CHAPTER: IV

CHANDRABABU NAIDU
AS A CHIEF MINISTER OF ANDHRA PRADESH

Section A: Life and Leadership of Naidu

Chandrababu Naidu, Ex Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, had earned international accolade in recognition of his revolutionary zeal and achievements in the field of Information Technology and had great concern to serve through it the public of Andhra Pradesh. Besides, he was successful in thoroughly transforming the society in all respects. Excellence in administration was his goal and efficiency his motto. He possessed a rare quality of political acumen and leadership that helped him reach topmost echelon of political organization and administrative system in his state, a personality of multi facets. By all definitions of the term of leadership he proved to be a good leader in practical politics. He occupied such a political status that helped him in his performance of the role that mobilized more or less organized collective and voluntary efforts towards the attainment of shared goals and objectives. Naidu, a man with the quality of behaviorism, guided people and their activities in an organized effort. With such traits of leadership, he became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh on 1st September 1995. Chandrababu Naidu was the longest-serving (1995-2004) Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh.

Chandrababu Naidu belongs to a peasant family of a remote hamlet ‘Naravaaripalle’, 8 km away from Samiti Hqrs, Chandragiri.
located at a close proximity of temple town Tirupati in Cittert district.\(^1\) His father Kharjura Naidu was a middle class farmer in Naravaaripalle.

Chandrababu Naidu was born on 20\(^{th}\) April 1950. After receiving primary education in Seshapuram, he had to go to Chandragiri for his secondary school education. There he stayed with his relatives and studied up to 10\(^{th}\) standard. As he began to ascend the educational ladder, the distance between his village and education also grew. Chandrababu worked hard. His next destination was Tirupati to receive University education. It is there, in Tirupati that change began to take place. During this time, qualities of leadership in him began to manifest. While doing his B.A. (Economics, Politics, and History) in S.V. Arts College, he developed a social outlook. He was not satisfied with limiting himself to classroom studies. On the eve of examination only he would focus on his studies. Much of the time he was engaged with certain social commitments.

To realize his social commitment at such young age he formed village development committees. In the name of “Vinayaka Sangham”, he used to organize social development activities. As soon as annual holidays were declared, he would rush to Naravaaripalle and motivate the youth there. His aim was to do something for the village. In 1972, studying in a college, he mobilized people and laid a five-kilometer metal road to Bhimavaram. In other words, today’s Janmabhoomi activities can trace their roots to Chandrababu’s college days mental drives for social service. There is a similar case of irrigation water works. There were six canals around Naravaaripalle. These sources used to dry up due to growth of plants in their course. With the help of
‘Vinayaka Sangham’, Chandrababu would clear the canals of the overgrowth, ensuring a free flow of water. In the activities he devised for the improvement of the village; everyone was encouraged to take part. Each household was to send a volunteer to work for the village. If some tried to shirk these duties they were required to pay a fine of a hundred rupees as punishment. In those days a hundred rupees was no small a sum. But Chandrababu could be adamant where work was concerned. Besides this, he had a modern vision. At a time when no one even dared to imagine such a thing, young Chandrababu had brought bulldozers to Naravaariपalle in order to level the land. Clearing the land of bushes and leveling the land he planted crops. Again, it was his initiative that saw cement pipes being installed and water being brought into the fields of Naravaariपalle. He abhorred wasting time. He was a great believer in hard work and was always on the look out for new ideas and innovations right from his young days. After entering politics, and taking over the reins of government, these qualities made him a visionary Chief Minister. For every task, he planned appropriate approaches, a perfect work-plan, unstinted monitoring, and unrelenting labour till the results were achieved. All these factors placed him at the pinnacle in his individual life, in his business dealings and also in his political life.

**Beginning of the Political Life:**

The foundation of Chandrababu Naidu’s political career was laid during his studenthood. Sri Venkateshwar University offered him his first political platform. Those were the days, when after
completing M.A. (Economics), Naidu was doing research on Prof. N.G. Ranga, and his contributions to rural economic development. It did not take much time for Chandrababu Naidu to grow in stature as prominent leader in politics. Many a time he played decisive roles in the elections for the University Students Unions. In fact, many of the present day state politicians were initiated into politics from this University. Piler Ramachandra Reddy, presently Chittoor district Congress leader, KS Narayana, CPI State Assistant Secretary, are among the notable contemporaries of Chandrababu Naidu. The yearning to scale great heights and realize his visions prompted Chandrababu Naidu to enter the political arena. During the devastating Divi cyclone of 1977, Chandrababu, as the Chandragiri Youth Congress Secretary, led a youth band, of dedicated workers for the rehabilitation activities.

Around this time, the Legislative Council elections were slated. There were constituencies reserved for graduates during those days. Graduates from the concerned Universities were voters. Along with politicians, teachers unions also used to actively participate in the election process. Legislative Council was a touchstone for indirect politics and rehabilitation of senior politicians. Members of the Legislative Assembly, teachers, graduates, and representatives of local organization used to elect representatives to the Legislative Council, during the biennial elections. Once in two years this Council used to have 30 members elected for a term of 6 years. Chandrababu Naidu, at a very young age, competed for the Council known as the Elders’ House. This was an ambitious move for a political infant.
NTR's entry into politics in 1983 became a milestone in the state's political calendar; the 1978 elections became a watershed for the Congress party. The state Congress saw the dramatic emergence of a new generation of leaders. Indira Gandhi's Congress had a lacuna in its state leadership. It had to start searching even for its MLA's. This forced the emergence of a new generation of leaders in the Congress. In the tumult caused by these political events, Chandrababu Naidu from Chandragiri came into state politics as a youth leader. From then onwards he never looked back.

Chandragiri was then a newly formed constituency and Chandrababu Naidu a fresh youth leader from the region. His ability to incisively analyze the circumstances of the time made him a youth leader to reckon with in the region. Precisely for this reason, his name had found a prominent place in the Congress (I) list of probable candidates. Above all, the support of senior members like P Rajagopala Naidu and Jayachandra Naidu stood him in good stead. Rajagopala Naidu helped confirm Chandrababu's name as a candidate in the Indira Congress. Moreover, there was no candidate who could equal Chandrababu Naidu in Indira Congress; then Chandrababu had the support of students and youth.

The fight was transformed into a one to one competition between Janta Dal and the Congress (I). As the elite in the village supported Janta, Dalits and weaker sections rallied behind the Indira Congress. Entire villages were divided into two camps. The wave created by the weaker sections helped the Congress to sweep the poll. Chandrababu was among those who were successful in this election. His entry into
the state level politics was thus solemnized. His election to the state assembly in 1978 was undoubtedly a significant step forward. A number of youth leaders had been brought to the fore through this election. The shape of the Assembly itself had undergone a change. One of the very few leaders, who seized the possibilities and the opportunities that this situation offered to shape their political career, was Chandrababu Naidu.

**Election Results of Chandragiri Assembly Segment in 1978**

Total Electorate: 1,05,123.  Votes polled: 81,279

Valid votes polled: 79,338.  Percentage of valid votes: 75.47%

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Chandrababu, having been elected at a very young age to the Assembly, concentrated on his constituency’s development. Striving ceaselessly, he sought the co-operation of bureaucrats to social development. Projects for roads, bore wells and drinking water were given new shape.
Chandrababu’s political life was impelled forward with great momentum in 1980. It was October, when 16 ministers of cabinet rebelled and toppled the Channa Reddy government. T. Anjaiah succeeded Channa Reddy as the Chief Minister. Anjaiah was a man with different vision and background. Indeed, it is because of Anjaiah that the youth congress became strong in the state. Thought Anjaiah looked simpleton, he was a very shrewd person. He introduced a new generation of leaders in the districts that had hitherto been the fiefdom of senior local leaders. It was during this change in power that Chandrababu Naidu became Cinematography Minister. Anjaiah’s jumbo-cabinet, with 63 ministers had been a national surprise. Though it was later reduced to 45, because of interference from the centre, Chandrababu Naidu’s position remained stable. Having become a minister, his prestige and activities grew. The number of his acquaintances swelled. He was not the one to rest content once power was bestowed on him. He soon accustomed himself to the intricacies of his department and worked diligently to improve its functioning. He was soon drawing the accolades as an able administrator. Perhaps, it was during his tenure as minister that cinematography first caught the attention from the people outside.

Marriage:

In 1981, Bhuvaneshwari and Chandrababu Naidu got married to each other. That was an occasion when politics and cinema had come together for a memorable union. Though there were prior interactions between politics and cinema, NTR’s acceptance of a State Minister
Chandrababu Naidu, as his son-in-law, laid the foundation for greater interactions between the two fields. At the reception of Bhuvaneshwari and Chandrababu Naidu, which was held in Hydrabad, one of the prominent guests was the then Chief minister, T. Anjaiah. It was a rare occasion when ministers and important cinema functionaries met. It was there that T Anjaiah mooted the topic of NTR's candidature to the Rajya Sabha. But NTR had not been very inclined towards career in politics at that time and was hesitant.

**The Upheavals in Congress:**

One important issue concerning local body elections in Chittoor district greatly proved the adamant natures and attitude of Chandrababu Naidu. The local body elections (Panchayat Raj) were not held for a decade in the state of Andhra Pradesh. It was T. Anjaiah who had taken a bold step for the revival of the democratic local bodies in the state. Surpassing a number of upheavals in the Congress party, the Chief Minister, T. Anjaiah had held these elections quite successfully. In the process of selection of candidates, there was large number of intra-party manoeuvres and one such issue was concerned with Zilla Parishad elections in Chittoor district. The seat was reserved for Scheduled Caste. The district had 3 ministers in the state Cabinet of Anjaiah viz. N. Amarnath Reddy, Chandrababu Naidu and C. Das. Among them Naidu was quite junior while the other two were experienced leaders of the party.

A difference of opinion occurred between Amarnath Reddy and Naidu regarding choosing of a right candidate for the post of ZP President.
Chandrababu Naidu with the support of C. Das convinced the chief minister and got Mrs. Kutuhalamma, a Dalit doctor of primary health center and a total novice to politics, elected to the position. This incident was a bone of contention for the then PCC President Kona Prabhakar Rao. He had suspended both Naidu and Das from the Congress party though they were the ministers in the Cabinet. T. Anjaiah was also quite adamant and did not yield to the pressures of the PCC. The matter was taken to AICC President for a final decision. Rajiv Gandhi intervened in the matter and owing to directives from AICC, the PCC had to withdraw the suspensions, ultimately. This event brought a special recognition to the Chittoor district politics and also recognition to Chandrababu Naidu in state politics as powerful young political leader.

Subsequently, with the exit of T. Anjaiah, Bhavanam Venkatram succeeded as the chief minister of the state in 1982: Chandrababu Naidu once again was chosen as the minister in the cabinet headed by Bhavanam Venkatram. Later, he was also elected as the minister in the cabinet headed by K. Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy. In this process, Naidu continued with his ministerial position from 1980 till the next elections in 1983.

The Emergence of TDP and Entry of Naidu in TDP:

The Telgu Desam Party was christened under the leadership of NTR, the matinee idol of Telgu silver screen having 35 years film background in social, historic, mythological and socio-folklore covering around 300 films. In the formation of the party, a veteran Congress leader, Nandendla Bhaskar Rao, incidentally belonging to his own caste 'Kamma', had rendered great support. The party held a few conventions
before its final take over of a shape of the regional outfit and obtained considerable support from the dominant *Kamma* caste, local body leaders and a few legislators.⁴

It was a great mental stress on Chandrababu Naidu as he was continuing as a minister in the Congress leadership under K. Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy while his father-in-law, NTR, had been the founder president of regional Telgu Desam Party taking measures to fight the then coming assembly elections in 1983. Though, physically he was in Congress, mentally, psychologically, and sentimentally he was with TDP. In the assembly elections of 1983, Naidu contested as a Congress candidate, much against the TDP and he had to face a political defeat. It is a fact that though he had done his best for *Chandragiri* constituency in his five year term and undertook many projects of developmental work, he could not stand up to the TDP wave. This defeat was a kind of setback for some time on his political career and made him go into political oblivion temporarily.

**Election Results of Chandragiri Assembly Segment in 1983**

Total Electorate: 1,10,198  
Valid votes polled: 84,058

Percentage of valid votes: 76.28%

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<td>M. V. Rama Naidu</td>
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The Congress party was badly routed and the newborn TDP rose
to great political heights, an unprecedented electoral success throwing
Congress party out of power. Though Naidu was unhappy for his
defeat yet he was happy to see his father-in-law taking over the reins of
chief minister-ship of the state. For some time, Naidu got engaged with
his business activity, construction of a few hotels etc. By the end of 1983,
Chandrababu Naidu with his followers, along with large number of
Chittoor district leaders, joined the TDP. For some time Naidu did not
participate in active politics and confined himself to assisting NTR, and
concentrated more on building the party machinery, conducting
political classes and training camps at the gross root levels so that the
future of the TDP was built up on a strong foundation. NTR is said to
have a conclave of intellectuals like Minte Padmanabham, Tummala
Chowdhary and Chandrababu Naidu who used to suggest important
recommendations to NTR and the latter took decisions related to the
Government and the party.

Nadendla Episode and Restoration of Democracy:

Following the crisis in TDP arising out of political coup initiated
by Nadendla Bahaskar Rao, Naidu became quite active and stood badly
by his father-in-law to face the political crisis. In the month long
political crisis of August, 1984, Naidu played an active role in getting
the TDP legislators loyal to NTR and mobilizing different non-Congress
parties and raising hue and cry of Save Democracy in Andhra Pradesh. Soon after NTR came back to power on 16th September, 1984, Naidu took a respite from his activities. After the reinstallation of NTR, the
role and stature of Naidu had considerably enhanced though he did not hold a political office.

In the mid-term assembly election of 1985, Naidu played an active role in weeding out the uncommitted leaders from TDP and inducting only the loyal to NTR and TDP. The TDP made another sweeping victory in the assembly elections of 1985 and it was a crowning success to NTR but in reality, it was the master mind of Chandrababu Naidu for selecting suitable candidates, shaping the election strategy and so on. Naidu, despite with no position in Government, remained an additional constitutional authority. He was not eager to fight the elections for he was totally immersed in the party elections. Later, he assumed the as the General Secretary of the party, which started working in the office of Telgu Vijayam at Gundhipet near Hyderabad. Naidu organized political training classes in the spacious premises of Telgu Vijayam where he introduced computers and prepared a list of the active TDP workers.

The TDP had the full involvement of Dr. D. Venkateswara Rao, eldest son-in-law of NTR as the President of Telgu Yuvatha and Chandrababu Naidu as party General Secretary. Quite frequently, there used to be a difference of opinion between them. It was a kind of family problem to NTR who tried to resolve it by inducting Dr. Venkateswar Rao in the ministry and making Naidu as the president of Andhra Pradesh Karshaka Parishad, which was a newly established organization. The Karshaka Parishad was given shape by NTR to solve the problems of peasants and agriculturists in the state. The main objectives of the Parishad were to decide about the crops to be
produced, undertake land investigations, providing seeds, train the farmers in modern agricultural practices and providing fertilizers and pesticides, to render help to the farmers in getting agricultural loans and to get the remunerative prices to the products of farmers, etc. Besides, the Parishad was to provide godowns for keeping the produce of the farmers, helping them in securing export orders, eradicate the middlemen and other matters connected with agriculture. It was indeed a prestigious position created exclusively for Naidu. But following the directives of judiciary, the position was cancelled.

Contribution of Naidu to Build Party at Gross Root Level:

NTR a long term for political mobilization of the people wanted to build the party at the gross-root level. In this context, Naidu had greatly contributed and rendered a helping hand. The party concentrated on training camps for its party workers to build up a strong, cadre based party in the state. The different wings of the party – the legislators, the Telgu Yuva Patha, and the trade union organized two week long camps at Gandhipet, the TDP headquarters near Hyderabad. From Gandhipet, the scene shifted to the district towns and other smaller places where orientation camps for Mandal level workers were also organized. The training programmes with insistence to wear yellow shirts (Party colour) and a rigid routine were devised by Chandrababu Naidu. Indeed, he became second in command of the party and his importance increased mainly from the time NTR was unceremoniously ousted from power in August-1984.
As is known, the two sons-in-law Dr. Venkateshwar Rao, and Naidu had constant friction which created a kind of schism in NTR’s family. Dr. Rao started fighting to get hold on the party after NTR was re-saddle with political power. Naidu, No.2 in command has established himself as de facto chief of TDP. Dr. Rao was already a legislator and chief of the party’s youth wing namely Telugu yuvatha with a membership of 2 lakhs. In such a situation, both sons-in-law were up against one another in their efforts to pick party men for various party positions.

As such both wanted to build a bigger clout for themselves. NTR assigned Naidu the task of organizing the party at the gross-root level and conducting elections to the village, Mandal and district units. In this process, Naidu had gifted party posts to people of his liking and created a strong coterie behind him. Further, the party’s image had enhanced by his role in keeping the flock intact when NTR was thrown out of office. However, such increase in power was quite irksome to many ministers, while some of them began to curry favour with him. A few rallied around Dr. Rao by organizing Telugu Yuvatha in their districts. Dr. Rao viewed Naidu as a rebel from Congress-I, while the latter viewed him as the novice to politics. Naidu desired to give party posts to former Congress-I men as well as new entrants to build his power circle, while Dr. Rao insisted that only those, who had been with the party since its inception were to be elected as district presidents. During party elections in December 1985, NTR dispatched ministers with sealed covers containing names of his choice on district committees. Such a move had boomeranged. In many districts, party’s electoral
colleges refused to be dictated and the elections had to be postponed. For the elections in lower tiers, the party dispensed with secret ballot and instead met voters individually, recorded their choice in register and declared the results.

After the bitter experience of 1984 episode, NTR greatly depended on his two sons-in-law to screen the candidates for various important positions. The members of the state executive committee were hand picked men whose past was screened before their formal election at the party’s annual conventions. NTR had a strong desire to organize Bharata Desam Party but on such issue, there was a difference of opinion in between the two sons-in-law. The cold war between the two sons-in-law and the demand for democratic election had a great impact on the party that developed cracks in the party monolith.

After the Third Mahanadu annual convention in 1986, NTR nominated 26 members for state executive committee and appointed Naidu as the General Secretary. The party youth wing headed by Dr. Rao did not command such popularity and was sidelined. There was an open defiance to the principle of NTR ‘one man one post’. The youth leaders insisted the re-election of Dr. Rao as their leader. Dr. Rao wisely sent his two resignations: one as MLA, and the other as chief of youth wing to enable NTR to choose in between them. However, NTR was silent and Dr. Rao agreed to remain as the legislator leaving youth leadership.

The TDP cadre was divided mainly between the two, Dr. Rao-state health minister, and Naidu, a key party functionary. At a time, when NTR was thinking about the forthcoming Lok Sabha elections during 1989 and state assembly elections, Dr. Rao suggested sweeping
changes to galvanize and motivate party cadres while Naidu was with
those who were for limited changes. This group claimed that senior
ministers were influential in their districts and should not be dropped.
Such resoning had also carried a tacit threat of dissent.

Upheaval in the Party on the Issue of Laxmi Parvati:

Laxmi Parvati, an unknown entity, had slowly entered NTR's life.
A gradual acquaintance of NTR with Laxmi Parvati had culminated in
the form of love and later marriage, bringing about a trouble both in the
family and the party. As NTR was growing in age, he had some
ailment. During such time, Laxmi Parvati attended him and even
endeared NTR toward her a great deal. This episode had created some
ripples in the family of NTR and even in the TDP big-wigs and middle
party cadres. Signals were sent to Naidu to tackle the situation. Naidu
advised NTR to refrain from the lady and better give up his obsession.
Despite protest from the family members as well as sons-in-law, NTR
refused to refrain from Laxmi Parvati. In the course of such
developments, NTR's film titled 'Major Chandrakanth' was released and
the producer of this film was another film star Mohan Babu. The
hundred days celebration of this film was planned on grand scale at
Tirupati and preparations were made to mark such an event to
solemnize NTR and Laxmi Parvati's wedding. It was rumored that
Laxmi Parvati's trip to reach Tirupati via Chennai was planned and in a
most clandestine manner she reached the venue.

NTR, while speaking to the party functionaries as well as
organizers, introduced Laxmi Parvati to the audience announcing
publicly the secrecy of their affair. The meeting, however ended abruptly with the intervention of Chandrababu Naidu. With this incident of abrupt closure of the meeting, NTR became greatly annoyed for his plan was foiled. This episode hit the headlines both on television, and the radio broadcast apart from print media. This issue was a matter of great discussion among the general public of the state. Some were against it while some had lauded it as a bold act of NTR. In the course of a few days, there started a number of felicitations and gradually the party functionaries started marking a beeline to Madam Laxmi Parvati for a kind of access to NTR.

In such a situation, the tumult of the 1994 assembly elections began to manifest and the party had to gear up to the assembly election and make arrangement for the selection of candidates and so on. The importance of Laxmi Parvati gradually increased day by day and there was a whispering campaign that Laxmi Parvati would have an important role in the selection of the candidates and distribution of party tickets. Besides, there was a gossip that the followers of Naidu may not be favored with the party banner in these elections. The process was continuing and there was a search for new faces and even the rumours were afloat that money was being exchanged for TDP tickets. It is a fact that NTR was aware of such developments. Although Naidu is reported to have raised objections and even advised the party supremo to be cautious in the selection of candidates, NTR did not seem to have obliged Naidu.

The electioneering was commenced on a grand scale with the initial mega event entitled Praja Garjana (public roar), a big and
unprecedented public meeting at the gymkhana grounds, Secunderabad. It was reported that nearly ten-lakh public attended this meeting from all districts of the state.\footnote{It was a big feat and counter act to the rally held by the Congress party at Vijayawada and Chuddapah during September, 1994. The aspirants of the TDP for the assembly elections were made to mobilize a crowd and put up a grand show at Hyderabad. Several non-Congress national leaders had attended the said Gymkhana feat, which had indeed accorded a fillip to the morale of TDP cadre to a great extent. The TDP was quite keen in making the elections ‘do or die’. The party customarily brought out an election manifesto consisting over ninety six pages divided into three parts - one dealing with ‘Praja Garjana’ meaning People’s Roar covering a total of nine paras. In it, the party made stringent criticism of the Congress party for its omissions and commissions viz. non-sanctioning of irrigation projects by the union government, Prime Minster P.V. Narasimha Rao’s alleged clandestine deal with the BJP in the demolition of Babri Masjid in December 1992, etc. It made a vehement attack on the Congress party for its acceptance of GATT and Dunkel proposals and involvement in ‘Bofors’ scam, the atrocities on Harijans, corruption in irrigation projects, communal trouble, etc.

The second part of the manifesto dealt with some of the promises of the TDP while the third part of the manifesto once again dealt with the allegations on Congress party and questioned whether it had the right to rule over the state. It is mentioned in the party circles that the architect of the manifesto was none other than Chandrababu Naidu who had put in his heart to shape it a great deal.
The party faced innumerable crises/difficulties in the selection of candidates because it was marred by a tussle of groups, one led by Naidu, another by madam Lakshmi Parvati and even by the party supremo. By and large, it was a family tussle. It is pointed out by the observers that the TDP had contested from all the places barring the seats allotted to two Left parties and just two seats to Janta Dal. The allotment of party banner to the aspiring candidates had been a big difficulty. At times even NTR had to intervene and make changes until the last moment. Many senior party leaders had deserted the party and took shelter under the Congress having been disgusted of authoritarian style of the leader and the family rule. Even a few Members of Parliament had negated the attitude of NTR in the allotment of party banner. The aspiring candidates were made to put up their show in mobilization of crowd for 10th October feat at Gymkhana grounds, Secunderabad. The TDP had encountered the problem of dissidence in as many as 25 constituencies among 14 districts. Besides, the party had to put in extra strength in as many as 11 constituencies where it had a narrow margin in 1989 assembly elections.

As indicated earlier, the factionalism in TDP was a recurring feature. In the past, it was the result of the involvement of two sons-in-law. But after the entry of Laxmi Parvati, a new power center had emerged where she appeared to have undertaken back seat driving. Her indirect involvement in party affairs had created an irksome situation to the party cadres. It had made several senior leaders leaving the party and aimed their guns at NTR in view of Laxmi Parvati’s role in party affairs. The factionalism had centered around 50 constituencies and
infighting among the sitting legislators and those aspiring TDP banner was very much rampant. The incident of Nalgonda constituency is worth mentioning which was represented by Raghuma Reddy. His rivals made an active campaign against him and made allegations to TDP supremo quite often. Laxmi Parvati, evincing keen interest in the party affairs, had held Adalats to resolve the problems during the course of allotment of party banner to the candidates. It was mentioned in the party circles that, confidentially, she collected information from the constituencies and later summoned the leaders and resolved their disputes. In such Adalats, she had been acting as an arbitrator advising the party men to maintain unity in the interest of the party.

Another incidence of Kavali assembly is also of similar nature. The rivalry between Dr. Kalpana Devi and Pranay Bhaskar of Warangal district is the third in the series. It is said that Laxmi Parvati sorted out the differences among the leaders and thereby brought unity among the party rank and file. Chilakaluripeta seat in Guntoor district is another incident where there was large number of aspirants for party tickets. Laxmi Parvati summoned such leaders, pacified them and resolved the disputes. In such a manner, she played an important role as an arbitrator and in this regard, she must have received green signal from her spouse NTR. From her actions, it is evident that she had been taking active interest in the party affairs and came out successful.

In these elections, the party president NTR and his better half, Laxmi Parvati, made a historic campaign through their usual Chaitanya Ratham all over the state. This campaign was marked with a difference
when the party president confined to urban and semi-urban areas and refrained to go to interior villages.

NTR deliberately made his wife accompany him and adorn top of Chaitanya Ratham and even addressed the gathering. At such gatherings, Laxmi Parvati fed words into his mouth now and then even the couple exchanged garlands. In a way, he had deliberately introduced his wife to the general public, which was assumed that she would emerge as a possible successor to NTR.

The election results in the state of Andhra Pradesh were quite surprising not only to the Congress party but also to TDP. In the royal battle, Congress, TDP, BJP, Left Parties, BSP stacked claim for political power. However, the main tussle centered between the Congress and TDP in which the Congress was totally routed. All its expectations to retain the political power were shattered down to pieces. In the world of Cricket, Graham Gooch of England team was quite popular in sweeping shots and in the field of electoral battle, NTR had made a clean sweep of Congress party which had been washed away in the TDP wave. The Congress party had lost 35 out of 39 ministers and several other stalwarts in these elections. Even the margin of victory of Congress party had been quite low. The TDP secured 219 seats out of 292 and the friendly parties of TDP viz. the tow Left parties had also made impressive positions in the state assembly.

In a total of 107 seats in Telangana region, the TDP secured 70 seats aggregating 38.56% valid votes. In the case of Rayalaseema regions, out of 52 seats, the TDP had won 40 places aggregating an average of 50.48% valid votes. In Coastal Andhra region, out of a total
of 133 seats, the TDP bagged 109 seats aggregating on an average of 46.31% valid votes. By and large, the average valid votes of the TDP were around 50.48% in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Significantly, the TDP secured 30.60 lakhs of additional voters’ support in this election.

Significant to mention was that these elections did not project a wave or Tornado during the pre-election time. Even the political commentators observed that the pre-election scene indicated lack of such a wave but did not expect such a state of affairs to the Congress party. Even the observers expected a hung assembly. But all such predictions had been undone by the TDP in the state of Andhra Pradesh.9

The observers held that the credit for such a grand victory in the state assembly goes mainly to NTR. A few observers stated that Laxmi Parvati was also partly instrumental in the spectacular win in view of her participation in the election campaign and in the selection of the party candidates. Some observers maintained that it was Chandrababu Naidu, who planned the election strategy and significantly contributed for such a massive mandate.

The election strategy of TDP in general and Naidu in particular for his selection of candidates as well as omissions and commissions of Congress party coupled with the positive poll manifesto formulated by TDP were chiefly responsible in getting such a massive mandate in favour of TDP. The significant aspect in these elections was concerned with NTR’s move with Laxmi Parvati; making a roadside romance was a matter of great feat for general public. All such factors were greatly responsible for the clean sweep of the Congress party in the state assembly elections.
After the change of political power from Congress party to TDP, NTR assumed as the Chief Minister and formed the Government. The party experienced a series of crises, not arising from other political parties or leaders. It basically emanated from within the personal and family circles of NTR. As is known, ever since NTR married Laxmi Parvati, a kind of dissatisfaction arose among his family members since the elderly man had gone for a second marriage at the age of 71. Another aspect was the apprehension among the family members that Laxmi Parvati, having involvement in the party affairs and being close to NTR, she might ultimately succeed NTR both his political life as well as his properties.\textsuperscript{10} Har Krishna, the third son of NTR made a hue and cry to NTR against Laxmi Parvati.\textsuperscript{11}

A few more developments ever since NTR assuming power are also worth mentioning. At the time of the swearing in the ceremony of the Cabinet at Lal Bahadur stadium, Chandrababu Naidu took his oath as the Finance Minister. Significantly for the first time he assumed the position of the minister in the TDP. Ever since 1983 to 1994, for over a decade, he had confined himself to party activity and never aspired the Government portfolio. It was only in November 1994 that he entered the Cabinet as a finance minister. On the dais, NTR along with Laxmi Parvati shared seats. On this occasion, Laxmi Parvati openly announced that she was responsible for securing Chandrababu Naidu both the finance and revenue portfolios. Such an assertion by Laxmi Parvati had raised eyebrows of several leaders. Many people including Dr. Venkateswara Rao objected to such announcements.

They pointed out that the choosing of the finance minister was
the constitutional per-requisite of the chief minister and that no one had
the power to interfere in this matter.12 The cabinet making was a
difficult exercise, and several hidden forces operate in its finalization,
yet seldom they were publicly announced. Madam Laxmi Parvati by
such an announcement appears to have indicated to the audience in
general and leaders including Chandrababu Naidu in particular, that
she was the real force behind the cabinet formation. From then
onwards, the TDP rank and file started respecting Laxmi Parvati for her
immense influence yet, it had a negative impact on the party affairs. The
frontline leadership of the party conducted its business with NTR as
usual, the second rank leaders started making a beeline to Laxmi
Parvati and sending messages to NTR through her.

Chandrababu Naidu and other senior leaders had arrived at a
decision concerning (i) marriage of Laxmi Parvati with NTR; (ii)
management of government affairs in usual manner. In the first case,
they believed that the marriage was a personal affair of NTR and
though it had, no doubt, damaged party’s image, yet the massive
victory of TDP had sidelined the said affair to a great extent. On the
second count, they resolved that the management and running of the
government required to be careful with full concentration on its
working. However, notwithstanding the senior leaders, swallowing the
bitter pill of madam Laxmi Parvati in NTR’s life, there started more and
more pinpricks as well as the big sinister move on the part of Laxmi
Parvati which could not be imagined by the senior leaders including
Chandrababu Naidu. She had several other plans in her mind for their
successful implementation.
A few ministers and MLAs started surrounding Laxmi Parvati with the agenda of opposing Chandrababu Naidu who had wielded great control on party matters for over a decade. In this respect, these legislators and ministers got considerable encouragement. They even started sharing information, which they could not directly discuss with NTR. It was also felt that the decisions, which NTR could not have taken in the normal course, were being taken in a hasty manner. It was evident to the party leaders that madam Laxmi Parvati was instrumental for such actions. Efforts of the senior leaders to define her role in the party and in the cabinet proved to be a failure. It is because NTR did not pay attention to such messages of restraining Laxmi Parvati’s role in such matters. In a short span of time, the intra-party camps in between Laxmi Parvati on one hand and the Chandrababu Naidu on the other were clearly demarcated in all the districts and even among the lower levels making the atmosphere quite tense. Gradually, all those party functionaries started disliking Naidu and leaning towards Laxmi Parvati considering that she might have an effective say in all matters concerning the party and the government. The strong blow of winds in her favour was quite visible to the party leaders, administration as well as to the media. It was even found that decisions taken in the presence of leaders at the early hours in the morning were modified and over-turned by night. The functionaries of no stature were honoured with party ranks. The situation gradually reached a pinnacle stage when it was rumored that a particular person belonging to Naidu’s camp was likely to be axed from the party.
All this was quite visible because NTR, the party supremo, was totally under the influence of Laxmi Parvati. Those leaders who targeted Chandrababu Naidu turned towards NTR and madam Laxmi Parvati. This feature continued to be a regular phenomenon thus making Naidu’s life quite miserable. Despite all such humiliations, Chandrababu Naidu refrained from reacting and exhibited utmost courage and patience. Quite frequently he tried to explain the situation to NTR at every rare opportunity he could get so that he could see reason in the management of party and government. Naidu was primarily concerned with the party and wanted it to weed out her interference in and the government. It was found that those senior leaders, who had worked for the party during difficult times, more particularly when it was in opposition, were sidelined, while those who sought Laxmi Parvati’s favours were recognized and even given party positions.

Therefore, the disgruntled functionaries started approaching Chandrababu Naidu to remedy the situation and take the corrective measures. However, he was helpless and could not protect and retain party’s image and the dignity of the government. Madam Laxmi Parvati continued with her planned attack on all the followers of Chandrababu Naidu. A few MLAs were suspended and even efforts were made to bring disciplinary proceedings on a few leaders including senior leaders like late Madhava Reddy of Nalgonda district. The party circles rumored that the days were not far off when Naidu would be targeted. But even observers pointed out that though the party workers hovered around Laxmi Parvati out of sheer need, they respected Naidu for his
imaginative leadership and steering the party during the curvilinear fortunes of TDP. 13

The TDP was passing through a difficult phase and got sandwiched between Laxmi Parvati and Chandrababu Naidu something comparable to power and sympathy. NTR protected the supporters of Laxmi Parvati. All those who had a common agenda to inflict injury to Naidu's prestige took shelter under madam Laxmi Parvati's political umbrella. They continued to build hopes to get Naidu ousted from the minister seat and felt that Laxmi Parvati could successfully accomplish their objective. Knowing well the facts, Naidu exhibited great courage and patience. NTR, however tried to balance both the sides but with an edge in favour of Laxmi Parvati. Although Chandrababu Naidu was aware of his obligations to NTR, for he was chosen as his successor, he could not tolerate such ill treatment of madam Laxmi Parvati. NTR, some time back, desired to choose his son Bala Krishna, the silver screen hero as his political heir and made an announcement to this effect, but later he had withdrawn such announcement having considered his son Bala Krishna of certain weaknesses and lacking experience to steer political party and the Government. NTR, after marrying Laxmi Parvati, started leaning towards her and gradually gave her both freedom and importance.

The tussle between Chandrababu Naidu and Laxmi Parvati, however, led some of the leaders who kept away from both the groups, continued to consider NTR as their God incarnate and started slowly moving closure to Laxmi Parvati. They felt that it was an important qualification of a party activist to express loyalty to Laxmi Parvati rather
than to NTR. In such a course of developments, a few instances of rupture are worthy of illustration. The first in the series was concerned with the contest in the bye-election of Tekkali assembly segment in Srikakulam district of North Coastal Andhra. NTR, having vacated the seat, was to be filled in through bye-election. The followers of Laxmi Parvati mooted the idea that she should be fielded to ensure easy victory and thereby the situation would be made clear for her succession. But Hari Krishna, the third son of NTR, revolted against such a move. Observers opined that Chandrababu Naidu was attempting to rid the party of Laxmi Parvati, while Hari Krishna was confronting on the home lines. He was unable to accept the entry of Laxmi Parvati into his father's life and even expressed abundance of displeasure on her wielding the power as an extra constitutional authority.

In a way, he led the revolt of the Nandamuri clan who was not willing to tolerate someone else occupying the role of their mother. As efforts were commenced for making Laxmi Parvati enter the Tekkali assembly poll, Hari Krishna also decided to enter the fray. He announced that he, too, was fighting the election from Tekkali and openly disclosed his decision to public and stated that if a party banner was denied to him he would contest as an independent candidate. It was a matter of great shock to NTR and he felt that the rebellion in the family was taking shape against him. In this respect, all those leaders who opposed Chandrababu Naidu convinced NTR that it was Naidu who responsible for the revolt in the family. The anger of NTR was unbound and at every stage rumors were floated against Chandrababu Naidu. With the decision of Hari Krishna
announcing his entry to the bye-election battle, NTR shelved the issue of fielding Laxmi Parvati from the contest. Though the matter ended, yet it had left wounds, which were healed temporarily but the scars remained as a permanent feature.

It is known to almost all the party cadre that Chandrababu Naidu had the habit of visiting NTR’s residence early morning every day for discussing the party matters and other important affairs. Such a practice was in vogue for about a decade. But under the changed circumstances after his tussle with Laxmi Parvati, Naidu reduced the frequency of his visits because he had to face considerable humiliations. A stage had reached when he decided not to visit NTR’s residence any more.

Madam Laxmi Parvati, after her plan to contest Tekkali assembly poll was foiled, started distributing party positions and even chairmanship of corporations according to her discretion. She started distributing positions for the party men under the plea that the party workers did not have enough power. It is natural that the party leaders, who were in opposition for five long years from 1989 to 1994, were eager for some positions or the other and, therefore, they were justified in seeking favours from Laxmi Parvati. Laxmi Parvati exhibited blatant favoritism in such matters and the situation was crystal clear to one and all. Unprecedented group politics was the order of the day. Although there was considerable pressure on NTR, yet being a prisoner of his wife, he leaned towards her and could not bring about a balance. It was a fact known to party circles that Laxmi Parvati was no match to Chandrababu Naidu in managing the party matters and even resolving various problems encountered by the government. NTR was equally
aware of such a matter but he could not express the same for he was under the influence of Laxmi Parvati.

The Lok Sabha elections were to take place in 1996. Hence, Laxmi Parvati was conscious to take a decisive action before plunging into it. There were efforts on her part to gradually wean away the supporters of Chandrababu Naidu in her favour. The positions in the corporations of Chittoor district were assigned to anti-Naidu groups. Similarly, in Vijayanagaram and Nalgonda districts, the feelings of senior leaders like Ashoka Gajapati Raju and Madhava Reddy were greatly hurt. Similar trend continued in the appointments of agricultural marketing committees and state committees.

With the passage of time, the politics of groupism gradually spread to almost all the districts and even at lower levels upto villages. The fears were expressed from different quarters that it would have a great impact on the insuring Lok Sabha elections. Another incident of that period is also noteworthy. It was concerned with Laxmi Parvati’s tour to Nellore and Chittoor districts. Coupled with it, there were elections for co-operative central banks. Although, the first one had less impact, the second had a great impact on Naidu accounting for increasing pressure for him. It was a testing time for Chandrababu Naidu and for the innumerable party workers, who had associated themselves with him for quite a long. In the course of Laxmi Parvati’s visit to Nellore, the group supporting her even made caricatures at the group led by Chandrababu Naidu. To facilitate her tour, NTR himself changed his itinerary and reached Tirupati a day earlier. Although there was no
single official engagement at Tirupati for him, he desired to take rest at Tirumala guest house for that day.

Although Chandrababu Naidu wanted to arrange some activity for him, NTR did not agree. He wanted Laxmi Parvati’s activity to be highlighted on that day while the madam was busy challenging Chandrababu Naidu in his home district, Chittoor. Her group started hailing her as Andhra Jayalalita and future chief minister of the state of Andhra Pradesh. There were open declarations from her followers that in the fight between the two - one led by Chandrababu Naidu and the other by Laxmi Parvati, they would stand by her. They raised slogans to this effect and even rendered abundance of encouragement. The party circles as well as the media maintained that the attendance in the meeting held at Nellore and Chittoor was quite large covering above two lakhs. It was something like an image building exercise in her favour. Besides, it was an effort also to sideline Chandrababu Naidu.

The election for the presidents of district co-operative banks was another issue which, again, exhibited NTR leaning towards Laxmi Parvati. There were about 70 corporation presidents, hundreds of directors, district and state party committees, Panchayat and municipal positions etc., which were filled in at the instance of Laxmi Parvati.

Against this background, elections to district co-operative banks were scheduled. The position concerning elections for co-operative institutions were announced and the names were sent in sealed covers. It was found that all decisions of election leaders were much against the ministers of the respective districts who had been working in the party.
from its inception. The decisions were such that strong holds for the party were weakened. The result was the entry of open rebels in a number of districts. As the situation was going out of hands, Chandrababu Naidu became quite impatient and felt that the matter required to be placed before NTR to see the reason of unworthy people being chosen for such positions. In the case of Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions, the decisions through sealed covers finally had come to be stayed and the majority of those elected were the choice of Laxmi Parvati. However, in the case of Telangana region, it was a different story. In the districts such as Adilabad, Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Nalgonda, Khammam and Warangal, Laxmi Parvati’s group was routed. At such a defeat, NTR was quite furious. Similar results were noticed in Chuddapah and Vijayanagaram districts.

At Vijayanagaram, the TDP was wiped out. At some places, the candidates decided by NTR were not elected even as directors. At Nalgonda district, it was a great surprise to NTR at the defeat of the candidate, Narendra Reddy, nominated by him who belonged to the group of M. Narasimhulu, the minister. NTR was quite unhappy at such developments and this defeat had hurt his prestige. Laxmi Parvati and her supporters added fuel to the fire and NTR took it as indiscipline in the co-operative elections. In the name of indiscipline and defiance to the party decisions as many as eight TDP legislators, were suspended from the party.15 The ministers, Kadiam Shrihari and Nagesh had to face strong abuses from NTR. In view of such defeats and rebellion at Nizamabad, Vijayanagaram, Khammam and Nalgonda, disciplinary proceedings were contemplated against the party leaders.
As is known, Madhava Reddy was an important leader of Nalgonda district and party General Secretary as well. After Jana Reddy’s shifting loyalties to the Congress, Madhava Reddy occupied an important position and commanded the confidence of the majority of MLAs from Nalgonda district who were also loyalists of Chandrababu Naidu. The disciplinary action initiated was to be taken against almost all the legislators and other party workers who were behind the revolt. Thus the TDP was facing something of a chaotic situation at Nalgonda district. As eight legislators were suspended, there was an increasing pressure on Chandrababu Naidu for effectively facing the situation and put up bold measures against the initiatives of Laxmi Parvati. The TDP activists were forming the opinion that if they supported Laxmi Parvati, they would get power and position and in case they supported Naidu they would get punishment. Chandrababu Naidu had the support bulk of TDP leaders. It was felt by his followers that he was unnecessarily projecting patience hoping after hope that NTR would retrace his steps or mend his way. It reached a stage when it was difficult for his supporters to be convinced any more with the assurance that some day NTR would exhibit a change.

However, such hopes were belied. Time had come for a decisive action on the part of Naidu for staging an ultimate show-down. The strategies of NTR and Laxmi Parvati on the other hand forced Naidu to push her into political oblivion. Through such act, they aimed to take both the party and government into their hands. NTR was quite adamant not only in the field of silver screen but also in personal as well as political matters. He ruled the silver screen with stubborn
behavior and similarly in politics too he exhibited such a posture. The dismissal of all the 31 ministers under simple plea of budget leakage was fresh in the minds of party leaders as well as general public. Such an action of NTR was vehemently criticized by the parties including TDP leaders of his dictatorial and autocratic attitude as well as reckless behavior. Later, he appointed a team of 23 ministers – all of them being new faces on February 15th 1989, retaining not even a single member from the earlier ministry. It may be pointed out that never before such sweeping changes were undertaken by any chief minister in the history of Andhra Pradesh. NTR had thus created history. Therefore, the supporters of Chandrababu Naidu prevailed over him to gather enough courage, mobilize party leaders, rank and file and subdue Laxmi Parvati, in other words N.T. Rama Rao. Such an attitude was built up among the party cadre because NTR had decided to make Laxmi Parvati as the Deputy chief minister. Though she was not even an elected legislator, N.T.Rama Rao made up his mind and fixed 9th September-1995 as the auspicious day for the swearing in ceremony. If Laxmi Parvati was to be made deputy chief minister, she would have attained the position of No. 2 in the cabinet and Chandrababu Naidu would have lost his No. 2 position. It might thus have forced him to leave the cabinet and get humiliated.

Chandrababu Naidu was placed in a great dilemma and made attempts for searching of several questions concerning revolt or pleadings to N. T. Rama Rao for reasoning. He was aware that in the past, several leaders revolted against N. T. Rama Rao and faded away politically. The instances of Nadendla Bhaskar Rao, N. Shrinivasulu
Reddy, Vasantha Nageshvara Rao, Jana Reddy, M. Padmanabham, K.E. Krishnamurti and P. Upendra were quite fresh in minds of TDP leaders in general and Naidu in particular. Naidu, therefore, decided to make a last bid to appeal to NTR to see reason for all his actions which were adversely affecting the party and government. During N.T. Rama Rao’s tour of North Andhra in connection with ‘Government at the threshold of people’ (Prajala Vaddaku Palana) Naidu decided to plead with N.T. Rama Rao but he found N.T. Rama Rao having taken several decisions much against the party’s interest. Therefore he decided to act quickly and raise the banner of revolt.

The real revolt was to be staged on 22nd August 1995, if the pleadings were unheeded. Several ministers pressurized Naidu to save both the government and the party from the selfish forces hovering around NTR. Chandrababu Naidu consulted several senior leaders and even consulted Dr. Venkateswar Rao and Ummareddy Venkateshwarlu, the then members of Parliament at Delhi and decided to stage a coup. It was finally resolved that a team of senior leaders would meet NTR after his return from north Andhra tour and plead to free the party and the government from the clutches of madam Laxmi Parvati. In case he refused to do so, all the ministers would stage a dharna in front of his residence. Further there was some change in the pattern of revolt by next day i.e. 23rd August 1995. A committee of senior leaders viz. Ashoka Gajapati Raju, T. Devender Goud and S. V. Subba Reddy met N.T. Rama Rao and put the plea to restore the image of the party and the government. N.T. Rama Rao’s sons and members of his family also met him on this issue but all their pleas had no effect.
Even Chandrababu Naidu met him. But without considering Naidu as his son-in-law, NTR used strong and abusive words and threatened that he would wind up the party. Quite often, he used to utter that TDP was his creation and would end after him. The situation reached a stage when NTR was beyond reasoning and change.

With the failure of the talks, the bulk of his legislators decided to assembled at the behest of Chandrababu Naidu at Hotel Viceroy at Hyderabad. Dr. Venkateshwara Rao and his wife, Smt. Lokeshwari also came from Delhi and stood by Chandrababu Naidu in staging a revolt.

The past congregation of legislators at Abids, the residence of NTR and Rama Krishna Studio during August, 1984 crisis when Nadendla Bhaskar Rao had revolted against NTR¹⁷ was repeated this time at Hotel Viceroy abetting Tank Bund of Hussain Sagar connecting the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. This time it was a revolt by Chandrababu Naidu against his father-in-law at Hotel Viceroy, which was made as a venue. The entire family members of N.T. Rama Rao stood by Naidu in this open revolt.

Change in leadership:

The Telugu Desam Legislature party met at this Hotel wherein Dr. Rao proposed Chandrababu Naidu’s name as the leader of the party. As many as 144 MLAs rendered support to Naidu and passed a resolution electing him as the leader of Telgu Desam Legislature Party.¹⁸ Further, the legislators also made a resolution of lack of confidence in the leadership of NTR.¹⁹ In addition to the above, the meeting passed yet
another resolution requesting the Governor of the state not to consider the recommendations of NTR to dissolve the house.

It is pointed out by observers that as many as 132 legislators agreed to the resolutions while 20 legislators who were on their way back to Hyderabad during the middle of journey had extended support to the said move. At this meeting, Hari Krishna and a few others including Ashok Gajapati Raju and Chandrababu Naidu addressed the gathering. Dr. Vendateshwar Rao was reported to have indicated that such resolutions were passed under compelling circumstances and at a situation when N. T. Rama Rao was in a mood not to pay attention to the repeated requests to restore the image of the party and the government.20

Ashok Gajapati Raju, while addressing the gathering, spoke with tears in his eyes expressing sorrow at the state of affairs and stated that N. T. Rama Rao was instrumental for several party workers to grow as leaders under his shade and this step was taken under unavoidable circumstances. After this meeting, a delegation went to the Governor Krishna Kant and gave a letter seeking an initiative to form the new government under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu.

Consequently, madam Laxmi Parvati made a public apology for her actions and her assertion that she would never interfere in the politics in the future, the demand for replacement of N.T. Rama Rao was not changed. N. T. Rama Rao had consulted senior officials and lawyers to advise him to seek the dissolution of assembly since he could not retreat at the last count due to the position of manipulative politics. The demand for dissolution was used as a stick and also a threat to
every legislator and they were made to choose between continuing as a legislator for another four years of dissolution of the house, without any guarantee that they would come back as legislators. This strategy had worked to some extent but there were still a few legislators aligned to NTR to some extent but they were told that holding a responsible office they would be disqualified on the ground of defection because N. T. Rama Rao group did not have one third of legislators of the original Telugu Desam legislature party to qualify for recognition as a group. Such a threat and inducing made the remaining legislators supporting N. T. Rama Rao join Naidu’s group.

On the next morning, the then speaker Y. Rama Krishnadu reached Hyderabad on a helicopter and the same day, the assembly held its meeting presided over by him and passed a resolution recognizing Chandrababu Naidu as the leader of the legislative party. Consequently, an assembly bulletin was also issued to this respect.

The resolutions passed in the Assembly were submitted to the then Governor Krishna Kant. Subsequently, the Governor having received the resolution, adopted by the TDP legislators electing Naidu as its leader and the resolution of the assembly recognizing Naidu as the leader of the legislature party, had sent the list of MLAs submitted by Naidu to the speaker of the assembly to determine whether he really enjoyed the support of MLAs listed therein. It was a piquant situation in which the Governor was placed in a dilemma. The Governor Krishna Kant with a political background initially of Congress Party and later that of Janta Dal, was to act in a most dispassionate manner, devoid of politics and without inviting political criticisms. At the center, P. V.
Narasimha Rao was running the Congress led government while the TDP was vertically split into two groups one led by Naidu and another by founder leader and the then chief minister NTR friendly to Janta Dal. Soon after the Governor’s desire, the speaker had examined the signatures of the TDP legislators signing the resolution recognizing Naidu as a leader of the TDP and certified of its authenticity.

The Governor had no option except to concur and appoint Chandrababu Naidu as the chief minister of the state. However, the Governor desired to move cautiously and kept the issue dodging for five days. During that period V. P. Singh, Deve Gowda, S.R. Bommai and other Janta Party leaders arrived at Hyderabad to bring about a compromise between the two groups but failed to achieve it. Meanwhile, N.T. Rama Rao had suddenly fallen ill and got admitted to a hospital. In Accordance with the advice of his supporters and well-wishers he decided to honorably resign from the hospital itself. The resignation letter was sent to the Governor. There were also reports from certain quarters that NTR had gone to Governor to handover the resignation letter after reaching his residence and also there was an allegation that the resignation letter had been obtained from him under duress.

It may be noted that from 25th to 30th August 1995 there was a kind of lull in two groups but by 30th August the decks were cleared both politically as well as constitutionally and legally in favour of Naidu. The state convention of the party was held at Basant Talkies, Hyderabad wherein a resolution was put forth to remove NTR from the party presidency and appointing Chandrababu Naidu in his place. The
resolution was passed unanimously and even all those who attended
the convention appended their signatures on the papers. As a result,
Naidu took over not only as the chief minister of the state but also as
the president of Telugu Desam Party on 1st September 1995 and thus a
change-over was formalized.

The entire episode concerning the vertical split within TDP was
basically the result of extra constitutional role of his second wife Laxmi
Parvati.21 Ever since December, 1994 to August, 1995, several political
developments had taken place in the TDP in which Laxmi Parvati
occupied most important place and she had become a factor for such
dissidence and ultimate rebellion by a group led by Chandrababu
Naidu. A feeling had developed among the party leaders that blessings
of NTR could be secured if they could get an access to Laxmi Parvati.

The rebellion in TDP was quite natural and the result of N.T.
Rama Rao’s own making and his excessive ego that the party depended
on his own personal image. NTR lost political power in 1989 and made
to occupy opposition benches for five long years. Having married
Laxmi Parvati he had allowed her to interfere in the matters of party
and Government while neglecting the committed party leader
ultimately leading to a dictatorial attitude.22 A leader of that stature had
lost of reasoning to accept the established doctrine that the party was
more important than the person and that the public welfare was more
significant than the party.

The palace politics was ultimately responsible for a great dent in
the party affairs. The expression of love towards his wife Laxmi Parvati
was a personal matter but allowing her interference in the day-to-day
politics and governmental affairs effected N.T. Rama Rao’s fall from political power. Stubborn attitude, personal ego, lack of personal understanding were mainly instrumental factors for the down fall of N.T. Rama Rao. He had been a toy at the hands of his wife and ignored elected legislators, senior party leaders and others.

N.T. Rama Rao had committed two blunders; one concerned with totally ignoring the party leaders and the other not being habituated to go through the comments in the print media. A person of his stature who was to consider the welfare of seven crores of Telgu people had set aside and at the age of 74, becoming an instrument at hands of a lady allowing her for backseat driving was something like his own making for a total fall.

In this episode, the Governor’s action relying on the Speaker’s recognition on the leader of numerically larger group within the legislative wing of the ruling party was also questioned in certain circles. Even the state Governor had kept the issue pending without arriving at a decision for five long days at which there had been adverse comments from different quarters. He had allowed N.T. Rama Rao to remain in power despite a clear resolution of the majority of the TDP legislators supporting Naidu and the Speaker certifying to that effect. The Governor ought to have invited Naidu to form the Government and allowed him to prove his majority in a couple of days. Such action would have been more justified. But dodging of the issue for five days by the Governor, comments were made that the Governor had deliberately given five days’ time to N.T. Rama Rao as well as the senior Janta party leaders at the national level for a compromise and even
allowing the fallen hero to search for legal or constitutional avenues. However, it was commented by different circles that the state Governor being a person above board and non-partisan had refrained from quick action and allow for a fair decision.26

The entire episode though formalized by the swearing in ceremony of Chandrababu Naidu and his first public meeting at Nizam College Grounds, Hyderabad on 9th September, 1995 and approval by large number of party leaders and others, yet it was subject to clearance form the state judiciary. The High Court, having examined the case in detail, had delivered its judgment legitimizing Chandrababu Naidu’s Government. The full bench of the High Court had examined four important dimensions. They are: (i) Was it correct on the part of Governor to refuse the dissolution of the house as requested by N.T. Rama Rao and inviting Chandrababu Naidu to form the Government? (ii) Was Chandrababu Naidu’s election as the leader of the Telgu Desam legislature party in order? (iii) Was the bulletin issued by the Speaker announcing Chandrababu Naidu as the legislature party leader legal? (iv) Which was the real party after the split? The first two questions were of immense importance which determined the legality of Chandrababu Naidu’s Government.

The High Court gave clear orders and felt that dissolution of assembly would have been against the majority MLAs’ interest and it would have been tantamount to N.T. Rama Rao rubbing his views on the majority members. High Court also cleared that when N.T. Rama Rao lost his majority, it was in order to seek alternative ways to establish a Government and in that instance, the Governor’s request to
Naidu to form the Government was in order. Then there was no question of legality of Naidu’s election as the legislative party leader. The High Court did not go into the issue and felt that whether he enjoyed the majority support or not and the Governor was convinced that he enjoyed the majority and his request to Naidu to form the new Government which was a correct decision. It was proved further during the trial of the strength in the assembly. The High Court, however, struck down the bulletin issued by the Speaker.

From the entire narration of the story, the rebellion and the coup taking place as result of quick political developments in the span of nine months from November, 1994 to August, 1995, it was evident that N.T. Rama Rao’s personal ego, stubborn attitude, adamant behavior and excessive favour extended to his wife were chiefly responsible for his downfall from the political power.

On the question of such capturing of political power by Chandrababu Naidu, Professor F. D. Vakil of Osmania University observed, “in a representative form of Government, one should always recognize the crisis as a package deal. Withdrawal of confidence in a leader is one of the inherent characters of the Parliamentary form of Government. In the absence of second line of leadership to TDP, Naidu stood little taller than the others in terms of organization and leadership qualities and so he stacked the claim at the numbers game while the legal battle of the Governor come on the scene later. There was no official split, as such things were cleared for the Governor to react quickly”.

Though N.T. Rama Rao nursed a feeling of reviving of Bharata Desam party contesting Lok Sabha election in 1996 and taking revenge
on his defeat at the hands of Chandrababu Naidu, yet his sudden death on 18th January, 1996 ended once for all his contemplated strategy. It was a great loss to National Front since he was the very architect of it and it was an irreparable loss to the Telgu Desam party also.²⁸

The entire episode amply demonstrates the factors behind the curtain for the fall of N. T. Rama Rao and ascendancy of Chandrababu Naidu as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh and President of Telgu Desam Party.

He was no match to NTR either in his physical stature or dramatic style of rendering speeches or charisma. To fill in these gaps, Chandrababu had to depend only upon good governance. And, precisely, he toiled hard on this count. As far as working hard was concerned, he was an equal to NTR. From morning till night, he would concentrate on work. The official conferences, reviews and meetings that he conducted were more clear, analytical and decisive. His government was formed out of revolt. Naturally, it had some weaknesses the influence of which was likely to be seen both inside and outside the government. At every step there was the allegation that the government had installed itself after backstabbing. First and foremost Chandrababu had to counter this allegation.
Section B: Chandrababu Naidu and the coalition Politics at the Centre

Naidu is known for his remarkable administrative and political capabilities and for shrewd strategies. However, he lacked oratory and demagogy skills to attract the masses unlike his father-in-law, N.T. Rama Rao. This was a greatest limitation on his part. But he enjoyed a rich political experience of 17 long years initially in the Congress and later with the Telgu Desam party. He had sound political skills in making the cabinet and also in taking appropriate decisions after coming to power. In the making of cabinet, he had deliberately put a small team of 10 ministers with 8 cabinet ministers of state and 2 deputy ministers in the first instance. It included such loyalists who had stayed with him in his revolt against N.T. Rama Rao. He had, however, made Hari Krishna, the rebel son of N.T. Rama Rao as a cabinet minister and assigned him the transport portfolio. Naidu had deliberately declined to include his co-brother, Dr. Venkateshwara Rao, Member of Parliament as the deputy Chief Minister although there were rumors to this effect. His inclusion would have given Chandrababu Naidu the firm imprints of family rule over the state although the Telgu Desam party had the image of a family party. In view of this, he kept Dr. Rao to parliament with the status of a leader of Telgu Desam party, and thus Naidu appeared to have played his cards well in escaping the criticism from the general public.

Numerous problems required the attention of the new Government which included the hike in power tariff, bus fares, etc.
The welfare of minorities was another important dimension because the Muslims were scared of the Telgu Desam party and its excessive overtones of Telgu. It may be recalled that a few minority leaders had represented in the past to Congress Government about the plight of the Muslims in terms of employment, industry, trade and commerce and also excessive thrust over Telgu language. Apart from the aforesaid issues, power generation, drinking water to twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad, abolition of value added tax, mega city plan, road maintenance, integrated rural development, and minor irrigation projects were a few other issues which required attention of the Government. The state had been facing severe financial crunch owing to the populist policy measures like rupees two a kilo rice scheme and Prohibition. These policies were implemented by the former Chief Minister, N.T. Rama Rao, which were the avowed promises of Telgu Desam ever since 1983. Naidu, being a seasoned administrator, tried to objectively assess the benefits and compare with that of the taxes levied to match such a deficit. Naidu had insurmountable problems before him, one concerning stabilization of his Government; second, effective grip on the legislators and other party functionaries and the third, ably maintaining the tactical relationship with the union Government which was then headed by P.V. Narasimha Rao of the Congress Party.

Chandrababu Naidu was a shrewd politician and attempted to prove at large that his Government believed in doing something constructive and deliver goods positively rather than indulging in
empty slogans and film-style rhetorics similar to his father-in-law's. After assuming the power, Naidu held a dialogue with the District Collectors each and emphasized the need for effective implementation of the much cherished welfare programmes of rupees two a kilo rice, prohibition and relief to weaker sections. There was a considerable pressure from the opposition for lifting ban on People's War Group as well as on prohibition. Naidu had gone one step in advance in stoppage of liquor ban on medical grounds to check the misuse, which was upheld by a single judge of the state High Court that vindicated the stand of new Government. Even in regard to toddy, the new Government had maintained the status quo, which gave great relief to the toddy tapers.

Naidu made sudden visits to the old city of Hyderabad beyond Musi River and patiently heard the grievances of residents in regard to electricity, protected water supply, drainage and other issues. Indeed the old city of Hyderabad in particular and other areas under the municipalities surrounding Hyderabad were badly maintained. The roads, drainage system, unauthorized contractions, pollution etc., speak volumes of dysfunctional municipalities. Corruption had been unbound and callous functioning of municipalities least considering the civic requirements was the hallmark of the day. The Ex Chief Minister, having visited the old city, had come to know the problems and placed them in the agenda of action of the Government. He had assured construction of three lakh houses for weaker sections both in rural and urban areas apart from equal number of house site pattas while emphasizing allotments to
women. He was equally aware of the need for accommodative and rapprochement attitude with the ruling party at the center for getting the clearance of several pending projects cleared and seeking additional grants to the state Government.

In this context, it may be pointed out that the Telgu Desam Party leaders ever since 1983 treaded on a wrong path of confrontation with the Centre and deliberately took a posture of opposing Congress Party for the sake of opposition though they had emulated DMK/AIADMK in Tamilnadu in several spheres. A careful look at DMK/AIADMK would illustrate that these regional parties, confined to state, maintained cordial relations with the Union Government ever since they assumed power in 1967. This is the reason they had maintained power at the level of state in turn like musical chairs. The Telgu Desam Party on the other hand was quite ambitious and not content with the political power at the state and with an eye at the center deliberately chose to make conclaves of regional parties and so on. Ultimately, the party took wrong steps and faced a miserable debacle in 1989. Naidu choose to deviate from the said approach so as to keep his position safe while sidelining the established policy line of N.T. Rama Rao.

Chandrababu Naidu attempted to emulate NTR, his father-in-law, in regard to the policy of ‘Government at the threshold of people’. In the first week of November, 1995, the Ex Chief Minister attempted to test the said policy so as to build up a rapport with the general public and thereby stabilized his Government. This idea was carver out by NTR in the first week of August, 1995 and put to application in the North Coastal district of Andhra Pradesh. It was, however, a thorough
failure. But then, the main thrust of this unique theme was bye-fold. One was to indicate to the public at large that Naidu’s Government was keen to solve people’s problems and earn their goodwill, thereby Naidu desired to have a popular image, which he greatly lacked. As is known, Chandrababu Naidu was an effective strategist but failed to attain a popular image comparable to his father-in-law, NTR’s. The second most important dimension was to assess the people’s mind in regard to the split in Telgu Desam Party.

In this respect, the theme was quite unique and tended to be a measuring rod to reach the mind of the people among the rural parts. By the end of the first phase meetings of Grama Sabha, lakhs and lakhs of memorandums and petitions were received involving several thousand of crores of rupees for their salvation. It was pointed that the problems not involving finances were to be resolved on the spot. It was also established that among such petitions, around 10 to 30% were said to have been disposed of on the spot. The people at certain places exhibited their interest and enthusiasm while at a few other places it was damp squib.

The Gram Sabha meetings and sudden inspections created a kind of euphoria and even a kind of shock treatment to the state bureaucracy. By and large, the individual problems were reportedly quite high as compared to collective problems concerning villages or Mandalas. Among the representations made to the Government, the matter of illicit liquor and its unlawful distribution was the major topic. Apart from it, the other issues concerned with protected water supply, roads, bus transport
facilities, repairs to tanks and electrical transformers, school buildings, community halls, medical and health amenities, etc. Among the issues concerning individual problems, mention may be made of pensions, employment avenues, etc. At a few places, the civil servants were taken left and right for their failures, while in some places the ration shop dealers were suspended.

The Gram Sabha meetings were held in all most all parts of the state. In the case of Adilabad district, the meetings were held at a few places to resolve the problems of the people. And an estimated requirement of Rupees 20 crores was required for this purpose. Altogether 1.40 lakh petitions were received in West Godavari district and 1000 of them were resolved. In the case of Vishakhapatnam, there were 1.18 lakh memorandums received for remedial measures by the Government. Every word in the metropolis was reported to have sent 1000 petitions and the average expenditure to resolve such problems was around 10,000 lakhs. Similarly, in Karimnagar district, there were about 50,000 petitions of which 1000 were resolved on the spot. Hyderabad had a large number of petitions involving a total expenditure of rupees 70 crores. The representations from slum areas were quite high.

Warangal district similarly had 50,000 representations, which required Rs. 50,000 for every village. In this process, in almost all the districts, there had been large numbers of petitions for disposal by the Government. The Ex Chief Minister made use of all the available modes of transport such as car, bus and even footpath and secured considerable publicity. The press reporters accompanying him provided a good publicity too. By doing this, the Ex Chief Minister had attempted
to instill a hope among the general public that the new Government would look into their grievances quite sympathetically, and that it was quite earnest in resolving such problems. Thereby he had put up a popular image through such measures. It was indeed a novel scheme and a step further in the enhancement of people’s political consciousness in the management of popular Government.

The elected leaders quite naturally undertook several unique schemes to legitimize their leadership. In the electoral politics too, the leaders assured much sops to bag the votes. Although such schemes and sops were a kind of solution to their problems, the people expected more and more such sops with passage of time. They tended to take it as a standard for future Government and leaders, and any failures would be a deathblow at a later day. Naidu through such a novel method of ‘Government at the threshold of people garnered a great political mileage and an image of a popular leader.

Lok Sabha Elections – 1996:

The Lok Sabha Elections brought about a complete change in the state and national politics. The elections of Lok Sabha in 1996 ushered in a new era of coalition politics at the Centre. Regional parties emerged at national level in terms of sharing power at the Centre. In Andhra Pradesh the Telgu Desam was the second to a national party, Indian National Congress with a tally of 16 against 22 seats. Its performance under the leadership of Chandrababu Naidu was better securing 16 seat in Parliament compared to its tally of 13 seats in 1991 elections.
Lok Sabha Elections of 1996 in Andhra Pradesh

(Total number of seats – 42)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr.No.</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats Won</th>
<th>Valid Votes polled</th>
<th>% of valid votes</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>INC</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1,20,87,596</td>
<td>39.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>TDP</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>99,31,826</td>
<td>32.05</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7,28,536</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>CPI(M)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>AIMIM</td>
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In the case of Telgu Desam Party (Naidu group) the party had obtained 16 seats in these elections while it had 13 seats in 1991 Lok Sabha elections. In the interregnum of 1991 to 1996 owing to the politics of machinations by the All India Congress Party, a few Telgu Desam Party MPs had defected to Congress Party but in these elections, the Telgu Desam Party had consolidated its position and commanded a respectable strength of 16 seats. The party won Srikakulam, Bobbili and Anakapalli seats in North Costal Andhra, Kakinada, Narsapur, Eluru, Manchilipatnam, Tenali, Bapatla, Narasaraopet in South Costal Andhra, Chittoor and Hindupur in Rayalaseema region and four constituencies viz. Nagarkurnol, Adilabad, Karimnagar and Warangal in Telangana region. The Congress Party on the other hand obtained 22 seats viz. Parvatipuram and Vishakhapatnam in North Coastal Andhra, Rajahmundry, Amalapuram, Vijayawada, Guntour, Ongole and Nellore in South Coastal Andhra, Mahebubnagar, Siddpet, Medak,
Nizamabad, Peddapalli, Hanamkonda and Miryalgluda in Telangana region and one seat from Nandyal in Rayalaseema region the CPI(m) had won a single seat at Khammam while the CPI had won the Nalgonda and Bhadrachalam seats.

It is significant to make a mention of P.V. Narsimha Rao who had own the bye-election of Nandyal with a majority of over 5 lakh votes and had won the 1996 Lok Sabha elections with a margin of 98,530 votes only. The popularity of the former Prime Minister had declined a great deal. It appears that the voters had not paid considerable attention to the so-called “Telgu Bidda” in these elections. Chandrababu Naidu, as the Chief Minister of the state from 1995 September, had concentrated on certain programmes like, Shramadhan, Government at the door steps of the people (PVP), etc. and even made use of the televisions satellite channels to the optimum, enthused the party cadre, selecting the right candidates for the election quite tactfully to lead the party to a great electoral success.

Taking note of All India position, the elections to Lok Sabha in 1996 had not accord clear majority to any political party.
Party Position in the Lok Sabha Elections - 1996
(As on 12th May 1996)

Elections held: 537 Seats
Result declared: 525 Seats

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Number of Seats</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>INC</td>
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<td>Janta Dal</td>
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<td>CPI (M)</td>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>DMK</td>
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<tr>
<td>Independents</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Asian Recorder, 3-9 June, 1996 Page 25667

The outcome of the Lok Sabha elections resulted in no party or alliance in groups getting majority of seats in the house. The BJP had emerged as a largest single party and with its partners, it was touching the 200 figure, which was short of the 50% plus majority to form the government.
The Congress Party had witnessed the most humiliating defeats in the north and south, an unusual phenomenon in its poll history with the exception of two states viz. Orissa and Himachal Pradesh. The party had also lost in four states in the simultaneous assembly elections. In the past, the Congress party had 232 seats with a poll average of 28.8%. In the Lok Sabha elections, the party suffered a debacle in Punjab, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and the North Eastern States. The BJP made an impressive show in Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar and in Karnataka it fell short of its expectations and made poor performance in Himachal Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, West Bengal and Orissa. The party, however, maintained a creditable performance in the state of Gujarat.

The Telgu Desam party supremo, Chandrababu Naidu, after a spectacular success in the Lok Sabha elections of 1996, had set his eyes on national politics and desired to play an active role at the center. He had evinced considerable interest in strengthening the third front comprising of Janta Dal, CPI, CPI (M) and the conclave of regional parties such as Telgu Desam party, DMK, AGP, Samajwadi party, and even grouping Akali Dal and others. There were differences of opinion among the Telgu Desam party cadre in the state in regard to extending political support to BJP led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee on one hand and third front leadership on the other. A few leaders of the Telgu Desam party contended that by extending support to the BJP, Andhra Pradesh state would get additional support in completion of pending projects and also additional grants for certain subsidized programmes like
rupees two a kilo rice and the policy of prohibition. The other group supporting third front also believed that in the event of the third front coming to political power at the center the state would not only secure additional financial grants, completion of pending projects but also a share in the formation of cabinet at the center. Further they contended that not only the image of the Telgu Desam party would be considerably enhanced but the role of Chandrababu Naidu too. Added to the above, this group also believed that the Telgu Desam party, by sharing the Union Council of ministers, would be in a position to influence the central leadership in bringing about a radical change in the union-state relations in the Indian Federal set-up.

In this process, the Telgu Desam party emerged as a messiah of the regional parties in bringing about unity and playing a tacit role in the politics of Union Government at the apex. Chandrababu Naidu is reported to have assured Telgu Desam Party’s support to the third front and even consolidated other regional groupings around it. Further, it may be pointed out that late NTR had earlier played a pivotal role in the formation of national front in 1989 as well as for the rise of V.P. Singh to political power. Chandrababu Naidu is reported to have put up concerted efforts in extending support to the third front as an alternative to the national front of 1989 in bringing about non-Congress and non BJP Government at the center. Thus, he had gradually assumed the role of a ‘King maker’ at the national politics. As V.P. Singh and Jyoti Basu had declined to accept the position of leadership of third front, Naidu turned his attention to H.D. Deve Gowda for the leadership of the third front. Incidentally, the congress parliamentary
party, in view of its strong opposition to BJP for its age-old communal leanings, also supported the leadership of Deve Gowda.

In this way, a consensus had gradually built up in favour of Deve Gowda to take up leadership of the United Front composing of Janta Dal, CPI (M), CPI, DMK, TMC, Samajwadi party, Madhya Pradesh Vikas Party, Telgu Desam party (Naidu), Maharashtra Gomantak party and Karnataka Congress Party. In the 1996 Lok Sabha elections, the regional parties altogether comprised 61 members in which 17 belonged to DMK, 20 of TMC, 16 of TDP and 5 AGP. Akali Dal had 8 members who had initially stood by BJP but later switched loyalty towards the United Front. Another 3 members of the regional parties also stood by the United Front. This block of regional parties chose Chandrababu Naidu as the convenor to lead the unity of non-Congress, non-BJP regional front and to take decisive step to hold a dialogue with Deve Gowda in the formation of the Third Front at the national level. There were two issues before Naidu. One was ‘short term’ and the other ‘long term’. The former was concerned with securing huge grants from the union Government to meet the requirements of the state while the long term was to stabilize his position not only at the level of state but also in National Politics. Added to it, he was also concerned with representation of Telgu Desam party in the Union Council of Ministers.

As is known in politics, there is no permanent friendship of enmity. It is all transient and subject to change with the passage of time. During the year 1984, the BJP stood by Telgu Desam Party in the ‘save democracy’ in a difficult time when NTR was unceremoniously removed from political power by the then Governor of the state of
Andhra Pradesh.\textsuperscript{33} Since then, the unity between BJP and TDP continued in the successive assembly elections of 1985 and 1989 besides the Lok Sabha elections of 1991. However, the honeymoon between the BJP and TDP had come to an end by 1994.

In the formation of new Government following the Lok Sabha elections of 1996, Chandrababu Naidu as a leader and Convener of the regional groupings had strongly favoured supporting United Front led by Deve Gowda. The president of India, adhering to the constitutional norms, had invited Atal Bihari Vajpayee, the leader of the BJP and the combination of other regional groupings to form the Government in view of the fact that the BJP was the single largest party in the Lok Sabha elections with a strength of 161 and other alliance partners totaling 34 on its side. The swearing in ceremony was held on 16th May 1996 with Vajpayee as the Prime Minister and 11 others as ministers. The president stipulated a condition of obtaining a confidence vote on the floor of the house. Vajpayee asserted that he would provide ‘a good, honest and responsible Government’ and added ‘we will show our strength on the floor of the house’.\textsuperscript{34} The Third Front leaders had contemplated a strategy while the congress party was unequivocal in reiterating its decision to support Deve Gowda from outside. The Bahujan Samaj Party, which had 11 members strength in the Lok Sabha, announced to vote against the Government led by Vajpayee. The appointment of Vajpayee as the Prime Minister of India had created a major political controversy with the leaders of National Front, Left Front lodging protests over the decision of the President of India. What caused considerable heat was the President’s inviting Vajpayee even
before the decision of the Congress Party to support Deve Gowda communicated to the Rashtrapati Bhavan.

The president had in principle observed the established convention of inviting the leader of the single largest party to form the Government. The BJP had the support of 195 members in the Lok Sabha with a shortage of 70 members to get the majority. The party hoped to secure the support of the other parties to fill in the gap of majority during the period between 15th and 31st May. BJP was hoping after hope that the regional parties such as DMK, TMC, AGP and TDP would render support in its bid to form the government at the Centre.

It may be pointed out that comments poured in had come from several quarters on the leadership of BJP taking over the reigns of Government. The British media, in an assessment of the post-poll scenario in India, had appreciated the democratic exercise but put up a concern for the then emerging chaotic polity, instability and religious fanaticism.35 Daily Telegraph, in its editorial, observed “India on perilous drift”36 and added that “in contrast to China, India remained a beacon for Asians who value individual freedom”.

A few other media experts indicated that BJP’s electoral performance had not diminished despite its “religious fanaticism”37 which could prove dangerous to “decisive in multi-religious countries like India”.38 Guardian magazine in its editorial observed that “BJP still represents a threat to racial tolerance and social harmony”39 and added that “Indian politics now evolving around Hindu chauvinism represented by BJP, whether by involving them in exigencies of coalition Government or keeping them in opposition”.40 Though BJP
was branded as a rank communal party, Atal Bihari Vajpayee did not attract any stigma of extremism. Generally, he was described as a moderate and also seen as the mis-fit in a party. According to London Times, “BJP’s Government would destroy India’s delicate internal balance”. The commentators from Britain were quite critical of BJP for its commitment to turn India into a nuclear weapon state and its attitude towards minorities, etc.

Further, it stood on economic liberalization lacking creditability in the eyes of commentators in London despite Vajpayee’s quite frequently reiterating that his party stood by pro-liberalization. Guardian, the leading daily observed “the defeat of the congress party as a terminal blow to the party’s assumption of a natural right to rule”. While the London Times opted for a Left coalition rather than Hindu militants with a nuclear bomb. In its editorial it hoped the Congress Party would come back to power in future although the people were determined to punish it then and found no alternative. The Lok Sabha had decided to take up a discussion on the vote of confidence sought by Vajpayee’s Government on 27th May. It was decided at an all-party meeting convened by the Speaker P. A. Sangma on 22nd May. The United Front unanimously elected H. D. Deve Gowda as the leader of its parliamentary party.

The United Front comprised of 13 political parties, and there was a general assertion from almost all the leaders of these parties providing solidarity to the United Front. The debate was initiated on 27th May and continued till the next day. It was noticed that Vajpayee could not mobilize the support of other regional groupings to secure a majority on
the floor of the parliament. Baring its allies Shiv Sena, Samta Party, Akali Dal and Haryana Vikas party, no other party had come forward to extend support to the Government. There were differences even within the Samta party opposing the Government during the debate. It was a marathon discussion on the floor of the house and Vajpayee's reply to the debate was marked by acrimonious exchanges between the treasury benches and the opposition. While concluding his reply, Vajpayee announced his resignation, a tactical move to preempt his defeat at the end of the debate and voting.

The United Front Government led by H.D. Deve Gowda was sworn in on 1st June, 1996 as the Prime Minister, and the President of India had stipulated a condition to prove majority on the floor of the House by 12th June. The Government was constituted and the motion of confidence was carried out by a voice vote in Lok Sabha on 12th June. In this process, the Third Front, with the support of regional groupings, came to occupy political power at Delhi. It may be pointed out that Chandrababu Naidu, who had taken up the major responsibility of uniting the regional groupings in the support to non-Congress, and non-BJP front, had succeeded in his efforts, and from then onwards, he continued to play a pivotal role at the national politics. In the new Ministry, four members from Telgu Desam Party viz. K. Yerram Naidu, B. Bulliramaiah, S. Venugopalachary and U. Venkateshwarlu were inducted.

Chandrababu Naidu similar to NTR, also continued to play a pivotal role in the politics of the Union Government and successfully brought the unification among the members of the United Front. With the
passage of time, the national parties continued to decline considerably and failed to draw political support from certain regions of India. It is the case of All India Congress Party, which once held political support all over the country, that reduced to a minimal position. The vacuum created by the All India parties was gradually occupied by regional groupings. Thus, an authentic federal polity was taking shape in India with the rise of regional parties ever since the middle of sixties and later of the eighties, and single party dominance system had come to an end.

Interesting to note is that the Ex Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu had traveled in the path of opposition to Congress Party despite the fact that he was once an active Congress leader. As a part of the United Front, he was compelled to seek the support of Congress Party for the installation of United Front Government in power. In his thrust for the role of a ‘King Maker’ at the center, he had inspired United Front segments to convince V.P. Singh for the leadership of the front but failed to secure his acceptance. An effort was made to rope in Jyoti Basu but it, too, could not succeed. Thus, the mantle fell on Deve Gowda, not that he maintained All India stature, and he was accepted like a dark horse as none of the known horses show general acceptability. The only credit to him was the spectacular victory of Janta Dal in Karnataka state during the Lok Sabha polls of 1996.

In the state of Andhra Pradesh, the Congress Party leaders were not happy with the concept of AICC in rendering unconditional support to the United Front. They were quite disappointed at the dismal situation of no political power at the state and even the loss of power at the center. Until then they had the solace of being in
political power at the center but with the defeat of their party in 1996 polls, they lacked political shelter. However, they had hoped the strategies of the Congress Party at the national level and political machinations of the past in temporarily rendering support to non-Congress secular parties and ditching them later in accord to political convenience. In this respect, the regimes of Charan Singh and Chandra Shekhar can be an instance here. They, therefore, sought to live under the dilapidated shelter of P. V. Narasimha Rao or wait for timely opportunity at a later date. Further, the Congress Party leaders of the state were placed in an embarrassing position for the reason that they, on one hand, had to oppose Naidu in the state and, on the other, go hand in hand at the center.

By November 1996, certain rumblings in between the Congress Party and the Prime Minister Deve Gowda had erupted owing to several reasons. Although there were reports that there was opposition by the AICC to his Government, he categorically indicated, “The word threat was not in his dictionary”. The Congress Party expressed much unhappiness on two issues - one from the alleged phone tapping of several senior leaders and two: the meeting of Deve Gowda with Bal Thakhery, the supremo of Shiv Sena party at Mumbai. The Congress Working Committee, in its resolution, fiercely attacked the Government charging its failures to meet the commitments to the people both on economic front as well as the political sensitive areas. Further, it also found fault with the Prime Minister concerning the Uttar Pradesh fiasco, decline in industrial growth, uncertainty in the flow of foreign funds, weak physical discipline, distribution of funds in adhoc manner.
and lacking direction in the economic management. The CWC also found the faults concerning the management of foreign relations and attacked the United Front for the pathetic delay in reacting to the Afghan situation, defeat at the United Nations when India failed to secure a victory in elections to the Security Council and the "casual response to the physical attack on Indian diplomats in Pakistan".

The Left parties were largely dissatisfied with the style of functioning of the United Front Government particularly in regard to decision-making. The then Chief Minister of West Bengal, Jyoti Basu was unhappy with the Deve Gowda Government's stand on the issue of strike by the Central Government employees demanding bonus. Even Chandrababu Naidu, who was responsible and played a prominent role in elevation of Deve Gowda, was sore at his partisan attitude towards Karnataka concerning Almatti dam issue and the sanction of rupees 182 crores loan by the center. He viewed it as an insult to injury. Further the rift in Janta Dal in Bihar was widening gradually in view of the fact that the Left parties decided to hold a rally highlighting the failure of the United Front Government on various counts. The Left parties decided to launch an offensive move including CPI, CPI (M), Forward Bloc and RSP. The rift in between Left parties and Janta Dal was a blow when the CPI, the strongest of the Left parties in the state, fielded its candidate for the post of Deputy Speaker of the state against the chagrin of the Janta Dal.

The Janta Dal had supported the BJP's nominee on the plea that the BJP was the largest opposition party in the state. Added to the above, the CPI categorically supported the creation of a separate state of
Jharkhand contrary to the stand adopted by Janta Dal and indicated that the interim Jharkhand Area Autonomous Council would resign from it. As is known, the Janta Dal was a divided house as the senior leaders harboring suspicions against one another. Laloo Yadav and his supporters were quite unhappy with the Central Government in the Fodder scam and termed it as a political conspiracy. Sharad Yadav, the then acting President of the Janta Dal was anxious to emerge as a full-fledged aspirant after Laloo’s exit.

Sita Ram Kesari, a senior Congress Party leader had attempted to woo the Dalits and minorities through the reorganization of the party. The prodigals within the Congress Party were intending to come back. The ball was set to roll with the coming back of Madhav Rao Sindhia and many other leaders like Arjun Singh, N.D. Tiwari and G.K. Moopanar. In view of the feeble nature of the united Front, the faction of Congress Party desired to extend the support by joining the United Front Government while others desired unconditional support from outside. The situation was gradually undergoing a change with the intentions of several senior leaders coming back to the organization.

Sita Ram Kesari, who was the then interim president of the Congress Party kept low pro-file and started consolidating his position by reorganizing the party frontal bodies and making several changes to enliven the set-up and erase the image of the party as “corrupt”, declaring his personal assets, putting up Man Mohan Singh, a former bureaucrat and finance minister as in-charge of economic affairs of United Front Government, etc. P.V. Narasimha Rao, the leader of the Congress Parliamentary Party, had quit the post in the last week of
September 1996. The party had an enormous position owing to series of scams such as, Bofors, securities, Jain Hawala, JMM bribery, Urea deal, medical equipment, etc. under the Congress rule at the center and such scams thoroughly exposed the misdeeds of the party leaders and damaged the image of the Congress Party at the all India level. The election of Sitaram Kesari, the senior most Congress Working Committee member, as the party chief was welcomed from certain quarters. He was the choice of P.V. Narasimha Rao for the latter attempted for an indirect hold on the party by way of back seat driving. Soon, after his election, Kesari declared the stand of the party in the relations with United Front and indicated no alteration. He made it amply clear that the United Front Government would have a breathing time, as there was no change in the party’s stand towards it.

It may be pointed out that Kesari followed the line of P.V. Narasimha Rao in the spirit and content while he preferred the Congress leaders to unite and make a consolidated bid to rebuild the party. Kesari and Laloo Prasad, despite belonging to different parties managed a close liaison. The unity between them was a threat to Deve Gowda. Another important dimension concerning Kesari’s approach was towards the regional parties. The Congress had aligned with the Bahujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh for electoral purpose. If similar tone had been stretched further, it would have made the party to align with the regional parties, to sever the connections with United Front and would have rendered support to the Congress Party.

The then Chief Minister, Chandrababu Naidu was slowly getting disappointed with the union Government stand on Almatti dam giving
financial assistance of rupees 182 crores to Karnataka. The other was concerned with the center’s poor response to the cyclone in the state causing loss of lives crossing 1000 and damage to crops in more than 7 lakh acres.\textsuperscript{48} The cyclone damaged at least 3 lakh houses, and several power installations and transmission lines were destroyed. Innumerable aqua farms all along the Costal line of 1000 KM range were washed away. Chandrababu Naidu desired the union Government to treat the cyclone as a national calamity and offer assistance commensurate with the situation. But the response of the Union Government was unfavorable.

Following quick political developments, P.V. Narasimha Rao resigned the leadership of Congress Party and in his place Sitaram Kesari was elected on 3\textsuperscript{rd} January 1997.\textsuperscript{49} Sitaram Kesari, quite often, exhorted the Congress leaders of the party coming back to power and reiterated that he favored economic reforms and liberalization. With the spectacular election of Kesari to the Congress Party President as well as the leadership of the Parliamentary party, the party had gained sufficient political mileage and respectability. It had established an impression that it was not averse to democratic practice and the concept of internal democracy though it subscribed to the practice of consensual lines. Further, it was able to conduct the election without recourse of stalling the entire process, seeking judicial intervention similar to that of Janta Dal’s which was facing obstinate leaders, bent on tearing the party to pieces unmindful of its adverse effect. Further, the party secured phenomenal respect in the eyes of other political parties and more particularly the leaders of the United Front. By and large, the image of
Congress Party had been considerably restored with such developments. As is known, Kesari had the long desire to adorn the chair of Prime Ministerial position in India. By 30\textsuperscript{th} March, 1997 in a quick development, Congress Party withdrew its support to the ten-month-old Deve Gowda Government and stacked claim to form the next Government.\textsuperscript{50} The United Front and Congress Party leaders like Sharad Pawar, Rajesh Pilot and loyalists of P.V. Narsimha Rao were surprised to know the move of Sita Ram Kesari. However, the Congress Working Committee had endorsed the move in a written communication sent to the President of India, Shankar Dayal Sharma. The TMC leader G.K. Moopanar had asserted to render support to the United Front Government.\textsuperscript{51}

Similarly, Chandrababu Naidu, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, and 17 other strong MPs of Telgu Desam Party maintained that the United Front should meet the challenge while Assam Chief Minister and AGP President P.K. Mahanta spoke in a similar vein.\textsuperscript{52} The Left parties continued to render the support to the United Front Government. CPI (M) leader, Har Kishan Singh Surjeet asserted that the United Front would stay together while CPI leader, Bardhan concurred with it. The BJP and its allies that formed a single largest block in Lok Sabha, decided not to stake claim and preferred to let the Congress Party and United Front tear each other apart. Sitaram Kesari called upon the Prime Minister, Deve Gowda and desired him to resign gracefully and all the United Front constituencies to join Coalition. Almost all the PCC members and Congress legislators and other leaders expressed their support for Kesari’s move.
The trial of strength for the United Front Government, led by Deve Gowda, took place on 11th April 1997 and it was voted out of power. Deve Gowda failed to win the vote of confidence. It is interesting to point out that contrary to expectations, the Prime Minister chose not to resign at the end of the debate and instead opted for voting on the floor of the house. The Congress, BJP and its allies voted against the Government. During the debate, the main Congress Party speakers made it clear that they were opposed to only Deve Gowda’s leadership but not to the policies of United Front Government, while Deve Gowda lodged a bitter attack on the Congress Party president Sitaram Kesari for his political machinations.

The other members, participating in the debate on confidence vote, were rather soft suggesting the exit of the Prime Minister. The BJP, on the other hand, lashed out in both the directions. It accused Congress Party for a great betrayal and flayed the United Front for linking up the Congress Party only to keep BJP out of power, thereby frustrating the mandate of the people. Since then, a quick development took place at Delhi among the different political parties and reached the consensus between the Congress Party and United Front; the Congress rallied around I. K. Gujral for the leadership of United Front Government. Incidentally, the United Front Government headed by Gujral won the vote of confidence in Lok Sabha on 22nd April, 1997.

Gujral’s Government is constituted with the support of Congress Party and conclave of regional groupings. The nomenclature of this Government was not radically different from its earlier one. The only exception was the absence of TMC in the Coalition. However, later, the
TMC had decided to join the United Front Government led by Gujral in view of the national interest for a smooth sailing of the Government.\textsuperscript{35}

The Government of Gujral was not placed in a rosy situation in view of the fact that the CBI had taken a decision to chargesheet as many as 55 personnel including Janta Dal chief, Laloo Prasad Yadav. The tussle for the Presidency of Janta Dal was another problematic issue in between Laloo and Deve Gowda. Besides, the demand of Laloo for rethinking of certain issues also had an effect on the Government. The partners of the United Front were quite skeptical of the Congress Party because they were afraid of losing their creditability and legitimacy once the Congress Party joined the Government. Further, the regional groupings, particularly led by Naidu, were quite averse to the Congress joining the United Front Government. I.K. Gujral exhibited a conciliatory note and declared on the eve of vote confidence that he would neither allow any witch hunting nor protect any one. He promised transparency and sought the help of all parties in building a national consensus on the key issues like, economy, secularism, social justice, and women’s rights.

Some of the Congress Party leaders were quite keen in joining the United Front Government. But some of them desired the Congress to form the Government independently with the support from others. The party hoped to fulfill the task either through the next Lok Sabha elections securing a majority or emerging as the single largest party. The other alternative was to split Janta Party and secure the support of faction with the forces opposing BJP. The crux of the issue before the Congress was to come to power through any mechanism other than the
general elections, because the election fortunes were not highly bright. However, Kesari had been reiterating the support of the Congress Party to the United Front as a stopgap arrangement. The party hoped that the tussle in the organization of Janta Dal will ultimately end with the division of the party and about 20 MPs, led by Laloo Yadav and a chunk of MPs led by Mulayam Singh Yadav, would provide support to form the Government.

In the bye-election of a few Lok Sabha seats, the Congress Party and Samajwadi Party had come closer and Laloo and Kesari also exhibited a strong fraternity because of the Biharis' background. After presidential election of the Congress Party and Kesari's emergence on the top, its reputation had been considerably enhanced in the eyes of Janta Dal. The United Front leaders, who used to look with contempt and making a series of comments about the Congress Party for holding frequent consultations, took the Congress into confidence on various matters. Significantly, in the election of K.R. Narayanan for the post of President for India, there were mutual consultations in between the Janta Dal and the Congress Party and even Chandrababu Naidu had a pivotal role in a liaison between the United Front and Congress and succeeded in the elevation of K.R. Narayanan to Rashtrapati Bhavan.

As is known, the dividing line between the Janta Dal and Congress Party was quite thin, and they were united by anti BJP thrust. Further, bulk of the Janta leaders had come closer to the Congress Party in view of strange political developments and, therefore, the commentators speculated that the period since then till August was
quite interesting for several unique political developments and changes in the political scenario.

The Government faced its crisis on 28th April, 1998 when the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI), the Central Criminal Agency, announced its plans to prosecute Laloo Prasad Yadav, the President of Janta Dal and the then Chief Minister of Bihar. The CBI also made plans to levy corruption charges which were the result of 15 month investigation into the alleged misappropriation of funds amounting to rupees 95 millions over 20 years for a series of Bihar schemes designed to provide subsidized material. Even the CBI also pointed out that as many as 50 others to face the prosecution in connection with the case including 3 ministers of Laloo Prasad Yadav's cabinet. But Laloo Yadav insisted that he was innocent of the charges and refused to resign as Chief Minister. He had also hinted to split the Janta Dal and form another regional party and even force a general elections.56

Another important factor for the deep national crisis relating to the tussle between the Congress Party and United Front constituents on the issue of ejecting the DMK ministers from the union cabinet followed the alleged indictment of Jain Commission revelations. The Congress Party initially demanded placing of Jain Commission interim report on the opening day of winter session of the Parliament. The Government after much deliberation had ultimately decided to place it but the Home Minister waited on the alibi of calling for the required evidences in support of the assumptions and finding of the commission. There were speculations whether the commission would be in a position to present such documents on time. However, the commission geared up its
machinery and submitted the required documents running over several thousands of papers on time. The Government, consequently tabled the report as was promised. The Parliament, however, could not discuss the findings owing to a situation created by the Parliamentarians belonging to the Congress Party and its adversary DMK. The former demanded ejection of DMK ministers, while the latter were adamant of such a stand. The Lok Sabha was even adjourned sine die after the situation remained unsolved for a few days. The Congress Party made the situation of no deliberations on the findings of the report, lest the entire episode of Tamil Nadu Government’s approach towards LTTE was brought to light. It was a naked truth that Congress Party machinations and the nexus in between Tamil Nadu Government were thoroughly exposed. The important dimension of the entire episode was concerned with two principal functionaries – one, the Prime Minister of India and the other, the functionary of the steering committee of the United Front. I. K. Gujral, the principal actor, as the Prime Minister, was viewed as a noble soul with certain principles and values. He was known as the least political opportunist and quite fair in terms of reciprocity. As was known, he was a Congress Party man in the past for quite a long time.

The trend of opportunism of the Congress Party and dictatorial attitude of Mrs. Indira Gandhi compelled him to quit the party and join the Janta Dal in 1977. Further, Gujral was also considered to maintain a soft approach towards Sitaram Kesari and temperamentally being soft, he never attempted to make the Congress Party isolated. It is pointed out that he was indebted to Congress Party for the support extended in his elevation to the post of Prime Minister. His attitude towards RJD
and its supremo Laloo Prasad was quite cordial, though the United Front constituents were adamant to ditch Laloo. He was averse to the idea. In the hearts of the hearts, Kesari desired the Congress Party to be within the United Front cabinet by way of inside support for the stability of the Government and to contain the BJP, yet he was forced by the political circumstances to fall in line with others. Besides, Gujral also appeared to be averse to such an assumption but still he had to fall in line with the demands of other United Front partners and regional conclaves to put the Congress Party at a distance and only obtain outside political support.

In view of the failure to get reconciliation between the Congress Party and United Front constituents, Gujral had no other option except to resign on 28th November 1997. Instead of adopting the approach of former Prime Minister, H.D. Deve Gowda, making a scene of drama of the fall of his Government on the floor of the Lok Sabha after a marathon debate, Gujral adopted a moderate approach consequent to the Jain Commission revelations. Further, he did not like to take the onus of recommending dissolution of the Lok Sabha although he was entitled to it, before the Congress Party withdrew support to the United Front. In a way, by resigning, Gujral desired the formation of another Government either under Congress Party or another combination with the Congress Party and leave the matter to the decision of President of India. Thus the total approach of Gujral was not of shrewd politics similar to that of the episode of former Prime Minister, H.D. Deve Gowda. Gujral was quite elastic and accommodative, and in, view of the fact, he
was pushed to the wall. He had no escape route except to resign and leave the matter at rest.

The convener of the United Front steering committee, Chandrababu Naidu had played a remarkable role in the entire political drama that was on political stage in the course of a fortnight prior to the aforesaid episode. His ascendancy to the role of principal actor and developing a clout at All India politics during the course of one year and half is quite meteoric. Naidu played a significant role in the election of Deve Gowda and he was quick in his somersaults in his exit as well as in the elevation of Gujral as Prime Minister, mobilization of support to the candidature of K.R. Narayanan as the president of India, election of Ranga Rajan, former chairman of Reserve Bank of India, as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh. Even in inter-state council, his role in the demand for a higher share in the central resources is quite remarkable.

Soon, after the revelations of Jain Commission report, Chandrababu Naidu was quick to make a trip to Madras quietly extending solidarity to DMK chief, Karunanidhi and maintain liaison with the flock of regional parties, keeping them united for bargaining with North Indian leaders and national party outfits. He is a thorough politician and manipulator who had earned unique distinction in politics in the past when NTR was unceremoniously removed from power in August-September, 1984. The episode of August 1995, when Naidu initiated a Palace-coup in Telgu Desam Party to unseat NTR, is quite fresh in the minds of general public. He knew the logic of anti-Congressism, which had been the very basis of the rise of Telgu Desam Party as well as the formation of United Front at national level. It is for
this reason that he had been opposing Congress Party at the center to share the power and join the ministry under the United Front Government. Further, Naidu was quick to obtain in writing the stand of the leaders of all the units of the United Front that they would not support the Congress Party in case-of an alternative Government were contemplated and appended those letters with the resignation letter of I.K. Gujral which was presented to the President of India. It was a rare strategy of clinching on the United Front partners not to develop a deviant approach after 28th November when the Prime Minister resigned.

Har Kishan Singh Surjeet of CPI (M) had greatly extolled Chandrababu Naidu for his strategic ways. Naidu made a number of visits to Delhi for almost a fortnight preceding this crisis despite abundance of criticism from the state opposition parties. He was even unmindful of the sate assembly session, which was taking place and played his cards very well in the national politics. Naidu had assumed a pivotal role in keeping the Congress Party as untouchable and even making it isolated and incapable of securing the required political strength for a workable Government. Besides, Chandrababu Naidu was also successful in keeping the Telgu Desam Party Lok Sabha member under his control. It is commented that he had even convinced the President of India of no alternative other than dissolution of Lok Sabha. It is on record to point out that the BJP made frantic efforts to repeat the Uttar Pradesh drama at New Delhi and more particularly to attract the Congress Party parliament members in its favour. It aimed to engineer the split in
the Congress Party to a tune of 47 members (1/3rd of the strength) so as to escape from the provision of anti-defection law under the constitutional amendment act of 1985. It was also commented by political circles that a few members of both Telgu Desam Party and Congress Party were prone to defections in favour of the bandwagon of BJP under the lure of money, posts and various other inducements. However, the BJP had failed to get the required number, which included vacillating Lok Sabha members from Andhra Pradesh (those from Congress Party and Telgu Desam Party). Thus, it had failed quite miserably and conveyed to the President of India its acceptance for the dissolution of Lok Sabha.

Lok Sabha Elections - 1998:

The 1998 mid term poll of Lok Sabha was indeed a forced one on the nation while bulk of the leaders/ aspirants were caught unaware of the sudden political development. Although the top leaders and the principal political groupings in the country had an inkling of the fall of the Gujral’s Government, they were not sure of its sudden fall. The Congress Party had been reiterating its political support to the United Front Government and Sitaram Kesari, its President, continuously assured his support to the Prime Minister on every public platform while serving a notice in the form of admonishment, threat or warning. In this process, the United Front leaders got used to such hollow threats under the assumption that none of the Lok Sabha members were prepared for poll and more particularly the Congress Party members of Parliament owing to a
looming uncertainty and media reports painting less than a rosy picture of its poll prospects.

The Lok Sabha elections were held in the last week of February 1998 all over the country. The results had been quite surprising. The electorate had once again preferred a hung Parliament with no clear verdict either in favour of the saffron BJP or the other secular groupings viz. the Congress Party and United Front. The Coalition politics thus had come to a stay in India. The apprehensions of the President of India, K.R. Narayanan and assumptions of the Indian Prime Minister, I.K. Gujral had come true with the election verdict in 1998 polls.

The BJP was jubilant for obtaining a strength of 179 and its allies consisting of 12 parties with 87 seats making a total 266 out of 535 seats for which elections were held. The Party was put to abundance of strain to arrive at the magic figure of 272 coupled with the behavioral pattern of its two allies – Trinamual Congress of West Bengal, and AIADMK of Tamil Nadu. The Congress Party and its allies maintained the 166 figure while the United Front 96, and together did not add up to the required number. Therefore, they were forced to seek the support of a few independents. However, the chances for a secular Government under the Congress Party with United Front support appeared very bleak in view of certain internal contradictions both within the Congress Party and United Front.
### All India Party Performance of 1998 Lok Sabha Election:

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<tr>
<th>BJP and its Allies</th>
<th>No. of Seats</th>
<th>Congress, UF and its Allies</th>
<th>No. of Seats</th>
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<tr>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the Telgu Desam party, which continuously spoke of 25 seats, was now made to be content with half of it, i.e. 12 seats while its friendly opposition parties such as CPI securing 2 seats, and the Janta Dal one. Thus, the United Front in Andhra
Pradesh had bagged 15 seats altogether while the Congress party 22 seats. The BJP had won 4 seats and one seat by AIMIM as expected.

A comparative picture of 1996 and 1998 Lok Sabha election results would indicate that the TDP had come down by 5 seats altogether, while the Marxists had failed to retain their lone seat, Mahaboobnagar was captured by Janta Dal in 1998 elections. It may, therefore, be maintained that the TDP is down but not out as compared to other ruling parties in different states of India such as Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. Considering different regions in the state of Andhra Pradesh, the TDP had secured just 4 seats in the entire Coastal belt, while its share in Rayalaseema region was just 2 and 6 in Telangana region. In other words, the party had lost its credibility in Andhra region. On the contrary, the Congress party bagged 12 seats in Andhra region, 6 in Rayalaseema and only 4 in the Telangana region. It indicates that the TDP, which was expected to maintain its strong position in Coastal Andhra, had lost its ground in these elections. It was confined to 2 seats in extreme North Coastal Andhra district Srikakulam, 1 seat in Vishakhapatnam and 1 in East Godavari district. The Chowdharis, Kammas and bulk of the Kapus along with substantial segments of OBCs appeared to have exhibited their loyalty to other political groups, thereby turning away from the Telgu Desam party. In the case of Rayalaseema, the TDP retained one seat at Chittoor, the home district of Chandrababu Naidu, and one at Nandyal where the party had won in the bye-election of 1996.

It was indeed, a comfortable performance in Telangana for the party which had won at six places viz. Siddipet, Nizamabad, Adilabad,
Peddapalli, Hanamkonda and Warangal and 3 of its allies viz. CPI at Bhadrachalam and Nalgonda, and Janta Dal at Mahaboobnagar constituency. The Aspect was concerned with the defeat of the party nominee at Hindupur and victory at Adilabad segments. Similarly, it was assumed that the party would lose at Hanamkonda and Warangal segments in view of the discontent of farmers more particularly the suicidal deaths of large number of cotton growers, etc. It is a great surprise that both the seats had gone in favour of Telgu Desam Party.

The Congress Party had maintained its position and even was enhanced by one seat when compared to its strength in the out-going Lok Sabha. Though it had fielded a total of six candidates considering non-locals at Tenali, Bapatla, Narsaraopet, Khammam, Nalgonda and Nizamabad respectively, four of its candidates had come out victorious. Incidentally, they were the big-wigs of Congress party who included N. Janardhan Reddy and Nandendla Bhaskar Rao, the former chief ministers, Shiva Shankar, former union minister and K. Rosaiah, former minister and PCC President. However, Keshava Rao and V. Hanumantha Rao failed to come out victorious at Nizamabad and Nalgonda respectively. It is observed that the dissidence in the Congress Party rank and file in these two segments was significantly responsible of their defeat. All success in Vishakhapatnam, Krishna, Guntoor and Nellore barring two in Rayalaseema may be attributed to the unified battle put up by the Congress Party.

It is even noted that the BJP which had maintained just 5% of average valid votes in the past, had substantially enhanced its position to 18.5% making the electoral victory in four places; two in
Telangana and 2 in Godavari districts of Costal Andhra regions. Added to it, the party had put up an impressive show at several other places. The tilt of two seats in Godavari districts, one at Kakinada and the other at Eluru is the result of loyalty from Chowdharis, Kapus and OBCs in those segments. The important factor was concerned with the support of Kapus led by M. Padmanabham, the Kapu leader that had immensely helped for the victory for the BJP in Costal Andhra constituencies. Particularly, The film glamour of Krishnam Raju coupled with a campaign of large number of glittering film damsels may be instrumental for its success in Kakinada constituency. The Scheduled Caste voters who greatly resented the ruling TDP following categorization of the castes into A, B, C and D in the wake of Madiga Dandora did not seem to have put up desired results. The case of TDP’s nominee in the Amalapuram constituency is an ample proof in this regard. The Congress Party was successful in Nellore, Tirupati and Nagarkurnool. The Muslim minorities had put up substantial support to the ruling TDP in capturing the 4 seats at Hanamkonda, Warangal, Nizamabad and support to Congress Party at Guntoor, Kurnool and Chuddapah.

It may be pointed out that the Lok Sabha elections in the state of Andhra Pradesh does not seem to have put up all out support to Congress Party and all out opposition to the Telgu Desam Party.
## Party Performance of 1998 Lok Sabha Elections in Andhra Pradesh

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>No. of Seats</th>
<th>Valid Votes Polled</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>816200</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPM</td>
<td>--</td>
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<tr>
<td>Janta Dal</td>
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<td>278302</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>384211</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
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</table>


The impressive performance of Telgu Desam Party in Telangana region, despite the wrath of farmers, Naxalites opposing the Government and the issue concerning the separation of Telangana region and bifurcation of the state, was quite surprising. Indeed, it speaks of election miracles, and the tall talk of Telangana region opposing the Telgu Desam Party was thus unfounded. The election result appears to be a mixed reaction and several local factors seem to have played an important role for such a verdict. Similarly, the failure of the Marxists at Miryalagunda may be attributed to the division in the ranks of the party. It may be observed from the table that the Congress Party’s poll average is around 39.6% in 1996 Lok Sabha poll while it had come down to 38.3% in these elections. The Telgu Desam Party and its allies maintained the same poll average of 38.3% as compared to that of Congress Party. The BJP, which had just 5% valid votes in the past elections of 1996, now enhanced to 18.2%. In other words, there was an enhancement to a tune of 13.5% votes altogether. Though the Telgu
Desam Party and its allies maintained their position in terms of valid votes, the number of seats had come down substantially.

One of the debatable issues was concerned with the campaign by madam Sonia Gandhi in these elections. She had addressed as many as 138 election rallies all over the country, which included a total of five visits to Andhra Pradesh addressing the meetings, spread over 18 parliamentary segments. The Congress critics maintained that her campaign had not materially altered the position of Congress Party all over the country. It is because the party had 139 seats in 1996 while its strength had increased to 140, thereby making an enhancement of just one seat. Added to the above, even in the state of Andhra Pradesh the party had won 21 seats while a lone seat was added now in these elections. However, it is appropriate to indicate that the position of Congress Party had been decreasing since 1989 all over the country. The sympathy wave following the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi was responsible in the enhancement in the strength of the Congress Party in 1991 but the position had come down substantially in 1996. In all fairness, it may be pointed out that had Madam Sonia Gandhi not campaigned in these elections in such a vigorous manner, the Congress Party could have come down to double digit figures in the country and quite poor in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

It was a litmus test for Chandrababu Naidu to play his cards well in the ensuing battle between Congress Party coupled with the United Front on one hand and BJP on the other. He was placed in an irksome position because a bulk of the United Front partners were favoring the unity of Congress and the United Front coalition for a stake of claiming
Government led by Congress Party while the BJP with a strength of 250 seats claiming stake at the center. Chandrababu Naidu, with 12 seats, had played a catalytic role in the tussle for seat of power between the two groupings. The Telgu Desam Party had fought against both Congress Party and the BJP in these elections thus making both the groups as archrivals. However, the Congress Party occupied a primary place and BJP, a secondary. Naidu had been wooed by both Congress Party and the United Front for a possible support for the Congress Party Government at the center. The BJP also did not lag far behind in such a race. It had sent emissaries for its support in the entire number game. It is appropriate to point out that in politics, there are no permanent enemies or permanent friends; there are only adversaries. The permanent enmity or friendship is illogical. In the melee, Naidu was guided by the interests of the party in the then coming assembly elections of 1999 and more particularly in obtaining a leverage in the union Government similar to 1996 and 1998 when the United Front Government was in power.

It was a ticklish issue for Chandrababu Naidu to support the Congress Party at the center having fought tooth and nail against it in these elections. It would be a blatant error in case he tended to support BJP because of the support he had obtained from minorities, who in all fairness stood by Telgu Desam Party in a substantial manner. The commentators speculated that Naidu would adopt a neutral stand or extend outside support – a novel and unique method put up by the BJP and the Left Parties in 1989. The incidence of National Front led by V.P. Singh as Prime Minister is a pointer.
During the interregnum of the declaration of Lok Sabha results to that of the formation of a BJP-led coalition Government at the center, quick political development had taken place with a considerable debate among the leading political personalities of the Congress Party, Left Parties, Janta Dal, Samajwadi Party and even the BJP. After the Lok Sabha elections, with the chances of the BJP and its allies being on a narrow edge to take over the reins of the Government, the United Front constituents had changed their anti-Congress plank and decided to render support to the Congress Party led Government to prevent BJP coming to power. Their contention greatly rested on the alibi of securing unity and therefore reconciled to support the Congress Party.

The Samajwadi Party, even before elections, made seat adjustments with the Congress Party in Maharashtra, while the RJD, too, followed such a suit in Bihar. The Left parties who were anti-congress had transformed a great deal. Jyoti Basu, the staunch critic of Congress Party had shown interest to support the United Front - Congress coalition. So was the case of E.K. Nayanar at Kerala. In other words, bulk of the United Front elected members of Parliament favored the Congress - United Front coalition. However, Chandrababu Naidu had been quite firm in regard to the denial of Telgu Desam Party support to Congress Party.\textsuperscript{57} He had attempted to explain the position to the United Front and tried to impress upon United Front leaders that the Telgu Desam Party fought against both the Congress Party and BJP in his own state. The Congress was an archenemy to Telgu Desam Party while the BJP was considered as an adversary.\textsuperscript{58} The genesis of Telgu Desam Party stood on the anti-Congress plank. Therefore, Naidu was
clear on the denial of support and maintained anti-Congressism ever since the birth of Telgu Desam Party. In regard to the BJP, as is known, it stood by Telgu Desam Party in the political crisis of 1984. However, many factors were responsible for Telgu Desam Party to keep a distance away from BJP subsequently in 1994.

Presently, the party had decided to abstain form voting at the time of confidence vote on the floor of the Lok Sabha. The United Front leaders felt that by not participating in voting, it would result in Telgu Desam Party giving support to the communal BJP. Therefore, they tried to impress upon Naidu to rethink in this regard. Jyoti Basu had even indicated that Congress Party was an adversary in the politics of West Bengal. Despite such a stand, the CPI (M) had decided to support the Congress Party for the cause of a secular unity. The arguments by several top leaders of CPI (M) as well as Deve Gowda and their luring appeared to have failed to change the attitudes of Naidu. In this melee, a few Telgu Desam Party members were reported not only to have exercised pressure on Naidu, but also they had come out openly to render support to the United Front-Congress Party coalition. They felt that it would pave the way for political advantages to the Telgu Desam Party in terms of getting ministerial berths in the Government and Center’s help in terms of clearance of pending projects in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Naidu, however, treaded very cautiously because the party interests in the state, at a later date in the assembly elections, were quite important. A few United Front constituents had appealed to Naidu to retrace his steps and fall in line with secular unity while a few others had gone to the extreme step of expelling Naidu from the United
Front altogether. Janta Dal chief, Sharad Yadav, however, was quite careful to put up restraint. Chandrababu Naidu who happened to fly to New Delhi almost every day during the past crisis period to resolve the contentious issues, had completely confined himself to the state politics and made an exercise in strengthening the party structure.

The Congress Party had arrived at a view that the partners of the United Front may not be united any more with the stand of the Telgu Desam Party. It desired the Left parties to initiate a breakdown of the United Front. Further, it had also believed that under the then prevailing circumstances, the unity between the Left parties and Telgu Desam Party would come to an end. However, both the Left Parties in the state were reluctant to sever their connections with Telgu Desam Party because such a unity had been a kind of blessing in disguise by way of a few seats in Lok Sabha and state assembly. The Marxists at the All India plane were quite sore with Telgu Desam Party and the party Chief Secretary, Har Kishan Singh Surjeet was quite unhappy with the way Naidu had drifted apart from the United Front. Considering the then political situation obtained in the Lok Sabha, Naidu refrained from joining the BJP coalition and decided to abstain from voting and play less active roll in the central politics.60

The Lok Sabha had a strength of 541, in which BJP and its allies were altogether 266, the Congress Party and its allies were in the order of 261, the Telgu Desam Party 12, National Conference 2 and the independent 1, thus totaling 15. Chandrababu Naidu very tactfully took a decision of abstaining from the vote of confidence and played his cards very well and got GMC Balayogi elected as
the speaker of the Lok Sabha. In the trial of strength, following a
two-day discussion on 27-28th March, 1998, the ruling BJP Coalition
won the trust vote and thereby got legitimized in political power.
The BJP coalition Government led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee rested on
a slender majority coming from as many as 14 different political
groupings of the country.

Quite frequently, it had faced pinpricks from certain groupings
and even postures of unhappiness and threats of withdrawal of support
from different quarters. One such issue was concerned with Kumari
Jaya Lalita of Tamil Nadu who was quite skeptical and critical of the
leadership in regard to sharing of Kavery river water in Karnataka and
Tamil Nadu. The Samta Party quite often pressurized the BJP
Government for the dismissal of Rabri Devi Government in Bihar and
demanded imposition of President’s Rule to secure law and order in the
state. However, the Samta Party was not favouring for the creation of
Vananchal state. Akali Dal was also not favorable towards the BJP on the
issue of creation of Uttaranchal state and inclusion of Udham Singh
Nagar in it. The Trinamul Congress, led by Kumari Mamta Benarjee,
quite often demanded a special package for West Bengal which
included railway projects, four way express highways, development of
Calcutta port, etc. The revival of sick public sector units in West Bengal
also figured as one of the major demands apart from economic
demands.

Mamta had also sought protection of national heritage of West
Bengal which included the need for the provision of adequate facilities
of the Calcutta based Netaji Museum, to set up a permanent exhibition
on Subhash Chandra Bose and Indian freedom movement at New Delhi. Besides, she raised the demand for scraping of the previous Government's decision to handover the metro railway project to the ministry of urban affairs and transferring the same to be controlled by ministry of railways. She has also sought an 'open sky policy' for Calcutta airport. In addition to this, her party wanted the Government to dilute the military control over Bagdogara airport near Siliguri which was against the wishes of Ministry of Defense. In this process, the relationship between BJP and Mamta Benarjee of Trinamul Congress had turned into a kind of love and hate.

The BJP unit in the state of Andhra Pradesh was keen on increasing its credibility as a viable opposition and enhancing its strength in the then coming state assembly elections. The party president, Vidyasagar Rao missed no opportunity to attack the Telugu Desam Party on policy perspectives. Another important factor was concerned with the poor financial assistance to the state Government following a great deal of devastation caused by the cyclone of October, 1998 affecting the state, causing enormous loss in terms of lives, and damage to properties. The cyclonic effect coupled with a heavy downpour for two days continuously had resulted in Bhima and Tungabhadra rivers inundated with floods causing heavy damage in the districts of Kurnool and Chuddapah. The other districts that were affected included Krishna, Guntoor, Prakasham, Nellore and both the Godavaris. The normal life was not only paralyzed but the tanks, rivers, bridges, culverts, etc. had collapsed. On the request of Chandrababu Naidu, the state Chief Minister, the Prime Minister, Vajpayee visited the
state and made an aerial survey and announced on the spot rupees 200 crores by way of flood relief.

As is known, Chandrababu Naidu had been experimenting with more economic reforms and introducing innovative programmes. He had initiated reforms in power sector, closure of public sector undertakings, massive programme of weaker section houses, several luring packages to big business organizations, hike in water, cess, power, dairy, bus fares and other consumer goods, etc. Further, he had a great thrust on implementation of computer network while making Hyderabad city as 'Cyberabad' earning a title of Hi-tech Chief Minister. In the process, the state was caught in a massive debt trap of foreign loans for 29 externally aided projects at a cost of rupees 15 thousand crores. Although the Telgu Desam Party had been extending relationship to the ruling BJP on the basis of issue-based support, the latter had not extended such reciprocity of goodwill. The state Government had expected a great deal of financial support from the center but all its hopes were belied. The state Government, further, contemplated a unique state reconstruction programme with the assistance of the World Bank while making it quite prestigious. However, the bottlenecks form the central Government by way of procrastinations to procedural wrangles had thrown the state into a financial crunch during the year 1999.

The President directed the Prime Minister to seek a vote of confidence on the floor of the house. The Government fixed 15th April 1999 as the date for vote of confidence. In a brief statement after moving the confidence motion, Vajpayee stated that the opposition must take the country into confidence and asked “what
kind of alternative it proposed to bring in after removing his Government.\textsuperscript{61} The Prime Minister declined to make the customary introductory speech and desired to hear first from opposition as to what they proposed to do besides bringing down his Government.\textsuperscript{62} At the end of the discussion from the opposition benches, Vajpayee made a 75-minute speech and asserted that “no coalition could achieve as much as he could in a span of 13 months in the spheres of – national security, economy, domestic front and external affairs.”\textsuperscript{63} Subsequently, the BJP-led coalition Government of Vajpayee lost confidence of Lok Sabha by a single vote on 17\textsuperscript{th} April, 1999.\textsuperscript{64} It was a nail-biting finish after a long political entries and eleventh hour change of ideas in the political crisis caused by the AIADMK’s withdrawal of support. It was for the first time the Government was voted out of power by such a narrow margin.\textsuperscript{65}

The Congress Party made attempts to form an alternative Government but suffered a setback because it could not mobilize the support of Samajwadi Party, RSP, Forward Block and few others. Madam Sonia Gandhi could mobilize the support of a total of 233 MPs, which fell short by another 39 members to make up the required number i.e. 272 in the Lok Sabha. The President of India, therefore, in a communication, had indicated that the time had come for the democratic will of the people to be ascertained once again and that a Government would be formed which “can confidently address the urgent needs of the people.”\textsuperscript{66} Consequently, the cabinet met on 26\textsuperscript{th} April and recommended for the dissolution of the Lok Sabha.\textsuperscript{67}
Lok Sabha Elections – 1999:

The mid-term Lok Sabha elections were held in September and early October 1999 for a total of 538 seats. The following table shows the final tally of strength of alliance parties.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>BJP Allies</th>
<th>Seats Won</th>
<th>Congress Allies</th>
<th>Seats Won</th>
<th>Left Parties</th>
<th>Seats Won</th>
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<td>134</td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>61</td>
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</table>


In these elections, there was a 2.7% swing to Congress Party nation wide. However, the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a combination of BJP and its allies scored its decisive victory owing to the skilful and tactical alliance with regional parties. The
moderation of Vajpayee as a significant electoral factor. He was seen as the only BJP politician who was acceptable as the Prime Minister to most of the parties in India. On the other hand, the Congress Party insisted throughout its election campaign that the country could be effectively governed by only a single party system but went on to suffer its worst ever election defeat. In these elections the BJP deliberately eschewed the rhetoric of Hinduism and concentrated on economic reforms and infrastructure programme.68

In the case of Uttar Pradesh, the BJP had won just 29 seats out of a total of 85 and the Congress Party won 10 seats. The Samajwadi party, led by Mulayam Singh Yadav as the second close to BJP had been the highlight of the results in the state. The party had secured 26 seats in the state, an improvement of 5 over its 1998 tally. The BSP bagged 14 seats and RJD, led by Laloo Prasad Yadav as its president, had a poor show in Bihar. The party won just 7 seats out of a total of 54 while the BJP came out successful with 23 seats. In a way, it made up in Bihar for its losses in Uttar Pradesh.

The Congress Party had put up a poor show with 112 seats all over the country. The party was wiped out fully in the state of Delhi and all the seats in this state had gone in favour of BJP. It was a great shock to Congress Party for its worst electoral debacle in the state of Orissa winning only two out of 21 Lok Sabha seats. In the case of Karnataka, the party doubled its strength to 18 seats upstaging BJP and Janta Dal (U.) that were made to be content
with just 7 and 3 seats respectively. Madam Sonia Gandhi was elected to Lok Sabha at her first attempt, winning two seats - one at ‘Bellary’ in Karnataka state and another at ‘Amethi’ in Uttar Pradesh. She had defeated the BJP’s most charismatic politician Sushma Swaraj by a narrow margin at Bellary constituency. The BJP had come back in Rajasthan by winning 16 seats out of a total of 25. In the case of Gujrut, the BJP bagged 20 seats and the Congress Party won 6 segments out of a total of 26 seats.

In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the Lok Sabha and assembly elections were held together in which the Congress Party fought alone while there had been seat adjustments in between Telugu Desam Party and BJP. The Left parties aligned with NTR-TDP in the form of Mahajan front while a faction of Telugu Desam Party led by Hari Krishna labeled as Anna TDP had gone alone. The Telugu Desam Party had put up a spectacular show in both the Assembly and Lok Sabha polls. The party contested in 34 seats and won 29, which is a record figure. Indeed, the party had just 12 members in the last Lok Sabha but now added another 17 members. It had emerged as the 4th largest party in the Parliament and second after the pro-BJP parties. The BJP, having made seat adjustments with Telugu Desam Party, had been a great beneficiary for it secured 7 seats in the Lok Sabha out of 8 seats, the party contested.

The following table shows the party position of 13th Lok Sabha Election in Andhra Pradesh, 1999.
### 13th Lok Sabha Elections in Andhra Pradesh, 1999

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Party</th>
<th>No. of Seats Contested</th>
<th>Seats Won</th>
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<th>% of valid votes</th>
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</table>

**Source:** (Report on the General Elections of Lok Sabha and Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly - 1999 (Statistical), General Administration (Elections), Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh. p. 18).

In the last Lok Sabha, the Congress Party had altogether 22 seats but presently, the strength had come down to a minimal of 5 seats. It amply indicated the poor performance of party in these elections. The party had come out successful only at ‘Bobbili’ in Vijaya Nagaram District, ‘Narasaopet’ in Guntur District, ‘Chuddapah’ in Rayalaseema Region, ‘Khammam’ and ‘Miryalaguda’ in Telangana region. The margin of Congress Party votes, compared to its nearest rival, had been quite minimal at ‘Bobbili’ and ‘Khammam’ segments which is accounted less than 1% of the valid votes polled. It is agonizing that the Congress Party, despite polling over 42% of valid votes, had been able to secure just 5 while the Telgu Desam Party polling 39. 85% of valid votes, secured 29 seats. On the other hand, the Telgu Desam Party had
come out successful in the following 29 Lok Sabha segments of different districts in the state.

Significant to mention is that the seat adjustments in between the Telugu Desam Party and BJP had been a biggest boon to BJP for it had improved its position considerably to 7 in these polls. The worst hit were the two Left parties CPI and CPI (M) in these elections. There was an alliance between the Telugu Desam Party and Left parties and the latter were the beneficiaries owing to the graceful gesture of Telugu Desam Party in the state ever since 1983. In view of the severance of connections between them, following the breakdown of the United Front Government in 1998, the Left parties contested independently and put up a poor show. The popular vote of these parties had also considerably decreased.

In the case of state assembly elections in 1999, the BJP contested in 24 seats and came out successfully in 12 places polling 8.6% of valid votes. The Congress Party had contested altogether 292 seats and was victorious at 91 places polling 40.64% of valid votes. The CPI and CPI (M) attempted at 45 and 48 places respectively in the state. But the CPI failed to obtain a single seat while CPI (M) captured just 2 seats polling 1.71% of valid votes. NTR-TDP, led by Laxmi Parvati, made an attempt at 71 segments and failed miserably and its average poll was just 0.16%. The ruling Telugu Desam Party, led by Chandrababu Naidu, had attempted 268 seats and obtained 179 seats with 43.83% of valid votes. Among the other notable parties, mention may be made of AIMIM. It had won 4 seats contesting a total of 5 seats polling 1.08% of valid votes.
The following table illustrates the election results of the state assembly.

### Assembly Elections of 1999 in Andhra Pradesh

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**Source:** (Report on the General Elections to Lok Sabha and Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly - 1999 (statistical); General Administration (elections), Department, Government of Andhra Pradesh. Page No. 99).

The relationship between the Telugu Desam Party and BJP was marked by a kind of issue-based support. In other words, the Telgu
Desam Party at the center, and the BJP at the state, decided to hold their independent position each and declared not to refrain from mounting criticism whenever the ruling party had adopted anti-peoples' policies. The Telugu Desam Party initially decided to stay away form the NDA ministry and extend issue-based support to the Prime Minister. However, Naidu had modified his stand to extend support on issue-basis for a full term of five years unconditionally while keeping his party at a distance from the NDA ministry. It had succeeded in securing the Speaker's chair at the Lok Sabha. It is a fact that BJP was not quite happy with GMC Balayogi at his performance as the outgoing speaker in view of his lack of political wisdom at the crucial confidence vote. Still, the BJP had put up a large heart towards the TDP to concede the same as a good gesture towards Naidu for the help he had rendered by way of seat adjustment during the elections as well as issue-based support in the formation of the new Government.

From the aforesaid exhaustive account, it is evident that Chandrababu Naidu, ever since assuming political power in 1995, had steered the state of Andhra Pradesh with his leadership and contributed for its active role as the leader of the regional groupings. As convener of the United Front after 1996 Lok Sabha elections, he was quite strategic in the elevation of H.D. Deve Gowda as the leader of the United Front and the installation of a Government at the center led by United Front. Added to it, his role in the denial of support to the BJP-led Government in 1996 was equally significant in view of the fact that Naidu greatly believed in secular politics of India. His continued friendly relationship with the Left parties, ever since 1984, made him stand by the ideology
of the Left. Significant to add is that his role in lobbying with the Congress Party and elevation of I.K. Gujral to the position of Prime Minister was equally laudable for the fact that he never desired to align with Congress Party owing to the avowed policy of the Telgu Desam Party being “anti-Congressism”. Equally significant was his stance opposing the BJP to come to power for the first time after the fall of Deve Gowda Government. Consequent to the Lok Sabha elections in 1998, Chandrababu Naidu realized the futility of the alliance with the Janta Dal and United Front for the very fact that the former was a sinking ship on the All India plane, in particular, besides Andhra Pradesh. Similarly, the Left parties also did not put up a bright picture of their electoral fortunes of All India plane except in the state of West Bengal and oftenly in Kerala.

In the case of Andhra Pradesh, the Left parties could enhance their reputation at the graceful gesture of the Telgu Desam Party by way of alliance and conceding a few seats to them. Therefore, after the election results of 1998 Lok Sabha, Naidu had severed connections with the United Front and attempted to render issue-based support to the BJP-led Government at the center. Even after 1999 Lok Sabha elections, similar pattern of behavior was projected by Chandrababu Naidu and thereby made his position quite crucial at the All India plane owing to a substantial representation of Telgu Desam Party in the parliament with 29 seats of Lok Sabha and 10 in Rajya Sabha.

It is apt to mention that one of the strategic leaders of the regional groupings supporting the United Front, Naidu, played a commendable
role in elevation of K. R. Narayanan to the office of the President of India. In addition to this, he was also quite successful in the elevation of Krishna Kant as the Vice President of the Indian Republic. With regard to the Governorship of Andhra Pradesh, the center had to concede Naidu’s wishes in the choice of Ranga Rajan, the former chairman of Reserve Bank of India. Similarly, in the recent past, the center also conceded to the choice of Naidu in the appointment of Surjeet Singh Barnala, former Chief Minister of Punjab, as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh.

Further, Naidu, with his control on his party parliamentarians, enjoyed a great respect by the national NDA leadership for the fact that unlike other regional groupings in India, he rendered issue-based support to the union Government. It is a fact that Chandrababu Naidu not only stabilized the state of Andhra Pradesh but also contributed for securing a positive image himself and to the state of Andhra Pradesh among important political leaders of the globe. Chandrababu Naidu continued to strive hard for authentic federal polity of India and quite frequently echoed the problems of the state Government in matters of finances, resources and share of the states in the central revenues as well as various projects in the process of their completion.

He had surpassed NTR in dealing with the politics coalition at the Centre. It was not a small matter for a young leader like Chandrababu Naidu to shoulder such burden, and conduct the affairs of the nation and also of the state in a fruitful manner.
Section C : Innovative Programmes to Realize the Establishment of Swarnandhra Pradesh.

Golden age of Andhra Pradesh:

Chandrababu Naidu greatly paid attention to stabilize his position politically and to outwit the leadership of NTR-TDP group on one hand and the Congress Party on the other. Within the party, he had earned an image for himself as a shrewd politician invoking party discipline while concentrating almost all the powers as that of party-President as well as the leadership of the Government. He concentrated his attention on certain innovative programmes unlike that of his predecessors with a view to transform the state of Andhra Pradesh into Swarnandhra Pradesh. Time and again, he had been eloquently reiterating his commitment to the development of the state.

Naidu was quite aware that the leadership of the country was not a bed of roses particularly with the politicking played by North Indian politicians coupled with multifarious problems connected with the coalition politics. Equally, he was aware that he had the leadership of regional groupings with a limited strength of parliamentarians and therefore he might not be able to survive such politics of all India dimension. Hence, he directed all his efforts to the state of Andhra Pradesh with certain unique programmes. Among them, the important being ‘Prajalavaddaku Palana’ (Government at the threshold of the people), Shramdan, Youth Welfare, Adarana, Mundadugu, Deepam & Roshini, Janma Bhoomi, Vision 2020, IT and e-Governance, Water Users Committees, Watershed, DWCRA, and a few others.
Prajala Vaddaku Palana (Government at the threshold of the people):

Soon, after taking over the reigns of State Government, Chandrababu Naidu initiated the policy of ‘Government at the threshold of people’ (PVP) during the first week of November 1995 emulating NTR, his father-in-law. Naidu attempted to test the said policy so as to build up a rapport with the general public and thereby stabilize his Government. The theme of PVP was originally carved out by NTR in the first week of August 1995 and put to application in the North Costal districts of Andhra Pradesh. The main thrust of this unique theme was bye-fold. One was to indicate to the public at large that Naidu’s Government was keen to solve people’s problems and earn their goodwill. Therefore Naidu desired to have a popular image, which he greatly lacked. Naidu was an effective strategist but failed to attain a popular image comparable to his father-in-law’s, N.T. Rama Rao. The second most important dimension was to assess the people’s mind in regard to the split in Telgu Desam Party and taking over the leadership of the state.

In this respect, the programme of PVP was quite unique and tended to be a measuring rod to reach the minds of the people among the rural parts. By the end of the first phase, the State Government received lakhs and lakhs of memorandums involving several thousand crores of rupees for their salvation. It was pointed that the problems not involving finances were to be resolved on the spot. It was also established that among such petitions, around 10 to 30% were said to have been disposed of on the spot. The people at certain places
exhibited their interest and enthusiasm while at a few other places it was damp squib.

The *Gram Sabha* meetings and sudden inspections created a kind of euphoria and even a kind of shock treatment to the state bureaucracy. By and large, the individual problems were reportedly quite high as compared to collective problems concerning villages or *mandals*. Among the representations made to the Government, the matter of illicit liquor and its unlawful distribution was the major topic. Besides, the other issues concerned with protected water supply, roads, bus transport facilities, repairs to tanks and electrical transformers, school buildings, community halls, medical and health amenities, etc. Among the issues concerning individual problems, mention may be made of pensions, employment avenues, etc.

At a few places, the civil servants were taken left and right for their failures, while in some places the ration shop dealers were suspended. These suspensions and reprimands of officials indicate the expression of the state leadership at the failure of the bureaucracy in solving the problems of the poor and needy.

The *Gram Sabha* meetings were held in almost all parts of the state. In the case of Adilabad district, the meetings were held at a few places to resolve the problems of the people, and estimated a requirement of rupees 20 crores. Altogether 1.40 lakh petitions were received in West Godavari district and 1000 of them were resolved. In the case of Vishakhapatnam, there were 1.18 lakh memorandums for remedial measures by the Government. Every ward in the metropolis was reported to have sent 1000 petitions and the average expenditure to
resolve such problems was around 10,000 lakhs. Similarly, in Karimnagar district, there were about 50,000 petitions of which 1000 were resolved on the spot. Hyderabad had a large number of petitions involving a total expenditure of rupees 70 crores. The representations from slum areas were quite high. Warangal district similarly had 50,000 representations, which required Rs. 50,000 for every village.

In this process, in almost all the districts, there had been large number of petitions for disposal by the Government. Naidu made use of all the available modes of transport such as car, bus and even footpath and secured considerable publicity. The press reporters accompanying him provided a good publicity too. By doing this, Naidu had attempted to instill a hope among the general public that the new Government cared for their grievances quite sympathetically, and that it was quite earnest in resolving such problems. Thereby, he had put up a popular image through such measures. It was indeed a novel scheme and a step further in the enhancement of peoples' political consciousness in the management of popular Government. Naidu, through such novel method of 'Government at the threshold of people', had garnered a great political mileage and an image of a popular leader.

**Sharmdan Programme:-**

Another unique theme entitled 'Sharmdan' was an experiment in the area of development during January, 1996. He had suggested officials/civil service personnel, students, teachers, and political workers to get involved with this laudable activity throughout the week to render physical labour in the developmental activities of the state. He
had formally launched such a programme at Urumidla village under Chityal Mandal of Nalgonda district. Significantly, the legislators belonging to opposition parties, barring the Congress Party, and N.T. Rama Rao group, had joined the programme which indicated a kind of uniformity among the non-congress Parties. The theme had been a part of Sarvodaya philosophy undertaken before the dawn of independence. Naidu’s advice was taken quite seriously by the state bureaucracy as it was evident from the civil services personnel and other senior officials of the state services rendering Sharmdan in a big way at state Secretariat. The Service Commission staff also rendered service like cleaning and dusting the files in the offices, and such activities including cleaning of canals, laying roads and repairing tanks, etc. were undertaken in a large measure in the rural parts.

Another opinion on the positive side of Sharmdan activity, stretching over a weeklong affair in some parts without a long-term effect, was also painted in a different way. The critics maintained that Naidu had been keeping the people engaged in some activity or other by which he attempted to divert the attention of the opposition parties from possible attack on the Government for its failure on various accounts such as power cuts, meager developmental activities and other public amenities.

It was a strategic move on the part of Naidu to keep his own party rank and file engaged in some activity so as to make them refrained from planning another coup and also prevent them in making strategies to rally round NTR-TDP.
Youth Welfare Policy:

Chandrababu Naidu had outlined a new policy measure concerning unemployed youth. The said that the policy included self-employment avenues to the youth, exemption from examination fee for various tests conducted by the recruitment authorities, recruitment of 50,000 vacant posts in the Government by the end of April, 1996, etc. It was even indicated that the Government would review different sectors of the state services and self-employment areas and arrange for necessary training facilities to the youth besides constituting 60 youth committees for every Mandal and allocation of Rs. 1500 by way of grants. Further, there was also a move to provide self-employment training facilities through Panchayat Samitis allocating five acres of land, basic amenities and a grant of 10 lakh rupees with a view to impart training to youth in the self-employment schemes by the local Polytechnics and ITI centers. Indeed, it was a measure to extend priority in the provision of grants from DRDA to SC, ST and BC youth in regard to financial assistance.

The scheme was intended to provide preferential treatment to the youth for undertaking contract works such as tailoring, mining leases, minor irrigation, transportation of material of daily needs, etc. Loan facilitates to a tune of 15% through the State finance corporation and banks for the establishment of small-scale industries were also contemplated. By and large, there was a move for allocation of rupees 150 crores in the budget of 1997-1998 for the youth development and creation of separate ministry for their advancement. Further, the policy also intended to create a council comprising District Collectors and
representation of youth and Joint secretary of Industries, etc. for suggesting future prospects and employment schemes for the youth.

The theme of youth welfare and their advancement was applauded and even encouraged. It was pointed out that this policy was to support the youth under age group of 18 to 35 who constituted around 30% to 35% of the population in the society. The bulk of them were unemployed. As there were very limited employment opportunities, a considerable frustration caused among the youth. It was even pointed out that one of the reasons for escalation of Telangana agitation of 1969 was the frustration of youth lacking employment avenues.

Ever since middle of eighties, the youth, despite being educated and well trained, were denied proper placements, and hence they turned towards radicalism. They got encouragements form 'Peoples War Group' and other extremist organizations for destructive purposes. Their lack of confidence in the established Government, owing to its failure in securing proper employment opportunities for them, was the root cause for such a malice.

Therefore, Naidu viewed such a policy of training and providing employment avenues to youth would go a long way in making them involved in constructive activities and detract them from the extremist measures. Though the theme of the policy was intended for the welfare of the youth, yet it did not bear much fruits in view of the fact that the mounting unemployment had considerably enhanced day-by-day with the closure of many Public Sector Undertakings on the plea of their sick performance and imposition of ban on recruitment of posts, etc.
Adarana Programme:

This scheme Adarana was initiated by Chandrababu Naidu, on the eve of 1999 Assembly Elections. The programme was to convey that the state Government was committed to the welfare of the people in general and weaker sections in particular. The scheme also aimed at saving the traditional occupations of the backward classes, which were on the verge of extinction due to privatization launched in a vigorous manner following the liberalization of economy since 1996. Further, the programme attempted to extend a financial helping hand to the backward classes in the state in strengthening their self-employment avenues through the purchase of tools, instruments, etc.

Adarana programme was commenced with an estimated expenditure of Rs. 625 crores to benefit around 10 lakhs of people. The scheme was to provide modern and sophisticated tool kits to the eligible occupational backward artisans. The process of identification of beneficiaries was to be done through separate backward castes Gram Sabha, consisting of a village or cluster of villages. The Gram Sabha was to be assisted by the selection committee, headed by a nodal officer and the members being Mandal Revenue Officer (MRO), Mandal Development Officer (MDO), the Assistant Project Officer, the District Rural Development Authority or Extension Officer (Industries) or the nominee of the District Collector. Apart from these State Government officers, the concerned bank officer, village sarpanch and DWCRA self-help members were also involved.

The norms of Adarana indicate that the beneficiary must belong to an occupational backward community and must be earning his/her
livelihood through the traditional occupation. In the case of a tie between the two persons in the same occupation, preference was extended to the poorer applicant. It was also made mandatory that the beneficiaries should not only be the white card holders but also should belong to the income group earning below Rs. 11,000 per annum. The rules of the scheme also emphasized that those who were following the state sponsored schemes like permanent family planning, sending their wards to schools, participating in clean and green programme of Janamabhoomi were to be eligible. Only one person from each family was to be taken into consideration for the scheme and the whole selection process was to be completed in a short span of time on the eve of the 1999 Assembly and Parliamentary elections.

The Adrana scheme was initiated with a great fan-fare on the eve of the Assembly and Parliamentary elections of 1999. It proved to be a failure in view of certain inherent shortcomings and implicit intentions of the state Government. As is known, the Congress Party greatly banked on the support of women and backward classes. It is a fact that the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes were traditionally the vote banks of the Congress Party. As such the Telgu Desam Party, ever since its inception, depended greatly on the backward classes who constituted around 52% of the population. It is also believed that majority of the backward classes had become an important social base of Telgu Desam Party for its consolidation. The other intention of the state Government was to exhibit to the people, by and large, that Telgu Desam Party Government was committed to the welfare of the people and especially weaker sections.
In substance, the programme was a kind of election sop and a vote catching populist programme to lure the backward castes in support of Telgu Desam Party.

Mundadugu:

The year 1999 being the election year to the state legislative Assembly, many sops were offered to different sections of the people to lure them in favor of the ruling party. One such novel programme includes Mundadugu, a step forward programme especially envisaged for the scheduled castes with an additional outlay of rupees 100 crores.

In view of the fact that the birth anniversaries of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar and Babu Jagjivan Ram, the architects of scheduled castes’ development, took place in the month of April, 1999, the state Government had announced a special package programme which carried a great deal of significance. The then state Chief Minister, Naidu announced an additional amount of rupees 100 crores to the 1999 budget of social welfare in the matters concerning the progressive spheres. He had pointed out that the Adrana programme, which was launched for the backward castes, and self-employed artisans, had a positive effect on the said sections of the people. The step forward programme was contemplated for the exclusive development of the scheduled castes in the state.

It is estimated that the state had altogether 25 lakh scheduled caste households. Among them, 10 lakh households were to be accorded a helping hand through the contemplated programme. About 1.50 lakh households were to be provided ‘weaker section houses',
75,000 scheduled caste households with minor irrigation facilities, 1 lakh households to be extended self help projects, 25,000 households cleanliness programmes, 50,000 households each under IRDP and maternity benefit, 75,000 under the old age and widow pension schemes and 20,000 households with financial assistance. A total of 11.50 lakh households were thus estimated to be accorded a kind of assistance with the estimated additional financial outlay of rupees 100 crores.

In the budget estimates of social welfare department of the year 1998-99, a provision was made for rupees 324 crores which was enhanced to 470 crores for the year 1999-2000. With the additional amount of rupees 100 crores the social welfare department now estimated to get 570 crores particularly for the scheduled castes' households in the state. Naidu, further, added that as many as 8000 SC/ST backlog posts would be filled in.

The issue of mess charges had been another dimension. The students all over the state, led by certain Leftist student organizations, held a rally demanding a hike in it. The Chief Minister had announced enhancement of Rs. 40 in case of students prosecuting studies in classes 3-7 (Rs. 230 to 270) and Rs. 330 to the classes 8-10. It applied to as many as 6,2,189 SC/ST students' boarders all over the state. The enhanced mess charges were to come into effect from the next academic year June 1999 onwards. The post matric scholarships were enhanced by 25% and estimated to benefit as many as 2, 10, 321 SC/ST boarders. The scheduled castes finance corporation planned to purchase 20,000 acres of land with an amount of rupees 90 crores and distribute such an acquired land among the landless scheduled caste women.
The state had contemplated to provide power connections to as many as 4,000 agricultural wells during May to October 1999 with an estimated expenditure of rupees seven crores. In a way, a special package programme covering many facilities for the scheduled castes was contemplated so as to emancipate the Dalits from their abysmal economic position. It was a measure to bridge the gap between the forward castes and the Dalits and thereby attain the laudable objective of all-round development in the State.

It is quite appropriate to point out that bulk of all programmes announced were not new and innovative. They had been existing and ongoing programmes; the increase in mess charges had been to fulfill the demand made by the student community. The allotment of land, weaker section housing, and house sites had been a feature under the department of social welfare every year. Similarly, the maternity leave and widow pension schemes were in vogue for several years. It appears that the Telgu Desam Party had clubbed all such existing programme under the new label Mundadugu, a step for a kind of benevolent gesture towards the scheduled castes. They seemed to be some kind of old wine in a new bottle under a different brand. Taking note of the budgetary grant of rupees 470 crores under the social welfare and an additional grant of rupees 100 crores making it a total of rupees 570 crores apportioned among 25 lakh scheduled caste households was a meagre sum. It amounted to allocating rupees 2300 on each scheduled caste household. Taking on an average of 5 members such scheduled caste household, it worked out to 460 on every scheduled caste living soul per annum.
It may be pointed out that although the amount of allocations was quite large, yet when taken for totality of development of households it was quite meagre. It is, however, gratifying to point out that the state Government had thought of an additional 100 crores to the then existing budget. In this context, it is pointed out that large scale misappropriations were taking place in a few districts in the matters of maternity relief to people and money was flowing in the name of provision of relief measures in view of the nexus between the middlemen, politicians and the lower level bureaucracy operations in hand and glove.

This scheme was also a kind of election sop offered to the Dalits as one of the populist measures without appropriate fruitful application. It had become a fashion for politicians to think of innovative schemes more particularly to lure the backward classes and Dalits on the eve of elections under the label of emancipating them. There was a need not only the flow of money but also the quantum of achievement so that the laudable objective is attained.

Deepam and Roshni Programmes:

In July 1999, Chandrababu Naidu conceived two more innovative programmes, one entitled Deepam relating to 10 lakh gas connections to rural women particularly from the DWCRA groups all over the state\textsuperscript{75} and the other entitled Roshni for Muslim minorities.

The Deepam scheme was conceived to extend the facility of gas connections to the poor families in each Mandal of the state which involved a massive subsidy of 100 crores, taking a note of rupees 1000
as subsidy for each connection. It was meant to help rural women coming from weaker sections of the society. The Roshni scheme was meant for the reconstructin of Dargas, Shadikhana (marriage halls) and protection of Waqf property, etc. In addition to it, Naidu announced a medical college, three colleges of education, securing second official language status to Urdu in eight districts and a Haj house at Hydrabad. The foundation stone for the Haj house was laid in the first week of July 1999 and undertaken by a respected Muslim Clergy and interpreter of Holy Quran Moulana Abdul Kareem Parekh. The eight storied building was planned for completion in just one year at an expenditure of rupees 5 crores with six stories contemplated in the first phase. The building was to accommodate all the offices relating to minorities similar to Samkshema Bhavan for the scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, and the backward castes.

Deepam scheme was taken up for the benefit of rural women in the state. It is appropriate to point out that Naidu had carved out such innovative schemes and projects in order to tap certain sections of the society, more particularly, on the eve of 1999 assembly elections. Naidu, being a shrewd politician, attempted to tap the weaker sections of the society, which included women and minorities, backward castes and Dalits as much as possible in party’s favour. In these matters he had already evolved schemes for the backward castes and Dalits and some of them were under implementation. The Chief Minister tended to have concentrated on women and minorities by implementing Deepam and Roshni schemes. As is known, these two segments were around 50% and 12% of the population respectively and seemed to be on the priority to
render help. May be, the party or other sources indicated that the popularity curve was waning, and hence Naidu concentrated to improve on them. Taking *Mahila* as segment, the ruling party had given a good fillip to self-employed and encouraged the DWCRA groups in the state, which had greatly rejuvenated the rural women.76

The president of Telugu Desam Party had been focusing on women, their needs, requirements and so on. The scheme relating to 10 lakh gas connections to rural women, more particularly from the DWCRA groups in 1104 *Mandal* s all over the state, had been an innovative programme, which was considered a brain-child of the Chief Minister Chandrababu Naidu. It was not only conceived overnight, but a proposal to extend the facility to poor families in each *Mandal* was planned, a special team of officials and the concerned minister was sent to Delhi and even approval was sought from the Union Petroleum Ministry for the massive ten lakh LPG gas connections from the three oil refineries. The scheme was envisaged for completion by the end of August 1999. The opposition parties painted the scheme as the “election gas”. The center was quick to clear it for implementation, which was a great surprise to the opposition. It involved a massive subsidy of 100 crores. Though it was marked by considerable limitations by taking note of modalities, yet the Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) for cooking which until now had been confined to middle class was made available to the weaker sections.

As regards *Roshni* scheme, it is appropriate to point out that the *Muslim* minorities were quite sore with Telugu Desam Party for its bidding a good-bye to United Front Government and extending
support to BJP since March 1998. Significantly, a group of several Muslim leading personalities that planned a Haj house was seen as a display of anger and the unhappiness of the Muslim community against the Telgu Desam Party Government for joining hands with the BJP. Chandrababu Naidu, in a strategic move to win back the support of the Muslims, had adopted such a plan and decided to build Haj house under the auspices of the Government.

The MIM president was quite critical who maintained, “There is an attempt to hoodwink the minority just before the elections. Chandrababu Naidu had not implemented even 10% of earlier announcements”. He was even critical of empty promises of making Urdu as the second official language in eight districts.

Despite critical comments from several quarters including Congress Party, MIM and others, Naidu went ahead with such programmes on the eve of elections so as to attract such segments of population in favour of Telgu Desam Party in the then coming Assembly elections of 1999.

**Janma Bhoomi Programme:**

*Janma Bhoomi* programme, as carved out by Naidu, resembled the South Korean experimentation. The unique feature of *Janma Bhoomi* was to make the state of Andhra Pradesh enriched in social and economic sectors like per capita income, literacy, health care, employment generation, rural development, building infrastructure in rural parts, canal digging, road laying, repairs to tanks and check dams, etc. by successfully utilizing the human as well as natural resources abundantly available in the state. 77

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Janma Bhoomi provided proper environment for participation of people in decision-making, which in turn enhanced the confidence level of the people. The concept of Janma Bhoomi underlines the peoples’ direct involvement in developmental works with the objective of rebuilding the villages/towns in the process of attaining an ideal society. It also embodies and cherishes the concept of hard work, honesty, teamwork, co-operation, accountability and transparency making the people to achieve positive results in all walks of life.

V. Hanumantara Rao and others have opined, “Janma Bhoomi is a peoples movement for reconstruction and revitalization of the society. Not only that, it is aimed at helping each of us, internalize the time tested values of sacrifice, hard work, diligence, discipline, honesty, self respect and the quest for excellence”. Janma Bhoomi is described as the most comprehensive programme of rural development in the course of last 50 years. It was a happy blend of Gandhian heritage with modernity. It is an improvement of similar programmes going on in various communities abroad.

Chandrababu Naidu programmatically said, “needless to say this movement will lead to evolve as we go along and gain experience.” Janma Bhoomi is evolved with the rich experience gained by various communities in India and abroad in the matters of rural uplift.

Janma Bhoomi was not an easy task. It had in itself many constraints and inherent problems. For example, in the case of freedom struggle, the common foe is not within but without. In the case of Janma Bhoomi, it is within. The fight is directed against our internal enemies like lethargy, despair, dishonesty, corruption, inequality and moral
degradation. It is contended that Janma Bhoomi was aimed to restore lost values and build an egalitarian society based on the principles of equality and sustainability.\textsuperscript{80}

Chandrababu Naidu believed that Janma Bhoomi attempted to wage a struggle individually as well as collectively. May be, it was much more difficult and intricate than what they had rendered during the freedom struggle.\textsuperscript{81} Janma Bhoomi, therefore, was a people’s movement for reconstruction and revitalization of the society. The then Chief Minister, Naidu, while explaining the concept in a statement made on the floor of the State Legislative Assembly, said "Janma Bhoomi must be viewed in the context of the Government’s over all vision of ideal society."\textsuperscript{82}

Janma Bhoomi was a comprehensive programme / movement and aimed at the following objectives:

(i) Multi-dimensional development of all the citizens.
(ii) No poverty, inequity or denial of opportunity
(iii) People deeply involve in the decision making at all levels.
(iv) Government, a service agency extending high quality service to the people and playing a role of trustee and a facilitator.
(v) Transparency and total accountability at all levels.
(vi) Self-help, honesty, dedication, co-operation and hard work would be all pervasive.
(vii) Greater efficiency in utilizing the resources.
(viii) Information technology to be extensively used for the benefit of the people; and
(ix) Growth, equity and excellence to be the guiding spirit.
In the implementation of different phases of Janma Bhoomi since 1997 till today, to accomplish the aforesaid five objectives, the state Government had contemplated an institutional frame-work with the participation of the Government, the democratic institutions of the people, the grassroot level people’s institutions, the facilitating agencies (including NGOs, academic institutions, etc.) and the equal partners.

As per official documents, Janma Bhoomi was people’s movement for reconstruction and revitalization of the society. People’s participation and self-help were the two principles initiated for achieving the goals, while empowerment of people with knowledge and skill was a part of the process. One of the objectives of the programme was to eliminate the contractor system in the Government. Under this programme, the state Government sanctioned directly to the village communities, who were willing to take up the works on their own and ready to contribute a part (minimum of 25%) of investment. In order to ensure more professionalism in project implementation, a number of specific community based organizations (CVOs) were formed in almost all the developmental activities such as CVOs including the following set-ups.

(i) Water users’ associations for irrigation works, Culture, development communities.
(ii) Joint Forest management committees.
(iii) Education committees.
(iv) DWCRA groups.
(v) CMEY, and
(vi) Village level communities for Janma Bhoomi work.
## Details of Janma Bhoomi Program during 1997 – 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Round</th>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Theme</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1-7 January 1997</td>
<td>Janma Bhoomi concept and micro level planning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1-7 May 1997</td>
<td>Construction of HLCs/WLCs community infrastructure development works.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1-7 August 1997</td>
<td>Janma Bhoomi, Jana Chaitanyam - Immunization and health camps.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1-7 October 1997</td>
<td>Clean village/town concept, free veterinary camps, Campaign on save energy and small savings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1-7 January 1998</td>
<td>Participation of students and lecturers along with the habitation/ward level committees and the people in activities promoting clean village/ward concept and creation of community assets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>1-7 May 1998</td>
<td>Free health camps with focus on TB and blindness control. Works programmes through self-help groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>1-7 August 1998</td>
<td>‘Cheyuta’ for disabled, pollution control in urban areas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>3-9 October 1998</td>
<td>Free health camps with focus on AIDS, TB, eye care, dental care and reproductive health care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>2-8 January 1999</td>
<td>Micro level planning, free health camps with focus on curative and preventive aspects of AIDS, TB, eye care, dental care and reproductive health care.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>1-7 May 1999</td>
<td>Mahila Janma Bhoomi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>3-11 January 2000</td>
<td>Micro level planning and evaluation of Gram Panchayats /wards and nodal officers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** E.D. Shetty, A model for securing people’s participation in Janma Bhoomi - Rural Development, Hyderabad: Dr. MCR HRD Institute of Andhra Pradesh, November, 2000. pp. 33-35.
The Janma Bhoomi programme, as a people’s movement for development, is considered as highly imaginative in motivating and stimulating action on the part of the people towards bettering their way of lift. The following have been focal areas:
1. Micro level planning.
2. Health and sanitation.
3. Education.
4. Community organization.
5. Artisan development.
7. Decentralization of administration.
8. Development of the local bodies.
10. Environmental protection.
11. Upgrading of Artisans;
12. Focus on the aged, disabled, etc., and
13. Focus on farm development, in terms of increased production and profitable marketing of the produce within and outside the country.

**Accomplishment Under Janma Bhoomi Programme:**

A close look of the implementation of the *Janma Bhoomi* programmes from January, 1997 till August, 2000 covering as many as 13 rounds invariably present a considerable development process in the rural parts.\(^3\)

The Telgu Desam Party Government had been criticized for trespassing into the functions of local bodies claiming credit for itself. There had been criticisms that Telgu Desam Party Government had also
re-appropriated substantial central grants under IRDP and labeled itself under Janma Bhoomi, and thus claimed credit for the innovative schemes by Naidu. In view of the large-scale criticisms coming from different corners, the Union Government had announced the allocation of grants directly to the local bodies in the Budget estimates of 1999-2000.

In substance, the Janma Bhoomi programmes had been quite positive in creating awareness among the rural citizens for effective participation in administrative process at the rural level and also taking up measures for rural development. It may be pointed out that a considerable development activity had been undertaken in different areas.

Vision - 2020:

The Vision – 2020 was a policy document attempting to transform Andhra Pradesh into that of Swarnandhra Pradesh by 2020. It was the brainchild of Chandrababu Naidu, the then Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. The Vision – 2020 document aimed at setting up an agenda for taking the state to greater heights of glory in different sectors in the course of next two decades.84

The document is reported to have been the result of a considerable exercise by different departments, experts in the field both from India and abroad. On the eve of 50th Republic Day celebrations on 26th January 1999, The State Governor released the document. According to official sources, only six countries in the world have so far prepared vision documents, which include Malaysia, China, Ghana, Pakistan and Bangla Desh. Andhra Pradesh is the first state in India,
which has thought of such a vision document at the sub-national level. It articulates the developmental goals to be achieved by the state by 2020 while inspiring the entire population towards shared goals and aspiration.

The Vision – 2020 document outlines a three-fold approach of building the capabilities of the people and their institutions, focusing on high potential sectors as instruments of growth and transforming governance. The document is quite optimistic in the complexion of the state in the form of social development and economic growth.

It is maintained that fourteen task forces were constituted for the preparation of this document. They included Human Resources Development, Agriculture, Irrigation, Dairy Development, Co-operation and Animal Husbandry, Information Technology, Community Development (rural civic amenities and employment creation), Governance and Development, Social Sector Policy, Tourism, Environment Policy and Ecological Integrity, Health, Family Welfare, Women and Child Welfare, Industrial Policy, and Financial Sector Policy.

Infrastructure; Urban Development, Housing and Services. It is held by official circles that operationalisation of Vision – 2020 was to commence from April 1999 coinciding with financial year 1999-2000. A cell was constituted in the planning department for the receipt of comments and views from the experts, voluntary organizations, industries, business houses within state and outside.

The Vision – 2020 document envisages a growth rate of nine to ten per cent a year for the state economy in real terms over the next two
decades. Taking a note of other targets, the document hoped nine times increase in per capita income over the current level, containing the population growth at one per cent and creating 18-20 million employment opportunities. It is held that China and Korea recorded annual growth rate of 9% for 20 years. In the farm sector, China reached growth rate of 5.9% and Chile 5.6%, while Korea’s industrial growth rate touched 13.1%.

The Vision – 2020 document hoped that by the end of 2020, every individual in Andhra Pradesh would be able to lead a comfortable life, filled with opportunities to learn, develop skills, and earn a livelihood. Poverty would be eradicated and current inequalities would have disappeared. Disadvantaged groups – scheduled castes, scheduled tribes, backward classes, and minorities – as well as other groups in need of special attention, such as women and children, would be empowered and provided with the opportunities they needed to achieve their full potential. The genuinely vulnerable, the old, the infirm, and the disabled would be able to lead secure and dignified life. Every child in the state would be well fed, healthy and would go to school and learn. A girl child born in this year will have as many chances as her brother would go to school, find a job and live a healthy and productive life. No family would lack basic needs like, food, clothing and shelter. Every family will be able to live in hygienic surroundings and enjoy the benefits of clean air and water. Power would be available to run appliances, radios and television, transport would be at hand to go to work or seek entertainment and so would telephones to get important jobs or simply keep in touch with relatives
and friends. Families would continue to promote social values, encourage hard work and continually strive for a better life.

The document further maintained Andhra Pradesh would have a skilled workforce that stands for quality, productivity, workmanship and initiative, and policies and procedures to make it easy to do business in the state. Agriculture, industry and service, and business would have power, transport, and telecommunications. In fact the entire infrastructure they required to grow strongly and profitably would be achieved. This would make investors favourable in their investment decisions.

The document adds that the people of Andhra Pradesh would be able to look forward for exciting opportunities in a flourishing economy with thriving agriculture, industry and service sectors. If they live in rural areas, they would earn profitable livelihood from revitalized agriculture sector, find jobs, on poultry farms, food processing or fisheries units or be able to set up their own small-scale enterprises. People in urban areas of Andhra Pradesh might find work in exports firms, garments manufacturing enterprises, construction and real estate companies, travel agencies, tourism offices and software development firms and many others.

In both village and cities, they would be able to set up retail outlets, restaurants, and other such services to make them successful in their jobs and business. They would have access to knowledge and training through vocational education and skill building institutions and the benefits of technology transfer and small technologies. Further, the document mentions that every one would benefit from a Government that was truly ‘for the people’ which enabled individuals
and business to achieve their full potential, and was transparent and efficient in its functioning. In short Andhra Pradesh would be a vibrant and prosperous place, a state that set the standards for a high quality of life.

In order to accomplish the objective of Vision - 2020 document, Andhra Pradesh set itself the following mission:

- Eradicate poverty and take care its old, infirm, and genuinely needy.
- Enable its people to learn, earn, and lead healthful and productive lives.
- Promote small families for a healthy and wealthy society.
- Give its children a happy childhood and every opportunity to achieve their full potential.
- Empower and support its women and girls to fulfill their roles as equal shapers with men of the economy and society.
- Create the resources its people would need, such as capital and infrastructure, to transform their own futures.
- Enable its farmers, entrepreneurs, and professionals to make agriculture flourish and build thriving industries, services and business.
- Embrace innovation and the latest know how to grow its crops, make its goods and provide high quality services.
- Safeguard its environment and make its villages and cities clean, green and safe to live in.
- Make its Government simple, transparent, accountable and responsive.
Ensure that its people continue to have a strong voice and role in the governance of their state.

Indeed, this is an exiting and ambitious vision and a challenging mission to realize.

The State Government set certain priority areas to create a favourable regulatory climate and undertake initiatives at the state level and also influence the Union Government. The initiatives are as below:

(1) To identify and eliminate outdated laws that constrains growth,

(2) To modify existing laws particularly to reduce discretionary elements, or formulate new ones. Further, the State hoped to strengthen the policy framework to facilitate private sector participation in developing, unexploited resources and reform regulation to enable wasteland development, and

(3) To strengthen or formulate laws that protect public interest (such as laws relating to environmental pollution and quality certification).

The vision document also aims at transforming the state Government into that of SMART Government – meaning: Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent Government. Concerning financial resources and mobilization, the policy document asserted that the Government would not just rely on investment from external resources. On the contrary, it would raise the finances required. In this context, it is also indicated that the Government would lay stress on its spending and consolidate its fiscal position, maintaining its expenditure in a better way, making tax administration more efficient, initiate growth reforms in various sectors, etc.
Information Technology:

Chandrababu Naidu was greatly concerned to make advancement in the field of IT ever since 1995. A Hi-Tec City (Hyderabad Information Technology and Engineering Consultancy City) had come up on an area of about 158 acres of land at Madhapur. It was a joint venture of Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation and Larsen and Tubro to create about 1.4 million sq. ft. of top class IT space. The first phase of this project, known as Cyber Towers with about 0.55 million sq. ft., was completed in December 1998 and some of the leading software companies had shifted into this building. The second phase of the project, known, as Cyber Gateway was expected to create about 0.86 million sq. ft of IT space in four blocks and several other companies had started their own office around the Hi-etch city. By the end of March 2002, software-exporting industry was estimated to provide employment opportunities to about 64,000 persons. The number of professionals was 12,000 in March - 1999 and there were 287 registered cyber cafes in Hyderabad.

A number of multi-national corporations set up their offices in Hyderabad. An Indian Institute of Information Technology was started in 1998, closely associated with Carnegie Millon University in US. Software giants like Metamor, IBM, Signaltree, Oracle and Satyam started their schools in IIT. Microsoft was also helping to establish a faculty chair in this institute. Motorola had a school affiliated to IIT. Hyderabad would be the second software development center outside the US for Microsoft. An area of about 52 sq. km around Hi-Tech city had recently been carved out and named as Cyberabad, the name
supposed to be in conjunction with existing twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. The difference, however, was that the nomenclature of the twin cities was based on their historical past whereas the latest one had no such roots. This new township included the IIT, Indian School of Business (ISB), University of Hyderabad, a golf course, sports complex, Durgam Cheruvu (secret lake), etc. and was proposed for development on international standards. A separate Cyberabad Development Authority had been constituted for this purpose. The future prospects of IT industry in Hyderabad were seen in new entrants, expansion of the existing units and diversifying into area. The state Government and STP, Hyderabad planned to dedicate an earth station exclusively for Internet gateway for it enabled services.

In the recent past, the public sector undertaking ‘Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited’ laid about 22,000 km of fiber-optic network, making it the most extensive network in any state in the country. From the corporate sector, Reliance was establishing a high-speed digital backbone of about 2300 km. ‘Bharati Telecom’ and ‘Tata Tele-services’ were also taking up laying high-speed optical fiber network in the state.85

Added to the above an international gateway was inaugurated at Vizag in December 2000 and during 2001-02. Ten international gateways were planned for installation, of which there were six in Hyderabad and the other four in Vizag, Viajayawada, Warangal and Tirupati cities.

The State Government of Andhra Pradesh initiated some measures through ICTs to make the governance more electronic. The ICT policy 2002-05 provided several incentives, some of which already
exist to this sector. Some of the e-Government projects that were now at different stages in the state were APSWAN (Andhra Pradesh State Wide Area Network), CARD (Computer Aided Registration Department), FAST (Fully Automated Service of Transport), APDMS (Andhra Pradesh Development Monitoring System), SKIMS (Secretariat Knowledge and Information System), MPHS (Multipurpose Household Survey Project) and e-Seva. Under APSWAN, as many as 25 towns including 23 district headquarters were connected with the state secretariat. Eventually all the towns and 1104 mandal headquarters in the state were to be covered in this project. The project envisaged simultaneous communication of vast amounts of data, voice and video transmission.

The Ex Chief Minister, Naidu and other higher officials in Hyderabad continued holding statewide conference, interactive sessions with the officials at short notices and access vast quantities of information simultaneously saving time and money. The video conferencing from Hyderabad with district officials and teleconferencing from district headquarters with Mandal offices became quite a routine practice in the state in recent times. Among all the e-Government initiatives, the e-Seva seemed to be getting popular with the urban middle classes in Hyderabad. It is planned for expansion to 56 other towns with a total of 146 centers. These were the collection centers for various bill/fees (like telephone, electricity, trade license fee etc.) by the citizens and integrated with several departments. Initially, it began with certain services limited to a few localities but expanded significantly in terms of number of departments to which payments were made.
The Government of Andhra Pradesh was projecting Hyderabad as a future hub of software technology. Certain areas were being exclusively developed as hubs of IT industry with world-class and high-tech facilities. They emulated Singapore as their model for development. It is pointed out by observers that IT-led growth had shown as over-emphasis on urban areas and certain regions leading to uneven equitable regional development. It is also apprehended that IT led economic growth would contribute to widening rural-urban disparities.

Information Technology in Andhra Pradesh had several advantages for growth with a large pool of scientific manpower and pro-active Sate Government. It is pointed out that software experts had grown impressively in the last one decade. The IT-enabled services might play a significant role in creation of employment opportunities in future. Richard Heeks argued that ICTs offer genuine possibilities in achieving development objectives and suggested for a right approach towards ICTs.

In order to achieve this goal Heeks emphasizes that “we need to move away from concepts of electronic development that places ICTs center state”. Instead, the approach must be “information-centered, integral to its environment, integrated with development objectives, intermediated, interconnected and indigenised. The development priority for the future must therefore, be i - development and not e - development” The basic challenges lay in improving the social sectors like education, health, poverty, etc. and development of infrastructure, etc. These problems are required to be tackled on priority basis.
The Prime Minister, Atal Bihari Vajpayee, while inaugurating Cyberabad city at Hyderabad, had rightly and eloquently said “it means India’s tomorrow and tomorrow has begun in Andhra Pradesh.” It is, indeed, a great tribute to Naidu for his relentless efforts in shaping the ten-storied Cyber towers. The Ex-Prime Minister had envisaged a threefold task for the IT professionals, business and Government agencies and stressed the need for increasing the use of computer and for adjusting them to Indian languages besides the use of computer to the rural network.

Electronic Governance:

Electronic Governance now been recognized all over the world, more particularly the developed countries greatly put such governance into practice. Government’s departments were digitized and almost all the transactions made on-line. Presently, the Western countries are talking about electronic democracy. As Becker has rightly pointed out, recent developments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) contain within them the potential to facilitate “quantum leaps in the field of democratic politics”. Western countries witnessed the use of ICTs in the mid-eighties itself. Several American local Government authorities have been harnessing ICTs in the administration since the eighties. The basic purpose behind using ICTs in the administration is primarily to (i) improve contact between the local authority and the citizens; (ii) to upgrade delivery of services; (iii) to encourage citizen participation in public affairs; and (iv) to give new vigour to local politics. Almost all the political parties in the Western nations have websites and welcomed the digital revolution.
India has welcomed the concept of e-governance, which has already been used in the developed countries. Opening up of the economy has brought in a number of positive changes in India. One such positive change is concerned with the growth of information technology. Presently, the forces of globalization have compelled the state to adopt new public management in administration of public services. The use of ICTs in the organization has become a part of managerial culture. It has necessitated the Government to use of ICTs in their administration also.

Andhra Pradesh is one of the pioneering states in India which initiated the application of e-tools for administration. Andhra Pradesh was quick to realize that IT was strategic to the State’s future and Chandrababu Naidu recognized such a facility. The basic goal was to reach good governance rather than e-Government and hence Andhra Pradesh used the concept of SMART governance. SAMART stands for simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent Government.

**Water Users Associations (WUAS):**

This is another thrust area on which the State Government bestowed many efforts ever since 1996. Andhra Pradesh is one of the important river states in South India and is endowed with numerous rivers like, Godavari, Krishna, Pennar, Vamsadhara and other minor river basins. The State has a total irrigation potential of 4.80 million hectares. Irrigation and drainage have always been accorded priority in plan allocation by the Government. Despite massive investment in irrigation sector, the irrigated area has
shown declining trend in several major commands due to insufficient allocations for the maintenance of irrigation schemes, poor cost recovery of water charges, limited user involvement, low quality of agriculture, etc. resulting in a gap of 11.88 lakh acres. To remedy this situation, the Government of Andhra Pradesh took the historic decision to transfer management of all irrigation systems to farmers’ organization in January 1996. 89

During 1996-97, several consultations were held with farmers of the major project areas, District Collectors, Press, Universities, Legislators and Parliamentarians to evolve a strategy for the constitution of farmers’ organizations in the irrigation sector. Farmers in Andhra Pradesh had small land holdings ranging from 1 to 1.5 hectares and the complexity of irrigation systems varied from minor irrigation tanks, etc. to major irrigated commands. Further, the indiscriminate use of water by the head-enders was depriving the same to the tail-enders with water logging and salinity almost being a common phenomenon in most of the irrigation projects. The result of the series of consultations led to the enactment of the Andhra Pradesh Farmers’ Management of Irrigation Systems Act, 1997.

The APFMIS Act provides for the constitution of farmers’ organizations for the irrigation sector. The projects have been classified as Minor (less than 2,000 hectares), Medium (2000-10,000 hectares) and Major (more than 10,000 hectares). The Act also provides for recall of members on grounds of non-performance or any violations. The tenure of a farmers’ organization is five years. The following is the is the structure of the Farmers’ Organization:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Farmers' Organization</th>
<th>Irrigation Systems</th>
<th>Composition &amp; Functions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Water User Associations (At the primary level) | Minor, Medium & Major Irrigation Projects | 1. Formed on a hydraulic basis.  
2. Area of WUA to be divided into 4-10 territorial constituencies to give adequate representation to all farmers in head tail and middle reaches.  
3. All land holder and tenants within the notified area are member with voting rights.  
4. All other water users including cultivators, leaseholders etc. are members without voting rights.  
5. President and Managing Committee members are elected through secret ballot. |
| Distributary Committee (At the distributary level) | All Major irrigation systems only | 1. One ore more distributors constitute a distributor committee.  
2. All WUAs in its jurisdiction are its members.  
3. Look after medium drains and distributaries.  
4. Resolve disputes of WUAs. |
| Project Committee (At the project level) | All major & Medium irrigation systems | 1. A part of whole of the project to have a project committee.  
2. All the Presidents of the distributary committee are its members.  
3. Ensure that WUAs and DCs get their account audited and carry out O & M.  
4. Chairman and not more than nine members as the managing committee  
5. Resolve disputes of DCs and AUAs. |

Source: Note on water users association; Department of Irrigation Government of Andhra Pradesh.
Watershed (Neeti Nilwa):

The Government of India formulated the programme of Watershed on the recommendation of Humanatha Rao’s committee report and undertook measures for its application. Consequently, the state Government of Andhra Pradesh implemented the schemes in right earnest.\(^9\)

In order to combat the frequent recurrence of drought in the state, drought prone area programme (DPAP) was introduced during the year 1975, as a centrally sponsored scheme (CSS) with matching state share of 50:50. Integrated wasteland development programme (IWDP) was introduced during 1991 with 100% central assistance. The wasteland development taken up before April, 1995 had not performed well mainly because they had been planned and implemented on departmental basis by Government official and in isolated patches, without regard for the complete micro-watershed principle or with people’s participation. The programmes of dry land development in Andhra Pradesh had undergone a major change form 1995-96 with the introduction of new Watershed guidelines, based on the recommendations of Dr. Hanumantha Rao’s committee report. The main principle adopted in the guidelines lays special emphasis on the active mobilization and participation of the stakeholders in the programme including planning, implementation and subsequent management.

The Union Government realized that a great opportunity existed for improving the productivity, profitability and sustainability of dry farming areas through social mobilization. The rain-fed agriculture to become
productive, should be based on Watershed as the unit of development. Watershed is not a technology but a concept which integrates conservation, management and budgeting of rain water through simple but discreet hydrological units. Simultaneously, a Watershed supports a holistic framework, which means the combined application of technologies on soil and water conservation with improved crop varieties, farming systems and agronomic management, taking into account both arable and non-farm land. Water resource development, management harvesting and equity in sharing, from the nucleus of Watershed development. With assured availability of water, farming was motivated to accept more profitable, sustainable and innovative farming systems. Water availability had also catalyzed the adoption and spread of value-added activities in the entire area of the Watershed, such as horticulture. Cropping system needed to be tailored to suit different rainfall cum soil zones. Watershed development was the only solution to ensure drought proofing and to mitigate the distress caused frequent droughts.

From the aforesaid statistical details, it is evident that considerable progress has been achieved in the dry land development through Watershed programmes in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

**Women’s Empowerment and Self-Employment:**

Women have taken up the Self Help movement through savings as a mass movement – a path chosen by them to shape their destiny for the better. Development agenda of the state attempting to place people especially women, in the fore-front enabled formation of a large number of self help groups (SHGs) throughout the state where the women were saving one rupee a day.91
The development of women and children in rural areas is known as DWCRA.

The main objectives of it are as under:

(a) To uplift the economically poor women who are living below poverty line and to improve the standard of living.
(b) To educate the poor rural women in the spheres of life and culture.
(c) To uplift the socio-economic status of the rural folk into a better standards.
(d) To create awareness among the poor and illiterate women.
(e) To provide them employment opportunities under self-employment programme in a group of 10 to 20 women.

In a note prepared by the commissioner, Women Empowerment and Self Employment, it is pointed out that there are about 4.60 lakh women Self Help Groups in Andhra Pradesh covering nearly 61.48 lakhs rural poor women. Andhra Pradesh alone has about half of the Self Help Groups existing in the country. Ever since 1983-84 till 1994, during a decade, 1000 groups functioned but there has been a massive increase in SHG activities during 1995. The SHGs are not only resorting to thrift but are also taking small loans out of the corpus available with the group. A total amount of rupees 1508.02 crores in reportedly mobilized as corpus with these groups so far and Government estimates that it would enhance to 2000 crores in the next few years. The data in the following table illustrates the district-wise SHGs. Members and Corpus.
## District Wise SHGs, Members and Corpus:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr No</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>DWCRA</th>
<th>SHG</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Corpus (Rs in lacks)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Srikakulam</td>
<td>3058</td>
<td>20933</td>
<td>23991</td>
<td>348291</td>
<td>6140.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vijayanagram</td>
<td>2917</td>
<td>11519</td>
<td>14436</td>
<td>240369</td>
<td>3311.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vishakhapatnam</td>
<td>3099</td>
<td>15865</td>
<td>18964</td>
<td>272779</td>
<td>5222.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>East Godavari</td>
<td>7714</td>
<td>39040</td>
<td>46754</td>
<td>607290</td>
<td>21193.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Godavari</td>
<td>12763</td>
<td>8573</td>
<td>21336</td>
<td>293800</td>
<td>13623.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Krishna</td>
<td>14628</td>
<td>10404</td>
<td>25032</td>
<td>325420</td>
<td>6301.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Guntoor</td>
<td>12758</td>
<td>8425</td>
<td>21183</td>
<td>247998</td>
<td>6682.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prakasham</td>
<td>11629</td>
<td>10381</td>
<td>22010</td>
<td>288000</td>
<td>5056.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nellore</td>
<td>5447</td>
<td>12302</td>
<td>17749</td>
<td>266285</td>
<td>5041.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chittoor</td>
<td>12649</td>
<td>9581</td>
<td>22230</td>
<td>206874</td>
<td>5866.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cuddapah</td>
<td>3941</td>
<td>10680</td>
<td>14621</td>
<td>155717</td>
<td>4953.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ananthapur</td>
<td>17778</td>
<td>2341</td>
<td>20119</td>
<td>243620</td>
<td>6644.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>12442</td>
<td>7796</td>
<td>20328</td>
<td>258221</td>
<td>5655.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Chuddapah</td>
<td>6011</td>
<td>19709</td>
<td>25720</td>
<td>386000</td>
<td>8000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ranga Reddy</td>
<td>11708</td>
<td>1394</td>
<td>13102</td>
<td>182512</td>
<td>5035.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Medak</td>
<td>6356</td>
<td>11644</td>
<td>18000</td>
<td>269650</td>
<td>6800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Nizamabad</td>
<td>11779</td>
<td>3211</td>
<td>14990</td>
<td>186925</td>
<td>2919.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Adilabad</td>
<td>14542</td>
<td>1639</td>
<td>16181</td>
<td>201427</td>
<td>3072.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Karimnagar</td>
<td>103000</td>
<td>11302</td>
<td>21602</td>
<td>325935</td>
<td>8761.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Warangal</td>
<td>3729</td>
<td>20797</td>
<td>24526</td>
<td>343364</td>
<td>7749.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Khammam</td>
<td>13446</td>
<td>6414</td>
<td>19860</td>
<td>218460</td>
<td>4770.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Naglonga</td>
<td>3038</td>
<td>14539</td>
<td>17577</td>
<td>279045</td>
<td>8000.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>294432</td>
<td>258489</td>
<td>460311</td>
<td>3812035</td>
<td>150802.09</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Commissioner, Women Empowerment and self Employment, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, Note on self help Group.\(^1\)

The economic support to Self Help Groups covers the following aspects:

### DWCRA/SGSY:

Self Help Groups have been assisted under DWCRA/SGSY scheme in from of revolving fund of Rs. 25,000/- to each group.
DWRCA scheme was under implementation w.e.f. 1983-84 to 1998-99 and later got merged in SGSY from 1999-2000.

In addition, women have taken up initiatives in improving their socio-economic status by participating in the several programs such as family welfare, health, promoting their nutritional and educational status, awareness on environment, etc. Personnel hygiene through individual sanitary latrines and clean drinking water, etc. A large number of women from Self Help Groups participated in Jamna Bhoomi, a government program envisaging people's participation in over-all development of village regularly as active partners for their village development.

Various services/programs of government have got converged at SHGs level, which are as follows:

**Deepam Scheme:**

The scheme was launched by the Government of Andhra Pradesh on July-9 1999 for distribution of 10 lack domestic LPG gas connections to women of below poverty line families in Rural areas in Andhra Pradesh under Phase-I with an aim to reduce dependence on forest firewood, improve their health status, remove drudgery due to conventional cooking and to improve the general environment of the state. Beneficiaries under the scheme are required to be members from DWCRA groups, which are in existence for one year or above. In addition to the above, 15 lacks gas connections have been distributed to the rural poor DWCRA/SHG women in the state under the phase I and II.
Gruhini:

The government of Andhra Pradesh introduced a new scheme that is called Gruhini for benefits of the rural women Self Help Group members, who have no *pucca* house either on self or their spouses' name and annual income below Rupees 32,000. Total unit cost is Rs. 40,000 while the loan component is Rs. 30,000 and subsidy 10,000. As many as 36,452 houses were allotted during 2003-04 under the scheme. The identification of the beneficiaries is as under:

**District-wise Target**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>District</th>
<th>No. of Houses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Srikakulam</td>
<td>815</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vijayanagram</td>
<td>877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vishakhapatnam</td>
<td>1268</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>East Godavari</td>
<td>3095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Godavari</td>
<td>2939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Krishna</td>
<td>2354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Guntor</td>
<td>2686</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Prakasham</td>
<td>1761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Nellore</td>
<td>1523</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Chittoor</td>
<td>1006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Cuddapah</td>
<td>593</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Ananthapur</td>
<td>1051</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kurnool</td>
<td>1657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Mahebubnagar</td>
<td>1454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Ranga Reddy</td>
<td>897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Medak</td>
<td>963</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Nizamabad</td>
<td>1112</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Adilabad</td>
<td>2177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Karimnagar</td>
<td>1339</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Warangal</td>
<td>1768</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Khammam</td>
<td>3865</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Naglonga</td>
<td>1252</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>36452</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mid Day Meals Programme—Involvement of DWCRA Groups:

In rural areas, the DWXRA/SHGs had been appointed as implementing agencies under mid-day meal program taken up by the government for the ongoing school children of primary classes from 2nd Jan 2003. A total 53,156 women SHGS (DWCRA groups) have been reportedly working as implementing agencies under mid-day meal program in the entire 22 rural districts. In addition to the above, raising the nurseries, management of watershed is also entrusted to women in some districts.

Income Generating Activities:

Various income-generating activities have been taken up by DRDAs for the economic empowerment of the rural poor women under SGSY, State Revolving Fund (Matching Grant) and SHG Bank Linking Programme. Major activities taken by Self Help Groups are as under.
## Details of Self Employment Manufacturing Activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mest Product</th>
<th></th>
<th>Gem Stones</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Horn Toys</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Broom Sticks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bell Metal cashew nut</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Wooden Structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Veena</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Wood Carving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mango Jelly</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mosquito net</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Etikoppaka toys</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>Terrakota Pottry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Kalankari</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>Kora Toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Cane Product</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>Arivni Handicrafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Coconut &amp; Coir Products</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>Bross Idols</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Lace Product</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>Banjara Needle Works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>Paper Sweet</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>Pot Paining</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>Kondapalli Toys</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Decorative Articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Dry Fish</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>Artificial Bonsai Trees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Baniyans</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Gollabhama Sarees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Leather Lamp Shades</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Lambada ornaments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Paper Pulp Toys</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>Banjara Toys</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>Soft Toys</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>Gadwall Sarees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>Pickles</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>Kalakari Bed Sheets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>Sarees</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>Mirror Work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td>Dress Material</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Chappals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41</td>
<td>Readymade Garments</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>Lungis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>Zari Sarees</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Carpets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>Wooden Cutlery</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Handloom Sarees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47</td>
<td>Laminated Photos</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Brass Item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49</td>
<td>Embroidery item</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Silver Item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51</td>
<td>Puppets</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>Rexine Bags</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>Agarbattis</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Pochampally bed sheet</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Source:** Commissioner, Women Empowerment and self-Employment, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, Note on self Help Groups.
Capacity Building:

Special programmes have been designed for training and capacity building of the Self Help Groups Training for skill development and awareness generation through exposure visits taken up in all the districts. Regular skill development Training programmes were organized for value addition to DWCRA products for better packaging, standardization of ingredients, pricing and to develop marketing skills among the women. The well-known agencies like ORG-Marg are associated for evaluation and monitoring of Self Groups and to suggest measures for their sustainable growth.

Marketing:

Marketing support was provided to Self Help Groups through DWCRA Bazar, which have been set up in all districts. A permanent DWCRA Bazar is contemplated at Hyderabad. Product worth more than rupee 100 crores was sold through DWCRA Bazars during 2000-2002.

Institution Building:

Self Help Group was encouraged to come together as co-operative societies at the village level and mandal level by federating them under mutually aided co-operative societies act 1995. As many as 350 societies, have been formed which access credit from financial institutions, donor agencies, DRDAs and voluntary organizations the members of Self Help Groups in availing bigger loans for economic activities and also for collective bargaining in marketing of products, purchasing raw materials, etc. These societies popularly known as
‘Mahila Banks’ and have a share capital of Rs. 5.8 crores and total corpus of Rs. 17.77 crores. These societies charge interest of 12-18% per annum for giving loans.

It is reported that right from the beginning, a large number of non-governmental organizations in Andhra Pradesh have been working for the cause of women and more than 200 committed NGOs have been involved in facilitating formation of SHGs and in rendering efforts for their sustenance. NGOs are working in close co-ordination with DRDAs in training and capacity building skill development training programme and building SHG centered organizations, etc.

The following are the significant initiatives taken by state Government of Andhra Pradesh:

(a) Sales tax exemption on the sales of all the products manufactured by the DWCRA/SHG beneficiaries and marketed through the district level marketing societies organized by the DRDAs.

(b) Stamp duty waiver on all loan documents to be executed by the DWCRA/SHG for accessing loans from banks and to there financial institutions.

(c) Special provision made in the state budget during 1999-2002 for state matching grant/revolving fund to support SHGs.

(d) Established permanent marketing centers in all the districts.

(e) Established TTDCs in all the districts for skill trainings and capacity building and also to display technologies.

(f) Support to groups to participate in fairs at district/state/national and international levels.

(g) Support to form women’s co-operative societies.
In view of such massive self-help movement, there is a perceptible improvement in socio-economic status of the rural women. Due to constant efforts of the Government, women have become very active, assertive and are concerned with the issues relating to themselves and their surroundings. The following table provides the status of Self Help Groups by July 2003.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Status of Self Help Groups</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women covered (members)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Corpus (Rs. in crores)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groups assisted with Revolving Fund/ State Matching Grant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loan mobilized from banks under SHG linkage Programme (Rs in crors)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average credit per group (Rs)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average corpus per group (Rs)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY):

The SGSY is a centrally sponsored scheme funded by the Government of India and the state Government in the ratio of 75:25 from 1998-99. All the then existing schemes such as IRDP, TRYSEM, TOOLKITS, DWCRA, GKY and MSW were merged in the new scheme called Swarnjayanti Gram Swarozgar Yojna (SGSY). This programme came into effect from April 4th 1999.
The objective of the SGSY is to bring poor families above the poverty line by providing them income-generating assets through a mix of bank credit and Government subsidy.

The financial allocation, releases and expenditure since 1999-2000 to 2003-2004 was as follows:

(Rupees in Lakhs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Allocation</td>
<td>822.75</td>
<td>7070.69</td>
<td>4091.08</td>
<td>4984.03</td>
<td>-5651.84</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>Releases</td>
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<td>5853.88</td>
<td>5282.45</td>
<td>4217.73</td>
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<td>Expenditure</td>
<td>10044.08</td>
<td>7082.46</td>
<td>6240.76</td>
<td>5800.68</td>
<td>2360.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Commissioner, Women Empowerment and Self Employment, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hydrabad, Note on schemes pertaining to Self Help Groups.

National Assistance Programme:

The following two schemes under the banner of National Assistance Programme are under implementation:

1. National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAP).
2. National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS).

(1) National Old Age Pension Scheme (NOAP):

Under this scheme, the Government of India has been providing Rs. 75/- per person to all the people above 65 years of age who are destitute having little or no means of subsistence. The Government of India allocated a target of 4,66,000 and the state Government added a target of 853,400 making a total of 13,19,400 persons. During the year 2000-01, an amount of rupees 13774.20
lakhs was utilized on 1319,400 beneficiaries. During the year 2001-02, an amount of rupees 4251.01 lakhs had been released by the Government of India and the state Government also released rupees 7605.60 lakhs. The total beneficiaries were 13,19,400 including 25,000 weavers.

In 2002-03, another 2 lakh pensions had been added by the State Government making a total of 15,19,400 pensions including 30,000 weavers with an allocation of Rs. 13842.36 lakhs. The Government of India transferred the scheme to state Government for implementation from 2002-03. As on September-2003, rupees 6845.91 lakhs was reportedly utilized towards pensions. An allocation of rupees 13842.36 lakhs was provided in the budget of 2003-04 under plan and non-plan to assist 15,19,400 pensioners.

(2) National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS):

Under this scheme, the Government of India provides an assistance of rupees 10,000 on the death of any primary bread earner who is within 64 years of age. During 2000-01, 30780 persons were assisted under the scheme utilizing rupees 3108.97 lakhs. During the 2001-02, an amount of rupees 2383.57 lakhs had been released against the total allocation of rupees 3035.52 lakhs and an amount of rupees 2473.63 lakhs being disbursed to 25853 beneficiaries.

During 2002-03, as many as 18343 families had been assisted utilizing rupees 1838.44 lakhs. The scheme was transferred to State Government for implementation from 2002-03. During 2003-04, an
Allocation of rupees 2749.29 lakhs was provided in the budget to assist 50000 families. As on September -2003, as many as 48415 families had been assisted with an amount of rupees 2529.83 lakhs.

The following table illustrated the abstract of the SGSY special projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Name of the Project &amp; Beneficiaries</th>
<th>Bank Component</th>
<th>Subsidy</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>No. of Beneficiaries</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Economic Generation through Coir Production by Women SHGs in East Godavari District.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1452.00</td>
<td>1452.00</td>
<td>13800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Poverty alleviation through use of improved agricultural technology in chittoor District.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>1500.00</td>
<td>1500.00</td>
<td>10000 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Action plan to create technologically qualified global workers in Ranga Reddy, Medak, Nalgonda and Warangal of Andhra Pradesh(2001-2002)</td>
<td>539.00</td>
<td>799.21</td>
<td>1338.21</td>
<td>12000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Economic Generation Through Fashion Designing &amp; Garment Manufactured By Women SHG In East Godavari District</td>
<td>855.00</td>
<td>1200.00</td>
<td>2055.00</td>
<td>13680</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Gollapalem Lift Irrigation Scheme on Aleru drain In Inkollu Mandal in Prakasam District.</td>
<td>0.00</td>
<td>295.00</td>
<td>295.00</td>
<td>1481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Economic Assistance to 6275 IAY houses in Madakasira Block, Anantapur district Project Report(2001-02)</td>
<td>361.00</td>
<td>621.00</td>
<td>982.00</td>
<td>6275</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No.</td>
<td>Project Description</td>
<td>Budget (in Rs)</td>
<td>Beneficiaries</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Development of Marine Fisheries In Srikakulam District</td>
<td>627.00, 837.00, 1464.00</td>
<td>6100</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Special project on Employment Generation in Rural Areas of Nellore District</td>
<td>298.50, 1201.20, 1499.70</td>
<td>10250</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Providing Assistance to SHGs Federated into Mutually Aided Thrift Credit Cooperatives of Nalgonda District</td>
<td>--, 284.00, 284.00</td>
<td>24111</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Income Generation of SHGs through imparting skills in Textiles processing and Garment Manufacturing in Vishakhapatnam District.</td>
<td>489.60, 726.72, 1216.32</td>
<td>6080 Families</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Development of Handicrafts Clusters of Kalamkari Painting at Srikalahasti in chittoor District.</td>
<td>60.00, 298.74, 358.74</td>
<td>300 Benfs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Development of Tribal Jewellery Handicrafts Clusters in Nalgonda District</td>
<td>15.54, 48.40, 63.94</td>
<td>150 Benfs.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>565.14, 9263.27, 12508.91</strong></td>
<td><strong>90427</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total No. of Beneficiaries 88417 Families-6080 Acres-10,000.

Source: Commissioner, Women Empowerment and Self Employment, Government of Andhra Pradesh, Hyderabad, Note on schemes pertaining to SGSY. p.10

From the aforesaid exhaustive account, it may be mentioned that the assistance of Self Help Groups initiates since 1984 picked up considerably from 1995 onwards and more and more Self Help Groups had been provided with financial assistance through various agencies. Participation in Self Help Groups improved the access of women to credit. This helped women in

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reducing their dependence on money lenders. However, the interest rates in informal credit sector declined. The access to credit helped women to meet their consumption as well as production needs. The women invered the credit obtained from Self Help Groups in new economic activities and/or strengthening the old activities. They contributed to the occupational diversification of the household level. The non-agricultural activities undertaken by the women helped the households to obtain income from low risk activities. Thus, the quality of income of the households had gone up. The quality of employment, indicated by shift from wage to self-employment of women as well as their families, (when the other family members also participated in the activity undertaken by the women) was enhanced. All this indicates that the income of the poor increased and as a result he intensity of poverty among the poor came down.

Naidu suggested that the Government should focus the attention on developing the rural economy by activating agricultural and non-agricultural sectors and remove the infrastructure inadequacies to widen the self employment choices for the Self Help Group members so as to realize the goals contemplated in Vision-2020 document in respect of poverty alleviation and women empowerment.

An exhaustive discussion on varied schemes under implementation since 1995, it is evident that many schemes were election sops while some of them were formulated by Government of India with specific matching grants such as watershed, etc. Janma Bhoomi concept is another version of Sarvodaya with People’s participation and funding by state Government and grants released by Union Government for local bodies for various schemes.
It is undeniable that Naidu had accorded a new shape and label to old schemes and made efforts for development. The State of Andhra Pradesh took a leap in Information Technology and related activities, but still its place on All India map a among the Southern State was far from satisfactory. Deepam and Roshini schemes were meant to woo the rural women minority segments. Further, the Deepam scheme concerning the LPG connections was a part of DWCRA too. The Vision-2020 document was a pious contemplated plan for the transformation of the Andhra Pradesh over a period of two decades requiring massive investment.

Naidu emerged as a symbol of reform not just for Andhra, but for all Indians eager to replace the politics of populism and patronage with a new mantra of economic growth and efficient governance...... the ripples from the Andhra experiment would be fed all over the country.92

Naidu Knocked out:

Assembly Elections of 2004 bring an end to Naidu era. The simultaneous election in Andhra Pradesh became a referendum on Chandrababu Naidu’s nine-year rule. While he saw an “anti-opposition wind” blowing in the state, the verdict delivered a double blow to the TDP-BJP alliance. Everything seems to have gone against him. The sympathy factor did not work; women did not vote in large numbers for him as he expected; farmers, backward classes, and the youth sided with the Congress more than the TDP.

For the first time, two alliances fought against each other in the elections making it the most intensely contested elections in a polarized
situation. The Congress followed the alliance tactics adopted by the TDP from the beginning. It forged an alliance with the Left parties in the state. The alliance with the newly formed sub-regional party, Telangana Rashtra Samiti, paid huge dividends in the Telangana region. It also preformed much better in the coastal region, contrary to speculation that its alliance with the separatist TRS would invite the wrath of the people of the coastal region. In this Lok Sabha election, the Congress polled 41.5 per cent votes, which is less than the 42.8 per cent votes that it got in the 1999 Lok Sabha elections. But it won 29 seats this time, whereas it could win only 5 seats earlier. The alliance generated a momentum in favour of the Congress, far more than what it could have achieved had it gone alone. The Congress alliance got 50.6 per cent of the votes winning 36 seats. While the TDP and the BJP hoped to repeat their 1999 performance through continuing their alliance; they fared poorly by pooling the same percentage of votes as the Congress did, and got only 5 seats. The BJP could not get even a single seat. It is a total reversal of the 1999 verdict.

While one can attribute the Congress' success to the alliance effect, one needs to explain the factors that led to the loss of eight percentage points for the TDP-BJP combine. First, not many people believed in the claim the TDP made about development. The most striking factor is that the people's dissatisfaction about shrinking employment opportunities and irrigation water. As many as 52 per cent of the voters felt that the employment opportunities had gone down under the TDP Government, while 41 per cent thought the irrigation supply had deteriorated. Two-third of the people felt that the economic policies of the TDP Government either benefited the rich or not benefited any one. Similarly, half the voters felt that whatever
development happened took place in Hydrabad, while the rest of the state
lagged behind in 2004 Assembly election with a significant proportion.

Notwithstanding Naidu's image outside the State, it seems that
the leadership factor did not work for the TDP. Naidu is known for his
extraordinary skills in managing party and factions within the party.
But a leader is judged not by his capacity for backroom management.
There is a huge credibility deficiency for Naidu as a popular leader. The
survey found that the Congress leader, Rajasekhara Reddy was rated
much higher than Chandrababu Naidu in this respect. It is rare for a
sitting Chief Minister to be beaten in popularity rating by a challenger
who had never occupied the position.

The survey data shows that about one-fifth of the voters who had
voted for the TDP-BJP alliance in the 1999 elections, had switched to the
Congress-led alliance this time. Dissatisfaction with the NDA
Government, and a feeling that their financial condition worsened,
contributed to this vote change. The image the TDP acquired during
N.T. Rama Rao's rule as pro-women, pro-farmer, pro-backward classes
and pro-poor party underwent a change in recent years. The change in
image was reflected in the change in social profile of the party, as the
TDP-BJP combine fared badly among these social groups.

**Andhra Pradesh election results**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Seats won</th>
<th>Net gain</th>
<th>Vote %</th>
<th>Change from - 1999</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>TDP</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>-133</td>
<td>37.33</td>
<td>-6.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BJP</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-10</td>
<td>2.82</td>
<td>-0.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>38.25</td>
<td>-2.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRS</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>6.36</td>
<td>6.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI (M)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>-0.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.85</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: National Informatics Centre - Assembly Elections 2004.*

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A significant proportion of the poor supported the Congress. Despite the fact that Naidu’s Government pursued neo-liberal economic policies since 1996, a major portion of the poorer classes voted for the TDP in the 1999 elections. The allegation leveled by the Congress and the Left parties, that Naidu was acting at the dictates of the World Bank and that the loans from abroad, were used to enrich party leaders at the local level and seem to have stuck. His claim of trying to balance development (economic reforms) and welfare did not impress many. Unlike Rama Rao, Naidu was not a mass mobilizer, nor could he use pro-poor rhetoric. Unlike in 1999, he could not reel out welfare schemes on the eve of elections, which were thought to have fetched him votes then. In the implementation of welfare programmes, Naidu only sounded apologetic.

The discontent among farmers, that agriculture had been neglected, was widespread. This was due to poor irrigation facilities, lack of remunerative prices, inadequate market facilities, and the like, coupled with the persistent efforts of the Congress leaders to highlight them. People blamed the government for all these problems, although the TDP tried to make the point that it was due to the factors beyond its control. The suicides of farmers mocked the TDP in its face. On the other hand, the Congress’ promise of free power for cultivation attracted the farmers to it. Nearly 70 per cent respondents covered in the survey said that the power should be supplied free. The TDP leadership hoped that the farmers, notwithstanding the discontent, would finally vote for it. This did not happen.

Thirdly, the TDP leadership banked too much on the women’s vote. It hoped that the women who are involved in the large number of women self-help groups (estimated to be about 4.5 lakh) would vote in
their favour. About one fifth of the TDP candidates in the Vidhan Sabha elections were women. Naidu wrote personal letters to the women in self-help groups for electoral support. Even when the exit polls predicted a rout of the TDP-BJP, Naidu was asserting that the alliance would win, because it had a lead of 10 percentage points among women. The TDP had not only lost the edge it had in 1999 elections, but it actually did worse among women voters. While the Congress alliance led the TDP-BJP by 5 percentage points among men, the lead for Congress alliance went up to 13 percentage points among women.

Fourthly, the vote TDP received among the backward classes has also declined considerably. The strength of the TDP lies mainly in getting a large chunk of the peasant OBC vote. In 1999, it was almost double than that of the Congress. In fact, one of the reasons given for the rise of the TDP for power in early 1980s was the overwhelming support from the OBCs. The TDP-BJP combine fielded 15 more BC candidates than the Congress alliance in the Assembly elections, and three more than its rival alliance in the Lok Sabha elections. But this too did not work.

Finally, the youth also voted against the TDP in large numbers than in the 1999 elections. Resentment against the TDP Government increased over the years, mostly centered on unemployment. While 57 per cent of the youth voted for the Congress alliance, only 38 per cent voted for the TDP alliance. The TDP could not expect to win an election when it lost votes across all these social categories. Thus, it was a combination of alliance effect and the swing factor that saw a triumphant return of the Congress after a gap of almost a decade.

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REFERENCES:


5) Ibid, pp. 32-36.

6) Ibid, p. 47.


10) *Devine Consort* Sunday, 10-16 July, 1994


14) Ummareddy Venkateshwarlu, opcit. p.44.


19) Ibid.

20) Ibid.


24) Ibid.


36) Ibid.

37) Ibid.

38) Ibid p.25687.
40) Ibid.
41) Ibid.
43) Ibid.
44) Ibid.
51) Ibid.
56) Ibid.
57) *The Hindu*, March – 27, 1998 – Naidu categorically ruled out support for Congress Party and favored another coalition led by BJP.
62) Ibid.
63) Ibid.
64) The Hindu, Hyderabad, April - 18, 1999.
67) Ibid.
69) The Speaker GMC Balayogi had allowed Giridhar Gmango to exercise his vote at the time of confidence vote on the floor of Lok Sabha on April 17, 1998, which worked out to the disadvantage of the BJP for its failure to secure confidence of Lok Sabha by a single vote. Had he denied Gomango to vote and he himself exercised casting vote, the BJP could have easily sailed by a narrow victory. Political observers commented that it was the result of lack of political wisdom and shrewdness on the part of G.M.C. Balayogi.
71) Vaarta, Telgu, Hyderabad January 2, 1996.
72) Indian Express, January 15, 1996.
74) Ibid.
75) The scheme was also a part of battering Self Help Groups (DWCRA)
77) For details about Janma Bhoomi and its affects on Panchayat Raj system, See:


81) Ibid.


89) Note on water users association; Department of Irrigation, Government of Andhra Pradesh.

