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**The Telangana Turmoil:  
Apprehensions and Hope**

**Madhusudan Bandi**



**Gujarat  
Institute of  
Development  
Research**

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## **Abstract**

As nervousness grips the people of Andhra Pradesh over what decision union government would take on Telangana following the submission of the report of Sri Krishna Committee, this paper tries to understand the problem and the issues that kept the agitation for separate statehood alive since decades. It also addresses the apprehensions relating to state bifurcation among people of different regions in the state and the country. The paper argues that a new state can not be a threat either to the interests of other regions in the state or in any part of the country.

**Keywords** : Telangana, Hyderabad, Andhra, Rayalaseema bifurcation

**JEL Codes** : R11, R58

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# Contents

	Page No
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	i
Contents	ii
1. Context	1
1.1 <i>Genesis of Discontent</i>	1
1.2 <i>Present Scenario</i>	3
2. Issues and Apprehensions	6
2.1 <i>Political and Administrative Issues</i>	7
2.1.1 Security of the People Belonging to Other Regions	7
2.1.2 Sharing of River Water	8
2.1.3 Muslims of Telangana	8
2.1.4 Status of Hyderabad	9
2.1.5 Political Parties and Politicians	10
2.1.6 Naxalism and Feudalism	11
2.2 <i>Socio-Economic Issues</i>	12
2.2.1 Division of Assets	12
2.2.2 Real Estate	12
2.2.3 People of Non-Andhra and Non-Rayalaseema	13
2.2.4 People of Andhra and Rayalaseema	13
2.2.5 Real Estate Businessmen	14
2.2.6 Future of Students	14
2.2.7 Film Industry	16
3. The Way Forward	16
References	18

# Contents

	Page No
Abstract	i
Acknowledgements	i
Contents	ii
1. Context	1
1.1 <i>Genesis of Discontent</i>	1
1.2 <i>Present Scenario</i>	3
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2.1.6 Naxalism and Feudalism	11
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2.2.1 Division of Assets	12
2.2.2 Real Estate	12
2.2.3 People of Non-Andhra and Non-Rayalaseema	13
2.2.4 People of Andhra and Rayalaseema	13
2.2.5 Real Estate Businessmen	14
2.2.6 Future of Students	14
2.2.7 Film Industry	16
3. The Way Forward	16
References	18

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## 1. Context

'The closer a government to its people, the better it works' is how Stigler (1957) defined effective governance. And the demand for 'Telangana', if seen purely from this perspective, appears to hold substance. It is the geographical and population size that makes Telangana an ideal administrative unit befitting to be a state that would rank somewhere in the middle of the cluster of the other 28 states of India. However, the issue is not so simple for it is not merely a governance/local governance issue. It is interwoven with emotions, politics and, not the least, the vested interests of the powerful lobbies belonging to the three regions of the state, who have been staking their claims against statehood for Telangana completely overlooking the interests of common people.

This paper tries to highlight the apprehensions, real or imaginary (spread by the vested powers) about carving out a separate state of Telangana with Hyderabad as its capital. It attempts to understand the problem and the issues that kept the agitation for separate statehood for Telangana alive since decades. It draws significantly on the author's interactions with a cross section of people of Telangana during his field visits to the region since 2004 in connection with various research studies. The respondents are politically aware about the developments in the state and represent sections cutting across religion, caste and economic status. The analysis particularly relies on the information gathered during and after Kalvakuntla Chandrasekhar Rao (KCR) declared his fast unto death in 2009. The paper also reflects the perceptions and opinions expressed by both intellectuals and common public from all the three regions of Andhra Pradesh (AP) as gleaned from electronic and print media.

### 1.1 *Genesis of Discontent*

Going back into history should help us solve the problems and not complicate them further. If the votaries of Telangana claim how the region is different from the remaining two since the period of Muslim rule, the scholars of other

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regions give account of the linguistic homogeneity among the telugus prior to the Muslim invasion in this region. In fact, history supports the origin of 'telugu' word to Telangana as it is derived from '*trilinga*' which means three *shiva lingas*. These *lingas* are found on the mountains of Kaleswara (Karimnagar, Telangana), Srisaila (Kurnool, Rayalaseema) and Bhimeswara (East Godavari, Coastal Andhra) that mark the traditional boundary of telugu country forming more or less present day AP (Rao, 2004), thus justifying entire 'telugus' as one ethnies. But, in the present circumstance, this contention is limited to culture and history, simply because, here the question is not about the 'unity of telugus' but about control over the state resources. It is one of the issues<sup>1</sup> on which the 'Jai Andhra' movement took place for separation from Telangana in 1972. It was carried out by the people of the very region who are today against the Telangana agitation in the name of keeping all telugus in one geographic unit of AP state. The 1972 movement also claimed hundreds of innocent lives to scrap the '*mulki*<sup>2</sup> rules' that had constitutional protection to Telangana (Prasad, 2001).

Not until November 1, 1956 when AP was formed as the first linguistic state in India, the three regions of Telangana, Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra were part of AP state. The present day Telangana region along with Hyderabad state and some parts of Maharashtra and Karnataka were integrated from the Nizam into the Indian union on September 18, 1948 through 'police action'. Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema along with the present day region of Tamil Nadu continued to be administered as Madras Presidency. When Andhra's popular leader Potti Sri Ramulu died in the fasting camp on December 15, 1952 demanding separate Andhra region for telugu speaking people in Madras Presidency, violence erupted in the Andhra region, which forced the then Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru to agree for the creation of Andhra state. It was formed on October 1, 1953.

Final merger of Andhra with Telangana happened after the States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) headed by Syed Fazl Ali submitted its

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<sup>1</sup> In 1971, the Supreme Court had upheld the Mulki rules that gave 'the finality' to the rights of the Telangana people. This sparked an agitation in the Andhra region for a 'separate Andhra' as the people of Andhra protested against being treated as outsiders in their state capital (Prasad, 2001).

<sup>2</sup> Under the Mulki rule in force in the Nizam's old Hyderabad state, any person who had lived in Hyderabad for 15 years was considered a local. The employees from the Andhra region were thus to become 'Mulki' by 1971. Employees from Telangana wanted quick action in order to ensure their promotions and to prevent competition from employees belonging to the Andhra region (Prasad, 2001).

report after hearing people and organisations in both the regions. However, an important issue to be noted is that the recommendation of Fazal Ali clearly mentioned that the people of Andhra region were enthusiastic to create 'Visalandhra' (united Andhra with all telugu speaking people) whereas the majority in Telangana region was apprehensive and wanted to retain their separate identity. The reason cited by the commission was that the educationally backward people would be exploited by the people of Andhra (Government of India, 1955). It further mentioned that no models like Scottish devolution<sup>3</sup> in the United Kingdom nor any sort of guarantee would serve the special needs of the Telangana. So it was recommended to retain separate entity.

Despite the SRC report, Congress leaders from Andhra pressed for 'Visalandhra' to enjoy Telangana's readymade capital in Hyderabad<sup>4</sup> and also to reap the benefits of its rich resources of Singhereni coals and water basins of Krishna and Godavari (Government of India, 1955). They were able to use their influence to make a reluctant Nehru accept their concept of Visalandhra (Reddy and Reddy, 2011). Understandably, the protagonists of the separate state on the other side could not sustain their struggle before the stature of Nehru (Ram, 2007). However, the sentiment for separate statehood for Telangana among its people always remained alive even though the intensity varied.

## 1.2 *Present Scenario*

All the political parties in the state, including their own party representatives unequivocally assured in an 'all party meeting' held on December 7, 2009

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<sup>3</sup> Scotland was promised a referendum on devolution by the Labour Party in the build up to the 1997 election. This manifesto promise was carried out in 1997 just four months after the general election and a process of devolution was started for Scotland which lead to a Scottish Parliament based in Edinburgh coming into being in 1999. See [http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/scotland\\_and\\_devolution.htm](http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/scotland_and_devolution.htm)

<sup>4</sup> The city of Hyderabad completed its 400 years of existence in 1989. It was founded in 1589 by Muhammad Quli Qutub Shah, who established Qutub Shahi dynasty in 1512. It remained prosperous since then and was equipped with all the necessary infrastructure especially 'assembly house' for the elected members and other facilities any capital city wishes to have. Andhra region, on the other hand, had 'Madras' as its capital by virtue of being in the confederation of 'Madras Presidency'. After getting separated from the Madras Province and until its merger with Telangana in 1953, the Andhra state had Kurnool, a city with comparatively less amenities, as its capital.

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to support the motion for separate Telangana state if it is placed in the AP legislative assembly. Subsequently, the Union Home Minister P Chidambaram announced on December 9, 2009 the government's decision to initiate a process for the creation of a separate Telangana state. However, the dream of realising Telangana as a separate state remained short-lived when the elected representatives of Coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema irrespective of their party affiliations broke their promise of supporting the demand in assembly by resigning en-mass from the legislative house, thus forcing the union government to go back on its word to start the process for separate statehood for Telangana.

The union government set-up the Sri Krishna Committee (SKC) in February, 2010 to give suggestions and recommendations on the demand for separate state of Telangana. The SKC submitted its report on December 31, 2010 with the following suggestions: 1) To treat the movement as a normal law and order situation to be handled purely by the state with usual support from the centre; 2) To create a separate state of Telangana with Hyderabad becoming a union territory; 3) To merge Rayalaseema with Telangana and create a new state Rayala Telangana with Hyderabad as its capital; 4) To create Telangana without Hyderabad by forming a larger union Territory of Hyderabad by connecting Hyderabad with Guntur (Coastal Andhra) in South-East and Kurnool (Rayalaseema) in the south via Nalgonda and Mehboobnagar (both Telangana districts) respectively through creation of appropriate corridors by merging a few mandals with Hyderabad; 5) To grant statehood to Telangana with Hyderabad as its capital; and 6) To provide constitutional/statutory safeguards to Telangana region by guaranteeing redressal of the region's major grievances and keeping the state united. However, the committee itself observed that four suggestions made by it do not merit consideration and thought the 6<sup>th</sup> recommendation was the best option followed by 5<sup>th</sup> as the second best option. These suggestions came in for severe criticism.

By concealing the eighth chapter of the report comprising of nine chapters has further dented trust of the people. As expected, the content of this chapter (now open after high court's order) raised doubts on the integrity of the SKC because it is said to have disgraceful mention about crushing the democratic movement for separate Telangana by political management, force and also using media houses (which overwhelmingly belong to Rayalaseema and Andhra) to decisively thwart the Telangana movement. The final conclusion drawn on the SKC by the people of Telangana is that it was set-up only to buy time to contain the peaking movement.

The Telangana movement of 1969 was also as intense as the current one. But then the participation was limited to the students and government employees. In the current situation, the demand for separate state is clearly more of multiple aspirations of the people who have been left consistently out of the sphere of power. This is evident from the participation coming from all quarters of society and from people belonging to all walks of life right from a small village to the urban cities. Today they see the ruling elite as suppressers of their rights, who incidentally belonged to numerical minority, but dominating communities and also to the regions other than Telangana. The claim of looking down upon of the 'telugu dialect' of the Telanganaites is valid and can not be undermined; yet the frustration is compounded because of the deprivation of their rightful share of power in the spoils of government, be it in political parties, bureaucracy or administrative mechanism (Ram, 2007). Bhushan and Venugopal (2009) also mentioned about similar trend prevailing in other top government positions, which can not be a pure co-incidence. Jadhav (2010) sees it as an all round discrimination not only limited to jobs and culture. It extends to all fields reminding one of the practice of 'oppression of the oppressed' in the name of civilisation. This situation was anticipated by Dr. Ambedkar who feared the possibility of only few dominant caste groups dominating the linguistic states (Ambedkar, 1953). Now, all these have brought the society of Telangana to this boiling point where the other backward castes (OBC), scheduled castes (SC), scheduled tribes (ST), minorities and the forward communities are up in arms in unison to settle the separate statehood issue once for all by overthrowing a "totally corrupt, criminal, regionalist and commercial class from the Andhra areas" (Jadhav, 2010: 16).

It is important here to mention that, the underprivileged ones, especially OBCs, who are unorganized, but form the majority in the state, experienced political empowerment when Telugu Desam Party (TDP)<sup>5</sup> introduced an intermediate administrative tier called 'Mandal'. A new political space was created that helped these sections to taste real power for the first time in the electoral history after India's independence. Thereafter, the tussle for power among these sections has been pitching hard. In a new set-up of a relatively small assembly of about 119 Members of Legislative Assembly (MLA) (expected size of the Telangana assembly based on present numbers in AP

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<sup>5</sup> The main objective of the TDP was to break the hegemony of congress vote bank of Reddies, Dalits and Brahmins in the state (Maringanti, 2010). But ended as a Kamma dominated party. Hence Jadhav (2010) puts it as a rule of elite Reddys and Kammass for the last 40 years.

assembly), these sections see the possibility of capturing power for themselves<sup>6</sup>. If this development comes through, it would be more democratization of political system as Srinivasulu and Satyanarayana (2010) understand it. Interestingly, it is for the same reason of political empowerment, the dalits supported by civil rights groups in Andhra have been quite vocal in extending their support for the creation of separate Telangana (*ibid*). To sum up, the genesis of the turmoil in the state of AP is all about 'self-rule, dignity and self-respect' of the Telangana people (Kannabiran et. al., 2010).

Above all, the demand for separate state is within the Indian constitutional framework (Article 3). Branding this democratic right as 'rebellion' as some of the Andhra leaders tried to present it and equating the agitation by Telangana students with the 'Taliban' and other extremists, only shows clear prejudice against the oppressed because their rebellion is looked down as anti-social as if nationalism is right of the oppressor (Jadhav, 2010). AP Governor E.S.L. Narasimhan's veiled reference to concerns about Telangana issue has also not gone down well with the majority of people of this region, because he said. "Don't worry about what happens after December 31 (when Sri Krishna panel was supposed to submit its report on demand for a separate Telangana State: author's addition). January 1 will come after December 31" (Business Line, 2010).

## 2. Issues and Apprehensions

While making the announcement on Decemebr 9, 2009 to start the process for a separate statehood for Telangana, P Chidambaram, the then Home Minister of India said that the case of Telangana is different in every way from other demands for a separate state in the country. Besides many other reasons, the people there feel neglected despite speaking the same language. It is because of this reason that the movement or agitation never died even when it appeared to have reduced in intensity. However, the challenge on hand post the publication of SKC report remains how best the situation is dealt with.

By all means, solution lies more in educating/reassuring the people that their interests would not be harmed in any situation because of the unfounded fears that are compounded further by the irresponsible statements of the two

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<sup>6</sup> Social Scientists like Rashiduddin Khan, Rajani Kothari and M. N. Srinivas had advocated that the smaller states would fulfil the political aspirations of the people of backward regions, solve their identity crisis, free them from the political elite and also from their internal colonization (*Seminar*, Issue No. 164, 1973).

important leaders belonging to different regions. If one had allegedly urged for his party men to chase the so-called ‘settlers’ out of Telangana, the other reportedly had warned about a situation where people from Rayalaseema and Andhra regions will have to take a ‘visa’ to visit Hyderabad. No doubt, both were playing out their political calculations; but they forgot about the impact such outbursts can have on the psyche of the people who are not aware of their constitutional rights and blindly follow them. The following analysis throws light on some of the important political, administrative and socio-economic issues that are critical in convincing the people and prepare them for the inevitable.

## *2.1 Political and Administrative Issues*

### 2.1.1 Security of the People Belonging to Other Regions

There are people from all over the country who have made Hyderabad and also other regions of Telangana their home, some of them having settled much before the merger of the state on linguistic basis in 1956. In fact, Nizam had invited farming communities from Andhra to come and settle down in the command areas of Nizamsagar dam (Maringanti, 2010). Moreover, the people of Andhra and Rayalaseema regions had more valid reason to settle in these parts after the merger of the state by virtue of belonging to one state and also simply because Hyderabad was as equal a capital for them as any Telanganaites. Article 19 of the Constitution of India provides its people with the freedom to move about in the country and to settle and carry on their trade, business or provide services with an exception of the Scheduled (tribal) Areas and Kashmir (Article 370). But this constitutional right needs to be reassured to the common public as the pitch of the agitation is so alarming and passions are running high. Despite constitutional guarantee, fears of the general public are not baseless, because there have been numerous examples when the innocents have to bear the brunt of atrocities in the past in many parts of the country and in Telangana during 1969 (Prasad, 2001). However, the times have changed for good. Now the capacity of policing is not only better, but it is competent to tackle any anti-social activity, provided the authority is not partisan. It is also heartening to mention that agitations for Telangana even at their peak from November 2009 to January 2010 remained mostly disciplined and were not targeted the

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<sup>7</sup> ‘Settlers’ is a term used to describe the Andhra and Rayalaseema migrants settled in Telangana. Interestingly, it is not used to describe any other migrant group from within the state or outside. For detailed analysis of this term, see, Satyanarayana (1997).

people on the basis of region. On the contrary, many people who have settled in the Telangana region actually took part in processions to support separate Telangana (for example, Nirmal Mandal in Adilabad cited in Kannabiran et. al., 2010).

### 2.1.2 Sharing of River Water

Water is said to be one of the major causes all along for the demand and counter demand for the formation of separate state. Many scholars have put forward their arguments with statistics and evidences about how Telangana has been deprived of its water share (Simhadri, 2007; Kannabiran et al., 2010). Arbitrary distribution of water between the regions of the same state could be attributed to the narrow and discriminatory politics. But, there will be a 'tribunal', a neutral body that oversees the water conflicts between any two states to see that justice prevails. This should put an end to the fears of deprivation of river water to Andhra and Rayalaseema by Telangana on it becoming a state. If anybody still harbours any doubts on the execution of tribunal orders then the blame should go to the narrow politics played by the leaders who have set a precedence of dishonouring the judgments of tribunals only to present themselves as the saviours of their respective states. A case in point here is the open refusal by the Karnataka chief minister S.M. Krishna in 2003 to implement the interim order of the Cauvery Water Disputes Tribunal to release the prescribed amount of water to Tamil Nadu. He instead showed his willingness to go to jail for violating his constitutional obligations as the head of the state government only to score political points (Lok Sabha Debate, August 4, 2003: Discussion under Rule 193). This loophole in our federal structure to not able to make the offending party to abide strictly in letter and spirit needs to be addressed especially over such important issue as sharing water between the states and definitely such excuses should not be held against a legitimate demand like separate statehood for Telanganites. Persistence to keep AP united just for river water exploitation could also mean that the intentions of the leaders of the non-Telangana region is dubious because the present set-up puts them at advantage by virtue of having about 2/3rd MLAs in the assembly from their regions. This, in other words, vindicates the allegations of the Telanganites of suffering injustice in the matter of access to water (Ram, 2007).

### 2.1.3 Muslims of Telangana

If the results of the by-elections held in July 2010 for the 11 assembly constituencies in Telangana are taken as an indicator, there appears to be a consensus over their support to the formation of a separate state among the



Muslims of Telangana. In every constituency their support was overwhelming to the extent of loss of deposit for all those parties whose stand on telangana was not clear. The case of Nizamabad (urban) constituency is particularly noteworthy. For one, it has a very sizeable number of Muslim voters. Secondly, the president of the AP congress committee and a political heavyweight had to bear the brunt of the people from all quarters of the society. To support this argument, a couple of case studies presented by Kannabiran et al. (2010) are noteworthy. One among them is Sheikh Chand Miyan of Rudrur in Nizamabad, who believes that creating an impression that Hindus and Muslims would fight with each other in new Telangana is only a well-thought propaganda, when in reality he is confident that Muslims' condition would improve only in a new state. Similarly Jameela Nishat thought opening up of opportunities of livelihoods for her community would be a possibility only in a separate Telangana. As for Muslims of the city are concerned, Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen (MIM) has a reasonable sway over the electorate and the leadership is yet to open its cards on Telangana. In fact, it should be seen as a partial failure on the part of the leaders spearheading Telangana movement for not sitting across the table with them to have a fruitful dialogue on 'safety, security and socio-economic well being of the Muslims' as demanded by MIM (Deccan Chronicle, 2010b). In a movement of this magnitude taking them into confidence would have been more prudent.

#### 2.1.4 Status of Hyderabad

The origin of demand for separate 'statehood' or 'union territory' status for Hyderabad city has no historical reason nor it is practical is how K Jayashankar, a popular Telangana ideologue, used to clarify time and again on this issue. This demand is born out of sheer opportunism by people interested in consolidating their immense wealth earned through real estate, or to serve the interests of those in this business and also those who are Information Technology (IT) employees or Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) who have invested their money in real estate and who fear their investments will crumble on creation of Telangana with Hyderabad as its capital. On making Hyderabad capital of both Andhra and Telangana can be welcomed for short duration with a time-frame But for the long run it is neither desirable for the people of Telangana nor for the common people of Andhra. It is because in such case people of Andhra and Rayalaseema have to travel in all practicality into another state (districts of Telangana) to reach their capital as Hyderabad would be land locked by other districts.

Demand for separate Hyderabad as a state or union territory can only be equated to King Solomon's 'splitting the baby' story. Many people in Telangana also suspect that the intentions of converting Hyderabad into a greater Hyderabad by merging over 600 villages (Melkote et. al., 2010) may have been to make it geographically big enough so as to claim separate autonomy when the demand for separate Telangana comes up anytime in future. This is indicated by the fourth recommendations of SKC Report. Entertaining a thought to separate Hyderabad from Telangana would only mean that all the other capital cities of their respective states would be under threat of becoming union territories. This is because any capital city is bound to develop in leaps and bounds compared to other places in its state and generate good chunk of revenue and also all-round opportunities for the people. Besides, the composition of the city also changes from local to cosmopolitan. When the outsiders slowly outnumber the locals and start demanding the separation from its mother state, the sentiments of the locals take a beating giving rise to a call for 'sons of soil' movement. This invariably takes a violent shape, ultimately resulting in destruction of one and all. The demand for the separation of Hyderabad from Telangana is also expected to pave way to such unpleasant situation given the sentiments of overwhelming majority of the people all over the region of Telangana. Mumbai is a good example in this connection because whenever demand for its separation from Maharashtra makes round, violent protests accompany them as its follow up. Nevertheless, great relief for Telanganaites came when MIM came up with the statement that if the state is to be bifurcated, Hyderabad would have to remain as its capital (Deccan Chronicle, 2010b). Otherwise, MIM's unclear stance was being presented as if MIM is anti-Telangana by those who are against separation of the state.

### 2.1.5 Political Parties and Politicians

Political situation in AP in general, and, particularly in Telangana, is in complete chaos. So is the condition of the political parties and their leaders. This all began since the day KCR started his fast in November 2009. It is very much apparent that the political parties have virtually split regionally, which means that the leaders, even while belonging to the same party, are functioning in different directions, especially, on the sensitive issues pertaining to their regions.

In Telangana, it is the Joint Action Committees (JAC) and not the political parties that are calling the shots at every level, viz., state, district, mandal and village. This became evident when Osmania University students declared to continue their Telangana agitation despite KCR calling-off his fast within 48 hours (Maringanti, 2010).

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The absence of a clear stance on Telangana by the two major parties - Congress and Telugu Desam - is understandable because the leadership of both the parties does not want to loose the ground in any of the regions. If a clear stance is taken in any region's favour, one has to loose-out in the other region forever. Remaining uncommitted can help them come with excuses later to reach out to the people and continue their existence when this issue is settled. Because of such narrow political self-interests, the leaders and their parties are pushing both the regions towards uncertainty. If this tendency is prolonged, it would cause irrevocable damage in the long term, especially the to financial sector that could be detrimental to both the regions.

It is interesting to mention here about the anguish expressed in one of the Television shows by a leader from a major party in the state. He illustrated how an MLA's worth is down-sized in Uttarakhand because it is now a small state. Besides, he compared their quarters to any ordinary hostels in AP. May be, he was cautioning the MLAs and ministers of AP that, if state becomes smaller after division, they will also have to meet the same fate. If at all the politicians of any one region would grieve more on bifurcation, it would be Rayalaseema leaders because this region has produced the highest number of chief ministers including the present one and may have to forego the legacy of ruling the bigger state. Coming to the crux of the electoral formula, i.e., 'caste', on which the politicians and parties thrive for their political fortunes, the equation is surely going to be altered not only in Telangana, but also in Andhra and Rayalaseema (Pingle, 2010).

#### 2.1.6 Naxalism and Feudalism

Those against Telangana try to create an impression that if a separate state is formed the entire state will fall into the hands of the naxalites, an outlawed group. But, the majority of the people of Telangana do not believe in this theory because they understand that on creation of the new state, power would justifiably shift into the hands of the weaker sections for whose cause the naxalites claim to be fighting against the government machinery. So in the changed scenario they anticipate much of their objective would be achieved.

Apprehensions of feudalism resurfacing in Telangana too are far from truth. India has surged far ahead at least in this area and in the regions of Telangana people are now much aware of their rights. There are good number of intellectuals and leaders from the oppressed sections who have been educating people about their rights and how to live with dignity. People seeking to remain united speak of Telangana going into the hands of naxalism and

feudalism in same breath though on different occasions while addressing to the poor sections and well-off sections to scare them if the state is realised in future. The people of Telangana are smart enough to see through their wily intentions and very well understand that both these ideologies are quite contradictory to each other and both can not coexist.

## 2.2 *Socio-Economic Issues*

### 2.2.1 Division of Assets

People of Andhra and Rayalaseema regions express apprehensions that Hyderabad remaining with Telangana after bifurcation would deprive them of about 40 percent of revenue (as is the case more or less in proportion with any capital cities) that is generated in the city (Deccan Chronicle, 2010a). But such fears are more of a myth because Telangana region excluding Hyderabad generated more than half of AP's total income in recent times (2003-04 to 2006-07) while expenditure was much less in these regions (for details see Melkote et. al., 2010). Whatever be the figures, there is a system in place that provides for an arrangement wherein the set-principles are followed to demarcate the assets between the new states on division. So there is no question of loosing on rightful share by any side. Moreover, Andhra region in the pre-merger state was bankrupt even to function as government while the Hyderabad state was running surplus in revenue inherited from Nizam's government (Pingle, 2010).

The distribution of assets again depends on whether the state would be divided into two or three. This tricky decision would haunt the centre on conceding Telangana because how the people of the remaining two regions i.e. Andhra and Rayalaeema would take the separation from Telangana in terms of whether to stay together or wish to go separate ways. The opinions are again divided among all sections of the people on this issue in those regions. However, there is possibility of reaching a consensus to stay united, provided clarity on water sharing and choice of capital for this new state is settled amicably.

### 2.2.2 Real Estate

Following the then union home minister's announcement on December 9, 2009, real estate investors irrespective of their regional identities had developed fears of loosing huge money, anticipating crumbling of real estate if Telangana becomes a reality. It must be noted that the value of plots in and around Hyderabad is said to have increased by 300 per cent in a matter of less than a decade, thanks to the specific policy and legislative changes that facilitated

industrialists and politicians from Andhra and Rayalaseema to buy lands in Hyderabad (Inniah, 1997) in the midst of reports of deliberately drying the natural lakes in the city to make way for new settlements (Jadhav, 2010). However, not all real estate players share this anxiety. Some are of the view that clarity or the lack of it on Telangana will not necessarily have negative effect on real estate, because they believe real estate is determined by many other factors like inflation and economic recession and not necessarily the emotional issues such as this. Even if it has to have an influence, it is said to be a temporary phase.

The present situation already shows a fall in the real estate prices according to the local real estate agents (Singh, 2010). The question is which sections will be affected by the fall in prices. Those who would be affected can be put under three categories, one, those who are into full-time real estate business. Two, the owners of plots or houses belonging to Andhra and Rayalaseema regions, while the third category of people are those who belong to rest of the country including the residents of Hyderabad and also other parts of Telangana. It is interesting to find the different reasons of apprehensions among these three categories.

### 2.2.3 People of Non-Andhra and Non-Rayalaseema

The fears of this section of people are comparatively less. Their only concern is the coming down of prices of their plots, houses or flats. It is important because for most of them it is their only saving in the form of insurance. However, they also know that the price fluctuation is temporary and their real market price would be regained once the Telangana issue is permanently settled. Moreover, they have no choice of going anywhere as Telangana is their permanent home, even if the price downfall stretches beyond time.

### 2.2.4 People of Andhra and Rayalaseema

According to estimates, there are about 66.41 percent electorates in the city of Hyderabad. Out of them 22 percent are migrant voters, majority of whom belong to Andhra and Rayalaseema regions (Khan, 2009). Settling down of people in Hyderabad especially those belonging to middle class government employees and businessmen began in the 1960s and peaked in the 1980s when land was released in large scale by the Hyderabad Urban Development Authority (HUDA), now Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) (Maringanti, 2010). As stated earlier, in other parts of Telangana, people from these regions were already migrating for agriculture work and also leasing-in lands much before the 1950s (*ibid*). After the film industry shifted from

Chennai to Hyderabad, the people connected with this industry also started living in Hyderabad. With the boom in the IT sector, the situation changed drastically that has infamously gave rise to the adage “have lands in Andhra, have a house in Hyderabad and have a job in America” (Biao, 2007: 36). It is this section of people who have some amount of fears about what happens to their immovable property if Telangana is formed. This fear is cashed-in to mobilise the people in Andhra and Rayalaseema towns and cities. This propaganda should have been contained by Telangana leaders and the government by demonstrating in concrete terms to these residents that nothing would hold them from staying back in the city even after carving a new state of Telangana. The citizen should have been explained that formation of new state would just be a new administrative set-up within the country and not secession from it. Moreover, it will definitely not be an exodus like what happened during the partition of India and Pakistan when millions of people migrate had to from their homelands.

#### 2.2.5 Real Estate Businessmen

It is strongly believed by the Telanganaites that the real estate lobby is dominated by Andhra and Rayalaseema people who in reality are ‘the political class /caste group / business class of Andhra and Rayalaseema’ (Srinivasulu and Satyanarayana, 2010; Maringanti, 2010). It is they, who are said to be promoting ‘*samaikya*’ (Unified) AP movement in Andhra and Rayalaseema for their own benefits. Further, those coining separate Hyderabad state or wishing to turn Hyderebad into a union territory are identified with such real estate lobbies. As alleged by the Telanganites, many in this lobby are frightened because their land dealings are not transparent and fear enquiries and investigations at the hands of the new regime in the new state only to loose their shoddy investments, so they do not want to let go their vice-like grip over the power that goes well with the present set-up.

#### 2.2.6 Future of Students

All along the Jai Talangana and Jai Andhra movements, the students have been in the forefront on both the sides because education and employment were issues close to their lives. Now the stakes for the government position are still alive but the proportion is far less than what it was in the past. However, in the wake of the globalisation and also after Hyderabad becoming a hub of IT sector, the situation in the private sector has considerably changed. There have been huge private investments by not only multi-national companies (MNC), but also by the individuals belonging to all the three regions, lead particularly by the Andhra and

Rayalaseema entrepreneurs (Kannabiran et. al., 2010). This has created huge employment opportunities in all the sectors not only for educated youth, but also for others in allied unskilled jobs.

One of the reasons for the strong protests from the student community in Andhra and Rayalaseema against the formation of Telangana state is because of the fears that they would be deprived of jobs in Hyderabad (Maringanti, 2010). This has created insecurity among students and unemployed who look towards Hyderabad as a source of employment (Srinivasulu and Satyanarayana, 2010). They think that they will not be able to fulfil their parents' aspirations because many of them had their families investing heavily even by selling lands in educating them in the hope that they would get jobs in Hyderabad, especially in the IT sector. These fears are exploited by the leaders of that region. According to the majority of the respondents it would have been a praiseworthy act if Telangana proponents had assured these students that their jobs would remain secure even on formation of separate state. The students in the first place should not have had doubts on their constitutional rights, particularly, when people from other parts of the country are enjoying their jobs in the city of Hyderabad. Then again, these students can not be blamed because they were overtaken by the irresponsible statements by the leaders of both the regions which is already discussed in the earlier section on 'security...'. Those thinking rationally among the people interviewed by the author asked: Would it not be the responsibility of any state government to provide free and fair administration to every citizen? And if investors belonging to Andhra or Rayalaseema are moving from Hyderabad, then would not they move to their regions thus bringing jobs at their door steps? And if MNCs or other national companies wish to move altogether out of Hyderabad due to law and order reasons, would it not be a loss for all Telugus? Does any government allow this to happen particularly when every chief minister in the country is seen laying red carpet to the investors in their states? Aren't all these fears really uncalled for?

On the other side, the students of Telangana are convinced that they are discriminated by the employers. In the words of B Ravinder Reddy, JAC convenor of Mothkur Panchayat in Nalgonda district, most of the companies, factories and industries in and around Hyderabad are owned by the capitalists belonging to Andhra and Rayalaseema, who hire people of their own region for all top positions to the exclusion of local candidates, especially, those belonging to dalit or OBC castes. So he believes that on formation of Telangana they could push 'labour standards' more stringently for the advantage of the locals (Kannabiran et. al., 2010).



### 2.2.7 Film Industry

Movies play an important role in the lives of majority of the people. Telugu people are no exception. They too are influenced by films in their every day life, even to an extent of electing NT Rama Rao (NTR) a popular cine artist of Telugu film industry to the position of chief minister within a year of him forming a political party. This would not have been possible if cinema had not been so dominant in people's lives. More recently, Chiranjeevi (Praja Rajyam Party – now merged with Congress Party), a popular actor presented another example by emulating NTR. Though he could not make an effective dent like his predecessor, he was able to garner a respectful percent of votes in the 2009 assembly elections. Telugu film industry was moved to Hyderabad from Chennai in the 1980s when the then chief minister Marri Chenna Reddy (belonging to Telangana) promised to help it by extending all the facilities on behalf of the government to set-up studios. Notably, the Telugu film industry has been and is in complete domination of Andhraites (Maringanti, 2010). Probably because of this, the Telanganites are shown repeatedly in poor light by portraying them in the characters of either villains or as comedians (Jadhav, 2010; Kannabiran et. al., 2010; Melkote et. al., 2010). This trend is not appreciated by the people of Telangana and instead helped in adding fuel to the antagonism between Telangana and other regions. Given such track record, the formation of Telangana could breach the industry into two with some preferring to continue in Hyderabad and some wishing to transfer to a new capital. In any case, it can be surmised that the Telugu film industry will surely flourish wherever it stays. However, little repercussion could be anticipated in Telangana since they do not boast of having many in the industry as frontline film-workers.

### 3. The Way Forward

Many innocent lives have already been lost on both the sides in agitations over demanding and countering a separate statehood. After the November 2009 uprising, there seems to be a real discord between the two regions in every walk of life including political polarisation (Srinivasulu and Satyanarayana, 2010).

Now they have reached a point of no return and the formation of separate Telangana state appears to be the only solution that would end what the Telanganites see as imperialism (Jadhav, 2010), because for them it has been a systematic and consistent abuse of Article 38 (2) of Indian constitution which speaks of minimising inequalities among the people of the state viz.

culture, jobs Moreover, Nehru himself was of the view that 'Visalandhra' is inspired by the imperialist occupation of the land (Indian Express, 1953). In fact, the same imperialist forces in ruling as well as in opposition who succeeded in merging Telangana with Andhra (Jadhav, 2010) are alleged to have had their way even after the favourable announcement in the form of Telangana by the union home minister in 2009. Small states may not be a solution for everything; but at least people can have more control on jobs, resources and, above all, self respect because other things will follow (Jadhav, 2010). In other words it is in harmony with the philosophy of Gurzada Appa Rao, a renowned poet and dramatist who wrote in telugu '*Desham ante matti kadu, desham ante manushuloye*' meaning the nation does not refer to the landmass, but the conglomeration of its people.

Strikingly, in the midst of arguments over what ought to be the ideal size of the states for better governance, the growth rate of Chattisgarh (9.2 percent); Jharkhand (11.1 percent) and Uttarakhand (8.8 percent) against the projected 6.1 percent, 6.9 percent and 6.8 percent respectively (Government of India, 2008) sends a clear message that '*small is beautiful*' despite political instability, which is blown out of proportion, especially, citing these three small and new states.

In the end, it will all come down to real delivery of governance, how well it is taken to the people. Otherwise there will be new issues while struggle for better life goes on for the common man. One can hope Telangana to present a harmonious and cohesive society by developing a 'casteless equation' among its people for it has a tradition of drawing social reformers and political leaders from all sections of the society (Jadhav, 2010). As Melkote et. al. (2010) describe Telangana already presents a cosmopolitan and composite culture of amalgamation of various linguistic groups resulting in a distinct identity of its own.

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The Gujarat Institute of Development Research (GIDR), established in 1970, is a premier social science research institute recognised and supported by the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) of the Government of India, and the Government of Gujarat.

The major areas of research at the Institute are the following:

### 1. Natural Resources Management, Agriculture and Climate Change

Research under this area concerns the broad realm of environment and development. Studies have focused on economic viability, equity, environmental impact assessment and institutional mechanisms. Issues in common property land resources, land use and water harvesting have been researched extensively. Implications of climate change risks for Asia and the adaptation and mitigation strategies at the local levels have begun to be studied.

### 2. Industry, Infrastructure, Trade and Public Finance

The main themes include policy dimensions concerning the micro, small and medium enterprises, industrial clusters and intellectual property rights. Studies on basic infrastructure and linkages between infrastructure and regional growth have also been carried out. Trade and development and public finance are new areas of interest.

### 3. Employment, Migration and Urbanisation

Studies under this theme relate to employment, labour, diversification of economic activities and migration. International migration has emerged as an additional theme along with urban services and aspects of urban economy and governance.

### 4. Poverty and Human Development

Issues examined include access, achievement and financing of education and health sectors. Studies on poverty relate to conceptual and measurement aspects, quality of life, livelihood options and social infrastructure. There is an increasing interest in understanding urban poverty, rural-urban linkages and issues in microfinance.

### 5. Regional Development, Institutions and Governance

Recent studies enquire into regional underdevelopment and the dynamics of local level institutions. Tribal area development mainly relating to livelihood promotion and human resource development has been a focus area. Recent analyses have also looked into Panchayati Raj Institutions, Forest Rights Act, MGNREGA and Right to Education Act.

Much of the research informs national and regional policies. The Institute also undertakes collaborative research and has a network with governments, academic institutions, international organisations and NGOs. A foray into specialized training and doctoral programme has just been made.



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