

Prof B Janardhan Rao (1956-2002)

B Janardhan Rao was born into a farmer's family in the year 1956 in **Warangal district**. Prof Janardhan Rao's academic contribution to the growth of the discipline of Public Administration in general and research on Tribal Development in particular is highly remarkable. Prof Rao is a distinguished social scientist and committed academician and a social activist too. His active involvement in the politics of separate statehood for Telangana has added a new dimension to his role in contemporary social transformation. His participation in the movement of protecting tribal rights has sensitized and enlisted support of both tribal communities and civil servants.

Prof Janardhan Rao has a brilliant academic career. He took his masters in discipline of Public Administration in 1979 and M Phil in 1981 and is recipient of two gold medals. He completed his Ph D in 1985 for which he worked on "Land Alienation in Tribal Areas". This was later published which became popular in the literature on Tribal development and well received by the academic circles. Prof Rao as a teacher for more than two decades has inspired quite a number of students belonging to two generations of this region. He supervised research and actively involved himself in 13 research projects funded by various national and international research organizations. He published five books and 43 research papers in various journals and edited volumes.

Prof Rao worked on a research project titled "Administrative Response to Tribal Protest: A study of Tribal Movements in Andhra Pradesh" as a post doctoral fellow during 1993-95. Prof Rao participated in 11 international and 37 national seminars and conferences. As an active social scientist he was member of various national level professional associations and institutions like ICSSR Study group on Tribal Policy and Affairs, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation of Contemporary Studies (RGICS) among others.

Prof Janardhan Rao has visited few European countries. In 1987 he presented a paper along with Prof K Murali Manohar on "Adaptation and Change as a way of Human Practice- A study of JNM Movement" at SOAS, University of London. He lectured on "Aboriginal Protest in Andhra Pradesh during 1880-1980 at the South Asia Institute, Heidelberg. Another important work "Adivasis in India; Characterisation of the Transition and Development" had been submitted to a research project on "Terms of Political Discourse in India" held at York University. In the XIII World Sociological Congress at Beilfeld he presented a paper on "Land, Legality and Tribes; an Uprooting Process of Indian Tribes". During the year 2000 he attended the American Telugu Association Youth conference at Atlanta and addressed the meetings in eight North American cities and lectured on "Development Inequalities in Andhra Pradesh" focusing on regional imbalances and social unrest.

He has set up a couple of organizations 'Krushi' and 'Adyayana' and was the founder member of organizations, Kakatiya School of Public Administration, Local Chapter of Indian Institute of Public Administration and Society for Women's Studies and Development. Prof Rao was also a human rights activist and actively involved in the talks on peace process in the state as member of Committee of Concerned Citizens.

His research paper on 'Chunchupelly Then and Now: A Study in Tribal Deprivation' has been published posthumously in the book on **Rural Transformation: Perspectives from Village Studies in Andhra Pradesh** Ed by G Niranjan Rao and D Narsimha Reddy in 2007.

Prof Rao was an ardent Telangana protagonist in the second phase of the Telangana Movement which started in the mid nineties decade. He has written extensively in Telugu on the Telangana issue in news papers especially on discrimination in irrigation, employment and financial allocations. He coined the phrase **Neellu. Nidhulu Niyamakalu** which forms the core of exploitation of Telangana region.

According to him Telangana issue can best be understood from the Adivasi perspective as both Telangana and Adivasi have been grossly exploited by the non Telangana and non tribal migration. He also challenged through his writings the stance of Communist parties both CPI and CPM on Telangana issue. He was actively involved in the process of launching of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) in 2001. In fact the hectic activity of guiding the political leadership of the party has taken the toll on his health which went neglected and finally succumbed to heart failure in 2002 February.

Prof Janardhan Rao will be remembered for his finer humane qualities and friendship. He was a man with open ideas and outspoken character. He was easily approachable, extremely modest despite all his achievements and brought together personal integrity, vision and academic and social leadership.

Note on the activities of B Janardhan Rao Memorial Foundation

Prof B Janardhan Rao Memorial Foundation (front organization of Prof B Janardhan Rao Memorial Trust) was formed in January 2003 comprising family members and close associates of Janardhan Rao. It strives to popularize the ideals and work he is associated with. With that aim it organizes annual lecture series, publishes literature on themes close to his life. Besides, the foundation also strives to bring out his unpublished and incomplete works. Issues of Tribal Development, tribal land alienation, Telangana and human rights are dear to him and hence form the agenda of the Foundation. The Foundation has also published a few books independently and also in collaboration with Hyderabad Book Trust (HBT).

The following are the members of Prof Janardhan Rao Memorial Trust

- 1) K Jayashankar, Former VC, KU
- 2) K Murali Manohar, Prof (Retd) Dept of Public Administration, KU
- 3) K Seetarama Rao, Prof, Dept of Public Administration, KU
- 4) M Kodandram, Prof, Dept of Political Science, OU
- 5) Banda Prakash, Congress Party, Hanamakonda
- 6) E Jagannadha Rao, Chairman of the Trust
- 7) Kalvakuntla Sudhir Rao, Industrialist, Hyderabad
- 8) Kodati Sudhir, Consultant, Social Activist, Canada
- 9) P Narendra Babu, Assoc Prof, Dept of Public Administration, KU
- 10) T. Buchi Babu, Correspondent, Baharati Vidya Bhavan, Hanamakonda
- 11) E. Revathi
- 12) In the year 2007 we have inducted a new member into the Trust with Prof S Galab from the CESS.

The Publications of the Foundation are

- 1) Telangana Matti Malichina Maneeshi, A collection of Memoirs by friends and family members (2004)
- 2) Telangana Marutunna Rajakeeya Mukhachitram, A collection of essays written on Telangana by Janardhan Rao (2004)
- 3) Andhra Pradesh Rajakeeyavyavastha: Telangana Rajakeeyalu 'Political Structure in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana Politics', Translated essays from English by Janardhan Rao, Seeta Rama Rao, Yadagiri Charyulu and Revathi. Source Dagmar Bernstorff and Hugh Gray in English (2005) Published along with Hyderabad Book Trust
- 4) Pranteeya Asamanatalu: Pratyeka Telangana 'Regional Disparities and Separate Telangana' Collection of translated essays by eminent economist Prof CH Hanumantha Rao, Translated into Telugu by Revathi and Bharath Bhushan (2007), Published along with Hyderabad Book Trust
- 5) Telangana Rashtram Samasyalu, Savallu (ed) by K Seetarama Rao and E Revathi, Prajahita Prachuranalu, Warangal, Collection of essays

presented at the seminar held by the BJR Memorial Foundation in February 2010

Every year the Memorial Lecture is published and distributed at the time of the conduct of the Lecture. 6 Memorial Lectures have been conducted but four have been published. The fourth Annual lecture by Prof D Narsimha Reddy was also translated into Telugu published by the Hyderabad Book Trust.

The Memorial Lecture series are

First Annual Memorial Lecture, January 2003, “ **Telangana, The Demand for a Separate State**’, by Dr K Jayashankar, Former Vice Chancellor, Kakatiya University and ideologue for the ongoing Telangana Movement

Second Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2004, “**Adivasis in the era of Globalisation**”, by Dr BD Sharma, IAS (Retd), and former Vice Chancellor North Eastern Hill University, Commissioner for SC & ST Commission, New Delhi and President, Bharat Jan Andolan

Third Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2005, “**Guthikonda Bilam to Guthikonda Bilam, Law and Protest Movements**’, by KG Kannabiran, President, PUCL and Human Rights advocate

Fourth Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2006, “**Economic Reforms, Agrarian Crisis and Rural Distress**”, by Dr D Narsimha Reddy, Prof of Economics (Retd), University of Hyderabad

Fifth Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2007, “ **Tribal Land Rights: With Particular Reference to Telangana**”, by JM Girglani, IAS (Retd)

Sixth Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2008, “**Violence & Powerlessness: Some thoughts on the politics of youth**”, by AMRIT SRINIVASAN, Dept of Humanities and Social Sciences, IIT Delhi

Seventh Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2009, “Regional Disparities, Smaller States and Statehood for Telangana”, by CH Hanumantha Rao Honorary Professor, CESS. Hyderabad

Eighth Annual Memorial Lecture, February 2010, **Telangana People’s Movement: the Unfolding Political Culture** by Prof G Haragopal, Honorary Professor , University of Hyderabad

Prof B JANARDHAN RAO MEMORIAL FOUNDATION,WARANAGAL

BIYYALA JANARDHAN RAO MEMORIAL LECTURE

TELANGANA -The Demand for a Separate State

K. Jayashankar

INTRODUCTION

When I was asked by my good friend, Professor Murali Manohar, to deliver a lecture in memory of Professor Biyyala Janardhan Rao on a theme related to Telangana I was overwhelmed by my sensibilities. The reasons are obvious. Telangana has been my life long passion and Janardhan added a precious dimension to it towards the evening my life. My personal relationship with Janardhan, who was younger to me by twenty-two years, was fairly long and very intimate as also varied. I saw in him a shy and humble student with rustic simplicity, but formidable in scholastic achievements. I saw in him a very popular teacher deeply committed to the code of professional ethics. I saw in him a tenacious researcher with a firm conviction in making academic pursuits socially relevant. I saw in him a voracious reader encompassing the entire gamut of human relationships. I saw in him a prolific writer on a wide range of themes of social concern. I saw in him a skilful orator capable of keeping his audiences spell bound for hours together. I saw in him a social activist determined to fight against all forms of injustice and exploitation. Above all, I saw in him a lovable friend and a decent human being, with a warm heart.

Janardhan's entry in to the Telangana Movement around 1996 became a turning point in his career as it turned out to be a landmark in the movement itself. I have rarely come across an academic and activist who could register such a meteoric rise in any people's movement as Janardhan did. His identification with the ongoing Telangana Movement was total. His image in the movement was marked with admiration and hope. I had the privilege of sharing my Telangana concerns with him on innumerable platforms, at home and abroad. When the entire Telangana was looking to him for future leadership of the region he was abruptly snatched away from us. It was a rude shock to the people of Telangana and a set back to the Telangana Movement. To me, personally, it was a grievous loss.

In delivering this lecture I, no doubt, feel honoured. At the same time I also feel, as I said at the very outset, overpowered by sentiment and emotion in doing it in memory of a person whom I loved with my head and heart and who in turn gave me of his love and affection abundantly and at times lavishly. I take this opportunity to pay my homage to my Janardhan.

Now I come to the theme of this lecture. I have titled it as "Telangana: The Demand for a Separate State". I consider it appropriate because Janardhan

became a synonym for separate Telangana. It is divided into three parts. Part I gives a historical perspective, Part II deals with the development scenario and in Part III a few questions that are normally raised are answered.

PART –I

A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The people of Telangana are once again restive, reiterating their demand for a separate state. The demand of the people of this region for a separate state is not a new development. It was voiced much before the formation of Andhra Pradesh and continues to be raised even thereafter. The reason for the resistance of people of Telangana to join Visalandhra (metamorphosed to Andhra Pradesh) was fear of exploitation in the enlarged state and the reason for their reluctance to continue in the present state is the actual experience of being exploited.

The States Reorganization Commission (SRC) set up by the government of India in early 50s to examine the question of reorganization of states of the country was, in fact, not in favour of merging the Telangana region with the then Andhra state. After a very careful examination of the issues involved the SRC recommended:

"... It will be in the interest of Andhra as well as Telangana if, for the present, the Telangana area is constituted into a separate state which may be known as the Hyderabad State, with provision for its unification with Andhra after the general elections likely to be held in or about 1961, if by two-thirds majority the legislature of the residuary Hyderabad State expresses itself in favour of such unification". (SRC Report: Para 386)

The Commission further recommended:

"Andhra and Telangana have common interests and we hope these interests will tend to bring the people closer to each other. If, however, our hopes for the development of the environment and conditions congenial to the unification of the areas do not materialize and if public sentiment in Telangana crystallizes itself against the unification of the two states, Telangana will have to continue as a separate unit". (SRC Report: Para 388)

The Commission came to this conclusion after a dispassionate assessment of feelings of the people of Telangana and the fears entertained by them. Elaborating the reasons for recommending statehood for the Telangana region the Commission observed:

"One of the principal causes of opposition to Visalandhra also seems to be the apprehensions felt by the educationally backward people of Telangana that they may be swamped and exploited by the more advanced people of the coastal areas... The real fear of the people of Telangana is that if they join Andhra they will be unequally placed in

relation to the people of Andhra and in this partnership the major partner will derive all the advantages immediately while Telangana itself may be converted into a colony by the enterprising Andhras". (SRC Report: para 378)

Further, the SRC cautioned the nation against the dangers involved in reorganizing the Indian states solely on linguistic considerations. One of the rational criteria recommended by the Commission, while reorganizing the states, was:

"To reject the theory of 'one language one state' which is neither justified on grounds of linguistic homogeneity, because there can be more than one state speaking the same language without offending the linguistic principle, nor practicable, since different language groups, including the vast Hindi speaking population of the Indian Union, cannot always be consolidated to form distinct linguistic units", (SRC Report: para 163)

In addition, the Prime Minister of the time, Jawaharlal Nehru, also was not in favour of merging Telangana with the Andhra state. He ridiculed the demand for Visalandhra as an idea bearing a tint of "expansionist imperialism". (Indian Express, October 17, 1953).

Yet, paradoxically, the state of Andhra Pradesh was formed on 1st November 1956 -ignoring the wishes of people of Telangana, against a categorical recommendation of the SRC and contrary to the views of the tallest leader of the time, Jawaharlal Nehru. It was the outcome of manipulative politics.

The merger of Telangana with Andhra was, however, not unconditional, nor was it considered eternal. No less a person than Jawaharlal Nehru himself compared it with matrimonial alliance having "scope for divorce" if the partners in the alliance cannot get on well. (Deccan Chronicle, March 6, 1956).

The formation of state of Andhra Pradesh became possible because of a set of solemn promises made and constitutional safeguards given to the people of Telangana as a protective umbrella against the possible exploitation in the enlarged state. These promises were made not once. They were made umpteen times and were also broken umpteen times. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1956, which was an assurance of fair play given to the people of Telangana to facilitate the formation of Andhra Pradesh, was scuttled the very same day on which the state was born, by the very same "Gentlemen" who were signatories to the agreement. The All Party Accord, the Eight Point Formula, the Five Point Formula -the supposed panacea expected to heal the wounds inflicted by the massive Telangana agitation of 1969 -were not even given a fair trial before they were scrapped. The Six Point Formula, a counter prescription to meet the situation created by yet another upheaval in 1972 -the Andhra Agitation - further robbed the people of Telangana of whatever little was left in the name of safeguards.

All these exercises ultimately turned out to be futile as they were, at best, attempts to treat the symptoms rather than the malady. Consequently, the exploitation of the region and its people continued (and still continues) unabated under the patronage of political leadership irrespective of the region it hailed from and irrespective of the party it belonged to. In this process the so-called concept of "Telugu Brotherhood" has become an empty rhetoric placing the people of Telangana in an extremely unenviable position. Deprived of their legitimate share in the fruits of development, marginalized in the political process and administrative set up, belittled on the cultural and linguistic fronts they are virtually reduced to the status of second-rate citizens in their own homeland. Therefore, the demand for a separate state continues to persist.

The objective of this paper is to present a comparative account of development achieved in some of the vital sectors. The sources of data are the reports published by the state government and other official agencies.

It is to be noted in this context that when the state of Andhra Pradesh was formed there were only two recognized regions -Andhra and Telangana -since Rayalaseema was considered a part of Andhra. After the Andhra Agitation of 1972 and the resultant imposition of Six Point Formula, the state was divided into seven zones, within the framework of three regions, namely, Coastal Andhra, Rayalaseema, and Telangana, treating the capital city as a separate entity. The rationale underlying this decision was to make the capital city equally accessible to the people living in all parts of the state. This has the appearance of fairness, but in reality it has deprived the people of Telangana of their legitimate right by a subtle play, which made the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad more accessible to the people of Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema, and more inaccessible to the people of Telangana. It is, therefore, necessary not to mistake the development of capital city with the development of Telangana region or any other region for that matter. In the present analysis the capital city is treated as a separate region in conformity with the philosophy of Six Point Formula.

The main factors that generally form a basis for evolving strategies of development of a region are its geographical area and population, besides resource endowment and levels of development already achieved. Geographically~ Telangana is the largest region of the state covering 41.47% of its total area, while Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema cover 33.75% and 24.51 %, respectively. Telangana is inhabited by 40.54% of the state's population while the share of Coastal Andhra is 41.69% and that of Rayalaseema 17.77%. The contribution of Telangana to the state's revenues has all along been more than 45%. The region is literally encircled by two major rivers of South India, Krishna and Godavari, and is traversed by a large number of tributaries. It is one of the largest coal producing areas of the country and is rich in forest wealth and other natural resources. It has inherited from the much-maligned feudal regime fairly well developed assets like railway system, industrial units and the capital city.

In spite of all these advantages the region has remained backward not only because of the neglect meted out to it but also because of the unending exploitation of its resources, natural as well as financial, for the development of

other regions of the state. The development of Telangana region has, therefore, to be assessed keeping these basic factors in view.

PART -II

THE DEVELOPMENT SCENARIO

A comparative picture of development that has taken place in different sectors over the last 45 years, highlighting the imbalances that still persist in the levels of development between different regions of the state, is given hereunder:

Education

- The rate of literacy in Telangana is only 55.95% as against 63.58% in Coastal Andhra, 60.53% in Rayalaseema and 79.04% in the capital city. It is the lowest rate in the entire country, except in Uttar Pradesh.
- Enrolment of students at the school level in Telangana is hardly 32% of the total enrolment in the state while it should be at least 40% to be commensurate with the size of population of the region.
- More than 75% of the expenditure on government and government-aided colleges is incurred in Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions put together, where as the Telangana region which is entitled to a share of at least 40% of the total expenditure gets hardly 25% of it.
- Out of 21 universities and university level institutions funded either by the state government or the federal government or self financed, 3 are located in Coastal Andhra, 7 in Rayalaseema, 10 in the capital city and only one in the entire Telangana region.

Irrigation

- 68.5% percent of catchment area of river Krishna is in the Telangana area but this region gets hardly 15% of its waters.
- 80% of assured waters of river Krishna allocated to the state by the Bachawat Tribunal have been usurped by the Coastal Andhra region while 90% of its surplus waters, yet to be allocated, are reserved for the Rayalaseema region, denying the Telangana region of its rightful share.
- Having appropriated a lion's share of Krishna waters by questionable methods, the powers that be are planning to repeat the performance in respect of Godavari waters as well. It is happening in spite of the fact that 79% of catchment area of river Godavari is in the Telangana region.

- Godavari waters have already been harnessed to irrigate more than 12 lakh acres in Coastal Andhra while the corresponding figure for Telangana is hardly 4 lakh acres.
- The proposed Polavaram Project to serve the already developed Coastal Andhra region is planned to be six times larger than the proposed Ichampalli Project envisaged for serving the parched fields of Telangana region.
- The net area under tank irrigation in the region has declined by 76% between 1956 and 1998.
- The Telangana farmers depend mostly on well irrigation. As a result, while the farmers of Coastal Andhra get irrigation facilities at the cost of state's exchequer, the Telangana farmers are forced to pay from their nose for a similar facility. A steep hike in the power tariff has further added to their misery.

Agriculture

- The net area sown in the Telangana region has decreased by 21.77% during the period 1956 and 1998, while in the Coastal Andhra region it has increased by 4.22% during the corresponding period.
- While around 40% of net area sown in the state is in the Telangana region, the quantum of institutional credit available to the farmers of this region is far less than what they are entitled to. They get only 18.19%, 23.41 % and 28.25% of the total credit provided by the District Cooperative Central Banks (short-term), the A.P. Cooperative Central Bank (long-term) and the Scheduled Commercial Banks, respectively.
- Inadequacy of institutional credit is forcing the Telangana farmers to fall into the debt trap laid by the private moneylenders, leading to a large number of suicides during the last six years.

Industries

- No major industry worth its name has been set up in any of the districts of the Telangana region as compared to the establishment of several industries in Visakapatnam, Vijayawada, Kakinada, Nellore, Tirupati, and Cuddapah.
- Quite a few major industries established in the Telangana region during the period of much maligned Nizam are being closed one after the other by the successive governments. Important among the closed industries are: Azam Jahi Mills (Warangal), Sir Silk Factory (Sirpur), Antargaon Spinning Mills (Adilabad), DBR Mills (Hyderabad), Allwyn Factory

(Hyderabad). Further, the famous Nizam Sugar Factory (Nizamabad) is put on sale.

- The Fertiliser Factory at Ramagundam is closed because of, among other reasons, inadequacy of power supply and poor quality of coal made available.
- This fertilizer plant is situated in the coal belt of the region and large quantities of good quality coal available here are diverted to the other regions for feeding thermal power plants there.
- A national super thermal power plant is situated in Ramagundam itself and its operation is solely dependent on coal and water supplied by the Telangana region, ignoring other pressing requirements of the people of the region.
- These major inputs available locally are, ironically, not accessible to a locally situated fertilizer plant.
- Coinciding with the decision to close down the fertilizer plant at Ramagundam a decision is taken to set up a new fertilizer plant at Nellore in Coastal Andhra.
- The industrial development that has taken place in and around the capital city has not benefited the people of Telangana in any way.
- The land, water, power and other infrastructure facilities made available to these industries belong entirely to Telangana; yet the migrants from other regions grab more than 95% of the jobs offered by these industries.
- The environmental pollution caused by the industries in and around Hyderabad is going unchecked because the sufferers are mostly Telanganites.

Finances

- The contribution of Telangana region to the state's exchequer has all along been around 45%. But the expenditure incurred on the development of this region has never been more than 25%.
- The lower rate of per capita income in the Telangana region as compared to the other regions enables the state government to get allocation of funds at a higher rate when devolution of resources is made by the successive Finance Commissions. But the benefit of such higher allocation never accrued to the Telangana region.

- More than 80% of loans taken from the World Bank and other international and national agencies are being spent for the development of Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema. But the burden of repayment of these loans and interest on them is being borne by the people of Telangana also, at least to the extent of 40 to 45%.
- A cumulative effect of these and similar factors, over the years, has been diversion of thousands of crores of rupees meant for the development of Telangana region, for the development of other regions.

Employment

- There are about 15 lakh jobs in the government and government-funded offices and establishments. Based on the size of population at least 40% of these jobs, i.e. 6 lakh, should have been filled in by the job seekers from Telangana. But the total number of jobs now occupied by them is less than 2 lakh.
- The state government issued orders -the much publicized G.O. 610 -as back as in the year 1985 to remove all the non-locals appointed against the vacancies meant for the youth of Telangana and to appoint only Telangana locals against all resultant vacancies. Besides not implementing these orders further recruitment of non-locals in the Telangana region is going on.

The Capital City

- The imposition of Six Point Formula has deprived the people of Telangana, among other things, of their legitimate rights on the facilities developed in the capital city by their forefathers over a period of four hundred years
- The facilities available in the capital city are now more accessible to the people migrating from Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions and more inaccessible to the people of Telangana. In this process non-locals have become locals and the locals have become non-locals.
- The development-taking place in and around the capital city cannot be an indicator of development of Telangana region as mostly the settlers and migrants from the other regions of the state reap its fruits.
- Construction of flyovers, widening of roads, development of Hi- Tech cities etc., will not address the serious problems confronting the people in the other nine districts of Telangana. Cholera deaths in Adilabad, spread of malaria in the tribal belt, suicides by farmers in Warangal, Karimnagar and Khammam, eternal famine conditions in Mahabubnagar, fluorosis in Nalgonda, fall of ayacut under Nizamsagar, pollution in Ranga Reddy and

Medak and so on need to be attended to on a priority basis. But they never get the attention they deserve.

- The film industry that has flourished in the capital city because of innumerable concessions given to it in terms of allocation of land, water, electricity etc., depriving the common man of Telangana of these facilities, is solely controlled by the Andhra migrants. The film industry monopolized by the Andhras does not allow Telangana talent to flourish and the industry also indulges in a sustained campaign of making fun of linguistics and cultural variations of this region.
- The near monopoly control enjoyed by the Andhra settlers on real estate transactions and land speculation in and around Hyderabad and Secunderabad has already spread to a radius of nearly 100 kilometres around the capital city resulting in the displacement of thousands of poor farmers and farm workers of the local areas.
- The identity of Telangana reflecting itself in its history, culture, language, polity etc. is fast getting eroded because of the Andhra onslaughts. Examples: erecting the statues of only Andhra leader like N.T. Rama Rao, Kasu Brahmananda Reddy, Damodaram Sanjeevaiah, Puchalapalli Sundaraiah including those who never had anything to do with Hyderabad or Telangana, or even Andhra Pradesh for that matter, like Tanguturi Prakasam, Potti Sri Ramulu, Alluri Sitarama Raju, Tripuraneni Ramaswamy Chowdary, Raghupati Venkataratnam Naidu etc; re-christening places and institutions as Sanjeeva Reddy Nagar, Vengal Rao Nagar, Potti Sri Ramulu Nagar, Sanjeevaiah Park, Brahmananda Reddy Park, Sundaraiah Park, NTR. Ghat, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy Sagar, Potti Sri Ramulu Telugu University, N.G. Ranga Agricultural University, Kaleshwar Rao Bhavan; naming structures after Balayogi, Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy and so on. The ruling classes totally ignore the Telangana stalwarts like Burgula Rama Krishna Rao, K. V. Ranga Reddy, Dasarathi Krishnamacharya, Vattikota Alwar Swamy, Komuram Bhim, Ravi Narayana Reddy, Shoebulla Khan, Baddam Yella Reddy, Arutla Kamala Devi, Kaloji Narayan Rao and a host of others.

PART -III

SOME QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Why the issue of separate Telangana is being raised once again?

The demand of the people of Telangana for a separate state is not a new development. It was voiced much before the formation of Andhra Pradesh and continues to be raised even thereafter. The reason for the resistance of people of Telangana to join Visalandhra was fear of exploitation in the enlarged state and the reason for their reluctance to continue in the present state is the actual experience of being exploited.

Is it not a bogey raised, off and on, by the disgruntled politicians?

If it were to be so, how could the demand sustain itself for nearly five decades? Opportunistic elements do infiltrate into any movement of the people. But such aberrations cannot undermine, every time, the genuine aspirations of the people. When formulations ranging from the extreme left (PWG) to the extreme right (BJP) of the political spectrum support, or claim to support, the demand for a separate state, in some form or the other, does it not reflect popular urge of the people? Can it be brushed aside forever? What about the voice being constantly raised by the intellectuals and practitioners of learned professions who do not have any vested interest in practical politics? Is it of no consequence? Can it be ignored just like that?

Is there no alternative to the demand for a separate state?

All possible alternatives have already been experimented with –The Gentlemen's Agreement, The All Party Accord, The Eight Point Formula, The Five Point Formula, The Six Point Formula and what not? Were they not experiments to safeguard the interests of Telangana within the integrated state of Andhra Pradesh? Have any of these agreements been implemented? Have any of these solemn pledges been redeemed? Have any of the judicial pronouncements including the verdict of Supreme Court of India been honored? Now what else is left to be further experimented with?

What did the Chief Ministers who belonged to this region do while they were in power?

PV Narasimha Rao, M Chenna Reddy and T Anjaiah did become Chief Ministers of the state. But what was the duration of stewardship of all of them put together? It was hardly five years, in the state's history of forty six years, that too in bits and pieces -to be precise, in four spells and each spell spanning a few months. It should be noted in this context that J Vengal Rao was a migrant from coastal area. He never came out of his moorings and he never identified himself with the hopes and aspirations of people of Telangana. P.V. Narasimha Rao made a feeble attempt in 1972 to implement the verdict of Supreme Court validating the Mulki Rules. The verdict was in favour of Telangana. But the reaction from the other regions was so instantaneous and so wild that in the process PV Narasimha Rao lost his Chief Minister ship and the Telangana region lost all its safeguards. Even the verdict of the highest judicial authority of the country was confined to the dustbin. This can happen to any leader from Telangana in that position. Because, their survival depends upon the support of the area which has a numerical majority in the political set up and has greater money power to influence the political process and administrative machinery. The problem, therefore, lies essentially in the nature of political equations between the developed and backward regions and not necessarily in the persons holding positions of power. The States Reorganization Commission eloquently commented upon this as well.

Even if it is assumed that the leaders of a region can contribute to the development of that region, then why do the people of Rayalaseema complain of backwardness? This state has been ruled for a fairly long period, and continues to be ruled even now, by the chief ministers hailing from that region. And that too not by ordinary men, but by stalwarts like N. Sanjeeva Reddy (twice), D. Sanjeevaiah, K. Vijaya Bhaskara Reddy (twice) and N. Chandra Babu Naidu (already twice). They too could not -and would never -go against the dictates of the affluent region for their political survival. .

Rayalaseema and North Coastal Andhra also are backward. What is so special about Telangana to ask for a separate state on this score?

It is true that these two regions also are backward. They too have been, like Telangana, victims of neglect. But Telangana has an additional problem i.e., diversion of its resources, which legitimately belong to it, for the development of other regions. Best -or worst -examples are diversion of river waters and other natural resources, financial resources, employment opportunities and so on. This has been going on unabated. The other two regions do not have such problem. That Rayalaseema is relatively better developed than Telangana in several aspects is a different story. So is the case with regard to industrial development of Visakapatnam in North Coastal Andhra.

Further, Telangana can be a viable unit as a separate state and can be better developed. This was also eloquently endorsed by the SRC. Above all, the people of the region want to have it. Why should the people of Telangana keep quiet even if their counterparts in Rayalaseema and North Coastal Andhra are contented with whatever is given to them?

How many smaller states can this country have?

More than half of the states in the country are smaller than Telangana. They are: Assam, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Mizoram, Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Goa, Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttaranchal. Further, West Bengal and Kerala also are smaller than Telangana in geographical area. Then why all doubts about and objections to giving statehood to Telangana, which would be the largest of the smaller states in the country?

What about linguistic unity and cultural identity?

Next to Hindi, largest number of people in India speaks Telugu. If there can be nine Hindi-speaking states with the possibility of some more coming up, what is wrong in having more than one state for Telugus? It may be recalled that the SRC recommended the creation of separate Telangana state in addition to the already existing Andhra state. The SRC, in fact, never wanted language to be the sole criterion for reorganizing Indian states. The most intriguing part of the whole argument of the so-called linguistic unity is that the Telangana dialect is ridiculed with impunity especially by the cine field and mass media. Who controls them is an open secret. Can such things go on without the connivance of ruling classes? Otherwise what hell the agencies expected to censor films and

TV serials are doing? In such humiliating conditions what is the significance of linguistic and cultural unity? Has it not become totally meaningless?

Are the Naxalites responsible for the backwardness of Telangana?

Of late, this question has become some sort of a political slogan of the ruling classes. Therefore, it needs to be examined dispassionately. While doing so one need not agree with the philosophy of Naxalites and certainly need not endorse their acts of violence. The issue on hand is different. If the argument of the government is based on facts it should be substantiated with empirical evidence. How does one explain the following facts?

- The Naxalite Movement as compared to the North Telangana districts is less in Mahabub Nagar district. Then how is it that Mahabub Nagar is more backward than all the districts of North Telangana? It is not only the most backward district in the region and the state but is also one of the backward districts in the entire country.
- Kothagudem Thermal Plant and Ramagundam Thermal Plant are in the areas where the Naxalites have been very active for the last three decades. How is it that various stages of development of Kothagudem Thermal Plant are being completed ahead of the schedule? How is it that Ramagundam Thermal Plant is getting awards year after year for its good performance?
- The entire coal belt is in Naxal- affected areas of the Telangana region. The coal produced here is transported on a large scale to other regions without any hindrance. Have the Naxalites stopped this activity any time?
- Even a private sector industry, the AP Rayons, is functioning well in the midst of Warangal forests -the nerve centre of Naxalite activity. How is it functioning if Naxals are a hindrance?
- Visakhapatnam district also is an important centre for Naxals. How is it that Vizag has emerged as a major industrial town not only in the state but also in the entire country?
- Besides not starting any new industries in the region, several industries established by the much-maligned Nizam are being closed one after the other. Examples: Azam Jahi Mills, Sir Silk Factory, Antargaon Spinning Mills and DBR Mills. The Allwyn factory has already been sold. The Nizam's sugar factory is also put on auction. Are the Naxalites responsible for the closure of all these industries?
- The Telangana Movement of 1968-69 was a massive revolt of the people against the exploitation of the region. Where were the Naxalites then?

It should be realized that the growth and spread of Naxalite Movement in Telangana is a consequence of backwardness of the region and not a cause for its backwardness. But the powers that be are trying to reverse the causal relationship. The people of the region have a feeling, and justifiably so, that the

ruling sections will see to it that the issues emanating from the Naxalite Movement are never attended to with the seriousness and earnestness they deserve. They have a vested interest in doing so. They can use it as a pretext to further neglect the region in the realm of development.

What is the role of political parties in this regard?

- The Congress party and its leaders of the region have the reputation of talking about Telangana when they are out of power and forgetting about it while in power.
- The Telugu Desam and its leaders of the region have the unique distinction of not talking about Telangana whether in power or out of it.
- The Communist parties boast of their preparedness to fight injustice and discrimination found anywhere in the world. But, what has happened in Telangana during the last four and a half decades never bothered the comrades.
- The BJP has excelled all other parties in playing hide and seek with this issue.

If political parties and political leaders fail to protect the interests of the people whom they claim to represent, should the people subject themselves to misery and suffering forever? History tells us that it is the will of the people that ultimately prevails. It is only a question of time.

1st Annual Prof B JANARDHAN RAO MEMORIAL LECTURE

TELANGANA -The Demand for a Separate State

K. Jayashankar
Former Vice Chancellor, Kakatiya University, Warangal

K Jayashankar- A Brief Bio Sketch

Dr Jayashankar born on 6th August 1934 at Hanamkonda, Warangal. Dr Jayashankar obtained his post-graduate degree (double MA from Banaras and Aligarh) and Doctoral degree (Ph D) in Economics from Osmania University. Starting his academic career initially as a School Teacher, later worked as a Lecturer in Economics and taught for a number of years in various Government Colleges.

He worked as a Principal CKM College during 1975-79, Registrar of Kakatiya University (1979-81), Registrar Central Institute of English & Foreign Languages (1982-91) and Vice Chancellor of Kakatiya University (1991-1994). He is on the Board of Governors of a number of Universities, Member of Academic Senate of

several Universities, Members of several working groups constituted by UGC etc. He has published a number of articles and research papers on several aspects in various newspapers and journals, especially on Telangana problem.

He visited several countries abroad including USA, UK and Canada on several occasions and participated in a number of meetings.

As an eminent educationist, meticulous planner and able administrator, he brought a rare distinction and grace to every position that he held. Dr Jayashankar is known for his scholarship, friendly approach and fine humane qualities.

Currently he is the Chairman of Centre for Telangana Studies and actively associated with a group of social activists known as Committee of Concerned Citizens.

Prof B Janardhan Rao- A Brief Bio Sketch

Biyyala Janardhan Rao, was born on 12 May 1955 in a farmer's family in a remote village at Labarthy of Warangal district of Andhra Pradesh, India and passed away prematurely on 27 February 2002. Prof Janardhan Rao's academic contribution to the growth of discipline of Public Administration in general and research on Tribal development in particular is highly remarkable. Prof Janardhan Rao is a distinguished social scientist and committed academician and a social activist too. His active involvement in the politics of separate statehood for Telangana has added a new dimension to the issue. His participation in the movement of protecting tribal rights has created awareness not only among tribes but also among civil servants concerned.

Prof Janardhan Rao has a brilliant educational career, took his Masters degree in public Administration in 1979 and M Phil in 1981 and has been recipient of two gold medals- in MA and M Phil. Prof Rao completed his Ph D in 1985 from Kakatiya University. His Ph D work on "Land Alienation in Tribal Areas" became very popular. His book, Land Alienation in Tribal Areas, published in 1986 has been widely reviewed and appreciated in 13 research journals of international reputation.

Prof Rao as a social science teacher served Kakatiya University for more than two decades and being a popular and committed teacher inspired and influenced the students of two generations of his generation. Prof Rao supervised three Ph D and four M Phil scholars and actively associated with several research projects supported by national and international research organisations. He has published 5 books and 43 research papers in various journals and edited volumes.

Prof Rao as postdoctoral ICSSR fellow, during 1993-95, worked on a research project titled "Administrative Response to Tribal Protest: A Study of Tribal Movement in Andhra Pradesh". Prof Rao as a popular speaker and a convincing discussant participated in 11 international and 37 national conferences and seminars. Prof Rao as an active Social Scientist was member of various national

level professional associations and institutions like ICSSR Study Group Panel on Tribal Development, National Study Group on Tribal Policy and Affairs, Rajeev Gandhi Institute of Contemporary Studies (RGICS).

Prof Rao visited several countries like UK, Germany, Netherlands, France and Switzerland. In 1987 he presented a research paper jointly with Prof Murali Manohar titled "Adaptation and Change as a way of Human Practice- A Study of JNM Movement" at the Conference on Mass Culture and Visual Arts in South East Asia held at SOAS, University of London. He presented "Aboriginal Protest in Andhra during 1880-1980" at South Asia Institute, Heidelberg. Other important works of Prof. Rao include "Adivasis in India: Characterization of the Transition and Development" submitted to a Research Project Conference on "Terms of Political Discourse in India" held at York University and paper on "Land Legality and Tribes: an Uprooting process of Indian Tribes. During the middle of 2000" presented to XIII World Sociological Congress at Belfield. Prof. Janardhan Rao addressed meetings in eight North American cities and lectured on "Development Inequalities in Andhra Pradesh" focusing on regional imbalances and social unrest.

He is founder of 'Krishi' and 'Adyayana' and associated with KASPA, IIPA-Warangal Chapter etc. He has been an active member of Committee of Concerned Citizens, which initiated several measures aimed at peace process in Telangana in order to reduce state and counter violence.

Guthi Konda Bilam (1969) to Guthi Konda 2004)--- Bilam (thirty-five years after)

**The names of those who in their lives fought for life.
Who wore at their hearts the fire's centre.
Born of the sun, they traveled for a short while toward the sun
And left the vivid air signed with their honour**

Stephen Spende "The Truly Great".

KG Kannabiran

Guthikonda Bilam for a communist revolutionary is an important event. More than Boddapadu in Srikakulam it is only in Bilam that final touches were given to the manner in which and course the armed struggle should take. The meeting at Guthikonda Bilam took place between 26 Feb 1969 and 2 March 1969. Charu Majumdar emerged as leader of the group that believed that it is time to start the armed struggle and in the course of campaigning for the views of the Naxalbari line he came south. So also did his colleagues Bharat Choudhari, Saroj Dutta and Ajith sen. While for the liberal left "The God That Failed" forewarned the distortions that have surfaced in the communist system much before the "collapse" of the communist system, for communists in this country the debate was about the differences between the Soviet line of the post Stalinist era. and Chinese line as propounded by Chairman Mao. The Soviet line after Stalin came to be characterized as social imperialism and the Chinese line of Chairman Mao as the correct path. Guthi Konda Bilam meeting took place during the period of that fierce polemics in that sleepy village located in Narasarao pet of Guntur District This village is around 40 miles from Guntur. The delegates to this important meeting were a few Naxalites who traveled by two taxies. They held their deliberations on the hilltop in the nondescript temple premises located on the hilltop, which provided the camouflage for the preparation of the armed struggle, which has become intractable and continuing all these three and a half decades. The Charu Majumdar adherents around 1980 rechristened themselves as CPI ML Peoples War. . Choudhari Tejeswar Rao and Y Koteswara Rao K G Satamurthy CK Narayan Reddy late Kolla Venkaiah were among those that met there. On the first of March 1969 Charu Majumdar addressed the delegates on the "Naxalbari. uprising" and also spoke about the theoretical formulation of that struggle. The struggle was to have for its model the Naxabari struggle. All those that met there unequivocally elected the Chinese path. The State Co ordination Committee was formed and resolved to form co-ordination committees at the district level. To claim International character for their line they declared that Chairman Mao is their Chairman These were being prosecuted in a varied assortment of conspiracy prosecutions. The schisms that occurred in the process and later became

bitterly antagonistic to each other, were also prosecuted and dealt with brutally by the state for they also they also deserve to be liquidated and destroyed. Following the colonial tradition the Government used the available regressive legal structure to prosecute them as also the pre-constitutional law as a shield for physical liquidation British Rule passed on the hatred for the Communist movement as a part of the colonial legacy.

It may be useful to detail the situation in tribal areas during the period when the Naxal Bari movement spread to the tribal areas of Srikakulam areas.. Charu Majumdar in his political statement before the court stated " that there was no conspiracy as such by the accused but there was an open fight by the girijans for their rights against the land lords and money lenders and other exploiters of the Srikakulam agency areas. The girijans of the agency area and Srikakulam district fought for the restoration of their lands in the hands of moneylenders and landlords, who exploited them and for occupying Banjar lands and for resisting the collection of boosted up loans. There was no secret in the agitation of the girijans against the exploitation by the landlords and the moneylenders and the atrocities committed on them when they fought for their rights.... In order to suppress the girijan struggle the Government conspired and foisted this case" All the accused stated before the court that when the girijans were organizing themselves into a sangam (Union) and for that purpose were holding a conference on 31/10/1967 at a place called Mondemkal the landlords headed by Mededi Satyanarayana opened fire at the girijans who were proceeding to Mondemkal, killing two girijans Korranna and Manganna. This sparked off the Srikakulam Girijan Revolt Quite a few of the accused were lawyers and they were putting the Constitution, its values and governance to test

The state of tribes in the country and in this State were appalling and needed urgent attention was brought to the notice of the Government by the Dhebar Commission, and the Malayappan and the Pratap committees in this State and yet when the movement surfaced for these very reasons, the Government instead of looking for speedy redress of the situation resorted to the law order device to suppress the uprising. What was worse the government handed over to the police establishment the entire responsibility to tackle and suppress the uprising on a long-term basis. This policy of correcting social imbalances to the police permitted growing impunity in governance in all spheres and weakened the Constitutional scheme to lift the tribes and the other deprived sections from iniquitous conditions of living and spread a measure of equality in their lives. The notorious Madras Suppression of Disturbances Act 1947, Passed by the British to contain the spread communist movement into the Andhra area of Madras Presidency was adapted by the Andhra Pradesh State with the usual indifference while adapting. Like all other laws of the pre-Constitution period, this was also not checked for validity under the Constitution. This was used against the spread of Naxalite movement by declaring regions as disturbed areas, which gave the sub inspector of police the powers to shoot to kill if an assembly of more than five refuse to disperse when called upon to do so. Thus the Agency

areas in Khammam, Mahboobabad Warrangal Kareemnagar Adilabad, Nizamabad etc were covered by notifications declaring these areas as "disturbed" Thus was prepared the Killing fields where the best of the leadership were liquidated. Villages were razed to the ground and the government was more unlawful than the Naxalites. We were plainly told that the naxalites have no shelter under the Constitution. In fact a judge sitting in a Division Bench hearing a case of death sentence against two Naxalites, Kishta Gowd and Bhoomaiah, quite seriously asked me "why should these people who do not believe in the Constitution be allowed a constitutional protection?" I told him "when such issues come before the Court, it is our values which are on trial and not their values" Nearly a thousand persons were killed in encounters during that period.. In fact my friend DBM Patnaik, an advocate, one of the accused in the Parvathipuram case, cross-examined the prosecution witnesses to disprove the prosecution claim that they were killed in encounters. He was aware that the defense can only cast a reasonable doubt on the prosecution case and not go on to prove the falsity of the prosecution case and that in the name of containing their movement the prosecution committed murders. This was to inform the public that the Government was not even committed to the values spelt out in the Constitution.. But the response of the State was to protect the status quo though in its Constitution it has a mandate for social change. This mandate for social change that has been specified in the Constitution stood suspended and the Naxalbari movement was the pretext..

The State adopted a two-pronged drive to contain the Naxalite movement. At one level they pursued the brutal policy of encounters shielded by the fig leaf legality provided by the AP Suppression of Disturbances Act and also prosecuted them according to law but by subverting the legal processes. Thus the State started recording the official history of this movement by periodically prosecuting them for conspiracy—a tradition and a practice bequeathed to us by the British. In fact in the last of the conspiracy cases known as the Bangalore Conspiracy case the Investigation officer is on record saying that commencing from Parvathipuram Conspiracy Case there was a prosecution for every five years, which in effect trace their struggle to overthrow the system. That was his perception. The state failed to contain this movement because they were prosecuting their politics and not their crimes. The State evolved a twin policy to contain the progress of this movement—firstly by launching mega conspiracy prosecutions apart from prosecuting the very same persons for the individual offences in various sessions divisions. The Police establishment of the state took over as its exclusive business containing the spread of the Naxalite movement. Mr. Veernarayan Reddi, Deputy Superintendent of C B C I D entrusted with investigation, files a Charge Sheet in the Parvathipuram Conspiracy case representing the State against 75 accused and 65 others for offences under section 120 B conspiracy to murder and other offences against property in the magistrates court at Parvathipuram. The same complainant filed a private complaint against the same accused before the same magistrate for offences against the state. The private complaint filed by the Deputy

Superintendent of the Police is a political prosecution for the offences of waging war against the government lawfully established. This complaint against the accused Naxalites for threatening the security of the state was filed as a private complaint by the Deputy Superintendent of the Police before the Magistrate. Thus a practice gets established and improved upon in subsequent cases for an investigation officer writing out complaint to himself as an investigating officer, which becomes a First Information Report. It is on record in the evidence of the I O in the Secuderabad conspiracy case that the contents of Report were culled out from the old records with the police department.

Politics has come to mean only parliamentary politics and any mode of wresting power of governance, even theoretically, other than through elections would amount to waging war. Extra Parliamentary associations excepting the Lions, the Rotaries the YMCA and such associations became suspect. Communists of any persuasion were anti nationalist and the parliamentary left is tolerated because it lends a radical sheen to politics which otherwise had nothing to do with radical politics or radical positions in liberal politics. From 1969 onwards in the State of AP democratic space has been shrinking and there was a witch hunt of all persons suspected to be sympathizers of revolutionary movement and the state launched a man hunt for the extremists. While Mr. Veernarayan Reddy was proceeding with his mega prosecution the state police was on a killing spree and out of the about 240 accused listed in the Charge Sheet around 120 were killed in what was put out as "encounters". They targeted the best of the leadership and this they achieved by the effective abuse of the Madras Suppression of Disturbances Act 1947, which was a pre-independence legislation to contain the armed struggle carried on by the communists against the Nizam. This piece of legislation was adapted in mid sixties of the last century to contain the Naxalite uprising in Srikakulam in 1969, which spread like prairie fire to almost all areas in Andhra Pradesh The entire forest spread from Srikakulam covering the coastline going into Bhadrachalam, the forest areas of Khammam Warrangal, Karimnagar and Adilabad...

The effect this had on the administration and governance under our Constitutional scheme bears some detailed examination. We are very often harshly critical of the movement, for that matter any public protest, without examining the distortions that sets in governance by employment of unlawful force, and are carried away by the vocabulary used by the State. 'Law and order', 'public order' and 'security of state' are the expressions undefined and bandied about by the government, their official representatives and the retained intellectuals of the state. These undefined expressions, which on pronouncement have always had the effect of dispensing with constitutional governance. The distortions once introduced become part of the administrative practice of the state and therefore constitutional governance continues to remain suspended. It would be interesting to examine the distortions in governance of the state and what effect it had on the law

enforcing institutions in the state and the administration in general by the time we were talking about the peace process.

Free speech, freedom of assembly and association stood suspended de facto in shall the areas where the movement was present. Talk about civil liberties and any published account of the state of civil liberties was proscribed de facto. Any organized protests for even expressing genuine grievances were prohibited de facto by the local police. Halls for holding the meetings were found locked. Literature by Revolutionary writers was proscribed under the provisions of the Criminal Procedure Code repeatedly. Revolutionary writers were preventively detained to prevent them from writing. Every legitimate democratic activity was prohibited and driven underground. Civil liberties activists were mauled and very openly dragged out and shot quite brazenly. Quite few research scholars and teachers were asked to execute bonds for good behaviour. Govt teachers were required to execute bonds for good behaviour for having attended the meetings addressed by Rajini Kothari and myself. Many were jailed and implicated. K Balagopal was repeatedly mauled kidnapped and even implicated him in the SI Yadgirireddy murder case! Civil liberties activists were targeted for killing. It was a weird bartering system for it was not definitely on the principle 'eye for an eye' For every policeman killed by the Naxalite an unarmed helpless but a committed civil liberties activist was killed. A doctor, a person who confined his activity to civil liberties, a young human rights lawyer were killed. Later killing of civil liberties activists was privatized by the state by organizing some surrendered naxalites as the vigilante groups to deal with civil liberties activists and they wielded indigenous weapons to slaughter a teacher in Nalgonda and a lawyer who colonized to Hyderabad on account of the threat to his life. This enumeration is only illustrative and not exhaustive.

In the process of the subverted law and order system three police officers and quiet a few policemen killed. One minister was killed and the former chief minister, who encouraged this impunity, providentially is alive and functioning as an opposition leader to savour the fruits of his policy. He is today complaining about police impunity in the wake of the dastardly murder of Paritala Ravi, his trusted MLA from Penugonda.

The Constitution has provided for administration of what are called Scheduled areas, which remained, suspended or tardily enforced during this 38-year period. A movement, which began for redressing injustice to the tribes, also took notice of the general backwardness in many areas and the movement spread to those areas of the State and took up issues of the socially and economically deprived sections. Let us look at the Constitutional focus on the governance of the tribes and in fact provides a meaningful charter for social transformation with emphasis on fairness and equality.

The Constitution, when it replaced the Government of India Act 1935, gave an entirely different mandate to the government. After the Constitution came into force the earlier division of tribal societies were given the new nomenclature Schedule V Areas and Schedule VI Areas. The Constitution

made a total departure from the Government of India Act 1935. The British occupation of the country did not lead to integration of Tribal India with the '*Civilized Indian*'. It isolated the tribal societies and whatever marginal interference was there it was to put down tribal revolts. The history of this experience has been that the isolation of tribes was taken advantage of by the non-tribals and the tribes were submitted to intense exploitation. There have been several uprisings from Mal Paharia rising in 1772 to Naxalbari in 1968 in independent India. The conditions giving rise to these uprisings have been their intense exploitation and their struggles and uprisings had very often nothing to do with the National Struggle for Independence. In the Constituent Assembly there were a few able representatives who focused the issues pertaining to the tribes quite effectively. With our hegemonic and indigenous apartheid caste culture we thought homogenization is integration. Our assumption of equality, which was more a patronizing sentiment than a well thought out conceptual understanding of reality, did not reflect correctly the majority community's relationship with the plurality of communities living within the Indian part of the sub continent. The castes within the Hindu fold were in different stages of development. This inequality was running parallel to the inequities prevailing within and between the plural societies living in the subcontinent.

The Constitution took notice of the fact that the people living in the subcontinent never experienced equality in their history despite Buddhist emphasis on equality- perhaps the first religion to lay emphasis on equality. The tribal societies lived in comparative autonomy and in isolation. In fact there is a large body of recorded opinion that the problems of tribes multiplied not by their isolation but by their coming into contact with the main body of the non-tribal community. The British policy was to provide protection through a policy of non interfering isolation, which resulted in and in fact allowed their exploitation at the hands landlords, moneylenders, contractors and also Christian missionaries as they were close to the British Administration. Pursuant to this isolationist policy it took care to demarcate the areas predominantly inhabited by the tribes and classified them into "excluded areas and partially excluded areas". Section 91 of the Government of India Acts 1935, sets out the Constitutional character of these areas and what is of interest for the purposes of our study is the fact that no law made by either the federal or local legislature shall apply to these areas unless so notified by the Governor and he had the power to modify the laws made by the Federal and Provincial Legislature in their application to these areas. The history of the legislative and constitutional scheme was taken into account by the Constituent Assembly while formulating provisions with reference to the tribes. The Constituent Assembly carefully listed out the Schedule of the Tribes living in these Excluded and Partially Excluded Areas, all the while aware of the fact that neither the Tribes nor the Castes so inventoried are a homogenous group, and therefore the collective name SC and ST is a convenient term of reference without meaning any thing more. It would therefore be wrong to conclude that the various categories included therein are equal. What is important to notice is that the Constitution took note of

the situation and at various levels issued directives and protective mandates to enable these scheduled communities to rise to the level of equality along with the rest of the community

Thus one will find a Constitutional scheme emerging providing principles of governance of the tribes living in the Fifth Schedule Areas.

Article 14 as interpreted by the court for over half a century bans not only unreasonable classification but also arbitrariness and unfairness in the treatment of persons.

Article 15(4) makes a special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward classes of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. This article comes into play principally in matters of education. This should be normally read as ensuring equality within the tribe or caste but also as between castes and tribes. This should work for the elimination of oppression and violence structured against women within castes and tribes and as between castes and tribes as well.

Article 19 gives them all the fundamental right to freedom and it also stipulates that the state may, only by law, impose restraints on the exercise of the rights. Right to move freely through out the territory of India or the right to carry on any profession or any occupation, trade or business is subjected to restraint by law made in the interest of tribes. *Article 23* deals with forced and bonded labour. The major portion of this labour comes from ST and SCs. The type of migration that takes place has always been due to destruction of their natural habitat driving them to the plains and urban areas in search of right to life and in the process drive them into bondage

Reinforcing these Fundamental Rights the Constitution created a set of mandatory principles of governance and to emphasize its importance called them fundamental obligations. The Constitution makers wanted to free governance from litigiousness and so declared that these cannot be enforced in a court of law. It was not realized for long that these were politically enforceable. Some looked on Part III and Part IV in adversarial relationship.

It is important to note that the State in Part III and Part IV is defined by the limitations imposed on its political conduct and governance. The State is not an abstract entity but is defined by the enumeration of instruments and instrumentalities of governance. It includes the Government and Parliament of India the Government and Legislature of each of the States and all local or other authorities within the territory of India or under the control of the Government of India. The power and authority of the State is defined by the limitations imposed by the fundamental rights and obligations enumerated in Part III and Part IV. In short the Indian State is defined in terms of its limitations and not in terms of its powers.

After setting out in Art.37 that state shall apply the principles set down in Part IV while making laws the latter directs the state to establish a just social

order in which justice social, economic and political shall inform all its institutions.

Art 39, inter alia directs the state to provide for all citizens, men and women equally, the right adequate means of livelihood; that the control of material resources of the community is so distributed as to sub serve the common good; that the operation of the economic system does not lead to concentration of wealth and means of production to the common detriment

Art 40 mandates the State to take steps to organize village panchayats and endow them with such powers and authority as may be necessary to enable to function as units of self-government. This was achieved by the 73rd. Constitutional amendment and The Provisions of the Panchayats (Extension to the Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.

Art 46 A requires the State to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wild life in the country.

To secure the Constitutional Purpose in certain states the proviso to Art.164 lays down that the States of Bihar. Madhya Pradesh, Orissa shall have a Minister in charge of Tribal Welfare who shall in addition be responsible for the Welfare of Scheduled Castes and backward classes. Art 164 could have easily laid down that in all states, which have, areas covered by the V schedule there shall be a Minister in charge of tribal welfare. To increase administrative efficiency uniformly such an amendment can be thought about.

Look at the unfailing attention paid to this issue by the constitution. In part XII Art.275 (1), which deals with Finance.

"Provided that there shall be paid out of the consolidated Fund of India as grants in aid of the revenue of a state such capital and recurring sums as many be necessary to enable the state to meet the costs of such schemes of development as may be undertaken by the state with the approval of the Government of India for the purpose of promoting the welfare of the Scheduled Tribes in that state or raising the levels of the administration of the Scheduled Areas therein to that of the Administration of the rest of the areas of the state".

There has been through out an emphasis on the special responsibility of the Central Government for the progressive development of the Scheduled Areas and the Scheduled Tribes. The Constitution stresses that grants in aid shall be spent to bring the level of administration in Scheduled Areas to the level of administration in the rest of the State. These provisions were enacted in the context of the history of tribal revolts and the indifferent and exclusionist attitude of the British. Despite such attention our governments continue the colonial legacy.. The Constitution made a definite departure from the Government of India Act 1935. More positive role is given to Governor. He is

expected to examine every enactment of the legislature or the Parliament and make modifications in its application to the Scheduled Areas for ensuring progress towards equality and justice in all its facets.

Apart from these there are certain provisions that deal specifically with the Tribes and Scheduled Areas. As a step towards empowerment, representation at the State and National level was ensured by a system of reservation of seats (Art.330). With a view to give them a sense of participation in the administration reservation was provided in services of the state. For Scheduled Tribes and Castes this is not just to provide them with jobs but also to give them a sense of participation for a section of people who were always kept outside the administration. It has been a continuing misfortune of this country that the upper castes and the non tribals saw these efforts as discrimination towards the undeserved and with this attitude of mind the bureaucracy and the political government paid only nominal attention to the issues raised by the Tribes and the Scheduled Castes. Article 338 which was recast and introduced by the 65th Amendment Act of 1990 is a standing supervisory commission with powers to safeguard the rights and interest of the Tribes with rights to participate and assist in the planning process of the socio economic development of the Scheduled Tribes. The Commission is the authority to report to the President on all matters of safeguard of the Tribes for the effective implementation and other related matters.

We are not here concerned with the correctness of the various paths that emerged from the Naxalbari experiment and the various ideological lines that emerged out of the schisms that formed from out of the split in the communist movement in this country. The issue is whether we as a people who have provided for ourselves a Constitution allow the Government under the Constitution depart from the procedure provided for governance and adherence to the values enshrined in the Constitution.? Whether the value system we have provided for our selves should be campaigned for or should we permit formal compliance and substantial breach of the written down law? Should we always debate about the futility of armed revolution neglecting the Constitutional obligation, and resort to violence to suppress such movements which surfaced because of the government failure to perform the Constitutional obligations; or should the government entrusted with the task of governance act according to the value system provided in the preamble and Part III & Part IV of the Constitution? These are the issues projected by accused in the Parvathipuram Conspiracy case, which set the tone of issues that came up for debate in the Parvathi Puram Conspiracy case and in subsequent quinquennial prosecutions up to 1993. Quite a few of the accused were practicing lawyers and their approach was an insurgent approach. They seemed to argue, it isnot seditious to campaign for overthrow of a Government even after eighteen years of the Constitution failed to perform its fundamental obligations and never took steps to realize the goals set out in the Constitution. The under current of their contention the expressions 'law and order', public order' and security of state should be understood to be

protective of values of the State and not destructive of the values of the Constitution. The State is defined by the limitations imposed on the state and its instrumentalities and not the absolutist state. It is not the colonial understanding of these expressions but the constitutional understanding, which the courts failed to do when occasion presented itself in 1975.

Instead of looking for speedy redress of the situation The Government resorted to the law order device to suppress the uprising. What was worse was the government handed over to the police establishment the entire establishment to tackle and suppress the uprising on a long term basis. This policy permitted growing impunity in governance in all spheres and weakened the Constitutional scheme to lift the tribes and the other deprived sections from iniquitous conditions of living and spread a measure of equality in their lives.

From Guthi Konda Bilam (1968) to Guthi Konda Bilam (11th. October 2004) the number of police personnel killed are 1039; number of politicians killed are 381; Number of CPI ML PW leaders killed in , what is euphemistically called encounters, are 2565; In these thirty and odd years in 12306 violent incidents 499 persons were killed; 2369 civilians were killed in these three decades of violence. A few lakhs worth of government and private property were destroyed. If one looks at the casualties on the side of the police the personnel in the lower echelons of SI and Constables were the casualties.. Similarly the casualties among the civilians unconnected with politics are the largest. The number of people who were harassed detained and subjected to torture and other forms of violence by the police. The public facilities and telephone exchanges which have now become a necessary means for communication for persons in the rural areas were indiscriminately destroyed as reprisals for killing in encounters. This state of affairs went unabated for over three decades in certain areas of this state mainly the tribal areas and the Telangana Districts of Andhra Pradesh. In these areas there has been no democratic activity for three decades and people were reared under friendly fascism and if people did not fall in line they had to face up to real fascism.. The annihilation and maiming of informers is a thoughtless method of strengthening the movement. Very often circumstances created by this kind of violence has been largely responsible and the party has to evolve more rational method of dealing with the informers.

The taking over of the political management of the movement has led to assumption of powers by the police not granted either by law or the Constitution. Such assumption of illegalities spreads like a contagion and the police have lost the capacity the respect either law or procedures laid down which is so essential for investigating a crime fearlessly and without favour. Once you entrust the police with a political task others will use them for other political tasks and the entire establishment becomes the private militia of every outgoing and incoming politician. In every state in India this is the position we find ourselves in. The plight of Shankaracharya is caught in this kind of a disorder. This leads to the progressive deterioration of police

credibility. At one stage the police, who killed unarmed human rights activists themselves felt, that they couldn't kill critics of police atrocities even against the violent naxalites. Perhaps they found they are getting discredited much faster than they imagined. and so they prepared from out of surrendered naxalites killer squads and totally disabled themselves from investigation of crimes by the killer squads. And thereby further discredited themselves. .

The revolutionary movement started using violence and violent methods, which cannot advance their revolutionary agenda. The political entrustment of suppressing the movement in course had the consequence of putting the police and the revolutionary movement in an adversarial relation ship. Thus both these contenders left the Constitution and the revolutionary agenda to the winds in this killing spree. This came to an end, though temporarily from the time when debate about peace talks commenced. This was a great boon to Andhra Pradesh; thirty five years of killing and property destruction came to a halt from the day the proposal came to the fore. One thought that Constitutional governance relieve the people of the harshness of their lives.

The CCC emerged at this stage and raised its voice demanding some democratic space. It wanted to revive Constitutional governance, which has been given up in this State for nearly three decades. This demand by handful of committed citizens caught the imagination of the people and they wanted a halt to this violence and demanded that politics of the state, whether extremist or parliamentary party should sit and talk things over and there should be cease fire to their belligerent politics, and concentrate their attention to improve the qualities of their lives. The farmer, the handloom weaver and others for whom life has become a burden, are telling the government "our suicides are a protest against your corruption and indifference to our lives, and deaths due to hunger and endemic famine conditions are the ideological crimes of the Ruling Party". People told the Maoists the irrelevance of their revolutionary agenda which is equally indifferent to their right to life. The young who are joining the Peoples Guerilla Squads are attracted because of the employment factor and romanticism and when the romance of this revolutionary engagement wears out they say "we surrender and claim terminal benefit from the government and if we are offered sufficient incentive we join the police killer squads to enrich ourselves" It is this competing devaluation of parliamentary politics and the increasing irrelevance of the revolutionary agenda that is disturbing to the people. These circumstances compelled the CCC to pursue their programme to increase the democratic content of politics and political practices of the parliamentary parties CCC decided to campaign for cease fire between the contending violence in the State and in this interregnum called the Ruling Party and the Maoists to make people lives livable and persuade the government to full fill its constitutional obligations. The consensus that evolved on account of the CCC's effort pushed all these political parties to include cessation of violence and peace in their election manifestos and fought the intransigent agent of the World Bank, the Telugu Desman. The victory in the elections informed every sensible politician in the state that

people desire peace which meant democratic value and democratic debate and resolution of problems politically in the over all back ground of Rule Of Law.

When the CPI ML PW emerged from underground lives after thirty five years at the same Guthi Kondabilam on 11th. October 2004 there were five lakhs of people waiting to hear their message. They were not brought by lorry loads to the meeting place as is the practice of election politics. To a devalued adversarial electoral politics, the sight may create panic, but to people who believe in democracy this sent the signal that the State is not politically dead. When they emerged at Guthi Konda Bilam there was an agreement of cease-fire on the anvil and they trusted the government's assurances and the government for the first time in thirty-five years kept up this assurance, a rare democratic gesture. They were looked after well. The first round of talks was held and one found the fairly young Maoist leadership quite conversant with the conditions of the people and were very articulate. They sharply focused on the land issue supporting them with various instances. The atmosphere in which the debate was carried on by marked respect to each other. The leaders met several sections of the people and held discussions to understand the problems and all were satisfied with the candid manner in which they carried on the discussions.

On the last day of first round of talks the rumbling of a possible break down were evident. Clause seven in the ceasefire agreement suggested for the next sitting, but the government draft talked about arms laying down in general and the debate thereafter for a few minutes created a doubt whether we go through the second round of talks.

Now we are back to square number one. In the first round of talks nothing was decided except affirming the cease-fire agreement and clause (7) for discussions in the second round... After the conclusion of the first round he was almost parrot like repeating what Chandra Babu used to say earlier. He went on saying the Maoists and revolutionary groups should give up arms if the second round of talks are to take place. Alternately the second round of talks should be confined to laying down of arms. Both the Police and Maoists are readying themselves to resort to violence People in Warrangal area are also saying the situation in rural areas is becoming tense and are hoping that talks would continue.

We must recollect the process, which led to the first round of talks. Neither the Chief Minister nor his Home Minister, before the talks commenced told the Maoists and other Naxalite groups to give up arms and their ideology of armed struggle. They went on the assumption that the talks will convert them to democratic methods. This is evident from the fact that in the Cease Fire Agreement draft sent by CPI ML PW and Janashakthi the government agreed to all the clauses with some modifications, but clause (7) of the agreement.

That clause as originally worded by PW had no reference to arms. It merely stated that PW and other political parties will have the freedom to address public meetings. The amendment introduced led to re-drafting the clause and on account of some confusion while discussions with the mediators and the Party's representatives, the Party informed the Government that this Clause (7) maybe treated as one of the items in the agenda for talks. The draft clause put forth for acceptance by PW and JanaShakthi is the clause finalized by the Home Minister in consultation with the Police Chiefs. The clause as modified by the Government reads now to mean that in order to ensure peace during the course of peace talks, no Party, including PW or Janashakthi will carry arms and address any public meetings during the period of peace talks. It can be seen from this that surrender or laying down the arms has never been an issue. Participating in the politics of the country without arms does not require anybody's leave or permission. It would be their very elementary right. Question of laying down arms would therefore arise at the final stages and not before. That is why in the talks with the Nagas there was no insistence on laying down of arms. Under these circumstances the government may not use their belief in armed revolution or their unwillingness to lay down as a pretext to put an end to talks. That course has not even the merit of being disingenuous. It will only mean the government is bowing to pressures internal and external as well.

It is in this context I met the Prime Minister on 31 October and explained the background of the talks and the apprehensions of our committee. The Prime Minister assured me that talks will go on and it is his government conviction that governance should be without violence and that violence has no place either in governance or for resolution of political issues.

Do we want the revival of state and Party Violence as it was in the period between the first Guthkonda Bilam meeting and the subsequent meeting in October 2004 at the same place or do we want the revival of democracy assuring peace with human dignity with all our rights intact and enforceable? That is the question before the people.

The events that happened toward the end of December 2004 made the people aware that the Government was not serious about resolving political issues by debate and dialogue. Small event will lead to larger acts of violence. The 3Feb 2005 brought the prospect of peace talks to a crisis. The surrounding of Nallamalla forests and the plan to attack Ramakrishna and his comrades near Kamakshi temple, Dornal Mandal cannot be a normal policing activity as claimed by the Director General of Police and this must have been planned well in advance. The Adilabad encounter earlier in the day when Ganesh was believed to have escaped and the Kothaguda encounter in Warangal on January 16 in which Jampanna was believed to have escaped

were part of a deliberate plan to liquidate the naxalites. It is unfortunate that the government should talk about continuation of talks with the naxalites and attempt to liquidate them at the same time. We the members of the Concerned Citizens' Committee would like to recall what the Prime Minister has written to one of us. The unequivocal statement made by the Prime Minister is that the Congress Party is committed for talks and that they do not believe in the use of violence for resolving political issues. The existing understanding between the government and the Maoists will continue, he said, which means that the ceasefire understanding written down and signed by the Peoples' War Group and affirmed in writing by the Home Minister will continue and therefore has not been broken. Under the ceasefire understanding, which according to us still continues, the government has no authority to take the offensive. The government in this case has taken the offensive definitely from 6th December 2004 onwards and all of these were clearly planned assaults, including the one that took place on 3rd February 2005. The Prime Minister in his letter further assured us that the state is going to open a new chapter in its history. The state government flagrantly violates all the assurances in the said letter. The only statement made by the Prime Minister about law and order is with reference to Maoists' recruiting members and extortions, which may lead to "collapse of law and order" and the state government, will be vigilant about it. The Prime Minister was made aware of the practice of encounters in this state and that is why he clearly said that the state should be alert on law and order.

To us it looks as though the police forces of the state have mapped out the various camps set up regularly by the Maoists and other strategic information regarding their movements when the peace talks were on, diverting the attention of the public by repeatedly propagating that they are indulging in extortions and recruiting members.

The last stages of Chandra Babu's tenure in power were a period when talks about peace emerged for debate. It was an attempt to get away from an unrelenting - thirty-eight year period when peoples rights guaranteed to them by the Constitution. were abrogated by the Police Department and confirmed by the elected Political Executive. Mr. Chandra Babu Naidu believed, like the former CM Jalagam Vengal Rao, unlike his other predecessors, wanted to have them liquidated and for that sanctioned total impunity to the police. Police in this exercise were well rewarded for this witch hunting. During the nine-year tenure the violence between police and naxalite confrontation led to 1622 people. which includes 1044 civilians, 291 political leaders and 267 policemen and the police eliminating 1537 naxalites. Are we agreeable to revive this violence? Don't we want a Government run in terms of the Constitution? Do the people want to wait till the Revolution comes for Equality and Justice or rather compel the government to perform the Constitutional obligations bring about the social transformation provided for, before launching a Revolution?

These peace talks were backed by influential intellectuals the various human rights organizations and more particularly the Concerned Citizens Committee because of their genuine interest in bringing democracy and Constitutional governance. Persons in a large number wanted the Peace Talks to go on. The PW, which later merged with MCC became Maoist on the second day of Peace Talks in what was thought as the first round. The state assured them complete immunity and they participated quite freely without any overt or covert pressures.

They disabused the people of their views that the Maoists are incapable of giving up their violent politics They exhibited their awareness that force as a midwife brought forth new societies which were victims of infant mortality. They were willing to experiment with the process of dialogue and debate for enforcing the constitutional provisions which the Government failed to enforce all these years for making lives of the poor and the socially deprived better.. They spoke very intelligently at meet with the government representatives. They displayed remarkable expertise in the problems of the people. The Press interview they gave was marked by focus and was free from inane palaver or jokes which one found in the press briefings of the parliamentary politicians. The Government gave very casual performances. Sitting at the meeting as a mediator I felt the Government was not serious about talks on peace. Adversarial politics is never intended to resolve issues. This kind of politics will always procrastinate resolution sothat the same issues will figure in the manifestos repeatedly. On the last day the Home Minister Mr. Janareddi gave the impression that there is no second round of Peace talks. He cannot mask the Governments disingenuousness. The others would never bother whether talks would be continued are not.

Peace is not Government's largesse; nor is it the Maoists. Peace is the collective Human Right of the Community. The people voted for peace in the last election. The Ruling party and the Maoists should recognize this. But I am afraid of the intellectual's tendency to capitulate to power despite establishing the abuses of power for he has always been under the sway of power

K G Kannabiran
7 February 2005

About Prof Janardhan Rao

B Janardhan Rao born into a farmers family in the year 1956 in Warangal district. Prof Janardhan Rao's academic contribution to the growth of the discipline of Public Administration in general and research on Tribal Development in particular is highly remarkable. Prof Janardhan Rao is a distinguished social scientist and committed academecian and a social activist too. His active involvement in the politica of separate statehood for Telangana has added a new dimension to the issue. His participation in the movement of protecting tribal rights has created awareness not only among tribes but also among civil servants concerned.

Prof Janardhan Rao has a brilliant academic career, took his masters in public Administration in 1979 and M Phil in 1981 and is receipient of two gold medals. Prof completed his Ph D in 1985 for which he worked on " Land Alienation in Tribal Areas" . This was later published which became popular in the literature on Tribal development and well received by the academic circles. Prof Rao as a teacher for more than two decades has inspired quite a number of students belonging to two generations of this region. He supervised research and actively involved himself in 13 research projects funded by various national and international research organizations. He published five books and 43 research papers in various journals and edited volumes.

Prof Rao as post- doctoral fellow , during 1993-95, worked on aresearch project totled "Administrative Response to Tribal Protest: A study of Tribal Movements in AndhraPradesh". Prof Rao participated in 11 international and 37 national seminars and conferences. He as an active social scientist was member in various national level professional associations and Institutions like ICSSR Study group on Tribal Policy and Affairs, Rajiv Gandhi Foundation of Contemporary Studies (RGICS)

Prof Janardhan Rao has visited several European countries . In 1987 he presented a paper along with Prof Murali Manohar on " Adaptation and Change as a way of Human Practice- A study of JNM movement" at SOAS, University of London. He lectured on "Aboriginal Protest in Andhra Pradesh during 1880-1980 at the South asia Institute, Heidelberg. Another important work of his is : Adivasis in India; Characterisation of the Transition and Development" submitted to a research project on "Terms of Political Discourse in India" held at Yprk University. In the XIII World Sociological congress at Beilfeld he presented a paper on " Land , Legality and Tribes ; an uprooting process of Indian Tribes". During the year 2000 he attended the American Telugu Association youth conference at Atlanta and addressed the meetings in 8 North American cities and lectured on "Development Inequilaties in Andhra Pradesh" focusing on regional imbalances and social unrest.

He has set up a number of organizations 'Krushi' and 'Adyayana' and was the founder member of organizations, Kakatiya School of Public Administration, Indian Institute of Public Administration and Society for Womens Studies and Development. Prof Rao was also a human rights activist and actively involved in the talks on peace process in the state as member of Concerned Citizens Committee.

Prof Janardhan Rao will be remembered for his finer humane qualities and friendship. He was a man with open ideas and outspoken character. He was easily approachable, extremely modest despite all his achievements and brought together personal integrity, vision and academic and social leadership.

Economic Reforms, Agrarian Crisis and Rural Distress

D. Narasimha Reddy

*Professor of Economics (Rtd),
University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India.
E-mail ID: **reddy_dn2000@yahoo.com***

Prof. B. Janaradhan Rao Memorial Lecture

***On
27th February, 2006***

*Department of Public Administration
and
Human Resource Management
Kakatiya University
Warangal, Andhra Pradesh*

Economic Reforms, Agrarian Crisis and Rural Distress[#]

D. Narasimha Reddy^{*}

I am grateful to the organizers for inviting me to deliver Professor B. Janardhan Rao Memorial Lecture. I am one of those who looked forward to see Janardhan emerging as a critical scholar in building up a vibrant and purposeful social science research community in this part of the country. It is a cruel irony that I should end up delivering his memorial lecture. I have accepted the invitation not because I have the competence or erudition but as an opportunity to pay my respects to the memory of this young scholar.

Even after fifty years of planned development strategy, the Indian economy towards the end of the Twentieth Century still remained predominantly rural. The rural India, however, was never closed or isolated but had its own dynamism and was on a steady path of articulation with the rest of the Indian economy and the world at large. Much of this transformation was well under a series of development programmes where the state had a dominant protective as well as promotional role. But during the last two decades, especially since the early 1990s, as a part of the neo-liberal wave of globalisation aided by the revolution in information and communication technology (ICT), which has compressed time and space drastically, the rural India too, some what rudely, is exposed to the surge towards integration into the global market economy. That liberalization intensifies suffering among the poor farmers was highlighted in the very early stages of this global process (Cornia et.al. 1987). But the impact as it is unfolding in countries like India appear to be much more intense. The impact and stress on the health and welfare of the rural people, especially farmers is sought to be addressed briefly in this paper.

This lecture is divided into four sections. The first section brings out that the Indian economy is still predominantly rural, with slow urbanization but growing rural-urban disparities in income and levels of living. Agriculture continues to be the most important economic activity in the countryside with a disproportionate retention of high share in the total workforce, but with a fast declining share in

[#] Professor B. Janaradhana Rao Memorial Lecture, held on 27th February 2006 at Department of Public Administration and Human Resource, Kakatiya University, Warangal, Andhra Pradesh.

^{*}Professor of Economics (Rtd), University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad, India. reddy_dn2000@yahoo.com

the national product. It also deals with the structural changes in employment as well as land holdings. The agricultural sector evolves as the one with preponderance of self-employed small-farms in terms of land holdings, and growing proportion of hired-casual labour awaiting the spread of appropriate technology for a breakthrough towards improved productivity. The second section discusses the political-economy of technological change in a small-farmer economy in a transitory pre-reform to post-reform period. The third section analyses the nature of economic reforms in Indian agriculture and the impact of the surge of reforms resulting in the agrarian crisis and the stress that manifests into a series of suicide deaths of farmers across the country. The fourth section analyses reforms and resulting suicides with particular reference to the State of Andhra Pradesh and closes with a few questions.

I. Rural and Agrarian India

During the last decade, India along with China, is cited as one of the fast growing economies of the world and these two countries are also seen as major gainers of the present phase of globalization. Paradoxically, India is one of the slow urbanizing countries among the developing countries.

Table 1: Share of Rural India in National Income, Total Population and Workforce			
Indicators	1980-81	1993-94	1999-00
1. Percentage share in National Income	58.91	54.27	49.52
2. Percentage share in Population	76.88	73.51	71.62
3. Percentage share in Workforce	80.62	78.15	76.47
4. Ratio of Urban to Rural National Income	0.60	0.69	1.02
5. Ratio of Urban to Rural Per capita Income	2.32	2.34	2.57
6. Ratio of Urban to Rural Per capita Conspn. Expr.	1.46	1.62	1.87
Source: Shiela Bhalla (2005), pp. 3,4, 19 & 62.			

Table 1 shows that even on the eve of the Twenty-first Century 72 percent of the population and 76 percent of workforces in India are rural. Contrary to the expectations that rapid urbanization as one of the accompaniments of development, India continues to be very slow in the process of urbanization. What is puzzling is that though there has been relatively higher growth of GDP during the last two decades, there has been a marked deceleration in the growth of the urban share, from 1.1 per cent during 1981-91 to less than 0.8 per cent

during 1991-2001. This is reflected in the growth of urban population from 3.2 per cent in 1980s to 2.8 per cent in 1990s (Sen 2003, pp. 479-480). In terms of the share in the national income and in terms of the level of per-capita income and levels of living, rural India experienced growing disparities during 1990s. Within rural India, agriculture continues to be still the dominant occupation.

Table 2: Changing Sectoral Share of Rural Workforce (in percentages)				
Rural Employment	1983	1987-88	1993-94	1999-00
1. Agriculture	81.49	77.46	78.39	76.16
2. Non-Agriculture	18.51	22.54	21.61	23.84
3. Status of Rural Workers	61.37	59.50	57.96	55.76
a. Self-Employed	7.15	7.79	6.45	6.83
b. Hired-Regular	31.49	32.72	35.59	37.41
c. Hired-Casual				
Source: Shiela Bhalla (2005), pp. 20 & 37				

Table 2 shows that even during the period of economic reforms there was no substantial increase in the share of rural non-farm sector in rural India. Further, the employment status of rural labour is tending towards relatively more insecure casual labour, while self-employment and regular employment show a declining share.

Table 3: Sectoral Distribution of Workforce and Gross Domestic Product in India (in percentages)						
Sector	1983		1993-94		1999-00	
	WPR	GDP	WPR	GDP	WPR	GDP
1. Agriculture	68.45	38.02	64.75	30.97	59.84	24.99
2. Industry	14.34	18.83	15.55	21.06	17.43	21.56
3. Services	17.21	43.14	19.70	47.97	22.73	53.45
Source: NSSO and National Income Accounts, GOI.						

Further, Table 3 shows the structural divergence and pressure of labour concentration in agriculture, even as the relative share of agriculture in the national income is dwindling fast exasperating the inequalities between agricultural and non-agricultural incomes.

a. Agrarian Structure on the Eve of Economic Reforms

To understand the severity of the impact of the economic reforms on rural India, it is necessary to analyse the changes in the basic agrarian structure and the nature of peasantry who are sucked into the vortex of market forces. Table 4 is far too familiar to those studying agrarian structure in India. It reveals that there has been a general tendency of increase in the share of households and the area cultivated by small-marginal farmers, that there has been a reduction in the share of holdings as well as the area cultivated by the large-farmers, and that the average size of holdings in all size-classes is on the decline. There has been a marginal increase, nonetheless, in the concentration ratios. The asset concentration would be much high if non-land assets like farm machinery, and buildings are included. But the worst part is the phenomenal increase in the "near landless households". Although rural landless households increased only marginally from about 10 percent in 1970-71 to 11 percent in 1991-92, if we take those households with less than about half an acre, which are referred to as "near landless" along with the landless, their proportion has increased from about 30 percent in 1970-71 to about 48 percent – nearly half of the rural households by 1990-91 (Sharma, 1999). These are the households, which constitute the vast and growing rural underclass.

Table 4 : Changes in the Distribution of Operational Holdings in India (Percentage share of holdings and area under each size group)												
Years	Marginal Farm < 1 hectare		Small Farm 1-2 hectares		Semi-Medium 2-4 hectares		Medium Farm 4-10 hectares		Large Farm Above 10 hectares		Avg. Size (Hec.)	Gini Ratio
	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area	No.	Area		
1970-71	50.6	9.0	19.1	11.9	15.2	18.5	11.2	29.7	3.9	30.9	2.30	0.59
1980-81	56.4	12.1	18.1	14.1	14.0	21.2	19.1	29.6	2.4	23.0	1.84	0.63
1990-91	59.0	14.9	19.0	17.3	13.2	23.2	7.2	27.2	1.6	17.4	1.57	0.64
1995-96	61.6	17.2	19.0	18.8	12.3	23.8	6.1	25.3	1.2	14.8	1.41	0.64
Source: Various Reports of Agricultural Census of India.												

If we take all those households with about 10 acres (about 4 hectares) or more (medium and large holdings) as constituting the rich peasantry, it is this class, which has emerged as the 'masters of the countryside'. Until 1970-71, there

had been no substantive change either in the share of households or in the share of land operated. They still constituted 15 to 20 percent of the households and held 60 to 65 percent of the operational holdings. But in 1970-71, this group of rich peasantry had already emerged as the class for itself, and wielded power, not only in the countryside but also acquired capability to influence public policy, apparently to appease the masses; and at the same time, to manipulate the implementation of these policies to their own advantage. It is well known that land reform legislation, particularly relating to land ceilings, hardly had any effect on the landholdings of the rich peasantry till the end of 1960s. By 1970s, when considerable political pressure called for effective legislation and implementation, the rich peasant class was well entrenched. Wherever land was emerging as an increasingly productive asset, both because of public investment and because of new technology, the land reforms were subverted with impunity. The ceiling surpluses were kept to the minimum and the surplus land surrendered often was of very poor quality. Even with surrenders of substandard surplus land, the total ceiling surplus land redistributed to the poorer peasantry hardly constitutes about 2 percent of the total cultivated land in India, in comparison to about 25 to 40 percent in the case of East Asian countries. What is retained by the rich peasantry is not only better quality of land but also the land, which became better productive asset because of benefits of State investments in providing infrastructure like irrigation and power facilities. This was also the land of the rich peasantry that was ready to receive the improved technology along with the heavy doses of State subsidies.

Thus, when we refer to the top 15 percent of the rural households operating about 50 percent of the land, at the end of 1960s substantive proportion of this land was more productive land, while the small-marginal farmers who constituted about 80 percent of the households operating only about 40 percent of the land, substantive part of which was relatively low quality land. The gini ratios, or worsening nature of land concentration, in some of the States need to be read along with the qualitative differences in the land operated by the rich and the poor farmers. It was not until the 1970s, when the revised land ceiling legislative measures acquired a certain cutting edge, there appeared a tendency toward decline in the proportion of households as well as area held under the large peasant category. The tenancy legislation, which apparently had the

objective of transferring land to the cultivator (with the exception of tenants under the zamindars and other intermediaries who became owners in 1950s), has never been near reaching this objective. The class character of the entire gamut of agrarian reforms in all its variations are best summed up as a classic instance of how the capitalist farmers were the net beneficiaries of both the ill implemented and the well-implemented agrarian reform programmes (Rao, 1992).

b. Political Economy of Green Revolution Technology

By 1990s, however, small-marginal farmers, with 80 percent of the holdings and about 40 percent of the land cultivated, came to numerically dominate the Indian agriculture but yet ended up in a precarious position because of technological changes as much as policy and other prominent changes over which they could not assert their power. It is increasingly clear that the introduction of "Green Revolution" Technology in its first phase during 1960s and 1970s excluded the small-marginal farmers not only because of its limited spread, but also because of the latter's inability to access recourses. While land reforms failed to bring about any radical redistribution of land, the introduction of new technology has brought about sharper differentiation among peasantry by opening up more profitable opportunities in agriculture to the rich peasantry. The impression created is that the 'HYV technology', unlike the heavy farm machinery based technology, doesn't impose any size barriers of entry for small-marginal farmers. But in actual practice, the 'new technology' has been biased in favour of those who have better command over resources. Even those studies, which found that the new technology benefited all, had come out with an emphatic observation that "the gains of larger farmers... were disproportionately large" (Rao, 1975). The rich peasants with better resources, access to information, risk bearing capacity, input buying capacity, access to cheap credit and better reach to scarce inputs through cooperatives or the government agencies have become adept in adopting the new technology (Byres, 1981). Some of the middle peasantry who could access all the resources seem to have become rich themselves by adopting the new technology. But the small peasantries are caught in this milieu and suffer the worst deprivation, though their knowledge is adequate for new technology, but their economic capacity to mobilize resources and bear the risks are very inadequate.

II. Challenges Before Small Peasantry on the Eve of Economic Reforms in Agriculture

There has been rapid diffusion of yield improving technology in 1980s (Sen and Bhatia 2004). By late 1980s, just at a time when the small-marginal peasantry needed to find its feet in high productivity agriculture, there have emerged a number of technological, resource related and institutional changes. First, farming systems have been undergoing shift from crops based on traditional variety to high-yielding varieties to hybrids to GM crops. The shift to high value but high-risk hybrid and GM crops is also accompanied by increasing exposure to market dependence for seeds, which may also carry sui generis kind of intellectual property right for which farmers end up paying exorbitant price. These changing cropping systems necessitate knowledge-based practices, timely and comprehensive extension systems and services. There have been significant change in the structure of costs of production in the last two decades, reflecting the changes in technology and relative prices of inputs (Sen and Bhatia 2004). The cropping pattern has also changed from the cereal bias, particularly from coarse grain, to more diversified and high value crops, because of the demand driven factors like fast changing composition of the food consumption basket.

Secondly, there has been growing pressure on resource base requiring measures to mitigate the adverse impact. Land degradation due to excessive use of chemical fertilizers, and soil erosion due to extension of cultivation to marginal lands are problems that are more familiar. According to estimates of National Remote Sensing Agency (NRSA), in 1980s the degraded land increased by 7 million hectares from 11.31 per cent to 18 per cent of cultivable area (Chand, 2006). The answers, in the form of shift towards organic farming and crop rotation, are not easy options particularly to small farmers, unless accompanied by appropriate institutional support systems. More challenging is the pressure on water resources. While the problems of water-logging salinity and reduction of wastage are some of the problems often addressed in the context of command areas, the serious crisis is as a consequence of over-exploitation and resulting irreversible depletion of ground water resources, especially in dry and drought prone areas. Apart from resource depletion and un-sustainability of ground water exploitation, the major problem thrown up by dependence on

ground water as a source of irrigation arises out of the fact that it involves farmers-based private investment, which is sourced at very high interest rates from non-institutional sources by small farmers. The risks are high and the failure or depletion of water table has often been the trigger for many suicides in these regions. A study by activist scholars draws attention to the fact that at present 57 per cent of total irrigated area in the country is dependent on ground water resources and it is likely to increase to unsustainable levels of over 70 per cent, which would spell high risk and ruin to farmers as much as power utilities (Narendranath, Uma Shankari and K. Rajendra Reddy, 2005).

Third, the institutional sources of credit, and other inputs like fertilizers, pesticides and seeds, have been on the decline over the years. Most of the small-marginal farmers are driven to depend on unregulated and unscrupulous sources. While the emerging system of agriculture necessitate more sophisticated knowledge-based information systems, extension systems are almost defunct or in disarray. **Fourth**, while it is well recognized that a reasonable livelihood for a small-marginal farm could only be ensured, if part or even half of the income sources are in non-farm activities, there is very little evidence of this fact forming the basis of rural development strategy. There is considerable experience of other countries in this regard, but without much impact on the strategy in India.

Fifth, the challenge of the shift towards free trade driven agriculture even under the AOA of WTO does not demand indiscriminate abandoning of state support systems. There has been focused strategy of cost reduction based on state supported research and extension investments even in North America and Europe. A small farmer-based agriculture, if it should not only face the challenges of the competition but also rise to the possibility of export orientation, needs strong research and extension support in the whole range of areas from developing appropriate plant varieties to sustainable resource use to market facilitation.

III. Neo-Liberal Reforms, Institutional Retrogression in Agriculture and the Rural Stress

Besides the economic reforms which overwhelmed the peasant stability, the roots of the present all pervading crisis in the Indian agriculture could be traced

back to the complacency and benign neglect of mid-1980s. Agriculture had fallen from policy priority under the euphoria that the country had left behind the days of shortages and achieved sustainable self-sufficiency in food grain production; that agriculture reached a level of development where it could respond to the domestic market as well as global prices, if only the market restrictions are reversed; and that preferential and institutional interventions are anachronisms. But the worse deal had to wait till the 1990s when the reforms influenced every measure of public policy including agriculture at the behest of the central government, and were carried on with different degrees of zeal at the state level. The unfinished distributive land reforms were seen as obstacles to incentives, and liberal markets were expected to bring about technological breakthrough. The result is rapid decline of institutional support to agriculture based on well-deliberated principles of growth with equity. The evidence compiled here, both from macro and micro level, suggest the rapid retrogression in the public agricultural support systems manifesting in unprecedented stress that has been causing widespread health hazard of farmers' suicides.

Although in 1991, when India officially went along the structural adjustment path and introduced a series of neo-liberal economic reforms, there was apparently not much explicitly by way of reforms in agriculture. But very soon, at least by mid-1990s when the WTO was in place, there did unfold many policy reforms directly addressed to agriculture. Table 5 lists some of the important policy changes and measures of reform relating to Indian agriculture. International trade in agriculture is liberalized. Beginning with 1997, all Indian product lines are placed under Generalised System of Preferences (GSP). By 2000 all agricultural products are removed from Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) and brought under tariff system. Canalisation of trade in agricultural commodities through state trading agencies was almost removed and most of the products brought under Open General Licensing (OGL). The average tariffs on agricultural products, which stood at over 100% in 1990, was brought down to 30% by 1997 and targeted to come down further.

Internally, the structural adjustment process initiated in 1991 at the behest of the IMF, and pursued with the aid of the World Bank had far reaching implications for the Indian agriculture. The single minded pursuit of fiscal

reforms had much greater effect on the agricultural input support system and institutions than even the provisions of Agreement on Agriculture (AOA) of the World Trade Organisation (WTO). Much of the Green Revolution initiated in 1960s in India was built with a system of state supported incentives or subsidies and public investment in agricultural infrastructure like irrigation. The National Seed Corporation established in 1963, and later, a network of State Seed Corporations established since 1975 had virtual monopoly and responsibility of developing and distributing better and high yielding variety (HYV) seeds in collaboration with the agricultural universities. Though trade in seeds was opened to private trade in 1980s, in 1991 100 percent foreign equity was allowed in seed industry in India and restrictions on import of seeds were relaxed.

Table 5: Important Measures of Economic Liberalisation in Indian Agriculture	
Area of Liberalisation	Policy Changes and Measures of Implementation
I. External Trade Sector	a. In tune with the WTO regime, since 1997 all Indian Product lines placed in Generalised System of Preferences (GSP).
	b. In 1998, Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) for 470 agricultural products dismantled. In 1999, further 1400 agricultural products brought under Open General Licensing (OGL) and canalization of external trade in agriculture almost reversed.
	c. Average tariffs on agricultural imports reduced from 100% in 1990 to 30% in 1997.
	d. Though India in principle is against Minimum Common Access, but actually is already importing 2% of its food requirements.
II. Internal Market Liberalisation	
1. Seeds	a. Since 1991 100% foreign equity allowed in seed industry. b. More liberalized imports of seeds.
2. Fertilizers	a. Gradual reduction of fertilizer subsidies since 1991.
3. Power	a. Since 1997 Power Sector reforms were introduced at the behest of the World Bank in States like Andhra Pradesh and power charges increased. b. Power sector opened for private sector.
4. Irrigation	a. Water rates increased in some States. b. Participatory water management was sought to be introduced through Water Users'

	Associations (WUAs). c. States like Andhra Pradesh made new large irrigation projects conditional on 'stakeholder' contribution to part of investment.
5. Institutional Credit	a. Khursro Committee and Narasimham Committee (1992) undermining the importance of targeted priority sector lending by the commercial banks. b. The objectives of Regional Rural Banks' (RRBs) priority to lending to weaker sections in rural areas diluted since 1997.
6. Agricultural Marketing	a. Changes in the provisions of Essential Commodities Act. b. Relaxation of Restrictions on the inter-State Movement of farm produce. c. Model Agricultural Market Act. d. Encouragement of Contract Farming. e. Agricultural Commodity Forward Markets.
III. Fiscal Reforms	a. Fiscal Reforms with an emphasis on tax reduction and public expenditure turned to reducing Fiscal Deficit as priority. (Grave implication for public investment in agriculture and rural infrastructure).
Source: Vamsi (2005) p. 975, Dorin (2004), p. 206, Acharya (2004), p. 67 and Ramesh Chand (2006)	

Fertilizer subsidy, which continues to be the major explicit agricultural incentive system directly funded by the Union Government of India, has been considerably reduced. Fertilizer subsidy, which amounted to 3.2 percent of GDP and 6 percent of the Union revenue expenditure in 1990-91, was reduced to 2.5 percent and 5 percent respectively by 1997-98 (Acharya, 2004, p. 67). It was further reduced to 0.69 percent of GDP by 2003-04 (Sen and Bhatia 2004, p. 275). Low electricity charges for agriculture are an incentive system provided through State budgets. Since 1997 several State governments introduced power sector reforms at the behest of the World Bank loans, and increased power tariffs with the ultimate objective of cost recovery. As part of the reforms, power sector was thrown open to private sector investment. Low water rates for irrigation have been yet another implicit incentive to farmers provided through the State budgets. Many States revised the water rates upwards with the objective of recovering operation and maintenance costs. Some States like Andhra Pradesh had unannounced ban on investment on new major irrigation projects, unless the 'stakeholders' also contributed to part of the investment. The irrigation reforms included introduction of participatory water management

through Water Users' Associations (WUAs), which did not have much impact on the efficiency of utilization of irrigation water resources. A comprehensive study of the working of the WUAs in Andhra Pradesh concludes that though substantial amount of money were spent on the reform process, money was used mainly for improving the ailing irrigation systems rather than strengthening formal institutional structures. Contrary to the expectations, political involvement dominate its functioning. There is devolution of powers to WUAs, as most important functions like assessments, collection of water charges, sanctioning of works remain with the irrigation departments (Ratna Reddy and P.P. Reddy, 2005).

Since substantial proportion of the Indian agriculture is a 'small farm' based economic activity, and is the one increasingly moving from a system of farmers' own-resource-based subsistence farming to purchased-input-based intensive commercial farming, and since small farmers' own resources are much too meager, timely and assured credit at reasonable interest rate has become a critical input in Indian agriculture. In fact, in the face of inadequacy or non-functioning of agricultural cooperatives, part of the radical banking reforms of the earlier times in 1960s in the form of 'social control', and later by way of bank nationalization, were aimed at increasing the flow of institutional credit to agriculture by prioritizing lending to this sector. But beginning with 1991, at the behest of pressures from the reform agenda 'targeted priority lending' or 'directed credit' to agriculture was put on the back burner. The Narasimham Committee on the Financial Reforms (1992) recommended the dilution of priority sector lending, including lending to agricultural sector by the commercial banks. Though for political reasons, there was no explicit policy of removing priority lending to agriculture, the insistence on adherence to commercial performance placed a severe constraint on bank credit to agriculture, with disastrous consequences. Instead of expanding rural bank branches, there was actually closure of rural bank branches, which declined from 34,867 in 1990 to 32,386 in 2003 (Rao 2004b). The Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), which were meant for lending specifically to 'weaker sections', were opened up to all on commercial principles with upward revision of interest rates (Rao 2004a).

Table 6: Gross Capital Formation (GCF) in Agriculture in India		
Years	GCF in Agriculture as a	Public Sector GCF in

	Percentage of Total GCF	Agriculture as a Percentage of Total Public Sector GCF
1980-81	19.1	16.08
1981-82	18	15.93
1982-83	13.9	11.17
1983-84	14.1	N.A.
1984-85	12.8	N.A.
1985-86	13.7	N.A.
1986-87	11.2	5.37
1987-88	10.4	9.44
1988-89	11.7	8.17
1989-90	9.7	6.89
1990-91	9.8	6.53
1991-92	9.2	5.91
1992-93	10.1	5.72
1993-94	10.3	6.95
1994-95	9.8	6.83
1995-96	8.8	7.21
1996-97	9.1	6.9
1997-98	9.4	5.92
1998-99	9	5.56
1999-00	8.8	5.4
Source: National Account Statistics, Central Statistical Organization, various issues.		

The economic reforms in the Indian agriculture intensified process of public and private resource crisis brewing from the mid-1980s. Gross Capital Formation (GCF) in Indian agriculture declined drastically. Table 6 shows that the public sector GCF in agriculture declined to one-third in 1999-00, of what it was in

1980-81. Contrary to the expectations, the reform measures did not stimulate much increase in private investment. On the contrary there was deceleration of growth of private investment in agriculture (Sen, 2003) and as a result, the overall GCF in agriculture as a share of total capital formation in the country, declined by half during the period. Further, there was a drastic reduction in the share of developmental expenditure on rural development from 11.7 percent of the GDP in 1991-92 to 5.9 percent in 2000-01 (Smitha, 2005;p.5). One of the severe consequences of the reforms, as mentioned earlier, was felt in the provision of institutional credit to agriculture.

Table 7 : Short-Term and Long-Term Loans for Agriculture and Allied Activities by Formal Financial Institutions					
(Amount in Rs. Crores)					
Years	Short-Term		Long-Term		Total Bank Credit
	Amount Outstanding	% to the Total Bank Credit	Amount Outstanding	% to the Total Bank Credit	
1980-81	3367	13.3	4289	16.9	25371
1981-82	4237	14.3	4862	16.4	29682
1982-83	3685	10.4	5995	16.9	35493
1983-84	4339	10.5	7185	17.4	41294
1984-85	5006	10.2	8670	17.7	48953
1985-86	5858	10.4	10377	18.5	56067
1986-87	6236	9.9	11645	18.4	63308
1987-88	7342	10.4	13742	19.5	70536
1988-89	8561	10.1	15239	18	84719
1989-90	9527	9.4	18160	17.9	101453
1990-91	10002	8.6	19313	16.6	116301
1991-92	11126	8.9	20723	16.5	125592
1992-93	13713	9	22512	14.8	151982
1993-94	12952	7.9	24037	14.6	164418
1994-95	14360	6.8	24691	11.7	211560
1995-96	17793	7	28226	11.1	254015
1996-97	20009	7.2	30911	11.1	278401
1997-98	21469	6.6	32949	10.2	324079
1998-99	23521	6.4	33885	9.2	368837
1999-00	26387	6.1	36220	8.3	435958
Source: RBI, Handbook of Statistics on Indian Economy, 2001.					

Table 7 shows that between 1980-81 and 2000-01, agricultural sector's share of formal short-term as well as long-term bank credit, declined steeply to less than half. The acceleration in the decline in the share of much needed long-term credit for investment was witnessed since early 1990s. The worst sufferers of

the formal institutional resource crunch have been the small borrowers, who are mostly small farmers.

Table 8 shows that beginning with the early 1990s, especially since 1993, the small borrowers' share in bank credit declined to one-third by 2001. This doesn't mean that small farmers' needs have gone down or small farmers were restrained from borrowing. But, it only means that small farmers were forced to borrow from non-institutional sources like moneylenders, fertilizer and pesticide dealers, friends and relatives. The interest charges of these informal sources are disproportionately high compared to institutional credit. Since no official information is available on the magnitude of informal credit and the rates of interest therein, resort is made to micro-level studies.

Table 8: Trends in Number and Amount Outstanding of Small Borrowal Accounts (SBAs) in all the Rural Financial Institutions						
Years	Number of Accounts (Rs. in Lakhs)		Share of SBAs (%)	Amount Outstanding (Rs. in Crores)		Share of SBAs (%)
	All	SBAs		All	SBAs	
1984	295	282	99.5	43326	8897	20.5
1985	336	321	95.6	49995	10028	20.1
1986	388	371	95.8	56182	12615	22.5
1987	434	416	95.8	6363727	15444	24.2
1988	480	459	95.6	71285	17954	25.2
1989	521	497	95.4	88027	22330	25.4
1990	539	512	95	104312	24147	23.1
1991	619	588	94.9	124203	27323	22
1992	659	625	95	136706	29945	21.9
1993	621	585	94.2	162467	32091	19.8
1994	596	558	93.6	175891	32188	18.3
1995	581	539	92.8	210939	34060	16.2
1996	567	519	91.6	254692	36252	14.2
1997	556	500	90.1	284373	37446	13.2
1998	535	468	87.4	329944	41095	12.5
1999	523	427	81.7	382425	38284	10
2000	543	392	72.2	460080	36408	7.9
2001	523	372	71.1	538433	37816	7
Source: RBI, Basic Statistical Returns, 1984-2001 as compiled by PSM. Rao (2003).						

Table 9, based on a survey of eight villages in Andhra Pradesh, provides basic information on the share of informal and formal credit to the farming community

and the relative rates of interest. The formal institutions with a modal interest rate of 12 percent meet only 20 percent of the credit needs of the farmers, while the informal sources with a modal interest rate ranging from 24 to 36 percent cater to 80 percent of the credit needs. And much of the borrowing is for agricultural investment purposes, which substantially push up the costs of cultivation and keep the farmers in the grip of high cost debt.

A recent nation-wide survey (NSS 2005, Report 498) also brings out the grave agrarian situation in terms of farmer indebtedness. Almost 50 percent of the farming households are indebted, but it is much higher in states like Andhra Pradesh (82.0%), Tamil Nadu (74.5%), Punjab (65.4%) and Kerala (64.4%), which are also States with relatively higher investment. More than 50 percent of the borrowing is for investment in agriculture, but it is much higher in Andhra Pradesh (77%), Maharashtra (83%) and Karnataka (73%). Institutional sources account for about 50 percent on an average, but it is much lower at 30 percent in States like Andhra Pradesh, where the rest of 70 percent comes from informal sources.

Table 9: Source-wise Interest Charges on Agricultural Loans in Eight Select Villages Across Andhra Pradesh

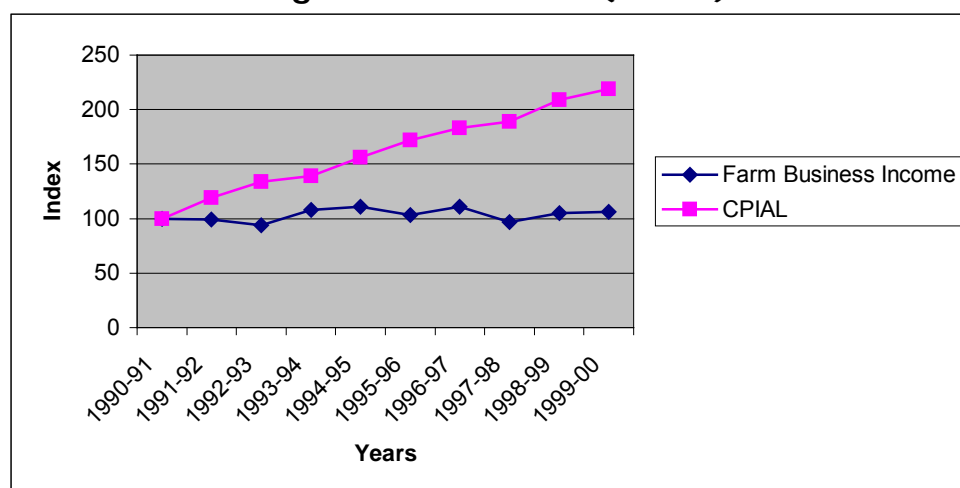
Rate of Interest	Institutional Loans		Non-Institutional Loans		Total Loans	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
< 12%	4	1.75	0	0	4	0.04
12%	112	49.12	14	1.51	126	10.94
13 to 23%	73	32.02	3	0.32	71	6.16
24%	31	13.59	370	40.04	401	34.81
36%	8	3.5	479	51.84	487	42.27
48%	0	0	5	0.54	5	0.04
60%	0	0	37	4	37	3.21
>60%	0	0	16	1.73	16	1.39
All	228 (19.79)	100	924 (80.21)	100	1152 (100)	100

Source: N. Shyam Sunder (2003) and R.S. Rao & M. Bharati (2003)

There has been steep increase in the costs of farming across the country, which is substantially due to reforms. The fertilizer price index increased from 99 in 1990-91 to 228 in 1998-99 at a compound annual growth rate of 11 percent

(Acharya 2004, p. 73). And one estimate, across the crops and country, suggests that fertilizers presently account for 29 percent of farmers' input costs (Acharya 2004, p. 78). There have been increase in the water charges in many states. One of the often cited reasons for agricultural trade liberalization is that it provide access to higher prices in the global markets. However, there has actually been decline in global prices of some of the agricultural commodities like rice and cotton for which India enjoyed comparative advantage. Before 1998-99, the Indian domestic lint prices were lower than world prices and India was an exporter of cotton. With the removal of Quantitative Restrictions (QRs) and with the recent fall in the global cotton prices, India has turned into an importor of cotton, which depressed domestic prices of cotton and has been the cause of serious losses to cotton farmers (Vamsi 2005). According to one estimate, most of the global agricultural commodity prices in 2002 were lower than in 1994, and particularly cotton prices were 30 percent less (Vamsi 2005). Farm Business Income (FBI), the difference between the value of output produced and the costs actually paid out, which was on the rise in 1980s, started declining in 1990s. The growth of FBI per hectare decelerated from 3.21 per cent in 1980s to 1.02 per cent in 1990s. The growth of real FBI per cultivator decline from 1.78 per cent in 1980s to 0.03 in 1990s. The "real FBI per cultivator may actually have declined during the 1990s in Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Orissa and Rajasthan" (Sen and Bhatia 2004, p. 42).

Figure 1: Indices of Farm Business Income and Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labour (CPIAL)



Source: Sen and Bhatia (2004), p. 241 and Economic Survey 2004-05

Figure 1 shows the steep rise in cost of living in rural areas as indicated by Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labour (CPIAL) while the farmers' income languishes. This has also resulted in widening of disparities between agricultural and non-agricultural incomes as could be seen from Table 10. The disparities have doubled over the last two and a half decades, leaving agriculture way behind.

Table 10: Per Work Income in Agriculture and Non-Agriculture Sectors (at 1993-94 prices)					
Period	Income Per Worker		Ratio of Non-Agriculture to Agriculture	Growth Rates in the Last Decade	
1978-79 to 1983-84	9961	28430	2.85	-	-
1988-89 to 1993-94	11179	39355	3.52	1.16	3.31
1998-99 to 2003-04	11496	59961	5.22	0.28	4.30
Source: Ramesh Chand (2006)					

IV. Reforms and Rural Stress in Andhra Pradesh

The State of Andhra Pradesh has acquired a special place, in more than one sense, in implementing the economic reforms in all sectors, including in agriculture. It was the first State in India to explicitly implement the reform agenda, and it is also the State to reap the largest suicides of farmers in the country. In 1995-96, the then government of Andhra Pradesh ushered-in an agenda of economic reforms at the behest of the World Bank's Andhra Pradesh Economic Restructuring Project (APERP). Even the health sector was not spared from the neo-liberal economic reforms (See Annexure 1). Ever since, at least till 2004 when there was change in political leadership, the state was seen as a kind of laboratory for economic reforms at the provincial level. The economic performance of the state has been subjected to close scrutiny. Considerable amount of analytical contributions on the state of the economy and the conditions of living of the people are available with a focus on the reform period. (Rao and Dev 2004). But here the focus is on reforms and their impact in agricultural sector.

Agriculture continues to be a major source of livelihood for about two-thirds of populations of the state and still contributes close to one-third of the state's domestic product. Agricultural growth is seen as an important factor in raising rural employment and incomes and in the reduction of poverty. But, during the reform period agriculture is caught in a serious crisis. The State experienced a growth rate of 6% per annum in agricultural investment in 1980s but it decelerated to just 1.5 percent per annum in 1990s. There has been steep deceleration in the growth rate of agricultural output from 3.4% in 1980s to 2.3% in 1990s. Crop yields in the state has been much lower than many other states.

There has been a systematic decline in the budgetary expenditure on agriculture and allied activities in the name of fiscal constraint. There was neglect of research and extension. The government investment in agricultural research and education in the state (at 0.26 percent of its agriculture GDP during 1992-94) was lower than for the other three southern states and was just around half of that for All India (0.49 percent for center and states together). Public expenditure on extension, which is borne by the state government, declined in absolute terms in the nineties. It was only 0.02 percent of the state's GDP during 1992-94, as against the All-India average of 0.15 percent. There was an attempt to privatize extension services. As a result of these policies, extension services are currently in bad shape in the state. Agricultural extension services account for only 9 percent of the farmers' information on agricultural technology in the State. Input dealers (30%) and other progressive farmers (34%) constitute the major source of information (NSSO – Report 499 -2005). With the virtual breakdown of the extension machinery, small and marginal farmers became increasingly dependent upon the private trade for extension services. At the same time, such agents were subject to less regulation than before, leading to circumstances in which resource-poor farmers became victims of exploitation by such agents.

By the late 1990s, the looming agricultural crisis was recognized to be substantially the consequence of inadequate agricultural services, including extension, reliable seed supply, quality pesticides, machinery, proper soil survey testing, soil conservation, market information and market intelligence. However,

despite this, the state government of that time refused to recognize this and take corrective measures. A 'Working Paper' of the Department of Agriculture (1999) stated that government could act only as a facilitator and no public investment would be made in providing these services. Referring to the vast gap in agricultural extension, because of unfilled vacancies which at that time accounted for more than one-fourth of the sanctioned posts, it was declared that the state "doesn't have resources to employ any more extension workers", and so it was proposed that the entire cadre of agricultural extension officers be wound up. "Without any additional financial burden to the state", the extension services would be promoted through the private sector through a system of registration of unemployed grantees or retired employees, who would offer these services for a fee. Qualified graduates would be encouraged to become licensed dealers of fertilizers, pesticides and seeds. The burden on AP Seed Corporation would be reduced by making the private sector more accountable through appropriate MOUs. The hiring of agricultural machinery would be encouraged through the corporate sector, NGOs and others. Soil surveys, soil conservation, collection of market information were to be "encouraged and to be developed in private sector with appropriate policy incentives".

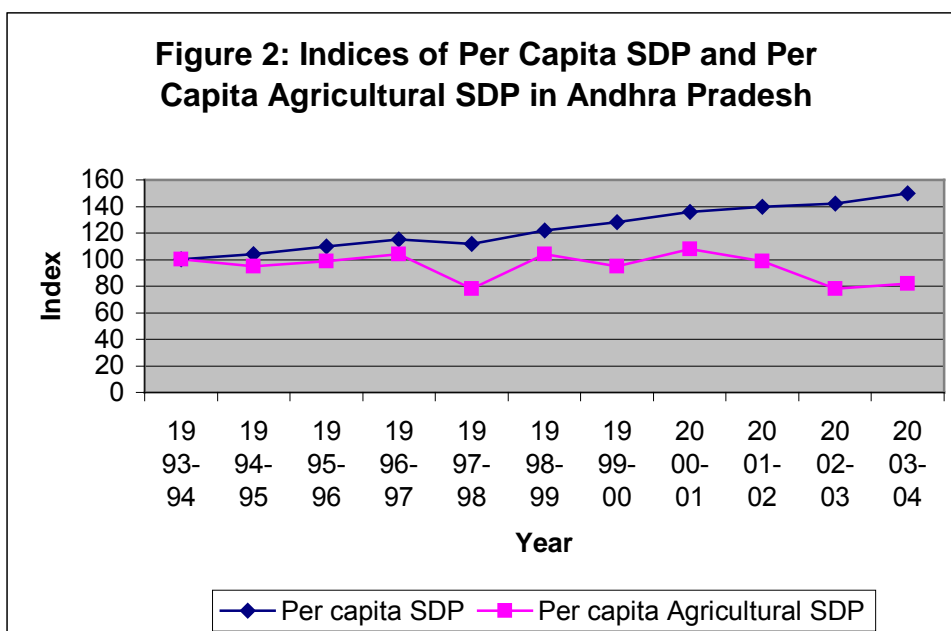
The failure of extension services, the mushrooming of spurious seed and pesticide companies, and the relegation of the agricultural university and the A.P. Seeds Corporation to an insignificant role in the research, development and propagation of seeds of non-food crops, are all the consequences of deliberate policy changes in the state. Even a critical infrastructure like irrigation suffered adversely and resulted in the lopsided development of private ground water sources engendering as the single largest source with all the attendant ecological adversities. One of the worst set backs to agricultural sector, and particularly to the small-marginal farmers, is the diminishing share of institutional credit. It fits into the erosion of agriculture as priority and targeted credit lending.

A persistent complaint is that farm gate prices of most of the agricultural commodities fall steeply at harvest time, only to rise steeply when the farmer had already sold his output because of his poor retention capacity. This is yet another form of usury that benefits the trader-dealer who rolls in as a moneylender with a tie-up for buying the commodity at the harvest time.

Peasant farming exposed to perpetuation of such a gross multiple modes of exploitation turns out to be precariously perched on uncertainty. There is no wonder that in a recent all India survey by the NSSO (Report 496, 2005), 40 percent of the farmers across the country responded that they would like to quit farming if there was a choice.

With the aggressive reformist approach of the State, it is not surprising to find that many public institutions critical for farmers and agricultural development were systematically eroded or destroyed. Some important government corporation and cooperative institutions in the state were closed, allowed to run down, or simply handed over to the private sector. These institutions, such as AP Irrigation Development Corporation, AP Agro-Industries Corporation, AP Seeds Development Corporation, Cooperative Sugar Factories, Cooperative Spinning Mills played an important role in helping the farmers. The closure of these institutions also affected the farmers adversely.

The Consequences of economic reforms in the agriculture sector of the state resulted in the steep rise in the power charges, growing dependence on high cost ground water resources, increased irrigation charges and high degree of dependence on high interest bearing dealer-broker provided informal credit. In addition to the evidence from micro-studies cited earlier (see Table 9), the recent NSS survey also shows that the incidence of indebtedness among farmer households in the State is 82 percent, which is the highest in the country (NSSO 2005, Report 498). Further, the institutional sources in the State account for only 30 percent of the loans, which is the lowest for the country. In addition to the rising costs of debt and other agricultural inputs, with volatile commodity prices, the farmers in the State, particularly those who have been opting for high value crops like cotton, face serious problems of spurious and unregulated seed supply, undue reliance on disproportionate use of pesticides due to presence of no proper extension information, face high risks of losing the entire crop. The other high cost risk is the investment made in wells and tube-wells, which often fail because of overexploitation of ground water or lack of recharge of ground water due to prolonged drought conditions.



Source: Vamsi (2004).

The result is, even as the overall state income and per-capita income rises, the per-capita agricultural income faces a decline. Figure 2 brings this out clearly. The result is the levels of living of farmers, including the large holders languish. Table 11 shows that the per-capita expenditure in the rural areas, which was on the rise between 1983 and 1993, that is, during the pre-liberalisation period, comes down rather sharply in the post-liberalisation period, for almost all agricultural classes in the state. And this happens along with an overall increase in the per capita income at the rate of over 3 percent. The immunization of the farming community is evident and any small aggravation caused by the pressure from private moneylender, inability to sell the product because of the depressed prices or even failure to meet expenses for children's education or meeting health emergencies involving private hospitals or a prolonged drought can trigger the stress beyond endurance forcing the farmers to commit suicide.

Table 11: Real Monthly Per Capita Expenditure of Agrarian Classes in Rural Andhra Pradesh (in Rs.)				
	1983-1984	1987-1988	1993-1994	1999-2000
1. Large Farmer	151.61	183.18	166.81	164.35
2. Medium Farmer	135.64	146.15	142.95	138.18
3. Small Farmer	117.20	132.84	139.93	135.02
4. Marginal Farmer	120.08	124.71	124.23	125.63
5. Agricultural Labour	94.63	100.85	110.43	106.95

6. Non-Agricultural (Self)	115.07	134.29	135.01	126.86
7. Non-Agricultural Labour	107.57	116.84	116.15	127.55
8. Others	148.72	169.29	196.63	178.34
9. Weighted Average	114.51	125.58	128.68	124.30

Source: Adopted from Vamsi (2005), p. 980.

Table 12 shows that between 1997 and 2004 there were 1688 farmers' suicides in the State (APRS 2005). According to a judicial commission appointed by the State Government, between May 14, 2004 and November 10, 2005, alone there were 1068 suicides of farmers, and in addition there were 277 starvation deaths of weavers in the same period (Nagesh Kumar 2005). The Commission also brings out the fact that the state was rocked by the revelation that 26 debt-ridden farmers of Guntur district had sold their kidneys.

Table 12: District-wise Estimates of Suicides of Farmers in Andhra Pradesh 1997-2004										
Sno	District	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	Total
1	Srikakulam	-	-	-	-	4	8	12	19	43
2	Vijyanagaram	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
3	Visakhapatnam	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	4	5
4	East Godavari	-	-	-	1	2	-	1	15	19
5	West Godavari	-	1	-	-	5	1	2	15	24
6	Krishna	1	4	1	1	3	7	3	30	50
7	Guntur	2	32	10	1	6	3	2	43	99
8	Prakasam	-	1	3	-	2	3	1	19	29
9	Nellore	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	23	23
10	Chittoor	1	3	-	-	2	3	3	23	35
11	Cuddapah	-	-	-	-	4	8	12	19	43
12	Anantapur	1	1	1	50	44	63	43	44	247
13	Kurnool	2	4	4	2	4	3	18	36	73
14	Adilabad	3	9	8	5	13	4	13	22	77
15	Nizamabad	2	9	1	-	11	5	4	35	67
16	Karimnagar	13	31	10	6	30	20	16	48	174
17	Khammam	7	20	5	3	6	6	7	23	77
18	Warangal	52	99	7	7	28	12	26	41	272
19	Nalgonda	4	5	1	10	11	18	12	40	101
20	Medak	13	15	3	2	8	2	4	39	86
21	Rangareddy	3	5	-	3	6	2	7	13	39
22	Mahaboobnagar	4	14	2	25	10	9	31	38	133
Total		108	255	58*	119	196	169	204	577	1688
Note: *Data for 1999 are incomplete										
Source: Compiled from reports in the Hyderabad editions of different daily newspapers by Andhra Pradesh Rythu Sangam, (APRS 2005).										

There have been number of studies in the state based on sample investigation of households of the victims to analyze the proximate causes for the suicides. A few of them are reviewed here to understand the nature of the stressors behind the suicides. In 1998, a Peoples Tribunal (RSC, 1998) heard the depositions from 60 farming households of victims drawn from across five districts in the State. Of the 60, majority of them (42) reported their dependence on wells or bore-wells for irrigation, on which they invested substantial part of their resources. Thirty-three of them reported water shortage as the main reason for their crop failure that triggered the suicides. Of the 21, who reported heavy borrowing for investing on the wells or bore-wells or deepening of bore-wells, only one reported bank credit, while the rest had borrowed from private informal sources at very high interest rates.

An AWARE (1998) study covered a sample of 92 households of farmers who committed suicide, from across 10 districts. The major cause reported by most of the victims' households is accumulated debt for digging or deepening of the wells. The trigger has been repeated crop losses or in some cases the failure of the bore-wells. The resulting inability to repay the loans and the feeling of threatened self-respect acted as the triggers.

A Citizen's Report (CES, 1998) investigated 50 households of deceased farmers in Warangal district of the State. In all the cases the cause seems to be failure of crops due to inadequate water sources. But 72 percent of them depended on own ground water sources, while 28 percent depended on tanks, which failed to provide full protection because of monsoon failure. But all of them have invested heavily on cotton crop. Of the 40 who borrowed earlier from the institutional sources had to resort to informal credit sources, because they were defaulters due to their inability to clear the outstanding debt from the institutional sources. Because of the increase in the number of bore-wells and the fast depletion of ground water table, there were attempts to repeated deepening of these sources. The study reports a case study of a village in the district, where 30 years ago there were only 6 tube wells and the water table was at a shallow level of six feet from the surface. But by 1998 there were 1800 bore wells, half of which were dry, and the water table was at 240 feet! Groundwater dependence and the risks related looms large in the emerging agrarian crisis. But there may not be any parallel to the worst scenario than

Musapally village in Nalgonda district. For a village with 2000 acres under cultivation, there are more borewells than people, 6000 borewells dug at an estimated investment of Rs. 6.52 crores. About 85 per cent of these wells are a failure (Sainath, 2004).

Vandana and Jafri (1998) report after investigating 27 victims' families. In all the cases, crop failure and uncleared debt burden were the immediate causes. But the causes for heavy debt in 16 cases were the investment in wells or bore wells, and nine of them reported either dried up bore-wells or bore-well with insufficient water supply. Like in the study by Sudhakumari (2002), most of the victims are male members in the age group of less than 40 years. With a few exceptions, majority of them belong to Backward Communities or Scheduled Castes or Scheduled Tribes. Barring the ST households, the educational level reveals certain level of schooling.

That the agrarian crisis not only continues but spreads to different regions and to a number of other high value crops than cotton is evident from yet another field study (Shashi Bhushan and Reddy 2004). The study cover 168 cases of farmers' suicides spread over five districts extending to all the three regions of Andhra Pradesh. Interestingly six of the 168 victims were women. Most of the victims (65.63%) are in the prime of their working life (31-50 years). Most of them have school education, and only a small proportion (18.75%) are illiterate. Majority of them (65.63%) belong to the Backward Communities but there are also 25% of them belonging to the so-called forward castes. The proportion of Scheduled Caste (6.21%) and Scheduled Tribes (3.12%) are relatively less than proportion in the population. Most of them are small-marginal farmers and 22 percent of them are pure tenants leasing land. But, most of the other, with some land, also leased additional land and thus 77 percent of the victims had leased-in some land. There was invariably mono-cropping and all are non-food commercial crops, like cotton (52%), Chillies (33%), Sunflower (11%), Tomato (8%), Sugarcane (6%) and Mulberry (3%). So, one need not be a cotton farmer to face high risks. It could be any commercial crop in the reform atmosphere that is adequate to put one under stress vulnerable to suicide. The trigger in these cases again is the failure of water resources of their own a minor sources like tank irrigation. Most of them depended on tube-wells (61%), and some of

them on dug-wells (22%) and tanks (19%). All these sources failed but 53 percent reported total failure and most of them were tube-well owners, while 47 percent reported inadequate water. This case study, yet again emphasizes that reforms which have no sensitivity to the regional specificities of agriculture, are likely to put disproportionately high pressure on the livelihood of farmers in dry land areas where there is no canal irrigation but the entire burden of developing water resources are on the shoulders of farmers through wells or bore-wells. In addition, there has been increasing pressure on the farmers in terms of meeting the basic social services like education and health, which are increasingly privatized and have been emerging as significant part of domestic expenditure needs. A combination of these stress factors have been at the back of the crisis in the farming sector which has been manifesting into widespread suicides, particularly from 1997.

It would be futile to explain away the manifestation of agrarian distress as psychological aberrations of the farming community. Failure of certain social institutions do serve as contingent factors to an extent, but do not explain the present distress entirely. While there are questions which bring-in the social dimensions from the Durkheimian analysis of suicides (Durkheim, 2002/1897). The spread of neo-liberal values and highly rationalized individual relations may call for attention to the growing alienation and social disintegration. The failure of village as a social community and the growing disintegration of joint family as protective and supportive collective may also call for closer analysis.

But the much larger question is whether small-marginal farming is sustainable without substantial public infrastructure support and comprehensive social security including health, education, employment and old age support? By and large the incidence of suicides has been higher among small-marginal farmers moving from subsistence agriculture to the high value crops with a strong motivation to improve their social and economic status. They are indeed risk taking small agricultural entrepreneurs whose success would be the basic premises for transformation of the rural India towards better and equitable incomes and livelihood. A keen scholar of the Indian countryside observes: "farmers' distress is not due to lack of agricultural growth but paradoxically due to enterprising qualities of farmers who pursue growth and even achieve it in

good measure. But drought-prone environment and non-caring policy regime turn those who bring growth into victims" (Rao, V.M. 2004).

It is a cruel paradox that the country is agriculturally self-sufficient, and the policy makers have designs and dreams about high export growth of agricultural commodities including food grains, but farmers who are the architects of these surpluses are allowed to die out of distress. What is needed is a caring policy but what exists is exposure to predatory market forces instead. There is increasing evidence that there cannot be rural development in a country like India without high agricultural growth. Substantial reduction in rural poverty is due to agricultural growth (Mellor 2006). There is no instance in the world of dry land farmers moving to high productivity agriculture by investing their own resources for the development of land and water resources in the face of gross exposure to the vagaries of the market forces. There is no instance of small-marginal farmers earning adequate livelihood without appropriate social security and economic support. Over 40 per cent of India's farming is the context of dry and drought prone regions. Almost 80 per cent of the country's farming communities are small-marginal farmers. Small-marginal farmers in dry regions are the most vulnerable but least cared for in the economic reforms framework. It is the policy neglect that has been forcing these farmers to shoulder all the costs and risks of high investment, including land and water resource development with borrowed capital at usurious interest rates. They have lifted Indian agriculture to relatively better productivity agriculture at a cost that they can ill afford.

These costs are costs of transition of the Indian agriculture from subsistence levels to higher productivity. These costs are necessarily social costs which should not be compounded to the shoulders of these farmers. The state has to own the responsibility for these social costs of investment in the development of land and water (including groundwater) resources, provision of adequate economic support by way of institutional credit, extension, quality input supply and remunerative prices as well as social sector support of ensuring quality education and health facilities. There is incontrovertible evidence that agricultural growth driven by improved productivity of small-marginal farmers would result in much more equitable distribution of income, augmentation of

effective demand with its spread effects on non-farm sector and would be more sustainable as well. The essential condition is the need for policy shift from the mindless neo-liberal market centred reforms to building of economic and social support systems to make small-marginal farming, especially in dry regions, viable and to ensure these farmers against exposure to distress due to vagaries of domestic and global market forces.

* * *

References

- Acharya, S.S. (2004) "Fertilizer Subsidy in Indian Agriculture: Some Issues" in Bruno Dorin and Thomas Jullien (eds) **Agricultural Incentives in India: Past Trends and Perspective Paths Towards Sustainable Development**, Manohar, New Delhi and Centre de Sciences Humains, pp. 67-82.
- Assadi, Muzaffar (1998) "Karnataka: Farmers' Suicides – Signs of Distress in rural Economy", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 14, pp.
- AWARE (1998) **Farmers' Suicides in Andhra Pradesh?**, AWARE, Hyderabad.
- Barret, Christopher B. (1998) "Immiserized Growth in Liberalized Agriculture" *World Development*, Vol. 26, No. 5, pp. 743-753.
- Bhalla, Sheila (2005) "India's Rural Economy: Issues and Evidence" Working Paper No. 25, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi.
- Cohen, Lincoln C., Trim G. Evans and Richard A. Cash (1999) "Health as a Global Public Good" in Inge Kaul et. al ed. (1999) **Global Public Goods: International Cooperation in the 21st Century**, UNDP-OUP, New York, pp. 284-304.
- Cornia, G., R. Jolly and F. Stewart (eds) (1987) **Adjustment with A Human Face**, 2 Vols., Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Deshpande R.S. and Nagesh Prabhu (2005) "Farmers' Distress: Proof Beyond Question", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XL Nos. 44-45, October 29, pp. 4663-4665.
- Dorin, Bruno and Thomas Jullien (2004) "The Product-Specificity of Indian Input Subsidies: Scope and Effects on Equity and Competitiveness" in Bruno Dorin and Thomas Jullien (eds), *op.cit.*, pp. 151-194.
- Durkhiem, E. (2002- French 1897) **Suicides**, Routledge Classics, Lodon.
- GOAP (2005) **Report of the Commission on Farmers' Welfare**, Commission of Agriculture, Department of Agriculture, GOAP, Hyderabad.
- Government of Andhra Pradesh (2004) **Report of the Commission on Farmers' Welfare**, GOAP, Hyderabad.
- Hanumantha Rao, C.H. (2005) **Agriculture, Food Security, Poverty and Environment: Essays on Post-Reform India**, Oxford University Press, New Delhi.

- Hanumantha Rao, C.H. and S. Mahendra Dev (eds) (2003) **Andhra Pradesh Development: Economic Reforms and Challenges Ahead**, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad.
- Krishna Rao, Y.V. and S. Subrahmanyam (eds.) (2002) **Development of Andhra Pradesh: 1956-2001: A Study of Regional Disparities**, N.R.R. Research Centre, Hyderabad.
- Mellor, John. W (2006) "Pro-Poor Growth – The Relation between Agricultural Growth and Poverty Reduction", in **India in a Globalising World**, R. Radhakrishna et.al (eds), Op.Cit.
- Mishra, S.N. and M. Govinda Rao (2003) "Trade Policy, Agricultural Growth and Rural Poor: Indian Experience 1978-79 to 1999-00" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXVIII, October 25, pp. 4588-4603.
- Mohan Rao, J. and Storm, S (2000) "Agricultural Globalization in Developing Countries: Rules, Rationales and Results" in Jayati Ghosh and C.P. Chandrasekhar (eds), op. cit.
- Mohan Rao, R.M. (2004) **Suicides Among Farmers – A Study of Cotton Growers**, Concept Publishing Company, New Delhi.
- Mohanty, B.B. and Sangeeta Shroff (2004) "Farmers' Suicides in Maharashtra" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 52, pp. 5599-5607.
- Nagesh Kumar (2005) "Focus on the Farm Sector: The Ramachanna Reddy Panel Report highlights the dangers of Neglecting the agricultural sector in Andhra Pradesh" *The Hindu*, December 22, 2005.
- Nair, K.N. and Vineetha Menon (2004) 'Reforming Agriculture in a Globalizing World – The Road Ahead for Kerala', **IP6 Working Paper No. 3**, NCCR – North South (Swiss National Science Foundation, Berne).
- Narendranath, G. Uma Shankari and K. Rajendra Reddy (2005) "To Free or Not to Free Power: Understanding the Context of Free Power to Agriculture" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XL, No. 53, December 31 – January 6.
- National Sample Survey Organisation NSSO (2005a) **Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers, Report 496, Some Aspects of Farming**, NSSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, GOI, New Delhi.
- National Sample Survey Organisation NSSO (2005b) **Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers, Report 498, Indebtedness of Farmer Households**, NSSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, GOI, New Delhi.
- National Sample Survey Organisation NSSO (2005c) **Situation Assessment Survey of Farmers, Report 499, Access to Modern Technology**, NSSO, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, GOI, New Delhi.
- Nayyar, D. and A. Sen (1994) "International Trade and Agricultural Sector in India" *Economic and Political Weekly*, May 14, pp. 1187-1203.
- Parthasarathy, G and Shameem (1998) "Suicides of Cotton Farmers in A.P: An Exploratory Study", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 13, pp.

- Peters, David. H et.al. (2002) **Better Health Systems for India's Poor: Findings, Analysis, and Options**, The World Bank, Washington D.C.
- Ramachandran, Prema (2004) "Health, Nutrition, Population: Vision 2020" in GOI (2004) *India Vision 2020*, Academic Foundation, New Delhi, pp. 361-390.
- Ramesh Chand (2006) "India's Agricultural Challenges and their Implications for Growth and Equity", paper presented at Silver Jubilee Seminar on **Perspectives on Equitable Development: International Experience and What can India Learn?**, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad.
- Raithu Sahaya Committee (RSC) 1998, **Farmers' Suicides in Andhra Pradesh: Report of the Peoples Tribunal**, Raithu Sahaya Committee, Hyderabad, July 1998.
- Rao, P.S.M. (2004a) 'Weaker Sections' Rural Credit in India: A Post-reform Scenario', Mimeo.
- _____(2004b) 'Growing Rural Indebtedness and Increasing Institutional Apathy', Mimeo.
- Rao, V.M. and D.V. Gopalappa (2004) "Agricultural Growth and Farmer Distress: Tentative Perspectives from Karnataka" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIX, No. 52, December 25, pp. 5591-5598.
- Reddy, D. Narasimha (2004) "Changes in Agrarian Structure and Agricultural Technology: Is Peasant Farming Sustainable under Institutional Retrogression", in R. Radhakrishna, S.K. Rao, S. Mahendra Dev and K. Subba Rao (ed.) **India in a Globalising World: Some Aspects of Macroeconomy, Agriculture and Poverty, Essays in Honour of C.H. Hanumantha Rao**, Academic Press, New Delhi, 2006.
- Reddy, V. Ratna and P. Prudhvikar Reddy (2005) "How Participatory is Participatory Irrigation? Water Users' Associations in Andhra Pradesh" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XL, No. 53, December 31 – January 6.
- Reddy, Sudershan A and B. Venkateswara Rao (1998) 'Gathering Agrarian Crisis: Farmers' Suicides in Warangal District', **Citizens' Report**, Warangal.
- Revathi, E (1998) "Farmers Suicide: Missing Issues", *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIII, No. 17, pp.
- Sagar, Alpana (2005) "Health" in **Disequalising Growth: Alternative Economic Survey, India 2004-05**, Alternative Survey Group, Danish Books, New Delhi, pp. 215-222.
- Sainath,P(2004) "Sinking Borewells and Rising Debt", www.indiatogether.org/2004/Jun/psa-sinkingbore.
- Sawant, S.D., Vaidehi Daptardar and Sandhya Mhatre (2002) "Capital Formation and Growth in Agriculture: Neglected Aspects and Dimensions" *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. , May 16.
- Sen, Abhijit (2003) "Globalization, Growth and Inequality in South Asia: The Evidence from Rural India" in Jayati Ghosh and C.P. Chandrasekhar (eds.) **Work and Well-Being in the Age of Finance**, Tulika Books, New Delhi.

- Sen, Abhijit and M.S. Bhatia (2004) **State of the Indian Farmer: A Millennium Study – Cost of Cultivation and Farm Income Vol. 14**, Academic Foundation, New Delhi.
- Shashi Bhushan and T. Prabhakar Reddy (2004) 'A Moving into Poverty Syndrome: Debt and Differentiation in Small Farm Economies: A Casual Study of Farmers' Suicides in A.P.', Poverty and Social Analysis Monitoring Unit (PSAMU-SERP), Hyderabad, November, Draft Mimeo.
- Singh, Sukhpal (2004) "Crisis and Diversification in Punjab Agriculture" Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIX, No. 52, pp. 5583-5590.
- Smita Gupta (2005) "The Crisis of Indian Agriculture under Neo-Liberal Policy" **Working Paper No. 24**, Institute for Human Development, New Delhi.
- Srinivasan, R (2004) "Health Care in India: Vision 2020" in GOI (2004) op.cit., pp. 327-360.
- Sudhakumari, V.M. (2002) 'Globalization, Economic Reforms and Agrarian Distress in India: A Study of Cotton Farmers' Suicide in Warangal District', Paper presented to the 2002 GDW Award for Research Papers, University of Kerala, Kariavottam Campus, Thiruvananthapuram.
- Srijit Mishra (2005a) 'Suicides in India: Some Observations', Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai, August 6, Mimeo.
- _____ (2005b) 'Suicides of Farmers in Maharashtra: Interim Report submitted to the Government of Maharashtra', Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai.
- _____ (2005c) 'Content Analysis of Farmers' Suicides Reported in Deshomati during 2004', Indira Gandhi Institute of Development Research, Mumbai, Mimeo.
- Vamsi, Vakulabharanam (2004) 'Immiserizing Growth: Globalization and Agrarian Change in Telangana, South India between 1985 and 2000' Doctoral Dissertation, Amherst: University of Massachusetts, Economics Department.
- _____ (2005) "Growth and Distress in a South Indian Peasant Economy During the Era of Economic Liberalisation" The Journal of Development Studies, Vol. 41, No. 6, August, pp. 971-997.
- Vandana Shiva and Afsar H. Jafri (1998) **Seeds of Suicide: The Ecological and Human Costs of Globalization in Agriculture**, Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Ecology, New Delhi.
- Vasavi, A.R. (1999) "Agrarian Distress in Bidar: Market, State and Suicides", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIV, No. , pp.
- Vyas, V.S., (2004) "Agrarian Distress: Strategies to Protect Vulnerable Sections" Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIX, No. 52, December 25, pp. 5576-5582.

Warangal :27-2-07

Prof. B. Janardhan Rao Memorial Lecture

By J.M. Girglani

TRAGEDY OF TRIBALS IN TELANGANA

Late Prof. Janardhan Rao had studied problems of the tribal areas and had rendered significant service in the cause of the tribals. It is therefore appropriate that the memorial lecture should cover the subject pertaining to the cause, which was dearest to his heart. I had the opportunity of studying Tribal Land Issues in Telangana and had submitted my report on the subject on 16th August 2005 to the Land Committee appointed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh under the chairmanship of Sri Koneru Ranga Rao, Hon'ble Minister for MA & UD. I shall therefore dwell on this theme for today's memorial lecture.

Saga of the tribals in India is a story of Nirbal se ladai balwan ki – yeh kahani hai diye ki aur tufan ki. This is a story of the struggle of the weak against the powerful, of the oil lamp and the storm. It is said that a lamb cannot lie beside the lion even with a fence between them, for long, and will ultimately land up inside the lion.

This memorial lecture comes at a time when we have before us a very significant legislation on tribal rights, The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Tribal Rights) Act, 2006, Act 2 of 2007 passed on December 29, 2006. It comes in the wake of the Draft National Tribal Policy (A policy for Schedule Tribes of India), issued by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, Government of India, in July 2006.

I shall confine myself to the tribal land issues in the areas of Telangana, listed in Schedule V of the Constitution, viz. Eturunagaram in Warangal District, Bhadrachalam in Khammam District and Utnoor in Adilabad District.

Let us look back at the plight of the tribals in Telangana with specific reference to the Gonds in 1930s and early 40s, as described by P. Sethu Madhava Rao in 1946. This has been quoted by Haimendorf in his book, "The Gonds of Andhra Pradesh – Tradition and Change in an Indian Tribe". This account of the Gonds by P. Sethu Madhav Rao says that in the period 1930-40 the Gonds were disadvantaged by the system of Village Officers, who kept accounts in Marathi and there was falsification of records and large scale wresting of land from the Gonds by the Patwaris themselves. There was also alienation of Gonds' lands by new settlers. The reservation of forests was the greatest single threat to the prosperity and wellbeing of the Gonds. Lands held by Gonds on patta were brought under Reserve Forests.

The hostility between Gonds and the Forest Officers finally erupted in a violent clash, which has since become part of tribal folklore, and which indirectly led to changes in Government policy vis-à-vis the tribal population of Adilabad. This confrontation known as the **Babhijheri** incident was on too small a scale to be classified as a tribal rebellion, yet it contained elements which in other parts of India have led to much more serious tribal unrest. Eleven tribals died in this conflict. This mini rebellion reflects the hardships to which the tribesmen had been subjected as well as the psychological reaction of a simple and inherently peaceful people to a sequence of unrelenting pressures and extortions. (Haimendorf)

Haimendorf writes that the traditional pattern of Gond life developed at the time when tribal communities lived in relative isolation in the highlands and wooded plains of Adilabad, rarely disturbed by close contact with other populations. That time is long past, and recent decades have been marked by an unrelenting struggle between the Gonds endeavoring to retain their ancestral land and economical independence and new settlers' intent on exploiting the rich agricultural and forest resources of the region. Traditionally land belonged to the entire village community in all the tribal areas and they cultivated it individually in accordance with their system of tribal harmony.

In the early 1940s the Gonds of Adilabad district had already been ousted from many villages and from large areas of land once held by their forefathers. In the lower lying country and above all in the riverien tracts, they lost much of their land to Hindu as well as Muslim settlers. The process began in the early decades of the 20th century when the Nizam's government pursuing the policy of opening of the district and raising its revenue encouraged the influx of new settlers from neighboring districts and granted them patta to as much land as they could make arable. The tribesmen did not realize the necessity of possessing patta as they believe the land belonged to the village community. Consequently they often failed to obtain recognition of their rights on the land which they and their forefathers had been cultivating. They resorted to shifting cultivation, but that had its limits.

Meanwhile gradual improvement of communication, for example, the construction of railway from Warangal to Nagpur and of a motorable road from Nirmal to Adilabad, as well as the influx of cultivating castes such as Kumbis, Kapus and Marars, who provided efficient labour, the country became valuable to non-cultivators, and Brahmins, Komtees and Muslims of Asifabad, Adilabad and Nirmal began acquiring whole villages on a commercial basis. A great number of villages in the open country were taken in auction by absentee landlords. The only area where Gonds remained in possession of most of their lands was the hilly tracts access to which was by cart-tracts over difficult country. In their practice of shifting cultivation the Gonds paid revenue only for the area they cultivated at any particular point of time. Such tenure was called Sawa-i-jamabandi (later called Siwaijama), without revenue settlements. Under this system their names did not appear in the village register as pattadars. The patta rights were knocked off in Siwa-i-jamabandi practice by unscrupulous persons.

The traditional authority of the Gonds was lost to the Deshmukhs and the Karanams and later to the Panchayats.

A similar process took place in a different context but similar circumstances among the Koyas of Eturunagaram Agency of Warangal district and in the Bhadrachalam Agency of East Godavari district which was later transferred to Khammam district.

Now – almost 70 years later – the National Tribal Policy Draft shows that very little had changed for the tribals of this country. Similar problems in different forms still persist. This is what it says in Para 1.11, says (Quote) “Ownership of land signifies livelihood, culture and identity in a tribal economy. The STs usually possess lands which are infertile uplands. But even such as they are these lands have also been going out of tribal possession on account of appropriation by exogenous forces. Poor land record systems in tribal areas coupled with illiteracy, poverty and ignorance of tribals and the greed of others have resulted in the continuous transfer of resources from tribals to non-tribals for several decades. Diminishing access to natural resources, and dispossession has led to their exclusion and economic impoverishment often reducing them to the status of migrant labour, rickshaw pullers and head loaders, and socio-psychologically setting them adrift”. (Unquote)

This is the condition on an all India canvass, not just in Andhra Pradesh or Telangana, almost 70 years after the account given by Haimendorf of the tribesmen in Adilabad district and 60 years after Independence.

The next paragraph 1.12 of the Draft Policy documents reads as under: (Quote) “To compound the problem further, displacement or forced eviction of tribals from their lands and natural habitats due to various developmental activities has for long been a serious problem. Displacement takes place on account of development projects which include large irrigation or hydro projects, coal and other mines, thermal power plants and mineral based industrial units. De jure displacement is accompanied by extensive de-facto displacement from a much wider area commonly referred to as the zone of influence. While the STs lose their land, livelihoods and community way of living, others reap the benefits of the development often financed from the

public exchequer that follows in the entire zone of influence. Inadequate rehabilitation of the displaced tribals compounds their woes making them asset-less and unemployed, trapped in debt bondage". (Unquote)

Before we go on to the steps that were taken after the Babhijheri uprising of 1940, let us look at the present all India scenario of the tribals. The population of a tribal community scheduled in the constitution of India and known as scheduled tribes (STs) is 84.3 million as per 2001 census and accounts for 8.2 percent of the total population of the country, scattered over all the states/union territories, except Punjab, Haryana, Delhi and the UTs of Pondichery and Chandigarh. In Andhra Pradesh the tribal population is reckoned to be 6% of the total population of the state. If they knew how to play the chess game of vote bank politics their 8.2% population could have done wonders for them. The STs have traditionally lived in about 15% of the country's geographical area, mainly forests, hills, undulating inaccessible terrain in Plateau areas, rich in natural resources. They have lived as isolated entities for centuries, leading to slower growth, dissimilar pattern of their socio- economic and cultural development and inability to negotiate, and cope with the consequences of their involuntary integration with the mainstream society and economy. Their greatest handicap has been and continues to be their value system, the paradigm of which is guilelessness, truth, honesty, loyalty and adherence to their word and commitments like the Raghuvamsi value of pran jaye par vachan na jaye (keeping one's word even at the cost of one's life). This value system has been the undoing of the tribes in the entire country and in our own State. It is said that where there are lobhis, people with extreme avarice, the thogis, cheats, thrive. It can also be said that where honesty reigns, deception thrives. Somehow in the North East widespread education including higher education imparted by the missionaries has saved the tribes from exploitation, but at the cost of their ancestral religion. Proselytizers are quite active in our tribal areas too. Where are those who profess to save their ancient religion? Jinhe naaz hai Hind per voh kahan hain... kahan hain kahan hain?

In para 1.8 of the Tribal Policy Draft, it is said that the improvements in socio economic conditions of Scheduled Tribes measured in increased literacy rates, reduction of poverty etc have not been proportionate to the investments made. As compared to other sections of the Indian society, the tribal population has the lowest Human Development Index (HDI). In addition, they suffer from geographical and cultural exclusion, which are not captured in the HDI. Similarly, lack of empowerment to make choices for themselves is also not accounted for. A large segment of the tribal population lives below the poverty line and suffers from a high infant mortality rate, severe malnutrition, various communicable diseases, lower literacy rates and an extremely slow pace of development. Under-development coupled with lack of access to proper administrative and judicial machinery in tribal areas further increases their deprivation.

Reverting to the Babhijheri uprising of 1940, we find that the Nizam's Government appointed Prof. Haimendorf as an advisor anthropologist. The anthropological approach brought in many ameliorative measures. In order to save the interests of tribals in land, Hyderabad Tribal Areas Regulation was promulgated in 1949. This was the precursor of the later AP Land Transfer Regulation (1959), which provided substantial protection of tribal rights in their lands. Regulation 1 of 1970 and Regulations in that decade further tightened the legal protection such that no non-tribal could hold land in the Scheduled Areas.

As is the normal strategy of the exploiter against the protection provided to the exploited, the protective hurdles were overcome through ever honed system of subterfuges and unabashed non implementation. The protections through drastic laws proved to be no deterrent to the unscrupulous land sharks with the political regimes and administration turning Nelsons eye and lending a collective helping hand to them.

The developments that took place from 1961-1971 opened up the Scheduled Areas of the state through communication facilities, which resulted in an influx of non-tribal population, which increased by 111% in Utnoor agency area.

The second Gond rebellion was triggered off by the recognition of the forward tribe Lambadas as Scheduled Tribes in Telangana area against an earlier advice of Haimendorf. The final and biggest blow to Gond psyche occurred when they were denied their traditional involvement in their own ritual, the Keslapur jatra.

Haimendorf writes that when he revisited Utnoor area in 1976 and 1977, he found massive encroachment of outsiders on tribal land. In most of the roadside villages, there were large concentrations of Marathas, Hutkaas, Mahars, Lambadas and Muslims from Maharashtra as well as a sprinkling of Gujaratis. Some of them were shop keepers, merchants and money lenders, but the majority of Marathas, Mahars and Lambadas were cultivators who came to the district with the intention of acquiring land. This wave of immigration reached its peak in the years between 1968 and 1977, and it was then that many villages changed their character and Gonds became economically disadvantaged minority in localities where only a generation ago they had been the sole population. He wonders and writes, "the question arises how this calamity could occur in the face of Regulations which explicitly prohibit the transfer of tribal land to non-tribals and even the acquisition of land not in the possession of a tribal by anyone who is not a member of a notified tribal community". AND THAT IS THE TRAGEDY OF OUR TRIBES IN TELANGANA. The answer is evident. Neither the administration nor the elected representatives could withstand the pressure of the immigrant non-tribals who have been able to gain the goodwill and cooperation of the local administration and powerful sections of the local non-tribal population who, according to him, dislike the official policy of protecting the rights of tribals and sympathize with the representatives of vested interests. In course of time, the immigrant non-tribal's lands have passed on into the hands of the Telugu non-tribals mostly from four central coastal Andhra districts.

30 years after Haimendorf had asked the question, I had the same question to ask after I had recorded in my report submitted on 14th August, 2005 the atrocious grabbing of tribal lands in all the three scheduled areas of the state through ingenious subterfuges and even open and uncamouflaged devices that would make any conscientious observer scream in anguish, "Oh government, of the people, by the people, for the people, where were you? Where are you?" Oh fighters for just causes, where were you? Where are you?"

What I found and brought out in my report was as under. I am mentioning below only the gross and shocking findings.

Warangal District, Eturunagaram Agency

1. Almost entire agriculture land in Govindaraopet Mandal, private and government, is under the occupation by settlers. Most of the tribals have fled from the villages of this Mandal.
2. In Mulug Mandal, there is an influx of settlers on the invitation and with the support of the non-tribals, who themselves are originally not inhabitants of this Mandal. The influx is still continuing. A large extent of the land occupied by the non-tribal settlers is government land which includes 1200 acres of land ceiling surplus land.
3. Orders issued for restoration of 350 acres under LTR in 1980 are not being implemented and the reason given by the officials is "non-tribal resistance". In other words, government is powerless before these non-tribals, thus recognizing the fundamental right of might against Constitutional protection to the weak.
4. In the same Eturunagaram Agency area "Jung Sipahi" pattas land is under non-tribal occupation.

5. Similarly 1000 acres in Kothaguda Mandal have been captured by Lambadas from outside the Agency area while Koyas go begging for it.
6. In Nursingpet village, Lambadas from in scheduled areas and non-tribals have come in large numbers and Koyas have fled from the village.
7. The Gram Panchayat has given permission for setting up 5 rice mills and 2 saw mills.
8. In Kothaguda village, there are 21,000 acres worth not less than 110 crores at the minimal value of Rs.50,000/- per acre of Billa number lands, which are occupied by non-tribals. In 1993 the land was surveyed. In 2002 the extremists are said to have blasted the MRO's Office and destroyed the survey records. To who's advantage? Who really blasted, God knows. (I am adopting Rs.50,000/- per acre as a minimal notional value. It could be much more).
9. The most shocking case is that of Mangapeta Mandal. Here 23 villages were excluded from the Schedule V notification under High Court orders because of some technical error. All the efforts of the State government and the States Human Rights Commission to have the rectification notification issued by the Central Government have failed during the previous and present regimes, because the powerful non-tribal occupants have been able to prevent action in New Delhi. One can imagine the value of these extents that lie in 23 villages.
10. Thousands of acres of government land is not being assigned to the tribals on the pretext of lack of surveyors to sub divide the land while non-tribals merrily continue to enjoy these lands, without any sub divisions.

11. Lands taken over under Land Transfer Regulation Act (LTR) in Tadvai Mandal, Gudur (1,300 acres) have not been restored to the tribals. (Notional value at Rs.50,000/- per acre – Rs.6.50 crores approx.)
12. In Rajivpet village of Narsampet Mandal, all the Koyas were dispossessed of their lands. Lambadas from outside the Agency area and non-tribals have taken over their lands.
13. In Kothaguda Mandal out of 101 LTR cases, land has been restored only in 70 cases.
14. There is no detection machinery to book any violation of LTRs. Thus the protective law is as good as a dead letter. This is a common feature of all the Agency areas of the State.
15. Ownership of non-tribals is assumed by MROs on the basis of unverified pattas believed to be dating back to 50 years or before 1959 (when LTR was enacted) or before 1970, when regulation 1 of 70 put teeth into the LTR. This unwarranted assumption protects the non-tribal intruders.
16. In Chelpaka village, the Forest Department is disputing the 50 years continuous cultivation by tribals. In Eturunagaram Mandal about 3,300 acres of revenue land worth at least 17 crores at a minimal rate of Rs.50,000/- is being cultivated by tribals but the forest authorities do not allow its assignments. Such demarcation disputes with Forest Department account for jeopardy to rights of tribals in thousands of acres in all the 3 Agency areas.

Khammam district, Bhadrachalam Agency

17. In spite of regulation 1 of 1970, the Registration Department continues to register documents of transfer of property in the

Scheduled Villages in the name of non-tribals. Regulation 1/70 is water on duck's back as far as they are concerned.

18. Even pattadar pass books are issued to non-tribals for government lands in the scheduled villages. "Welcome wolves we are not watch dogs. We belong to your species".
19. Licenses are issued for commercial and industrial enterprises to non-tribals by gram panchayats in the scheduled villages, involving the use of tribal land.
20. The most atrocious violation of the LTR and regulation 1 of 70 is that all the lands in Bhadrachalam Municipal town and the peripheral urbanized and urbanizable area is occupied by non-tribals with commercial buildings, hotels, residential buildings, colleges including an engineering college. The market value of this land on an average is Rs.4,000/- per square yard. This was confirmed to me not only by local enquiry but also by responsible District officers. This would work out to about 5,000 crores worth of land, which should have been the property of the tribals. It is now the property of the non-tribals and is commercially used by them. All the legal subterfuges adopted can easily be detected and exposed and torn apart and land proved to be illegally held in violation of LTR since finances are raised, licenses and various permissions are obtained and various detectable proofs are created, that can prick the bubble of the legal subterfuges, if the authorities so decide.
21. 1,000 acres of the land endowed to Bhadrachalam Temple in Purushothamapatnam village are occupied by non-tribals, who are also selling some of the areas out of this land. The value of this land can be gauged from the fact that out of the 1,000 acres, 30 acres have been acquired by the District Collector for a housing colony. Even if we put a very low estimate of Rs.1,000/- per a square yard on an

average, this Devasthanam land in the hands of the non-tribals is worth Rs.500 crores. It could as well be 1,000 crores, if we value it at Rs.2,000/- per square yard.

22. One of the legal subterfuges used by non-tribals is “panwar” pattas through which a tribal makes a will in favour of a non-tribal. So many thousands of acres have passed into the hands of non-tribals in this way. This is not quantified by the government.
23. Sada Bainamas, unregistered sale deeds, are being accepted by RDOs and MROs to issue pattas to non-tribals.
24. Maktadar pattas were given to non-tribal village officers through “Farmans”, entered in Khasras, for an extent of 6,000 acres. Some of these Farmans are fabricated and so are the Khasras entries. 6,000 acres of such lands are held by non-tribals though they were originally being cultivated by the tribals. Even at the minimal rate of 50,000/- per acre, the value of this land is 30 crores. These Farmans are illegal as Inam land could not be transferred even in the Nizam’s time by a Farman, from the original maktadar to a village officer. These lands are patently held fraudulently, illegally – with impunity.
25. Government lands and Bhudan lands have been officially assigned to non-tribals in violation of LTR. This has also happened in Eturunagaram and Utnoor agency as far as Government land is concerned.
26. G.O.Ms.No. 41 Revenue of 1971, dated 12-10-71 prohibits the eviction of a non-tribal Scheduled Caste person holding lands in violation of LTR. This G.O. along with two other G.O.s protecting non-tribals from eviction were struck down by the High Court in three different judgments one of 1984, another of 1998 and another of 2001. The government withdrew two of the G.O.s but not G.O.Ms. 41. Under the

alibi of this G.O. thousands of acres of tribal lands is allowed to be held with impunity by non-tribals. A G.O. once struck down by the High Court ceases to be valid and does not require a withdrawal. But in all the three Agency areas of the State, this G.O. has become a protective umbrella for non-tribals holding tribal lands and government lands in violation of LTR.

27. In this Agency as in Eturunagaram Agency in Bayyaram Mandal 450 acres of land stands in the name of Jung Sipais, which could be assigned as government land after certain formalities, to the tribals. But they continue to be in the hands of non-tribal settlers. Similar is the case with some 4,500 acres of "Pote kharab" land in Tammepalli Mandal. These are now in the hands of 300 settlers with pass books and khasrapani. Gone with the wind is the LTR and regulation 1 of 70. The jung sipai land and pote kharab land together account for about 5,000 acres.
28. In Chandaguda mandal 2/3 of 40,130 acres of patta land measuring 26,753 acres is held by non-tribals claiming to be Pattadars – to hell with the LTRs and Regulation 1 of 70. The value of the land held by non-tribals is about 150 crores at the minimal price of Rs.50,000/- per acre.
29. In Tekulapalli Mandal an extent of 1,130 acres of evacuee property land has been surveyed but not assigned to tribals waiting indefinitely for some clarification from the Revenue Department till kingdom come.
30. In V R Puram mandal 8,200 non STs from Nellore, Kanigiri, Nandyal are in possession of tribal lands which they took on lease some years ago and are enjoying in violation of LTR.

31. Large areas of land are held in the name of tribal women by non-tribals who have taken them as second wives or even as concubines.
32. In V R Puram Mandal 1379 acres are held even under Protected Tenants Certificates which are not permitted to be given for lands in the Scheduled areas to non-tribals. But, sir, who cares?
33. For want of survey, large areas of government land in thousands of acres are not being assigned to tribals. Meanwhile they continue to be held by non-tribals. The tribal areas in this district and also in other two districts, suffer for want of Revenue officers and specially Deputy tahsildars. The posts lay vacant for long period.
34. Thousand of acres of Government land are not assigned to Tribals on the pretext of want of surveyors to subdivide the land. But the non-tribals occupy the land continue to do so. They need no sub-divisions for booking B-memos. They are powerful.

Adilabad District, Utnoor Agency

35. It was brought out by the District President Gond Vana Panchayat Raj center that the gram panchayats and gram sabhas in the villages with non-tribal population are protecting non-tribal interests against tribal interests. This stark reality knocks the bottom out of the Draft National Tribal Policy and Tribal Rights Act, which set great deal of reliance on gram sabhas for protection of tribal rights.
36. An appalling fact came to light in this district namely that even the lands appurtenant to Indravelli Temple and other important tribal temples is encroached upon by the non-tribals, forgetting the tragic event of the Gond rebellion and police firing in Indravelli, some 25 years ago. About 225 acres of such lands have been occupied with houses, shops and other commercial establishments. Even at the rate

of Rs.200/- per square yard, this land would be worth about 23 crores. Some lands are being assigned to Lambadas from Maharashtra. These lands were intended to be used for jatras congregations.

37. Primitive tribal groups are being pushed out of their ancestral abode by the influx of non-tribals from other states and other districts.

Forests

Forest conservation Act 1980, has brought about a complete metamorphosis in the legal framework relating to lands in the forest areas.

Most of the forests before this Act were notified under section 4 of the 1927 act, declaring the intention to make them Reserve Forests. Before the final notification, Forest Settlement Officers had to complete the settlement process in these forests area and issue pattas to the tribals who have been cultivating the land within the forest limits. But over the decades neither settlement process carried forward nor were the forests finally notified as reserved forests. The simple fact is that no Forest Settlement Officers were appointed. At this stage, the 1980 Act prohibits all "non-forest activity" including agriculture in the forest area whether notified as Reserve Forest or not. In fact the Supreme Court judgment gave such a wide definition of forest that any cluster of trees that the Forest Department Officials consider to be a forest, becomes a forest. All agriculture by the tribals in these areas therefore became illegal even before the long pending settlement had taken place, regardless of decades of occupation by them. So they continue to be at the mercy of the Forest Officials, even though some of them are in enjoyment of the land for more than 50 years. The position is made worse by Forest Department disputing Revenue Department's claim on lands occupied by tribals for want of survey. There remains a stalemate.

Imagine the situation. The tribals were pushed deep into the forests by non-tribals as we have seen from 1930 onwards upto a point where the non-tribals

could not reach. The Forest department now wants them out of the forest areas. Meanwhile, the wide spread communication system of roads and location of Mandal headquarters in small towns has created a quantum jump in the influx of non-tribals who have already occupied the large areas of the cultivable land in the Scheduled areas. The strong frame work of protective laws has failed to provide any protection to the rights of the Tribals because officer who show interest are transferred and large number of posts are kept vacant. The general attitude of the State is protective of the land predators.

The radical groups, whom they host whether willingly or otherwise, say that they are not interested in specific problems of any tribals in any area as they would not like to be bogged down to local problems. They have a wider ideological agenda, which does not include the interests of the tribals in any particular local area. The tribals cynically feel that they are the protectors rather of the predators. Thus Matsya nyaya (Law of Fish), might is right, prevails in the Scheduled areas of Telangana – and perhaps of the whole State.

Detection of tribal lands occupied by non-tribals has not been taking place for years as posts for the purpose are kept vacant. Cases booked are kept pending for years due to quick turn-over of officers or vacancies not being filled. Lands ordered to be restored to tribals are not restored because of fear of non-tribal resistance.

You will be appalled to learn that the Governor's annual reports on the tribal areas of Schedule V, which should cover all aspects of tribes and their problems have not been submitted to the President of India at least for the past five years or even more. These reports have to be naturally prepared by the Departments concerned for the Governor. The role of Tribal advisory council has been almost negligible. Verily it has been a situation of Nero playing the fidel while Rome burnt.

The paradox

As against the above pitiable plight of the tribals, the Supreme Court in its judgment popularly known as Samata judgment of 11th July, 1997 held that not only the surface soil but also the sub soil including the right to mine in the Scheduled Area belongs to tribals only. Under LTR, the Supreme Court has held in this judgment, even Government is a person and cannot transfer any land rights in the Scheduled Areas for mining or any other purpose to a non-tribal. In other words, if any mining operations are to be done, only Government or Government Corporation with tribals as share holders can undertake such operations. So while the Supreme Court gives the totality of rights only to the tribals in the Scheduled areas, in actual practice they are being ousted from their own lands, and from the forests. One is reminded of the position of the last Moghal emperor, Bahadur Shah Zafar after 1857, who lamented that he could not even get two yards of land for his burial in his own country, India, and was buried in Burma, where he spent his last days.

A silver lining has appeared in the form of Act no 2 of 2007, the Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006. This Act gives some legislative framework to the Samata judgment and also mitigates the harshness of The Forests Conservation Act of 1980, to some extent, while it also dilutes the Samata judgment in favour of non-tribals for various non-agricultural community purposes.

Friends, you would see from the elaborate submissions I have made before you that the way to hell is paved with good intentions. If you have a tear to spare, shed it for the tribals of this State and particularly of the three scheduled areas of Eturunagaram, Bhadrachalam and Utnoor in Telangana districts of Warangal, Khammam and Adilabad. The lesson to be learnt from the two Gond rebellions is that one has to fight for one's rights and not depend on the protective laws alone: God helps those who help themselves. Protective laws provide protection only if there is a protector, who has the will to use them. Let us take inspiration from the great hero, Alluri Sita Rama Raju. May his spirit guide our tribals.

May the spirit of Bhimu, the hero of the Babhijheri rebellion and the martyrs of the Babhijheri and the Indravelli rebellions guide our tribals and also kindle the conscience of the powers that be and put the fear of God in the sharks of the Scheduled areas. Strength is virtue. Weakness is the greatest sin, says Swamy Vivekananda.

At this rate the tribals of Telangana may have to lament like Bahadur Shah Zafar, the last Moghal emperor: "Itna hai badnaseeb Zafar, Dafan ke liye – Do gaz zamin bhi na mil saki kuhe yar mein".

Violence & Powerlessness: Some thoughts on the politics of youth

AMRIT SRINIVASAN

Dept of HSS, IIT Delhi

Professor B. Janardhan Rao was young when he passed away. His involvement with the Telengana agitation, of the 70's - a movement dominated by youth protest – was well known. Also, his work on the land rights of tribals which presumed a longstanding history of revolt and resistance against the state. Warangal where he lived and worked as a teacher and researcher for years, saw the coming together of this history with youth insurgency in the Naxalite agitation. Today, in Andhra and the neighbouring states of Orissa and Chattisgarh a “civil war” which pits children against parents and tribal against tribal is being played out in the state sponsored sadam junum or “peace hunt”, which co opts young tribals to combat the naxals from amongst them by glorifying their actions as a spontaneous display of peoples power against violent extremists (Padel 2007).

The link between youth and violence, as an integral component of the culture of contemporary politics, was clearly known to Professor Rao and provides I think a fit topic for this lecture in his memory. In the Puranic legends, the leaders of men feared the aged “rishis” their anger and proverbial capacity to curse. Today, all those at the helm of affairs fear young men and seek to deflect their energy into something else. National service, war against injustice or terrorist violence, whatever we call the actions of young students like Bhagat Singh or today the Naxalite activists, violence transforms the anger of youth more readily into a political weapon. Indeed, violence is the very means by which to ensure loyalty and commitment when young men come together to participate in dangerous, risky and violent work which is secret by definition. Guerrilla, terrorist or tribal warfare, studies indicate,

inducts young men through violent initiations which in turn, affects/transforms their actual ability to do violence. It is this preparedness for violence that keeps the Indian middle-class away from politics, preferring instead to study and marry, the two most effective institutional antidotes to protest as a vocation.

Hannah Arendt's critical analysis of an earlier era of student protest in the sixties, highlights that it is not Youth Power but powerlessness, which makes the young violence prone (1969). The state only mimics the people's power when it turns it against itself as a "justified" and violent, reaction to injustice, collective insult or injury by one group against another. The Delhi 'riots' of 84 displayed the intrinsic link between powerlessness and violence when marginalized citizens "those who had never even killed a cat" were publicly permitted the killing of men, particularly young men, the proverbial enemies of the state (Srinivasan 2000). The state sponsored nature of these events lay in the justification given them as a "spontaneous" expression of people's power (read violence) which could not be contained by the police. The powder and petrol and targeted electoral lists provided were only a means to the achievement of this larger goal. The calling in of the army at a strategic moment when the local police had been allowed to display itself as impotent to act against the "moral" force of the people, was the final demonstration of the state authority's triumph over civil society's vengeance (Mitta & Phoolka 2007).

Whether in Sri Lanka, Punjab or Chattisgarh, the role of young boys is well advertised to critique the forces of "separatism" and "terrorism" as having an irrational, inhuman and criminal control over those who are coerced into serving them. But what is often left out of the account is the targeting of this very age grade of society for disciplinary action by the state authorities – the soldiers and police personnel chosen for the task in an actual operational sense are also the young, giving a competitive, game, hunt or feud like edge to the violence. In a recent book on Punjab, the supposed "terrorist"

inclination in young Sikhs under Bhindranwale, is shown up for what it really was - nothing other than youth itself! *Shaukiya*, "for fun and adventure", the authors argue was the reason many people interviewed gave for their taking to guns and violent acts. The access to arms only provided the powerless young men an 'entitlement to power.' The young boys were fascinated with modern weapons. Bearing arms provided a sense of being someone to reckon with, in competition with the highly trained and feared special security forces, sent out to capture them

(Puri, Judge & Sekhon 1999).

The networked, mimetic, play aspect of danger and death, made possible today by the new technologies, draws the young into the ambit of violence, almost by definition as it were. Even more significantly, it blurs the rational line drawn by Weber most famously between authority, or state legitimized violence and that which "illegitimately" draws on tradition or charisma (in this case, the charisma of youth) to justify its domination over others. The State's monopoly over the use of force can no longer go unquestioned, once the means of violence are more easily accessed by everyone. In such a scenario, there is de facto not that much difference in the tactics used by the state or its enemies to achieve spectacular violent ends, even though de jure, one is deemed legitimate and the other not. In such a context, "terrorism" is simply determined by the direction of violence not its distinctive quantum or content or what others do to the sovereign nation-state and not vice-versa. After 9/11, as Chomsky most cynically remarked, global terrorism has become defined by what others do to the USA while the latter's own reprehensible record of the use of violence against civilian populations in Afghanistan, Egypt and now Iraq, is seen as "low intensity warfare" (2002).

A "hypermodern" war had of course emerged even prior to 9/11, where post-Vietnam and post-Cold war lessons were learnt through the increasing deployment of computer simulation, media manipulation, global surveillance and networked warfare to keep the killing as much as was possible to virtual

levels in the gulf war and the aerial campaigns of Kosovo and Bosnia. At the centre of this revolution in military affairs (RMA), led by the USA, was "...the technical capability and ethical imperative to threaten and, if necessary, actualize *violence from a distance...*", like in play (Der Derian 2002:105)(emphasis added). The new technologies of killing in this "virtuous" war could of course skew casualty rates, changing the definition of the battlefield forever. The twin towers became a war zone when 19 hijackers killed over 3000 people in the USA. But equally, in the battlefields of Afghanistan, civilian *non combatant* casualties ranged anywhere between 1300 to 3767 while most of the Americans killed were either journalists caught in hostile fire or soldiers caught in friendly fire! Only one American soldier it seemed actually died at the hands of an enemy gun (Der Derian ibid).

To seek to justify all that goes wrong in a digital world would however be a simplification and an error. For those who consider themselves 'players', simulation only calls for technical not ethical reasoning. One succeeds or fails wins or loses. Good old fashioned morality, or the integral relation between means and ends, cannot function in a technologically simulated world where "...The very distinction between original and copies has been destroyed". This statement by the well-known French philosopher Jean Baudrillard, forecast as early as the seventies, the risky reality of the virtual world we live in, making any neat explanations of violence, its cause and effect difficult. In the absence of certitudes, assigning moral blame becomes a never-ending spiral of possibility and conjecture (1994).

Strictly speaking there is no hard evidence to prove the nineteen young men involved in the 9/11 attacks were motivated terrorists trained by Al Qaeda and under direct orders from Osama bin Laden (Smith 2002: 50-51). Certainly, the dispersed and de-centralised network of which he is a prime member was involved but this network of forces was established at the time

of the Afghan war by the USA and its Allies themselves to serve their own interests against Soviet Russia (Chomsky 2001).

Then again, identifying the attack as an internal or an external one on American civil society was difficult to decipher because as students, the young hijackers “had lived in the US for months if not years” (Smith *ibid*). At the same time, they were part of larger intergenerational, immigrant networks extending back to home countries which sometimes had a strong and lingering antipathy to local political intervention by the United States (Sassen 2002). Most crucially, the technology deployed in the planning of the attack was not very different from that used by the teenaged schoolboys in the Columbine school killings, making the slippage between what is deemed a “terrorist” act and what is not, very real and in need of explanation.

Way back in 1984, it was possible for the USA government to lay down a code or military manual defining a terrorist act as a violent, criminal act aimed at harming or coercing civilian populations in order to influence US authorities’ conduct and policy (Chomsky 2002:16). But today, school-killings and the hijacking of student communities attempt very much the same, reaching out to the world through increasingly networked, image-driven systems of communication. It would be foolhardy, by the terms of this very code, to deem these actions as non-political but that is exactly what is happening.

The new technologies behind the world of work, war and “play” conceal an explosive and exponential power of the virtual over the real. In the September 11 attacks, the tools used were not very sophisticated – the human body, some cutlery and fuel filled civilian airplanes. Indeed, the young terrorists practiced hijacking with the software Microsoft Flight Simulator before putting their virtual training to use. Their terrible purpose was achieved more through substitution and pretence, elemental ploys in childhood games of make-believe, than the use of any actual armaments. Equally, the age of the London bombers of 2005 was an intrinsic component

of their deception and hence success. As “cleanskins” (persons without any record of being under police surveillance of any kind), they had no proven links to terror organizations. Their bomb-making expertise, it was later surmised, most likely came from the internet. Indeed, the widely disseminated success of 9/11 in the media, may very well have provided the trigger for the bombings. The search for links with Al Qaeda amongst the Leeds youngsters was almost immediate after the event, though eventually abandoned by the British authorities.

By contrast, the search for standard “terrorist” influences behind 9/11, unearthed a very different kind of evidence. The young hijackers appeared to be familiar with the Columbine school killers Eric Harris and Dylan Klebold, who fantasized online about planes being hijacked and flying into tall buildings, much before their destructive act of April 20th 1999. This is indeed strange, because though the Columbine killings have been investigated to death nowhere is the violence seen as specifically political. The influence of heavy metal music of Marilyn Manson, films like Basketball Diaries and Matrix or Doom the gory video-game remains firmly within the culture of US teenagers in general. It is only when we come to the effect of the Freeware computer Role Playing Game made on the Columbine shootings themselves that we begin to see the latter’s political ramifications.

Danny Ledonne, the designer of *SuperColumbine Massacre RPG* (SCMRPG), was only aged 24 and a peer of the dead Columbine duo, when he insisted about his product, “I’m not advocating shooting up your school, and I don’t know how many times I can say that and no one will listen. This game does not glorify school shootings.” But at the same time, he did feel it necessary to take a pseudonym “Columbin” when releasing the game to the public on April 20, 2005, to commemorate the Columbine killings six years after! Was this mere, creative role-playing conceit? Or did he suspect the very real impact of his product? And how? A young Asian Canadian Kimveer Gill, aged 25 who went on a shooting spree at Dawson College in Montreal on

September 13, 2006, before killing himself, had confessed online that SCMRPG was a favourite computer game. The game had been downloaded nearly 40,000 times since its posting but after the Montreal killings, more than 8000 times on September 13, a Wednesday, making its server temporarily crash. And now most recently in 2007, evidence has been unearthed, that both the Finnish school shooter Pekka-Eric Auvinen as also Cho Seung-Hui, the Virginia Tech shooter, had the Columbine killings on their minds, which they saw as justified.

In the world of video games, computer websites and chat rooms, it is the combination of extreme exposure to the virtual, with extreme protection, alienation from the real – which seems to wreck the moral havoc amongst the young, most adults agonize over afterwards. It is Ivan Illich who long ago awakened us to the dangers of empowering the institution of Schooling, or “..the age-specific, teacher-related process, requiring full time attendance at an obligatory curriculum,” so much that it takes on monopolistic control over children's education (1970:32). In a world in which children are not supposed or even allowed by law to live and learn through work, apprenticeship to a trade or the raising of families, they are only expected to study or play. And that is exactly what they do but with enhanced capacities which permit them access to the new technologies of information and communication, at cheaper and cheaper rates. Television, video-games, RPG's, the computer and mobile telephony enter the home the neighbourhood and the school as educational, communication and gaming technologies. But far from merely 'consuming' what these technologies have to offer, the young are able to intercept, exchange even produce and re-produce their content or "message" as never before. Even more importantly, they are able to enhance the scope of the real world of human interaction through the skills and possibilities these interactive machines permit in the world of the imagination.

As not merely consumers but producers now of these new technologies, being able to “make” and handle a gun or a bomb through the Internet has

brought the young closer to actually using one than ever before. Equally "meeting" and making friends with complete strangers on the internet brings the young closer to actually doing things with them which are completely outside their usual range of supervised peer activity as our own Bombay teenager Adnan Patrawala learnt too late.

In various ways, the new technologies make of schooling an anachronism. Modern schooling carved out an institutional space to group people by age for the purpose of instruction which it was assumed could only be imparted within its four walls. The privilege of getting ones children into these spaces made parents willingly forego any rights they may have had over the instruction of their children. Parents, it is significant, rarely question the institutionalization of age-related authority in school as formally illegitimate. Surely this is strange and not just anachronistic in an increasingly networked world, where age-sets, secret societies and militant youth organizations have been declared illegal. Parents only question authority at the individual and personalized level, when things go wrong with their own children. In this they end up serving the state's purpose which claims the loyalty of the young as a legitimate claim on civil society, reflective of its own sovereignty. The higher incidence of school violence in the USA is not unrelated to the greater moral claim it makes on national service by its young. In a society where persons less than 18 years of age serve in the army and are eligible for being punished for capital offences by death, the school is not so illogical a site for violence.

Whatever the connection or absence thereof, between life, school and learning, there can be no ignoring the fact that the increase of expressive and playful internet usage in the period 1975 to 2006, has unfortunately also seen a steady increase in school based violence, both in its incidence (peaking in 1999 and now in 2006) and frequency. But what has not been noted is that this period has also seen an increase in the perpetration of "terrorist" acts by the young. Is the failure to bring school violence and

terrorism into the same frame of reference, an ideological or epistemological error or both? Certainly *madrasas* or those 'other' kinds of schools are seen as directly linked to the spread of fundamentalism and thereby terrorist inclinations, but not the modern institution of schooling despite its having emerged as the preferred site of violence for the young. Universal Child Rights persistently cloak the latter as lacking in political agency and deeming school shootings individual, psychologically motivated, erratic events, without any structural nuance. Evidence to the contrary however is only growing, particularly in the USA, which has consistently refused on the domestic front, to endorse the UN Convention on Child Rights since its inception in 1989. Is this because, unlike any other nation (all except USA and Somalia are signatories to the Convention), it recognizes and respects the political potential of the young to make or break state sovereignty (<http://www.ohchr.org>, <http://childrightscampaign.org>). On the global front as well, ignoring all demands to the contrary, the USA has preferred to go to "war on terrorism", rather than examine the underlying causes for events such as 9/11. Why? Is it because introspection might bring the crime right to its very own doorstep – apportioning blame in its very homes and school classrooms? We cannot say because no one is even attempting to frame such a question. This paper hopes to honour Professor Rao by taking a very tentative first step.

References

- Arendt, H. 1969. *On Violence*. New York: Harvest Press
- Baudrillard, J. 1994. *Simulacra and Simulations*. Ann Arbor: Univ of Michigan Press
- Chomsky, N. 2002. 9-11. Dehradun: Natraj
- Der Derian, J. 2002. *In Terrorem: Before and After 9/11*, K.Booth & T. Dunne (eds) *Worlds in Collision: Terror & the Future of the World Order*. New York: Palgrave: pp101-17
- Illich, I. 1970. *De-Schooling Society*. Harmondsworth Middlesex: Penguin
- Mitta, M & HS Phulka 2007. *When a Tree Shook Delhi*. Delhi: Lotus Roli

Padel, F. 2007. Peace & Light: Death Squads in Tribal India: How to Heal a CivilWar? www.tehelka.com/story_main34.asp/filename=cr220907A_CRY.asp

Puri,HK, PS Judge & JS Sekhon, 1999. Terrorism in Punjab: Understanding Grassroots Reality. Delhi: Har Anand Publications

Sassen, S. 2002. *Governance Hotspots:Challenges we must confront in the post September 11 World* . K.Booth & T. Dunne (eds) Worlds in Collision: Terror & the Future of the World Order. New York:Palgrave, pp 313-25

Smith, S. 2002. *Unanswered Questions*. K Booth & T. Dunne (eds) Worlds in Collision: Terror & the Future of the World Order. New York:Palgrave, pp 48-59

Srinivasan, A. 1990. *The Survivor in the Study of Violence*. Veena Das (ed.) Mirrors of Violence: Riots, Communities and Survivors. Delhi:Oxford, pp. 305-20.

Internet Sites:

<http://www.ohchr.org>

<http://childrightscampaign.org>

IIT Delhi, 20 Feb 2008

**PROFESSOR B JANARDHAN RAO MEMORIAL FOUNDATION
(Seventh Annual Memorial Lecture, 2009)**

Regional Disparities, Smaller States and Statehood for Telangana

C.H.Hanumantha Rao

While we assemble here this morning to pay our tributes to the memory of Prof.B.Janardhan Rao, we greatly miss him on several counts. He had done outstanding research work on tribal development and held out a great promise for further explorations in this area. Way back in August 1988, he sent me a copy of his book: **Land Alienation in Tribal Areas**, for my comments (Janardhan Rao, 1987). After reading it, I wrote back saying that the theme he had chosen was extremely important and that his findings were well-grounded because his analysis was carried out against the historical perspective of land relations as well as the impact of the prevailing exploitative socio-economic structure. Achieving Statehood for Telangana was another passion for him. This is evident from a reading of the collection of his essays in Telugu, **"Telangana-Changing Political Scenario"**, published six years ago (Janardhan Rao, 2003). He was at once a serious scholar and an ardent champion of these causes.

I am particularly happy to be here this morning amidst the academic community at the Kakatiya University because of the opportunity it provides for renewing my long, though intermittent, association with the Faculty and the Vice-Chancellor Prof. Linga Murthy. I had chosen to speak this morning on **Statehood for Telangana**. But after writing it out I discovered that the very first lecture in memory of Prof.Janardhan Rao was on the same subject delivered by Prof.K.Jayashankar, six years ago (Jayashankar,2003). One can not really add much to what Prof.Jayashankar says on this subject. So much so, the media aptly calls him the 'Telangana Siddhanthakartha' or the 'Telangana Ideologue'. Yet, if I did not change my subject, it is because, in the first place, Telangana continues to be a live subject until separate statehood is achieved, so that one can always say some thing in the light of the ongoing developments. Secondly, this subject was close to Prof.Janardhan Rao's heart and I can not think of a better way of paying homage to him than discussing issues like regional disparities and smaller states and their relevance to the formation of Telangana State.

1. Growing Regional Disparities in Development

Regional disparities in development have been growing in India, especially in the post-reform period. For example, according to the Eleventh Plan, the per capita Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) of Bihar – the poorest state in the country - which had steadily declined to a little over 30 per cent of the per capita GSDP of the richest state by 1993-94, dropped further to 20 per cent in 2004-05 (GOI, 2008). What is true of rising inter-state disparities in

development would be true of regional disparities within some of the larger states, as the factors contributing to such disparities would be the same in both the situations. The neglect of agriculture, rural development and the social sectors in the post-reform period and the consequent rise in rural distress together with the concentration of private investment and proliferation of economic opportunities in the developed regions has brought into sharp focus the regional divide or the rise in inter-state as well as intra-state disparities in development.

Public investments in physical and social infrastructure have an equalizing impact because they can be focused on backward regions. Further, public investment, in turn, induces private investment. But public investment has been falling over a period of time in the country. Public capital formation shrunk to 5 percent of the GDP in the recent period from 10 percent of GDP in the early nineties (Rao, 2006). According to the Eleventh Plan, over the past several years, the share of public investment in the overall investment has been declining reaching a little over 20 percent in recent years. Therefore, according to the Planning Commission, there is “a very great limitation on the influence that fiscal quantities, allocations and strategy can directly exert on growth rates, especially at state level. States have, therefore, to focus on providing the necessary policy framework and supporting environment that makes economic activity possible and attractive enough for private sector investments” (GOI, 2008).

But can such a policy framework be effective in larger states for bringing in adequate investments and other benefits to the backward regions? The role of the state has changed dramatically from that of the main provider of investment in infrastructure in the pre-liberalization period to a facilitator of private investment in the post-liberalization period. The earlier role had a moderating influence on regional disparities in so far as backward regions also benefited to some extent from investments in infrastructure, whereas the new role is fraught with adverse consequences for these regions within larger states. This is because private investment and technology flow basically to the regions where physical and social infrastructure is already well-developed. In Maharashtra, for example, which has been among the top few states attracting private investments on a large scale in the post-reform period, the developed Pune-Nasik belt has received disproportionately large investments when compared to the backward Vidarbha and Marathwada regions.

2. Smaller States: Potential for High Growth

It is generally believed that economic liberalization increases the role of the market while reducing the role of the state in economic activity. This is only superficially true. The relative roles of the market and the state do change in respect of the direct allocation of resources. But the impact of the state policies on the economy may turn out to be even greater if its role in influencing

private sector investments is taken into account. The role of the government in awarding contracts, choice of locations for private sector projects and technical institutions, decisions about the number, type and location of Special Economic Zones, land acquisition and compensation policies, various kinds of patronage extended to different enterprises and activities, etc. could together make a greater impact on the economy than in the pre-liberalization period.

Indeed, this is the unmistakable impression one gets in the post-reform period in India, especially at the state level. In general, the impact seems to be in the direction of increasing inequalities between different regions and income groups, as is borne out by the official statistics on changes in private consumer expenditure and growth rates in GSDP. This is basically because official patronage in bigger states tends to favour the regions and income groups already endowed with adequate resources, skills, power and influence. This clearly shows that backward regions run the risk of losing the race in bigger states in the post-liberalization era. At the same time, it shows that certain backward regions which can be constituted as viable states may use this enormous potential offered by state power effectively for their development.

This is borne out by the recent experience with the creation of smaller states like Chattisgarh, Jharkhand and Uttarakhand. Their experience has been extremely encouraging in respect of the growth in Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP). The Eleventh Plan document, approved by the National Development Council, gives the following figures which are telling: These states achieved growth rates far exceeding the targets set for the 10th Plan period whereas the performance of their parent states, viz., Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Uttar Pradesh fell considerably short of the targets (GOI, 2008).

State	Targeted Growth Rate (Per cent per annum)	Achieved
Chattisgarh	6.1	9.2
Madhya Pradesh	7.0	4.3
Jharkhand	6.9	11.1
Bihar	6.2	4.7
Uttarakhand	6.8	8.8
Uttar Pradesh	7.6	4.6

These high growth rates in GSDP lend credence to the proposition that the growth potential of these backward areas remained suppressed for long and their constitution into new states has released the creative energies of the

people. Better governance may have also contributed to attracting private investment from outside as well as to better planning and utilization of resources. This experience shows that the political commitment necessary for a focused attention on the problems of growth and equity can be better ensured in smaller states which are relatively homogeneous.

3. Development versus 'Sentiment' for Telangana

By attributing the demand for separate Telangana to the 'sentiment' (for Telangana), some sections of the political leadership are only evading the real issue. There is no religious or ethnic 'sentiment', not even of language, at issue. One can, no doubt, read in this demand some assertion of 'regional identity', but this is not something which can not be rationally explained. The simple and straightforward explanation is that people have seen, through their own experience, that 'development' in the sense of equitable share in water resources, jobs, opportunities for enterprise and career advancement and adequate voice in political decision-making is not possible within the integrated state and that separate statehood alone can ensure justice for them.

Therefore, what is at issue is not whether development has been taking place. Indeed, in a democratic polity like ours some development has to take place in different parts of the country including even the remotest areas. The issue really is about the rate and quality or pattern of development. Apart from equity, such as due share in investment allocations, quality also refers to the cost, risks, and sustainability of development.

There is a long-standing feeling that Telangana has not received its due share in investment allocations, and that the 'surpluses' from Telangana, i.e., the difference between what ought to have been spent and what has actually been spent, have been diverted to the other regions (Rao, 1969). For the Telangana region the per capita financial resources should be higher than the average for the Andhra Pradesh state, because, as for the Finance Commission transfer to states, 25 per cent of devolution is based on population and as much as 75 percent is based on criteria like lower per capita income and other indicators of backwardness. Planning Commission transfers too have a significant weightage to low per capita income.

But there is no way of ascertaining exactly how public expenditures, as a whole, are distributed between different regions in Andhra Pradesh. The relevant information is not being disseminated ever since the abolition of the Telangana Regional Committee in 1973, under the wrong notion that sharing of such information would breed regionalism. But experience has shown that withholding the relevant information would produce the opposite result of intensifying the feeling of injustice.

The growth that has been taking place in Telangana may be characterized as high cost growth. For example, the irrigation map of the region has changed completely. Tank irrigation occupied an important place a few decades ago. But now, over 70 per cent of irrigation is through ground water and deep tube wells in large parts of Telangana (Subrahmanyam, 2003). This means for a unit output growth there has to be much greater investment now. Moreover, we do not have any information on such vital aspects as the quantity of water to be supplied for Telangana on account of the proposed irrigation projects including from 'assured' sources.

Further, farming has become highly risky in Telangana. For a given failure of rainfall, the fluctuations in output are much greater now when compared to the earlier decades. There is much greater distress being reported from the rain-fed regions dependent on groundwater for irrigation where the suicide rates for farmers are high. Telangana region accounts for as many as two-thirds of the total number of farmers' suicides reported in the state between 1998 and 2006 (Galab, et.al, 2009). The water crisis has affected sustainability: Land left fallow in Telangana has increased from 25 percent of cultivable land in the early 1970s to as much as 40 percent by 1999-2000 (Subrahmanyam, 2003). Pollution from industrial projects in certain areas has aggravated the crisis.

The feeling of injustice is greater among the educated classes, i.e., students, teachers, NGOs and professionals in general. This is explained by the increasing awareness leading to greater sensitivity to 'discrimination' among such classes in respect of employment and promotions or career prospects, especially because of the rising importance of the services sector at higher levels of development. It is not surprising; therefore, that the separatist movement has gathered momentum in the post-reform period when the opportunities for such classes have proliferated in the services sector and the role of the state in influencing development and regional equity has vastly increased. For the same reasons, it should not also come as a surprise that the separatist sentiments are stronger in the relatively developed areas like North Telangana. Therefore, it can be concluded that far from 'development' programmes – more precisely welfare measures currently being implemented - countering separatist sentiments, the movement for separation would become stronger with the spread of development as long as the perception of injustices due to 'discrimination' in development within the integrated state persists.

4. Socially Inclusive Telangana

Statehood for Telangana is a national issue and not just a regional one. This is because it represents the on-going social change in the country for the

empowerment of people through decentralized governance by broadening and deepening the working of our democratic system. Such empowerment and governance would enable articulation of the real problems of the people and their solution. This would inevitably result in 'Samajik' or 'socially inclusive' Telangana.

Inclusiveness could not be achieved so far in a bigger state because the voice of the disadvantaged sections remained fragmented. Experience shows that the traditionally entrenched interests are perpetuated in bigger and heterogeneous states because of their easy connectivity arising from their access to large resources, power and influence. The weaker sections, on the other hand, can come together, organize themselves and raise their voice effectively in a relatively homogeneous state because of common history and traditions and hence easy communicability.

For illustration, tribals are the most disadvantaged section socially and economically with negligible political voice. They live in remote areas and are subjected to land alienation on a large scale. Hardly any initiative has been taken so far in Andhra Pradesh to restore their lands despite the strong recommendations made by a High-Level Committee headed by a Minister constituted by the present government (Government of Andhra Pradesh, 2006; Rao, 2007). There, the administration is alienated from the people and has been a breeding ground for extremist activities. But this has been treated not as a socio-economic issue, but mainly as a law and order problem. Because of this, the plight of the tribals has been perpetuated and the extremist activities have been surfacing time and again, notwithstanding the claims of success in this regard by the authorities.

According to 2001 Census, Scheduled Tribes population constitutes around 9 percent in Telangana as against 5% in the rest of the state. Thus, as much as 60 percent of the ST population of A.P. state is concentrated in Telangana. Their voice can be expected to be more effective in separate Telangana, not the least because their representation in the state legislature and other elected bodies at different levels would be proportionately greater.

Similarly, the population of Muslims is as high as 12.5 percent in Telangana when compared to 6.9 percent in the rest of A.P. state. As many as 61 percent of Muslims of A.P. live in Telangana, of whom 60 percent are spread over in different districts other than Hyderabad. They too can be expected to have greater political clout in separate Telangana in determining their fortunes as they can more easily relate themselves with the rest of the disadvantaged sections of the society in the struggle for a better and more secure livelihood. It must be noted in this context that social harmony between people professing different religions and speaking different languages has been proverbial in Telangana because of their shared history and traditions spanning over centuries.

SC's account for about 16 percent of population in Telangana as well as in the rest of A.P. Census does not give the figures of BCs. But we know from different sources that socially and economically disadvantaged sections including SCs, STs and BCs constitute not less than 85 percent of population in Telangana. Radical land reforms were the prime agenda for the peasant movement in the 1940s. However, not enough time was available for this process of agrarian reforms and radical social transformation to run its course. In fact, it was interrupted with the integration of Telangana with the Andhra region, so that it still remains an unfinished revolution or an unfinished task. In a larger and heterogeneous state like A.P. there is no adequate perception of this problem by the dominant political leadership which hails basically from the developed parts of the state.

Thus the weaker sections constituting a large majority of population in Telangana would be better able to articulate their problems and politically assert themselves in a separate state. Formation of Telangana state would thus strengthen the forces of social inclusion and secularism.

5. Inclusive Governance feasible in Smaller States

The population of Telangana is over three and half crores now – much more than three crores (or 'Mukkti Andhrulu') for the whole of Andhra Pradesh at the time of its formation. The demands on governance have multiplied over this half a century. Apart from commitment to the development of the region, a smaller state being more easily accessible to the common people can intelligently and speedily grapple with their problems. Moreover, governance at the grass roots can be improved in a smaller state by strengthening the Panchayati Raj institutions which have been deprived of their functions, finances and functionaries. It is indeed ironical that the ruling party in Andhra Pradesh, which owes allegiance to Rajiv Gandhi, who visualized 73rd and 74th Amendments to the Constitution, has not taken any initiative to revitalize these institutions. On the contrary, every attempt has been made to undermine these institutions by floating several top-down schemes and parallel implementation structures – on the top of it by naming some of these schemes after Rajiv Gandhi! In a smaller and relatively homogeneous state like Telangana, the empowerment of these local elected institutions can be expected to be high on the agenda, among other things, because of the greater pressures these elected representatives can bring to bear on the new establishment.

6. Consensus for Telangana

All the major political parties in Andhra Pradesh, except the Congress and the CPM, have unequivocally come out in favour of the formation of separate Telangana state. Even within the Congress Party, there is a consensus in its favour among the leaders, legislators, ministers in the state as well as the centre belonging to Telangana.

But then what does one mean by Consensus? The first States' Reorganization Commission (SRC), which recommended in 1956 formation of separate Hyderabad state consisting of Telangana, defined consensus as the one reached among the Telangana people themselves. This is clear from its recommendation that after 5 years Telangana could be merged with Andhra only if two-thirds of the Telangana legislators opted for it. But consensus now has come to mean among every one at the national and state level, except the people of Telangana!

This is not quite fair because, in the first place, Telangana was merged with the Andhra region in 1956 without ascertaining the wishes of the people of Telangana through their elected representatives as recommended by the SRC. Secondly, when there is a clear opposition to statehood for Telangana from sections of the power elite belonging to the dominant region of the state, it is not fair to insist upon consensus among all the constituent regions when the issue concerns a particular region only. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, the then Prime Minister, had openly stated that there should be a divorce between Andhra and Telangana, if the latter so desired at any future date

The demand for the Second SRC to settle the issue would have some basis if the first SRC recommended the formation of composite Andhra Pradesh state, and disrupting such an arrangement, it could be argued, would require re-examination of the whole issue by a similar high level expert and quasi-judicial body. But the First SRC had recommended the formation of Telangana state after examining all the relevant aspects and their recommendation was not honoured.

In a situation like this, the will of the people of Telangana, as expressed by the large majority of the legislators from the region, can alone be the guiding principle. This has been expressed time and again in favour of separate statehood in the last four decades through the democratic process vindicating the position taken by the SRC. Even in the by-elections held in May, 2008, it is common knowledge that the major political parties, including the Congress, approached the voters pledging themselves in favour of statehood for Telangana. Therefore, in the case of this last election, the rallying slogan of different parties favouring Telangana should be taken as an index of support for separate statehood. Despite this background, insistence on second SRC would only strengthen the suspicion that it is a diversionary move, especially in the light of the past experience that SRC's recommendation favouring Telangana was ignored by the powers-that-be.

The Committee headed by Mr. Pranab Mukherjee is supposed to be engaged in due consultations for ascertaining whether there is consensus for Telangana state. But the Congress Party's own position on Telangana is not made clear to this Committee. Even if the Second SRC were to be constituted, as per the Congress Election Manifesto of 2004, the party could

not possibly have remained non-committal on the issue, as most of the parties would have made their position clear to the SRC.

If the Congress supported statehood for Telangana, there would have been a majority in parliament in favour of such a Bill. But if the Bill could not be introduced because of lack of consensus in the United Progressive Alliance, or the government running the risk of losing power, then people would have understood the constraints, provided Congress's own position was made clear. Spelling out its position as a party did not by itself, pose any risk to the government.

The real explanation for the Congress not taking a stand is the 'veto power' being exercised by a few leaders in power in the state, which in fact is the genesis of the formation of Andhra Pradesh itself. This demonstrates how a few individuals representing numerically small social groups can manipulate the levers of power in a large and heterogeneous state by dint of the huge resources and power at their command. Yet, they have been telling the people, time and again, that they will abide by the decision of their 'high command'. But, insofar as Telangana issue is concerned, one wonders whether the 'high command' is located in Delhi or in Hyderabad! The fact of the matter is that these individuals are able to mislead and overpower their 'high command' by dint of their resources and numbers in parliament.

The demand for Telangana state is not opposed by the common people from the rest of the state of Andhra Pradesh, notwithstanding hostility from certain sections of business and political elite. This is amply borne out by the stand taken by parties like Telugu Desam headed by Chandrababu Naidu, C.P.I.,BJP, Praja Rajyam Party headed by Chiranjeevi, and others.

7. Need for Broad-Based, Non-Partisan, Movement

Leaders from Telangana may go to Delhi for making representations in most rational terms; they may even be called to Delhi by the 'high command', but basically, it is the power structure in A.P. that has become decisive in determining the outcomes. Therefore, the focus of action for achieving separate Telangana can not be Delhi alone; it has to be backed by the peaceful and democratic movement in villages and towns in Telangana region.

Political parties espousing separate Telangana have been engaged in electoral battles. This is understandable because the decision to carve out a separate state is ultimately a political one involving parliament and governments at the centre as well as the state. But the movement for separate Telangana itself has not been 'engineered' by political parties as some people would have us believe. Rather, the political parties supporting separation have been receiving sustenance from the deep-seated and widespread sentiment for separate statehood for Telangana nurtured by

various movements – political as well as non-political, including the ‘mulki’ agitation – since the times much before the formation of A.P.

It is, however, true that some political parties have displayed opportunism by building up their political fortunes using this sentiment and betraying the cause once their narrow purpose was fulfilled. But despite such betrayals, the broad political movement for separate statehood itself has survived and gained strength because of its genuineness and deep-seated social base. The demand for separation is far more widespread now than in 1969 when the agitation for separate Telangana was first launched. It has now engulfed farmers, youth and women on a much larger scale.

The experience of Uttarakhand is instructive in this respect. After getting disgusted over repeated betrayals by the political parties, the intellectuals and the people at large there took charge of a broad-based, non-partisan movement and succeeded in achieving separate statehood. There is, therefore, a need for continuing the broad-based and non-partisan, if not non-political, movement beyond electoral considerations. Such an independent movement should be complementary to electoral politics and is necessary for ensuring the accountability of the elected representatives as well as for safeguarding the interests of Telangana at the time of its formation. Intellectuals are best fitted to lead and nurture this movement for educating and building awareness among the people at large.

REFERENCES

1. Galab, S., E.Revathi, and Prudhvikar Reddy, “Farmers’ Suicides and Unfolding Agrarian Crisis in Andhra Pradesh”, in D.Narasimha Reddy and Srijit Mishra (Ed.), *Agrarian Crisis in India*, Oxford University Press, 2009, New Delhi.
2. Government of India, Planning Commission, (2008): *Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012)*, Vols.I&III, New Delhi.
3. Government of Andhra Pradesh, *Report of the Land Committee*, 2006
4. Janardhan Rao, B. (1987) *Land Alienation in Tribal Areas*, Kakatiya School of Public Administration, Kakatiya University, Warangal.
5. ----- (2003) *Telangana – Changing Political Scenario* (in Telugu), Professor Janardhan Rao Memorial Foundation, Warangal.
6. Jayashankar, K. (2003) *Telangana-The Demand for a Separate State*, B.Janardhan Rao First Memorial Lecture, Prof.B.Janardhan Rao Memorial Foundation, Warangal.

7. Rao,C.H.H.(1969) "Budgetary Surpluses of Telangana", Economic and Political Weekly, October 18,
8. ----- (2006): "Growing Regional Disparities in Development in India – Post-Reform Experience and Challenges Ahead", Lecture dedicated to the Memory of Professor A.M.Khusro, delivered.at the 88th Annual Conference of the Indian Economic Association, held at Visakhapatnam,27-29 December,2005; published in, The Indian Economic Journal, Vol.54,No.I, April-June.
9. ----- 'Land Reforms in Andhra Pradesh', The Hindu, September 13, 2007.
- 10.Subrahmanyam, S. 'Regional Disparities: Causes and Remedies', in C.H.H.Rao and Mahendra Dev (edited), Andhra Pradesh Development-Economic Reforms and Challenges Ahead, Centre for Economic and Social Studies, Hyderabad, 2003.

Telangana People's Movement: the Unfolding Political Culture

G. Haragopal*

Abstract:

The Telangana people's movement is rooted in a historical context and a developmental model that the Indian rulers have been pursuing. The regional disparities-economic, social, cultural -are a part of this process. After formation of the linguistic State, every economic or developmental mode-be it green revolution or neo-liberal globalization-ended up with sharpening of the differences and widening of the disparities. Added to it is the reckless Urbanization leading to imbalanced and unplanned growth of the city of Hyderabad. This city is geographically in backward Telangana region but attracted a lot of capital investment giving rise to endemic claims and counter claims on the city. This entire direction of development sharpened multi layered contradictions. The ongoing movement is a search for some resolution of the contradictions without the necessary political creativity or capacity in responding to the challenge. This is the dialectic of development one discerns in one of the ongoing movements in a backward region of India.

I feel it a privilege to deliver Prof. B. Janardhan Rao memorial lecture for varied reasons, firstly, I had the privilege of being a teacher of Janardhan; secondly, Janardhan has grown into a scholar in his own right; thirdly, Janardhan combined in his approach of studying the society a conceptual framework and painstaking field based research. Above all he had a passionate involvement in the upliftment of the marginalized sections, tribals being the most neglected segment of the society. Janardhan was also an activist concerned and engaged with politics of transformation. At the time he passed away, he was deeply involved in Telangana statehood

* Professor, Centre for Human Rights, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad;
e-mail: profharagopal@gmail.com

movement. He persuasively argued with me and did all that was possible to convince me when I had some reservations about the desirability and the final outcome of such a movement. His life has been cut short and the immense potential and promise he held remained unexpressed. It is not only a personal loss to some of us but a social loss. It is also sad and unusual that a teacher should be delivering the memorial lecture of a younger colleague. The topic chosen for the memorial lecture is the Telangana People's Movement: The Unfolding Political Culture. This is an area that is close to Janardhan's heart, an area that I would have liked to discuss with him, if he were alive.

The Historical Background:

In the ongoing Telangana movement for a separate statehood and counter movement in the Andhra region for a status quo, one of the lively debates relates to the history of the Telugu speaking people. Such debates have the propensity to go to the root or origin of the problem: the Telangana leaders and activists are arguing that Telangana has had a distinct history and to lump their history in the common history of the Telugu people is more an attempt to marginalize its uniqueness and distinctness. It fails to present the totality of the story. This argument is also taken to an extreme point of arguing that the common history is simply a myth. The movement in Andhra region in contrast, is tracing the unity and unified history of the people to Atreya Brahmana or Mahabharata and maintains that this long history is far more important than the separation for a very short period. Both the sides, of course, are marshalling the facts and information in support of their argument. This may not be the place to debate the reliability or otherwise of these arguments: what is important is the way the arguments are presented. It is a fact that a large section of people in Telangana region do believe that they are different and differentiated and it is that feeling that is sustaining the ongoing movement.

It is true that Telugu speaking people have had twists and turns in their history, but the origins of the ongoing movement could be traced to separation of the people when the coastal Andhra and later the ceded districts of Rayalaseema were surrendered by the then Asafjahi rulers to the British in the last quarter of eighteenth century. From 1776 to 1956 till the linguistic states were created as a part of Reorganization of the States on the recommendations of States Reorganization Commission popularly known as Fazal Ali Commission, the Telugu speaking people of Telangana were a part of feudal princely State of Hyderabad and the people of the Andhra region were a part of the Madras Presidency under the British. These two different political and administrative regions-one feudal the other colonial-shaped the history of people in terms of economic changes, political developments and cultural consciousness. This is more so in the case of coastal Andhra comprising Krishna, Guntur, and the two Godavari districts who are vociferous in arguing for the status quo.

It was sheer economic compulsions of the colonial regime and chronic problems of the delta districts to go for anicut across the Krishna and Godhavari rivers in the year 1852 just before the crown had taken over the governance of India from the East India Company. This construction of anicut, in a way, marks the beginning of modern Andhra. The wonders of water made a significant difference to the politics, economics and culture of the region. Economically the coastal belt experienced rise of the productive forces, the land that was prone to chronic floods, problems of water logging and drainage or famines, became a land capable of generating surplus. This led to urbanization, spread of education and rise of entrepreneurial peasant castes. The land witnessed a range of political and social movements influencing the consciousness of the people, this could be in a classical Marxist framework change in relations of productions though of a quantitative nature as they were not very radical and revolutionary, but reformistic. This region, as a part of the Madras Presidency also participated in the freedom movement and there are a number of places Gandhi visited

and inspired the people. There was also the rise of the communist party organizing the huge army of the landless labourers- the product of assured water mainly for rice-cultivation which is highly labour intensive.

In contrast the Telangana region as a part of feudal oppression, not only not witnessed any of these changes but suffered large scale deterioration in economy and social relations. The Nizams, the rulers of the Hyderabad state, extracted rural surplus through very oppressive landlords. The labouring class and peasantry were so utterly helpless in the absence of rise in the productive forces, that the nature of relations between the feudal landlords and these helpless masses were totally brutalized. All cruel forms of extraction of surplus were used. Any and every account of these relations is utterly shocking. The cumulative anger and anguish got expressed through the tribal revolts and later the rise of Telangana Armed struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party that shook the base of Feudal Nizams and the oppressive landlords. The Armed struggle qualitatively was far superior and the height of sacrifices was far higher than all the movements of Andhra region put together. It is this history of struggles and sacrifices that influenced, if not shaped, the economy, politics and culture of the Telangana region. It is these two different paths of change and political development that are dormant at one level and dominant at another level in the ongoing two movements that Telugu speaking people are carrying at the present juncture.

The History of Linguistic State: The Demand and Doubts

The demand for the linguistic states came from Andhras almost in the very beginning of 20th century. The main cause for the demand was the topography of rivers more than the language. Language, in a way, was the cultural or symbolic expression of river water. It is well recognized that rivers constitute the centrality of many of the world civilizational process, but politics of water forms the essence of those civilizations. Andhra region

having experienced the value of the water perhaps felt that Telangana located in Hyderabad state can be a perpetual source of conflict and tension given the flow and direction of the rivers. In fact this demand for a separate linguistic state was one of the most controversial demands immediately after the Independence. The historic fast unto death by Potti Sriramulu and the riots that followed his death forced the central government and Jawaharlal Nehru, who was otherwise not favorably inclined towards the idea of the linguistic states, to finally concede the Andhra State in 1953 and also appoint the first State Reorganization Commission to look into the whole problem of the linguistic basis for the reorganization of states.

The demand of Potti Sriramulu for a separate state to start with was mainly a demand to get out of the Tamilian economic, social and cultural stranglehold. The Tamilians carried a Dravidian movement against the Brahminical hegemony, they eulogized the Dravidian origins and their autonomy from the Brahminical fold revived all their cultural symbols and castigated the Brahminical symbols. This emphasis on Dravidian cultural identity and the militancy of the movement was so strong and wide spread that the Telugu people of the Andhra region were terribly uncomfortable. Added to it was the rise of new class of rich peasantry from the irrigation who were looking for new avenues for development saw Tamilian dominance as a hurdle to their growth. This could be the reason why the poetry, Art and Architecture, the other literary forms of Telugus during these times were romanticized. This imparted a sense of superiority among the Andhras. This streak continued even after the formation of the State. This could be one explanation for the condescending attitude towards the Telangana dialect and other cultural forms of life. This overall behavioural pattern of Andhras towards the Telanganites smacks a form of superiority, if not 'cultural arrogance'.

The Telangana political class which survived the armed struggle was not favourably disposed towards the idea of integration of the two regions. The middle classes were not enthusiastic. Nehru himself was opposed to the idea

of linguistic states. This opposition to the linguistic state from the Telangana elite was based on fears and suspicion that the new state with very aggressive entrepreneurial class will swamp the Telangana region and stifle the possibilities of its development. The Reorganization Commission that looked into the demand for the linguistic states did note the fears and apprehensions of the Telangana side. Consequently they debated the pros and cons of integration or otherwise of the two regions and observed that the Telangana may become a colony of the Andhra region and therefore suggested that the merger of the State should not be an unqualified option: they suggested that the two regions could be together for a period of five years and popular mandate could be sought in ensuing 1961-62 elections and then a final decision on the merger could be arrived at.

Addressing the fears of the Telangana people a "Gentlemen Agreement" was worked out. The agreement included several protections including a provision that the agricultural land in the Telangana region could not be bought by outsiders except by the prior permission of Telangana Regional Committee consisting of all the elected representatives of the region. In addition the Mulki rules in force from 1920s for protecting the local interest in public employment was also incorporated. In respect of sharing of political power, the understanding was that if the Chief Minister is from the Andhra, the Dy. Chief Minister would be from the Telangana region and vice-versa. Some of these provisions whether enforced or not suggest that the merger was not a very smooth affair. Those political elite of the Andhra region who are arguing that India is one country and people could choose to settle in any part of India as a part of right to movement forget that these questions were not raised at the time when the Gentleman Agreement was signed. This entire agreement in practice was violated in letter and spirit. This is one of the persisting tensions underlying the discourse of the 1960s and the present ongoing movement. This raises a very serious question that whether the political elite of a backward region would ever have the political capacity to ensure enforcement of an agreement of this kind when they get subordinated

to the dominant elite of the relatively advanced region in a system where the power has an inherent propensity to get hierarchised and concentrated. This process resulted in breakdown of coalition of interests leading to a sharp clash of interests and unresolvable tensions. The merger of the two regions, looking retrospectively was, in haste. In the ongoing movements there is a controversy on whom to lay the blame for the merger: each region putting the blame on the other.

One important factor that is somehow overlooked in the debate is role of the Communist Party which played a very critical role in the formation of the state. The rise of the Communist Party in the region during the hungry decade of 1930s was an important political development. The party came to organize the huge army of landless agricultural labourers against the Rajas- the revenue farmers who controlled thousands of acres of the land. The Communist Party was supported by the rising entrepreneurial Kamma rich peasantry. The party at that point was very strong and influential, commanded a mass following and some of the leaders like Sundarayya had a legendary image in both the regions. On the integration of the region, the party was guided by its ideological understanding of Marxist notion of nationality. In fact there was widespread belief that in the Second General Election, the party would be voted to power in the integrated state.

The congress party, to a large extent, hijacked the policies of the left and Nehru's government moved closer to the Soviet Union which publicly expressed its appreciation to Nehru and his policies. In the process while the dream of the Communist Party for Visalandhra became true, their hopes of coming to power were totally belied. This is partly on account of the nexus between the peasantry and the laboring class, while that initially proved to be very effective, became counter-productive when the rich peasantry moved out of the fold of Communist Party immediately after the formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh.

It is tragic that while the rich peasantry deserted the communist party, the party is historically struck and not able to get out of its earlier mode of thinking. This party which played a historic role in the formation of the State has been so marginalized that neither it is able to mobilize the masses in Telangana for integration nor educate the masses in Andhra region of the aspirations of people of Telangana region. The rich peasantry of coastal Andhra which constituted earlier the social base of the party continues to condition the thinking of the CPI (M) till to-day. This was coupled with the major failure of the central government which agreed to be an umpire for enforcement of the gentlemen agreement but did not keep up its promise, when there were blatant violations of the agreement. The opposition to the merger by Telangana Mahasabha was right from 1957.

The Green Revolution and its Impact on Regional Inequalities

In the mid 1960s India under the influence of Ford Foundation encouraged the farmers to go for new agrarian technology in terms of using high yielding varieties: seeds, fertilizers, pesticides, mechanization so on. This led to breakthrough in agricultural production but the darker side of the choice was abandoning of hundreds of years of time tested local technologies and cumulative wisdom of the local peasantry. This led to dependency of agriculture on market forces. Apart from agriculture losing its autonomy, the whole technology was highly water-centric. In an inequitable economy where natural endowments are unevenly distributed, democracy requires technology be used to correct the imbalances. This choice of technology obviously accentuated the inequalities; the fallout was widening gap between the coastal region which had had the advantage of assured irrigation and the rain dependent dry land cultivation of the other regions-Telangana, Rayalaseema and North Andhra. These regional imbalances over a period of time went on increasing. This is not only the experience of this state but experience all over India. This is one cause for a spate of demands for separate Statehood from different backward regions in India. The

compulsions of times seem to be leading to the demand for another State Reorganization Commission.

The green revolution did create surplus in the coastal region which could not be ploughed back into agriculture as capital absorption by agriculture, unlike industry, is inelastic. The coastal capital in search of greener pastures started moving to those areas of Telangana region wherever there were sources of irrigation particularly tanks or river water. This process that started much earlier got accentuated with the green revolution. The Telangana farming community was finding it increasingly difficult to compete with enterprising farmers of the Andhra region. The surplus also started moving to Hyderabad city into industries as Hyderabad had the necessary infrastructure and industrial culture. The capital mainly of Punjabis, Gujaratis and Marvaris felt threatened by the new capital. Added to this was the expanding educated middle class competing for the limited opportunities in public employment. The "subordinated" political elite of Telangana were in no position to represent these growing interests and fears of the region. This led to 1969 Separate Telangana Agitation.

The 1969 agitation was started by the students followed by the government employees. These two sections were in the forefront and the political elite of the region were compelled to fall in line. The political leadership lacked the capacity to carry the movement to its logical end. What all the Telangana political leadership had done was to hijack the movement and surrender it to the dictates of Mrs. Gandhi who was personally opposed to the division of the State. She was willing to concede anything short of formation of the State. As a part of the concessions and compromises the important leaders of the movement including Chenna Reddy who was supposed to be the key leader of the movement were accommodated in the power structure. Another move she made was to shift the Chief Minister Brahmananda Reddy- a most powerful Chief Minister at that point and make P.V. Narasimha Rao- a

telanganite hailing not from the powerful peasant communities-the Chief Minister.

This was also the phase that saw the birth of Naxalite movement which took up the agenda of radical agrarian changes. This movement was partly to complete the unfinished agenda of the 1940s Telangana armed struggle. It first rose in North Andhra and had spread to those places of Telangana where the 1940s armed struggle was at its height. This was also a result of failure of the Congress promise in 1950s to carry out land reforms peacefully through state measures. The movement challenged the political elite of the state and more specifically the Telangana elite. A section of the youth disillusioned with the leadership of separate Telangana movement and its outcome were attracted to radical politics which held promise for an alternative society. This movement brought back the question of land reforms on to the political agenda. Mrs. Gandhi's political rhetoric was, in a way, an echo to these political developments.

P.V. Narasimha Rao who was one of the most reliable members of Mrs. Gandhi's private political army went ahead with the idea of land reforms. This was a part of Mrs. Gandhi's strategy to tame the powerful agrarian communities all over India. Enraged by the shift of leadership and threat of land reforms, the powerful Andhra political elite built Jai Andhra agitation in 1971-72 demanding bifurcation of the state. The leaders of the Jai Andhra agitation, who could not directly question the land reforms, took up validity of mulki rules in the city of Hyderabad, the state capital. To start with some of the Andhra employees went to the High Court questioning the legality and legal validity of the mulki rules. The High Court in its verdict declared mulki rules ultra-vires but Supreme Court upheld the mulki rules. The leadership of Andhra region was so influential that they made the Indian parliament amend the law and declare mulki rules not valid. The Telangana political leadership remained mere spectators to the whole episode.

The Andhra elite attempted to hit the social base of Mrs. Gandhi's power structure as the masses were getting gravitated to Mrs. Gandhi because of the appeal of land reforms were drawn into Jai Andhra movement. It was exceptional solidarity of the Andhra leaders and effective mobilization of masses that Mrs. Gandhi-otherwise a powerful leader- had to backtrack and the Chief Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao was asked to step down. Notwithstanding this challenge that the powerful leadership of the Andhra region posed, the overall dominance of Mrs. Gandhi remained intact. Basically rise of Mrs. Gandhi in 1970s was a result of combination of several factors. Of them a few welfare-centric target group oriented programme weaned away the masses from the stranglehold of the local leadership. Mrs. Gandhi emerged in mass imagination as their chief patron replacing all the local patrons. This made the leadership in general and Telangana leaders in particular heavily depend on the high command. This shift in the nature of power relations marginalized the influence of local leadership of both the regions. They were never able to regain their autonomy in the congress politics. The Telangana political leadership became much more subservient than ever before, and their survival depended more on the grace of Delhi leadership than the mass base. This uproot of local leaders changed the nature and character of Congress party in a substantial way.

Mrs. Gandhi was also a product of the widespread rural unrest that Nation witnessed by late 1960s. The unrest coupled with increasing claims and counter claims of the dominant classes on the slow growing economy, that it became difficult for her to govern the country. She resorted to authoritarian and coercive methods by imposing emergency in 1975 by suspending the fundamental rights. During the dark days of emergency the state machinery, particularly the police and other law enforcing agencies became arbitrary in exercise of their power both with the masses and also the classes. This led to massive erosion of her support structure all over India that reflected in 1977 general election when she lost the power and the Janata party a non-congress coalition rose to power for the first time after independence. While

Mrs. Gandhi lost power all over India, her congress party was returned to power in the states of Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka. For the first time there were two different governments: one Janata party rule at the centre and the congress party in the State. The Janata party which was an amalgamation of contending interests was subjected to endemic pulls and counter pulls and the stress on the system was so high that the Janata coalition experiment collapsed in less than three years. This is one of the tragedies of Indian pluralistic parliamentary democracy.

Mrs. Gandhi was back in power in less than three years. Although Mrs. Gandhi was voted to power by the masses of the Country, the 1980s Mrs. Gandhi was different: her rhetoric shifted from Garibi Hatao to unity and integrity of India. This shift in essence is suggestive of the shift in the balance of political forces. While giving a clear signal that she was abandoning the earlier rhetoric, she was attempting to find a workable formula for unifying the multi-class interests. The poorer sections of Andhra Pradesh particularly of the OBCs who stood by her till 1970s started getting away from her charismatic fold.

Another striking development in the political economy of the state of Andhra Pradesh is the rise of the lumpen or mafia class that rose from the leakages of huge resources that the state invested in irrigation, roads, public enterprises, mining and other infrastructural development. This pattern of public expenditure through contractors gave rise to a neo-rich class and a wide range of middlemen as they were the direct beneficiaries of the leakages of public funds. This class of people is neither organically linked to agricultural activities nor are they engaged in industrial or manufacturing sector: a class which makes money without risking neither labour nor capital turn into a class of lumpens or mafia who lack a basic value framework in public affairs. Thus a set of opportunistic, money hunting power elite have been let loose by a faulty developmental model. They became an important component of the political processes of the state.

This was also the period during which the ideological politics were almost abandoned and replaced by identity politics. The target group approach of Mrs. Gandhi in public policy was one of the causes and also the consequence of identity politics. These politics built around the caste, an institution which Dr. Ambedkar thought should be annihilated, started fortifying an endemic division of the society. Identity politics are democratic to the extent that members of the Community are organized and mobilized around the dignity and self respect, as it leads to organization of the community and psychologically provides protection to the individual member and politically a space for articulation of their common community needs and interests. This process also led to linguistic, religious identities which buttress the regional and sub-regional identity. The Telugu Desam Party was a product and reinforcement of linguistic identity at one level and regional identity at another level

Rise of Telugu Desam Party: The Question of Telugu Identity

In terms of economic changes in 1970s there was considerable central government investment in Hyderabad and there was overall expansion of industrial and infrastructural base. The Andhra political elite felt more encouraged, empowered and reassured of their investment after the Jai Andhra agitation. As the Telangana leadership could not protect the mulki-rules, nor could protect the Chief Minister office for Telanganite, the Andhra elite came to believe that once for all the demand for a separate Telangana State was over. This has enthused them to invest more freely in industry and infrastructure in the city of Hyderabad. The agrarian surplus and leakages of public funds through contracts made the class more prosperous almost suggesting an arrival of some brand of regional bourgeoisie. The rich farmers, powerful peasant community and regional industrial class coupled with the restless masses laid a new base for the rise of alternative political force. There was realignment of political forces at the state and national

levels. In a multi-class society, alignment and realignment of political forces is an unending process. The lumpen mafia class became a political force to reckon with. It is in the wake of these developments, the TDP – a regional party under the leadership of NTR – was born.

NTR hailing from powerful Kamma peasant community was a very popular movie hero who played several mythological and social roles in Telugu cinema. He was equally popular in both the regions; his popularity coupled with his rhetoric on welfare programmes, which Mrs. Gandhi was abandoning, made him a great ballot box-office hit. It was a record that a political party came to power in less than a year's time after it was formed. This resounding success of NTR and his unquestioned leadership in the TDP further pushed the Telangana political leaders to margins of politics and political power. Their political survival depended on the vagaries of capricious NTR. Identical to Mrs. Gandhi's style was the despotic or monarchic style of NTR. There was no single cabinet minister or political leader from the Telangana region who could have talked to him as a colleague in the cabinet. This style of NTR not only marginalized the political leaders but politics itself. It reduced cabinet system of government into a caricature of parliamentary democracy.

The Telugu regional identity was so articulated that the Telangana identity got submerged in the larger Telugu identity. The self respect of Telugus which TDP raised as an important issue obviated the Telangana identity for the time being. It is not that what happened through the rhetoric of Telugu identity was integration of the regions but subjugation. It is always the case with such identity politics that instead of negotiating with the sub-identities, it leaves the space and scope for the aggressive reemergence of the identities. The rise of Telangana identity in late 90s was a part of this social and political dynamic of societal change.

The style of NTR and his arbitrary impulsive decision making left all the political elite of the state desperate but it was more so in the case of the helpless Telangana representatives. Their entire mass base was lost. It was this political void in Telangana region that was gradually occupied by militant politics of CPI (ML) movement which questioned the political relevance of parliamentary democracy. The political leadership lacked moral and mass base to confront a militant movement. This made the weak Telangana political elite insecure and they came to depend on police force to such an extent that the Superintendent of Police or even a subordinate police officer would decide whether a MLA or a Minister would attend a meeting or not, visit a village or not.

During this phase amassing of wealth and grabbing of land around the city of Hyderabad was one major “political” activity of the mafia class. NTR either allowed this activity or was indifferent to it. This led to fattening of the lumpen mafia class. They saw that sale of liquor or Arak liberalized, private capital allowed in education particularly professional education and opens more and more corporate hospitals. A neat nexus between the contractors, land mafia, liquor mafia, cinema industry, corporate hospitals and corporate educational institutions has been struck. The media provided the necessary support and propaganda for these classes. In fact the media became a part of this nexus: the role of one news paper baron during this period is something that all the Telugu people are fully aware of. He was called Raja Guru by the political circles. The Telangana political elite on the margins of this economic activity were contented with a few sub-contracts, land deals, liquor licenses and land grabbing. The power of this nexus has become so formidable that there was no countervailing democratic force.

The monarchic style narrowed the scope to carry on the other powerful community- Kapus who aspired for greater share in power when they aligned with the TDP. The killing of one of the Kapu leaders in Vijayawada led to serious hostilities and there was a violent backlash on the Kamma

community. There was also the rupture with the Dalit community with the Karamchedu massacre which led to a vibrant dalit movement not only in the Andhra region but whole of the state. There was opposition because of reckless liquor sales from women, thus the antagonism from women, kapus and dalit hit the social base of the TDP resulting in its setback in 1988-89 elections. The rhetoric of Telugu identity proved to be too inadequate to hold the people together and so called unity of Telugus cracked and left scope and space for the revival of the sub-identity. The law of identity politics seems to be that either it has to transcend the identity to strike linkages with similar or larger identities to pursue larger interests or they get struck in the identity which has a propensity for internal fragmentation. This seems to be true of linguistic politics, caste politics and regional politics. Rise of sub-regionalism is a part of this political phenomenon.

The Telugu Identity: Ups and Downs

The congress party in its five year term (1989-1994) under the faulty model of development triggered by LPG misruled and mismanaged the governance to such a point that it scripted its own defeat in the 1994 elections. The two major causes for its defeat were that it tampered with the two rupees rice scheme and also further encouraged and patronized liquor sales. This withdrawal from peoples' welfare programme was under the pressure of global market forces. Congress had no imaginative policy framework. The lumpen mafia class that has fattened during the Telugu Desam period was in a position to dictate the policy choices to the government. With the result the distinction between the Congress Party and TDP in reality was largely blurred. In a situation of this kind where the social base is common and policy choices are externally forced upon, the changes in political leadership through electoral politics carried no meaning whatsoever. This could be seen nowhere more strikingly than in the agricultural sector. The neglect of agriculture has been so phenomenal that it lost its voice in the policy process and its significant place in the economy giving rise to electoral jolts. Taking

advantage of the Congress Party's misdirected development, NTR promised total prohibition and also restoration of two rupees rice scheme which proved to be electorally gainful and got TDP and its leader NTR back to the power.

Given NTR's disposition and style he was adamant on implementation of these two programmes. As they were enforced it dented into State revenues and was adversely hitting the dominant economic interests particularly of the lumpen class. This approach was also not to the liking of global economic interests. The power of this class was so decisive that when NTR went ahead with these two schemes, they got him overthrown. It is ironical that those MLAs and MPs who won with the help of NTR's charisma and populist promises turned against him overnight and humiliated him when he personally went (Vice-Roy hotel was the place where the conspiracy was hatched) to appeal to the party MLAs not to let him down. It is in this shady palace politics, Chandra Babu Naidu –his son-in-law –manipulative and cunning became the obvious choice of these classes. This formidable power of the lumpen class along with the other interests remains unquestioned till to-day and it is they who are calling the shots.

The power in the state is so structured and manipulated that the linkages at the national level are so worked out that within no time the image of Chandra Babu Naidu was built. A large section of Indian middle classes believed that he was a potential Prime Ministerial candidate. His assuming of power may not be illegal but certainly it was immoral. His governance was ruthless, it was during his regime two civil liberties leaders were hacked to death and the president of A.P. civil liberties committee was kidnapped by a vigilante group which was fully patronized by the state police and backed by the Chief Minister. He projected himself as a CEO and not CM. Politics have come to be seen through the techno-managerial prism. This was greatly useful to the classes in amassing the wealth in whatever form that was possible. Politics have come to be reduced to wealth chasing power and power chasing the wealth. This approach facilitated the easy entry of the

global capital which treated the Andhra State as guinea pig for its experiment.

It is paradoxical that while identity politics were gaining momentum all over India, there was the super imposition of globalization on a backward, iniquitous and unevenly developed economy. This model was sold to the Indian people under the guise of serious balance of payment crisis. The people were told that there was no alternative except to borrow from the International Agencies and open up the Indian market to foreign capital. The state which is expected to be a protector of the sovereign power of the people and resources has turned into a facilitator of the movement of the global capital- a shift in the very role and character of the Nation-State. This model of development is intrinsically undemocratic and against the core values of Indian Constitution. Since there was no viable opposition the process led to widening of inequalities across the castes, classes, gender, rural, urban, and forward and the backward regions. It is these widening inequalities between the agriculture and service sector, between metropolitan Hyderabad and rest of the State, between the backward regions and relatively advanced regions that unleashed new political forces. The TDP was not opposed to global capital. This means their identity politics were more cultural in their approach than opposing the swamping of Telugu identity in economic terrain. The revival of the Telangana movement is a direct fallout of this path of development-the process on which rulers have had no control.

The determination with which Naidu 'encountered' the problems and wielded ruthless power is unbelievable. The TDP had 29 Members of Parliament, which was critical for the survival of NDA government at the national level. He very cleverly used this number and the BJP had not many options except to concede whatever Chandra Babu demanded. The NDA government had no moral qualms about the globalization as BJP's nexus, notwithstanding all the RSS postures and claims about nationalism and patriotism, with imperialism was smooth and strong. In the normal course it would have been problematic

for a state government to deal directly and enter international agreements without much of intervention from the national government. The ruthless suppression of all the democratic voices was possible with the backing of the bank and sangh parivar.

The Structural Adjustment: Further Widening of Inequalities

The speed with which the state of Andhra Pradesh opened up its economy to global economic forces particularly Multi-National Corporations is astounding and the jet speed through which the neo-liberal agenda was forced on the people of Andhra Pradesh caught them totally unaware. The economy which is essentially agricultural is, in no way, prepared for rapid globalization. For Globalization is not only adversarial to the agrarian economy but to the entire rural and also urban poor. The shocks of the model are very clear to see. The State was coerced to withdraw subsidies, extension support services to agriculture and investment of any kind in agriculture. On the top of it, the poor farmers were enticed to go for commercial crops like BT cotton. The commercial crops are water-centric and capital intensive is well known. The State sold a dream of quick prosperity to the poorer farmers who went in for massive loans for tapping ground water through bore-wells which proved to be not only debt-traps but death-traps. The human price for Structural Adjustment was very high. This withdrawal of state support to an agrarian economy, particularly the subsistence economy of rain fed dry land agriculture and shift of the cropping pattern led to a series of farmers' suicides. There was a political price that the TDP had to pay in the defeat of Chandra Babu Naidu and rejection of his model.

The propaganda –national and global- carried to build the image of Chandra Babu Naidu came to a grinding halt with his defeat in 2004 general elections. Given the image trap and massive propaganda, he firmly believed that there would be no challenge to his power at least till 2020: a vision document to that effect was prepared. This document replaced plan exercises. A.P had no

Five Year Plan document. The only political challenge to Chandra Babu was the then CPI (ML) People's War which challenged his power and neo-liberal policies. NTR played hide and seek with the movement but Chandra Babu was clear and had the pressure from the global economic forces to 'remove the hurdle' for pushing through the neo-liberal agenda. This is something that is repeating at the national level under the leadership of Manmohan Singh and Chidambaram. The language and the rhetoric of the Nation's Home Minister sounds so familiar to anybody in this part of India. As the economic reforms were being implemented, the spiral of violence and counter violence particularly in the Telangana region continued unabated.

Seeing the deteriorating situation, a group of citizens (Committee of Concerned Citizens) took an initiative to facilitate a dialogue between the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the Naxalite Movement. The committee met the then Chief Minister Chandra Babu Naidu who initially evinced some interest but soon realized that his mission was something different. The top three revolutionary party leaders with whom the committee had initial dialogue were "encountered". Enraged Peoples War party determined to avenge the killings attacked Babu's convoy going to the Tirupathi temple. Babu survived the attack. He decided to dissolve the Assembly and go to the polls seeking a popular mandate to put down the movement. He believed that the popular sympathy that the attack evoked would also help his party in winning the elections. The anger that his model engendered particularly in the rural sector was so intense and widespread that the deadly attack on him produced no electoral sympathy whatsoever.

In the process of globalization and implementation of neo-liberal agenda the global economic forces coerced many developing countries to cut down the state expenditure and leave the development to market forces and welfare to Non-Governmental Organizations. During this phase the State of Andhra Pradesh withdrew from several of its earlier activities particularly from the services like education and health. They were opened for private, what they

prefer to call, providers. The way the government run hospitals have been strangled and the way the school education got corporatized and the higher education stifled, it presented a tragic spectacle to watch. The gradual collapse of Osmania University, Andhra University known for their eminent position on the national and international map were robbed of their vibrancy. The fact that the college service commission has been closed sounded death knell of higher education in the public domain.

The World Bank gave liberal loans partly because the state of Andhra Pradesh is politically turbulent with an ongoing armed struggle. In fact one would suspect that the Bank, in the normal course, would hesitate risking the capital in a politically turbulent part of the world. It can be surmised that for the Bank A.P was a laboratory to experiment whether greater flow of capital can contain and combat an armed resistance to a neo-liberal economic model. One cannot otherwise explain the extra ordinary interest of these global agencies and high international dignitaries including American President visiting the state.

The space that was getting vacated by the public institutions was occupied by either global capital or capital from the coastal Andhra region. A few corporate bodies monopolized education mainly intermediate education, professional education-engineering and medical. The commercialization of education and health had adversely impacted on the vulnerable sections and backward regions. The expansion of IT sector and the NRI investment in the city of Hyderabad brought in new wealth and generated some surplus in the economy. But this development further widened the economic disparities. The rapid growth of the city of Hyderabad with its malls, cinema theatres, five and seven star hotels, and international airport presents a picture of prosperity. It was this success drama of which Chandra Babu was considered the Hero. There was the darker side of the story, the discontentment, distress and disillusionment of the marginalized section of the people. The surrounding Telangana districts of the city of Hyderabad- Mahaboobnagar,

Ranga Reddy, Medak and Nalgonda– hold ample testimony to how development of a centre rocks the resources of its periphery. Forgetting the contribution of the poor living in the slums of Hyderabad city, they were ruthlessly evicted from their little huts. The invasion of the global and coastal capital could be seen in the destruction of parks, occupation of beautiful tanks, blasting of fantastic rock formations, dismantling of palaces, old resting places, and picnic spots. They have not spared even grave yards for nostalgic person it was violent violation of all rights including right to memory. The ongoing Telangana movement has its deep seeds in this faulty disastrous model of development which is intrinsically uneven and unequalizing.

The Discontentment of a Backward Region - the Rise of TRS

The Telangana Rastra Samithi emerged from this deep rooted discontentment and deprivation: in fact the movement for a separate State was taking a shape in the womb of the neo-liberal model of development. For the demand came up at a time when there were objective material conditions maturing leading to the revival of the Telangana self-identity which was dormant and subdued for almost two decades. It was K. Chandrashekar Rao who sensed the mood of the sub-region and gave a political vent to it. A sizeable section of Telangana people rallied around the demand and it did become a political force by 2004 elections. Sensing this trend the congress party which was desperate to unseat TDP from power entered into an alliance with TRS without even properly assessing the implications and consequences of such an alliance. The congress party, as opportunistic as it has ever been since independence, maintained that it would revisit the economic policies and under no condition would submit itself to the dictates of the World Bank. It called Chandra Babu Naidu slave of the World Bank. It also promised a peace dialogue with the Naxalite parties. Y. S. Rajsekhar Reddy undertook a Padayatra through the rural Andhra Pradesh to instill some confidence in the rural masses and the peasantry that agrarian problems would receive utmost

attention of the congress party. These tours included the Telangana rural areas with TRS along with their slogans and symbols. The Congress party won the elections.

In this election the TRS won five parliamentary and 29 legislative constituencies. K. Chandra Shekhar Rao and one of his colleagues Naredra became members of the central cabinet. The president of India in his address to the parliament acknowledged the aspirations of the Telangana people and a committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Pranab Mukharji for working out a consensus of political parties at national level for the separate statehood to Telangana. All these moves not only raised high expectations but legitimized the demand at the national level.

It should be recalled with dismay that the political elite of the Andhra region maintained strategic silence which was taken almost as consent and nobody at that point thought that there would be a counter movement against the Telangana state formation. It is difficult now to interpret this silence except to surmise that they pitched their hopes on the dishonesty and manipulative ability of the Congress leadership. They were right in one sense and one gets increasingly convinced that how the congress party could dilly dally and deploy such linguistic skills that every statement made could be interpreted in multiple ways. This skill is such that every statement that the Centre made sounded in favour of status quo for the Andhra region and separate statehood for the people in Telangana region. The promise kept on dragging in suspended animation. The crisis ridden young minds of the Telangana region who saw a solution to all their problems, rightly or wrongly, in the State formation resorted to self immolation or suicides as a form of protest against the disgusting political culture. These suicides made no difference to self –seeking Telangana political elite.

The Congress party took no steps for the formation of the state and Pranab Mukharji committee proved to be a tragic joke on the Telangana people. The

TRS which had a single point formula gave no programme to party cadres except periodically resigning from the elected posts and going for the polls seeking electoral mandate from the people. The TRS evinced no interest in the overall direction of development, in peace dialogue with the Naxalite parties, did not oppose Special Economic Zones, kept quiet when Greater Hyderabad was announced and was totally indifferent when thousands of acres of government land in and around Hyderabad was openly auctioned. The major buyers of the land were the lumpen economic class from the Andhra region. The economic elite of the Andhra region literally bought up Hyderabad city and acquired private ownership rights and their interests got deeply entrenched into the economy of Hyderabad city. There is a section of Telangana self-seeking elite who have been allowed to share the booty. The two prominent Telangana leaders of the Congress in the city of Hyderabad are very vociferous for the integrated state or autonomous status for Hyderabad.

As these developments were alarming, the Telangana aspirations were getting increasingly deepened outside the electoral and parliamentary framework. It was turning into a people's movement of which even TRS had no clue. The movement was sustained and nurtured by a wide range of committed artists, singers, poets, writers, educated elite, intellectuals, democratic voices and journalists. This range of men and women of integrity and commitment present a panorama of Telangana democratic ethos which has no parallel in the entire nation. These men and women are fruits of people's struggles and the sacrifices they made in the cause of liberation of people all through the twentieth century. This will remain a part of rich socio-political legacy of the people and hopefully remain the cultural resources of the Telangana state.

Rise of Rajshekhar Reddy: Setback to the Telangana Movement

In the period of five years, Y.S. Rajsekhar Reddy- a product and a propeller of Rayalaseema factional politics- knew too well the mechanics and machinations of power and knew how to hit his adversaries at vulnerable points. He literally stifled all the opposition to his power, managed to distance the Delhi High Command from all the leaders particularly senior Telangana leaders who were left with no choice except repeating and reiterating their loyalty to the high command without any reciprocation from the other side. He nurtured sizable young goons and political lumpens who were personally loyal to him. YSR fortified his position to an extent that he became indispensable for the congress party both at the national and the state level.

Y.S.R saw to it that the peace talks, which he promised in the elections, collapse and 'hounded' the Maoists with such ruthlessness that the movement got a serious set back. The only difference between Babu and Y.S.R. styles is that the later tilted the economic reforms slightly in favour of rural economy in terms of building irrigation infrastructure writing off of the agricultural debt, free power supply to farmers and a few pro-rural poor measures. This shift from the high metropolis-centric IT dominated thrust to agrarian concerns turned Y.S.R. into almost a welfare symbol and his sudden death evoked popular sentiments and the media made him an icon out of the context.

Y.S.R's death was followed by a big drama in Andhra politics; the lumpen forces that were solidly rooted in politics and intensely engaged in amassing wealth by all means felt orphaned and were looking for an alternative in wilderness. There was no single congress man respectable and reputed to take over the mantle. It was in this utter despair they propped up his son Y.S. Jaganmohan Reddy whose political career was less than a hundred days

at that time. Many congress men of all hues loudly claimed and openly argued that he was the only proper successor to YSR.

The young Jaganmohan Reddy triggered by ambition let loose the money and musclemen and created law and order problem in the state. Any name of a Telangana leader mentioned for the post of C.M. invited immediate protest and burning of the effigy of those leaders in their respective districts. The media which is also largely lumpenised lent wide publicity to every incident magnifying the protest that passed for public support to the young man. It created terrible fear all around and no congress man dared to even comment on what was happening around. Balagopal in his last address to Human Rights Forum just before he passed away, expressed his deep concern about this fear that gripped the state. This only suggests that Y.S.R. or his supporters built such an anti-social force that this drama would have been enacted if high-command had ever touched Y.S.R for any reason. It took this sequence to happen for the high command to realize that it enjoyed no support in this state and all the rhetoric used in praise of the high command was hollow. The seasoned congress politicians in Delhi wanted to do as much of damage control as possible and send a message to Y.S.R's followers and to the Congress Party in the state that the power of High Command matters.

The Ongoing Movement and Unfolding Political Culture:

As the movement for a separate statehood picked up, after the death of Rajsekhar Reddy, one trend noticed relates to the increasing disjunction between the electoral politics and societal movements: that there rose a strong popular movement in Telangana region in less than three months after the General elections suggests the rupture between form and essence of politics. This was revealed by a study just before the elections where the Telangana voters preferred the congress party to TRS: there was less than 10% Telangana electorate who were inclined to vote for TRS, but 60 % of the Telangana voters held that the Congress Party deceived the Telangana

people. That they were all supportive of the Telangana demand but were not inclined to vote for TRS, indicates de-linking of formal electoral politics and substantive popular demands. This explains the rise of varied movements parallel to or outside the electoral politics creating endless pressure on the state structure.

The Telangana movement also sharply brings out the politics of dishonesty and manipulations of parliamentary political parties. The two major political parties; the Congress and the Telugu Desam and several other smaller parties openly committed to the Telangana demand and even campaigned for it during 2009 elections without any conviction and consensus within the party. This is a case where each pitched hope on the dishonesty of the other. This was so clear that as the demand for a separate statehood picked up, each party blamed the other for not being sincere about the commitment. For instance Chandra Babu Naidu stated categorically on the floor of the Assembly that his party would unhesitatingly vote for the Bill for a separate State, if only the congress party dares to introduce the Bill. The Chief Minister Rosaiah called for all party meeting to elicit the views of all the parties; the TDP in the meeting promised to extend its full support if the Congress initiates the process. But the minute Chidambaram made the announcement that the process for Telanagana State formation would be initiated, the TDP backed out arguing that the announcement on 9th December 2009 was made at midnight without any proper debate. In fact the demand for a debate could have been raised when the issue came up in the State Assembly or when the CM convened all party meeting. This U turn reveals that TDP did not carry any conviction: the TDP is sharply and vertically divided and the leaders of the party in the two regions keep on making diametrically opposite statements but yet belong to the same political party. Till today no one knows whether TDP has any categorical stand on the issue, if it has it is not clear to the people of the two regions. When asked what the stand of the party is, one of the senior TDP leaders said privately that they were advised by their leader to do exactly double of what the

congress does? He further said as the stand of the congress party is divided so is the case with the TDP, the congress manipulate so will TDP do, if Sonia Gandhi is silent so is their leader Chandra Babu, if congress concede Telangana, the TDP will gracefully accept. They are maintaining that there will be the party units in both the new states as their party is a national party and not regional party as it is made out to be.

The same is the story with the congress party. All the members of the party unanimously in one voice repeatedly promised that they would abide by the decision of the High Command on the issue. This included leaders of the congress party of both the regions. It is because of this posture, the Telangana people rejoiced the statement of Chidambaram about the formation of the State on 9th December 2009. The uproar from the leaders of the Andhra region and threatening postures and tendering of resignations to their MLA positions came to an uncritical observers or innocent people as a great surprise. The elected representatives of the Andhra region started arguing that they did not properly assess the sentiments of members of their constituencies, the decision by the centre was hasty, that centre succumbed to the pressure of KCR and his gang, separation of people is negation of the principles of linguistic state, that it would lead to the fragmentation and may ultimately lead to the disintegration of the nation so on. They added that Telangana will be taken over by the Maoists, there would be endemic communal tension in the city of Hyderabad. The list of arguments is not unending.

The issue is not whether these arguments have some validity or not, it raises the question; why these apprehensions were not raised when the congress party entered the alliance with TRS in 2004 elections? Why in 2009 elections the congress manifesto did not reflect these concerns? How that this great 'wisdom' dawned only on the midnight of 9th December? Was it that their continuous expression of loyalty to the High Command was hollow? This open defiance of the High Command only brings out the height of hypocrisy that

the party suffers from. With the result the stand of the Congress Party and its behaviour is amazingly identical to the TDP. And both the parties are divided on regional lines and Sonia Gandhi from Delhi and Chandra Babu Naidu from Hyderabad are watching the unfolding drama with unusual amusement without either taking a categorical stand or disciplining the party.

This culture of parliamentary political parties and their blatant division on a serious policy question defy all conceptual categories of the party system. Nowhere one can think of a political party allowing its members to take opposite stands and fight or quarrel with each other without the party leadership intervening in the process. It calls for totally an innovative conceptual category to explain the split political culture of party system. It is widely said that the British adopted divide and rule but to day it is not dividing the others but getting internally divided to rule. They may reflect the fractured and fragmented nature of politics but this ambiguous stand by two major political parties in the state created enough of confusion leaving a large political void. It is into this open political space several other sections entered and formed political and non-political Joint Action Committees to take forward the movement.

The JAC Experiment: The Political Culture.

There emerged any number of Joint Action Committees from different walks of life including political Joint Action Committees. The political Joint Action Committees included all political parties supporting the demand in the respective regions. The Telangana political Joint Action Committee chose Kodand Ram, a Political Science professor from Osmania University as its Chairman, similar to this Committee was the Andhra Joint Action Committee headed by professor Samuel of Nagarjuna University. That the Chairmen of these political Joint Action Committees were from outside the political sphere speaks volumes about political culture. It is refreshing that the Chairmen are drawn from the academia. That the political masters willing to work with an

academic while is a sad reflection on their political credibility, it adds a modicum of dignity to the academic profession. There is, however, the debate going on whether academics be allowed to play such a direct political role at all? This question is raised not only by some of the political elite but this is being debated in the academic circles also. That an academic can take a political stand on public affairs is a long and well established western liberal tradition.

Given the conflict ridden unhealthy competitive politics, this experiment lasted for a very short time in the Telangana region. The first party to get out of the political JAC was the Congress Party on the plea that they are the ruling party both in the State and Centre and it is their government that has to finally concede the demand. Their main anxiety seems to be not to lend any credit for creation of a new state to any other party other than the Congress Party. The second party to get out of the JAC was the Telugu Desam party. They got out blaming the Chairman Kodand Ram that he was too proximate to TRS and was carrying only the TRS mandate. In a competitive political culture rooted in the game of electoral gains or losses, concerted political action for a cause, however popular the cause could be, seems to be not working. Thus the political JAC which looked as a rallying point did not last long and the political crisis continues.

That there is a wide spread suspicion of the political parties, there sprung a number of other Joint Action Committees—the JACs of students, journalists, employees, writers, doctors, engineers, lawyers, democrats, developmentalists, women, SCs, BCs and local Committees including village level Joint Action Committees. The JACs organize not only meetings of their own members but public meetings popularly called Dhoom-Dham. Dhoom Dham is a folk form where highly talented artists particularly those who can sing and dance participate. They render songs relating to the demand for separate state and the injustices done to the region. Some of the artists also combine speech and song. They make scathing attacks on the politicians of

different hues. These attacks are sometimes very pungent with humour and satirical evoking massive applause from the people. In quite a number of these meetings the elected public representatives are not allowed by the gathering to speak: they are heckled and humiliated. Several representatives of the Congress and the TDP are facing this popular anger in the Telangana region. Their confidence seem to be that finally the state formation is a political act, and once such decision is made all their political space would be restored back. They are also confident that none of these organizations can partake in the complex and expensive political game called electoral politics. What is puzzling is the total disjunction between the civil societal democratic articulations and the parliamentary political culture. How do these processes get connected whether they will get connected at all is the question. It is this disjunction that accounts for the parallel social movements along with the parliamentary election-centric political processes. The implications of these developments in the long run will have to be further explored.

There is yet another significant development in the ongoing movement; HMTV, one of the electronic channels has been organizing a live telecast of the debate called Dasha-Disha (direction and destination) on ongoing movements in both the regions which has become immensely popular. They have been organizing it in different districts of the State in both the regions. They invite important opinion makers from different walks of life to air their views with unfettered freedom. In these debates one or two persons known for their clear stand point are invited to present the other point of view for separation or status quo depending upon the district of the region where the programme is organized. This exercise, if not an experiment, is fairly effective. Members of one region listen to the arguments of the other region with some interruptions from the passionate and impatient supporters. This programme is popular and people in the entire state watched this live telecast lasting for six to ten hours. This viewership behaviour fairly compares itself with day and night cricket matches.

The presence of elected representatives of the two political parties – Congress and TDP – in the live telecast is resented, sometimes loudly protested. There are instances when they were physically prevented from presenting their views when the whole state is watching the programme. The implications of such an exercise are not yet clear. This programme has thrown up to the public view of the State some of the organic intellectuals or public men whose work and reputation otherwise remained confined to their respective district boundaries.

This is, by any standards, a new development in the mass media and an eye opener to different electronic channels that general public is open to views and serious democratic debates, if only media cares for it. This is a lesson to foreign supported National English channels which are totally partial, partisan and one sided. Watching these national channels has been a disgusting experience. That is one reason which makes this experiment at the regional level in local language very refreshing.

The Telangana region witnessed a wide ranging democratic movement which has created men and women of courage and conviction. The creativity level of these sections is remarkable. This region distinctly presents two cultures: one the people-centric democratic culture and the maneuvering political culture. There is some interface between the two and one has to watch the outcome of encounter of these two cultures. The question is whether the democratic culture would be able to make difference to formal politics or the maneuvering culture will vitiate the democratic culture.

P.S. As this paper was being given finishing touches, there was a by-election caused by the resignation of twelve MLAs from their positions as a part of the concern for the spate of suicides of young persons mostly students for the cause of a separate State. The MLAs of all the parties in the Telangana region took an oath on the dead bodies of these young persons that they would resign from their positions, but only TRS MLAs and one BJP MLA resigned and

rest of the MLAs backed out under one pretext or the other. The election campaign for the candidates who resigned was done by all the Joint Action Committees. There was a view point that the Congress and Telugu Desam should not field the candidates in expression of solidarity with the cause, but it was turned down by respective party high commands. The result was that all the TDP candidates and four Congress candidates lost their deposits including the PCC president D. Srinivas. It was quite an impressive victory for the candidates and more so for the separate state demand. It suggests that the demand has percolated far deeper in popular consciousness than ever before. The contribution of non-political Joint Action Committees, which enjoy far higher legitimacy, has been very substantial. It is a convergence of legitimate non-political civil societal formations and devalued electoral politics. The question still remains which culture will become predominant in influencing the future of unfolding culture in the Telangana region.

Note: This is a revised version of 'Prof B. Janardhan Rao Memorial Lecture' delivered at Kakatiya University, Warangal, on 3rd May, 2010. I thank Prof. V.S. Prasad, Dr. G. Vijay for their useful comments on this paper. I also thank B. Jagannatham research scholar, Department of Political Science, University of Hyderabad for his assistance in finalizing this paper.

References

Srinivasulu, K. and Sarangi, Prakash (1991): "Political Realignment in Post- NTR Andhra Pradesh", Economic and Political Weekly, Vo. 34, Nos. 34 & 35, pp.2449-58.

Hanumantha Rao, Ch (2010): "Regional Disparities, Smaller States and Statehood for Telangana", Academic Foundation, New Delhi.

Haragopal, G (1985): "A Socio Economic Study of Modern Andhra, Social Science" Probings, Vo. 2, No.1, March.

Haragopal, G (1987): "Dimension of Regionalism, Nationality Question in Andhra Pradesh", TDSS, Pune.

Krishna Reddy, G (2002): "New Populism and Liberalism: Regime Shift under Chandra Babu Naidu in Andhra Pradesh", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XXXVII, No. 9, 2-8 March, pp. 871-883.

Pingle, Gautham (2010): "The Historical Context of Andhra and Telangana-1949-56", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLV, No.8, pp. 57-65.

Balagopal K. (1999): "The Man and the Times", Economic & Political Weekly, Vol. XXXIV, No.26, June 26.

Balagopal, K. (2004): Andhra Pradesh: Beyond Media Images, The Economic and Political Weekly, June, 12.

Kalpana Kannabiran, Sagari R Ramdas, N. Mudhusudan, Ashalatha and M. Pavan Kumar, (2010): "On the Telangana Trail", Economic and Political Weekly, Vol. XLV, No. 13, March 27, pp-69-82.

Bharath Bhushan, M and Venugopal, N (2009): "Telangana: The State of Affairs ", AdEd Value Ventures, Hyderabad.

M. Kodanda Ram (2007): "Movement for Telangana State: A Struggle for Autonomy", Economic and Political Weekly, Jan-13, pp.90-94.

Srinivasulu. K, (1997): "The Thesis on the Question of Small States", in Simhadri, P & Vishweshwer Rao, P.L, 'Telangana: Dimensions of Underdevelopment', Centre for Telangana Studies.