gold medals presented to them at grand functions." These persons missed no opportunity to praise the Maharaja and the prince. Mirza invited leading personalities from all over India and made them speak in praise of the Maharaja and the administration. He also got reports and articles published in newspapers of London and New York paying tribute to the Mysore administration. While issuing advertisements to newspapers, he was calculative and favouring those publications which were friendly to the administration.²⁴

Narayan Rao also points out that every effort was made to project the Maharaja as the great center of veneration, as against nationalism or patriotism. People were dazzled by the grandeur of the Dasara festival and the highly impressive procession *Jambu Savari* where the Maharaja was presented with all the grandeur and paraphernalia. Mirza realised that the people of Bangalore rarely had an opportunity to witness Dasara. The Silver Jubilee of the Coronation of the Maharaja was celebrated at 1927 at Lalbagh with a lustrous Durbar and the Maharaja was taken in a grand procession with all the colour and pomp on the main roads of Bangalore, to overawe the people. Silver Jubilee celebrations were also organized in Madras, Bombay, Calcutta and London. A Resolution wishing the Maharaja's health, was passed unanimously in the Representative Assembly and Legislative Council. "These were deliberate efforts of Dewan Mirza to enlarge the royal image in the minds of the people," says Narayana Rao.²⁵

But the Civil Disobedience Movement had strengthened the patriotic feelings of the people. The Non-Tax Campaign launched in various parts of the country enthused the farmers and a huge *jathas* were organised in the Irvin Nala area in Mandya district by Congressman H.K.Veeranna Gauda against excessive water rates in the Cauvery valley.²⁶ "The growing acceptance of nationalist ideas by the Non-Brahmins is apparent from the active involvement of many of them during the late 1920s and early 1930s in projects to further the constructive work programme of the National Congress, particularly efforts for Harijan uplift," says James Manor.²⁷

People connected with Arya Samaj, Brahma Samaj and Theosophical Society, who were mostly non-Brahmins were attracted towards the Congress activity. Among them were T.Siddalingayya of Doddaballapur who was a Theosophist and W.H.Hanumanthappa Sr. of Bangalore, who was a Brahma Samaj person.

The all-India Congress Working Committee at its meeting at Wardha in July 1935 also passed a resolution saying that if British India (Presidencies) was fit for Swarajya, the Princely States' people also were eligible for that. The Working Committee also supported the founding of responsible governments in the Princely States.²⁸

24. Ibid

25. Ibid

26. SSS, II, p.381 (Account by H.K.Veeranna Gowda)

27. James Manor, p.27.

28.. V.S.N., pp:50-51.

In his address at the Representative Assembly in June, Sir Mirza said that the Government had no intention to change the existing constitution. When the current administrative system was functioning satisfactorily, the demand for more power by the subjects of the state surprised him. In a letter to *London Times*, he wrote that he had no faith in adult franchise.²⁹

After the Poona Pact between Dr. Ambedkar and Gandhiji, the Harijan Sevak Sangh was founded. Gandhiji toured Mysore State in 1934 to propagate against the practices of untouchability and collected funds for Harijan Sevak Sangh. Full co-operation was rendered to Gandhiji and his entourage by the State Government of Mysore when he visited many important towns including Bangalore and Mysore. A civic address was presented to him by Bangalore Municipality. Though Gandhiji did not speak on politics as such directly, people's enthusiasm for nationalism was demonstrated by the mammoth gatherings to receive him and the good response he received for his request for donations to the Harijan Fund.

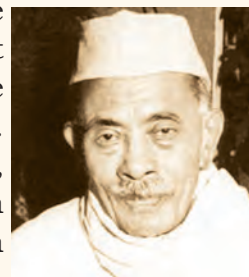


Mahatma Gandhiji

Sir Mirza met Gandhiji and sought his goodwill. Gandhiji visited Mysore state again in 1936 and stayed at Nandi Hills for almost a month in May after which he visited Bangalore. The untouchability eradication movement had its echoes in the Mysore palace. The *Panchamas* (Harijan) officers and other leaders were for the first time invited to the Durbar held at palace during the Dasara festival in 1936.

An Illusion about Gandhiji

It seemed as if Sir Mirza and the Maharaja were under the impression that Gandhiji had a permanent soft corner for Mysore administration. In 1936, Gandhiji visited the Government Soap Factory and the Government Workshop at Bangalore and admired the progressive administration of Mysore. This illusion is indicated in a remark by the Maharaja, expressed to Sir Mirza who shared this with a freedom fighter after some tragic developments in 1938. Bhupalam Chandrashekharaiyah, a freedom fighter from Shimoga met Sir Mirza over a serious crisis that had developed after the Vidhurashwatha Tragedy.



*Bhoopalam
Chandrashekharaiyah*

Sir Mirza had great regard for Bhupalam as his speeches in the Assembly were highly constructive. In the controversy over power production, Bhupalam had enlightened and convinced Sir Mirza that the electric power generated at Jog had to be of 50 cycles frequency as against 25 cycles frequency power produced at the Cauvery. He explained that 50 cycles was the new trend and the equipment and machinery were to be tuned to the latter.³⁰

29. Ibid

30. SSS, III pp:889-87.



Naga Images and Temple - Vidhurashwatha

He met Sir Mirza immediately after the Vidhurashwatha Tragedy on 25 April 1938 conveying Gandhiji's message. Gandhiji had suggested that if the State does not allow hoisting the National flag, a 'Death Brigade' of five would proceed to Vidhurashwatha everyday and insist on hoisting the National flag, challenging the police and military posted there. This was in the first week of May 1938 that Bhupalam met Mirza and conveyed Gandhiji's instruction to the Congress. Even before Bhupalam could meet Mirza after his meeting with Gandhiji at Wardha, newspapers had wrongly reported the message as "Mahatma Gandhi to lead Death Brigade in Mysore." What Gandhiji had told Bhupalam was that the proposed Sayagraha will be guided by him personally wherever he was. This was wrongly reported, and Gandhiji also immediately denied the report. "What I told Bhoopalam Chandrashekhariah was that I shall guide him from wherever I am. But in his grief and agitated state of mind over the Vidhurashwatha tragedy in which the Police shot dead the Flag Satyagrahis, he totally misunderstood the message and conveyed the news that I would myself lead the Death Brigade of Flag-Satyagraha in Mysore"(Telegram to A.P. news agency, published)³¹

But news of Bhupalam meeting Gandhiji had been wrongly conveyed to the newsmen by some others and not Bhupalam. Gandhiji had told Bhupalam to convey his decision to the Mysore durbar. But all this appeared in all-India newspapers and the Maharaja was very upset.

31. Ibid, p.897.



About the episode, Sir Mirza told Bhupalam that on the day the news broke out, the Maharaja was so upset and showed so much contempt towards the Dewan that the Dewan said that he had never felt humiliated by the Maharaja in the course of the last 22 years of his very close relationship. “Has your Gandhi lost his faith in you?”³² The Maharaja insultingly asked Sir Mirza. This was reported by Sir Mirza to Bhupalam. Both the Maharaja and Sir Mirza were under the impression that Gandhiji had so much regard for them that the Mahatma would not speak or act against them forgetting that Gandhiji had his own supreme national agenda which transcended personal goodwill or relationships. This episode is quoted here to show the wrong assumptions the Mysore durbar had made over Gandhiji’s soft corner for Mysore State.

Industrialization

But as an earnest lover of Mysore and a dutiful Dewan, Sir Mirza had continued the policy of industrialization of the state. After the exit of Sir M Visvesvaraya as Dewan, his successors Sir M.Kantaraja Urs and Albion Banerjee, had nothing to offer to develop a vision for modern industrial growth. Kantaraj Urs was Dewan for a short period. He was sickly and devoted much of his energy to implement the Miller Committee Report. The post-War period was also one of scarcity and revenue stagnated. To finance public works which were incomplete, a public loan of Rs. One crore was floated. Kantaraj Urs remarked, “Some people after all had made money during the war because the loan became over-subscribed within three months”.³³

Banerjee devoted much of his energy in administrative changes and meeting the problems created by the natural calamities which were urgent and pressing. Moreover, the Industrial Department itself felt “that the large number of concerns that have already been started were presenting a number of problems”. In 1923, the Economic Conference had to be cancelled because of financial stringency. The year 1924 saw floods and drought which called for relief work on an emergency basis.

“As Mirza Ismail was to remain Dewan for a long period from 1926 to 1941, and as he probably was the most powerful among all the Dewans, it seems equally relevant as in the case of Visvesvaraya to pinpoint the problem of development. There is abundant evidence to suggest that Ismail considered himself a successor of Visvesvaraya whom he admired much, and in a few cases he was even acting upon the advice of Visvesvaraya,” says Hettne. Like Visvesvaraya, the basic policy can be summarised “as a persistent struggle for the political and economy of Mysore,” Hettne adds. A Committee headed by P.G.D’Souza, Director, Department of Industries and Commerce in 1928 submitted a proposal that the Government can lend up to 25 percent assets to a joint stock company to start a new industry and 50 percent in other cases. Government representatives can be increased in its Board of management. A

32. Ibid

33.. Speeches (Kantharaj Urs) p.128.

fair proportion of the personnel should be Mysoreans in the establishment and the capital also should be Mysore. Sir Mirza saw to it that State's role must be bigger in starting new industries. The Committee had opposed the passive role of the government, followed for long after Sir M Visvesvaraya's Dewanship.

But Sir Mirza started with great courage to achieve a forward thrust in the field of economic growth. Production started at the Iron Mill and Canal Work of the K.R.Sagar, was progressing well. Still 1929-30 was a year of "unprecedented slump in all branches of trade and industry." It was the year of world depression and the Report of the Department of Industries and Commerce 1930-31 as a year of "acute depression". Still Sir Mirza's Address to the Representative Assembly was full of confidence, "A policy of courage is, to my mind, the proper policy for Mysore and we have not therefore shut down Bhadravati or State's any industrial establishment, or called to halt, to our scheme for development. On the other hand, we have proposed that we should go ahead, with the Irwin Canal, new silk factory and electrification of towns and similar schemes."³⁴

"People who have money should invest it on land or raise buildings. We lack initiative in starting industries. Nobody wants to take risks in investing money to start factories. So it is the state which has to take initiative. Due to this background the state itself must start industries," felt Sir Mirza calling such ventures "State Socialism." If anybody either from the state or outside volunteered to start any industrial enterprise, he assured them of the States' help or participation with basic facilities.

Using silk waste as raw material, Mysore Spun Silk Mills was started at Channapatna with 3000 spindles in 1936. The State invested Rs.85,000 for starting this as a public limited company. Spun silk weighing 80,000 pounds was used for manufacturing spun silk yarn, raw silk fabrics, sarees, waste silk druggets, pile carpets, coating and shirting etc.³⁵

Bhadravati Complex

The Mysore Iron Works and Distilleries started by the efforts of Sir M V was vastly expanded by adding a steel production unit (1936) in the days of Sir Mirza. Sir M Visvesvaraya was the Chairman of the Board of Managers till 1929. Sir M N Krishna Rao became the next Chairman. Instead of producing only raw material, manufacture of finished goods was also started. Its nomenclature was changed as The Mysore Iron and Steel Works with the commissioning of a cast iron pipe plant, open hearth furnace, rolling mills (1936) and a cement plant.³⁶ The furnace was designed to give a daily output of 80 tons. Japan's competition became acute in 1930s and Government of India on request from Mysore, passed the Iron and Steel Duties Act of 1934 and extended protection to iron and steel production for seven years. The steel produced here was found to be exceptionally pure on account of very low

34. Speeches (Sir Mirza), vol. II p.59.

35. Karnataka Gazetteer, I, p.785.

36. Ibid

percentage of phosphorous and sulphur. It was found to be ideal raw material for special and other alloy steels. It was the largest producer of steel and alloy steel in India. A high tension line from Mysore to Bhadravati to supply power was drawn. Despite economic depression and strong competition in the world market, the unit survived through the efforts of Sir Mirza and the Second World War helped it to see better days. When the 18-mile long water supply line from the new reservoir at Tippegondanahalli to Bangalore was commissioned, the huge pipes produced at Bhadravati were used for the pipe line. Later named Visvesvaraya Iron and Steel Ltd. (VISL), it is now managed by the Steel Authority of India.

A cement plant was established in 1938 at Bhadravati with a kiln of 80 tonnes capacity per day producing 20,000 tonnes of portland cement annually. The blast furnace slag of the iron and steel unit was used in this new unit. This also saved the transportation charges from elsewhere. As per the plan outlined by Sir Mirza, a steel foundry with 3 ½ tonnes of electric arc furnace, and adjunct to the open-hearth furnace was installed. ³⁷

Another noted enterprise started was the Mysore Paper Mills Ltd. at Bhadravati in 1936, with government taking share in the enterprise, making it a joint stock company. Its foundation was laid in 1937 and regular manufacture began in 1939. The region is full of bamboo forests which came to be used as raw material. Rag pulp was also used for separate quality paper. The Bison Brand paper of Bhadravati had a special reputation. The daily production of paper was 12 tonnes at the beginning.

With a view to achieve economy, Sir Mirza stated that the Chairman of the Iron and Steel Works and Paper Mill should be a single person. The Managing Director too should be a single individual. This would provide the technical services of the engineers of the Iron and Steel Works to the paper mill also. This policy was announced by Sir Mirza in the Representative Assembly in 1936. ³⁸

The Mysore Match Company started in 1927 by a private company had a government share of 10 percent out of its authorised capital of Rs.10 lakhs. The factory had a capacity for producing 1000 grosses of match boxes per day and employed 300 persons. In 1940, the factory was taken over by the Government.

Industries in Mandya District

The K.R.Sagar Dam which provided irrigation to Mandya district in the late 1920s and early 1930s helped the farmers



Sugar cane

37. Karnataka Gazetteer, Shimoga Dist. P.187.

38. VSN, p.22.

to raise sugarcane crops on a very large scale. Since the Government had started a 200 acre cane farm earlier, the farmers took to raising sugarcane on their own. Though jaggery was produced, they were aware that production of sugar on modern lines would bring maximum

benefit to the Sugar cane growers. The Sugar industry being in the nature of a new industrial venture and capital being needed, the Mysore government took the initiative to float a Joint stock company. Sir M.Visvesvaraya had



Lesli C. Coleman

suggested this earlier. The Mysugar company came into existence at Mandya in January 1933 with an authorised capital of Rs 20 lakhs of which 60 percent was the Government's share. Sir Mirza always believed in mixed economy. Sixty percent of the shares were held by the Government in a novel move where a majority of shares was held by the State. This instilled confidence in other investors and production started in 1934. Government of India granted protection to the

Sugar industry in 1932 which was another advantage. The Brain behind the establishment of Mysugar company at Mandya, which resulted in 'Financial and Economic progress' of the people of Mandya, is a Canadian Gentlemen, Lesli C. Colman.

The quantity of sugar produced was only 5,250 tons in the first year. The next year capacity of the factory was raised and 600 tones of cane per day were crushed. In 1940-41 the factory crushed 3,13,000 tonnes of sugarcane and produced 30,601 tonnes of sugar. It had the longest crushing season of 250 to 300 days due to regular supply of cane and abundant irrigation facilities.³⁹ The scarcity created by the Second World War proved a boon to the factory.

A distillery was installed in 1935 for the economic disposal of the molasses with an initial production capacity of 1500 gallons of rectified spirit per day. This was the first modern distillery in India. Initially alcohol was used for power purposes. Later a dehydration unit which could convert industrial alcohol into absolute alcohol was established. It was the first such plant to be installed in India. There was great demand for alcohol during the Second World War, and as new plants could not be imported then, steps were taken to fabricate such a plant at Bangalore. Absolute alcohol of 99.6 percent purity, Rectified Spirit, Denatured Spirit, molasses, arrack, and special liquors such as brandy, whisky, gin and rum were produced in this factory in course of time.⁴⁰



Sugar Factory, Mandya



39. Karnataka Gazetteer, Mandya Dist. Pp:160-64.

40. Ibid; p.164.



Another factory started in Mandya district by the Mysore Government was the Mysore Chemicals and Fertilizers Ltd at Belagola in 1937 with an authorised capital of Rs.25 lakhs. It was planned by S.G.Sastry, Director of Industries and Commerce and the machinery was imported from The Chemical Construction Corporation, New York. It started production from 1940 with distilled water which was decomposed and hydrogen and oxygen were produced. An Ammonia Plant was installed to make use of hydrogen and produced five tonnes of ammonia per day. The Ammonium Sulphate plant in the complex produced 20 tonnes of Ammonium Sulphate per day.⁴¹ An Acid Plant attached to it produced 25 tonnes of sulphuric acid per day. The whole complex required availability of electric power at a concession rate of 0.125 of an anna per unit and this was supplied for the whole factory. This was the first fertilizer unit in India.

The Mysore Implements Factory was started in 1940 at Hassan with a capital of Rs1.78 lakhs as a state enterprise to produce implements and machinery needed by agriculturists. These included *mumties*, hammers, pick-axes, shovels, hoes, axes, plough etc. The implements were produced of high carbon steel and gained an export market. Machinery needed for production could not be imported and locally the machines were forged, providing more employment.

In Bangalore too, several industries were started. The Government Electric Factory was founded in 1934 to produce transformers (produced for the first time in India), motors, pumps, transmission towers etc. The Mysore Lamp Works Ltd was started in 1936 with a capital of Rs 5 lakhs, the government holding 17.6 shares in the unit. All types of electric lamps, incandescent electric lamps, neon signs, etc. and train lighting lamps were manufactured.



Mysore Lamps Factory

The Government Porcelain Factory was also started in 1937 to manufacture insulators for the Electrical Department as well as domestic crockery. It worked in collaboration with Nippon Gaisha Ltd of Nagoya, Japan.

The Mysore Industrial and Testing Laboratory (MITL) was founded in 1931 at Bangalore as a government concern for producing pharmaceutical, chemicals, malt extracts, etc. It supplied medicines to government hospitals and produced medicines worth Rs 65,000 in 1936. It also succeeded in producing bitumen (asphalt) used for paving roads required by the P W D⁴²

The Mysore Chemical and Manufacturers Ltd was started at Belagola in 1940 and Tarabanahalli in Bangalore district 1941 as a private enterprise. But Sir Mirza extended all help to the venture. It produced Copper Sulphate for the first time in India, and also Sulphate of Ammonia and Alum.⁴³ Several private industries were started with the Dewan's encouragement and help. They were as given here.

41. Ibid; p.171

42. Karnataka Gazetteer, I, p.787.

43. Karnataka Gazetteer, Mandya Dist, p.171.

Jewels of Administration

- 1) AMCO Batteries,
- 2) The KAR Mobiles Ltd.,
- 3) The Fire Brick and Potteries,
- 4) The Mysore Stoneware Pipes and Potteries,
- 5) The Mysore Vegetable Oil Companies,
- 6) The Mysore Hosieries Ltd,
- 7) Mysore Vegetable Oil Products,
- 8) The Mysore Glass and Enamel Works,
- 9) The Balakrishna Flour Mills,
- 10) The Elgin Flour Mills.



Elgin Flour Mills, (now no more) Bengaluru



Workers at work, Harihara



Maharaja & his Court at Harihara

The Mysore Kirloskar Ltd. started their venture at Harihar, Chitradurga district in 1944 with an authorised capital of Rs10 lakhs. The first textile mill at Davangere was started in 1939. This is only a selection of industries to show how private industries developed under Sir Mirza's Dewanship. They were provided with land and other facilities. Availability of cheap power was another factor.

Sir Mirza was guided by the Swadeshi spirit and all industries that he started made use of local material. In a speech given by him, he proudly spoke of the comprehensiveness of his industrial policy. "We are very proud of products of our factories, and at the risk of being called provincial, try to set before all true Mysoreans the ideal that they should wash themselves with Mysore soap, dry themselves with Mysore towels, clothe themselves in Mysore silks, ride Mysore horses, eat the abundant Mysore food, drink Mysore coffee with Mysore sugar, build their homes with Mysore cement, Mysore timber, Mysore steel, furnish their homes with Mysore furniture and write their letters on Mysore paper."⁴⁴

Sir Mirza paid a great deal of attention towards development of tourism and worked to preserve ancient monuments. The famous Hoysala temples at Belur and Halebid were renovated with their premises, cleared of wild growth and roads, improved. The Chamundi Hills was provided with a motorable road and the environment on the hill was



Way to Chamundi Hills

44. Quoted by Sreenivas Aingar p.12; from Dr.L.F.Rushbrook Williams Famous Letters and Speeches.

improved. The Biligirirangana Betta and Himavath Gopala Swamy temple in Chamaraj Nagra district were cleared of wild growth and motorable roads to the places were created. At Srirangapatna too, the old monuments were repaired. The fading paintings in Dariya Daulat palace were retouched and the palace was given a new look. Debris of buildings and old damaged houses were cleared which had become common



Wall Paintings, Dariya Daulat, Srirangapatana



Kemmanagundi Hills

haunts of snakes and bandicoots. Public attention to Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary was drawn after it was cleared and cleaned and a serene Paschima Vahini's atmosphere at Srirangapatna was restored. A road was constructed to Nandi Hills and buildings atop were repaired and renovated. Facilities were also provided atop the hill for water, accommodation to stay and availability of food. Roads were built to Agumbe and Gersoppa (Jog) Falls and guest houses constructed. The Brindavan Gardens is also the concept of Sir Mirza. Beautiful parks and fine bungalows were constructed at Kemmannagundi Hills which was renamed Krishnarajendra Giridhama. The approach roads were also improved. On the whole, Sir Mirza undertook a lot of work to improve tourism facilities in the State.



Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary

D.V.Gundappa mentions that Sir Mirza paid close attention to proper behaviour of officers and had a watchful eye on corrupt Government servants. If any Government servant was involved in debt, he used to personally enquire into the matter and punish him if he was wrong or irregular in his dealings. When he came to know that some Assistant Commissioners had borrowed



Jataka Stand, Shivajinagar, Bengaluru

beyond their capacity and were involved in litigations, he forced them to take leave and made them report to duty only after the cases were settled and brought a certificate to that effect. Even one of his relatives who was in this situation, was not spared for such accountability.

In the 1930s, city buses were introduced in Bangalore by a private company. The *jatkavalas* strongly protested against such

a facility as it affected their business. Along with their *jhaktas* and horses, they held a protest in front of the Bangalore palace. “The whole palace premises was heaped with horse-dung,” says D.V.Gundappa jocularly. When new progressive ideas come, the old naturally clashed with them. The *jhatkavalas*, who were mostly Muslims abused Sir Mirza and even asked, “What kind of a Muslim is he? He has no beard.”

With the growth of industries, the demand for electricity was increasing. Sir Mirza sanctioned Rs.12.68 lakhs to have a single 4,000 horse power New electric generator unit at Shivasamudra instead of two machines,



Shimsha Power Station

each of two horse power capacity.⁴⁵ The original power production at Shivasamudra which was 4.3 M.W. was stepped up in eight installations, and by 1930 the total capacity was stepped up to 45 MW. Similarly the Cauvery's tributary, the Shimsha was harnessed for power production at the Shimsha Falls in Mandya district, with a potential of 17.2 M.W. power. The Shimsha Project was completed in 1938. Similarly power production was also planned at Sharavati river by Sir Mirza in 1938 and its survey work ⁴⁶ was completed in 1947-48. Wherever possible, in addition to towns, villages too were supplied power in the period of Sir Mirza's Dewanship.

Power was supplied to all nine district headquarters, towns, 39 out of 73 Taluk headquarters town and 167 villages. If there were 320 power installations in 1925-26, these increased to 5,720 in 1940-41 and lighting installations from 5,680 to 19,810 during the same period.⁴⁷ About 15 government or government-sponsored industries were started during Dewan Mirza's regime. In 1940, industrial production was at its height in the new factories. Steel was 30,290 tons, cement 23,543 tons, chemicals 8,525 tons and paper 4,000 tons.⁴⁸

To secure a market for Mysore products, exhibitions were arranged and advertisements were published in newspapers all over the country, as well as in London and New York. A Trade Commissioner's office was opened at London to popularise Mysore's special products. Mysore was the only state in India which opened an emporium in a foreign country and the credit for this goes to Dewan Mirza. To help develop and increase industries, trade, transport



Shivasamudra Power Station



Sharavati River

45. VSN p.23.

46. Karnataka Gazetteer, I, p.850.

47. Sreenivas Aingar, pp:16-17.

48. Statistical Abstract of Mysore, 1951, p.141.



and communications were essential. To keep the railway network under State control, 721.66 miles of railways which were operated by M.S.M. Railways were acquired in 1938 by the Mysore Government.⁴⁹

Sir Mirza proposed an automobile factory for which Sir M. Visvesvaraya had prepared the ground. But the Supreme Government was not keen on Mysore's industrial growth and helped Mysore enterprises only when it served their own imperial interests. The British were not happy with Mysore recording better economic progress than its own presidencies or new industries coming in the way as competitor to their own products from England. Sir M. Visvesvaraya's period clearly witnessed this. Another excuse put forth was that all resources must be spared for its war efforts during the First World War, and new railway lines and industries should not be started. In fact, initially Sir M. Visvesvaraya had not secured the permission of the Supreme Government for starting the Bhadravati Iron unit. Sir M. Visvesvaraya was bold enough to tell the Maharaja that if everything was left to the British, the Bhadravati Iron unit would not have come up. (*Letter to Maharaja, 28th April 1941.*) The mentality of the British is reflected in a statement by Todhunter, the Maharaja's Private Secretary, "They were ruining Mysore by over-Industrialization".⁵⁰

On the whole a report of the Department of Industries and Commerce (1937) states that the industrial progress of the state is "quite remarkable," and this was possible because of the assistance given by the State Government. Various small industries were also started in the 1930s with the assistance of the State. It was because of the right policies of Sir Mirza, on the advice of Sir M. Visvesvaraya, that such progress could be achieved. Sir Mirza felt that where "private enterprising is proverbially unenterprising and private capital is notoriously shy", it was necessary for the Government to take an active interest in the problems of trade and industry. He also said that Mysore was moving towards "State socialism". He also stressed the idea of 'Swadeshi' in industrialization, repeatedly stressing the ideas of Gandhiji and the slogan of the Congress indirectly. This was to ensure that the industries should be complementary to each other and the State did not depend on others.

Agricultural Growth

It was not only industrial growth but also the growth of agriculture that Sir Mirza paid attention to. His long and systematic effort to revive sericulture in the State had already started with the Channapatna Spun Silk unit. He prepared projects to encourage epiculture, develop poultry, manufacture of soap as a domestic industry, handloom industry, straw mats, woollen country blankets (*Kambali*) etc. Processing of tobacco for cigarette factories was experimented near Whitefield.⁵¹

With the help of the Horticulture Department, he encouraged the raising of fig gardens at Ganjam village in Srirangapatna. He permitted the sale of

49. V.S.N., p.25.

50. Tod Hunter to Maharaja, as quoted by Hettne, p.296.

51. VSN, p.27

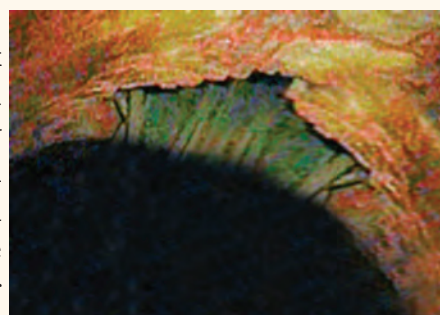


Fig Tree, Ganjam

figs in the Srirangapatna railway station by the fig growers, without paying any fees. This helped every fig raising family to earn Rs.200 per year and the income of the village rose within one year by 1.5 lakhs. "C.F.Andrews, noted Gandhian, expressed great pleasure over the experiment," says Sir Mirza in his autobiography.⁵²

Sir Mirza was for rational use of the forest wealth of the country. Instead of using costly iron poles, he thought of substituting them with cheap poles of *balgi* tree available in Mysore forests. He encouraged the Forest Department to raise *balgi* plantations with tall *balgi* trees for use by the electricity department. This helped to achieve savings and also usefully utilise the indigenously available material. Similarly he also encouraged the use of wooden sleepers for the railway lines as strong quality wood was available in Mysore forests and use of costly iron sleepers was dispensed with. To check termites attacking these *balgi* poles and rail sleepers, they were treated by 'creosate' a scientific device and this seasoning was done at Bhadravati.⁵³

In 1928, the famous Hulikere tunnel work at Krishanaraja Sagar was started to expand the scope of the canal network and to convey water to the High Level Canal. The tunnel is 9183 feet in length and was completed in 1931. The Krishanaraja Sagar could irrigate 1,20,000 acres of land and the waste weir gates were procured from the Bhadravati



Hulikere Tunnel



Krumbiegal

Iron Works. Sir Mirza also created the famous Brindavan terrace garden, being inspired by Shalimar Garden in Kashmir as Sir Mirza was very fond of ornamental gardens. Taking help of Krumbiegal, Director of Horticulture, he prepared the layout for the Brindavan garden. S.Narayanaswamy says that it was modelled on the Shalimar gardens "with a number of terraces, parterres, fountains, running and cascading water channels, water chutes, lush greens lawns, flower beds, shrubs and trees. The whole landscape of the Brindavan garden was designed according to the instructions, directions and taste of Sir Mirza. Today the Brindavan garden is world famous for its ethical beauty, grandeur and illumination effect during night time." Narayanaswamy also speaks of a fruit garden beyond the Brindavan garden. Hybrid coconut seedlings are specially produced there for the whole State.⁵⁴

Curzon Park near Mysore Palace and Lalithadri Park near Lalita Mahal Palace are also the result of Sir Mirza's efforts. In Bangalore, the eastern wing

52. Ibid.

53. Ibid., pp:27-28.

54. Studies, p.52.



Curzon Park, Mysore



Corporation, Bengaluru



S.K.R.S.J.T. I., Bengaluru

of the glass house in Lalbagh was constructed by Director C.J.Javaraya in 1935 during Sir Mirza's Dewanship. The fourth wing of the Glass House was constructed by using iron from Bhadravati factory. The Silver Jubilee Park in Bangalore was also created to commemorate the Maharaja's silver jubilee.⁵⁵ He also raised magnificent buildings like The Krishnarajendra Silver Jubilee Technological Institute, Sir K.P.Puttana Chetty Town Hall, Bangalore Municipal Office, Central Railway Office at Mysore etc. as pointed by Sreenivasa Aingar.⁵⁶



Mysore Railway Head Office

Every town must have a park and a central circle with trees and gardens around it, and these add to the planning or growth of the layout of the town, and this must be an example for villages too was Sir Mirza's wish. He used to instruct the municipalities and Panchayats about this. For the development of villages, he paid special attention. Every village must have a Panchayat, a school and a Co-operative society since the State would progress with the development of villages. The cooperative society should help farmers and craftsmen with finance and also arrange for the marketing of the crafts produced in the village. It must also organise consumer stores. The villagers should dress themselves neatly. He ordered huge mirrors to be fixed in bus stands, courts, taluk *cutcheries* and other public places so that villagers were able to see themselves and change their physical appearance. Many village homes did not have even a small mirror, he had observed.

The Central Land Mortgage Bank was founded in Mysore State in 1929. From 1929 to 1939, a total of 37 Primary Land Mortgage Banks were founded in the State by Sir Mirza's efforts. The Co-operative credit movement was developing on a firm footing in the State, especially through the efforts of K.H.Ramayya, officer in charge.

According to the recommendations of the Malnad Improvement Committee (1926) Land Mortgage Banks were started in Malnad taluks. A District Committee for each of the three Malnad Districts – Shimoga, Kadur (Chikmagalur) and Hassan was appointed to advise the Government on Malnad improvement. A special engineering staff section was appointed to conduct a survey for creating inter-village and inter-taluk communication in Malnad. A preliminary survey

55. Ibid, p.53.

56. Sreenivas Aiengar, p.13.

of malaria and hookworm diseases in the Manjarabad (Sakleshpur) area was also ordered to be conducted. The Malnad Improvement Scheme was extended to parts of the Mysore district and to the taluks of Heggadadevanakote and Hunsur. The District Malnad Committees invited the Deputy Commissioner as the Chairman and some non-officials as members.

The Mysore District Boards Regulation came into operation from February 1927 and Taluk Boards were abolished. The District Boards had greater control over finance. The New Panchayat Regulation also came into effect on the same date.

James Manor points out the impact of this change on Mysore's politics. In the district election of 1930, several young non-Brahmins set out to capture these promising positions in seven out of eight districts. This convinced even the most timid among them of the possibilities of the electoral politics – at least with a limited electorate.⁵⁷ K.C.Reddy was one among them who was elected President in Kolar district.

Aid to Farmers

Small electrical pumps were sold to farmers under a hire-purchase scheme according to a government decision in 1927 to help them in pumping water to farms from wells or tanks. The Electrical Department was invited to supply and install the pumps. If dryland was to be cultivated by using the pumps, no extra assessment was levied. This was a boon to thousands of farmers.

The Nagenahalli farm was converted into the paddy breeding station in 1929. A section in the Agricultural Department was created to distribute pure seeds of new varieties of crops raised in various Government Farms. The Royal Commission on Agriculture makes special mention of Mysore State for undertaking the praiseworthy work of new seeds distribution method in one of its recommendation. An improved plough designed by a local blacksmith was recognised as an excellent copy of such improved imported ploughs. Similarly an improved sugarcane mill was designed by a local mechanic. Both of them received State honours.

A Serum Institute was founded in 1928 to protect livestock from epidemic diseases like rinderpest. A Committee appointed in 1929 suggested a programme of improving agricultural livestock and one of its suggestions was to protect livestock from epidemics. A cattle breeding center was started at Ajjampur near Kadur.⁵⁸



Amruth Mahal Kaval, Ajjampur

57. Manor, James, Political Change in Indian State, Mysore 1917-18, 1977, p.66.

58. Shama Rao, p.415.

To extend relief to agricultural debtors, especially in the Malnad area, an Act similar to the Deccan Agricultural Relief Act of Bombay Presidency was considered. With a Member of the Council, K Chandy as the Chairman, a Committee to examine the issue was appointed. According to its recommendations, a debtor cultivator whose income does not exceed Rs.1000 per year was permitted to repay his



Hallikar Breed, Amruth Mahal, Ajjampura

debt within eight years by instalments. The Act was applicable to ryots of Manjarabad (Sakleshpur), Sagar and Koppa taluks. The years of 1929 to 1933 were years of the Great Depression. The Central Land Mortgage Bank had been opened against this background to help the farmers to convert their debts into long term loans.

Rural Upliftment

In 1929 a programme of “Rural Uplift” was taken up and the Dewan called it “the most sacred duty.” Priority was given to sanitation and a small establishment was created to guide Local Bodies to furnish schemes to improve sanitation, drainage and water supply and the facilities offered by the Government. Such facilities were availed of by a large number of Municipalities. Suggestions were extended to improve the aesthetic side of town improvement by opening parks and suitable sites were allotted for public buildings. Funds were allotted for all these works.

In 1926 there were 58,000 drinking water public wells and 15,000 tube wells in the State. In 1941 there were 1,00,000 wells and 1,14,000 tube wells. Tippagondanahalli water supply works for Bangalore and the Cantonment area were also planned in this background. The cost of this particular project was Rs.50.50 lakhs and the length of the pipeline was 14 ½ miles with pipes brought from Bhadravati.⁵⁹



Tippagondana Halli Reservoir, Bengaluru

There were 10,600 villages which had Panchayats functioning. Some Panchayats supervised schools, village forests, tanks and village groves (*topu*) and planting avenues and fruit trees. They also purchased improved agricultural implements and sugarcane mills and hired them out to the village farmers. Weekly labour for community purposes was also insisted upon by the Panchayats. A public spirit developed and rich persons donated money for schools, hospitals and other public buildings. The Dewan, during his visit to a town, invited such persons and persuaded them to make donations in their

59. Ibid., pp:418-19.

parents' names. These spaces were marked for the establishment of a school building, hospital or a park. They were also honoured at public functions with titles.

Rockefeller Foundation

The Rockefeller Foundation of U.S. in 1927 invited four young medical graduates to America to train them on sanitation. Dr. Sweet of the same Foundation conducted a Spleen Survey in 1927 to study the incidence of malaria. Three Malaria Experimental Stations were started at Nagenahalli (Mysore district), Mudugere in Kadur (Chikmagalur) and Hiriyur. A Rural Health unit was started at Mandya as an experiment to help and calculate the cost of running such units in each taluk.

The League of Nation's Malaria Commission team visited the State in 1929 on invitation from the Durbar to study the Malaria Experimental Stations' work in Bangalore. The study team expressed its satisfaction for the successful anti-malaria campaign. In 1930, the Rockefeller Foundation deputed J.J.Meildazis, a Sanitary Engineer and the services of Dr. Sweet, a Consultant in Health to advise the State to improve the Health Department. A Board of Health was created including these experts and seven bureaus were created under it. Victor Heiser of the International Health Board, New York visited the State and advised the Government to continue the Rural Health unit and other developments that could be taken up.

Health and Medical Services

The Mandya Health Unit functioned very successfully and reported its record of achievement. The Rockefeller Foundation extended its grant to continue the unit for two more years. There were 330 doctors in the State, including



Vanivilas Hospital, Bengaluru

40 private practitioners in 1928. This worked out to be one doctor to a population of 18,000. Private doctors in rural areas were extended subsidy to treat the poor. A local fund dispensary was founded by charging moderate fees with the help of rich donors. Bangalore, Mysore and Shimoga came to have well-equipped hospitals. Mysore had an hospital for women founded in 1880 which was improved and named after Maharani Kempanajammanni.

Bangalore too came to have the Vanivilas Hospital for women. Former Dewan Sri Kantaraj Urs donated amounts totalling Rs.1.20 lakhs to help set up Gunamba Child Welfare and Maternity Hospital at Mysore. Inspired by this, many rich persons altogether donated a sum of Rs Nine lakhs for such works. In the whole of the British Empire, Mysore was ranked second in 1932, first in

1933 and third in 1934 in health services. A Medical Council was established by the Government in December 1931 to register qualified physicians and supervise their work. The Council was the authority to license pharmacies selling medicines.⁶⁰

Anticipating the need to check the population explosion, Sir Mirza had started a facility to advise mothers on the importance and methods of planned motherhood in the Cheluvamba Hospital at Mysore and at Vanivilas Hospital in Bangalore during 1930.⁶¹ Perhaps this was first attempt in the country.



Cheluvamba Hospital, Mysore

The Elementary Education Regulation, 1929-30 invested the local bodies with the management, control and financing of elementary education. Effective supervision was vested with the Education Department. Enforced from 1931, 12 educational authorities were created, eight for eight districts and remaining four for Bangalore, Mysore, Tumkur and K.G.F. Kannada was made the medium of instruction in one of the high schools in Bangalore and Mysore as an experimental measure. Scouts and Guides also progressed and there were 10,648 boys enlisted in 1933 and 500 girl guides in 1931.

From 1927, Taluk Boards were abolished and Hassan and Kolar District Boards were allowed to elect their Presidents and Tumkur Board to elect a Vice-President. The District Boards were vested with additional powers. The four Malnad Improvement Committees which had started in 1929 had their terms expired, and the four District Boards came to have Malnad Improvement Committees. District Boards President became the chairman of these committees with four Board members and the District Economic Superintendent as the Secretary. Some District Boards opened orphanages, Destitute Homes and even helped high schools under special powers. In 1932, a number of elected members of the Municipalities increased and women too were permitted to be members.⁶² The Chief Court of the State was designated as the High Court of Mysore. In 1930, according to the revised rules, women were permitted to be members of the Representative Assembly and the Legislative Council members were expected to take an oath of allegiance to the Maharaja in their first entry. In 1932, women were allocated four seats instead of two, Muslims 18 instead of 15, Depressed classes 10, and 6 from the Assembly; the last category was on nomination.

The Workmen's Compensation Regulation was issued to help factory labourers who lost their lives in harness while working in the factories. A Commissioner was appointed to hear such cases and decide on the compensation. In 1931-32 itself, the compensation paid came to a total of Rs.94,000.⁶³

60. Ibid; p.421-42.

61. Karnataka Gazetteer, II p.712.

62. Shama Rao, p.424.

63. Ibid., p.430.

There was a request at the Dasara session of the Representative Assembly in 1928, for a legislation to create changes in the status of Hindu women. Some laws related to this had been already passed in the British Presidencies. A Committee of non-officials headed by retired Chief Justice K.Chandrashekhar Iyer was appointed in 1929, and K.Rukminiyamma, one of the first lady graduates of the Mysore University was appointed as one of the members. The Committee issuing a questionnaire and held meetings with several authorities, made recommendations, based on which a Regulation was passed in 1931. Some of the highlights of the law were –

- It authorised widows the right of adoption in particular circumstances.
- The right of an unmarried daughter to share half of a son's share in the family property, was recognised.
- The estate inherited by a female from a female or a deceased husband or son was to be treated as '*stridhana*' (exclusive to a woman.)
- The widow was entitled for maintenance when her husband's family property was partitioned.

The Bill became a Law in 1934.

Autocratic Rule

With all these useful and people friendly reforms, industrialization and changes in administration, Sir Mirza was termed an 'autocrat' and popular agitations continued demanding responsible government. However, he was following the wishes of the Maharaja who believed in the divine right of monarchy and he did not want to share his powers with insiders in the State. Even the British were doling out administrative responsibility to the people's representatives and by the Federal Act of 1935, elections were held in their 11 Presidencies and elected representatives were appointed as ministers to run the administration in 1937. It was Indian National Congress which came to power in a majority of Provinces, and it was notable that this took place in the neighbouring Presidencies of Madras and Bombay.

In fact Sir Mirza had contempt for democracy. Congress in the State had reached the masses with students, labourers and peasants joining its ranks and leading newspapers mostly supporting the Congress. It was no longer a Brahmins' mouthpiece. The Congress had secured power in Madras and Bombay by popular vote in 1937, inspite of facing severe opposition from the government and pro-government parties. Sir Mirza could not foresee the direction in which the wind was blowing. A speech delivered by him at Ramanagaram on 15th July 1937 was highly provocative. "It ignited the firewood pile of the spirited atmosphere. While democracy was on the run all over Europe, the local Congressmen trying to rehabilitate it," he said.⁶⁴ Sir Mirza was referring to the rise of Nazism in Germany, Fascism in Italy and Communism in Russia, all in Europe, which was the home of democracy and he

64. Karnataka Gazetteer, Bangalore Dist. P.107.

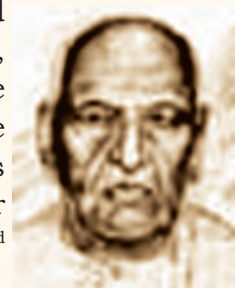


felt that it was ridiculous that efforts were being made to introduce it in Mysore. He always called senior gentlemanly Congress leaders like K.T.Bhashyam, T.Siddalingayya and others who were professional men and dedicated patriots as habitual agitators, trouble shooters and mischief mongers. He called all popular agitations as “manifestation of hooliganism.” Here is a sample: “The agitator seems to love nothing so much as general disorder and confusion. When local troubles arise, which should be the object of every good citizen to settle in a peaceful manner, the attempts to increase them and to direct them into the general stream of grievances against established order should be condemned”.⁶⁵ But it was not easy to make the government to lend its ears to grievances. Even the right to form trade unions by factory workers was not recognised, though such a law existed in British India from 1926.

“The tension between the princely Government’s progressive image and the reality of its autocratic ways became so severe that the regime’s carefully constructed façade began to come apart,” says James Manor.

The year 1937 was a year of rapid changes in Mysore. ‘Mysore Congress’ secured 39 seats in the Representative Assembly Elections held in that year. Sampige Venkatapathayya, a leading advocate and dedicated Gandhian who was the President of Mysore State Congress failed to get elected to the Assembly and resigned from the Presidentship. T.Siddalingayya, an advocate from Doddaballapur near Bangalore was elected the ‘Mysore Congress’ President. The new President wanted to convey the message of the Mysore Congress to the nooks and corners of the State.

After consulting Jawaharlal Nehru, the ‘Council of Action’ was framed with T.Siddalingayya, Tagadur Ramachandra Rao (a veteran of Untouchability Movement) and ‘Veerakesari’ Sitarama Shastri (noted journalist) as members. In a marathon tour of the State, the members delivered lectures on the need for responsible government, criticising government policies that was not in the interest of the people and encouraging enrolment of members to the Mysore Congress.⁶⁶ They received whole hearted popular response at the public meetings. From 6th September to 3rd October 1937, they visited all important towns in districts, spending four or five days in each district, touching Kolar, Bangalore, Mysore (including Mandya), Shimoga, Chitradurga, Hassan and Chikmagalur. The police knew about their programmes in advance. The car in which the party travelled had a driver whose helper Thimmayya was secretly planted in the group by the Police department. T.Siddalingayya has given a list of places they visited and local leaders who welcomed them.⁶⁷ These details showed that Congress had reached the rural areas. In fact Congress had organised taluk conferences in 1938-39 and passed resolutions demanding various concessions to the farmers and secured a wide rural base. These rural



Sitarama Shastri

65. Speeches, Dasara, 1937, p.189.

66. Karnataka Gazetteer, Bangalore dist, p.108.

67. S.S.S. II, pp:68-72.

issues had been also raised by Congressmen in the Representative Assembly. On 6th October, the trio were summoned by Bangalore District Magistrate and as they refused to avail bail for themselves, they were sentenced for one-year rigorous imprisonment and taken to Bangalore Central jail. As they refused to stay with criminal convicts, they were transferred to different jails; T.Siddalingayya was hand-cuffed, taken to Kengeri and sent to Mysore Jail.⁶⁸

Sir Mirza made an indirect reference to the demands put forth by these leaders in his Dasara Assembly speech on 16th October 1937, “Immediate responsible government, recognition of fundamental rights of citizenship, independent judiciary, adult franchise, free and compulsory education, reduction of agricultural indebtedness, nationalisation of industries and abolition of drink trade.” He severely criticised such demands as irresponsible.⁶⁹

Praja Paksha merges with Congress

The Mysore Congress appointed K.T.Bhashyam as the ‘Dictator’ on Siddalingayya’s arrest. He was arrested at Mysore on the eve of the Dasara Assembly. He was the leader of the Congress Assembly Party. The atmosphere was tense and there were protests on the arrest of T. Siddalingayya and other leaders everywhere. Bhashyam’s arrest made the Representatives of the Praja Samyukta Paksha convene a meeting presided over by V.Venkatappa to decide the party’s merge with Congress on the 16th October when the Assembly was to meet. The number of Congress members in the Assembly rose to 130 after the merger.⁷⁰ “Authorities were bewildered to find that a repressive action against Congress, which had been designed to intimidate the non-Brahmins from involvement in Congress had the opposite result,” says James Manor.⁷¹ Sir Mirza was shocked!

It was at this time that the famous Congress leader and Former Mayor of Bombay K.F. Nariman came to Mysore to participate in the Local Bodies’ Conference. He severely criticised the Mysore Government and the ‘extravagance’ of the Dasara Festival. Sir Mirza refers to Nariman’s talk in his speech while concluding the Dasara session on 23rd October, and spoke vehemently against Nariman. “A recent visitor to Mysore had many things to tell the people of Mysore and many faults to find with the government of Mysore and this city.”⁷² Sir Mirza tried to answer the criticism of Nariman and the demands of Congress in the subsequent part of his speech.⁷³ “The programme in question had an eight-fold demand – immediate responsible government, recognition of fundamental rights, adult franchise, free and compulsory education, reduction of agricultural indebtedness, nationalisation of industries and abolition of drink trade. You will see that the whole programme puts the cart before the horse. If you are to have a government by a ministry responsible to an adult electorate, then you must have free and compulsory education before you form your electorate. And if you are to have compulsory education, you must find the money to pay for it. And if you are to

68. Ibid.

69. Speeches, Dasara, pp: 299-30.

70. Karnataka Gazetteer, Bangalore Dist. P.108.

71. Manor, James, p.105.

72. Speeches, Dasara, 1837, p.198.

73. Ibid, pp:201-02.

abolish revenue, you will find that you are proceeding to rebuild your house by destroying the foundation.”⁷⁴ Demands for an ideal arrangement in the long run by Congress (some never made) showed Sir Mirza’s effort to ridicule the Congress by exaggeration.

Nariman visited Bangalore on 2nd October and was to deliver a talk at Banappa Park. He was arrested dramatically from the platform while trying to address the huge mob, which included a large number of students. “The arrest of the well known British Indian Congressman has greatly outraged us, more than any State level matter could have and serious trouble developed as a result. A mob of 5,000 marched to the District Court. The police panicked and opened fire, wounding several dozen people, six of whom died later. That evening, crowds stormed three police stations in the city and after more firing, the State Cavalry had to be called to quell the riot,” reports James Manor.⁷⁵ But V.S.Narayan Rao states one death, and not six.⁷⁶ People were highly agitated and this unrest continued the next day till Section 144 was promulgated in the city.⁷⁷ Nariman was released and after reaching Bombay, he wrote a series articles in the *Bombay Chronicle* where he criticised Sir Mirza as a ‘Mini Mughal’ of the South.⁷⁸ The incident, known as ‘*Nariman Galate*’ provoked a large section of students and labourers in Bangalore and elsewhere in the State. The Bangalore Bazaars remained shut on 24th as well as 25th October. Schools and colleges also remained closed.



K. F. Nariman

“The Dewan quickly centralized the direction of the government in his effort to thwart the Congress. At a conference of Deputy Commissioners, he praised one official who had reportedly committed atrocities against Congressmen as an example to follow,” says James Manor.⁷⁹

The war against newspapers by the Dewan continued. *Swarajya* of T.Prakashan from Madras was banned in the State. The picture of ‘*Gandabherunda*’, a mythical bird with the royal insignia printed on the masthead of *Veerakesari* was objected to and the Editor was warned not to use it. Permission granted to *Janavani* but another paper was withdrawn. *Vishwakarnatka*, *Tainadu*, *Sadhvi*, *Navajeevan* etc. were also harassed.

B.N.Gupta of *Prajamata* (originally hailing from Madras) was asked to leave the State within 24 hours on 28th October, 1937. Similarly Monnayya, an active Congress worker from Kodagu (Coorg) had been externed from the Mysore state and M.A.Parashuram, a trade union leader of Madras origin was externed six times!⁸⁰ Other nationalist papers which had wide circulation were also being harassed. When Gupta wanted to start *Prajamata* in 1930, he was

74. Ibid, pp:202-03.

75. Manor, James, p.75.

76. VSN, p.59.

77. Ibid.

78. Ibid, pp:60-61.

79. Manor, James, pp:105-106.

80. S.S.S., II, p.168; 154

not given permission and instead it was banned. He went to Hubli and with the help of Dr. Hardikar brought out the paper as '*Prajashaki, Prajavarta* and under such other names with the permission of Bombay government and sent his paper to Mysore State. Sir Mirza had allowed publication of *Prajamata* from Bangalore.

Two teachers, Gangi Reddy and Channappa, and 16 teachers from Channapatna who signed and submitted the Memorandum to the Dewan, were dismissed from service. The former were termed as Congressmen. This is only a brief account of repression started by the Dewan.⁸¹

The A.T.C.C at its Calcutta session attended by K.C.Reddy supported the agitation in Mysore and "condemned the ruthless policy of repression" in 1937.⁸² This emboldened the Mysore Congress. Both Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi wrote to Sir Mirza over the developments and the latter urged Mirza to create a favourable political atmosphere, free from repression. Sir Mirza appointed the K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar Committee to suggest constitutional reforms and on 1st April 1938 freed all political prisoners.⁸³ The popularity of Congress was put to test when 13 members of the Representative Assembly resigned in November 1937 and got themselves reelected with a thumping majority in the January 1938 elections to the Assembly. The representation given to Congress in the K.R.Srinivas Iyengar Committee was a very small one. Congress refused to Co-operate with the Committee.

Shivapur Congress

The Mysore Congress organised its first conference at Shivapura near Maddur during 10th - 12th April 1938. Though there was a ban on hoisting the National flag and Section 144 had been promulgated, over 30,000 people, mostly villagers including women assembled, and despite battalions of police



Dhwaja Satyagraha Memorial, Shivapura

pointing their guns at the assembly, the flag was hoisted and President of the session T.Siddalingayya was arrested together with another leader M.N.Jois. The Conference continued for three days, and everyday some senior leaders courted arrest by hoisting the flag. On the third day, it was resolved that the Satyagraha at Shivapura must continue for one month. But the other delegates should return to their places and offer Flag Satyagraha by defying the ban on hoisting the national flag.⁸⁴ "Shivapura was a great success for the Congress and correspondingly a great defeat for the Dewan. The Government now felt that something needed to be done about the Congress movement, which had spread like wildfire. The

81. V.S.N; pp: 66-67.

82. Manor, James, p.106.

83. Ibid., p.68.

84. Karnataka Gazetteer, Bangalore Dist pp:108-09.

opportunity came shortly after the session at Shivapura,” says Hettne and points out that the opportunity was at Vidhuraswatha.⁸⁵

The Flag Satyagraha was launched all over the State and hundreds courted arrest. In the annual *jatra* at a holy place called Vidhurashwatha in Kolar district, the police resorted to firing when the Flag Satyagraha was launched on 25 April; many died and many more were injured. Among those killed was a pregnant woman who was not in the assembly but was circumambulating a holy pipal tree. Press censorship was clamped and wild rumours spread that 32 people had died. This was described as ‘*Jalianwala of Mysore*’, and created panic all over.⁸⁶ (Actual number of deaths was 10, as per the later reports.)

Bhupalam Chadndrashekhariah, who had been to Wardha, had met Gandhiji and with his message came to meet Sir Mirza who was bewildered by Gandhiji’s statement over him leading the ‘Death Brigade’ etc., in Mysore. On Bhupalam’s suggestion to Sir Mirza, the Dewan approached C.Rajagopalachari and through him contacted Mahatma Gandhi.⁸⁷ Gandhiji sent Sardar Patel and Kripalani to Bangalore on 6th May 1938 and these leaders met Congress leaders including those in jail as well as Sir Mirza. On Gandhiji’s request that it was time that “Only remedy is to immediate transfer of power to people” in view of the strong people’s movement, Sir Mirza replied that the movement was more a manifestation hooliganism”.⁸⁸ ‘Dishonest’, ‘Self-seeking’, ‘Hooligans’ etc were the invectives used by Sir Mirza to Mysore leaders.

A sort of compromise between the Congress and the Government was reached by which an Enquiry Committee headed by Justice Vepa Ramesan was appointed to enquire into the Vidhurashwatha Tragedy. The Congress agreed to hoist the national flag together with Mysore State Flag at its major functions. Another condition was that the K.R.Srinivasa Iyengar Committee should be authorised to consider the establishment of responsible government and the Mysore Congress must be recognised as a legal political party and so on. But among the seven points agreed by the Dewan, the one of releasing political prisoners and withdrawal of prohibition orders was not adhered to by Sir Mirza.⁸⁹ Most of the political prisoners were released very late during the marriage of Prince Jayachamaraja Wodeyar.⁹⁰ When mentioned about adhering to the pact with Patel, Mirza said that there had been ‘no pact’. This statement made in the Legislative Council in June “was most ungracious”, says James Manor.⁹¹



85. Hettne, p.197.

86. Karnataka Gazetteer, Bangalore Dist., p.109.

87. S.S.S. III, 897.

88. Manor, James, p.109.

89. VSN, p.73.

90. Ibid.

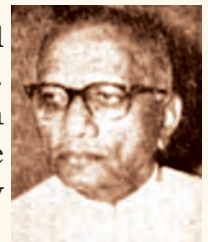
91. Manor, James, p.123



Townhall, Mysore

In the meanwhile, agitation continued in some form or the other. When a new police station building in Mysore was named after Hamilton, a most hated police officer, Tagadur Ramachandra Rao led a peaceful Satyagraha to erase the name written on the building and this agitation was known as 'Hamilton Building Satyagraha' which went on for several days and nearly 70 persons courted arrest.⁹²

When a ban on meetings near Rangacharlu Memorial Town Hall in Mysore was imposed, the 'Town Hall Satyagraha' in Mysore was organised in which scores courted arrest. The second annual session of the Congress was held at Vidurashwatha in April, presided over by H.C.Dasappa, an advocate from Mysore, where the national flag and Mysore State flag were hoisted together. An early decision over establishing a responsible government was repeated.



H.C.Dasappa

Satyagraha Launched

In July 1939, a written request by T.Siddalingayya to meet the Dewan was rejected.⁹³ On August 14th 1939, 14 State Congress Committee members were banned from entering KGF, and they were arrested; this triggered the KGF *Satyagraha* in which hundreds courted arrest.⁹⁴ In 1939, Congress decided to organise a mass *Satyagraha* demanding that a responsible government be appointed. T.Siddalingayya was a 'Dictator' who offered *Satyagraha* at Tumkur on 1st September, and the Forest *Satyagraha* (mainly felling toddy trees, and other forms of breaking law peacefully) was launched alongwith other forms of the movement. It was very strong in Tumkur, Chitradurga and Shimoga districts. The Satyagrahis were imprisoned and S.Nijalingappa courted arrest at Turuvanur near Chitradurga.

The total arrests by November 1939 reached 2,801 and majority of them were farmers.⁹⁵ Nine lawyers who had been imprisoned had their *sanad* cancelled. They included T.Ramachar (Kolar) C.K.Sampangiramayya (Chikaballapur), K.T.Bhashyam (Bangalore), H.C.Dasappa and Rangaramayya (Mysore), M.GovindaReddy (Chitradurga), K.C.Reddy (Kolar) and S.Nijalingappa (Chitradurga). Gandhiji, who had great regard for Sir Mirza, sent his Secretary Mahadev Desai in November 1939 as an emissary to meet Sir Mirza and other leaders.

Gandhiji advised the Mysore leaders to stop the movement and contest forthcoming elections.⁹⁶ In the meanwhile Krishnaraja Wodeyar expired in August 1940 and Jayachamaraja Wodeyar was crowned in September 1940. All convicted leaders were released in August 1940, on the occasion of the Investiture of the new ruler. In the elections held for the local bodies, out of the 133 Congress candidates who contested

92. VSN, p.75.

93. Ibid

94. Ibid

95. Manor, James, p.124.

96. VSN, p.76-77.

in the District Board Elections, 119 won the Contest. In Bangalore municipality, all 24 seats and in Mysore, 23 out of 24 seats were won by Congress.⁹⁷ “To their considerable surprise, Congress achieved a stunning victory” says James Manor. “Loyalist District Presidents were defeated in the election, even for seats on boards of Hassan, Chitradurga and Kolar district,” and in the newly created Mandya district.⁹⁸



Jayachamaraja Wodeyar

There was a 25-day long strike in the Binny Mills in early 1941. As it was the period of the Second World War, the Government had reduced many demands, including recognising the Trade Union in order to end the strike. The Industrial Disputes Act (1926) which was in force in British Presidencies was enforced in Mysore during 1941 with certain modifications. Its leaders like Bhashyam of the Congress led the Trade Unions which were recognised for the first time.

The Congress gave stiff resistance against the autocratic rule of Sir Mirza who, among many other things had tried even to suppress freedom of the Press, freedom to organise Trade Unions and other liberties which were privileges, even in the British presidencies.. All this the Dewan did for the Prince who believed in divine right theory. P.G.D'Souza former Secretary and Council Member says that “Sir Mirza by his training and tradition, though inspired by the highest deal of ‘benevolent autocracy’ was not imbued with much democratic spirit”.⁹⁹

A highly talented and experienced administrator who was keen on ensuring people's welfare by using his administrative power and talent to improve finance, agriculture, industry, irrigation, animal husbandry, education, sericulture, local self-government, local bodies and every other branch of public activity, Sir Mirza was a rare personality. His loyalty to the State and the Maharaja was unquestionable. But he continued to be an autocrat or was forced to be so. He did not realise the direction of the changing political winds and rise of strong popular opinion against him. Instead of admiring the democratic set up in England, he started admiring fascism. He thought that people in Mysore were not fit for democracy. In fact he said this in a speech in the Assembly in 1937.

This caused a series of agitations and tackling this, was not always easy. Even in his initial years, Binny Mills worker had a strike (1926) and such agitations continued all through his Dewanship. Alongwith the Ganapathi disturbances in (1928 -29), the labour strike in 1934 and 1937, he had to tackle all *Satyagrahas* launched by the Congress. He thought wrongly that so long as he had the friendship of Gandhiji and Nehru, he need not worry about the local Congress leaders, whom he took lightly and termed as self-seekers and hooligans. He underestimated the popularity built by them by hard labour

97. Ibid, p.77.

98. Manor, James, p.128.

99. Studies, p.28.

for the public cause and self-sacrifice. He even tried to rig elections. A time soon came when he had no supporters in the palace or among the national political leaders.

When he came to know about the increasing popularity of Congress, he tried to rig the elections. “Sometimes he muddled in the matter of elections to Representative Assembly and to the local bodies to prevent the success of Congress candidates,” say Jayappa Gowda.¹⁰⁰ The Srinivas Iyengar Committee’s recommendations were implemented with certain exceptions by the Mysore Act 1940 (Act No.VIII of 1940) in April 1940. The Representative Assembly’s strength was fixed at 310, which could be increased to a maximum of 325. Except for 12 members who were nominated, all other members were to be elected. The Legislative Council was to have 68 members of whom 24 were to be nominated by the Government and others elected. The term of both houses was to be four years, instead of three years. A Council of Ministers was to consist of not more than four members and the Dewan. The members were to be nominated by the Maharaja.

“The powers and functions of the Representative Assembly were enlarged, its character as a body for consultation and reference continued to be maintained. The privileges of the Representative Assembly came to be enlarged and it was provided that the Representative Assembly would invariably be consulted in regard to any legislative measure before it was introduced into the Legislative Council. Except in exceptional cases, Government undertook to accept any legislative measure approved by the Assembly by majority vote,” H.P.Shashidaramurthy summarises the main constitutional changes.¹⁰¹ But the question of establishing a responsible government did not arise. For ministers were to be nominated was the provision. The Congress, despite the rigged elections (there were instances of rejection of nomination papers on flimsy reasons and other manipulative practices by the officers etc.) won 106 out of 152 seats it contested to the Assembly, and 17 out of 21 to the Council.¹⁰² Elections were held in February 1941, and on the advise of Mahatma Gandhi, Congress had contested elections, despite the Government being hostile.

Differences with the Maharaja

There was some kind of disharmony between the new Maharaja and the Dewan. When Viceroy Lord Wavell visited Mysore, the Maharaja expressed his unhappiness about the Dewan and his wish to terminate his service when his four years’ extension was to end. The Dewan did not confide with him on State matters and tried to keep him in the dark on many subjects. But Wavell advised him not to undertake such rash act. The Maharaja had also told the Resident that the Dewan had interfered with the 1941 elections and referred to the rejection of nomination papers of several candidates. “His Highness told me frankly that the hands of the government were not clean in this matter and he has lost confidence in the Dewan.”¹⁰³ Sir M.Visvesvaraya had prepared a plan to have a car (automobile) factory in Bangalore



Viceroy Lord Wavell

100. Ibid., p.86.

101. Ibid., p.100.

102. James, Manor, p.113

103. Hettne, p.84.



and Sir Mirza readily took up the proposal. M/S Walchand Hirachand had agreed to take the initiative in investment, land for the factory had been earmarked and infrastructure was planned. The automobile factory was not only to provide jobs to large number of people, but it was expected to help create many ancillary industries.¹⁰⁴ Car production was likely to ensure better mobility and economic growth. But the British did not want such a factory to come up in India, more so in collaboration with an American Company (M/S Chryslers) as planned, as against their own English firms. The paramount power put forth an excuse that starting a car factory would involve a huge investment which would come in the way of the war efforts of II World War, then going on.

Todd Hunter who was the Private Secretary of the Maharaja prevailed upon the Maharaja not to permit the factory. This was also the advice of the Resident. The young Maharaja had to yield to their pressure and refused permission for starting the car factory. Sir Mirza was highly upset as he had many other plans for the State. The Maharaja had rejected his proposal, and it amounted to loss of faith in the Dewan. Another proposal over distribution of portfolios from the Maharaja was not accepted by the Dewan in the early May. On 7th May, he tendered his resignation to the Dewanship and was relieved on first June 1941.¹⁰⁵

In fact “The new ruler spent much of his time during those early months in power seeking an issue on which Sir Mirza might be persuaded to resign. It was not till April 1941 that he found one. In that, the Maharaja insisted that the Dewan’s plan to give only three portfolios (public health, education and local self-government) to non-officials was insufficiently generous and great concessions were required. Sir Mirza insisted upon his scheme and was asked to resign.”¹⁰⁶ Mirza Ismail’s position had become extremely shaky. Facing the strong opposition movements, loss of confidence of Maharaja, and finally loss of British support over his economic policies, he was forced to quit the post.

The Government of India had begun to throw different obstacles and cold-shouldered the proposed car factory. “Perhaps when the full story of his resignation comes to be known, a little responsibility would fall on the paramount figures. A significant factor is your Ruler’s Private Secretary, a hard-boiled imperialist,” wrote *Mysore Weekly* (18.1.1959). Popular opposition was also significant.

Dewan at Jaipur

Sir Mirza’s reputation as a great administrator and talented organiser was not only known all over the country but even abroad. The Gaikwads of Baroda invited him to be his Dewan. Maharaja Harisingh of Kashmir also invited him to his State. But V S Srinivas Sastry advised him not to go to Kashmir. Sir Mirza responded to the invitation of the Maharaja of Jaipur and joined as

104. V.S.N.. P.78

105. Ibid, p.79.

106. Manor, James, pp:132-33.

Dewan of Jaipur and continued there for four years from 1942 to 1946. The Dewan's Council had four other members with little scope for internal tussle. He managed the administration skilfully and became very popular.

A complaint was made to the Maharaja by the Ministers that Sir Mirza behaved like an autocrat. Sir Mirza explained the various issues that caused the complaints in detail and the Maharaja was satisfied. Sir Mirza took the issue lightly and raised the issue in the Council meeting informally and consoled all members.

However, there was little dialogue between the rulers and the ruled. The peoples' association, Praja Mandali was agitating for a responsible government and Sir Mirza convinced the Maharaja of the need to have a Representative Assembly. A Committee to examine the issue, consisting of representatives from various rungs of the society was nominated. Senior officer from Mysore, S Hiriyannayya was invited to be its President. The recommendation of the Committee resulted in establishing a bi-cameral legislature for legislative and advisory purposes. On 7th January 1944, the new ministry started functioning and the cabinet had one non-official minister. A joint session of the two legislative body was inaugurated 7th September 1945.

The British at the center did not like Sir Mirza's act of starting this set up and also opposed his beautification programmes at Jaipur. They felt that this was a waste of state resources when Second World War was demanding heavy resources. The Maharaja replied that he would bear in mind the British Government's advice. There were many rich Marwari industrialists from Rajasthan whom Sir Mirza invited to Jaipur which included Birlas, Goenkas, Poddars, Bajaj, Singhanias and others and urged them to raise beautiful magnificent residences with parks to beautify Jaipur, and thus created a new extension. The Jesuit Mission at Patna was invited to Jaipur to open a school for which a magnificent building was raised.

He also strived to start the Rajputana University. Prof. Rollo of Mysore University was invited to Jaipur and worked for five years to improve the academic standards. A museum, an art museum and libraries were started. Conferences of an all-India nature like Sanskrit, Hindi Literary Conference, PEN Meet (1945) etc., were organised and men like Sophia Wadia, Sarojini Naidu, Jawaharlal Nehru, Dr. Radhakrishna etc., were invited to these programmes.

The Hawa Mahal (1778) which was in a ruined condition was renovated and made attractive. Many old heritage buildings that had not even been



Hawa Mahal, Jaipur

whitewashed for a quarter century were beautified. Old historical temples and mosques were renovated. He popularised Hindi as administrative language instead of Urdu. He also founded Jaipur Bank, Jaipur Club, and Jaipur Medical College. He gave Jaipur a place in India's map as the tourists' Pink City'. He also helped the founding of local industries like producing vessels, glass and glassware,



porcelain factory, mill to produce jowar flour, spinning and weaving mill. A chemical plant near the Sambar lake, copper mine at Khetri etc., were also started. Three of these were major industries. Gandhiji and Tej Bahadur Sapru were among others who praised Sir Mirza for his achievements in Jaipur State in a four year period.¹⁰⁷ In fact a main street in Jaipur was named as Mirza Ismail Road (This entire account of Sir Mirza's work at Jaipur is based on V.S.N., pp:94-113).

At Hyderabad

Sir Mirza was next invited to Hyderabad, a trouble-torn state, as the Dewan in August 1946. His appointment as President of the Nizam's Council was opposed by the Muslim League leader Jinnah. Sir Mirza had written to Jinnah that the Muslim League was the only organization of the Muslims and he was its elected leaders, and he had to strive to bring about harmony in Congress and League. Jinnah wanted to cajole Sir Mirza to join the Muslim League. Sir Mirza had replied (1941) that as the Muslim League was an anti-Hindu organisation and as he had strived for 'communal concord', he would not join the League. "When Jinnah personally came to Hyderabad to persuade the Nizam not to appoint Sir Mirza as Dewan, the Nizam was furious and told Jinnah not to interfere with internal affairs of the state and dismissed him" says Nawab Hoshiyar Jung, Nizam's Personal Advisor.¹⁰⁸

Sir Mirza took charge as Dewan on August 1946. The Report of the Armudu Iyengar Committee appointed in 1936 to recommend constitutional reforms in Hyderabad submitted its report in 1938. But it was released to the public just before Sir Mirza's reaching Hyderabad. But neither the Hindus nor the Muslims were happy with the Report.¹⁰⁹ Gandhiji who had known about the Report wrote to Mirza to have new or more reformed arrangements. Sir Mirza wrote that the situation in Hyderabad was peculiar and he could not act quickly and though the Nizam was liberal minded, he could be persuaded for change. Though Hyderabad state had more than 75 percent Hindu population, its police and army had absolute Muslim domination. Sir Mirza demanded recruitment of 25 percent Hindus in both the forces. Quasim Razvi, a leader of Ittehad-ul-Musalmin had raised an army of rowdy storm-troopers called the Razakars and had promised the Nizam to save Hyderabad from any external aggression. The Razakars were engaged in loot, arson, and bloodshed and Gandhiji had first hand reports of this from Padmaja Naidu and others.

The Nizam insisted on the Indian army being withdrawn by the Interim Government headed by Nehru. On Sir Mirza's anxiety over security of the State from internal strife (which was rampant) and invasion, the Nizam replied that the Razakars were capable of doing it. Liaqat Ali was the Prime Minister in Hyderabad and Nizam always relied on his advice. Still Sir Mirza tried to persuade the Nizam to join the Indian Union, but Liaq Ali took the Hyderabad

¹⁰⁷. The whole account of Jaipur Bojourn is based on V.S.N., pp:94-113.

¹⁰⁸. Ibid., pp:117-118.

¹⁰⁹. Ibid. p.119-120

issue of 'relationship' between the Indian Union and Hyderabad to the UNO without Sir Mirza's knowledge. As the Nizam was behaving like a prisoner of Ittehad-ul-Musalmin, Sir Mirza soon realized that he could not achieve anything. So after 11 months stay in Hyderabad, he resigned to his post on 8 August 1948.

Later Hyderabad had to face 'police action', a well known fact. But Sir Mirza became a subject of wrath of the then Central Home Minister Patel, because Sir Mirza's plans to grant internal 'autonomy' to Hyderabad was not to his liking. Sir Mirza's concept of Federal Government to India by granting internal autonomy to Mysore and other princely states outlined during the Round Table Conference was not entertained by the Congress.¹¹⁰ "The credit of bringing a fresh air to breathe into the fossilized bureaucratic machinery of Hyderabad goes to Sir Mirza. He declared that he would be available on two mornings in a week to all the needy who wanted to meet him," says Parveen Rukshana.¹¹¹ But his action of meeting the people and solving their grievances was misinterpreted to the Nizam as his conducting a 'darbar'. He was accused of hobnobbing with Congress leaders in the lobbies of the Constituent Assembly. "He found it impossible to stay on in Hyderabad as the Nizam was set upon independence"¹¹² In fact Mirza's departure created a gap which was not easy to fill. For 10 months, Sir Mirza Ismail as Dewan tried to restore the political process by building up the Nizam's position in the country. But the Nizam lost power because of short-sightedness, obduracy and wrong leadership.

After Independence, Jawaharlal Nehru, the Prime-Minister offered Sir Mirza, the post of India's Ambassador to France. Sir Mirza declined the offer. Perhaps he could have accepted the offer if he were posted in England, says V.S.Narayan Rao.¹¹³ He agreed to visit Indonesia in June 1951 which was freed from the Dutch Yoke, as the technical advisor appointed by United Nations. He was there for eight months and reported on the countries conditions, rampant with corruption and lazy temperament of people. He was worried over the domination of the Chinese and growing influence of Communism.

He was also in the delegation sent to Ceylon under the leadership of Sir Girijashankar Bajpayee to discuss the problem of 'Stateless Indians' in September 1951. He also visited Persia, the country of his ancestor and Shiraj, their home town as the guest of Shah of Iran. He also wrote for *London Times* occasionally. Sir Mirza passed away on January 1959 in Bangalore. He was deeply mourned by Tej Bahadur Sapru, S.Srinivasa Sastry, C.Y.Chintamani and other national figures. K.T.Bhashyam in his interview with *Tainadu* (soon after Mirza's resignation as Dewan (May, 1941) paid tributes Sir Mirza thus, "Though we differed in our views, I held the hope that he would try to bring about cordial and friendly relations with us, thereby facilitating the establishment of peace and contentment in public life of the State."¹¹⁴

110. Based on V.S.N. p.114-131

111. Studies., p.63

112. Ibid., p.63-64.

113. V.S.N.,p.189.

114. Hettne, p.86.

