

CHAPTER 1

EARLY CAREER

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Satara District is one of the important districts in Maharashtra. It has always played an important role and has been in the forefront known for social and political movements. Many national and state level reformers, educationalists and political leaders belong to this district. Leaders like Y.B.Chavan, Balasaheb Desai, thinkers like Gopal Ganesh Agarkar, Laxmanshastri Joshi, social reformers like Karmaveer Bhaurao Patil, Sant Gadge Maharaj are the well known figures of this district.' Kisan Veer was one of them.

The District came into prominence both during pre-independence days and post-independence days. During pre-independence days Satara district was known for the role played by Nana Patil, Kisan Veer, Y.B.Chavan, Borate, Baburao Ghorpade. These were the leaders who took part in the underground movement, and established a dominate influence in the district and state level politics of Maharashtra.

" Kisan Veer who played a great role in the Independence movement was born on 11th August, 1906 in the house of Mahadeorao Veer and Haribai Veer, in Raviwar Peth at Wai. This part of Wai town consisted of all castes and religious people. Raviwar peth is the original part of Wai

town and majority of farmers live here. Kisan Veer lived here in his childhood. " ¹

" On 11th August, 1906 there was a festival named as ' Gokulashtami ' it is also known as 'Janmashtami' According to the Mahabharata a Hindu epic, on the day of Gokulashtami God Krishna was born. So the child was also named as Kisan." ²

His father Mahadevrao and his Uncle Dnyanoba had business of cloth selling. Because of business economical condition of Veer family was good. Kavathe is the central place of that area. In that village 50 % were Marathas and remaining 50 % were of other casts and religions. Because of suitability for business, Mahadevrao, father of Kisan Veer opened the cloth stores in Kavathe. Mahadev Veer was an orthodox tailor always engaged in pilgrimages to Pandharpur.

Kisan had two brothers. Elder brother was Dhondiba and second was Appa. Veer family shifted from Wai to Kavathe. " When Kisan was about one year his mother died of plague. After the death of his mother, his sister-in-law (wife of his elder brother) Bhagirathibai played the role of mother. She loved him as her son. " ³

"Primary education of Kisan Veer started at the age of nine. His class teacher was Vamanrao Ramchandra Kulkarni alias Kaka. He used to give the knowledge of social events. Because of Kaka's nationalist thought he used to buy the news paper, ' Kesari.' " ⁴

In 1911 British Government cancelled the partition of

of Bengal, at that time Lokamanya Tilak was arrested and was sent to the prison at Mandale. He was returned on 16th June 1914. In 1916 Tilak started Home Rule movement at Bangalore. Mr. Bhausahab Soman, Dr. Athalay, Nath Ghanekar started the propoganda of Home Rule and National Congress in Satara District. On 17th September 1917, Lokamanya Tilak came to Satara, for the reason of 66th birth anniversary of Dadasahab Karandikar. While returning to Poona he stayed in Wai and Limb and gave the lectures on 'Swarajya'. At this time British Government arrested Annie Basent and Arundel. Because of this incident people were dissatisfied. Students expressed their resentment. This happening was known to Kisan Veer through ' Kesari ' which was coming regularly to Kulkarni teacher. He was impressed by this event.

" In 1918 British Government and her allies won the first world war. British celebrated this Victory. This victory was celebrated at Wai also by distributing badges and sweets to the students. Kisan Veer and some of his friends refused to accept the badges and sweets. The result of this incident was that Kisan Veer and his friends including Babasaheb Mulla were punished by the Head-Master, Charegaonkar, National thought of Kisan became strong by this events. "

Kisan Veer was born in an orthodox tailor family. Abhangas were recited by his family. Kisan liked ' Abhangas ' and was impressed by them. ⁶ In those days the Untouchability

was observed in the society but due to the effect of the teaching of the 'Abhangas' Kisan Veer did not believe in untouchability during his childhood.

The favourite game of Kisan Veer was 'Viti-Dandu.' He used to play Atya Patya, Kho-Kho also. He had the hobby of swimming also. After the school time he used to help his father in selling cloths.

In forth and fifth standards, Khatik Master and in sixth standard Mr. Atre from Bhuinj were his class teachers. Shekdar Guruji was the Head Master whose nationalistic thoughts impressed Kisan Veer very much.

On holiday Kisan Veer used to help his father and his elder brother in selling cloths. " He used to do exercise in the morning and wrestling in the evening. At that time he used to do physical exercise. Because of this exercise his body became physically strong.⁷ Because of this hobby he took money from his wrestler friends as contribution and tried to prepare good soil by mixing butter milk and edible oil in red soil. When brick tank collapsed he built new tank of lime and from remaining money he did the plaster to the outside of the wall of wrestling ground. This event points out his selflessness. " For maintainance of the wrestling ground he collected money from people by arranging the wrestling of femous wrestlers Thosewala Dagadu Nhavi. Kisan Veer gave that money to his wrestler friends but that friend did not give it back. So shade of wrestling ground remained incomplete. From this event he learnt a lesson and

after it he started to keep accounts of public work and money.⁸

After the 7th standard he went to his sister for english education but he had nationalistic ideas in his mind so he came back.

"On 6th, 7th November, Mahatma Gandhi was on tour of Satara District. He took the meetings at Wai, Satara and Sangli. Kisan Veer attended the meeting which was held at Wai with his friends. "⁹ Kisan Veer was impressed by Gandhian ideas.

Kisan Veer was married to Radhabai a daughter of Haribhau Gadekar from Panchgani.

In 1920 his cousin Kondiram opened cloth-shop at Bombay. Kisan Veer was in Kavathe. There were people of other casts and Bahujan Samaj in Kavathe. Their occupation was agriculture. Living of Kisan Veer in Kavathe brought close relation with farmers of Bahujan Samaj. He tried to know the problems and difficulties of farmers and Bahujan Samaj and tried to solve their problems.

After the death of Kondiram the charge of the shop at Bombay came to Appasaheb, an elder brother of Kisan Veer. This gave opportunity to Kisan Veer to visit Bombay. When he used to go on tour for a business he saw the events of national movement at Wai, Panchagnai, Satara, Pune and Bombay.

Veer family had to face many difficulties. Kisan Veer's elder brother was sick for many days. Because of the

superstition they did not consult the doctor, hence he died. All responsibility came to Kisan Veer. His father Mahadevrao was old. " In 1926 Kisan Veer married second time with Laxmibai, the daughter of Eknath Tukaram Thakote." ¹⁰ " At that time there was a famine and there was shortage of food grains. Now Kisan Veer opened shop of food grains. In this business capital was of Kisan Veer incharge was his friend Shankar Satpute from Kavathe. He brought food grain from Solapur, Barshi, Pandharpur etc. He started business on a large scale. But after the end of famine when he checked the account he was in loss all capital had finished." ¹¹

After this event Kisan Veer started a Cotton shop with the help of a friend but he was unsuccessful in it. Then he started a business of sarees at Bombay. " This business was in partnership. But his partner was an adicted person. So this business also came in loss. At this time the calamity happened the mistake of his wife, After the cooking, woods which were kept in corner, took fire and in this fire all balance was burnt. Thus his family remained empty." ¹²

Kisan Veer was in great difficulty, but his friends helped him. " With the help of Mallappa Pulli, a merchant of Solapur, he opened a cloth shop again at Karanjkhop. Proprioter was his father-in-law, Thokate, Kisan Veer took fifteen acres agricultural land form Kulkarni from Karanjkhop and five acres of Bhoite from Vagholi on a tribute." ¹³

In 1928 Pandit Motilal Nehru demanded 'Swarajya' in the conference of National Congress which was held at Calcutta. Baburao Vaidya, Bhausahab Soman followed Nehru's action at Satara. Altekar followed it at Karad. At this time leaders of Congress started to increase the members of congress, Maharashtra regional congress wanted to register 2500 members in Satara district, but actually 4243 members were registered. Kisan Veer took active part in this work. He registered members from Kavathe and its surroundings.¹⁴

In Delhi assembly British Government was thinking of strict implementation of laws. At this time Sardar Bhagat Singh threw bomb in the assembly to oppose this law. Whole India supported this action of Bhagat Singh. In Satara Bhausahab Soman, Dr.V.V.Athalay and in Wai Govindrao Vaidya, Bhiayyashstri Watave, Rajabhau Bhave tried to awaken the feelings of freedom.

All those political movements had a great effect on Kisan Veer. He became uneasy watching these political movements.

During this period Kisan Veer happened to meet Trimbak Vaman Kulkarni, he was also known as Dev Master. " Entry of Dev Master in life of Kisan Veer was the important turn to his life. Kisan Veer discussed with Dev master about the situation of freedom movement. Dev Master gave him Biographies of Indian revolutionaries. He read biographies of

Banadhara Kumar Ghosh, Kaniahlal Dutta, Madanlal Dhingra and Narendranath Goswami. Kisan Veer was also impressed by the history of Maratha, especially of Shivaji. He was also much impressed by the book ' Revolt of 1857 by N.K.Behre.¹⁵

" At this time special number of Chitramaya Jagat was published giving description of Russian Revolution. Kisan Veer was impressed by it.¹⁶

In 1920 Lokamanya Tilak expired. After the death of Tilak Mahatma Gandhi took the charge of freedom movement and started non co-operative movement. At this time Kisan Veer was in Bombay. He took part in this movement. Kisan Veer returned to Kavathe from Bombay with the thought of freedom and experience of freedom movement. He planned for the future.

" Kisan Veer decided to capture the forts. He did not consider the British power and its modern war techniques. He thought only to try on his best level for freedom. For this he held a meeting of his friends. He decided to capture the fort Purandar because there was camp of British army. If this fort was captured, they would take the possession of weapons. So Kisan Veer sent Kisan Koli to watch the condition of fort.¹⁷ " Behind this action there was no political view but only to attack the British and for attacking there was the necessity of weapons and bombs.

' Kisan Veer discussed with Dev Master about the search of weapons. Dev Master suggested him the name of Nilubhau

and Nath Ghanekar of Satara. They were proprietors of National School of Satara. Kisan Veer met Ghanekar along with his friends. Ghanekar asked him in detail about Kisan Veer, but Kisan Veer refused to give any information. Therefore, Ghanekar thought that it was the plan of C.I.D. So he did not co-operate with him. After returning from Satara Kisan Veer and Dev Master met Mr. Bhuskute the editor of 'Swarajya' and tried to get knowledge of bomb from him. But when they come to know the danger in making the bomb they left the thought of it." 18

After this event, Kisan Veer was impressed by the ideology of Gandhiji. He became a member of congress and started to do the work of congress activities. The principles and ideology of congress were spread from Satara and Wai to the nearby villages. Government officers concentrated their attention to Kavathe because the ideas of Gandhiji were spread from Kavathe to other villages. Kisan Veer knew that there would be no progress of village and national work if there was no unity so he tried to bring the people closer to each other who were gone away due to the groupism.

Thus Kisan Veer prepared himself to participate in freedom movement. He received the guidance of Dev Master. In future he played a great role during pre-independence and post-independence period. He tried to unite the people who were went away from each other was important role in future

to solve local problems or quarrels which happened between local political leaders. Surrounding which was got to Kisan Veer made a darer which was necessary in future.

Thus the early career of Kisan Veer is marked by the hardships, difficulties which made him strong enough to face them. In the adverse condition emerged the extra ordinary career of Kisan Veer, who played a unique role in Satara district. At the same time the influence of his teachers and the nationalists leaders prepared him to participate in the freedom movement.

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