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ROLE OF NANDAKISHORE DAS IN SATYVADI VANA VIDYALAYA

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Abstract:- (Nanda Kishore Das a brilliant scholar in English passed from Calcutta University jumped in to the National main stream of Freedom Movement. He was the first satyagrahis in first batch of Odisha who joined the Non-cooperation Movement while studying at Calcutta University. After the suspension of Non-cooperation Movement, he completed his education but his family life was very miserable and pitiable. There was a serious break down of his wife's health and there was no other source to maintain his day to day life. Pandit Gopabandhu Das, veteran Congress leader could foresee his difficulties and took him to Sakhigopal, Puri where he established a School in 1909. Nanda Kishore Das was busy engaging as a teacher in that School from the year 1922 to 1926. Being a English teacher he imparted English education in a lucid manner and won the heart of the children, staff and the guardian. He was a man of method, disciplinarian and popular for his unique method of teaching)

Satyavadi Vana vldyalaya, the brain child of Gopabandhu Das, was established on 12 August 1909 in a shady grove of Vakula and Chhuriana at Sakhigopal in Puri. It was developed in to High School in 1912. The School was adorned with Nationalistic teachers like Gopabandhu Das, Pandit Godabarish Mishra, Nilakantha Das, Acharya Harihar Das and Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra who left the lucrative Govt. service and sacrifice their personal comfort and joined the school with missionary zeal and spirit to produce real Indians.

Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra was another gifted talent in Satyabadi group and he was a renowned teacher, essayist and historian and dedicated person. His essay 'Ka' proved his simplicity in language and pleasure in theme. His two outstanding historical compositions were 'Konark' and 'Barabati' which carry historical inclinations to philosophical sentiment. Fascinated by the charm of Gopabandhu Das he joined at Satyabadi School in 1913 and proved his parallelness in the man-making factory.

Acharya Harihar Das was another saintly teacher of Satyabadi Vanavidyalaya. Born at Sriramchandrapur Brahmin village he completed his higher education at Ravenshaw College. He taught English and Mathematics and translated the Bhagabatgita and the Upanishad which popularized his skill. His monumental book 'Child's Easy First Grammar' is very helpful for English learning.

Nanda Kishore Das joined in the School in April 1922. It attracted large number of students in different part of the province. Teachers were remained busy in the school constantly and put emphasis on character building, industry and agriculture. The students also rendered valuable help to the needy and poor people. Nanda Kishore Das taught English stories "Rip Van Winkle"-written by Washington Irving and "Contry Church Yard"- written by Gray's Elegy.

Thus, Satyabadi Vanavidyalaya was sacred fountain of Oriya nationalism during the period of its existence. The school was finally recognized by the Calcutta University and it was affiliated to that University up to 1917. Subsequently when Patna University was established in 1918, the school remained under its control. With the intellectual teachers of Panchasakha Nandakishore Das, M.A. in English got a lucky chance to join at the school along with other teachers like Ramachandra Rath, Lingaraj Mishra. They sacrificed their personal comfort and worked in the school with a missionary spirit.

Satyabadi School founded by Utkalmani Gopabandhu Das was a fountain of Oriya nationalism prior to the launching of the Non-Cooperation Movement. During the period of Non-Cooperation Movement, Nandakishore was leading a very miserable and precarious life at his native place Soro. Foreseeing his difficulties Pandit Gopabandhu Das arranged to take him to his National School at Sakhigopal as a teacher. "I got a sigh of relief" said Nandakishore, "when I joined the school in April 1922, I was in this school for full four years as a teacher of English and was also teaching English in the Intermediate classes opened during the movement. I was paid an allowance of Rs.50/- only for a couple of months, but this was reduced to Rs.40/- after Pandit Gopabandhu was imprisoned for two years at Hazaribagh Jail." The staff of the college engaged themselves in general Congress work during the vacation.

As a member of the Balasore District Congress Committee and Provincial Congress Committee, Nandakishore Das regularly attended the meetings of those bodies. Over and above these works during Gopabandhu Das's absence, Nandakishore Das was regularly writing the editorial comments of the weekly The Samaj then being published from Sakhigopal. Pandit Krupasindhu Mishra, Headmaster of the school used to write the main editorial. This paper played an important role during Non-Cooperation Movement. It published all information regarding Congress activities, for the knowledge of public criticized the repressive action of the Government and exhorted people to come forward and take active part in the Freedom Struggle.

Satyabadi School put emphasis for restoring the Ashram life. 'Simple living and high thinking', 'Service to mankind is service to God' was the motif and motto of the school. Most of the boys lived with their teachers in the hostel as freely and comfortably as they did with their parents at home. The hostel life followed a daily routine of duties carefully prepared with due regard to harmonious development and physical, intellectual, moral and spiritual capabilities of its inmates. Regular habits in early bath, morning and evening prayer, in punctual attendance in various functions of the day, i.e. meal, study, play etc. were carefully insisted upon. Nevertheless, the boys enjoyed the sufficient liberty and were themselves the custodians of the discipline messing and other affairs of the hostel life. Moulding of the characters students were affected. The students were spent their time in the free atmosphere of the playground, dining hall and at the time of leisure and recreations.

The students used to sit on mats on floor with low sloping desks before them. The school allowed students to go outside with their teams to see men and things with their own eyes. They took up the practice of doing social service as a duty. During epidemic seasons, they went out neighbouring villages, distributed medicines and nursed the patients. On festival occasions their service as volunteers particularly important pilgrim centres of Puri and Sakhigopal were praiseworthy. They gladly removed dead bodies of person known and unknown and the inmates of Satyabadi Vihar gladly undertook any hardship to relieve their suffering brotheren. Their strenuous efforts in relief centres made them familiar with the realities of life.

The structure of education in the Satyabadi school was liberal. But much stress was given on ethical principle and values based on religion. The object of the school was to create cultured and civilized persons for the country which would help them in promoting the spirit of national cause for nation building. The major contribution of the Satyabadi school was imparting the values of national integration and social service in order to make them aware for the existence of the free citizen of India. For the students education was not meant for lucrative career or for material facilities. It prepared for a life dedicated to social service at large.

Mother tongue was the medium of teaching for young boys and girls so that it helped them for discovering their cognitive capacity, originality and creativity. Instruction was carried out through mother tongue. It was realized that true education could not be possible without the use of mother tongue. During his stay Nanda Kishore Das felt that, the school followed no-discrimination policy although teachers in the schools were Brahmins. Education was

not the privilege of the few intellectuals belonging to high castes. But it was meant for all irrespective of caste, colour and creed. 'Universal Education League' was adopted for realization of equal right to education for everyone. Education was considered as a process of mental illumination, not a process of favouring a group of people from the rest of the society.

For the allround development of the students The Satyabadi Bana Vidyalaya fostered the community spirit and co-operation among the students. As the school was completely residential, the teachers and the students put up together in the hostel which created on healthy atmospheres among the students and teachers. For the students, the teachers were elder brothers who used to help the students as and when necessary. The hostel of the school maintained the true ideal life for the allround development of the students. Frequent meetings were held among the inmates for their Prayers, community dining, excursions, cultural programmes and conducting social works and co-curricular activities.

The school had constructive method of teaching. The School was not meant for the completion of the course or preparing the students for university examination. Beyond the period of the class, teachers were engaged to supervise and counsel students. The problems of the students were solved through mutual discussion in a big hall in front of the Head Master and other teachers. These apart every teacher had to cover the previous chapter in 10 – 15 minutes at beginning of the period. Questions were asked on the subject matter at the end of the period which was taught to them. The teachers used to visit the every borders in the hostel and clarified the doubts of the weaker students if they had any difficulty for grasping the lessons taught to them.

Besides theoretical education, due importance was attached technical training in order to fit boys for battles of life. Spinning weaving carpentry, agriculture and coir and cane works were the main subject of industrial training. Spinning was compulsory for all students, weaving for selected big boys, while students were free to choose any one to the rest. There were 16 looms weaving only Khadi of different textures, plaintwill, towel etc. Seth Jamnala Bajajji kindly contributed 100 charkhas, still working in the Satyabadi School. About 25 acers of Land had been acquired for training in agriculture. Nanda Kishore Das learnt the skill of weaving and spinning while he was in the school. He used to wear Khadar and never gave up the practice even leaving at school.

'Development of village' was emphasized among the students so that the students would not turn towards town and cities after the completion of their education. The students were advised to go to the nearing village to aware the people regarding the health habits, to teach the illiterate in night schools, to conduct meeting for solving village problems, to help them improve their work of agriculture, carpentry and to revive the ancient practice of community exercise known as 'Akhada' for rejuvenation and to keep fit the village youth.

Education in Satyabadi School is based on the climatic need. Being a hot country the working hour for school was made twice, i.e. from morning 6.30AM to 9.30A.M afternoon 3.30P.M to 5.30 P.M. As far as Indian climate was concerned the noon period was meant for taking rest, not for doing activities. He felt that the efficiency of students would be increased if the timing was changed from a prolonged 10 AM to 5PM working hour from 6.30 AM to 9.30 AM in the morning and from 3.30 P.M to 5.30 P.M in afternoon. In Satyabadi School fostered democracy and student. It was a practice by which students were monitored. Students were given liberty and freedom for their own academic development and management. They freely discussed the academic and personal problems with the teacher. In a democratic way the teachers listened the grievances and solved them side by side. Disciplinary steps were taken by the teachers to control the unsocial habits of students i.e. drinking Bhang (liquid drug), chewing Pan (betelA.) and Smoking bidi. For violation of rules and regulation strict punishments were adhered to.

'The universal Education League' founded by Gopabandhu Das wanted to educate all. He was an ardent supporter of women education. He had participated in the works of "Mahila Bandhu Samiti" spearheaded by Pandit Sadasiv Mishra and Pandit Lokanath Mishra who were the students of the school. Rules and Regulations were made equal for all students. They slept on the 'date palm' leaves mats. They were served simple food like rice and dal and mixed vegetables. They had to get up at dawn and do some exercises to keep them energetic, active and fit. All the students and teachers were staying in hostel to inspire community living. Three types of Educations were taught in the school i.e. General Education (Sadharana Sikshya) Brahmacharya Education (Brahmacharya Sikshya) and Social Education (Loukika Shikshya). In general education Oriya, English, Hindi, Mathematics, Science, Geography, History

and Economics were taught. After reading up to a given level, the students could join a Govt. School Continue further if they desired.

Brahmacharya Education was given to the students of upper primary pass or the students ranging from 12-15 years. After reading some portion of general education students were given some special content. Special emphasis was given to them for moral and personal development. General knowledge and critical knowledge of Shastras and Sciences were given in the first five years of study. Period of specialization were made in the last three years and the subjects about a Particular field of study included medicine, Sanskrit, History etc. In this category the selected students would be taken. Creating rural teachers and rural workers were main object of social education where Orissa was neglected for these two sections. Any person completed the traditional education or the so called 'Chatsali' thing the age between 18-30 years could read in Satyabadi School. For these age groups, the duration of the course was one year. But they could be read for three months i.e. from February to March.

With short span of his stay Nanda Kishore Das did not forget the school atmosphere, curriculum, the house and the mango grooves. When the school got diverted from national main stream and got affiliated from the University he completely felt de-associated. So, he left the school after the four year of his service. Thus, a brilliant chapter in his career came to an end. But it's surroundings was ever green in his memory till his death.

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