



AN OVERVIEW OF THE LIFE PATH OF RAJARSHI SRI NALVADI KRISHNARAJA WODEYAR

***Dr. Shylaja G .¹**

Abstract: *The diamond that rose in South India has itself shined and shed light on humanity, the oppressed and especially the untouchables, who have been excluded from the system for centuries due to oppression, repression and cruelty. Therefore, it is important to briefly reanalyze the history of Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar based on the following ten points. This article purpose is to understand the urge of re-examining the life path of Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar.*

Key words:- *Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, excemptional and exemplary, Ashoka Chakravarty, Kanteerava Narasimharaja Wodeyar,etc.*

Many kings, emperors and kings have come and gone in the history of India. Among them kings with sense of philosophy are rare. Especially, Chathrapati Sahu Maharaja of the Kolhapur state in the Mumbai region and Rajarshi Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar of the Mysore state, which known as the famous cultural city in India can count them as philosopher kings. Among the princely states and territories in India, these two states have implemented the most progressive and humane sentiment of compassion at every stage. Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar had traveled towards maturity with ideological brilliance. He was considered a great man in history and a humanitarian who is compassionate about common people.

The diamond that rose in South India has itself shined and shed light on humanity, the oppressed and especially the untouchables, who have been excluded from the system for centuries due to oppression, repression and cruelty. Therefore, it is important to briefly reanalyze the history of Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar based on the following ten points. This article purpose is to understand the urge of re-examining the life path of Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar.

¹. Associate Professor, Dept Of History, GFGC Channapatna, Ramanagara District.

It is a historical fact that the oppressed and majority of the people who lived a dark lives in the Mysore region were enlightened by the heartfelt humanitarian Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, the greatest of the kings of South India and the one who was born in the 19th century and honored by the title called Rajarshi from Mahatma Gandhiji and Rashtrakavi Kuvempu. Furthermore, Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar himself had discovered that, what is needed for the all-round development of the society is just the four simple truths known as freedom, equality, brotherhood and sweet alliance. To implement these four elements the bold steps were taken by Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar the methods and policies followed by him in this regard are still excommptional and exemplary.

The kings who rule the state, always concerned about common people and participate in their joys and sorrows. Similarly, the king one who being accessible to the people in Mysore state is, non-other than our proud Rajarshi Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was born on June 4, 1884, in the Mysore Palace as the eldest son of the tenth Chamaraja Wodeyar, the king of the Mysore state, and Mrs. Kempanajammanni. He had three sisters, Jayalakshmmanni, Chaluvajamanni, and Krishnajammanni, and a brother, Srikantirava Narasimharaja Wodeyar.

Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was greatly interested in education from childhood. The 10th Chamaraja Wodeyar, the king of Kannada Nadu, had established the Royal School in Mysore city in 1892. J.J. Whitely and Sri.P. Raghavendra Royaru were appointed as the head teachers of this school. He made arrangements for the early education of Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar in that school. Along with Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, prominent like Mirja Ismail, Lakshmi Kantaraja Urs, T.S. Ali Khan and M.S. Ramachandra Rao were studied. In this school, along with traditional education, Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was also taught English, Russian, Persian, Kannada and Sanskrit languages as the main subjects from his childhood. He learned mathematics, general science, and history which he implemented scientifically along with adopted rationality, he advocated it in the administration of the state.

The tenth king of the Mysore State, Sri Chamaraja Wodeyar, died prematurely on December 28, 1894. Due to that reason, Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, who was a minor, was declared the heir to the Mysore State and was crowned as the Maharaja of the Mysore State in 1895. Since Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was a minor, his mother Kempananajammanni ruled behalf of him as the royal mother and the representative of the Mysore State. As soon as Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar turned 16, he married Pratap

Kumari Devi, the daughter of Kathewada Rana Srivinaya Narasimha. Then, as soon as he turned 18, he assumed power as the Maharaja of the Mysore State and thus assumed the full responsibility of the kingdom.

Strinalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, since childhood, has been responsive to the problems and contentment of the common people. That is why, within a week of assuming power as the Maharaja, he had called a huge meeting with the important purpose of providing happiness and joy to all the citizens of the Mysore State. The Maharaja himself was the one who voluntarily accepted the reports about the problems and sorrows of the people.

He gave the right to vote to women in the Mysore State in 1927. He elected the non-Brahmin communities of the country as members of the People's Representative Council. That alone remains a historical and significant fact even today. In 1918, he formed a commission under the chairmanship of Sir Wesley Miller, the Chief Justice of the government, to provide representation to every class of the people in the state. The commission traveled throughout the state and collected comprehensive information about all castes, races and classes and documented it in its report and submitted it to the Maharaja. After examining the report of this commission, Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar gave his reservation to the oppressed sections of the people. Many communities who were thrown out of the system by reservation saw rays of light. Therefore, they get recognition and privileges like education and political power. Providing this privileges in the Mysore state the credits goes to Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Deep in the mind of Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, he made every effort and attempt to provide all kinds of facilities and amenities to the backward and untouchables in the state so that they could come into the mainstream. Similarly, he appointed Srikantharaje Arasu, a backward class, as the Dewan of the Mysore state. One of the greatest intellectuals of that time, the honest and good governance of Srikantharaja Urs would serve as a model not only for Mysore but also for the entire world.

Lord Samuel, one of the leading British politicians of that time, compared the selfless service of Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar to Emperor Ashoka Chakravarty. Again, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who was known as the iron man in the Indian freedom struggle, said that if all the kings and maharajas of this country had performed their work in the state as selflessly as Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, then India would not have needed independence. These words can be said to be literally meaningful. People living in a country should live with equality, not with hatred and jealousy. Humans are born. But one day they die. Fighting blindly and pretentiously for a life of four days is of no use. That is not true humanism.

Saying that a human being living on earth should live as a human being. It can be said that he was a great philosopher king who provided necessary facilities to all communities, abolishment of superiority and inferiority complex.

Rajarishi Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, who was himself a great scholar, philosopher and educated person, said that everyone living in his state should not have any feelings of inequality or hatred and should live with the feeling of brotherhood like children of the same mother. He called for no one to suffer from hunger or illness and carried out the important dream of making this state a caste-free state. That is the reason he also formulated and implemented many pro-people schemes. Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar made the necessary preparations to transform his state into a model state in the entire India. Because Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar knew that the welfare of the people is the welfare of the king. It would not be wrong to say that the fact that such an ideal prince ruled our Mysore state is a blessing to the people of Kannada Nadu.

The revolutionary ideas thought by Rajarshi Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar have worked wonderfully. Most importantly, he provided basic facilities and amenities like health and education to every village in the rural areas step by step. It was his heartfelt desire that every citizen should have the ability to face the inevitable difficulties. It was the earnest desire of Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar that they should live self-reliantly, regardless of their caste. Since he knew very well that education is the foundation of all development, he wanted everyone in the Mysore region, including the untouchables, to be educated. Similarly, Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar was the one who knows that tribes living in the forests it would be difficult for them to come to the city to study, he ordered to open schools in their own places and even granted them scholarships from the state treasury, thereby spreading the rays of light of literacy to the illiterate masses.

Rajarshi Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar had a sense of duty in every field. He did not have any pretensions of being the ruler, king or maharaja of a state or kingdom. From morning till evening, and if necessary, until night, he would receive letters from the public in the palace and see them. He would practically tell the officers and staff working under him to serve in the same way. One day, the Viceroy had come to the palace in Mysore city to see the Maharaja. At that time, a permission slip from the palace was required to be obtained. Similarly, when Rajarshi Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar went to meet the same Viceroy, his guard stopped the Maharaja of Mysore, but the Maharaja himself said, “As you know, I am the Maharaja, let me in”, but he firmly clasped his hands and said, “Lord, I will not let you in

without the permission of the officers”. Then the Maharaja left. Then, appreciating the efficiency of the guard, he gave him a gratuity of 50 rupees and also increased his salary. Thus, he also gave a call for loyalty and honesty in any work to every citizen. Similarly, when Mahatma Gandhiji arrived at the Mysore Palace, Gandhiji himself praised the Maharaja’s interest in Khadi and also gifted him a spinning wheel. Under Gandhiji’s influence, Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar started wearing Khadi. Similarly, he also issued a royal decree for every employee working in the palace to wear Khadi. Thus, it can be recognized that Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar had adopted loyalty, patriotism and humanity.

History has recorded that many great people staged protests and movements across the country during the time when the caste system was being practiced excessively in India and the Mysore state. Even though Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar did not have the inferior of untouchability, he is credited to start a movement for equality in the state. His historical struggle has been recognized not only by South India but also by the entire India. It is a historical fact that has been seen in history that the facilities of the government have been taken over by the advanced or the caste. However, his deepest desire was that this should be equally distributed to the backward and the untouchables. This and most importantly, one of his main thoughts was that the mentality of untouchability should be destroyed as it spread on this soil.

Due to caste system and upper class behavior there were many mishaps that were happening to the children of the untouchables in the Mysore region. Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar, who was an eyewitness, realized that if the economic condition of the untouchables were improved, then they could continue their education in an easy way, and he also gave great encouragement to professional education. He opened several dozen of public schools in the country specifically for the children of the untouchables. He also issued an order to admit them to those schools. He also sanctioned scholarships for the students of the untouchable castes from the treasury. The entire untouchable community in the Mysore country also expressed complete support for the historic decision taken by Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar. The number of non-Brahmins in government posts was also low. He also included the untouchable castes in it. Thus, it can be said that the lives of the untouchables had recovered during the rule of Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar.

The Brahmins who knew this stance and idea of Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar and under the leadership of Sir M. Vishveshwaraiah, who was the Dewan at that time, examined

non-Brahmins qualifications and efficiency in a meeting. Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar, upset by this, said that if there was no efficiency among the non-Brahmins, he would be brave and develop them into competent people. At that time, Sir M. Vishveshwaraiah, who did not accept the protection of non-Brahmins and others, resigned from his post of Dewan and left the Mysore State. This alone can be understood in what way communalist minds work. Communalist always thought that, no one else should work on their equal. It can be said that this is a mentality of feeling superior and inferior.

With the foresight of Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar, many non-Brahmins and untouchables take the lead in getting facilities. He opened separate schools and hostels for the untouchables in many parts of the state. He issued an order to provide free food, clothes and books to these classes. He also offered many professions and provided representation and reservation for membership in many associations and organizations. He also issued a royal decree that admission should be made in public schools in all parts of the state without considering caste, creed or any other difference. Thus, Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar, with his love and faith for the untouchables, broke the barriers of the caste system and preached equality.

Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar brought another revolutionary change during his rule. That is, he changed the social system that had been strictly observing caste systems since ancient times and gave access to the palace to the untouchables. This is a historic event. This has revealed to the society how rich the heart of Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar was. Due to this, a large number of untouchables were able to see the light even before independence. There is no doubt that Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar was the first to implement such a revolutionary change in the Karnataka region.

In most parts of India, the royal family has ruled the state for hundreds of years. However, the style of administration carried out in the Mysore state had gained special public recognition. This is unforgettable for the oppressed sections of the people. If this great man had continued as the Maharaja for a few more years, the poverty and caste system of this state would have been completely eradicated. Unfortunately, all the evil forces that came after him, like demons, have been gradually slowing down the development of the state beyond the limits. This has to be said to be the misfortune of the people of Kannada Nadu. Some of the achievements made throughout the state during the reign of Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar are still visible today, like a solid rock that has emerged, like an ever-flowing stream, shining in the light.

He also opened night schools to educate the untouchables who were ostracized by the social system. He banned the Devadasi system. He made education for women compulsory. He opened Urdu schools for the Hindus and a separate school for the blind and mute children. Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar is a great humanist who knew the truth that no matter what kind of lamp is burning, the light it gives is the same.

Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar gave 75 percent reservation to the Shudra and Atishudra communities in the Mysore state, excluding the Brahmin community. This can be said to be the first of its kind in the history of India. Even the untouchables who received all the facilities from him can recognize that even today, this Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar has been remembered in the depths of their hearts. In memory of such a great man, Dalit organizations across the state have been holding his portraits, holding processions, organizing seminars and celebrating his service in every district, taluka and rural area along with revolutionary songs. Thus, he has become an immortal light for the untouchables of Karnataka.

When we compare the laws made by Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar before independence with the laws made by caste Hindus, it indicates the distance between the earth and the sky. He did not limit his vision to just for the speech like rich aristocrats but as we know he was a great man who showed it with action. If he had not taken over the administration of the state of Karnataka, the lives of the poor and untouchables would have been worse than the lives of dumb animals in modern society. Thus, Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar not only fought for the oppressed, but also shone as a brave and unparalleled social reformer. The philosophers have said that a person who is deprived or who saves a community for a time within the social system is created. Showing the way to a blind person without eyes, giving food to a hungry person, is the mentality of a kind-hearted person. It can be said that humanity is proud that such an act was done by the great Rajarshi Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar.

Although Srinivasaiah Krishnaraja Wodeyar did many eternal and pro-people works for the people of the country, still he was not free from criticism from his opponents. That is, from now on, many cunning priests will use the upper caste of shudras to destroy the Maharaja who destroyed their lordship. No matter how much hatred he had to suffer but still continue to work for the salvation of the Shudras and the same upper caste Shudras will stab the blind and compassionate Maharaja in the back. Due to this act, the Maharaja's pure and tender mother's heart was greatly hurt and his peace of mind was also destroyed. At the

same time, the untimely death of Sri Kanteerava Narasimharaja Wodeyar, the beloved brother of the Maharaja, who was the backbone of the struggle for the liberation of the Shudras, also brought great pain. Suffering from these heart broke incidents, Sri Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar suffered a heart attack on August 3, 1947 in Bangalore. It can be said that a ray of hope flew from Kannada Nadu.

The creation of golden era in the Mysore state is because of Rajarshi Srinavadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, who was continuously immersed in the service of the state day and night, the development of the state and the Shudras, without leading a life of royal splendor, has earned the fame and admiration of the world's great light Buddha, like Chhatrapati Shahu Maharaja, who has achieved humanity in the history of India. He dedicated his entire life to the prosperity of the Shudras, sacrificing his life span of 56 years, and united in the nature. However, even today, his living and indelible contributions are shown to the world like a bright light.

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