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SEPARATE STATEHOOD OF TELANGANA MOVEMENT - A STAND OF ALL POLITICAL PARTIES

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Abstract

Telangana activists like Intellectuals and employees initiated the second phase of Telangana Movement. The movement for Telangana state has always become a political agenda. Though students, employees, people have been joining the movement. The Telugu Desam Party also tried its level best to avail issue of Telangana on the eve of elections in order to get people's votes and reversing their stand immediately after election results were announced. The Bharatiya Janatha Party (BJP) is basically in favour of smaller states for convenience of governance and its electoral gains. The Congress party was also included the issue of Telangana in its National Common Minimum Programme in 2004. The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in principle, which has supported the formation of new states.

Keywords: Initiate, Formation, Convenience.

INTRODUCTION

Telangana statehood and the role of political parties participating in the electoral politics. The people of Telangana have been demanding a separate state even before the merging of Telangana region with Andhra state to form United Andhra Pradesh. The movement has been consistently rising frequently by political parties and other organizations. All the time majority of Telangana people rallied behind this movement and political parties were also often supporting the demand for separate statehood to make use of Telangana sentiment and in such a way the issue of Telangana has become an instrument to all the political parties to obtain political mileage out of this Telangana agitation, except the political parties like Communist Party of India and Communist Party of India (Marxist).

Politics of Telugu Desam Party:

The Telugu Desam Party was established by then Telugu film veteran famous actor N.T. Rama Rao on 29th March, 1982. This party was formed on the concept of self-respect of Telugu people. It is basically an integrationist party. He was expected to be choice of new party other than the ruling Congress party in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Moreover, within a short span of time, the TDP party was performed well through winning 202 seats out of the total 294 from the state Assembly and also won 30 seats out of 42 Lok Sabha seats in the 8th Lok Sabha elections with thumping majorityⁱ.

Furthermore, the TDP party was lost in 1989 Assembly elections. Afterwards, Telugu Desam Party came to power in 1994 through winning 219 Assembly seats out of 294 seats. Moreover, N.T. Rama Rao was elected for the third time as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.²³ It was N.T. Rama Rao who issued G.O 610 in 1984 for repatriation of about 58,000 employees working in the Telangana region to the respective districts in Seemandhra region. But the G.O was not implemented till date ignoring legitimate rights of Telangana unemployed youth to get these opportunities. The Telangana supporters have been persistently demanded for implementation of G.O 610 while Sri Nara Chandra Babu Naidu was Chief Minister during 1995 to 2004. He has been delayed and prolonged the issue instead of implementing through appointing of committees such as Jaibharath Commission, Gilglani Commission and legislature committee headed by Mr. Prakash Reddy MLAⁱⁱ.

Telangana activists like Intellectuals and employees initiated the second phase of Telangana Movement 1996 onwards owing to increasing steps and actions of injustice meted out to the regionⁱⁱⁱ. The TDP Party after miserably defeat in General and Assembly elections 2004, slowly changed its strategy of politics on the issue of Telangana. It lost political power in the state and its role of king maker at the Centre as well through opposing formation of Telangana State. The TDP Party was back to basics and concentrated on strengthening its power. The party's stand about Telangana was switched over to strategic neutrality. Like other counterparts in Congress, TDP leaders from Telangana also have taken the slogan of Jai Telangana only to get votes during local body elections and by elections to the state Assembly and parliament^{iv}.

The people could not understand the real stand of the TDP party with regard to Telangana state formation. As general elections of Parliament and State Assembly elections coming closure, the TDP party announced a major change in its policy towards



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Telangana demand for separate statehood, after long rounds of discussion with the polite bureau of party, declared that it would support separate state of Telangana kept in mind that, it would lose the elections on 9th October, 2008. Previously the TDP party was strongly disagreed to the demand of separate statehood because it was stood for a unified state of Andhra Pradesh. Sri Nara Chandra Babu Naidu also gave a letter to Pranab Mukherjee committee that his party is also in favour of Telangana statehood.

However, the dual stand taken by the T.D.P was completely exposed when the Union Home Minister Mr. P.Chidambaram has announced central government policy about the issue of Telangana on 9th December, 2009. The leaders from TDP party openly opposed formation of Telangana state^v. Meanwhile MLA's and MP's of Telugu Desam party from Andhra region have resigned collectively resigned to their membership in Parliament and State Assembly. In view of Telangana agitations at peak, then the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh Sri K. Rosaiah convened all party meeting on 7th December, where the president of TDP party declared that his party will abide the decision of the state and Central government with regard to formation of Telangana state. But he has reversed his earlier stand after Union Minister's announcement in favour of Telangana state. Like Congress party, the Telugu Desam Party also tried its level best to avail issue of Telangana on the eve of elections in order to get people's votes and reversing their stand immediately after election results were announced. Thus, TDP party has been adopting a wait and sees policy with regard to the issue of Telangana state formation.

Baratiya Janatha Party (BJP)

The Bharatiya Janatha Party (BJP) is basically in favour of smaller states for convenience of governance and its electoral gains. In its political policy, the party resolved for formation of smaller states. As a part of extension of its policy, the BJP has adopted a resolution that one vote for two states (Telangana and Seemandhra) at its Kakinada state executive meeting in 1998, on the eve of General elections. However, it could not include Telangana state while forming three states namely Uttaranchal, Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand from the states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Bihar respectively during the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) government in the year 2000. It was due to intervention of Mr. Nara Chandrababu Naidu and Venkaiah Naidu against the formation of Telangana state. However, the party after defeated in General elections 2004, realized its mistake and taken a positive stand and adopted a resolution at state and central executive bodies. The BJP party also coming out with open stand in regard to the reorganization of states. The parliamentary party leader Mrs. Sushma Swaraj raised the issue of Telangana at many times in Lok Sabha and offered party support unconditionally in formation of Telangana state.

However, BJP party again recommended the demand for smaller states in its election manifesto of 2009. Moreover, it has asserted that the party always supports the creation of smaller states in India and it was during the National Democratic Alliance regime (NDA's) only that the three small states were created as stated above. The BJP party in view of its promise towards all round development and better governance in future also would encourage the cause of smaller States. The party was emphasized and provides all needed support in the formation of Telangana as being part of commitment to its policy on new states^{vi}.

Telangana Statehood and Politics of Congress Party

The Congress political leaders from Coastal Andhra region have been playing very suspicious role both at the Central and state level. Right from the regime of Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, most of the Chief Ministers from Seemandhra region considered to be powerful and lobbying against people's interests of Telangana region. The Gentlemen's Agreement of 1956 was failed in implementation in favour of Telangana. Whenever the movement for Telangana came into force, the Seemandhra leaders manipulated the opinion of the central government to oppose the formation of separate Telangana state and implementation of safeguards to the people of Telangana as well. The movement of Jai Telangana 1969 was oppressed by Mr. Kasu Bramhananda Reddy, then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and who was also issued the G.O.36 in view of transfer nearly about 25000 employees of Andhra region in Telangana to their respective districts but could not implemented.

When separate Telangana was at peak level in 1969 which led by employees and students but the Congress leader Mr. Marri Chenna Reddy with his followers joined in the main stream of agitation for Telangana and founded a party known as Telangana Praja Samithi (TPS) in 1969 and contested in elections through this party in 1971 which won 11 seats out of 14 Parliamentary seats and subsequently joined with Congress party again to get personal benefits only like Governor post, Ministerial berths. However, the TPS was merged with the Congress. Afterwards, a reorganized TPS was formed but could not able to lead the Telangana movement. The Congress party through its manipulations tried to crush the Telangana movement by offering political positions to its leaders^{vii}.

Six-point formulas was also failed to protect the interests of Telangana region and it turned as the most favorable way out for Andhra region in making illegal appointments to legalized. Thus, lakhs of educated youth from Andhra were got jobs under non-local



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quota in the vacancies of Telangana districts and Hyderabad as well. This practice has been habituated by the Congress party and successive governments in the state also^{viii}. Moreover, leaders were continued to make use of the sentiment of Telangana people before elections and thereafter they forget about it.

The demand for Telangana statehood was often raised by few organizations and expressed the aspiration of Telangana people at that time the Congress party in opposition at both Parliament and state assembly. The Congress party was started took the advantage of the situation and sentiment of Telangana for electoral gains since 1999. The Telangana Congress leaders formed "Telangana Congress Forum" under the guidance of Mr. Chenna Reddy so as to give an impression to the people of Telangana and TRS party at the state and central level that Telangana state is possible with Congress party when it came to power^{ix}. The TRS party was also joined in the both state and central government's cabinets. A committee was established under Sri. Pranab Mukherjee as the chairman of UPA government.

Moreover, the Congress party was also included the issue of Telangana in its National Common Minimum Programme in 2004. The TRS party was agreed to make alliance with the Congress party in keeping view that they will accept the Telangana state if they came to power. Thereafter, then the President of India A.P.J. Abdul Kalam while addressing the both houses of the parliament referred the issue of Telangana on 7th June, 2004^x. He said that Telangana issue was included in the agenda of UPA government.

Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy led the Congress party efficiently with proper plan to distract the attention of the people from their movement for separate statehood to development grounds. As such he introduced welfare schemes like old age pensions, widow pensions and free electricity and ration cards also; government houses on the one hand, reimbursement of scholarships and fees reimbursement on the other hand. Therefore, it won the elections with thumbing majority in the Assembly election of 2009.

Communist Parties

The Communist Party of India (Marxist)'s state unit General Secretary during their representation with Sri Krishna Committee, emphasized that, keep in mind the national policy of the party opposed the process of dividing the states and CPI (M) party was strongly disagreed to bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. Thus, it was not support the formation of separate state to Telangana region. He was clearly stipulated its party's policy, which relied on the beliefs that the independence of the states in connection to the Centre likely to agree and cooperate each other in the context of demand for formation of new states^{xi}.

Where as in the case of the Communist Party of India (CPI), the leaders from the state unit declared that the national leadership of the party was agreed to give an exception in case of demand for Telangana because of its wide popular demand for a separate statehood. Although the CPI party's national policy was also disagreed to the bifurcation of states and also not supported to creation of smaller states^{xii}.

The Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) in principle, which has supported the formation of new states. The party also stated, it seems that negotiations politically in the country have not yet come at any complete agreement on the present important issue of formation of smaller states.

As we have discussed before the Congress party has been adequately utilized the sentiment of Telangana statehood for its electoral gains and it played all tricks and tactics to deceive the people of Telangana in the form of extending dates and appointing different committees and promises as safeguards at national as well as state level. The BJP party also tried to played few tricks stating that one vote for two states in 1998. However, the party has not included the demand of Telangana while forming three new states in Northern India. The TDP party was also preferred to acts as a supporting party in the formation of Telangana state, even though not willing to bifurcation of the state of Andhra Pradesh. In view of electoral gains only, TDP party made alliance with TRS party before 2009 elections. All the political parties national and regional within the state have been played with sentiment of the Telangana people to get electoral benefits rather than to considering and committed to form separate state of Telangana.

The regional identity of Telugu people was very well expressed whereas the identity of Telangana people got hided and suppressed under the broad perception of Telugu identity. The TDP party had raised self-respect of Telugu people as an important problem which prevented the identity of Telangana temporarily at that time^{xiii}. The influential Telugu identity of Coastal Andhra region caused to disregard and restriction of the other regions identities within the state of Andhra Pradesh. It is essential that forms of identity need to consider and fail to come to an agreement with the identities of sub-regions, which gave space and scope for the



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emergence of politics which are based on sub region's identity. As Professor Hara Gopal described that the rise of the identity of Telangana region was a part of societal change in terms of social and political dynamics.

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