



Formation of Andhra and Andhra Pradesh— A Comprehensive Analysis

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Abstract: Before analyzing the separatist agitations in A.P. it is necessary to go into the various factors and events that led to the formation of Andhra in 1953 and Andhra Pradesh in 1956 as those still influence the politics of the state. In fact the seeds for separatism were sown even at the time of the formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh. Hence in the following article highlights the formation of Andhra and Andhra Pradesh.

Key words: Andhra, Andhra Pradesh, Separatism.

The state of Andhra Pradesh is made up of three distinct regions known as the Circars or the Coastal Andhra, the Rayalaseema or the Ceded Districts and Telangana. At the beginning of the century the first two regions had formed part of the Madras Presidency and the third of the Nizam's State of Hyderabad. The five districts of Guntur, Krishna, East Godavari, West Godavari and Visakhapatnam, constituted the Circars or the Coastal Andhra. The four districts of Bellary (a part of which is in the present Karnataka State), Anantapur, Cuddapah and a part of Kurnool were Ceded to the British by the Nizam in 1800 in return for military help and protection. These districts earlier known as "the ceded Districts" form the present "Rayalaseema". The district of Chittoor, which is now in the Rayalaseema region, was carved out of Cuddapah and North Arcot districts.

The district of Nellore, which forms a part of Coastal Andhra, was earlier a part of Caranatic, held by a Nawab. It belonged neither to Circars nor Rayalaseema. It had a separate identity. The inhabitants, having imbibed certain aspects of Tamil culture by the virtue of the district's proximity to the Madras city have forged for themselves a kind of culture which was different from that Rayalaseema and Circars. In fact, even today culturally and economically Nellore distinguishes itself from Coastal and the Rayalaseema and, therefore, it is to be viewed as an entity by itself. However, till the formation of Andhra State, the Nellore district

identified itself with Rayalaseema because of its nearness to the Madras City and the People's disinclination to join the Coastal Andhra region. The Nine Circar districts including the districts of Rayalaseema now constitute the area known as the Andhra region.

Until 1953 the Teugu-Speaking people of the Coastal Andhra and Rayaseema did not have a State of their own. Though the Telugu districts accounted for forty percent of the population and forty-eight percent of the territory of the Madras presidency, the Telugu had no voice in the politics of the region. As far back as 1910 the Andhras started a movement aimed at bringing about a reawakening of the Andhras with a view to reviving their ancient glory and grateness. The feeling that they would flourish only under a separate province of their own found strong expression, when an announcement was made at the Delhi Durbar about constituting Bihar and Orissa as separate provinces in December 1911. At a series of conferences starting with the conference at Bapatla in 1913, the need for a separate Andhra Province was canvassed and resolutions were passed demanding the formation of a separate Andhra province on linguistic basis. A separate Andhra Congress Circle also came into being in 1917 which meant that the Congress Party leadership conceded linguistic basis for structuring its own organization.

While the demand for a separate Andhra Province was intensified, the people of Rayalaseema were non-co-operative and indifferent. Some prominent leaders of Rayalaseema region feared that the interests of the people of this region would not receive proper attention in a separate Andhra state. The economic disparity between the two regions has also contributed to the apathy of the people of Rayalaseema towards the formation of a separate province. The five districts of Rayalaseema were very backward compared to the Circars and with the exception of Nellore, all its districts lacked irrigation facilities and were considered infertile. The



Circular districts which constituted the delta on the other hand were well endowed with natural resources. "Kammas" were predominant in Coastal (Circular) districts whereas "Reddy" were chiefly found in the five Rayalaseema districts. The Reddys of Rayalaseema had always entertained a deep suspicion about the Kammas and Brahmins of the Coastal districts. The nagging fear that they would be dominated by the well-developed and culturally advanced Coastal leaders caused them grave concern. Hence the leaders of Rayalaseema had demanded certain safeguards from the Coastal districts. The nagging fear that they would be dominated by the well-developed and culturally advanced Coastal leaders caused them grave concern. Hence the leaders of Rayalaseema had demanded certain safeguards from the leaders of the Coastal Andhra as a precondition for their acceptance of a separate Andhra state.

At the 25th Andhra Mahajan Sabha held at Bezwad (presently Vijayawada) towards the end of October, 1937, several leaders including K. Koti Reddy, M.L.A. and H. Sitarama Reddy, M.L.A. from Ceded districts maintained that it would be a Himalayan blunder if the Circular leaders gave up the effort to win back Rayalaseema. Subsequently, a Committee was appointed to decide on the guarantees to be given to Rayalaseema. These committee members met at Sri Bagh, the residence of K. Nageswara Rao in Madras on November 16, 1937 and arrived at an agreement, now known as the Sri Bagh pact, on conditions to be fulfilled for enlisting the co-operation of Rayalaseema in the demand for the formation of an Andhra Province. Responding to the persistent pressure from Andhra, the Constituent Assembly appointed the Linguistic Provinces Commission with S.K. Dar, a retired judge of Allahabad High court, as chairman and the strongly opposed re-organization of provinces on linguistic consideration. It created much uproar in the country, to assuage the ruffled of the Andehars a high-power committee known as JVP Committee (consisting of Nehru (Prime Minister), Vallabhai Patel (Deputy Prime Minister), Pattabhi Sitaramaiah (Congress President)) to review the position in the light of the findings of the Dar Commission. As a result, the Government of India, not agreed to separate state for Telugu people.

Potti Sriramulu who began a fast unto death at Madras attained martyrdom on the night of December 15, 1952. This was followed by widespread violence all over the Andhra region. As violence continued unabated in many parts, Prime Minister, Nehru, finally conceded the demand of Andhras for separate linguistic province. On Dec 19,

1952 he announced the intention of his government to form an Andhra State with the undisputed Telugu speaking districts excluding the city of Madras.

The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh:

Having achieved a state of their own, the leaders of Andhra now turned their attention towards achieving Visalandhra (Greater Andhra) which had been their long-cherished dream. In fact, millions of Telugu-speaking people were scattered in several regions of States like Hyderabad, Mysore, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh. Andhra leaders were vociferous in their demand that all these outlying areas in these shall be merged in to the Andhra State so that the Telugu-speaking people would live together. This was the essence of the concept of Visalandhra. Some people of Telangana were not in favour and they wanted separate Telangana state.

The States Re-Organization Commission in its report submitted on September 30, 1955 recommended the disintegration of Hyderabad State since "Public sentiment, both within and outside the state, is overwhelming and insistent on the need for disintegration of the state. The report caused a great deal of adverse reaction in the various parts of the Andhra State and led to intensive lobbying by the advocates of both Telangana and Visalandhra. While the Communists reacted quickly and announced that they would resign and contest the elections on the issue, K.V. Ranga Reddy and Dr. Chenna Reddy, prominent Telangana leaders, hailed the Commission's recommendation. Meanwhile, the demand for a separate Telangana was gaining strength. 7 out of 10 Congress Committees in Telangana, 73 out of 105 Congress delegates and 10 M.P.s favoured a separate Telangana. However, when the issue was raised in the Hyderabad Assembly, out of 174 members, 147 expressed their views, and of these 103 supported Visalandhra, only 29 wanted a separate Telangana; 15 remained neutral.

Owing to the violent incidents that followed, the Congress High Command had finally accepted Visalandhra. In order to avoid misunderstanding between the two regions of Andhra and Telangana, the Congress High Command arranged a meeting of the leaders of the two regions in Delhi on February 20, 1956. The meeting resulted in an agreement over the formation of Visalandhra by providing certain safeguards. This was known as the "Gentlemen's Agreement."