

A Study of Dr. Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil's Contribution in Building Cooperative Sugar Industry

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Abstract: *Padmashri. Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil established the first sugar factory in Asia at Pravaranagar. He had a significant contribution in the establishment of this sugar factory. He started this first sugar factory on cooperative basis by exchanging ideas with horticultural farmers of many places. A large amount of capital was raised for this. Permits and registrations required for the factory were important as well as the active participation of the members in the factory.*

Key words: *factory, planter, farmer, co-operative, capital, member.*

1. Introduction

Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil contributed significantly to the agricultural business in the second phase of his life from 1923 to 1945. He understood the problems of agricultural business through experience and due to his innate intelligence and vision, he also understood the solutions to the farmers' problems. In the third and most important phase of his life from 1945 to 1964, he set up India's first cooperative sugar factory at Pravaranagar. So in this context Prof. Hon. Y. Vaidya says, "The first co-operative sugar factory in Asia came into existence at Pravaranagar in 1950. But the penance for it was started by Vitthalrao two years before that. Vitthalrao was not very educated, he learned the philosophy of co-operation from some big book or attended some workshop. It was."¹ Helping farmers was the permanent attitude of Padmashri Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil.

He had sympathy for the peasants and the working class. So he became the leader of the village and this leadership gradually developed. In connection with the establishment of Vikhe Patil's cooperative credit institution Prof. Hon. Y. Vaidya says, "Vikhe Patil recognized that poverty can be eradicated with a weapon like co-operation.

Loans were given to farmers at low interest rates through village credit institutions."² During and after the Second World War, instead of progress, a new struggle of exploitation emerged in the agro-industrial sector. was standing. "Vikhe Patal avoided this conflict by taking the initiative in starting the first co-operative society in his village and later setting up the first co-operative sugar factory."³

2. Dr. Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil's contribution in setting up cooperative sugar industry

The Bagayatdar Parishad of Belapur Road (1945) was held and with a new hope Vitthalrao and his Santhor associates took up the task of setting up a sugar factory. "Vithalrao Vikhe Patil established an organization named Pravara Left Bank Canal Khud Khatedar Shetkari Sangh and started collecting shares for the sugar factory through this organization."⁴ Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil was the president of this Khud Khatedar Shetkari Sangh.

3. Equity raising

It was decided in the Bagayatdar Parishad to set up a farmers' cooperative sugar factory. Vikhe Patil had taken the responsibility of raising the share capital required for the said factory. The initial area of the planned cooperative sugar factory was limited to the

following 23 villages on the Pravara Left Back Canal. Umbri, Balapur, Anvi Budruk, Pratappur, Dah Budruk, Chinchpur, Durgapur, Hasnapur, Hanumantagaon, Loni Budruk, Loni Khurd, Pathri Budruk, Lohgaon, Kolhar-Bhagwatipur, Tisgaon, Kadot, Mandwe, Fayabad, Kuranpur, Gallimb, Bableshtar, Rajuri, 23 villages like Chandrapur and its surroundings became the jurisdiction of Vikhe Patals. Later this number increased to 41 villages.

He had a longing for the farmers. His public relations were a joke. When the people of the village gathered together, they challenged each other to take shares in the work of setting up the factory. Vikhe Patil's method of accumulating shares was visionary. 300 per share to be sold, but above 25 shares no one wants to give more shares. Muralidhar Ingle had informed Raja Mangalvedhekar about the method that if that happens, injustice will be done to the small landholding farmers.

An example can be given of the incident in Tisgaon regarding the raising of shares. The story of Tisgaon, "If we went there, the farmers said we know everything. Everything is agreed. We are ready to take the share. But first tear the receipt of our village leader. Immediately we tear the receipts. The next day, Vikhe Patil and Secretary Ingle were hanged in Tisgaon. They went. They held a meeting with the villagers. The villagers again said the same thing, first tear the headman's receipt, then we tear all the receipts, along with that, the Vikhe Patals tore the village headman Dada Nalkara's receipt and threw it at him. And said, "Don't give me money. I will take it by turning. Dada Nalkara's Khandsari." There was a factory. Money was deposited in his name in the society. Patal took 1,800 rupees. Such was the moral right of the Patala. He used it on occasion and the people loved him."⁵

There were many obstacles in the process of accumulating shares in this manner. However, Vikhe Patil worked tirelessly and

collected as much capital as he could and started the further work of getting permission and registration of the factory.

4. Factory Licensing and Registration

Vitthalrao's work of raising share capital for the construction of a sugar factory was going on since 1946. The application for registration of the said factory was sent to the register office at Pune. Also, an application was sent to New Delhi to get permission from the central government for the factory. Vikhe Patil was fighting hard for permission and registration of the factory.

On December 14, 1948, permission was granted for the co-operative sugar factory and after that dt. On 31st December 1948, 'The Bagayatdar Co-operative Sugar Producers Society Limited, Loni' was registered under the Co-operative Act, 1925. In this context, Raja Mangalvedhekar says that "Talking about Vaikunthbhai's valuable help, Vitthalrao said with great gratitude, "Vaikunthbhai took us like a crawling lump. Due to Dr. Dhananjairao, permission was obtained from the Centre. Thus, the sugar factory was registered."⁶

5. Active participation in the factory

1st General Meeting of Registered Gardeners Co-operative Sugar Producers Society Loni Budruk asst. Register May B. A. Patil Pune under the chairmanship and May. Y. B. Dated Sunday in the presence of Gaitonde Joint Manager Mumbai Cooperative Bank. On 13/03/1949 at two o'clock in the afternoon Shri. It was held in the Maruti Mandir courtyard. About five hundred member representatives were present in the said meeting. The Bagayatdar Co-operative Sugar Producers Society Mr. Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil was the first voice chairman.

6. The dream of setting up a cooperative sugar factory came true

Vikhe Patil did not give bribe to anyone during the construction of the factory. They told

the concerned that this is a factory of poor farmers, they will not accept bribes and started the process towards the construction of the factory. On 23 December 1950, Managing Director of Mumbai Bank Shri. Verde and his wife Mrs. The auspicious hand of Verde was worshiped at Gavani early in the morning and after putting sugarcane in the gavani and turning on the missionary, the factory was announced to have started.

While giving honorable mention to Vitthalrao in the construction of this factory, Prof. Dhananjairao Gadgil in the third annual report of the factory has mentioned that, "Vithalrao Eknathrao Vikhe, our vice-president, should be considered as the main driving force behind the society since its conception. He worked tirelessly to organize the factory construction from the very beginning. He should be gratefully mentioned here."⁷ 17 From July 1950 to November 6, 1964, Vikhe Patil became the president of the factory. He made the said factory debt free.

7. Conclusion

Padmashri. Dr. Vitthalrao Vikhe Patil organized the farmers in adverse conditions and set up cooperative credit societies to free them from the exploitation of capitalists. Capital was raised for the construction of the factory through them. A factory was set up with the help of the government. Due to this factory, villages with a new vision were built by providing services such as education, health etc. Empowered society created. Matriarchy was created in all caste religions.

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