

Rayat or Peasant or Farmers Movement in Karnataka

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Abstract: India has a long history of peasant or farmers' movement, dating back to the colonial period when farmers in different parts of India revolted against Zamindars, landlords, British colonial masters or powers including feudal lords. These movements were the results of severe exploitation, oppression, loss of rights over land, imposition of new taxes, and new agrarian relations of the peasants with the Colonial state or the feudal lords. Most of the struggles that the peasants resorted to were either carried as part of nationalist struggle or independent of it. Some of the important struggles of farmers or peasants during the British period were: Bhil Revolt (1822,1823,1837-60), Deccan Peasant Revolt (1875), Mopilla Revolt (1921), The Muslhi Satyagraha (1921-24), Struggle of Warlis (1945), Birsa Munda revolt Nagar Peasant Uprising (1830-33). In this context, three important struggles that Gandhi led require our special attention. They were: Champaran (1918-19); Bardoli (1925) and Kheda(1918). In the first struggle, the primary issue was opposing the Tinkathia System imposed on the Indigo cultivators of Champaran by the colonial powers. In the second and third struggle, opposing the rent payable to the government at the time of distress was the major issue. All these struggles had one impact: it brought the peasants to the nationalist movement.

Among the many progressive movement and popular agitations, the Rayat movement or the peasant movements were wary and frequent. Between 1950 and 1980 local Rayat's Association conducted the agitations in their own areas and districts. There was little success for these agitations. Therefore, Rayat leaders like Former Minister H S Rudrappa, Abig farmer and Law professor Prof. M D Nanjundaswamy, N D Sundaresh, progressive farmer and activist. Sindhanuru Revanasiddaiah formed the State level farmer's organization called 'Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha' at Bangalore on October 17, 1980. It was a turning point in the history of peasant movement.

Key Words: farmers, rayats. Peasants, movement, Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha (KRRS), KagoduSatyagraha.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Rayats movement in Karnataka can be traced back to 1682, when Chikkadevarajawodeyar had increased the land tax on the irrigated land of Kabini region. There in 1930 farers of Bidanur region revilted against the aggressive revenue officers. In 1950 Kaagodu farmers and tenants revolted against aggressive Zamindars. In 1970 farmers of Navalagunda, Naragunda in old Dharwad District revolted against the oppressive laws of the Government. Then in 1980 farmers revolted against the government in protect the government in protect against the supply of fake seeds and fake fertilizers. These revolts were mainly organized for the following reasons:

- Heavy taxation on lands.
- Loss of crops due to draught and flood.
- No remission of land taxes and collection of tax by force during natural calamities.
- Oppression of the revenue officers during tax collection.
- Acquisition of agricultural lands by the Government for industrial road transport.
- Oppression of poor farmers by zagirdars and inamdars.
- Agitation for land to the tiller.
- Agitation for fixation of minimum price by the Government.
- Agitation against betterment levy and imposition of land development tax.
- Revolt against money lenders.



- Collection of water tax without supplying water.
- Agitation against unjust cess or customers levy, octroi, etc.
- Agitation against the abolition of tenancy.
- Agitation against irregular supply of power to the pump-sets.

2. Rayats Movement Up to 1956:

Peasants movement at Nanjanagudu: 1682

In the days of Chikkadevaraja Wodeyar land tax was enhanced in the irrigated areas of Kabini river in Nanjanagudu taluk. This was bitterly opposed by farmers of the area. They demanded the abolition of increased tax. At that time leaders of farmers were invited to the large hall in Nanjanagudu temple. Secretly these leaders were murdered in a conspiracy hatched by Jaina Minister Vishalaksha Panditha who was also a close friend and class-mate of Chikkadevaraja. Thus the peasants revolt was nipped in the bud.

Peasants Rebellion at Bidanur: 1830

Bidanur kingdom had been conquered by Hydar Ali and Fouzdars were appointed in that area. The Fouzdars were oppressive from the beginning. Even under the Fouzdars like Veeraraja Aras, Gopalaraja Aras who belonged to royal family and Shirasthedars like Thimmappaiah and Nagappaiah and others belonged to Brahmin community were highly oppressive and corrupt in collecting revenue. They were also corrupt in remitting the amount to the treasury. Farmers were exploited by these officers as well as Zamindars. The farmers of Bidanur area revolted against the oppressive government in 1830. They were led by a political opportunist by name Boodi Basappa. Krishnaraja Wodeyar-III was unable to suppress the rebellion of the farmers. Moreover, he could not full fill the eight demands of the farmers, led by Boodi Basappa, Manappa and Five other representatives, who presented the memorandum to the Maharaja of Mysore.

Eight Demands of the Farmers:

- To abolish tenancy system by granting right to cultivate the lands in which they were cultivating.
- To return the lands sold in auction for non payment of land tax due to draught and famine.
- To wave of the loans of the farmers as well dues.
- To distribute the waste lands among the landless farmers.
- According to the size of the family lands had to be allotted.
- To give subsidy to purchase bullocks and seeds for next five years.
- To abolish sharrat system or contract system and put an end to the explanation of farmers.
- To cancel land tax for the next 10 years.

As these demands were unreasonable, impractical and politicized were rejected in toto. The rebellion spread to Tumkur, Chitradurga also. These farmers were supported by the farmers of Bhattarahalli in Ballary District. The rayats broke-out in revolt and attacked and looted the houses of zamindars and merchants. Many shops were burnt in Channagiri, Holehonnuru, Chikkamaglore, Hassan, Bhuvanagiri, Chandragutti and other places. Village troops were organized by the Fouzdars to curd the rebellion of farmers. Big land lords and rich farmers supplied spears, swords, lathies etc., to suppress rayats. But the rebellion couldnot be controlled. Immediately Madras Governor S.R. Lushington ordered Maharajato send British troops stationed at Bengaluru Contonment to Bidanur region : Corrupt Fouzdars and Shirsdedars were suspend and in their place new officers were appointed. Krishana Rao was made Fouzdars of Bidanur and Shashagiri Rao was made the Fouzdar of Chitradurga. Rebel leaders were suspended and in their faces were burnt with Punju's . About 7000 farmers participated in rebellion which resulted in loot, punder and merder. Finally, they were suppressed by major Rockfort, Major Evans, Casa Major and others. Law and order was restored in Bidanur region.

Farmers Revolt at Shiroor: 1875

This revolt was organized by the farmers against money lenders in Karade village, Shiroor taluk of Dharwad District. A rich marwadi by name Kalyanram had given loan to not only small farmers but also zamindars and deshmuks. He was in the erciless habit of auctioning pledged lands and othe properties if the loans were not repaid in-time. Once he brought a decree or court order to auction the lands of Deshmukh Babasaheb. But nobody came forward to buy the land. Therefore, Kalyanram himself purchased lland and house for a bid of 150 rupees. Moreover, he demolished the house and forced Deshmukh to leave the village. This was not tolerated by the farmers and they revolted against the Marwadi and throw him out of the village. They brought Deshmukh to the village.

Farmers Revolt at Supa:1875

This revolt was inspired by the revolt of farmers at Shiroor against the Marwadi. The farmers in Supa area were called Kunabies. They burnt down the loan records of the local Maarwadies. As a result, about 200 Maarwadies families ran away from Supa. In this context Farmers of Sirigonda, Purandara, Indaoura, threatened these Maarwadies and drove them out. The revolt of the Supa farmers was suppressed by British troops sent from Bobay. About 1000 farmers who took part in the rebellion were arrested and fined. Rebelled tax was imposed on these villagers. In this background Bombay Government passed Deccan Farmers Relief Act in 1879 to save the farmers from money lenders. This act prohibited the auction of lands and houses. But it did not make alternative arrangements to extend loans. As a result, the farmers who had borrowed loans had to work in their mortgaged lands as daily labourers to earn livelihood.

Irvin Naala Rayats Movement:1931-32

Irvin canal provided water to the Mandya region from K.R.S. There was delay in the construction of canal. Water supply was not regular. Even then the Government began to collect water tax. This angered the farmers and led a Jaatha to Mysore. But the Government suppressed the revolt mercilessly.

Kaagodu Sathyagraha:1950

Kaagodu is a small village in Sagar taluk of Shivamogga District. Most of the farmers belong to Vokkaliga and Lingayat communities. Some of the tenants belonged to Deeva community. The tenants get a share of 15% of the crop. The land lords enjoyed 85% of the produce. It was like a lion's share. This exploitation continued for any generations. In 1930's Socialist party leaders like Sharad Joshi of Maharashtra, Mahendra sing Tikayat and Ramamanohar Lohia of UP organized demonstrations of the farmers. Some of the tenants started a movement against the land lords at Kaagodu and raised the slogan 'land for the tillers'. Socialist party of Karnataka led by S. Gopala Gowda and others led the agitation in 1950 and 1951. They were arrested and cases were booked against them. These leaders were thrown in to prison. However, rights of the tenants were upheld by the Court. Therefore, the cases were withdrawn and the leaders were also released. With this success small farmers and tenants occupied the government lands and began to cultivate them. Big land lords also joined on the side of the government to curb the revolt of farmers around Kaagodu.

3. Rayats Movements 1956 Onwards

Farmers Revolt in Dharwad District 1972

In this year farmers of Magadi village near Gadag in old Dharwad District organized a conference of farmers to demand minimum price fixed for agriculture products, like cotton, sugarcane ground nut, jowari silk etc. it also demanded to start Fair Price Depos all over the State. Communist Party of India had supported this movement of the rayats. But there was no popular support for this movement as big farmers and landlords as well as middle class people did not have faith in CPI. Thus this rayat revolt of Dharwad did not succeed.

Varuna Naala Farmers Revolt 1978

In 1978 D. Devaraja Aras took up the Varuna Naala Canal from K.R.S. to feed the dry lands in the Mysore District. Immediately Mandya District farmers opposed the Varuna Naala project by taking out half naked procession. They led by K.V. Shankare Gowda Ex. Minister. This revolt of the Mandya farmers led to the unpopularity of Congress. This led to agitation by Raitha Sangha all over the State. Janata party led by Ramakrishna Hegde got power with support of the farmers. But Janatha Government went on giving assurances without fulfilling them. To please the farmers of Mysore District the Varuna Naala Project was Completed without causing much loss of water to Mandya area.

Rayats Movement At Navalagunda And Naragunda 1980

A number of taluks in Bombay Karnataka areas coming under Dharwad and Belgaum Districts were prone to draught frequently. Therefore S. Nigalingappa Ministry sanctioned Manali Project across Malaprabha river near Savadatti in 1960. But the project was dragged on by the successive ministries led by old Mysore Chief Ministers who did not release the funds for the project. Finally, it was completed after 20 years. The farmers could grow abundant cotton, jowar and other crops. But they were unable to pay development fee imposed on them. They were unable to repay the loans taken for fertilizers, insecticides, hybrid seed, tractors etc. in 1980 the farmers of Navalagunda and Naragunda conducted a rally attended by about 10,000 rayats. The leaders Daddimmappa, Adinayarana Reddy, Jayarama Reddy and others put forth these demands:

- Removal of middleman between farmers and consumers.
- Remission of old loans of the farmers and issue of new loans at lower interest.
- To fix supporting price for agricultural products.
- To supply fertilizers, insecticides, seeds, implements at concessional rates.

- To reduce water tax in some areas.
- Abolition of water water tax in some taluks.
- To give old age pension to agricultural labourers.
- Abolition of registration fee for tenants.
- Crop insurance without premium payment.
- Distribution of Government lands to landless farmers.
- Free education and free medicine for the agricultural labourers.
- Establishment of small scale industries in rural areas.
- Eighty percent seats in education for children of farmers.
- Fifty percent seats in education for children of farmers.
- Abolition of levy on Sugar.
- Electricity supply at 6 paise per unit.
- Abolition of minimum rate for electricity supplied to irrigation pumpsets.
- Abolition of of sale tax on tractors.
- Improvement of rural roads.
- Old age pension for agricultural labourers.

Such agricultural rallies were held at Savadatti and Belgaum also. Shops, hotels, schools and others were closed. During the rally there were disturbances. To control the mob, the police resorted to lathi charge and shooting. About two persons were killed and 20 members were injured. Immediately Chief Minister Gundu Rao announced concessions to farmers worth 80 crore rupees. Betterment levy was abolished forthwith. A Committee was appointed with Bangarappa as chairman. After Bangarappa's term Bommai became chairman.

This committee did not consider un-lawful demands of the farmers. In 1880, Raita Sangha was led by H S Rudrappa, N D Sundaresh, Basava Gowda patil, M D Nanjundaswamy, Puttannaiah and Others.

Farmers Movement of Shivamogga:1980

The farmers of Shivamogga District were inspired by the success of the farmers of Navalagunda and Naragunda. They formed Raita Sangha under the leadership of H S Rudrappa, Ex minister. They took procession to the Deputy Commissioner and presented a memorandum of six demands. They are:

- Abolition of water tax.
- Abolition of development tax.
- Abolition of land revenue.
- Concession in chemical fertilizers.
- Fair price for paddy and sugar-cane
- Old age pension for farmers.

R Gundu Rao Government did not respond which were not justifiable in the long run. Therefore, farmers resorted to satyagraha for 48 days in front of the D. C. Office. Strikes, road blocked were held in many cities and towns. Advocates of Shivamogga District, as well as students and grain merchants supported the agitation of the farmers. However, some of these demands were fulfilled.

Farmers Agitation in Chitradurga and Hassan District:1980

These agitations were held to support the farmers of Shivamogga. Fasting, road blockade, jail bhara programmes were taken by these farmers. They presented the following seven demands through Deputy commissioner.

- Rural bus services.
- Establishment of Agricultural College at Chitradurga and Hassan.
- Bank loan without interest.
- Supply of implements at a concessional rate.
- Repairs of irrigation canals.
- Proper relief to farmers who lost land due to irrigation works.
- Establishment of sugar factories in these districts.



Rayats Agitation for Fertilizers in Haveri:2008

At the beginning of monsoon in the month of June there was great demand for fertilizers. But there was shortage of fertilizers in the market. The state Government had not procured enough fertilizer from the Central Government. Merchants created additional shortage to make more profits. This led to the agitations by the farmers. Agitations turned violent. Farmers resorted to stone throwing on police and burning of old tyres to show their anger. When the situation went out of control police resorted to shooting at Haveri. Two persons were killed and some were injured. One was taken to Sanjay Gandhi Hospital, Bangalore, where he died. The agitation spread to Harihara, Malebennuru, Chamarajanagara, Mysore, Mandya, Chikkamagalore, Shikaripura etc. Two farmers viz., Ajjappa of Malebennuru and Narayana Swamy of Shikaripura consumed poison and died. Some papers reported that opposition party was involved in such cases to bring a bad name to B SYadiyurappa Government which had come to power just 10 days back and it was the responsibility of the previous Government to procure enough fertilizer. More over the Central Government had supplied 60% of the quantity requested by State Government.

One-man Enquiry Committee was appointed headed by Justice Jagannatha Setty by the Government to provide in to the golibar incident. The farmers of Mandya, Mysore, Hospete, Bagalkote, Belgaum, Gokak, continued agitation for fair price to be fixed. Even in 2010, Government has responded properly to these demands.

Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha:1980

1980 was a turning point in the history of farmer's revolt in Karnataka. There were many revolts at district level in Naragunda, Navalagunda, Sindhanuru, Bengaluru etc. These revolts did not succeed in fulfilling their main demands. R Gundu Rao Government had imposed development tax in 1980 with effect from 1973 in the irrigated areas of Naragunda, Naikagunda, Rona, Hubli and other taluks of Dharwad Districts and Soudatti, Bailhongala taluks of Belgaum District. Moreover, canal works had not been completed in 1980. Therefore, the farmers revolted against the unjust order. In this revolt some were killed and many were injured. Due to this tragedy farmers revolt spread like wildfire all over the state and the country. Bharat Kissan Union leader Mahendrasingh Tikayat, Narayanaswamy farmers leader Tamilnadu, Sharad Joshi of Maharashtra, H S Rudrappa and N D Sundaresh of Shivamogga took a leading role in farmers revolt. In this movement intellectual leadership was given by Professor M D Nanjundaswamy of Mysore, who was a Professor at the Sharadavilasa Law College of Mysore and an expert in agricultural affairs. He was also a big land lord. The farmers revolt was well organized under his leadership. At that time Green Revolution had increased the outset. But it had improvised the farmers and driven them to insolvency. Besides the farmers suffered from irrigational price policy, shortage of electricity, increase in agricultural capital, marketing problem of sugar-cane growers. Oppressive attitude of the high handed officers. These causes had led the revolt of the farmers. This time was ripe for the fall of Congress Party and corruption. Therefore, the revolt continued. In the meantime, Bhadra Cooperative Sugar Factory problem had reached a climax under the leadership of Nanjundaswamy, Sundaresh, H S Rudrappa, Revanna Siddaiah and others. They submitted memorandum of 19 demands to the Shivamogga D. C. on 1st September 1980. Main demands were:

- Release of arrested farmers.
- Cancellation of bank loan to farmers.
- Sanction of new loans at the rate of 4% interest.
- Crops Insurance Scheme for the farmers.

On that day that is 1st September 1980 the rebel farmer's leaders decided to wear green cap and green shawl at the time of agitation.

Formation of Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha

Till 1980 District level Raita sanghas or organizations had conducted agitations against oppressive laws and exploitation by the zamindars and banks. But they had failed because of their disunity. Hence they decided to form a state level Raita Sangha to fight unitedly against all unjust levies, taxes and fulfill their demands. At this juncture Congress Leader D. Devaraja Aras who had lost power organized Pragathi para Raitaravedike with the support of CPI and CPI(M).

With this background Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha was established at Bangalore on 17th October 1980. This sangha put forth 2 more demands namely. Prohibition of liquor and demolition of toddy shops in the rural areas.

The revolt of Karnataka Rayats was quite different from the farmer's revolts in other parts of India. In those areas socialistic outline was made a part of their programmes. But Prof. M. D. Nanjundaswamy had rejected both Capitalistic and Communistic ideologies and had accepted socialistic ideals with a difference. He believed in eradication of caste system, prohibition of liquor, opposition to hybrid crop and opposition to large scale industries.

Karnataka Raita Sangha members responded positively to the needs of contemporary sociological ideals. Under the leadership of Nanjundaswamy. In December 1980 a big Jaatha of farmers was organized from Naragunda to Bangalore. The farmers reached Bangalore on 5th February 1981. But the Gundu Rao Government did not respond properly.

On 2nd October 1982 on Gandhi Jayanthi day 300000 farmers from all over Karnataka assembled in Cubbon park, Bangalore in front of VidhanaSoudha. They raised the following slogan “No levy, no land revenue until the demands are fulfilled “Besides this slogan they demanded enquiry into police firing at Naragunda on 2nd November 1982. Farmers of Shivamogga organized onther Jaatha to Bengaluru. On 10th November they held Dharani Sathyagraha in front of CMs Residence. Between November 12 and 20 farmers of Kanakapura, Kollegal and other areas stopped granite transportation. More than 500 farmers were arrested and imprisoned. This agitation continued in Mandya District where they demanded fixation of fair price for Sugar-cane, in front of KaalamuddannaDoddi Sugar Factory. Police resorted to lathi charge the agitating farmers. But the agitation went out of control. Farmers resorted to road disperse the agitating on November 23rd farmers Gejjalagere in Maddur taluk became violent and 2 farmers were Killed in golibar. The opposition parties raised the issue in the Assembly. Unruly 16 MLAs were expelled from the Assembly. In the Gundu Rao Government agreed to withdraw betterment levy.

In 1983 Assembly Elections Raita Sangha decided not to support any political party. This decision was opposed by Revannasiddaiah of Sindhanur who left Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha and formed Raita Kaarmika Sangha and supported opposition parties against Congress. Revannasiddaiah contested from the Communist Party and won the election. He became the prominent of the farmers in the Assembly.

4. Raita Sangha Party: 1989

Raita Sangha did not participate directly in the elections of 1983 and 1985. It also did not support any other party. But after the elections it supported the Janata Party headed by Ramakrishna Hegde. But he did not fulfill the demands of the farmers as he did not depend on their support. Therefore, in 1989 elections Raita Sangha emerged as a political party and contested 111 seats. Only 2 candidates namely M D Nanjundaswamy, Rudre Gowda won the elections. All the 109 candidates lost their deposits. Moreover, total number of votes secured by them was only 65000.

Causes for The failures of Raita Sangha Party

- There were no charismatic leader in the Raita Sangha.
- Big farmers and zamindars did not support the Raita Sangha. They were already in the other parties.
- Manifestoes of the Raita Sangha Party did not appeal to the people.
- Agricultural laborers belonged to other parties.
- Candidates were financially not sound.

Raita Sangha and Globalization

Raita Sangha was exposed to new challenges from Globalization which shook the very roots of the farmers. It was the brain child of affluent farmers and merchants and manufacturers of the West. Globalization included the policies of Liberalization, Privatization and Globalization. Globalization brought Multi-National Companies like Corgil Seed Company, Monsanto Seed Company etc. which supplied hybrid seeds and made huge profits. Some other MNCs, supplied chemical fertilizers, insecticides and made huge profits. Indian farmers became dependent on these companies and were exploited them. SEZ took away the lands of the farmers for industrial purpose and global markets. In short globalization uprooted the farmers in various ways. This was realized by the Raita Sangha leaders like Nanjundaswamy, Sundaresh, Puttannaiah and other leaders who tried to check the exploitation by the MNCs. Rajya Raita Sangha drew the attention of the Government towards the evils of globalization.

In 1994, once again Raita Sangha Party contested many seats. Only one candidate Puttannaiah of Pandavapura was successful. All others lost their deposits. Puttannaiah brilliantly presented the problems of the farmers during question hour in the Assembly. But nothing was done to solve the problem of the farmers.

Split in Rajya Raita Sangha

Groupism began to weaken the Rajya Raita Sangha. One group was led by M.D.Nanjundaswamy of Mysore and another group was led by P. Puttannaiah of Pandavapura. Both were leaders from old Mysore area. The farmers from North Karnataka elected Patil Rudre Gowda of BJP as their leader. Meanwhile Prof. M. D. Nanjundaswamy died. There after Suresh Babu Patil of Belgaum who belonged to Nanjundaswamy group was elected as their leader. V. Suresh Reddy was elected as the president and Kodihalli Chandra Shekhar as the General Secretary. Miss Chukki Nanjundaswamy daughter of M D Nanjundaswamy was elected as the Secretary for external affairs of the Sangha. K T Gangadhar was made a senior leader of the party. In the meantime, Puttannaiah group along with dalit Leader Devanuru



Mahadeva have merged into Sarvodaya Karnataka party. Puttannaiah group is supported by Basavaraja Thambake of Bidar, who was elected as the President, Basavarajappa of Shiamogga as General Secretary, K C Basavaraj as Vice-President, Mrs. Sunanda Jayaram elected as the President of the womens wing.

North Karnataka area did not have a good leader in these circumstances. During the 25th year of Raita Sangha. North Karnataka farmers organized Uttara Karnataka Raita Sangha on 21st July 2005. S.R.S Swamy was elected as the President. Differences between Puttannaiah group and Swamy group have been increasing due to political, geographical and caste based differences. These second and third groups are not showing symptoms of coming together to fight for the welfare of farmers. The Raita Sangha which was the hope of the farmers has become a leader for the selfish leaders to power. This is the misfortune of the farmers.

Suresh BabuPatil tried to bring all the three groups under one roof. It was criticized and removed by M DN. Group. Suresh Babu Patil's motive for unification was not liked by the Kodohalli Chandra shekhar and Chamarasa Maali Patil who were made President and Vice President of DN group of Raita Sangha. Mrs. Chukki Nanjundaswamy is elected as the Executive President of the Sangha.

In this background Suresh BabuPatil of Belgaum has started new organization called Grama Swarajya Chaluvalli.

Reunification of Raita Sangha Groups

As a result of the split in the Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha(KRRS) misunderstanding and propaganda weekend the Sangha. Inciurce of time ther remained two names in the fore front of different groups namely Puttannaiah and Kodihalli Chandrashekhar. These two leaders of major groups began to realise the importance of unity in the Karnataka Rajya Raita Sangha. Because after the demise of Prof. M D Nanjundaswamy the raita Sangha failed to present any issue before the government for the betterment of the sons of the soil.

As leaders of both the groups came forward and gave up differences and merged into a single unit. In fact it was materialised at the presence of Sri Shivamurthy Swamiji of Muruga Matha on 23rd February 2012. Accordingly, K S Puttannaiahbecae the Honorable president and Kodihalli Candrashekhar as the vice president, Chaasawaali as the secretary and Dr. Venkata Reddy as the president of High power Committee of united Raita Sangha.

5. CONCLUSION:

The farmers' movements in India have excelled in populist philosophising. Some farmers' leaders, like Nanjundaswamy particularly, have emphasised that the price issue is only one of the many issues affecting fanners and the ultimate goal of their movement is to end capitalism of the Western type and run the economy on Gandhian principles. There is an immediate need to curb the mad rush to elitismthat provides little employment and security to the masses. Mass leader like Prof. Nanjundaswamy has already given a call to his followers to avoid synthetic fabrics and wear only cottons. But there have been no corresponding moves to take up the issues concerning rural artisans and rural industries or to improve other aspects of rural life such as education and health. The fact is that farmers' movements are yet to graduate themselves into rural movements for improving the quality of life of the bulk of the rural population, let alone movements of all the deprived sections including the urban poor. Irrespective of personal convictions, it is doubtful how far Nanjundaswamy would be able to dissuade the elite farmers from emulating the life styles of the urban rich and carry them to Gandhian goals.

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