Socio-Political Transformation of Telangana: A Historical Study of the Telangana Movement and the Formation of a Separate State (1948–2014)

[1] **Dr. P. Jyothsna**
[1] Degree lecturer, MJPTBCW Residential Degree College, St. Ghanpur
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ABSTRACT

The historical and political process through which Telangana was established as the 29th state of India was a long-drawn struggle marked by socio-cultural realities plus regional identity, economic disparity, and demands for political self-determination along with administrative injustice and inequality. The demand for the creation of Telangana state cannot simply be seen as a political issue of territorial reorganisation. It has emerged out of a complex historical experience, one that is characterised by the peculiar legacy of Hyderabad State under the Nizam, the Telangana peasant armed struggle, the merger of Hyderabad into the Indian Union and the subsequent merger of Telangana with Andhra State in 1956. This paper addresses the socio-political transformation of Telangana between the years 1948 and 2014. It takes a closer look at the historical origins of regional consciousness, the consequences of linguistic reorganisation, the 1969 Telangana agitation, the political developments of the 1970s and the re-emergence of the statehood movement in the twenty-first century. Using a historical and analytical qualitative methodology based on secondary literature, government documents, history and scholarly publications, the project study's regional identity, federal politics, economic development and democratic mobilisation. Special attention is sel a voice to the role of students, intellectuals, political organisations, employees and cultural activest and civil society. The authors contend that the demand for separate Telangana state has been shaped by the cumulative effect of grievances, mobilisation and assertion. The establishment of the state in 2014 was not merely an administrative division but a substantial alteration of the political geography and federal structure of the Indian state.

Keywords: Telangana, regional identity, socio-political transformation, Telangana movement, Hyderabad State, linguistic reorganisation, regional disparities, state formation, Indian federalism.

I INTRODUCTION

The history of Telangana is an important instance of regional political consciousness and democratic mobilisation in post-independence India. The 2 June 2014 establishment of Telangana as a separate state was the outcome of a protracted historical process marked by political struggles, regional aspirations, socio-economic inequalities and cultural identity. While direct demand for statehood increased significantly during the twentieth century and twenty-first century, the roots can be traced to the unique administrative, economic and cultural experiences of the Telangana region under the Nizam in Hyderabad State.

Prior to Indian Independence, Telangana was a part of the princely State of Hyderabad, governed by the Asaf Jahi dynasty. Telangana developed under a different political and administrative system from the Telugu-speaking districts of coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema, which were administered under the British Madras Presidency. The separation during this period lead to changes in land relations, revenue administration, educational institutions, employment pattern and language use and political participation. Thus, the political merger of these

regions after independence could not simply mask their historical diversities.

The Indian Union was integrated with Hyderabad State in September 1948 marking a significant turning point. The reorganizing of Indian states on language lines led to new possibilities and tensions. In 1956, Telangana became a part of the Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh. The merger came with constitutional and administrative safeguards intended to protect the interests of the Telangana region. But differences over their implementation generated discontent over time.

The Telangana agitation that took place in 1969, was the first mass mobilization that demanded protection of regional rights and increasingly, a separate state. Subsequent political development like the 1973 Six-Point Formula cooled down the regional fervour but did not eliminate their aspiration in the region. The establishment of the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS) in 2001 converted the demand for statehood into an ongoing political movement. The massive protests together with cultural mobilisations and the involvement of students and the political and parliamentary negotiations led to the enactment of Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. The current study situates these developments in a historical context and explains how the Telangana movement was not a mere political phenomenon. On the contrary, it represented the coming together of historical memory, regional identity, economic expectation, democratic participation and federal restructuring.

II OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The principal objectives of this research are:

1. To examine the historical and political conditions of Telangana before and after the integration of Hyderabad State into the Indian Union in 1948.
2. To analyse the impact of linguistic reorganisation and the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956 on Telangana's regional identity.
3. To investigate the causes, nature and consequences of the Telangana agitation of 1969.
4. To examine the socio-economic and political factors responsible for the revival of the separate Telangana movement after 2001.
5. To assess the contributions of students, intellectuals, political organisations, employees and cultural activists to the statehood movement.
6. To analyse the historical significance of Telangana's formation as a separate state in 2014.

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research methodology uses qualitative history and descriptive-analytical as methods. The main sources of this paper are published books, peer-reviewed journal articles, government reports, official legislative documents and historical studies. These pertain to Hyderabad State, the Telangana movement.

This research adopts a chronological approach to examine the major political and socio-economic developments from 1948 to 2014. Historical interpretation has been combined with thematic analysis to understand regional identity, political representation, economic inequalities, cultural mobilisation and federal relations.

The States Reorganisation Commission Report (1955), the report of the Committee for Consultations on the Situation in Andhra Pradesh (2010), select parliament documents and the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act (2014).

The research does not pretend to provide new survey results or unique archival findings. Rather, it critically evaluates existing historical evidence to account for the emergence and development of the Telangana movement for statehood.

IV HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: TELANGANA UNDER HYDERABAD STATE

4.1 Political and Administrative Conditions before 1948

Hyyderabad Before independence Telangana was the major Telugu-speaking region in hyderabad state which was ruled by the Nizam of hyderabad. The state had its own administrative setup, revenue system and political culture. This was quite

different from the British-administered Madras Presidency in its administrative traditions.

The agrarian structure of Telangana was characterised by huge inequalities in land ownership and access to resources. Group of powerful landlords, deshmukhs, jagirdars and other intermediary authorities commanded great influence over rural society. The cultivators in many areas faced heavy taxation, mounting debts, insecure tenancy and several other exploitations.

A notably important practice was vetti, which describes a system whereby parts of the rural population worked without pay. It had an economic impact on the disadvantaged communities. Land concentration and political power concentration were the causes of agrarian discontent.

There was a discrepancy in educational and administrative opportunities. Urdu had an important role in the official administration of Hyderabad State. The Telugu-speaking people often had to face difficulties in education and administration in their language.

These influencing factors gave rise to a regional social consciousness. The Andhra Jana Sangham and later the Andhra Mahasabha provided a venue to discuss issues like language, education, culture, and agriculture. The campaign inherently linked local grievances to wider political questions.

4.2 Telangana Peasant Armed Struggle (1946–1951)

The Telangana peasant armed struggle constituted one of the notable popular movements in the region's modern history. Starting in 1946, it emerged in reaction to oppressive agrarian relations, landlord domination, forced labour, and the exploitative practices occurring in the countryside.

The Communist Party of India had a significant impact on organizing the peasants through village-level associations and political networks. The Andhra Mahasabha served as an important platform for articulating rural grievances.

In districts like Nalgonda, Warangal and Karimnagar the movement intensified. Peasants put together cooperative opposition to oppressive landlords, challenged illegal exactions and demanded control over agricultural land. In some hamlets, local agencies created alternative forms of administration and collective decision making.

Women played a crucial role in mobilising and communicating, resistances as well as organizing village activities. The movement was not only rural or class-related as showed by their participation; it also challenged patriarchal and other social hierarchies.

The conflict accelerated in the last years of Nizam due to the Razakars, who were trying to suppress the oppositions through violence and terror.

In September 1948, the military intervention in Hyderabad was known as operation polo or police action as a result of this operation Nizam's independent political authority ended in the Hyderabad state was brought under the administrative control of the Indian government. The peasant struggle went on in different forms until its withdrawal in 1951. Similarly, the struggle created an important revolting history against exploitation and unequal political power. Rural communities have been able to organize politically thanks to their religious beliefs.

V INTEGRATION OF HYDERABAD STATE AND THE EMERGENCE OF REGIONAL ASPIRATIONS (1948–1956)

5.1 Integration into the Indian Union

Hyderabad state integrated Indian Union in September 1948. This event brought about a change in the political structure. The new administrative arrangement of the Indian Union replaced the government of the Nizam and the process of democratic political restructuring started gradually.

The integration was, however, controversial and brought political and social tensions. We must view the Police Action in the overall historical perspective of postcolonial state formation, the Hyderabad political crisis, and the violence suffered by varied communities. According to Purushotham (2015), the September 1948 events

entailed processes of internal violence and consolidation of state sovereignty.

In the year 1952, elections were held in the Hyderabad State and an elected government was formed under Burgula Ramakrishna Rao. These developments offered individuals opportunities to take part in politics and represent their region.

However, the issue of future political relations of Telangana with Telugu-speaking districts of Andhra remains unresolved.

5.2 Linguistic Reorganisation and the Vishalandhra Question

The need for linguistic reorganisation increased in independent India. The Andhra State formation in 1953, following the movement for a separate Telugu-speaking state, upgraded the demand for the unification of Telugu-speaking regions.

The Vishalandhra project was proposed to be established by joining the Telangana region with the Andhra State. Still the issue was contentious as Telangana had a different historical experience, administrative system and socio-economic structure.

The issue was examined at length by the State Reorganisation Commission (SRC), appointed in 1953. The report in 1955 acknowledged the historical and economic differences between the two areas. It had doubts about merger immediately and suggested that Telangana could remain as a separate Hyderabad State for the time being, with merger ultimately depending on the people and the Assembly.

The Commission acknowledged that mere linguistic affinity might not suffice for seamless political integration. All in all, the political negotiations later enabled the creation of the united Andhra Pradesh.

5.3 Gentlemen's Agreement of 1956

Negotiated in February 1956, the Gentlemen's Agreement was intended to give safeguards to Telangana in the united state.

Among its main concerns.

• Safe Keep of Financial Resources of Telangana

• The state administration has regional representation.

• Protection relating to employment in the public sector.

• Protect educational opportunities.

• Setting up a Telangana Regional Council.

• Well-balanced allocation of administrative and development cost.

The objective of these arrangements was to prevent Telangana from being politically and economically marginalised in a bigger state.

The formation of Andhra Pradesh took place on 1 November 1956 when Telangana merged with Andhra State. The merger drastically restructured southern India's political geography.

Yet, the safeguards of the agreement later became a major political issue. Dissatisfaction in the region emerged regarding their implementation, particularly around employment, financial allocation, administrative representation and development priorities.

According to Seshan (2018), the historical differences between Telangana and Andhra were important for the duration of their union. Thus, through the merger, a common administrative structure came to exist while the historical identities of the two regions did not get completely erased.

VI THE TELANGANA AGITATION OF 1969

6.1 Causes of the Movement

The discontent with the execution of safeguards that were supposed to be made in 1956 merger was the cause for 1969 Telangana agitation. Initially, creation of employment opportunities became a regional issue. There was a section of Telangana society which pointed out that the supportive provisions regarding local candidates in public employment were not being implemented. Two, there are complaints regarding the usage of Telangana's fund. Activists in region alleged that the revenue generated in Telangana was not reinvested in the region. Furthermore, the feeling that Telangana was politically weak in the united

state was additionally caused due to the belief that regional administrative institutions were weak.

6.2 Student Participation and Mass Mobilisation

The 1969 agitation was led mainly by the students. Educational institutions, particularly Osmania University, became important sites for political debate and mobilisation.

The demand was initially about implementation of safeguards, but the movement gradually escalated into demand for a separate Telangana state.

The agitation was joined by governmental employees, political activists, intellectuals and civil society. Various parts of the region witnessed demonstrations, strikes, public meetings and protests.

The demand for a separate state emerged as a significant political organisation contributed to this. Under M's leadership. Chenna Reddy tried to turn a popular movement into structured mass political action.

In order to address the grievances, the government put forward various proposals pertaining to the repatriation of non-local employees and protections for the region. However, these measures did not solve the basic political disputes.

6.3 Consequences of the Agitation

The agitation of 1969 marked a turning point in Telangana's regional political identity formation. The movement's lack of immediate achievement of statehood shows the ability of students, employees and ordinary citizens to mobilise around regional rights. The protest highlighted, as well, the limitations of administrative safeguards without effective institutional accountability. The political influence of the movement gradually diminished owing to internal conflicts, negotiations, and change of political leadership strategy. Despite this, the call for a separate state of Telangana remained a significant factor of regional political consciousness. According to the Committee for Consultations on the Situation in Andhra Pradesh (2010), perceived failure of safeguards and apprehensions regarding public employment and regional resources were the main reasons for the agitation of 1969.

VII REVIVAL OF THE SEPARATE TELANGANA MOVEMENT AFTER 2001

7.1 Formation of Telangana Rashtra Samithi

In 2001, K. Chandrashekar Rao established the Telangana Rashtra Samithi (TRS). The turn of Chandrashekar Rao was a key moment in the statehood movement. The demand for a separate Telangana was placed at the centre of the organisation’s political programme. The earlier periods witnessed regional demands articulated through short-lived agitations or political negotiations. The TRS, however, attempted to set up a permanent political organisation for statehood.

7.2 Role of Intellectuals and Cultural Organisations

The movement was backed by academics, writers, poets,historian, students and cultural activists after its revival. Kothapalli Jayashankar played an intellectual role in framing arguments for separate Telangana. Through his writings and public interventions, he explained the historical and economic aspects behind the regional demand. Cultural organisations have also contributed greatly. Folk songs, poems, performances and meetings were now used as political communication. The movement was now presenting Telangana not only as an economically backward region but as a historically distinct cultural and political community. Pathania (2018) examines how the movement used cultural-political mobilization to significant effect. Of the new regional identity created through their efforts, Bhuchung D. Tsering believed that the politics of recognition also became an important dimension of their demand for statehood.

7.3 Political Negotiations and Electoral Mobilisation

The TRS got involved in the country’s politics by entering into electoral alliances with national political parties. The political developments of 2004 drew the Telangana demand into a wider national political discussion. Still, there were disputes about when and under what conditions.

The demand for statehood picked up steam in 2009. K. Chandrashekhar Rao's fast unto death catalyst another round of public mobilization in response to the growing protests, the Union Government stated on 9 December 2009 it is going to initiate the process of forming Telangana. The political circumstances changed following widespread criticism which resulted in more negotiations and protests. The problem was now a big national political problem involving Union Government, the Andhra Pradesh legislature, political parties and different sections of civil society.

VIII FORMATION OF TELANGANA STATE IN 2014

8.1 Political Decision and Parliamentary Process

Following lengthy discussions and political debate, the Union Government proceeded towards the formal reorganisation of Andhra Pradesh. The Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Bill was introduced in Parliament in February 2014. It met with considerable opposition and controversy, but was passed by Parliament and given presidential assent. The legal mechanism for forming Telangana and reorganising the remaining territories of Andhra Pradesh is provided by the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014 (Act No. 6 of 2014). The Act got President's assent on 1 March 2014. 2 June 2014 was appointed day for the formation of Telangana under its provisions. On 2 June 2014, the Indian Union decided to carve out a separate state of Telangana from the state of Andhra Pradesh, with Hyderabad becoming the capital of Telangana.

8.2 Constitutional and Administrative Significance

The formation of Telangana was a crucial occurrence in the federal structure of India. The successor state was endowed with administrative institutions, government departments, public infrastructure and established economic centres from Andhra Pradesh. The drafter of Reorganisation Act also dealt with other transitional matters like representation in legislature, public employment, allocation of assets and liabilities, institutions, water resources and administrative arrangements. According to the Act, Telangana and Andhra Pradesh were made the common capital of Hyderabad for a period of 10 years transitional. Creation of Telangana proved that regional aspirations could get accommodation within constitutional and parliamentary framework of India. Yet, the emergence of a new state also created problems of administrative complexity in terms of allocation of resources, institutional responsibilities and inter-state coordination.

IX CONCLUSION

The movement for the formation of Telangana as a separate state gathered momentum in the 2000s largely due to the desperation of the large number of young Telangana people who took up jobs and moved to Hyderabad. We cannot understand their origin with the events just prior to state formation. The agitation in 1969 marked an important stage in the emergence of an organised regional consciousness. Rather, it had a deep connection with the history of the Hyderabad State and the Telangana peasant armed struggle, the integration of Hyderabad into the Indian Union and the political implications of linguistic reorganisation in 1956. While the subsequent political arrangements, especially the Six-Point Formula of 1973, helped lessen the tension momentarily, they did not extinguish anxieties over regional representation, development and autonomy.

After the year 2001, the politics and culture started getting more mobilised in the statehood movement. The involvement of various people like students, intellectuals, workers and women created a broad-based democratic movement demanding a separate state. The political negotiations and the conduct of legislative business ultimately culminated in the Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act, 2014. Historically, the formation of Telangana signifies more than the mere creation of a new administrative unit. It shows acknowledgement of regional political identity, the value of people’s participation and the ability of Indian federalism to respond to sustained regional aspiration. The completion of socio-economic transformation

should not be equated to the same time as the achievement of statehood. The long-term importance of Telangana's formation will ultimately depend on inclusive development, equitable sharing of resources, accountability of institutions, and effective representation of all sections.

Therefore, the Telangana movement has an important place in the history of modern India as an instance of the way historical memory, cultural identity, economic concerns, and democratic politics can come together to reshape the political organization of a federal nation.

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