
CHAPTER THREE

KISAN VEER: AS CONGRESS LEADER

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In the last chapter, Kisan Veer's emergence as a leader was assessed. It was through various activities, Kisan Veer could gain popularity among the rural masses. Besides Wai was the centre of all his activities. The British government in India since 1940 and onwards had realised the awakening of nationalism amongst the masses. They had taken various steps for introducing Home Rule, and hence had introduced various elections to associate Indian's in administration and government.

It was on 16th May, 1946, warrants of underground workers were withdrawn. All underground workers were welcomed and when this was done Kisan Veer came out and started living a free life.

" In 1946 elections to the Satara district Local Board were declared. Kisan Veer was given the responsibility to choose the candidates to contest the election as Congress candidates. He choose candidates from every taluka. The selection of V.N.Patil for local board as a candidate of Congress party; caused a conflict between Kisan Veer and Krantiveer Nana Patil. Kisan Veer was criticised by all the Congress men because V.N.Patil was the member of Government

civil gard (British loyalist). It was in this context he was criticised, but Kisan Veer stood firm on his decision.

" The election took place and meeting was held at Karad to select the President of District Local Board. At this meeting Kisan Veer proposed D.S.Desai's name for the post of President. The freedom fighters opposed Kisan Veer's proposal and they proposed Shri V.N.Patil, ^{for} the President's post. Shri Vasant Rao Patil and Shri Barde Guruji supported Kisan Veer. This election of the district local board hence was considered not as a election between V.N.Patil and D.S. Desai but was considered as a prestige issue between Kisan Veer and Nana Patil. The Satara leadership got divided on this issue.

In this election Kisan Veer was successful by getting D.S.Desai elected ~~as~~ unopposed. Shri D.S.Desai became the President of District Local Board"¹.

It is since this election, group politics ~~got~~ introduced in Satara Congress leadership. Besides Shri D.S.Desai getting elected, unopposed also established the fact that

1. Chitnis B.N. (Ed.) Kisan Veer Smurit Visheish Ank, 6th Nov.1981, Article of Chavan R.N., p.12.

Kisan Veer was in a perfect grip of local politics. This election had a long lasting effect in Satara district politics. The two faction's got established, known as the Kisan Veer faction and Nana Patil's faction.

Kisan Veer had to face a big challenge in 1948. In this year a new party emerged in Satara District and threatened the very leadership of the Congress rank and file. Kisan Veer can be stated to be a leader of masses, because he had great following at rural level. The new political party known as Peasants and Workers Party was established. Kisan Veer had a tough time to see that the masses loyalty towards Congress was not shaken. He was basically a grass root level worker and he did achieve a great deal of success in retaining the masses in the Congress fold.

From 1946 to 1952 Kisan Veer worked as a Secretary of Satara District Congress Committee. Shri Ramanand Bharati was the President of Congress Committee, Kisan Veer helped him in various ways for building the party. * On 16th June, 1946, Satara Congress Committee organized the Conference of Seva Dal at Satara. Kisan Veer used all the his efforts for the arrangement of the said Conference.

In 1952 Congress Party asked Kisan Veer to contest election from the Wai assembly constituency. Dadasaheb Jagtap contested against him who belonged to Peasants and Workers party. Unfortunately in this election caste played a dominant role because of which Kisan Veer was defeated by a margin of only 1800 votes².

KISAN VEER AS THE PRESIDENT OF DISTRICT CONGRESS COMMITTEE:

On 3rd January, 1953, Kisan Veer was again nominated as the President of Satara District Congress Committee. He worked as President upto the 14th October, 1959. During this period of seven years he was closely associated with Shri Y.B.Chavan, Shri D.S.Desai and Shri Laxmanshastri Joshi. Kisan Veer as a President of District Congress Organization formed various Taluka Congress Committees and formed a very sound Congress District Organization. He proved his organization abilities. He was a great admirer of Shri Y.B.Chavan, Shri Y.B.Chavan played unchallenged role in the politics of Satara and Maharashtra, because of Kisan Veer's firm grip on district politics. This credit goes to the Kisan Veer.

2. Kisan Veer Jeevan Darshan Commemoration Volume, Part II, p.p.63-64.

In 1955 Satara District faced great difficulties as it was facing a famine, various political parties came together and established " Satara District Famine Relief Committee". Even this responsibility fell on the shoulders of Kisan Veer, which shows that even opposition parties had faith in Kisan Veer's leadership and his abilities to work with the rural masses.

In 1955 the declaration of Linguistic Re-organization report was declared. The Samyukata Maharashtra movement which was opposed to this report, started gaining ground in Satara District. The Congress leadership had to face again various problems during this period. Kisan Veer as a President of District Congress saw that a proper public opinion was created, favourable to the leadership of Shri Y.B.Chavan's leadership. The most important challenge which Kisan Veer faced was the challenge of D.S.Desai's election and the Samyakata Maharashtra Movement, which tried to shake his leadership.

" At one of the meeting Shri Y.B.Chavan himself expressed at a public meeting " Unity among the Satara District Congress was my power, and it was developed by Kisan Veer"³. This points to the leadership of Kisan Veer

3. Ibid., p.71.

and Shri Y.B.Chavan's reliance on Kisan Veer. Kisan Veer also organized the historical Congress meeting on 1st December, 1955 at Phaltan. In this meeting Shri Y.B.Chavan, expressed his views for the first time about the composite state.

In 1956 Kisan Veer was nominated as the Member of Legislative Council. On 1st November, 1956, composite State came into existence and the general election for the State Assembly were declared in 1957.

" Kisan Veer was again candidate of Congress Party from ~~Wai~~ Assembly constituency and the same opposition candidate Dadasaheb Jagtap of Sumukata Maharashtra Samiti contested. Kisan Veer was again defeated in this election, besides only three candidate of Congress party were elected from Satara district"⁴.

" In 1962 Parliamentary general election were held, Kisan Veer again contested as a candidate from Satara Constituency for the Loka Sabha, Nana Patil contested against him as a candidate of " Peasants and ~~workers~~ Party". Kisan Veer was elected by securing one lakh three thousand votes, and Kisan Veer become a Member of Parliament.

4. Ibid., p. 71.

KISAN VEER AS MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT:

" From 1962-1967 Kisan Veer represented Satara Constituency in the Parliament. Though he was not highly educated he made his presence feel on the floor of Lok Sabha. During his tenure as M.P. from Maharashtra, Kisan Veer felt the need of having a meeting place of all Maharashtra M.P.'s He felt that all the M.P.'s of his State should come together for exchange of views and ideas, with this in his mind, he established a 'Marathwada Corner' at 265 ' ~~Avenue~~^A ' New Delhi.

In this place they discussed various problems related to Maharashtra region. Such as Krishna-Godawari river project, Co-operative movement and boundary disputes. It is in this way Kisan Veer tried to bring a sense of unity and integrity amongst the M.P.'s of Maharashtra".

Kisan Veer also took part in the Election of Parliamentary working committee which is supposed to ^{be} a very important body of the Parliament.

When Jawaharlal Nehru expired the problem of leadership arose. Kisan Veer fully supported Lal Bahadur Shastri for becoming Prime Minister of India. Later on again when Shastri expired, Kisan Veer played a major role passifying Shri Jagjivan Ram on the side of Indira Gandhi"⁵.

5. Kisan Veer Jeevan Darshan- A Commemoration Volume, Part-I, Artical of Annasabha Shinde, Ex-Minister, Govt. of India, p.6.

KISAN VEER AND EDUCATIONAL FREEDOM:

" Though Kisan Veer was elected as Member of Parliament, he tried to use this position also for the educational development of Satara district, especially in Wai taluka. In 1960 he established Yeshwant Shikshan Sanstha in Sirur of Wai taluka and remained President of this Sanstha throughout his life. He felt the need of a good college at Wai in 1967, and he established Janata Shikshan Sanstha at Wai and a Senior College was established. He was the President of this institution throughout his life. He was also the President of Kandala Shikshan Sanstha, from 1962 to 1979. Within a little span of time, Kisan Veer could spread education by establishing various educational societies"⁶.

KISAN VEER AND COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT:

" Besides his educational efforts Kisan Veer also contributed for cooperative movement. " The agricultural produce market committee was established on 12th May, 1952. The actual working started on 1st September, 1953. He worked as Chairman from 1953 to 1960. The operation area of market committee spread in three talukas of Satara, Wai and Jawali.

6. Kisan Veer, Jeevan Darshan Commemoration Volume, Part-II, pp.78-79.

In 1967 he was elected as a Director of Satara District Central Co-operative Bank. Through the society constituency and same year he got elected as a Chairman of the Bank and remained a Chairman throughout his life.

" As a Chairman of Satara District Central Co-operative Bank, he enjoyed offices of various state level and district level; Co-operative institutions, In 1967 he was the Director of Maharashtra State Co-operative Marketing Federation Ltd., Bombay. In 1974, President of Maharashtra State Fertilizers and Chemicals Ltd., In 1975 Director of Poona District Central Co-operative Bank Ltd., Poona. In 1967, he was the President of District Level Audit Committee, Satara. He was also the Director of Satara Zilla Sakhari Audyogik Seva Seva Sakhari Society⁷.

Kisan Veer after the end of Lok Sabha membership, diverted himself in educational and agricultural development on Satara district. He as a staunch supporter of Shri Y.B. Chavan, never thought of contesting election from Satara constituency and he worked for educational and co-operative movement in Satara and carved a place for himself as a

7. Dainik Aikya: Late Kisan Veer Smurati Ank: 1st September, 1980, Article of Chavan S.R., p.2.

leader of rural masses. The work of Kisan Veer and his leadership hence can be better assessed by assessing his contribution to the Co-operative movement agricultural and allied development, development of Banking institutions etc., Hence in the preceding chapters an assessment of these institutions is made.