



Martyr Bhai Kotwal: Work in Social Welfare & Indian Freedom Struggle Movement

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Summary

Hutatma bhai kotwal and his colleagues made social, educational revolution in karjat tahashil and neighbouring talukas, participated in freedom struggle and sacrificed all his livelihood. Bhai Kotwal and his colleagues made a sacred task to educate the people and destroy the poor customs of society. Bhai Kotwal redeemed farmers through injustice and oppression of pro-feudal Lords. They released him from the oppressive jurisdiction of the lenders. Through the farmers council, there was awareness among farmers. Bhai kotwal and his colleagues has constructed 124 grain ware house through his colleagues to remove the poor farmers and workers drought and the famine of food grains. Through the credit society, Reading room and gymnastics school, the generals strengthened their mind and wealth to fight against the British. Not only this, in 1942 movement of mahatma Gandhi will do or die and in response to the appeal, they jumped into freedom struggle. Taking the role along with his colleagues, the British power has become a panic. But finally , on the morning of January 2, 1943 he sacrificed for the nation.

Keyword - Hutatma Bhai Kotwal, Azad Dasta, freedom Movement, British power, Social Welfares

Introduction -

Hutatma Bhai kotwal was a leading freedom fighter, social worker and also true human being. He was born in December 1912 at Matherran hill station, in Kulaba district (now Raigad district). His full name was Vitthal rao Laxman Kotwal. His father name was Laxman rav and mother name was Durga bai. He completed his primary education at Matheran. Then he joined Dadoji kond dev vidyalaya in Pune and got first rank in Vernacular final exam in Pune district In 1937. Vitthal rao Kotwal complete his graduations from Vadiya college, Pune. Then he met Mr.Bhausahab Raut at Girgaon in Mumbai. Bhausahab helped Vitthal rao for his education. His help made Vitthal rao to complete his LLB in 1941. Bhai Kotwal intent was to serve. He realized that I should do something for my community and he spent all his life for the all round development of the society. The revolutionaries, sacrificed their life for freedom of Country. On August 15 August 1947, India became Independent because his sacrifice and dedication.

Research Method -

The present research paper is based on historical analysis approach. Research material has been compiled from leading books, journals. In fact, this research paper is based on secondary data.

Research Objective -

1. To understand the importance of martyr Bhai kotwal social reform and organization work.
2. To study the importance of the revolutionary work of Bhai Kotwal and his colleagues in Indian freedom struggle.
3. To study the Bhai kotwal social, academic and organizational work.
4. To study the life story of hutatma bhai kotwal.



5. To prove the utilities of the work Bhai Kotwal in today's situations/ condition.
6. To inspire the new generation from bhai kotwal's biography.
7. To analysis the hutatma Bhai kotwal and his social, education and revolutionary work.
8. To study the usefulness of food bank scheme.

The Portuguese sailor Vasco da Gama came to India to detours to South Africa on 23rd May, 1498 reached at calicut port of India. From this day Indian history had got a breakthrough. In the beginning of trade with India, the Portuguese business men were in forefront. They had brought a gun along with them. They did not just trade, but also emphasized the state expansion. In the 1510 Portuguese won the Indian territory from Adilshaha. Goa was the main center of Portuguese. Seeing this, other traders of European, like Dutch, Britain, French have also come here. The Queen of England, Grand the treaty to East India company for trade with India on 31st December, 1600. First, British attention was in business. But with the aim of creating convention and monopoly in business and protecting themselves, they started placing army forces with them. Dutch, French, and Portuguese got backstabbed by the British in the trade competition in India.

England there is a well liked veteranist Milton, Shakespeare, Nobel Ideologist and other Great philosophers one side, and on the other side of England, the retrograde landlords and the feudalists, who want to live up to the law of criminal justice. Another of these other side England came to India. The British give advantage of Indian rulers and started spreading their legs in India. The battle of Plassey in 1757, the British rules took came power in India. And on the 1857, baksar battle, England strengthened his foundation. And after that, the British created their slaves for the whole of India, on the basis of their armed forces and penetrating kittens. The uprising of 1857 saw the desire and unity for freedom among the Indian people. But the British crushed the uprising in the way of weapons and repression.

Early Life of Bhai Kotwal-

Vitthal Kotwal was born on 1 December 1912 in Matherran, A famous hill station near Mumbai, in the Kulaba District. He belonged to the poor family. His father name was laxman rao and Durga bai his mother. He completed his fourth grade in the local school (primary education) at Matheran. Then he shifted to Pune to his aunt Gauri tai Hande, he joined Dadoji kond dev vidyalaya in Pune and got first rank in Vernacular Metric final exam in pune district. In 1937, Vitthal rao Kotwal completed his graduations from Vadia college, Pune. After he returned to his native place, Matherran, he met mr. Bhausaheb Raut at Girgaon in Mumbai. Bhausaheb helped vitthal rao for his education. His help made Vitthal rao to complete his LLB in 1941. And become Advocate. Vitthal rav Kotwal was married to Indu tai turpudkar from Pune in 1935. He had a boy named Bharat, who died at the age of just 22years. His daughter name Jagruti died very early just two month age.

Social and Education Work -

At that time, the British had the power of India. India's social education and political status had drastically reduced. 150 years Indian was slavery parasites. The British ruled over thirty five crore people of India with the help of feudalists for nearly 150 years, the unbridled flows of the wealth was coming from India to England. The poverty had increased. The society was overwhelmed by discrimination of the high and low, caste and religions. Some thinkers and social worker came to received the poor working people, who were trapped in the darkness of the slavery. Idiolist like Rajaram Mohan Roy, Swami Vivekanad, Dhonde keshav Karve, Mahatma jyotiba Phule raised Education and social reform movement. Because of English education and social reform, Indian people got awared the slavery and they wanted to be freedom. Indians was suppressed not only by the British but also by the feudalists.

Vitthal rav was very well aware of the social problem in Indian society. So he joined the social welfare movement in very young age. Bhai Kotwal helped the fisherman community when the entire western shore was destroyed by cyclone. Vitthal rao destroyed the rich



owner's of bungalow and gave justice to poor people of Matheran. He founded the Matheran co.op. credit society and encouraged the people to save their own earnings. Bhai kotwal became the vice chairman of Matheran municipality in 1941. At that time, he provided essential facilities in the backward area. He was a president of 'Adarsh Barber Association.' He open 'Samarth Gym' and 'Shri Shivaji library' at Matherran. While taking education in pune, he attracted towards serious social, educational problems in the society and understand the effect of British rule by reading the books and listening the speech of the various thinkers and philosophers. In those days the education of the bahun community in the country was closed. Bhai Kotwal along with Gomaji Patil, Balasaheb Thosar, bhasaheb Raut, Ragho nago bhagat and with other social reformers established, 'The Karjat Taluka Shikshan Prakaran Mandal ' to widespread the education among the masses And stop their exploitation. The president of this board was Babasaheb thosar and bhai kotwal was secretary. In a very short duration of 4 years from 1938 to 1942 they started 42 voluntary schools to spread education among the masses.

When landLords denied food grain to the farmer at the time of drought, Vitthal Kotwal an innovative idea of grain bank for the farmers. With the help and support of Mr.Bhasaheb Raut, a thousands of kilos grain imported and distributed amongst the farmers. Who took a grain lone from this bank had to replace it with twenty five percent extra. Where as the landlords charge is double the lone. Bhai kotwal and his colleagues has constructed 124 grain ware house through his colleagues to remove the poor farmers and workers drought and the famine of food grains.He gave justice to poor farmers by fighting against the money leaders and landlords after becoming a lawyer. In 1941 he organised a farmer council in karjat to create awareness among the farmers regarding farming and providing supplementary information related to agriculture.

Indian Freedom Struggle Movement-

Vitthal rao was motivated towards the freedom struggle from his college day in Pune. He was influenced by socialists movement in the country. Hence he was called "Bhai" as an Indian socialist. The uprising of 1857 created the desire and unity for freedom among the Indian people. But the British crushed the uprising in the way of weapons and repression.

Even when social and educational work of the Bhai Kotwal going strongly. There was secret meeting of the socialist done under the Chairmanship of Yusuf MeharAli in Pune on April 1942. Leader such as Achyut rao Patwardhan were also present in this meeting. In future congress national leaders will be start a big movement for nation Independence. At such a time, we had to go on underground and work towards revolution and leave the British to escape. This decision was taken in this Meeting. Bhai Kotwal was present in this meeting of socialists. After meeting Bhai Kotwal had discussion with revolutionaries regarding Bhasaheb Raut, Balasaheb Thosar, Gomaji patil, Bhagat Mastar and others.

There have been many revolutionaries again the increasing oppression against injustice of the British.Many organization working for indian identify and independence stood at the national level.There were many armed revolutionary organizations work for Indian freedom. All of them the Indian national congress was a wide organization working at the National level. Modestly British does not give freedom to India in any way. Seeing this, congress passed historical 'quotes India' convention on 14th July , 1942. The resolution was approved by the National council meeting in Mumbai. On August 8,1942 in Mumbai, Mahatma Gandhi stigmatized the British to leave India in his speech and make an appeal to indian s for fighting for freedom and give order to 'do or die.' the Indian people response to this appeal therefore the movement know the mass movement. when the arreste of mahatma Gandhi, and other Nation leaders. The young socialist leaders like Jayprakash Narayan, Ram Manohar Lohiya were the frontrunners. Socialist Ideologist bhai Kotwal jumped into the 'underground movement', for Indian independence.

**Azad Dasta -**

Bhai Kotwal went to pune, karjat, neral, pali, manivali and other village and meet his revolutionary colleagues and organised the next plan for struggle of revolution. He also going to the head office of congress socialist party in Mumbai for strategy will be decided for the next revolution. After receiving instructions and promised to help from the central office, Bhai Kotwal formed, 'Kotwal Group' with his associate revolutionaries like, Gomaji Patil. It is also said, 'Kotwal Dasta' and 'Azad Dasta' of this group. Because of Bhai Kotwal personality and effective leadership, he got numerous supporters. In this 'Azad group' alias Bhai Kotwal, Gomaji patil, bhagat Mastar, Hiraji patil, Zipru Gavali, Dhondu Desai, Maruti Shelar, Dhaku Dukre, Kalu Dalvi, Nathu Bhoir, Vaman Bhoir, Dehu Kanoje, Ragho Gade, Appa Shende, Bhaskar Tambat, Dagdu Shaha, Gopal Shetty, Karnara Shetty of south, Shashi lal of Kadhevad, Chandrakant Gujrati of Rajkot, Ramlala Shriwastawa of North Bharat and Ekya Putalya Katkari was also in this group. Many patriot's of different religions who speak different languages in different regions come together for a great goal. 'We one all of you, our thoughts are one, our heart is one, we should achieve our goal, to bring foreign enemy out of India.' Knowing that mother goddess started fighting against the British. To bring the British Government strike, destroy railway line, to cut power poll, attack to government office, breaking a telephone power and doing many revolutionary work. It is impossible for the British to catch these revolutionaries in freedom struggle. The revolutionaries used to cry out loud to the British. As British power in India, So they dragged India into the second world. All Indians were angry with the British policy. When the second world war had reached the peak now. The British needed assassination and ammunition to fight in such a valley. There was a factory for ammunition required to fight were in Khadki (near the pune) and Ambarnath in Kalyan. The ammunition prepared by Mumbai factory was also used by the British for the second world war. The power supply required to open/ started the factory was from Bhavpurn, Khopoli tata power house. This power was a blood vessels of mumbai. However, the electricity generated from this power house was provided to the mumbai, pune through electric wire/star. To support these electric wire, many iron axes/bars are tied/stand. To cut this electricity iron bars and turn off the electricity provided to the factories, so the factories will be closed and for that the production of the ammunition will be stop. In the absence of war material the British will be defeated in the world war. Their strength will be weakened and they will give India freedom. With such revolutionary thinking, the Kotwal group decided to cut iron bars and stop electricity supply.

To find out about how to cut iron bars they get rid of an electronic engineer from a tata electrical company. After matching the accessories needed to cut down the pylon, On 24, September 1942 Bhai Kotwal and his colleagues cut off the iron bar at Done. In this way the first pylon was demolished. After that on 23rd October 1942, the revolutionary cut the second pylon at mangaon to shake the British power. From 24th September to 30th November, 1942 'Azad brigade cut Done, mangaon, Ambivali, Akurly, Akksal, dahigaon-varai, hum gaon, kasgaon, Done(second time) Dhawlyachapada and Devloli this 11 pylon outside the town feldown and Demolished. The British Government shook by this. The Governor of Mumbai provision become concerned due to obstruction in power supply of Mumbai. Because the creation of war material s had its opposite effect. The revolutionaries challenge to British Government of his revolutionary work. In addition, the movement of railways was destroyed, because the revolutionaries cut the pylon of kasgaon. Therefore it had serious consequences on war material supply. All these revolution activities was taken into accounts by the Governor of General of Mumbai and viceroy of india. The British Government was shook because of the revolutionary success. The police machinery was working to control the Kotwal Group.

The checkpoint started again to catch the revolutionaries. The people of village co operate with Kotwal Group. To prevent the villagers from causing trouble, the Kotwal Group



decided to take shelter in the forest of Sidhgad fort in the murbad taluka. The police come to the sheletons soon as possible they oppressed the people of the village. The Mumbai Governor announce prize Money of Rs.5000 for each of to capture alive or dead to Bhai Kotwal and his field Marshal Gomaji Patil. Police notice were issued on stick the home of to the suspected revolutionaries for the destruction of the Kotwal Group. 120 millety soldiers were called from Ajmer. So these was a lot of panic and harrific atmosphere created. In the same time, Gomaji patil son harami patil was catch by the police . The police tricked him a lotbut he did not even say a word about Kotwal Group and one day he escaped by the hand of police. On one night Harami Patil defiant and went straight to the revolutionary of Sidhgad on the next day. Local lender were co operating with the police to catch the revolutionaries. After creating financial difficulties revolutionary Bhai Kotwal told Bhagat Mastar to send a letter to the Maruti Patil of Nangaon to visit the sidhgad. But this letter was found to in the hand's of the traitorous people. He handed It over to the special designated DYSP Hall to catch the revolutionaries. After conformation of letter his soldiers reached Sidhgad on 1 January 1943 at night.

Sacrifice for the Nation -

With the help of traitorous R. A. Hall and Stefard fired on eighteen revolutionaries who were hold at Sidhgad. In 6.10 morning on January 2, 1943. In this firing Harami Gomaji Patil and Bhai Kotwal sacrificed for nation. Ten revolutionaries such as Gomaji patil, Kalu Dalavi, Dhaku Dukre, Bhaskar Tambat, Anna shende, and Gopal Shetty these were arrested at Sidhgad. Bhagat Master, Ramlala Shriwastawa, Dhondur Desai, Kantara Shetty, Maruti Shelar, Zipru chango Gavli, Nathu Kalu Bhoir, vaman Kalu Bhoir, Dehu Dhau Kanoje, Ragho Shankar Gade were arrested at various places in different time. The revolutionaries of sidhgad and other revolutionaries who supported the revolution, conducted anti trafficking case of all those revolutionaries. The case was run in the Karjat, Panvel, Thane, and Mumbai court and the revolutionaries were given different punishments. These revolutionaries of the breed in the normal houses. They should extraordinary courage and fight against British rule. There sacrifices and dedication, India became independent on 15th August 1947.

Bhai Kotwal was one of the leading freedom fighters who laid down their lives for the freedom of the country. From his social services and brave fight and sacrifice he is now proudly called, "Veer Bhai Kotwal", means fighter, warrior. Bhai Kotwal was a great personality who help the poor people. He laid the foundation of social reform and challenge the mighty British Government. Bhai Kotwal was a leader of the people. The British Government has reference to him in his secret correspondence as, 'Man of the people.' He wanted to create a state base on equality and justice. If he had long life, he would certainly have contributed to the nation transformative work.

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