CHAPTER – III

PROFILE OF THE STATE OF ANDHRA PRADESH
The struggle and sacrifices of leaders and cadres for separate Andhra Pradesh State bears a parallel and similar parlance in the history of free India. A new movement was kicked off after the country broke the shackles of slavery from the British colonial rule. People with Telugu as mother tongue raised their voices together demanding for bifurcation of the then Madras Presidency titling one as Andhra Pradesh. The repulse kindled off the fire resenting the treatment given to Telugu speaking people as second grade citizens in the Presidency. Several strong personalities gave a call to the Telugu speaking people to unite and fight for the separate identity of Andhras and not be known as Madrasis.

It is understood, according to the records and history manuals available, that the original terminology to launch the canon demanding independent identity and state to Telugu speaking people known as Andhras sparked off long before the independence. The then renowned leaders like Jonnavithula Gurunadh, Challa Seshagiri Rao, Gollapudi Seetha Rama Sastry and Unnava Lakshmi Narayana formed a Young Men Literary Association way back in 1903-1904. The confidence of persons strengthened when the bifurcation of Bengal was dropped in 1911. Later, in 1912 Konda Venkatappaiah was elected as secretary of the association. In conformity to the proposals, the first Andhra Maha Sabha convention was held from May 20, 1913. The meeting resolved for taking people’s opinion about separate state for Andhras. Second Andhra Maha Sabha convention was held at Vijayawada in 1914. In fact, the movement took strong movement from here. Third Andhra Maha Sabha was organised at Visakhapatnam in 1915 and the corresponding one, fourth Andhra Maha Sabha, at Kakinada. The fifth convention was presided over by Konda Venkatappaiah from June 1, 1917 at Neliore. A detailed discussion was taken up at this meeting in relation to the difference of opinions between Circar and Rayalaseema districts. A delegation headed by Nyapathi Subba Rao met Montek on December 17, 1917 and explained him about the necessity of forming a separate state for Telugu speaking people. Majority members opposed a resolution proposed by B.N.Sarma at the Central Legislative Council about the restructuring the states on language criteria on February 6, 1918. Later on in January 22, 1918 the Telugu speaking people in the Madras region formed a special Andhra Congress Circle. Nyapathi Subba Rao and Konda
Venkatappaiah were elected as first president and secretary respectively. There were many instances where in, delegations from the Circle represented the matter of a separate state for Andhras with the British rulers since 1918 that went in vain. The movement took a backseat when the Second World War broke in 1939, temporarily. The war ended in 1945 and the country was liberated from slavery in 1947 with Jawaharlal Nehru as the first Prime Minister. The Andhra movement leaders and members wished that their long cherished goal for Andhra Pradesh would be fulfilled. Meanwhile, a delightful declaration came from the then Prime Minister Nehru on November 27, 1947 that the government was considering formation of states on linguistic basis. Later, Nehru during his visit to Visakhapatnam stated that a Commission was in the offering to examine the possibilities of linguistic states.

Dhar Commission: A Commission headed by the President of Constitutional Council S K Dhar was formed by the National Government on June 17, 1948. The government handed the responsibility to it to examine the relevancy of language in the formation of states, how many states are to be formed, in which regions of the country, the socio-economic problems besides administrative difficulties and the ease that might crop up after formation of such states. The Dhar Commission submitted its recommendations on December 10, 1948 furnishing its findings to be in favour of no new state formations, keeping the country's integrity and general long-term development.

J V P Committee: The recommendations of Dhar Commission against the formation of linguistic states created heavy tremors in the country including in the Telugu speaking regions. The Congress party's national committee received all the feedback from the regional units and felt that there was an emergency need to institute another Committee on the issue. The national Congress committee immediately formed a new committee with Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhai Patel and Pattabhi Seetha Ramaiah. This committee was called J V P Committee with the first letters of the members.

In April 1949, the tri-member committee submitted its recommendations to the national committee of the Congress party. The committee expressed a view that depending on the socio-economic and political reasons, the thought of formation of linguistic states should be put off for some years. However, the committee in its report
said that if the Telugu speaking people forgone the Madras city, there can be a possibility to form Andhra Pradesh.

Indefinite fasting of Swamy Seetha Ram: Doubts stormed through the minds of the people in the Telugu speaking region whether the state would take shape or not, as the infighting of Congress members soared high. Swamy Seetha Ram (Gollapudi Seetha Rama Swamy) felt that Gandhian policy was the right policy to achieve the state and resorted to indefinite fasting from August 15, 1951. The outcome was overwhelming. People went violent demanding the formation of the state immediately. Acharya Vinoba. Bhave took initiative and convinced Swamy Seetha Ram to observe restraint and withdraw from fasting. Taking to the advice of Bhave, Swamy stalled his 35-day long fasting on September 20, 1951.

Potti Sri Ramulu’s fast unto death: Potti Sri Ramulu, one of the strong leaders of the separate Andhra movement, took to indefinite fasting from October 19, 1952, as the delay and negligent tactics of the National Government were disgusting and instigating the Telugu speaking people of the region at Madras. People resorted to arson immediately after Sri Ramulu went on indefinite fasting. Every Telugu speaking person came to know of Sri Ramulu and his fasting strike for favour of separate state. His name and the impact of his fasting reached the national capital within very short time. Foundation of the Congress party all over the country was rocked with this person’s fasting camp.

After consulting all the political fronts of the country, the then Prime Minister Nehru declared that there would be no objection to the government if the Telugu speaking region forgoes Madras from its state. Sri Ramulu did not take the declaration as the one that would come true and continued his fasting.

On December 15, 1952, Potti Sri Ramulu went to no return spheres in the fasting camp transforming the camp from indefinite fasting to fasting unto death. Violence marred all over the southern parts of the country, as the death news broke and spread like fire. On December 19, 1952, the Prime Minister presented the proposal to form Andhra Pradesh minus Madras and including some Telugu speaking districts, in the Parliament.
Formation of Andhra Pradesh: The central government acceded to form an Andhra Pradesh State as a result of the sacrifice by Potti Sri Ramulu. A Commission, with Justice Kailas Nath Wanchu as special officer, was formed by the government to report on the administrative, economic and other issues that might arise while forming the state. On February 7, 1953, Justice Wanchu submitted its report to the Government, examining and considering the recommendations of the commission. Nehru declared that the government decided to form Andhra Pradesh, on March 25, 1953. After the government expressed its readiness, people demanded the government that capital of the state should be in Rayalaseema region according to Sri Bagh agreement. Also accepting this demand, the state was formed by the government with Kurnool as its capital.

Congress party formed ministry with Tanguturi Prakasam as Chief Minister and Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy as Deputy Chief Minister. Trivedi was the first appointee Governor of the state. Nehru inaugurated the state on October I, 1953.

Telangana Revolt: Though India got Independence, there was nothing to cheer about for the people of Hyderabad state. During the years 1946 to 1948, Telugu speaking people were concerned about the developments in the state of Hyderabad. The Seventh and the last Nizam of Hyderabad, Nawab Mir Osman AH Khan was very anxious to become independent, resisting Indian Government’s efforts to merge Hyderabad state into the Indian Union. With the help of Khasim Razvi of the Ittehadul Muslimeen and its militia called the Razakars, he spread violence to achieve his desire.

To counter Razakars and Nizam Police, the Communists led peasant revolt by organizing village defense squads to protect the villagers. This revolt began in 1946 in the Nalgonda district and spread to Warangal and Bidar (which was then part of Hyderabad state) districts quickly. Farmers and labourers revolted against the Nizam and his loyal local feudal landlords using guerrilla tactics.

With the cooperation of a few patriotic Muslims, the Hindus who were more than 90 percent of the population of Hyderabad state launched 'Join India' movement to integrate the state with the Indian Union. Swami Ramanand Thatha led the state congress leaders and took part in the movement actively.
Merger of Hyderabad state into Indian Union: Indian Union's negotiations with the Nizam were abortive. The Nizam Government refused to accede his territory to India Union. Government of India launched 'Police Action' code named 'Operation Polo' on September 13, 1948 against Nizam. Nizam's forces surrendered within five days on 18 September 1948 and the merger of Hyderabad state into the Indian Union announced formally. Until the end of 1949, Major-General J.N.Chaudhuri was the Military Governor of Hyderabad. M.K. Vellodi, a senior Civil Servant acted as the Chief Minister of the State and the Nizam was designated Raj Pramukh in January 1950. Burgula Rama Krishna Rao took charge of the state after 1952 general elections.

The Big People Agreement: The Congress high command, Hyderabad people, and Communists were stressing towards a united Andhra Pradesh, while the separatists never mended their ways. Congress reviewed the situation and felt that the differences of Andhra and Telangana should be eliminated. The high command sitting at New Delhi convened a meeting of the leaders from Andhra and Telangana regions to discuss on the subject on February 20, 1956. Bezawada Gopala Reddy, Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy, Gouthu Lachanna and A Satyanarayana Raju represented the Andhra region for the meeting while, Burgula Rama Krishna Rao, K V Ranga Reddy, Marri Chenna Reddy and J V Narsinga Rao represented the Telangana region.

As a result of the detailed and in-depth discussion at the meet, a consensus was reached upon by the leaders of the two regions to shape the state as united Andhra Pradesh. All the eight Big Persons of the state signed on the pact to preserve the united Andhra Pradesh. This is popular as the Big People Agreement. This agreement was included into the states reorganisation bill for giving legal sanctity to it. A model bill titled Andhra - Telangana State was prepared for the cause, which was objected by the Andhra big people that the name might give way to conflicts at a later date. Then, the Joint Select Committee changed the name of the state as Andhra Pradesh.

The Formation of Andhra Pradesh: However, Telugu speaking people demanded for their long cherished Visalandhra formation, but people of Hyderabad state were unanimous in their demand for splitting the state into three parts. The States Reorganization Commission headed by Syed Fazal Ali heard the views of different
people and organizations. Based on the Commission's conclusions, the Congress Party High Command preferred Visalandhra and enlarged the state by including nine Telugu speaking districts of Hyderabad state to eleven districts of Andhra state to form Andhra Pradesh with 20 districts. In the process, the Hyderabad state was split among Maharashtra, Karnataka and Andhra State. Aurangabad division merged with Maharashtra and Gulbarga division merged with Karnataka. The rest of the two divisions of the state - Gulshanabad or Medak and Nizamabad merged with Andhra State.

Thus, the state of 'Andhra Pradesh' emerged merging all the districts of Coastal Andhra Rayalaseema and Telangana on November 1, 1956, with Neelam Sanjiva Reddy as the Chief Minister and C.M Trivedi as the Governor. The years 1947 to 1956 were very crucial in the history of Andhra Pradesh. Even as India got independence on August 15, 1947, the three distinct regions of Andhra Pradesh - Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema be joined to Madras state and Telangana was part of Hyderabad state, which was independent. Andhra Pradesh witnessed many struggles before it emerged as the first linguistic state on November 1, 1956.

Telugu people have a proud lineage: The history of Andhra Pradesh makes a fascinating reading. Around the fifth century B.C. an Aryan clan drifted to the south of Vindhyas and found people known as Nagas there. It is not clear whether it was the language these Nagas spoke or the territory they inhabited which bore the name "Tiland" or 'Telang' which eventually became Telugu. The Pallava kings maintained that it was the name of the language. On the other hand,'the expression 'Andhra'. It is believed, as an unintentional Corruption of the word, Aryan' by people for north of the areas occupied by the Nagas and the migrating Aryans.

It is said that the Aryans were initially referred to as "Andhriyans" and eventually as 'Andhra's. As the Nagas were accommodative by nature, the Aryans had no difficulty in infiltrating into them and living with them. Such was the unity of these two communities that according to Apastamba, the codifier of laws at that time, miscegenation was not only prevalent then but also the Aryan men had picked up the practice of consanguineous marriages. A custom prevalent among the Dravidians then and in most parts of the State. It is owing to this togetherness that the expressions 'Andhra' and 'Telugu' have become synonymous with one another as the time rolled
by. The apoch of the Salivahanas alias Satavahanas, spanning four centuries and a half, heralded the Andhra history. It was Srimukha, the founder of the Andhra kingdom in the third century B.C., who annexed the Magadha empire and extended Andhra grandeur to northern India.

Reaching the peak of golden age, the Salivahana reign spread from the Bay of Bengal in the East to the Arabian Sea in the West. The people of that era registered allround Progress. Budhism was widespread. The Buddhist Stupas and Viharas emerged at Dhanyakataka. Bhattiprolu, Guntupalli, Ghantasala, Chinna Ganjam and other places. Nagarjunakonda, the existing Amaravathi Stupa and the ancient Dhanyakataka Stupa, belonged to this period. Trade relations were maintained not only western cities like Rome but also with the eastern countries. Gautamiputra Yajna Sri Satakarni gave an impetus to sea voyages and maritime commerce. Along with ore exports, Telugu, culture and arts also reached the countries of the East.

After the Satavahanas, the Ikshvaku dynasty deserves an honourable mention. Vasishthiputra Kshantimula founded the Ikshavaku Kindom in the Telugu Country. Nagarjunakonda is the symbol of the fine culture of the Telugus interwined with the history of the Ikshvakus. By the end of Vishnukundin dynasty, the immigrants and the original inhabitants merged and an integrated Telugu community emerged. Budhism declined and the Vedic faith was revived. Prakrita Language and Prakrita poets were out of favour. Sanskrit language, Sanskrit poets and Vedic learning gained respect. Telugu began to shape into multiflous language.

After the Vishnukundians, the eastern Andhra came under the rule of the Chalukyan Kshatriyas. Vishnuvardhana was the founder of the Eastern Chalukya dynasty. The Chola kings of the South had matrimonial alliance with Vengi Chalukya Kings. Telugu developed gradually during their time. The earliest Telugu word that had come down to us is Nannaya’s Andhra Mahabharatha, written under the patronage of Rajaraja Narendra.

During the Kakatiya Period, Ganapati Deva made an attempt to bring the entire Telugu country under the aegis of a single authority to resist foreign aggression. Tikkana completed the translation of fifteen cantos of the Mahabharata and recited it
for the first time in the fort of Orugallu. After Prataparudra Deva, the sun set on the Kakatiya empire in 1323 A.D. Once again, the Telugu country crumbled to pieces.

During the reign of the Reddi Kings, fine arts were in bloom and sciences like Ayurveda and Astronomy received impetus. Yerrapragada and Srinatha belonged to this period. The Andhra empire under Krishnadevaraya, spread from Cuttack in the north to the southernmost areas. In his court, Bhuvana Vijayam, the Telugu literature was nurtured by the eight poets reputed as the Ashtadiggajas. Fine arts like music, dance, sculpture and painting acquired a new luster. Agriculture and commerce thrived.

During the period of the Sultans of Golconda. Hindus and Muslims lived in fraternity. Although the court language of the day was Persian, the Sultans acquired a thorough knowledge of Telugu, the language of the people. Telugu poets and the Telugu language were cherished in Golconda. Along with the other provinces of the Deccan, Golconda went under the Mughal sway and later under the British.

The end of the Qutub Shahis marked the beginning of the Asafiahis. The scene then shifted from Golconda to Hyderabad. With this, Andhradesa saw the rule of the Nizams – a period known for both constructive and chaotic conditions. The British interference rendered the matters worse. The Telugu people began to feel the need for preserving their identity. Consequently, in 1913, the nation heard their demand for a separate State through a resolution of the Andhra Mahasabha. The voice demanding a separate State became more and more strident and soon after Independence the Telugu speaking area of the composite Madras State was separated to form the Andhra State with Kurnool as its capital on October 1, 1953. And three years later, nine districts under the Nizam’s control in the erstwhile Hyderabad State were added to the Andhra State. Thus was born Andhra Pradesh on November 1, 1956.

Arts & Crafts

Andhra Pradesh is a treasure trove of rich art and crafts that are of great demand in international markets. The handicrafts occupy a special place and possess timeless charm. Nirmal is well known in the state for its wooden toy industry. The craftsmen use locally found light wood to carve soft toys viz. the replicas of vegetables, fruits, animals, dolls etc. Andhra Pradesh has an old tradition of making...
hand woven clothes. The State is very much famous for its handlooms and textiles; its silk sarees are among the best produced in the country. Kalamkari, a special art of dyeing clothes with vegetable oils still exist in the state. These are called handlooms. The style of fabric and design vary from place to place. Sarees are the most exquisite among all fabrics. The most popular handlooms in the state are found at these following places:

- Chirala Textiles, Chirala Handlooms
- Dharmavaram Sarees, Dharmavaram Handlooms
- Eluru Carpets, Eluru Handlooms
- Gadwal Sarees, Gadwal Handlooms
- Ikat Weaving Handlooms
- Kalamkari Fabrics, Machilipatnam Handlooms
- Mangalagiri Sarees, Mangalagiri Handlooms
- Uppada Sarees, Uppada Handlooms
- Venkatagiri

Nature and environment

Andhra Pradesh forms a major cultural and geographical link between the northern and southern parts of India. It is situated in the tropical region between the latitudes 13° to 20° north, and the longitudes 77° to 85° east. It is bounded by the Bay of Bengal in the east, Orissa in the northeast, Chattisgarh and Maharashtra in the north, Karnataka in the west and Tamil Nadu in the south. Andhra Pradesh has the second longest coastline in India (972 km.), running from Ichchapuram in Srikakulam district in the north to Sriharikota in Nellore district in the south. There are seven working ports in the State, including one major port (Visakhapatnam) and two intermediate ports (Kakinada and Machilipatnam).

The climate of Andhra Pradesh may be described as tropical-monsoonal type. The State receives its rainfall from the southwest and the northeast monsoons. Rainfall varies from region to region and fluctuates widely over time. The average rainfall ranges from about 74 cm. in the South to about 200 cm. in the North, but the annual fluctuations are considerable. As more than 60 per cent of the net sown area has no assured irrigation facilities and depends on rainfall for cultivation, monsoons play a crucial role in deciding the agricultural performance of the State and the overall
condition of the economy. Most parts of Telengana and coastal Andhra receive fairly good rains. However, Rayalaseema is a zone of precarious rainfall, annual average being 69 cm., and as monsoon often fails in this area, it has long been known as the ‘stalking ground of famines’ (kshamaseema). Annual fluctuations in the rainfall are some times so heavy that several districts are often subjected either to floods or drought. Excess rainfall is as bad as deficit and a flood is as disastrous as a drought. Cyclones and floods periodically devastate Coastal Andhra, causing heavy damage to standing crops, putting the economy of this region in great peril.

Rivers constitute a vital element of the consciousness and way of life of the people in the riverine areas. The anicuts across the Godavari, the Krishna, and the Penna, described as poems in concrete, were built more than a century ago. It was due to these irrigation projects the Krishna-Godavari tracts of Andhra had experienced an ‘agrarian revolution’ in a manner quite unlike any other part of the Madras Presidency in those days. The changes in the social and political organization of Andhra that followed the ‘agrarian revolution’ were immense. It is due to these irrigation projects that the central coastal districts even today remain as 'granaries' of the State. Sharing of river waters is becoming a contentious issue between various regions of the State in the last two decades or so. Andhra Pradesh is also rich in a variety of minerals, most important of them being coal, limestone, natural gas, barytes, manganese, mica and iron ore. Much of the industrial growth of the State is in mining and industries dependent upon these minerals.

Population characteristics

Andhra Pradesh is the fifth largest State in India, both in terms of area and population. The State's population stood at 75.73 millions in 2001 (Census of India), which accounts for 7.4 per cent of India's population. The massive size of the State can be gauged from the fact that only 12 nations of the world have larger population than that of Andhra Pradesh. The population of the State has more than doubled since its formation. However, the decennial growth rate of population in Andhra Pradesh has come down to 13.86 during 1991-2001. This is the first time the growth rate of the population has come down compared to the previous decade and is the lowest since Independence. It is much less compared to the all India decennial growth rate of 21.34. Literacy rate in Andhra Pradesh has gone up from 44.09 per cent in 1991 to
61.11 per cent in 2001, but it is still lower than the all India figure of 65.38 percent. The difference in literacy rate between rural and urban population, tribal and non-tribal people, socially backward castes and the upper castes, and males and females is still very wide.

With about 27 per cent of the population living in urban areas, the level of urbanization in the State is almost on par with the national average. Though the proportion of urban population as a whole has been increasing in the State, the rate at which it has grown has declined substantially in recent years. If high rates of urbanization during the earlier three decades were attributed to the stagnation of rural economy, the steep decline in the rate of urbanization during 1991-2001 needs to be examined. Although the proportion of people living in rural areas has declined from 82.6 per cent in 1961 to 72.92 per cent in 2001, the living standards of the rural people overall remain low, as most of them live under conditions of agrarian overpopulation and limited opportunities for productive work. When one speaks to members of peasant families in rural areas it becomes clear how eager the peasants are to move to towns if they get any opportunity to do so. Parents do not usually prefer to give their daughter in marriage to a person living in village or engaged in agriculture and would rather prefer a small employee in an office in urban area.

The data on workforce distribution indicate a high magnitude of dependency on agriculture. Nearly 80 per cent of the total workers in the State are still engaged in agriculture (cultivators and agricultural labourers put together). While the proportion of cultivators among the 'main workers' has declined the proportion of agricultural labourers has been on the rise. The proportion of agricultural labourers in AP is the highest among all the States in India. Their proportion tends to be even higher in the agriculturally advanced areas of the State. It is well known that all those who are involved in agriculture do not have sufficient work. With mechanization the need for manual labour in villages has been on the decline. Such a situation leads to overcrowding in agriculture and disguised unemployment. The elders in the villages often speak about the laziness syndrome prevailing in the rural areas, indicating that there is no sufficient work for all members of the village. Since dependency on agriculture over time has not declined much in the State, the per capita income of agrarian population can be improved only with significant rise in productivity levels.
or a major shift of rural population to urban areas relocating people in different occupations.

In terms of religious identities, Andhra Pradesh is a mosaic of different faiths. Although Buddhism was said to be the major religion till around the early medieval period, it has become virtually non-existent today. The 'Hindus', including the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribe people, constitute about 89 per cent of the total population. But the term 'Hindu' is a problematic one, because any person not claiming the other prevalent religions, such as Islam and Christianity, is generally subsumed under this category by Census enumerators. Thus Hinduism encompasses tribals, whose major religious form is animism. The North coastal Andhra has a preponderance of Hindus with about 99 per cent in Srikakulam and Vizianagaram districts, and about 97 per cent in Visakhapatnam and East Godavari districts. Muslims occupy the second place with about 9 per cent of population. Though Shias are in a considerable number, the majority are Sunnis. Muslims are located largely in certain districts and towns. They are in considerable number in Rayalaseema region (about 13 per cent), Guntur district (11 per cent) and parts of Telengana. The capital city, Hyderabad, has 26 per cent Muslims, where communal politics thrive. The Christians constitute about 1.8 per cent in the State, with a high concentration in Guntur district (6.7 per cent) followed by Krishna and West Godavari. Christianity spread mainly among the socially depressed castes, to which it rendered great service, but there is also a small section of upper caste Christians. The percentage of Christians may be apparently low because a larger number of dalit Christians claim themselves Hindu for technical reasons. Jains, Buddhists and Sikhs constitute about 0.4, 0.3 and 0.3 per cent respectively.

Economy

Andhra Pradesh like most States in India, has a multi-structured economy, ranging from shifting cultivation in Agency areas of Srikakulam district to high-tech industries in Hyderabad. Agriculture is still the mainstay of AP economy. The net area irrigated was 4.38 million hectares (41 per cent of net sown area) constituting about 8 per cent of the total irrigated land in the country, and slightly above the national average (39%). But area irrigated and sources of irrigation vary from region to region. During the early decades after the State came into existence canal irrigation
was given priority but for some time there is hardly any progress in bringing more land under canal irrigation. Food grains account for about half of the total cropped area. Rice alone accounts for nearly half of the total area under food crops. Pulses, oil seeds, especially groundnut, cotton, chillies, sugarcane, tobacco, and turmeric are the principal commercial crops of the State.

Agricultural productivity per hectare showed an increase since 1970-71, in the regions and crops that came under the influence of green revolution. Commercialization of agriculture in the State became prominent from the early 70s. But commercialization of agriculture also had its adverse effects on the peasant economy. Agriculture has become capital intensive and losses due to natural calamities or pest or price fluctuations in the market, often depriving the peasant remunerative prices to his product, meant the collapse of his economy. Several members of peasant classes, who in search of prosperity go for commercial crops and incur heavy investments, mostly raised through loans, end up as paupers. Such 'pauperization' from the status of an independent peasant results in loss of dignity for the peasant as he can not pay back his debts, marry off his daughter, support his children in their education, experiences a sudden fall in the living standards of the family, etc. This in turn drives the peasant to a state of despair and loss of interest in life. Suicides of farmers, especially those who grow commercial crops such as cotton, tobacco, chillies and groundnut, have become a recurrent phenomenon in the last two decades. AP has the dubious distinction of recording highest number of suicide deaths of farmers in the country in recent years.

The share of agriculture in Net State Domestic Product fell to about 25 per cent in 2000-01, from about 60 per cent at the time of State formation. This decline, in itself, may not be something to be worried about, provided it was accompanied by a corresponding decline in the proportion of population dependent on agriculture. But that did not happen. Thus the agrarian population in the State is sharing this sharply diminished share of the total income. It meant a condition of increasing relative deprivation for the rural classes.

Data on the number and distribution of operational landholdings and the operated area under different landholding size-classes show that the number and percentage of marginal and small holdings and the area operated by them have been
increasing, while the medium and large holdings have been declining during the last three decades. While in the early 1970s the medium and large landholdings accounted for 15.6 percent of the total holdings and operated an area of 57 per cent of land, they in 1995-96 accounted for only 6 per cent of the holdings with an area of 30 per cent of land. There has been a sharp decline in the number of large holdings and the area operated by them. ‘Deconcentration’ of land has been taking place in the State due to multiplicity of factors such as agrarian struggles by the communist and peasant organizations in the early decades, land ceiling laws enacted by the government, and out migration of members of land owning families to urban areas. Old type of landlordism has been broken down in large parts of the State. Land ceiling laws have lost their appeal. While in the pre-Independence period land passed from the zamindar and non-agricultural families to the members of intermediate castes, now land seems to be passing from peasant families, who have lost interest in agriculture or unable to keep their land, to members of backward and scheduled castes who are engaged in agriculture. These changes in the agrarian structure have far-reaching socio-political implications.

Andhra Pradesh is home to many manufacturing and service industries such as Information Technology, Bulk Drugs and Pharmaceuticals, Agro Processing, Mineral based Industries, Engineering Industries, Textiles, Leather Goods, Gems and Jewelry and many more to choose from. For facilitating the growth of industry and economy in the state, the Government has introduced ‘New Industrial Policy’ with great emphasis on provision of Quality Infrastructure coupled with a policy for gradual phasing out of subsidies and creating right industrial environment in the State to make the State of Andhra Pradesh an attractive destination for both Foreign and Domestic Investors.

Andhra Pradesh was a late entrant to the country’s industrial scene. The share of manufacturing sector in the Net State Domestic Product has increased from 7.2 per cent in 1960-61 to 12.9 in 1999-2000 (at constant prices, 1993-94). The share of secondary sector as a whole stood at 19.4 per cent. Growth of industries in the State was mainly propelled by public sector industry, especially in pharmaceuticals, electrical equipment, heavy engineering and machinery, iron and steel and fertilizers. Three-fourths of total employment in organized sector was in public sector in 1998
(1,513,000 out of a total of 2,065,900), although it might have come down due to the stoppage of further investment and also disinvestment in public sector in recent years.

According to the data available for the year 1998, the most prominent industries, judging by employment, were the manufacture of food products (22.9% of factory employment), followed by non-metallic mineral products (16.36%). Other important industry groups were machinery equipment and metal parts (10.92%), cotton textiles (7.14%), chemicals and chemical products (5.12%), metals and alloy industries (5.03%), paper and printing industries (3.28%), beverages and tobacco products (3.06%). During the 1990s, textiles, chemicals, paper, machinery and metal industries recorded faster growth. Much of the industrial growth took place in and around Hyderabad and Visakhapatnam cities. The computer software exports saw an impressive growth in recent years. The prominent among household industries is handlooms.

The growth of industry in the State in recent decades has been identified as one of the offshoots of agricultural growth since 1970s. The higher agricultural productivity and incomes have contributed to the pace of industrial development through supply of entrepreneurs and investment resources as well as a rising demand for manufactures. It is said that a rapid accumulation of agricultural surpluses among the top segment of peasants and landlords in the green revolution period, limited opportunities for further investment in agriculture in these regions due to land ceiling legislation in early 1970s, the rise of members of peasant families to political prominence and their ability to influence the industrial and credit policies contributed to the flow of agricultural surpluses into industry. The decade between 1975 and 1985 is considered a golden era for industrialization in the State.

Poverty remains one of the major challenges to the Government and society in Andhra Pradesh, as elsewhere in the country. The estimates of poverty by Minhas, et al, Expert Group, Planning Commission and the World Bank, using State-specific poverty lines, show that poverty in Andhra Pradesh has been declining since 1957-58, although the rate of decline varies from one estimate to the other. But the rate of decline is sharper since 1973-74. The rate of decline has been larger in Andhra Pradesh as compared to several other States and India as a whole. The Planning Commission estimates of rural and urban poverty in Andhra Pradesh show that
poverty has declined from 48.86 per cent in 1973-74 to 22.19 in 1993-94. The figures for rural poverty were 48.49 and 15.92 and for urban population 50.61 and 38.33 for the respective years. The latest government figures show that there has been a significant decline in recent years in the prevalence of both urban and rural poverty in Andhra Pradesh: the rural poverty had fallen to 11.05 (5.8 millions) per cent in 1999-2000 and urban poverty to 26.63 per cent (6.1 millions), the combined poverty level being 15.77 per cent (11.9 millions) (Government of Andhra Pradesh, 2002). However, the National Sample Survey Organisation's 55 Round on Employment-Unemployment shows that the rate of decline of poverty in Andhra Pradesh was not this high (Sundaram, 2001).

Several studies find that rural poverty is inversely related to agricultural production: in years of higher production poverty falls and in years of low production or drought it rises. But it is surprising that the pace of reduction of poverty has slowed down since 1983, during a period in which the poverty alleviation programmes assumed a large size and food subsidy (Rs.2 a kg rice) was implemented. Thus, it is difficult to establish any likely relation between economic reforms and poverty levels and also the relation between welfare schemes and decline in the levels of poverty. Despite several welfare schemes the incidence of poverty tends to be higher among the backward and scheduled castes and scheduled tribe population. While poverty causes hardship to those who have to live under it, it has its own political and electoral implications. The promise of providing basic physical needs dominated the election strategies of the political parties in recent decades because of prevalence of poverty. We often hear that votes are purchased with money and other allurements. The poor people are sought to be divided on caste and communal bases. The 'public servants' become arrogant and behave as if they are masters because of the preponderance of poor people, who tend to be fearful of the elites and hence submissive. Politicians tend to be corrupt and populist at the same time.

Society

It is well known that Indian society and politics acquire a unique character because of its caste structure. The role of caste factor occupied central place in the analysis of Indian politics, although some would argue that the role of caste has been over emphasized and that Indian voters have been exercising their franchise based
more considerations other than caste, it is somewhat difficult to relate class category
to political process and electoral behaviour, and in any case there has been not much
data available on this dimension. One finds it easy to employ caste category, since it
is easily felt and well articulated in politics. Since studies on caste and class reveal a
great deal of overlap between caste and class categories, some analysts may as well
presume that analysis of caste politics would also subsume, to certain extent, the
analysis of class politics.

Due to the changes in social relationships and the logic of universal adult
franchise in a fairly open and competitive electoral system the nature of caste
identities and inter-caste relations have been undergoing continuous transformation in
Andhra Pradesh. Much of the research on the sociology of Indian politics in the post-
Independence period has focussed on how the dominant castes came to occupy
important place in politics and the means they have adopted to retain political control.
In the recent past the emerging elites from the backward and scheduled castes have
been putting pressure for a 'due' share in the power structure. As a response, the
established political parties have provided more room to these new elites at the higher
echelons of the party and public/political offices.

The caste structure in Andhra Pradesh is akin to the one extant in most other
parts of India, if one views it as a traditional social order in which people are
functionally dependent on each other but separated as distinct groups stratified as high
and low. But the nature of caste system has been undergoing tremendous changes
over hundreds of years, with varying patterns in different regions and as such one
should not view caste as a fixed and rigid social relation. All castes, in Andhra
Pradesh, except the Brahmans, are coterminous with the linguistic boundaries of the
State, though they share several features with other castes similarly placed in the
social hierarchy in other States. The distinct character of Andhra Pradesh State
politics can be attributed to a large extent to this feature. It may be pointed out that
there is a difficulty in speaking of a uniform caste structure in Andhra Pradesh too, as
there are inter-regional and infra-regional variations. For example, the three north
coastal districts differ very much from those of central and south coastal region. There
are also variations between the three regions of the State (Suri, 1996). As such we can
only think in terms of broad outlines of caste structure in the State. Another problem
is that reliable data on the population proportions of various castes are not available. We can speak of only approximate figures (Ram Reddy, 1989). Often the leaders of various castes make exaggerated claims about their caste population.

The Brahmans constitute about 2-3 per cent of the State's population. They held a pre-eminent position in society for a long time, which continued till about the middle of the twentieth century. They were the first to take to English education and occupied important positions in the British administrative set up. They could make use of the initial advantages of the British rule and dominated the political scene during freedom struggle and in the initial years after Independence. Most of them gradually severed their rural roots and land connection and steadily shifted to urban areas due to a variety of social and economic reasons. As members of a community, which has a historical head start, they are still in large numbers in the bureaucracy, mass media, academic institutions and other vital professions such as law, scientific research, medicine and management. The Vysyas, known as Komatis in the State, constitute another 2-3 per cent. Engaged in the traditional occupation of trade, Komatis are omnipresent in the State. We find some wealthy businessmen among the Komatis and the members of the caste carry on most of the trades - textiles, grain, banking, money-lending, grocery, shop-keeping, pawn-broking, etc. And currently they are also engaged in entrepreneurial activities of bigger magnitude. Their members are more or less equally distributed in all the districts. Rajus, who claim Kshatriya status, are mostly confined to the north and central coastal regions, may constitute about 1 per cent.

The non-Brahman caste groups such as the Reddis, Kammas, Kapus and Velamas, whose main occupation has been cultivation, are the most important social groups in the State, in terms of numerical strength, land control and access to political power. The term 'dominant caste', coined by Srinivas, suits them very well. In the olden days they had enjoyed power and prestige analogous to Kshatriyas in the North. Some of these peasant communities consider themselves as the local variants of the ruler caste. All these peasant communities experienced a continuous ascendancy in Andhra society and politics since 1920s. The huge irrigation systems constructed in the later nineteenth century, to which a mention has been made earlier, enabled some members of these communities to accumulate agrarian surpluses and use the
economic resources to lead a better life and go for English education. A class of rich peasantry began to emerge among these castes in the twentieth century pre-independence period due to, among several other factors, rise in the price of agricultural produce, money lending and trade in commercial crops. Their economic and educational advancement had enabled them to challenge and dilute the Brahman dominance in the cultural and political spheres (Sun, 2000; Ramakrishna, 1993: 99-118; Innaiah, 1985; Barnett, 1976; Baker, 1976; Washbrook, 1976; Baker and Washbrook, 1975; Irshick, 1969). Their participation in the anti-colonial and anti-feudal struggles politicized them a great deal and produced a rich crop of leadership.

Reddis, who constitute about 8-10 per cent of the State's population, are distributed in all the three regions of the State, particularly in the five Telengana districts of Karimnagar, Warangal, Nalgonda, Mahbubnagar and Khammam, the Circar districts of Guntur, Prakasam and Nellore and the four districts of Rayalaseema. In the past they were rulers in some parts of Andhra Pradesh. The caste title 'Reddy' comes from the Telugu word 'redu' or 'rat', which means 'ruler'. During the medieval period they were described as the enterprising class of warriors and military chiefs. In modern period, most of the paligars in Rayalaseema (chiefs of large territories till the early nineteenth century) and jagirdars, muktedars and deshmukhs (the feudatory chiefs) of Telangana regions came from Reddy community. The statewide spread of the Reddys, their higher proportion in terms of their numbers among the peasant proprietor castes in Andhra Pradesh, their traditional power in many districts and villages and glorious antecedents of local rule in many parts of the State, coupled with their political initiative and involvement in the Congress and Communist politics before and after Independence, and the availability of better caste leadership from village, mandal, district and the State levels, and above all, their firm base in agricultural wealth, give Reddys a preeminence among the peasant castes in Andhra Pradesh (Rasheeduddin Khan, 1969).

The Kammas, who constitute about 4-5 per cent, are mostly concentrated in the Krishna and Godavari delta and are in considerable numbers in Nellore, Chittoor, Ananthapur and Khammam districts. The central coastal Andhra region, consisting of East and West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Prakasam districts, according to one Kamma caste historian, was once known as 'Kamma Rashtra'. The Kammas consider
themselves as Kshatriyas in the Varins hierarchy, and recall their privileged position in the reign of the Kakatiya dynasty (13-14th centuries). The Kammas of coastal Andhra carried out a non-Brahman movement in 1920s with later. A pronounced hostility appears between the Kammas and Brahmons, perhaps because the latter view the Kammas as rivals not only in professions but also in cultural and intellectual arenas. Much of the analysis of state politics has been hinged upon the Kamma-Reddy rivalry in the State, although it is often exaggerated and distorted.

The Velamas constitute another 1-2 per cent. They are as rich as the Reddys and the Kammas and are largely concentrated in few areas -- mainly in the two Telangana districts of Karimnagar and Khammam and in the Northern coastal district of Visakhapatnam. In smaller numbers, they are scattered in the Telangana districts of Warangal, Adilabad, Mahbubnagar, Nalgonda and Nizamabad, and in the Circar districts of Godavaris, Krishna, Guntur and Nellore. Reddis and Velamas were the landlords and constituted the bedrock of the feudal social and political order in the pre-Independence period.

The Kapu category makes up anywhere between 10 to 12 per cent. There are various sub-castes within the Kapu category, such as Telaga, Balija, Kapu, Munnuru Kapu, Ontari, etc. Nowadays they want to be addressed as Kapus only. Like Reddis they have a statewide spread, although there are few inter-sub caste marriages and inter-regional marriages within these communities. It seems the term Kapu is a generic category, which denotes cultivator. It is said that once all the peasant communities were considered Kapus. In fact, in the 1921 Census, the present Reddis were enumerated as Kapus. In several places the landowning cultivators are addressed by the agricultural labourers as 'Kapu'. The Kapus keep the caste title 'Naidu', but the Kammas too use this title in certain areas.

Various caste groups which are known by the names of traditional hereditary occupations, mainly artisan and service occupations constitute a large proportion of the population in Andhra society. These castes are today known as 'backward castes'. Out of the 50 odd backward castes listed by the government of the State, the major ones are the Yadava, Gowda, Padmasali, Rajaka, Mangali (who call themselves Nai Brahman), Kamsali (Viswa Brahman), Mudiraju, Boya, Waddera, Uppara, Kummari, Kammari, Medara, Pallekari (Agnikula Kshatriya), Perika, Gandla, Bhatraju and
Kalavanthavulu. They add up to about 35-40 per cent, although the Second Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Commission (1982) estimated that the Backward Castes constitute 44 per cent of the State's population. All these castes have their caste pride and regard themselves as having high social status, different from the one ascribed by the orthodox Brahmans. The Padmasalis and the Kamsalis regard themselves as the dwijas and culturally superior to several other communities. Some of these castes, such as the Yadavas and Gowdas, are engaged in cultivation, enjoy a good social standing and in recent years are growing in strength in education, employment and economic and political ascendancy. These castes have been given reservation under OBC category since 1961.

Andhra Pradesh is one of the major States with a large concentration of the Scheduled Castes (SCs), with about eight per cent of the total Scheduled Caste population of the country. There are about 59 Scheduled Castes in the State with a share of about 16 per cent of the State's population. Their proportion is more than 14 per cent in 19 districts. More than two-thirds (68%) of the SC population are agricultural labourers. The proportion of the Scheduled Castes living below the poverty line would be also very high. Large majority of them are still subjected to social discrimination, especially in rural areas, though the situation has undergone a great deal after Independence. In recent years the term 'dalit' is preferred to denote these communities. Malas and Madigas are the two major Scheduled Castes, which together constitute more than 90 per cent of the State's Scheduled Caste population. Numerically the Madigas are slightly more in number than the Malas, but the latter are better placed in terms of education, urban communal groups in the ministry.

Separate Telangana state movement

1969 movement in the following years after the formation of Andhra Pradesh state, however, Telangana people had a number of complaints about how the agreements and guarantees were implemented. Discontent with the 1956 Gentleman's agreement intensified in January 1969 when the guarantees that had been agreed on were supposed to lapse. Student agitation for the continuation of the agreement began at Osmania University in Hyderabad and spread to other parts of the region. Government employees and opposition members of the state legislative assembly swiftly threatened "direct action" in support of the students. This movement, also
known as Telangana movement, led to widespread violence and deaths of hundreds of people including 360 students.

Although the Congress faced some dissension within its ranks, its leadership stood against additional linguistic slates, which were regarded as "anti-national." As a result, defectors from the Congress, led by M. Chenna Reddy, founded the Telangana People's Association (Telangana Praja Samithi). Despite electoral successes, however, some of the new party leaders gave up their agitation in September 1971 and, much to the disgust of many separatists, rejoined the safer political haven of the Congress ranks. Still some of the extremist leaders who were not the Congress men remained in the cause. The non Congress men formed the STPS (Samyukta Telangana Praja Samithi) Leader include, Badri Vishal Pitti, Sada Laxmi, Konda Laxman etc. under leadership of Sridhar Reddy, student leader.

In the year 1972, all candidates belonging to STPS under the leadership of M. Sridhar Reddy contested the assembly elections, however, only Mr. Thakkalapalli Purushotham Rao got elected from Wardhannapet constituency of Warangal District and rest were defeated. In 1969, Mr. Purushotham Rao unveiled Telangana map in the state assembly.

In 1969, when the Hindi blockbuster Ava Sawan Jhoom Ke was released, Telangana people could be seen carrying posters with the slogan 'Aya Telangana Jhoom Ke [Telangana has come up]' with great fanfare.

Movement in 1990-2004: The emotions and forces generated by the movement were not strong enough, however, for a continuing drive for a separate state until 1990s when Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), promised a separate Telangana state if they came to power. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) created Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh and Uttarkhand states in year 2000 as promised. But the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) could not create a separate Telangana state because of the opposition from its coalition partner, Telugu Desam Party. These developments brought new life into the separatist Telangana movement by year 2000. Congress party MLAs from the Telangana region, supported a separate Telangana state and formed the Telangana Congress Legislators Forum. In another development, a new party called Telangana Rashtra Samithi (or TRS) was formed with the single point agenda of creating a
separate Telangana state, with Hyderabad as its capital lead by Kalvakuntla Chandrasekhar Rao popularly known as K. Chandrasekhar Rao.

Proponents of a separate Telangana state feel all the agreements, accords, formulas, plans and assurances on the floor of legislature and Lok Sabha, in last 50+ years, could not be honoured and Telangana was forced to remain neglected, exploited and backward. The experiment to remain as one state proved to be a futile exercise and therefore, separation is found to be the best solution.

The 2004 year and after: In 2004, for Assembly and Parliament elections, the Congress party and the TRS had an electoral alliance in the Telangana region with the promise of a separate Telangana State. Congress came to power in the state and formed a coalition government at the centre. Telangana Rastra Samithi joined the coalition government in 2004 and was successful in making a separate Telangana state a part of the common minimum program (CMP) of the coalition government. In September 2006 Telangana Rastra Samithi withdrew support for the Congress led coalition government at the centre on the grounds of indecision by the government over the delivery of its electoral promise to create Telangana. In December 2006, the TRS won the by-election to the Karimnagar parliamentary constituency with a record margin. There was pressure on the Congress party to create a Telangana state in 2008. All Telangana Rastra Samithi legislators in Parliament and in State (4MPs, 16MLAs, 3MLCs) resigned in the 1st week of March 2008 and forced by-elections to increase the pressure on Congress party, and to intensify the movement. By-elections for the 16 MLA seats, 4 MP seats were held May 29, 2008. During the election campaign, the Telangana Rastra Samithi party said it is a referendum on a Telangana state but both Congress and TOP parties said it is not a referendum on Telangana and also said that they are not opposed to the formation of Telangana state. To the disappointment of Telangana proponents, the Telangana Rashtra Samithi retained only 7 out of 16 MLA seats and 2 out of 4 MP seats after the by-elections.

In June 2008, Devender Goud, who is considered number two in the Telugu Desam Party, a politbureau member and Deputy Leader of the Telugu Desam Legislature Party, resigned from the party saying he would devote his time and energy to the formation of a separate Telangana state. In July 2008, Mr. Goud along with some other leaders like Mr. E. Peddi Reddy formed a new party called Nava Telangana
Praja Party. On 9 October 2008, in a historical turnaround from its 26-year history Telugu Desam Party announced its support for the creation of Telangana.

Symbolic declaration of statehood: The Nava Telangana Party, led by the former home minister of Andhra Pradesh, T Devender Goud, declared Telangana as a separate province within India on November 2, 2008. Konda Laxnian Bapuji announced that ‘We solemnly declare statehood for Telangana on November 2, 2008.’ Goud released ten pigeons in the air, symbolising the ten districts of the region, while he also unfurled the national flag on the occasion. Along with his party activists he was later arrested when they tried to barge into the Andhra Pradesh Secretariat to change the name plate from Andhra Pradesh to Telangana. A scuffle then followed between the police and the NTP workers before the party workers were taken to the Chikkadapalli police station. Other NTP workers soon descended on the scene and staged adharna to protest against the arrest.

The year 2009 and later: In February 2009, state government declared that it had no objection, in principle, to the formation of separate Telangana and that the time had come to move forward decisively on this issue. To resolve issues related to it the government constituted joint house committee. Ahead of the 2009 General Elections in India all the major parties in Andhra Pradesh supported the formation of Telangana. The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) again announced their policy of having smaller states and would create two states, Telangana and Gorkhaland if they won the election. The Congress Party still says it is committed to Telangana statehood, but claims Muslim minorities are opposed to creation of 'separate state along with majority of people. Some analysts, however, feel that the "Muslim reluctance card" has been very smartly played by Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddv, who is staunchly opposed to the formation of the new state.

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) has promised to work for Telangana statehood. Telangana Rasha Samithi (TRS) joined a Mahakutami (or grand alliance) with TOP and left parties to defeat the Congress party for denying statehood for Telangana.

The Praja Rajyam Party (PRP), newly founded by film star Chiranjeevi, supported Telangana statehood prior to elections, but later changed its stance.
Telangana Party merged with Praja Rajyam Party after it realized that there is not enough political space for two sub-regional Telangana parties with Telangana statehood as main agenda.

Several political parties, including some Telangana congress leaders, criticized Chief Minister, Y.S. Rajasekhara Reddy (YSR), when he changed his stand from pro-Telangana and gave anti-Telangana statements after the polls. Congress returned to power both at center and state. In September 2009, Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy (YSR) died in a helicopter crash while flying in bad weather. In the first week of Dec 2009, the TRS president, K. Chandrashekar Rao (KCR) started a fast- unto-death demanding that the Congress party introduce a Telangana bill in the Parliament. Student organizations, employee unions and various organizations joined the movement. Over 40 people committed suicide in support of Telangana state. Telangana strikes shut down Telangana on Dec 6th and 7th. Student organizations planned a massive rally at the state Assembly on Dec 10th. Government warned that the rally did not have permission and deployed police troops throughout Telangana. The apparent decline in K.Chandra Sekhar Rao health led to a sense of urgency to take a decision on the issue of Telangana statehood.

**Proposed Telangana State Formation Process:** On December 9, 2009, at 11:30 PM, Mr. P. Chidambaram, Union Minister of Home Affairs announced that the Indian government will start the process of forming a separate Telangana state, upon introduction and passage of a separation resolution in the Andhra Pradesh assembly. K.Chandra Sekhar Rao thus ended his 11 day fast, saying from his hospital bed that this was a true victory of the people of Telangana.

Representatives from Telangana celebrated the central government's decision while those from the Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema regions (Andhra region) protested. In fact, within a short time of the Home Minister's declaration, a majority of Andhra Pradesh's legislature submitted their resignations in protest of the separation of Telangana. As of 16 December, at least 147 legislators (including Praja Rajyam Founder Chiranjeevi) and many Members of Parliament resigned in protest of the Government's decision to begin discussions on forming a new state of Telangana. 22 Ministers from the State Cabinet, all from Andhra (Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema) regions submitted their resignations.
On December 16, media reports confirmed that there was a split in the Praja Rajyam Party. Praja Rajyam Party over the Telangana issue, with its leader Qurenieevi as well as 16/18 party MLAs opposing the division of Andhra Pradesh while Telangana leaders in the party were unhappy with the shift in the party’s views.

On December 23, the Government of India announced that no action on Telangana will be taken until a consensus is reached by all parties. The Telangana Rastra Samithi reacted by calling for another bandh (general strike) on 24th Dec ‘09, an action aimed at stalling the regional economy.

A JAC (Joint Action Committee) was formed with pro-separation members of the major political parties. There have been reports that members of the Joint Action Committee have widely divergent approaches on the issue of a separate Telangana. Subsequently, Andhra (Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema) region MLAs started withdrawing their resignations while MLAs and ministers from Telangana started submitting their resignations, demanding the Centre to take immediate steps to initiate the process of bifurcating Andhra Pradesh.

Constituting Sri Krishna Committee on Telangana issue: The central government has constituted Sri Krishna Committee on Telangana statehood, to consult political leaders, government officials, general public of all categories and student leaders in Telangana region. Also collecting opinion of all class of people in the areas of Sarkar and Rayalaseema and to submit its report to the Centre to take a decision on the formation of Telangana State.
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