Chapter-5

State Response to the Mobilization of Backward Castes

In order to understand the linkage between the politics of mobilization and non-mobilization, the policy response of the State is covered in this chapter. In response to the political mobilization of the backward castes through four instruments, discussed in the earlier chapter, the ruling party in the state of Andhra Pradesh took recourse to politics of accommodation through policies, having potential to ensure continuity of the hegemony of dominant groups through various policies and prevent the breakdown in the social system. Therefore, even after more than five decades of independence with a democratic Constitution, the principle of fair share to all the castes and communities is not realized. This was achieved despite sharp economic differentiation within the forward castes, increasing politicization of the backward castes and the lower castes. The State power provided the dominant castes ample scope for enlisting the support of aspiring backward castes. This was achieved by increasing number of positions and the quantum of resources available to their leaders. In the Indian social context, the attention paid to the demands of local leaders of backward caste groups could be assumed as accommodating the group they represented 'through the process of vicarious participation in the symbolic representation conferred on the whole community'\(^1\). The vested interests created complicated issues through public policies intended for providing the social justice. In its actual functioning, the practice of political accommodation is adhoc and expedient in character in response to the various claims and counter claims by the competing social groups. Radical policies were thereby avoided. Attempts were made to woo all sections of society within an eclectic policy framework, and reject a dogmatic approach. The underlying assumption has been that every

aspirant to power had his price. The basic objective has been to contain discontentment, which could otherwise pose an effective challenge to the very distribution of power. Certain policies and programmes are used as instruments to contain the backward castes and get in their support to the socio-economic and political structure of Andhra Pradesh. These include (1). Ineffective public policies for the poor such as occupational cooperatives, Adarana and anti-poverty programs. (2). Incremental policies for the middle and elite class like reservations in employment and local institutions. (3). Inadequate policies for students such as Social welfare hostels, scholarships, residential schools, reservations in educational institutions, study circles for coaching to those BC candidates, who are preparing for the competitive examinations. These policies have continuously neglected the poor and as a result only the castes, which have mobilized among the backward castes got benefited.

I. Ineffective Public Policies for the Poor: In the post-independent period for the economic development of the people who are practicing the traditional occupations, the Government of Andhra Pradesh has taken two measures. One is introduction of the occupational cooperatives in the pre-globalization period and second is the Adarana in the post-globalization period. None of these policies have economically consolidated nor protected their occupations due to the contradictions between the micro and macro economic policies, which are being pursued by the State.

(A) Occupational Co-operatives: After formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956, in order to meet the pressure from the caste associations, gradually over the years caste based occupational cooperatives came into existence. These societies are introduced to prevent artisans and handicraftsmen from migration, pull them out from poverty, strengthen the existing sources of livelihood, provide economic stability, lead to the formation of financial capital and accessibility to market. Therefore, a large number of occupational cooperative societies like, weavers society, fishermen society, toddy tappers societies, dairy cooperatives,
bamboo workers, washer men, barbers, contract laborers societies came into existence (see for details annexure-7).

Along with the adverse effect of globalization, today these societies are facing numerous problems such as vested interests of politicians, bureaucrats and contractors. They are also playing with lives of the weaker sections cooperatives. The complicated procedure, bogus membership, competition from the industrial products, partial credit supply to members, stress on short-term loans and partial coverage of the occupational population in the village and political influence in getting the membership in the society and lack of raw-material and market are the serious problems faced by these societies\(^2\). Therefore, for the last one-decade these societies have been declining and diminishing.

**B) Adarana**: Adarana is a project introduced by the Government of Andhra Pradesh just before 1999 Assembly elections to attract the backward castes vote bank. Adarana aims at providing modern and improved hand-tools to the Artisans with a view to improving their productivity, minimizing human drudgery, improving product/service quality and help modernize process operations. The ultimate goal is to contribute to increased income levels and improved standards of living of Artisans. It is proposed to cover 10.00 lakhs Artisans as part of the project during 1998-99 and 1999-2000. Approximately 1,10,000 Artisans to be covered per month, or around 5,000 units per District per month (see for details annexure-8).

Soon after the elections (1999), in which again Telugu Desham won and immediately stopped the Adarana from implementation. The Chief Minister offers three reasons for stopping the scheme; lack of quality tools, corruption in the purchase of the tools and mistakes in selection of beneficiaries.

\(^2\) Interview with venkataiah, President, AP Occupational Co-operative Societies at Hyderabad on 10-7-03.
Important observations on ADARANA: On the implementation of Adarana the concurrent evaluation study\(^3\) made following observations.

1). More than 87% of the artisans are traditional by nature. Caste-wise analysis shows that most of the artisans are engaged in hereditary activities denominated by caste.

2). It was also observed that activities like milk-vending, tailoring, sheep-rearing, earthwork, fishing, electrical and musical set have a mix of different caste people. Persons of other castes after acquiring training are taking up the above-mentioned activities in the districts.

3). Per unit monthly expenditure is higher than income in all the districts.

The reactions of the artisans on the usefulness of modern tools and technology in their activity are as follows.

a). The tools distributed were not to be put to full use.

b). Not much modernization has taken place in the activities where values of the tools are less than Rs. 2, 500/-

c). More than 80% of the artisans have selected their tools on their own, but provided lowest quality of tools.

d). A small percentage of beneficiaries (3-5) diverted /sold the tools distributed to them.

e). Nearly 43% were not satisfied with the distribution channels and inspection of tools, of them 38.2 % have also expressed doubts about quality of tools.

f). The educational level among these beneficiaries is not satisfactory. Of them 41.2% are illiterate, 32.9% completed up to the primary level, 22.8% secondary level, 3.1 % have higher than the secondary level.

g). The view of beneficiary on training was not encouraging. About 87% evinced interest in undergoing training in their respective trades.

\(^3\) Planning and Concurrent Evaluation of Adarana programme in selected districts of Andhra Pradesh, Center for Industrial Development, Yousufguda, Hyderabad, December 1999.
These observations are made based on the survey in six districts such as, Anantapur, Cuddapah, Mahabubnagar, Nizambad, East Godavri, and Prakasham. Two districts are selected from each region of Andhra Pradesh.

But there is also criticism on introducing and stopping of the scheme by the AP Backward Classes Welfare Association that instead of introducing reservations in the legislative assembly and Parliament, improved educational facilities and economic development schemes, the Government is trying to perpetuate the status quo by providing instruments to continue the traditional occupations on the one hand and destroying them through the globalization on the other hand. The Association also questioned that how can the Government modernize the traditional occupations with meager amount of financial assistance? This strategy has been leading to marginalisation of the backward castes.

Second criticism leveled against the Adarana scheme is that even the tools, which are purchased with the nominal amount, are also not provided to all the communities. There are 93 castes in the backward caste list; only 15 of them are eligible under Adarana. The third point is that the allotted Rs 80 crores is not at all released, only less than half of the money is spent but even in that also there is a lot of corruption. Ultimately, the scheme did not help the poor artisan communities; it is only the members of ruling party, who got the benefits and the Government official's co-ordinate the distribution activity.

(c) Anti-poverty programmes:

In order to meet the needs of the small and marginal farmers, the Government of India devised two agencies in 1960s. These agencies are Small Farmers Development Agency (SFDA) and the Marginal Farmers and Agricultural Laborers Agency (MFAL). The SFDA and MFAL were expected to finance schemes, which generate additional income and employment to the rural poor. The SFDA undertakes the programmes for benefit of the three target groups viz; small farmers, marginal farmers, and agricultural labourers. Apart
from their production potential in providing low-cost modern technology to small and marginal farmers, these agencies subsidized the operation of uneconomic holdings to blunt the edges of polarization along class lines by preventing rapid proletarianization of the peasantry\textsuperscript{4}.

Among the total farmers of Andhra Pradesh, 70\% are small and marginal farmers and a majority of them belong to the backward castes. These backward caste small and marginal farmers are the erstwhile artisans and handicraftsmen. Among these castes, there is a considerable number of labour class as well. According to the criteria of the target groups of the SFDA, the backward castes are one of the important groups. But benefits derived from SFDA have not reached the target group.

According to a study\textsuperscript{5} the SFDA could not leave any significant positive impact on the conditions of the poor. This is more true in the case of those who are at the rock bottom of the socio-economic pyramid. On the other hand it is used by the influential individuals of the village in tightening their grip over the rural poor. And better-placed farmers cornered off the benefits intended for poorer sections. Further, hostile environmental conditions, the cultural values of the poor, corrupt leadership with its deep rooted vested interest, unfertile land, unhelpful attitude of the development functionaries, the integrated bureaucratic structure with its cumbersome procedures, the non-viable nature of the schemes and inadequate infrastructure collectively rendered the real poor helpless in availing the benefits of the programmes has not been successful in enabling the rural poor to cross the poverty line.

Another important anti-poverty programme known as integrated rural development programme (IRDP) was introduced in 1978-79 by merging SFDA,


\textsuperscript{5} Balaramulu.Ch, Administration of Anti-Poverty Programmes (A case study of SFDA), Kakatiya School of Public Administration, Warangal (AP), 1984, pp.204-5.
DWACRA (Development of Women and Children in Rural Areas) and other community development schemes. With the implementation of this scheme, relatively poor household received non-viable and low cost schemes, while relatively better-off households cornered-off most viable schemes. This also includes considerable number of beneficiaries who are wrongly identified. This group knocked away a large portion of benefits intended for the poor. It is striking to note that the marginal farmers who also have some land are largely neglected.6

Therefore, these anti-poverty programmes led to three consequences such as (1) the intervention of the State in development is getting increasingly marginalized, (2) only land-based schemes have greater chances of success, and (3) the schemes are leading to stratification and not equalization.7

(II) Incremental Policies for Middle Class:
(a) Affirmative Action Policy:

The affirmative action policy has got a long history in India. By 2003 the policy of reservations completed hundred years. For the first time Sahu Maharaja of Kolhapur introduced the 'reservations' for the deprived sections of the society in 1903. In 1922 the government of Madras announced, to implement the reservations to non-Brahmins, in response to the self-respect movement led by Rama Swamy Naicker. The Justice party and DMK played a vital role in building the pressure on the Government and the Congress party.

The Composite Madras State for the purpose of grant of fee concession first took up the backward classes list. As and when a community was included in the list of Backward Classes for the purpose of fee concession it was followed by reservation of vacancies for the backward classes in public services.


7 Haragopal G, Forward to Balaramulu's, Administration of Anti-Poverty Programmes (A case study of SFDA), Kakatiya School of Public Administration, Warangal (AP), 1984, P.viii.
In Madras province, which included earlier the Coastal and Rayalaseema Districts of Andhra, a system of *communal rotation* was introduced by the Government to accord to all the recognized backward classes groups with a view to remove inequalities of representation in public services. The non-Brahmin movement was so vigorous that it gave rise to a political situation forcing Justice Party to form the ministry under Mont Ford reforms. The system of communal rotation in public services was in full force from then onwards till the advent of India's independence. Soon after the commencement of Indian Constitution on 26th January 1950, the Upper castes filed a petition in the Madras High Court. The High Court verdict was that it is not possible to identify some castes as the socially and educationally backward classes. Immediately the Chief Minister of Madras presidency, Chakravartthi Rajagopalachari, took the initiative to get the "stay orders" from the Supreme Court. Soon he realized that since the Indian Constitution gives equal opportunities and rights irrespective of caste, therefore, there is a possibility for the verdict, which would be anti-backward castes. If it is true, that it is difficult for the Congress party to win in the elections in the entire south India. That is why with the consensus of Rajagopalachari and Jawaharlal Nehru, the first amendment to the Indian Constitution was to provide the special treatment to the socially and educationally backward classes.

When the Constitution of India came into force, there were many states in which special preferences were available to Backward Classes in the field of education and recruitment to Government posts. It is observed that during 1951-52, educational concessions were available in about eleven states (Andhra, Bihar, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu&Kashmir, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, Punjab, Tamilnad and Utter Pradesh), Four of which also provided reservations in Government posts. One state (Saurashtra) provided reservation in Government posts but provided no educational concessions. All these states followed caste criteria in preparing the lists of backward classes for the award of these special preferences. With separation of Andhra from the Madras
Presidency and later formation of Andhra Pradesh, the ruling governments did not implement the reservations for the other backward classes till the appointment of the first Backward Classes Commission in 1968.

Another important landmark in the history of Backward Classes movement in Andhra Pradesh was that the ruling Congress Party had shown its cognizance of the existence of the grievances of the Backward Classes. During the regime of the Chief Minister, N. Sanjeeva Reddy the State Congress constituted a sub-committee under the presidency of Pragada Kotaiah to look into the problems of backward classes. However, this step of the Congress Party was treated as an attempt to divide the Backward Class Movement on party lines.

After the formation of Andhra Pradesh, in 1957 there was a startling development, Sanjeeva Reddy Government decided to prepare the Backward Class list not on the clearly laid down criteria of the caste but on the basis of economic backwardness. This led to difference of opinion among Backward Class leaders some subscribing to the view of Sanjeeva Reddy and others opposing the move. This controversy has persisted, since then.

Mention may be made here that the former State of Hyderabad was also maintaining a list of Backward Classes. As a result the State of Andhra Pradesh had these two separate lists applicable to the Andhra region and Telangana region respectively.

In 1963 the Andhra Pradesh Government amalgamating the two lists through G.O.No.1886 and brought out a new list of Backward Classes for the purpose of reserving 25 percent seats in Medical Colleges invoking Article 15(4). However, the validity of this order was challenged in the High Court of Andhra Pradesh in the case of Sukhdev V. Government of Andhra Pradesh. The High Court struck it down on the ground that the order has been made exclusively on

the basis of caste. The State failed to explain the reasons in taking the caste as the only criteria for determining the backwardness.

As a result of this judgment, the State government decided that the criteria for determining backwardness should be economic and it should be applied to an individual family rather than caste. Accordingly it issued another G.O.No. 301 in 1964, scrapping the earlier list of Backward Classes and ordered that financial assistance should be given only to the economically poor whose family income were less than 1500 rupees per annum. Further it also constituted a cabinet sub-committee to draw a new list of Backward Classes in 1966.

The cabinet sub-committee appointed by the Government of Andhra Pradesh adopted the following criteria for the preparation of the Backward Classes list

1). Poverty
2). Low standard of education
3). Low standard of living
4). Place of habitation
5). Inferiority of occupation and
6). Caste.

Andhra Pradesh Government adopted the list prepared on the basis of this criterion and orders were issued (in G.O. Ms. No.1880, Education, dated 29-7-1966). On the basis of these orders, Government in the Health, Housing, and Municipal Administration made provision for reservation of 20% seats for other Backward Classes, and amended the rules of admission accordingly. When these reservations were given effect, a batch of 104 Writ Petitions was filed in the High Court challenging the validity of the reservations. On hearing the writ petitions the High Court in its order dated October 7,1967 struck down the list of BCs for the reasons that the list of BCs was not based on any statistical data that it was only a list of castes without the test of poverty, etc., being applied to it. The matter was examined in consultation with Law Department and Advocate
General and the Government carried the case in appeal to the Supreme Court. The Supreme Court confirmed the order of the AP High Court.

After quite a lot of legal vicissitudes, the Government appointed a Commission in 1968 under the Chairmanship of Manohar Pershad⁹ to enumerate socially and educationally Backward Classes, who would be entitled to the rights conferred upon them under the provisions of the Constitution. There is a connection between the appointment of the first Backward Classes Commission in 1968 by the Government of Andhra Pradesh and the central Government action on the first national Backward Classes Commission i.e., the Kakakalelkar Commission. Ten Parliament members requested, through a memorandum to the Prime Minister under the article 340 of the Indian Constitution, Jawaharlal Nehru in 1953 to appoint a Backward Classes Commission at the national level to study the socio-economic conditions of the backward classes, identification of the list and suggest measures for the upliftment of them. The Kakakalelkar Commission was appointed in 1953 and the Commission submitted its report in 1955. But the Chairman of the Commission himself dissented for taking caste as the criteria and without discussion in the Parliament the commission report was set aside.

The matter was discussed at a conference of State representatives on 7th April 1959 and subsequently reviewed at a meeting of State officers convened by the Ministry of Home Affairs, but no consensus emerged. The Central Government ultimately took a decision that no all India lists of backward classes should be drawn up, nor any reservation made in the Central Government service for any group of backward classes other than the SCs and STs. Consequently, on 14th August 1961, the Home Ministry addressed all State Governments stating: " while the State Government have the discretion to choose their own criteria for defining backwardness, in the view of Government of

⁹ He resigned on October 1, 1969 and K.N. Anantharaman was appointed as Chairman on 29th October 1969.
India, it would be better to apply economic tests than to go by castes". Regarding the preparation of the lists of backward classes it was observed: "Even if the Central Government were to specify under Article 338(3) certain groups of people as belonging to 'other backward classes', it was still be opened to every state government to draw up its lists for the purposes of the Article 15 and 16. The state Governments were to adhere to their own lists, any all-India lists drawn up by the Center would have no practical utility".

**Anantharaman Commission:** The first Backward Classes Commission under the chairmanship of Anantharaman, in Andhra Pradesh, which is appointed in response to the Central Government action on Kakakalelkar Commission and pressure from the Backward Classes Associations, was asked to determine the criteria to be adopted in preparing the list of backward classes and make suitable recommendations for the uplift of the backward classes. The Commission prepared criteria for backwardness and examined the representations made by the various communities, which claim to be backward and has prepared a list of 92 backward classes taking into consideration their cultural background, economic, educational and social backwardness and made the suitable recommendations for their uplift: The Commission submitted its well-considered report on 25th June 1970, categorizing various castes to be treated as Backward Classes and recommended reservation of 30% of seats to the persons belonging to these classes in the educational institutions and other recommendations (see annexure-9).

In view of the rapid changes and developments that are taking place, the Commission recommended reservations for ten years in the initial stage and review position thereafter to consider desirability of extending the same.

**Government Action on the Commission Report:** In response to the BC Commission report, the government of Andhra Pradesh has taken the following action.
The State Government by an order (No. 1793, Education, dated 23-9-1970) announced reservations of 25% of the seats for Backward Classes. The benefits conferred under the G.O were initially limited to a period of ten years to be renewed thereafter,

(a) Reservations in educational institutions and employment:

The Government of Andhra Pradesh recognized 93 communities as Backward Castes on the basis of recommendations of the State Backward Classes Commission (1970) and 25% reservations are given to 40% of the population from 1972 onwards. These communities are divided into the following groups as show in the following table:

Groups, Castes, and Percentage of Reservations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Groups</th>
<th>Name of the Communities</th>
<th>% of Reservations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>A (38)</td>
<td>Aboriginal Tribes, Vimukta Jatis, Nomadic and Semi-nomadic tribes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>B (21)</td>
<td>Vocational groups</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>C (1)</td>
<td>Harijan Converts</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>D (33)</td>
<td>Other backward classes</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>(93)</td>
<td></td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


25% of available seats are reserved for the children of backward classes in all educational institutions both in general, professional and technical courses right from first year to post-graduation.

Certain persons belonging to the advanced classes, claiming to be aggrieved by the order successfully assailed this G.O and a Bench of Andhra Pradesh High Court quashed the same. The Chief Justice of Andhra Pradesh
High Court Justice Pingali Jagan Mohan Reddy gave a judgment that the backward classes list is not valid, because the socio-educational profile of the listed backward castes is not studied. The then Chief Minister deliberately did not respond to the High Court verdict to have fresh list of backward classes. The allegation on Sanjeeva Reddy by the backward class leaders was that he deliberately avoids the reservations for them in the government educational institutions and employment\(^\text{10}\).

The State Government to carry the matter to the Supreme Court in appeal aggrieved by the judgment of the High Court. The Supreme Court went into the details as to the genesis of the G.O and upheld the same as also the list of the socially and educationally backward classes so enumerated there in, by their judgment rendered on 12\(^{th}\) June 1972. The Supreme Court *inter alia* observed that a caste is also a class of citizens and as such a caste can be socially and educationally backward, the reservation made of such persons will have to be upheld not withstanding the facts that a few individuals in that group may be both socially and educationally above the general average\(^\text{11}\).

It is only by virtue of the above-referred judgment that the socially and educationally backward classes got a little benefit from 1972 onwards by way of reservations either in the technical and educational institutions or public employment at the initial stage of recruitment. Thus the concept of social justice for the socially and educationally backward classes became a reality because of the decision of the Supreme Court\(^\text{12}\).


The Backward Classes Conference (1979) Resolutions: The next important landmark in the policy matter of backward castes is the Backward Classes Conference. The historic Backward Classes Conference was conducted by the Government of Andhra Pradesh in 1979 to discuss issues on, which policy matters to be made was divided into eight groups to cover on various issues of the backward classes. The groups are as follows

- Dealt with Social Reforms and Political participation,
- Employment and Services,
- Economic Problems,
- Land Reforms,
- On Education,
- On house sights and Housing

The different groups passed various resolutions covering different aspects of welfare of Backward Classes. Some of the important resolutions passed by the State Backward Classes Conference are interesting\(^\text{13}\): (see annexure-10)

The State Government under the leadership of Dr. M. Chenna Reddy realized the force behind the upliftment of weaker sections and the need to tackle this problem on a war footing. The Government promptly announced in extending the reservations and other facilities for a further period of ten years commencing from 1980. The Government also constituted a Cabinet sub-committee to take up the follow up action after the Conference.

Muralidhar Rao Commission: On the demand of the backward classes leaders to increase the reservations, Muralidhar Rao Commission was appointed by the

\(^{13}\) Resolutions passed by AP Backward Classes State Conference held at Lalbahudur stadium at Hyderabad on 28th-29th April 1979.
state Government in 1981. The Commission submitted its report in 1982 with the recommendations (see annexure-11). It gathered dust for four years. The *Telugu Desham*, promised implementation of it in 1983 itself. In response to the backward classes NT. Rama Rao announced increase in the reservations from 25% to 44% in 1986. But High Court of Andhra Pradesh rejected the Government decision. Neither the Government of Andhra Pradesh nor the Backward Classes Associations preferred an appeal the Supreme Court. Therefore the increased reservations were not implemented.

From its terms of reference it appears that the intention of the Congress government in constituting the Commission was either to comply with the letter of the recommendations of the Anantharaman Commission of 1970, which had recommended that the classification and quantum of reservations to the BCs should be reviewed after 10 years; to actually identify at least a few backward castes who had 'progressed' using reservations during the last decade and delete them from the list of beneficiaries. Muralidhara Rao ignored the terms of reference and set out to do all he could to help the backward castes, therefore refused to delete any of the backward castes from the existing list (with the exception of one section of the Kalingas of Srikakulam), but added nine more to the list instead.

He recommended increasing reservations from 25 to 44 percent for the 52% of the backward classes population in the state. He supported this by a simple piece of arithmetic. The Scheduled castes, Scheduled tribes and minorities together constitute about 30% of the State population. The remaining 70% are to be shared out between the BCs and the forward castes. Since no caste-based census has been taken after 1931, Muralidhar Rao chose to go by the estimate of the Mandal Commission, Which had taken the forward castes to represent 17.58% of the population, and came to conclusion that the BCs constitute 52% in Andhra Pradesh.
As the term of Muralidhar Rao commission recommendations will be completed by 1999 the Govt, of A.P during the time of Mr.Kotla Vijay Bhaskarareddy as, Chief Minister, appointed justice Putta Swami Commission for identification, inclusion and exclusion of castes in the backward classes list. So far, though the term of the commission is over, the Commission did not submit the report. Three years (2000) ago the period of ten years for the BC reservations is over. The Government of Andhra Pradesh, however, extended the reservations through an ordinance.

Reservations in the local body institutions: Introduction of reservations for the backward classes in the local body institutions is in repose to the pressure built by the Backward Classes Associations on the government and realization of the numerical strength and lack of proper representation of the backward classes. With the victory of the Telugu desham party; the dissatisfaction among the backward castes against the Congress rule has been recognized. It was during the Telugu desham period, NT Rama Rao, as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, introduced the reservations in the local body institutions.

In order to accommodate growing elite among the backward castes and reduce the dominant castes hegemony in the local power structure Government of Andhra Pradesh through an ordinance in 1986 introduced 34% reservations in the local body institutions i.e., village panchayats, Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituencies (MPTCs), Presidents of the Mandal Parishads, Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (ZPTCs), and Chairmen of the Zilla Praja Parishads and in the Municipal Councilors and Chairmen. There are 21,943-Gram Panchayats, 1093 Mandal Parishads, and 22 Zilla Parishads at present in the state. Out of these 34% will be reserved for the backward classes, which means that 7460.62 Gram Sarpanches, 371.62 Mandal Presidents and 7.48 Zilla Parishad chairmen and in the same proportion in the M.P.T.C and Z.P.T.C and the

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14 [http://www.aponline.gov.in](http://www.aponline.gov.in)
Municipalities seats are reserved for the backward classes. With the introduction of reservations the representation of the backward classes has been increasing, but it is not in proportion to their population. But there is the criticism from the Backward Classes Associations on two points. One is that the candidates to contest in the reserved local body elections are decided by the landed dominant castes at the local level rather than the backward castes themselves. Second is with regard to important procedural aspect, that is the reservations in the local body institutions is not having Constitutional guarantee and they are introduced through an ordinance in the Assembly, therefore, at any point either the Government or the judiciary may abolish these reservations since the matter is before the Supreme Court.

Protective discrimination as a channel of mobility provided limited opportunities to the economically and politically mobile backward castes. Over the years they have been drawn into greater participation in political life but a major grievance has been that orders concerning reservations are violated due to two reasons. Some of the enforcing authorities do not have proper understanding about the open competition, roster and recasting etc., and some are deliberately doing so. It was happened in the recruitment of the junior engineers in the electricity department in the year 2000. 78 BC candidates have got highest marks, they are suppose to get the posts in the open category but given in the BC quota. That is why the deserved BC candidates did not get the jobs.

The reservation policy is one of the major instruments used by Government of Andhra Pradesh to co-opt the growing elite among the backward classes. Reservations have been made for them in educational institutions.

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15 Interview with R. Krishnaiah, President APBC Welfare Association at Hyderabad on 14-1-03.
16 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
employment, and local body institutions. This policy seeks to compensate for centuries of inequalities, which prevent the economically, socially and educationally backward classes from enjoying anything approaching a proportional share of formal positions in the most strategic areas affecting economic standing and political power. Reservation policy has immense potential to influence the political process: it has provided sufficient stakes for the backward castes and particularly elites in the backward castes to extend their support to the political system. But it has taken nearly three decades to introduce the reservations based on the recommendations of the Commissions, but not Constitution based, therefore, for every ten years the BC Commission will have to be appointed and obviously, the BCs have to face the anti-reservation agitation and legal battle in the court. At the same time, it is the only reservation movement, which has brought together the heterogeneous backward castes; dalit and the progressive forces fight for the democratic rights in the state as well as in the country.

II) Inadequate policies for Education: For the education of backward castes children, the Government of Andhra Pradesh introduced the social welfare activities. But ideas for the introduction of social welfare activities are derived from the caste associations, which have practiced the welfare activities like hostels, scholarships etc as a part of the social mobilization of their caste people before independence. In response to the pressure built by the Backward Classes Associations in the post-independent period, the social welfare activities (annexure-12) include hostels, scholarships, residential schools, study circles etc. But there is an allegation that these facilities provided by the Government are not sufficient enough, due to inadequate infrastructure and funds, even for 25% of the BC students in the state.


19 Interview with Kishor, president APBC students Association at Hyderabad, 10-11-03.
Gradually, consciousness among the backward classes about education has been increasing. The strength of the BC students in schools, colleges and universities is also increasing. But the Government is not providing sufficient seats to all the applicants due to the scarcity of hostels in the entire state. For instance in Kurnool district alone during the academic year 2003-4 the district backward classes welfare department received about 8000 applications from the BC students, who joined in the schools, for total number of 1842 seats in the entire district. Same thing is happening in all the districts and at all levels like junior, Degree Colleges and Universities. All BC students' applicants are not getting either hostel accommodation or scholarship and fees reimbursement for the professional courses. Similar situation exists even in residential schools, where each school receives four digits of applications and accommodates only double-digit number of pupil.

For the last few years, the department of BC welfare went on increasing the number of study circles in order to give coaching for those BC students, who are preparing for the competitive exams. Since beginning of structural adjustment, liberalization and privatization policy in the country, recruitment for the Government jobs has been declining. Therefore, mere coaching without employment opportunities is no way going to help the backward caste youth.

For the purpose of enforcing policy matters, which are introduced for the backward castes, and to solve the procedural disputes in the process of implementation the Government of Andhra Pradesh made following institutional arrangements. (A) AP Backward Classes Cooperative Finance Corporation (APBCFC), (B) AP Backward Classes Welfare Department (APBCWD) and (C) AP Commission of Backward Classes (APCBC): Broadly these three institutions are looking after the financial, welfare and legal aspects respectively. These institutions have, almost; become helpless due to scarcity of funds from the state government, lack of central government financial support and political will of both the governments. The finance allocations made for the
BC Finance Corporation hardly covering even 5% of the BC beneficiaries, regarding welfare only Rs 10 crores is allocated for 52% of the BC population and BC Commission do not have either the mandatory powers to take any legal action against the violation of the rule of reservations or decision making power, but it has got powers only to include and exclude the castes in the BC list\textsuperscript{20}.

**Summing up**: The benefits of the policies, that include occupational co-operative societies, Adarana programme and anti-poverty programmes, reservations in the education, employment and local body institutions and a nominal share through an accommodation strategy, only a few of the backward castes, that too from the mobilized castes have benefited, remaining large number of non-mobilized BC castes did not get any share and the state Government attitude towards the backward castes is ambivalent. Therefore, in the post-independent period those backward castes, which have occupational cooperatives and organization, mobilization and articulation alone occupied the political, administrative positions and availed educational facilities. A large section of the non-mobilized and non-articulated backward castes have not yet entered the state institutions.

Another aspect of the state policies towards backward castes is that of the continuous neglect of the poor. The policies, which are discussed so far, are for those BCs who are having some assets like practicing traditional occupations, small and marginal farmers, students and educated middle class, but there is no space for the poorest of the poor. Obviously these people also not having any assets or skills but only the labour power. They constitute the largest number within the backward castes and are vulnerable. For majority of the poorest of the poor backward castes, there is no proper policy to protect their rights or minimum guarantee of work.

Last dimension to the policy response of the state is that the policies, which are introduced by the Government of Andhra Pradesh, are ineffective,

\textsuperscript{20} See for details, *BC Garjana* (monthly journal; published by APBC Welfare Association, Hyderabad, January 2001.)
incremental and inadequate. Even for these type of policies also the BCs will have to fight for a long-time but there is no guarantee that it is going to sustain. It happened in the case of economic development policies, in affirmative action and now in the social welfare policy, because the State is retreating in the wake of globalization process. The institutions, meant for the implementation of these policies, are lacking sufficient funds, staff, monitoring and also a great deal of mal-administration.

That is why G. Ram Reddy\textsuperscript{21} rightly observed that "the distribution of patronage and rewards was carried out in ways that encouraged competition among the leaders of disadvantaged groups which prevented them from combining to establish a new political formation of all the disadvantaged. The result was that they could not rely on a substantial social base for sustained support. These 'leaders' therefore, were diverted from demands for structural changes, which could benefit the larger castes/communities they 'represented' and directed toward seeking rewards for family and factional groups to ensure their co-option in to the existing power structures". The large chunk of the poor among the backward castes is marginalized from the development process. The provincial dominant caste rulers in Andhra Pradesh consciously introduced the class division within the deprived castes, which has on the one hand the elite class of entrepreneurs, administrative elite in bureaucracy and politics and on the other hand a large number of laboring class deprived of the benefits of the State policies.

\textsuperscript{21} Ram Reddy. G, op.cit, p. 263.