

**A Critique of the Report of the SriKrishna
Committee on Telangana**

by

Dr. Gautam Pingle

***“A much talking judge is an ill-tuned cymbal”:
Francis Bacon***

Introduction

The five member SriKrishna Committee (SKC) (“Committee for Consultations On the Situation in Andhra Pradesh”) under the Chairmanship of Mr Justice B. N .SriKrishna, former Judge of the Supreme Court of India was constituted by the Ministry of Home Affairs, to bring clarity to the Government of India, over the issue of separate statehood for the Telangana region of Andhra Pradesh.

The Government had earlier acceded to the All-Party request and support for such a separate state backed up by a unanimous resolution of the Legislature Congress Party leaving the decision to the central Government. However once that decision to accord statehood to Telangana was announced widespread agitation by the Andhra region resulted in a stay of execution and status quo was ordered pending the SriKrishna Committee ‘s report which was to take 11 months. That Report of 505 pages of the main Volume with another 183 pages of Appendix Volume has now been issued and this is an analysis and critique of it.

Part I. Honesty within Dishonesty: SKC makes the case for Telangana

palku rAvaNuDu teliya IEka pOye (Ravana, could not understand this truth.),
“Sarasa Saama Dhaana” by Saint Thyagaraja

The Sri Krishna Committee report is a product of eminent persons told to decide what in all honesty they could not; as a result they have concluded in confusion - which serves no one. Among 505 pages and 146,071 words, they had to say some honest things even then, which were obvious to all.

It is difficult for an ordinary person to obtain, let alone read with patience and understanding the Report. The following is a set of 25 extracts in inverted commas (with page references, important parts highlighted by me) from the Report which when placed in sequence. Readers need to understand that SKC was under extreme pressure to do the wrong thing and while so doing it still could not avoid stating the case for Telangana. It did leave out significant issues, which will be highlighted later, but what it said is enough to make a solid case for separation. Read on and decide for yourself!

Status Quo Opposed- Telangana Deprived

1. “Overall, in spite of 50 plus years of policy protected planning and execution, **one finds regional variations** in the economic development of AP” (p.118).
2. The SKC noted that the **Planning Commission notified as backward nine of the ten Telengana districts** – with the exception of Hyderabad and resources have been allocated under its Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF). These districts contain, as the SKC says, 87% of the population of Telengana (p.81)

3. Considering the allegation that ,“Telangana has low per capita income, lower access to employment, lower business opportunities and low access to education and so on”, SKC says, **“At the outset, some or all such allegations appear true when absolute amounts, numbers and percentages are reviewed”**(p.117).
4. (In Telangana the), “ net irrigation by canals has increased only slightly from about 1 lakh hectare to around 2.5 lakh hectares. **Tank irrigation has reduced from 4 lakh hectares in 1955-56 to around 2 lakh hectares at present.**” (p.189)
5. **“The implementation of G.O. 610 during 1985 to 2005 was, at best, tardy, which remains a grievance of Telangana employees.** This issue continues to be highly contentious even today (p.48).”
6. “However, the data received from the State Government shows (Appendix 3.16) that the combined amount released to government and aided colleges **together is Rs. 93 crores in Telangana while it is 224 crores in coastal Andhra (with college going population similar to that in Telangana) and 91 crores in Rayalaseema (with population share being less than half that in Telangana)**” (p.153)
7. **“The real income of the agricultural wage labourers has declined considerably in Telangana whereas it has increased considerably in coastal Andhra region. Similarly, the SCs, STs and minorities in Telangana region have suffered a decline in income during the past about decade or more, whereas these communities have gained substantially in coastal Andhra (p.119)”.**

The Movement

8. “The present agitation, however, shows that the demand only lay dormant and could get re-ignited under specific circumstances. While the issue of rightful shares in public employment remains the key point of discord even in the current agitation, **a new turn has been given to the demand by Telangana region asserting that it has a separate cultural identity which is distinct from that of Andhra and Rayalaseema regions** (p.342).
9. **“The movement has also successfully performed the function of educating the people about Telangana’s grievances to the extent that even school children have now been made conversant with issues around the demand for a separate state.** Equally helpful to this cause have been NRI Telanganites (NRIs from the opposite side have participated by opposing formation of Telangana) who are known to be supporting the movement in several ways and who have also represented to the Committee.

The present movement is considered to be much more extensive than the one in 1969 (which was mostly confined to urban locations), a process in which modern technologies of communication and modern ways of conducting politics have surely helped” (p.352).

10. “While the JACs have sprung up in all the three regions, the most vibrant and numerous are in Telangana region with their reach going down to Mandal and even village level. **The JACs have successfully mobilized the common people who have articulated their particular interests through the movement” (p.359).**

Power Groups

11. “**The dominant upper castes, the Reddys, Kammas, Velamas and Kapus, continue to hold the reins of power in the state.** The Brahmins are much less influential politically due to smaller numbers; **however, coastal Andhra Brahmins played a historic role in forging a Telugu identity through their writings, eventually leading to the birth of Andhra state.** They were equally important in intellectual articulation of the cause of economically oppressed social groups and contributed to the extreme left movement to which major support was provided by coastal Kammas” (p.380).
12. “**The upper castes in Rayalaseema and coastal Andhra are vehemently against the idea of dividing the state; their greatest fear being the loss of Hyderabad.** The accommodation between these two regions has been in terms of **political domination by Rayalaseema and economic domination by coastal Andhra. Together the two regions have ruled the state through Congress and TDP political formations.** Telangana feels dominated by the upper castes of these regions and its struggle is primarily to shake off their yoke.” (p.390)
13. “**Large scale involvement of students including those from Dalits and Backward Castes in the current movement for Telangana seems to testify to this.** A large proportion of student leaders of the movement located in Osmania and Kakatiya Universities is known to be from Dalit/BC background. According to many sources, purported student suicides during the course of the agitation are also largely by Dalit and Backward Caste students”(p.163).
14. “The Madiga caste, which is predominant in Telangana and more numerous on the whole, has had less access to reservation benefits than the Malas who predominate in coastal Andhra. The former would certainly benefit from a separate Telangana but then their brethren in the coastal state would lose out without sub-categorisation. **The economic disaffection of SCs in Telangana versus their rapid strides in education form a potent mixture for agitation politics as is seen from the extensive participation of Dalit**

youth in the student movement. This is the very same constituency which may feel attracted towards and become co-opted by extreme left ideologies.” (p.415)

15. **“The Muslims in Telangana, contrary to common belief, are doing well on consumption (improvement by 76%) and poverty reduction levels (33 points)”** (p.363).
16. **“In 2007, literacy rates for the youth population aged 8-24 for SCs and Muslims in Telangana are ahead of or at par with those in the other two regions”** (p.131).
17. **“For example, it is possible that the ST community and the Muslims in AP may get a relatively better say in governance on separation in the state of Telangana”** (p.122).

Logic of the Movement

18. **“Although as a sub-regional movement, the Telangana movement does not pose a threat to national unity”** (p.344).
19. **“The Telangana movement can be interpreted as a desire for greater democracy and empowerment within a political unit.** As stated earlier, sub- regionalism is a movement, which is not necessarily primordial but is essentially modern – in the direction of a balanced and equitable modernization. **Our analysis shows that cutting across caste, religion, gender and other divisions, the Telangana movement brings a focus on the development of the region as a whole,** a focus on rights and access to regional resources and further, it pitches for a rights-based development perspective whereby groups and communities put forth their agendas within a larger vision of equitable development” (p.415).
20. **“However, given the long-standing history of the demand for a separate state, the deep penetration of the sense of grievance and the widespread emotion around the issue, unless genuine steps are taken to address both real and perceived disparities, the demand is unlikely to go away permanently even if it is subdued temporarily”** (p.417).
21. **“Thus, from the point of view of sheer size of economy, Telangana as a new state can sustain itself both with and without Hyderabad.** The other combination of regions – coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema together can also sustain themselves as a state; **in fact they can also sustain themselves separately”** (p.121).

Summing Up

22. "In view of the complex background of the situation and the rather serious and sensitive emotional aspects involved, **the Committee is of the unanimous view that it would not be practical to simply maintain the status quo in respect of the situation**" (p.442).
23. "Given the above first hand observations of the Committee during its tours of the regions, **the Committee feels that the issue of sentiment has to be considered only as one among several factors to be evaluated**. While not discounting people's wishes or sentiments, the overall implications of bifurcation (or trifurcation as the case may be) have to be carefully delineated to arrive at a responsible recommendation"(p.352-353).
24. "The Committee is of the view that given the long history of the demand for a separate Telangana, **the highly charged emotions at present and the likelihood of the agitation continuing in case the demand is not met** (unless handled deftly, tactfully and firmly as discussed under option six), consideration has to be given to this option. The grievances of the people of Telangana, such as non-implementation of some of the key decisions included in the Gentleman's Agreement (1956), certain amount of neglect in implementation of water and irrigation schemes, inadequate provision for education infrastructure (excluding Hyderabad), and the undue delay in the implementation of the Presidential order on public employment etc., have contributed to the felt psyche of discrimination and domination, with the issue attaining an emotional pitch. **The continuing demand, therefore, for a separate Telangana, the Committee felt, has some merit and is not entirely unjustified**" (p.453).
25. "Therefore, after taking into account all the pros and cons, the Committee did not think it to be the most preferred, but the second best option. **Separation is recommended only in case it is unavoidable** and if this decision can be reached amicably amongst all the three regions" (p.453).

Conclusion: What is "second best" for the Andhra is "first best " for Telangana!

Part II: Dishonesty

***maunnat satyam vishishiyte (truth is superior to silence):* Manu**

Introduction

We have seen how honesty lies like a pearl in an oyster of 505 hard pages of the SKC Report. Now it is necessary to deal with the dishonesty of it all. This is not your ordinary lying that comes to any one of us. As these are eminent persons and assisted by a barrage of ex-civil servants of the rank of Chief Secretary to State Governments and Secretary and Additional Secretary to Government of India, it is more subtle. They do not tell lies – they suppress the truth.

Andhra State

First, the saga of the Andhra State is told as if the Andhras wanted separation only for “promoting their own distinct culture” (p.1). This is a travesty of the history of the more than 20-year struggle of the Andhras to come out from under the majority Tamil influence. They came out even when they had to face financial bankruptcy. The question for Andhra was how was it to survive. That solution then unfolds like a tragedy for Telangana.

SRC

Next, the SKC tells a devious tale of the SRC report, with selective quotations and extracts from it. Yet the SRC said many other things not quoted by SKC. Even Nehru’s objections to trifurcation of Hyderabad are not mentioned nor his support for a separate Telangana!

The SRC noted that Telengana was financially stable and viable while Andhra was not: “The existing Andhra State has faced a financial problem of some magnitude ever since it was crated and in comparison with Telengana the existing Andhra State has a low per capita revenue. Telengana, on the other hand, is much less likely to be faced with financial embarrassment”. (SRC, op.cit, para 376)

It stated Telengana’s fears: “The real fear of the people of Telengana is that if they join Andhra they will be unequally placed in relation to the people of Andhra and in this partnership the major partner will derive all the advantages immediately, while Telengana, itself may be converted into a colony by the enterprising coastal Andhra (SRC, op.cit, para. 378)

And it concluded: “After taking all these factors into consideration we have come to the conclusions that it will be in the interests of Andhra as well as Telengana, if

for the present, the Telangana area is to be constituted into a separate State, which may be known as the Hyderabad State” (SRC, op.cit, para 386)

Telangana Surpluses

SKC deals with the critical “Surpluses” issue in passing and only noted the appointment of Justice Bhargava who gave a figure of Rs 28 crores diverted from Telangana over 1956-68. No details of the estimation of Surpluses diverted from Telangana are given by SKC; no references to the earlier Kumar Lalit Report estimation of “surpluses” (Rs 38 crores). This after all was the crucial issue in the 1969 agitation. Neither did SKC refer to the figures of diversion over more recent years.

1969 Agitation and TPS

Then comes the unkindest cutoff all. The SKC Report says only this of the 1969 agitation: “The student agitation, as a result, passed in to the hands of the politicians demanding separate statehood, who formed themselves into what was called the “Telangana Praja Samithi”. The Samithi, thereafter, began to organize a planned agitation. The Government became tough with the agitating political leaders, while the agitation continued till November when there was a split in the Praja Samithi and slowly with the passage of time, normalcy returned to state”(p.33).

Notice the inverted commas around the TPS...”so called” it seems. This was a nationally recognized party that fought the 1971 Parliamentary Election and out of 12 seats in Telangana, contested 11 and won 10 – a score half of the 20 seats won by the BJP. “And slowly with passage of time” – forgotten is the TPS merger with Congress, P. V. Narasimha Rao as CM; all lost on (by?) SKC. The only other reference is: “On the political side, P.V. Narasimha Rao became the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh in September 1971, as the first Telanganite to assume the coveted office”(p.33). “PV” is not in fashion these days.

Unrecorded Deaths

As for the long agitation, the number of those killed in police firing, all that is old hat to SKC as “slowly, with passage of time, normalcy returned to the state” - normalcy but not to the mourning families whose children sacrificed themselves for ...what?

But this amnesia is not just because it was 40 years ago. See what they have to say about recent times: “between May 2004 and November 2005, Telangana reported 663 suicides while Rayalaseema reported 231 and coastal Andhra stood at 174 out of a total of 1068 reported suicides” (p.366). Just this many tragedies?

On an RTI application, the Government of AP confirmed 2,023 suicides in Telengana during 2005 of which it said 1,210 were “genuine”. If SKC can make a hash of such tragic voluntary deaths, what it could do with statistics is to be imagined.

Presidential Order and GO 610

As for the infamous GO 610 and its non-implementation, this is what SKC has to say about the all too revealing Grigliani Report; “The Girglani Commission submitted its final report on 30.9.2004 with 126 findings and suggested 35 remedial measures.” (p.47-48). It then devotes a whole chapter to the issue without once mentioning even one of the 126 findings and that the figure for Telengana share of government jobs misallocated to non-Telengana persons varies from 1,00,000 to 2,00,000. Total government jobs in the state are estimated at 12 lakhs, of which Telengana should get a share of at least 4 lakhs. A loss of one quarter to one half of its entitlement would impact not only on Telengana incomes but also in alienation that the usual confrontation with non-locals in government employment brings.

Irrigation

Now to irrigation - that critical subject for Telengana! SKC brought in an ex-Chairman of the Central Water Commission of the rank of additional Secretary to Government of India – a Dam person. CWC does not deal with small tanks or wells only dams. See what he has to say: “The Net Irrigated Area (NIA) in all the three regions of AP has increased over the years. In fact the NIA in Telengana has doubled (from 0.8 million hectares in 1956-60 to 1.7 million hectares to by 2006-09). Thus Telengana has experienced a **whopping** 113% increase; while coastal Andhra and Rayalaseema have experienced a much lower growth of NIA at 30% and 55% respectively. Telengana has experienced a remarkable increase in NIA after mid-1970s compared to the other two regions where there is a steady increase over time.” (p.88).

So what have you to bother about, all deprivation is ephemeral, product of diseased imagination. Hold on - when percentages are used, reach for your calculator. Farmers don't deal in percentages they deal in acres and hectares irrigated. Where are those figures? SKC Report reports 100 pages later that: “Tank irrigation has reduced from 4 lakh hectares in 1955-56 to around 2 lakh hectares at present.” (p.189). My calculations (based on GoAP figures) are that during the 53 year period, 1956-2009, Telengana has lost 2.92 lakh hectares of tank irrigation. This implies a loss of nearly Rs. 30,000 crores in government investment in irrigation.

Tank irrigation was out of fashion as SKC seems to think: “A cause of concern is that surface water irrigation through tanks has declined significantly from over 64% in 1955-56 to just 12% in 2008-09 in Telengana. The trend is similar in

Rayalaseema with respect to decline in irrigation from surface/tanks.” But wait a minute – even this eminent expert has a problem: “The puzzle is in coastal Andhra, where the canal and tank irrigation has declined by about 10 percent, each over a period of 53 years” (p.89). What is the puzzle? The Government takes care to invest and repair the tanks and canals in Coastal Andhra and not in Telangana or Rayalaseema (where rain and Krishna water is scarce also)

Added to this is the loss of nearly 2 lakh hectares (or 5 lakh acres) of Telangana canal irrigation from the peak of 3,38,276 hectares in 1990-92 to a low of 1,16,203 hectares for 2004-05. The loss of another Rs. 20,000 crores of investment in this government irrigation is a major one

Thus despite the loss of 5 lakhs hectares of government irrigation in tanks and canals, “the net irrigation in Telangana has increased from about 7 lakh hectares in 1955-56 to around 18 lakh hectares in 2008-09.”(p.189). So Telangana is OK.

So how did the “whooping” increase come about? Thereby hangs another tale. This was due to Telangana farmers who invested their own money to increase well irrigation over the same period ten-fold from about 1.30 lakh hectares to nearly 13 lakh hectares (overtaking, by far, tank- and also canal irrigation) as the major contributory to Telangana irrigation. At a (estimated minimum) cost this was Rs 150,000 crores of farmer’s money. More than Jalayagnam!

Invidious Comparison

What is the trick SKC plays? Whenever Telangana is seen to be deprived, SKC compares it with Rayalaseema as if say you are better off without shoes because the other man has no legs! Then why not give Rayalaseema statehood also. They may be able to manage better on their own. That is only hinted at in SKC but not really addressed. Is Rayalaseema so desperate that it prefers to be a worse deprived region than Telangana by remaining in the unified state? Are they men or mice out there? Can they not stand on their own?

Summing Up

SRC tried to do both an honest and dishonest job at the same time .It admitted that the united state would not work as usual (Option 1). It played the fool with Options 2 to 4 and rejected them itself. It wants Option 6 – a united state with a Telangana Regional Committee, a River Water Development Board and Constitutional Amendment. This is history and it was a tragedy. The TRC was set up along with a similar one for Punjab by amending the Constitution. When the Punjab model did not work the state was separated. When the TRC was abolished we did not get a state. What was good for Punjab was not good for Telangana. Now SKC wants to repeat that history, now as a farce. What sort of eminence have these person exercised in such a crucial matter.

Part III. SKC did not consider at all: Views Across the National Political Spectrum on Telangana Statehood¹

These views were solicited in writing by the Pranab Mukherjee Committee set up in 2004 to consider demand for separate Telangana state. They were as follows:

1. The U.P.A. Government will consider the demand for 'formation of Telangana State' at an appropriate time after due consultations and consensus. **U.P.A. Common Minimum Programme adopted in 2004**

2. The UPA Government will consider the demand for the formation of a Telangana state at an appropriate time after due consultations. **President of India's Address to the Joint Session of Parliament, 7th June, 2004**

Responses of National Leaders to the UPA Sub Committee on Telangana Statehood – Chairman Pranab Mukherjee

3. The demand for Telangana state is a genuine demand emanating from the aspirations of the people.....It is my strong belief that Telangana has all the qualities that a self-sustaining state needs: economic viability, public support, unique cultural traditions optimum geographical size and relevant historical context...I, therefore, feel that this long standing people's demand should be considered at the earliest; so that further bickering could be avoided. **Chandrasekhar, Ex PM , 21st May 2005**

4. The UP Government made this promise nearly a year ago and has formed a sub-committee headed by Sri Pranab Mukherji for this purpose. It is high time that the assurances given to the people is fulfilled without any further loss of time. I am of the opinion that the demand of the people of Telangana for a separate state is genuine and needs to be considered at the earliest. I am confident you will do the needful. **V.P.Singh Ex PM, 25th May 2005 to Sonia Gandhi**

The consensus expressed in favor of formation of Telangana State is unique and unprecedented. It has, thereby, made the formation of the state an inescapable necessity for the UPA Government. Any delay in clinching the issue will not only cause erosion of credibility of the present Government but will also force the people of Telangana to go back to the agitation mode. I, therefore earnestly feel

¹ This data for this section as kindly provided by Mr M Narayan Reddy, former MP who has been of great support in this endeavor

that steps should be taken to form the state of Telengana without any further loss of time. **V.P.Singh, Ex PM, 9th August 2006 to Sonia Gandhi**

5. In my speech of 15th August 1996, from Red Fort, as Prime Minister, I had announced the formation of a new state of Uttaranchal. With regards to the formation of the State of Telengana , I had participated in a rally organized by Sri Chandrasehkar Rao and I publicly made an announcement as per recommendations of the States Reorganization Commission set up in the early 1950s. Even now I am of the same opinion. **H D Deva Gowda , Ex PM , 8th May 2005**

6. I am aware of the background of this demand that has my full support. ..Over the years – ever since the Indira Gandhi era – I have felt that formation of this state would go a long way to end many agonies and sufferances of the people in this region and provide opportunities for their socio-economic development . **I K Gujral ,Ex PM, 24th May 2005**

7. The NCP Working Committee resolved that the demand of the people of Telengana for a separate state is not a new or sudden development. It has been there for more than five decades. The grievances of the people of the region are real and their demand for a Telengana State is genuine. The NCP is, therefore, of the opinion that the state of Telengana should be created without further loss of time. **Sharad Parwar, President, NCP , 2nd May 2005**

8. As already committed by us in the Common Minimum Programme, the Rastriya Janata Dal extends it full support for creating Telengana State. We earnest feel that the creation of Telengana State cannot be delayed any longer. The people of the region have been fighting for it for more than a half-a-century. It is a people's movement in real sense. This movement has always been solidly backed by every section of the people of the region. Intellectuals, government employees, students remained all though, as the backbone of the movement. And now, it has percolated down to the agrarian sector and the working classes.... The people of this region strongly feel and they have every reason to feel so - that they can no longer live in the integrated state of Andhra Pradesh with self respect and dignity.....The electoral verdict of 2004 is of great significance in this regard. The Congress Party forged an alliance with the Telengana Rashtra Samiti clearly assuring the people of the region that the state of Telengana will be carved out if they were voted back to power. On the other hand, the Telugu Desam Party in alliance with the Bharatiya Janata Party staked its claim clearly opposing the creation of Telengana and we have seen the result....There cannot be a clearer verdict than this in favor of creating a Telengana State. Any interpretation given the contrary to it will amount to subverting the people's verdict. In a democratic polity, we cannot escape from honoring the people's wishes. The Rashtriya Janata Dal , therefore

wholeheartedly suggest that the State of Telengana be created without delaying it any longer. **Lalu Prasad, President, Rastriya Janata Dal , 20th May 2005**

9. The Bahujan Samaj Party welcomes the initiative taken to fulfilling the assurances given to the people of Telengana and wholeheartedly supports the formation of Telengana State. The demand of the people of Telengana for a separate state is not a new or sudden development. It has been there for the last five to six decades.... The UPA government has rightly taken up on its agenda the proposal for the formation of Telengana state. It is nearly one year since this promise was made to the people and should have been fulfilled by now. Any further delay in forming the State of Telengana will send wrong signals to the people. Therefore, the Bahujan Samaj Party suggests that the state of Telengana be formed very soon. **Km. Mayawati President, Bahujan Samaj Party, 8th May 2005**

10. It would be in the fitness of things to recall that the merger of Telengana with Andhra to form the present state of Andhra Pradesh was done ignoring a categorical recommendation made by the States Reorganization Commission. It was also much against the wishes of the people of Telengana and contrary to the views of the tallest leaders of the time Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru....The merger of Telengana with Andhra was however, not unconditional. ...No less a person than Jawaharlal Nehru himself compared it to a matrimonial alliance with the provision of divorce.

The demand of the people of Telengana for a separate state has many dimensions – economic, political, cultural, linguistic, social and so on. Deprived of their legitimate share in the fruits of development, marginalized in the political process and administrative set up, looked down on the cultural and linguistic fronts, they feel that they have been reduced to a status of second rate citizens in their own homeland. In fact, it is not just a problem of economic development. It is essentially a problem involving self-respect of the people of the region...It is already one year since this promise was made and it is high time to redeem forth the assurance given to the people. **Prakash Singh Badal, President, Shiromani Akali Dal, 12th June 2005**

11.

I wish to convey to you on behalf of our Party that we support the demand for a separate Telengana State. **George Fernandes, President, Janata Dal (United) , 5th July 2005**

12. The People's Democratic Party categorically supports the formation of Telengana State which is just demand of the people of that region. We feel that this matter has already been delayed, even after attaining broad consensus among several political parties across the nation. Having promised to consider the demand of the people for the creation of a separate state , we cannot afford

to delay it any further. Creating the state of Telengana forthwith would, therefore, be in the larger interests of ensuring political stability in that part of the country, in particular, and in the entire country in General. **Mahbooba Mufti, President , J&K People's Democratic Party**

13. We had also backed the formation of separate Telengana, to be carved out of Andhra Pradesh and Vidharbha, to be formed out of Maharashtra. Indeed the formation of these (five) states was an important commitment in our party's election manifesto in 1998.

A peculiar situation has arisen in the case of the demand for a separate Telengana, a demand which is as old as the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956. The BJP has backed this demand . However, we could not do anything in this regard since Telugu Desam , which supported the Vajpayee government between 1998-2004 was opposed to it. Since Telugu Desam was in power in Andhra Pradesh at the time there was no possibility of the AP Assembly passing a resolution in favour of Telengana .

As soon as the Telugu Desam severed its ties with the BJP, our party has unequivocally reiterated our support to the formation of a separate Telengana. **L K Advani, Former Deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister**

Minutes of the Meeting of Floor Leaders of the AP Legislative Assembly

Again in 2009, as we have seen the views of the State level leadership was requested and they were as under as given by the **Minutes of the Meeting of Floor Leaders of the AP Legislative Assembly, 7th December 2009, 8 pm** as faxed to the Home Minister, Government of India and faxed by the Chief Minister of the State.

14. The representative of TDP has informed that the stand of TDP was made abundantly clear in their Election Manifesto of the 2009 Elections and that there was no change in the Party's professed stand. He categorically stated that if Government brings Resolution for separate Telengana, the TDP will support the Resolution. **Telugu Desam Party**

15. The representative of CPM has reported that their party has made their stand clear to the Committee headed by Mr Pranab Mukerjee. **Communist Party Marxist**

16. Representative of Loksatta observed that the Congress Party has been keeping Telengana issue unsettled for 6 years. The Core Committee of Mr Pranab Mukerjee or the Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr Rosiah also has not given clarity to the issue..... He has informed that his party would support the Congress Party , if decisions are evolved carefully , keeping in mind the issues he has referred. **Lok Satta Party**

17. The representative of the CPI has stated that their party has adopted a political resolution favoring Telengana in the National Conference held in Hyderabad. **Communist Party of India**

18. The representative of the Praja Rajyam Party observed that even though Telengana issue is a complex one, yet his party would support the resolution for separate Telengana, if it is brought before the Assembly. **Praja Rajyam Party**

19. The representative of TRS has observed that in view of the opinions/views communicated by all political parties to the Committee headed by Sri Pranab Mukharjee; as well as the unanimity that is obtaining today, the Telengana Resolution shall be introduced and be passed in the Assembly immediately. **Telengana Rashtra Samithi**

20. The representative of the BJP exhorted that their National Executive in 2007 has categorically supported formation of separate Telengana State. Since the BJP is supporting this cause, Congress need not wait for securing support from other UPA partners , but go ahead with the passing of the bill in the Parliament as was done in the case of bill for revival of AP Legislative Council. **Bharatiya Janata Party**

21. The representative of the MIM observed that as the Assembly is in Session , the proper forum to express his views is the floor of the house and suggested that such discussion may be taken in the current session of the Assembly. **Majlis Ittehad e- Musaleem**

22. The representatives of the Congress Party has informed that since the Congress is a national party, the decisions are to be taken by the party's central leadership, as resolved in the CLP meeting of the Congress Party held today. **Congress Party**

23. The Process of forming the state of Telengana will be initiated. An appropriate resolution will be moved in the State Assembly. **Home Minister of India,**
December 9, 2009

24. On 5th March, 1956, Prime Minister Nehru declared at Bharat Sevak Samaj Conference at Nizamabad, that Government of India had decided to merge Telangana with Andhra State. Nehru made the following observation to pacify the people of Telangana, "*ek masoom ki bachchi (Telangana) ka, ek natkhat (Andhra) ke saath shadi ho raha hai. Kai din ke bad me ittefaq nahi hone ke vaje*

se talaq de sakthe hain". (An innocent girl (Telangana) is married off to a delinquent (Andhra). If they are dissatisfied they could seek separation at a later date. **Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, 5th March 1956** (Indian Express 6-3-1956).

25. At the inauguration of the State of Andhra Pradesh Pandit Nehru at Hyderabad, observed as follows: "From this day Andhras are on trial regarding treatment of Telangana People. If people of Telangana are ill-treated then they will have the right to seek separation". **Jawaharlal Nehru, Prime Minister of India, 1 November, 1956.** (Deccan Chronicle 02-11-1956)

Part IV: SKC ignores Girgliani Report Findings: A loss of Rs 45,000 crores

SriKrishna Committee (SKC) dealt superficially with many of the assurances given to Telangana intended to avoid unfairness and injustice to its people. The failure to protect Telangana jobs for locals has been the most important grievance of the Region. Yet the SKC has not gone into the matter despite the knowledge of a thorough going detailed exercise by J. M. Grigliani, IAS.

Girgliani Report (One Man Commission)

J.M. Grigliani Commission (2003) or the One Man Commission (OMC) was set up to examine the non-implementation of the GO 610 which reserved government jobs in Telangana for locals. This GO 610 was issued ten years after the Presidential Order of 1975 and yet was not implemented even after two decades.

The Girgliani Commission revealed the current situation regarding these solemn assurances and guarantees agreed nearly three decades ago by all political forces in the State and Center in the shape of a Presidential Order of 1975 safeguarding Telangana interests.

We need to bear in mind that the Grigliani Report was commissioned by the TDP government and has been accepted by succeeding Congress Government. A House Committee of the Legislature and a Group of Ministers has extensively discussed it. There is, therefore, nothing controversial about it except the discoveries it has made and the revelations. None of these findings were taken into account by the SKC.

Girgliani set out 126 findings and 35 sets of remedial measures. Let us consider only a few of the 126 issues that he examined in light of the Presidential Order and the consequent GO 610.

Heads of Departments

The first is related to the exemption from the Presidential Order of the offices of the Heads of Department (HOD's) of 51 Departments in the State Government from the operation of the Order. The idea, sensibly, was that since the HOD's offices service the whole of the state their staffing would be statewide. As he writes:

“ Thus, the 51 Heads of Departments listed in the Annexure to G.O.P.No. 728 of 1- 11-1975, 54 in the Budget Manual, 66 in Financial Code and 78 in Fundamental Rules – got multiplied into 288 (Planning Department's List), 174 (Finance Department's List) and to 145 (GAD's List). Even the Heads of Projects are treated as HODs.... However, the Report has listed out 102 HOD offices that alone are legitimately entitled to exclusion from localization of cadres under item (b) of Para 14 of the Presidential Order.” (See Chapter 1 in the Summary of the Report enclosed).

A Department can have only one single Head, while it may have many wings. Yet the Head of Wings were designated as Head of Departments -wings flew high, as it were, and became heads – an almost mythological exercise. The Departments of Irrigation, Roads and Building, Panchayat Raj Engineering, Health - all became, like Ravana, hydra headed. The Irrigation and Command Area Department even outdid Ravana with 16 Heads, while R&B has 5, and PR Engineering and Health 7 each!! In order to facilitate the posting of non-Telengana officers and staff, State Governments had opted to dismantle its command and control structure and set up multiple HODs. (Chapter 2)

Work Charged Establishment

This group largely consists of manual labour in a casual capacity without any tenure, perks and salaries of normal government employees. They are mainly employed in the Departments of Irrigation, Panchayat Raj and Road & Building. Their employment was exempted from the operation of the Presidential Order as they were temporarily employed and did not constitute a regular government cadre. (Chapter 7)

Yet the Girgliani Commission recorded that the Irrigation Department regularized 17,161, Road & Building 5,984, Panchayat Raj 7,860 – a total of 40,870 who were non-local (i.e., not Telengana persons) in the Telengana region. They were given permanent government employment, circumventing the spirit of the Presidential Order. Girgliani stated: “This was only the tip of the iceberg as many more non-locals were employed as Work Charged Employees in Departments which did not furnish figures to the Commission”. As Girgliani says: “Such exclusion is even more unjustifiable. These have to be brought under the Local Cadres” (Chapter 7)

Gazetted Employees

The third is the exemption in the Presidential Order for Gazetted employees. This was neatly circumvented by including previously non-Gazetted posts in the gazette with or without changing the designations of the posts. Girliani stated: "Thus by this ingenious method the local candidates were deprived of the preferential treatment under the Presidential Order. By resorting to these methods the estimated number of posts that were Gazetted after 18.10.1975 (date of Order) cannot be less than a lakh of vacancies which otherwise would have been filled by local candidates." (Chapter 8)

Part-time Junior Lecturers

The fourth is the elaborate and systematic procedure adopted in the polytechnics. Part-time junior lecturers were appointment of non-locals, though even these temporary jobs are direct appointment and are covered by the Presidential Order. Subsequently, the Order is again violated for the second time by regularizing these Part-time Junior lecturers. Thereafter, the regularized Part-time Junior lecturers were “transferred” to their “native districts” and given seniority as of a particular date instead of being put at the last rank thus disturbing the seniorities of those selected by the AP College Service Commission /AP Public Service Commission. (Chapter 16)

“Free Zone”

Lastly, there is the neat invention of a “Free Zone”. Girgliani says,

“ There is no territorial stipulation for the organizations that are excluded from the Presidential Order. They may be located anywhere. It is just incidentally that they are located in the Hyderabad City Area, which gives us the impression that Hyderabad City is Free Zone. Therefore, the Hyderabad City or Hyderabad District should not be defined as a Zone VII or a Free Zone which is totally wrong... The Presidential Order does not mention Zone VII and therefore, there cannot be a separate cadre for Zone VII which does not exist.” (Chapter 10)

Girgliani goes on and on about another 121 issues...the litany is endless, it seems.

The expressions used by this experienced administrator in this Report sums up the conduct of successive administrations over nearly 30 years:

- “ Government may devise some means by which the HOD's will cooperate in giving information required by the Commission in matters of deviations” (16.2.5)
- “Perhaps the government may also consider taking action against those who are responsible unless it has been permitted at the Government level itself.’ (16.15.4)

It is very obvious that such a blatant disregard of the Presidential Order over three decades and under different political administrations – even of different political parties - could not have been affected without the active connivance, ignorance, and initiative of the bureaucratic administration of the state. **Which brings us neatly to the point that in the two years that Girgliani worked on this job, only 52 Departments have responded to his requirement for data – so much for the writ of the Government!**

The refusal of nearly half the HOD's to provide data to the Commission appointed by the State government itself shows the level of utter disregard for the established law and its safeguards. Almost all HOD's are All-India Cadre officers with a responsibility to conduct the business of government as per the Constitution and in conformity to the law and regulations in force. As indicated generally by the Commission and in successive instances, senior All India Cadre officers would have to be party to decisions to violate the Presidential Order. If this could be done then, how is anyone to expect they will do better in any new scheme of guarantees even with Presidential Orders and Constitutional Amendments as before given as proposed under Option 6 – the best and first option of the SKC!

From the individual figures cited by Grigliani, the overall figure of Telangana jobs lost to non-locals is a minimum of 150,000. Even at a modest annual salary of Rs 1 lakh per annum (averaged over the thirty year span of the job), this amounts to Rs 45,000 crores of income loss to Telangana people and undue gain to Andhras. Bearing in mind that these government jobs are entitled to pensions till the holder dies and then thereafter the widow getting her pension till she dies, the loss to Telangana is horrendous. The SKC ignored all this.

It is a matter of almost criminal negligence for the SKC to ignore the extraordinary findings of Grigliani's hard work and analysis. It makes no sense for SKC to then go on and say:

“We, therefore, suggest that there is no real need to have any additional administrative instrumentalities for protection of persons belonging to Telangana region in public employment. However, existing safeguards should be implemented with renewed vigour.” (p.293)

If there was “no real need” then why should SKC recommend implementation with renewed vigour? The conclusion is that the SKC did not read nor let alone want to understand the Grigliani (OMC) report at all. SKC ignored this basic document without analyzing its findings - for if it did, it would come to the conclusion that it would be impossible to maintain further safeguards in a united state dominated by Andhra politicians and bureaucrats.

Part V: WHO IS BACKWARD –TELANGANA OR SRIKRISHNA?

Introduction

It is never a nice thing to be called “backward”. In my school days, a student who was called “backward” was one who could not keep pace with either the curriculum or the rest of the students. Next year, he (mine was a boys-only school) would have been kept back in class to repeat the curriculum and to find his true and comfortable place. But let that pass - today being Backward is something else and now allows you to fight for double promotion. And woe is it to them who suggest that he take a back seat where he belongs.

But the SriKrishna Committee (SKC) thought that Telangana deserves a double – maybe even a triple – promotion. So it declared that Telangana was not only NOT “backward” but also in fact better than Rayalaseema!

Government of India’s Views and Actions

Parliament was told that 9 out of 10 Telangana districts were included in the under ‘Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF)’ initiated in 2006-07 to address the problem of regional imbalances. In his written reply to a question in the Lok Sabha today, Minister of State for Rural Development, Pradeep Jain Aditya put by Mr Suresh K. Taware, said regional imbalances result from varying factors such as “differences in resource endowment, geographical and historical characteristics and also availability of infrastructure”.

But SKC wrote in their report that:

“The Government of India undertakes a review of the development of districts across India on a regular basis. The intention is to identify the most backward districts and infuse additional funds so as to make the backward districts catch up with other progressive areas across India. The National Planning Commission identifies such districts under the Backward Region Grant Fund (BRGF) scheme:

.....The backwardness of a district is normally defined using three main parameters; ‘value of output per agriculture worker’, ‘agriculture wage rate’ and ‘percentage of SC/ST population’ of the district.

Another factor considered as a special case is the presence of left wing extremism. For example, five districts in Andhra Pradesh namely Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Medak, Khammam and Nalgonda, which are all from Telangana region, are included in the RSVY on the recommendation of the Ministry of Home Affairs. These left wing affected districts constitute 46 % population of Telangana (including Hyderabad) and about 19 % of the population of Andhra Pradesh. On the basis of other backwardness characteristics, four districts from Telangana, three from Rayalaseema

and one from coastal Andhra are listed under BRGF. The BRGF population covered due to backwardness works out to be 41% (including Hyderabad) in Telangana, 74% in Rayalaseema and only 7% in coastal Andhra.

Of the total 87% population covered by BRGF in Telangana, 46 % is covered under extremist affected districts selection criteria. Thus, a large percentage of population from Rayalaseema, relatively smaller percentage from Telangana and very small percentage from coastal Andhra were backward as per the BRGF backwardness identification criteria. Hence, the argument extended by some political parties and civil society groups from Telangana region does not get support from this analysis of the BRGF” (Emphasis mine) p.81-82

SKC reports that: “Being the most backward region of the state, Rayalaseema is apprehensive of its fate in case an autonomous Telangana state is formed. The sentiment in this region, therefore, has been vehemently against the division of the state”(p.353). What is with Rayalaseema – if it is more backward it should want to separate and stand on its own feet – not live off other regions. What happened to the successors of those great leaders who had to be persuaded to sign the Sri Bagh Pact with false assurances from their Coastal cousins!

This a devious and dishonest attempt of SKC to twist what the Government of India, Planning Commission and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj have stated clearly. SKC is trying to convince its readers that Telangana was not backward by playing around with words that are not on record and which make no sense. Even the expression “Backward Regions” is part of the title of the Central Scheme. Even by their logic “value of output per agriculture worker”, ‘agriculture wage rate’” are clear enough indicators of backwardness.

Anyway, SKC is trying to convince by this devious and dishonest argument is that out of the 9 districts – 4 (Nizamabad, Karimnagar, Medak, Khammam and Nalgonda) are not backward but Naxalite infected. So only 5 districts are truly backward and these districts contain only 46 % of the population but agree that if the other 4 are included, the population living in backward districts is 87%! Only the Hyderabad district is forward!!

Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF)

But unfortunately despite all the twists and turns of the SKC argument *satyam eva jayate*. This is what Planning Commission has to say about RSVY and BRGF:

7.1.28. The development of backward regions has been a major concern of planners in India. However, prior to the Tenth Plan, the issue of development of backward areas was approached as primarily one of

development of StatesThe emphasis was on backwardness in terms of economic performance, though the impact of historical and social factors in economic matters was also recognized....

7.1.29. The Mid-Term Appraisal of the Ninth Plan showed that despite these efforts, one of the most serious problems facing the country was the wide disparity and regional imbalances between States, and within a State between districts. It was these pockets of high poverty, low growth and poor governance that were slowing down the growth and development of the country. In the Tenth Plan, it was decided to have a new approach to target these areas through a specific programme for Backward Areas, and the Rashtriya Sam Vikas Yojana (RSVY) was introduced in 2003–04. (Emphasis mine) 11th Plan Document, Volume 1, pp.144-145

So much for RSVY!

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj administers the BRGF, as the idea is to leapfrog state capitals and send the funds directly to the Panchayats in the Backward Regions. Obviously the Center does not trust the States to distribute the funds to those areas most in need! The Ministry says:

1.1. The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) is designed to redress regional imbalances in development. The fund aims to supplement and converge existing developmental inflows into identified districts,

1.3. The Backward Regions Grant Fund (BRGF) represents a novel approach towards tackling chronic regional backwardness by entrusting a central role in planning and implementation of the programme to Panchayats in rural areas, municipalities in urban areas and District Planning Committees (DPCs) at the district level to consolidate Panchayat and Municipality plans into the district plan” (emphasis mine) “Handbook on monitoring of the Backward Regions Grant Fund”, p.1

So it will be seen that that the BRGF is a fund for helping “pockets of high poverty, low growth and poor governance”, where “backwardness in terms of economic performance, though the impact of historical and social factors in economic matters was also recognized” and intended to rectify “the wide disparity and regional imbalances by a “novel approach towards tackling chronic regional backwardness”

Conclusion

What SKC has tried to prove by ingenious twists and turns, is that what is real is only a mirage! SKC is the mirage and which has kept Telangana occupied for a year and wasted precious time, which was needed to accelerate development of this Region. SKC has only succeeded in making a fool of itself, when it wanted to fool Telangana.

Part VI: SRIKRISHNA COMMITTEE IGNORES VIOLATION OF TELENGANA TRIBAL LAND RIGHTS BY “ANDHRA SETTLERS”

“There were two dangers to which subjection to normal laws would have specially exposed these peoples, and both arose out of the fact that they were primitive people, simple, unsophisticated and frequently improvident. There was a risk of their agricultural land passing to the more civilized section of the population, and the occupation of the tribals was the most part agricultural; and, secondly they were likely to get into the “wiles of the moneylenders”. The primary aim of Government policy then was to protect them from these two dangers and preserve their tribal customs; and this was achieved by prescribing special procedures applicable to these backward areas.” Simon Commission Report, quoted in *Samatha vs. State of Andhra Pradesh*, Supreme Court of India (K. Ramaswamy, S. Saghir Ahmad, G.B. Pattanaik JJ) 11.07.1997, para 16

Introduction

The Nizam’s government in Hyderabad State recognized the issue of tribal land rights and the protection they needed from exploitation by non-tribals. The Tribal Areas Regulation, 1356-Fasli (1948 AD) and the Hyderabad Tribal Areas Regulation, (Regulation No. III of 1359F –1951 AD) was in force to restrict transfer of land in Scheduled/Notified areas.

Tribals were also given patta for the land they cultivated and this ensured protection by law. In the case of one district, Prof Christoph von Furer-Haimendorf, Advisor on Tribal Affairs, HEH the Nizam’s Government of Hyderabad State, reported:

Despite all such obstacles the allocation of land to the tribals of Adilabad, which began in 1944, made good progress. By 1945 a total of 45,417 acres of land had been granted to 3,144 tribals, and by 1949 the amount of land assigned on patta to tribals had risen to 160,000 acres and the numbers of beneficiaries to 11,198. The work continued until about 85 per cent of the tribal householders of Adilabad adequate holdings of cultivable land.” (Quoted in the Samata Judgment, para 20)

Nonetheless, the Nizam’s government in Hyderabad State recognized the issue of tribal land rights and the protection they needed from exploitation by non-tribals. The Tribal Areas Regulation, 1356-Fasli (1948 AD) and the Hyderabad Tribal Areas Regulation, (Regulation No. III of 1359F –1951 AD) was in force to restrict transfer of land in Scheduled/Notified areas

Even under the British Raj, protection of tribal land from non-tribal acquisition was important. This was continued in the Constitution adopted for the independent Republic of India.

The Constitutional Position

The President, by the Scheduled Areas (Part 'B' States) Order, 1950, which became effective from December 7, 1950, exercised the power declaring certain specified areas as Scheduled Areas in Part 'B' States including the State of Hyderabad (Adilabad, Karimnagar, Nizamabad, Warangal, Khammam, Mehboob Nagar Districts).

The Fifth Schedule enjoins that the Governor of each State, having Scheduled Areas therein, shall report to the President regarding the administration of the Scheduled Areas in that State. Special power has been conferred to prohibit or to restrict the transfer of land by or among members of the Scheduled Tribes in such area and to regulate the allotment of land to members of the Scheduled Tribes in such area and to regulate money lending to the tribals in the Scheduled Area.

Andhra Pradesh and Telengana

The main statute governing tribal land and provision of safeguards in Schedule V Areas is: **Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation (LTR), 1959 (Regulation No:1 of 1959)** as amended in 1970, 1971 and 1978 and the Rules framed under this Regulation in 1969

In Telangana area of the State of Andhra Pradesh, prior to the Regulation and pursuant to Part B State Regulation in Fifth Schedule, the AP Tribal Area Regulation, III of 1359 F promulgated by the Nizam, as Raj Pramukh, of Hyderabad was in effect.

The Regulation came into force on March 4, 1959 in Andhra Pradesh area and in Telangana area with effect from December 1, 1963. Prior to this, the law in Telangana area was in operation prohibiting any transfer of agricultural lands without prior permission. The non-tribals in the Schedule V Area were presumed to have acquired title from tribals unless they are able to prove to the contrary that their possession of properties in the Agency tracts was lawfully acquired.

Situation on the Ground

However, with merger with Andhra there was a considerable influx of "Andhra settlers" from high-density populated areas into low-density populated regions, especially the tribal areas. Since most of the tribal areas were in the Godavari river valley and were very fertile, the influx from the Coastal Andhra areas proceeded upwards along the river in the Telengana districts of Khammam, Warangal and Karimnagar. The Coastal Andhra "settlers" were attracted by the black cotton soils with potential to grow cotton, chilli, tobacco and other cash crops in the cultivation of which they had considerable experience and for which there was a ready commercial market in the Coastal Andhra

The influx became widespread and, finally, with the intervention of the Supreme Court in the 1995 Samata judgment, the situation needed assessment. This three-bench Samata judgment cleared all legal controversy regarding the protection of tribal land and removed any ambiguity that governments had exploited earlier.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh (GoAP), commissioned J.M.Girgliani IAS (retd.) to study the issue of Telengana Tribal Land rights. He presented the "Report of Tribal Land issues in the Telengana Area". This report is dated August 16, 2005.

It indicated widespread violations of tribal rights, which had been guaranteed by the Constitution and were supposed to be monitored by the Governor of the State (who has to submit an Annual Report to the President on Schedule V Areas). These violations have been going on for at least 53 years and largely by "settlers" from outside the region

As can be seen the LTR was issued in 1959 just after the merger of the Telengana with Andhra State with the avowed purpose of protecting Telengana tribal rights from the expected influx of settlers from the Andhra area. However, it will be noted that the Rules, which are the operative part of any statute, were not issued till 1969 - ten years after the basic law – and mainly due to the Telengana Agitation of that year! The Government issued GO Ms 971, dated 7.10.69, which prohibited assignment of Government Land in Scheduled Areas to non-tribals.

Subsequent to this, to favor non-tribals and in relaxation of GO Ms 971, three other Government Orders were issued, which in due course were struck down by the High Court as *ultra vires* the Constitution. This indicates the motives behind the issuance of the LTR, the non-issuance of operative Rules, the subsequent ameliorative GO's and violations despite these Rules and Regulations as detailed below from extracts of the Telengana Tribal Lands report

Main Points

1. The Report states (p.5) "In Govindrao Mandal, in almost all the villages, the land is under cultivation by non-tribals.75% of the population is also non-tribal. Most of the non-tribals are not originally from these villages but are 'settlers' from Coastal districts. It is stated that the process started before the 1950's....The major thrust of infiltration and "detrribalisation" has been during the last ten years. This influx of non-tribals has resulted in tribals leaving these villages...the land occupied by the non-tribals are not only patta lands but also government lands"

2. It further states (p.8) that: “ Like Govindrao Mandal, in Mulug Mandal there is an influx of “settlers”, on the invitation of non-tribals who are originally not inhabitants of this Mandal. The influx is still continuing. A large extent of the land occupied by non-tribal ‘settlers’ is government land. They are not evicted; but pattas have not been granted either to them or to tribals. There are 2,000 acres of Land Ceiling surplus land of which 1,200 odd acres are under occupation of non-tribals. The restoration orders have been issued under LTR for 350 acres. The orders are not being implemented since 1980 due to ”non-tribal resistance””
3. Again (p.10), it states: “In Narsingpet Mandal, one of the Scheduled villages has 2400 acres of Government land of which 1700 acres are assigned to tribals as well as non-tribals. Lambadas and non-tribals have come to the village in large numbers. The Koyas have therefore vacated the village. ...The assignment of government land to the extent of 1,700 acres to non-tribals is in violation of the LTR”
4. It details (p. 15) the extent to which non-tribal settlers will go to protect their illegal possession of tribal land: “In Kothaguda Village there are 21,000 acres (worth about Rs 110 cores ate the minimum value of Rs 50,000 (per acre) of Billa number lands. A Billa number is a large part of surveyed land that has been left without numbering for whatever reason mainly because at the time of the survey, it was not cultivated though cultivable. In course of time, these unnumbered surveyed lands got occupied by enterprising non-tribals, who brought them under the plough or acquired them informally from tribals, who had started cultivating them. In 1993, the land was surveyed by Assistant Director, Palvancha. In 2002, the MRO’s office was blasted and the Survey records were destroyed. “
5. Also: “In Medapllai Village, the Billa no: is 536 acres. Of these 50% Maktadar’s portion admeasuring 180 acres was declared as surplus land under the Land ceiling Act. Out of these 90 acres are under submersion and another 90 acres under non-tribal occupation, the Village has no tribal population. (p.15)
6. Bhadrachalam village was notified under Schedule V. It later became a municipality. However, the Schedule V status does not alter because of this change as Schedule V specifically carefully excluded Hyderabad as well as major Panchayat towns for its ambit. On page 31 the report states: “ ..a staggering Rs 10,000 crores of worth of government and tribal lands are in the hands of non-tribals in the town for nothing except what may be called authorities turning the Nelson’s eye for over one or two decades” (p.31)

7. Apart for the lands of owned by tribals and government, even sacred temple lands – that too, of a great temple like Bhadrachalam, were not left alone. The Report states:

“ As mentioned above, the current market value of land in Bhadrachalam town is around Rs 4000 per sq yard. ...**the total value of the Endowments lands under encroachment and held in violation of the LTR can thus be estimated at Rs 500-1000 crores , by conservative estimates**(emphasis in original). (p.33)

8. The Government issued GO Ms 971, dated 7.10.69, which prohibited assignment of Government Land in Scheduled Areas to non-tribals. Thereafter, it issued a three GO's: GO. Ms 41 Revenue dated 12.10.71; GO Ms. 951 dated 4.12.1974 and GO MS 129, dated 13.08.79, which amended the GO MS 971 and, according to the Report “ which were intended to benefit non-tribals and protect them against the operation of the LTR.” (p.40).
9. “The High Court struck down these GO's, but in spite of these clear judgments striking down ALL these three GO's, strangely in all the Mandals of all the three districts , Warangal, Karimnagar and Adilabad, certain lands occupied by non-tribals were identified under GO Ms 41 and excluded from any action for eviction. There is no clear explanation as to why protection was given to the non-tribals under GO Ms 41 Revenue alone, among all the other GO's struck down by the High Court....When a GO is struck down by the High Court , it becomes in operative, null and void and it cannot be treated as valid....Whether it indicates a deliberate conspiracy or collective naivety or a convenient alibi to avoid taking action, or, to be charitable compassion for the poor occupants (presuming that they are poor which is doubtful. They are powerful), or that eviction may have the unpredictable fall out for the concerned officials, it is totally indefensible.” (p.41) (emphasis in original)

To sum up, the Report stated (page 23):

“Incredibly vast areas, in some case while villages and at least one whole Mandal and 70% of the lands in another Mandal are under occupation by non-tribals. If that had been the position 50 years ago, the villages would not have found place in Schedule V, inclusion in which is based on tribal population and land under their occupation. Their protection in their habitat and protection of their occupation is the very raison d’etre of Schedule V. Inclusion of an area under Schedule V therefore is by itself sufficient evidence that most of the land is under tribal occupation. That much of it has gone into the hands of non-tribals shows that it has passed off illegally. The presumption in the LTR to this effect is also based on this premise. In this context, to assume that the lands held by the non-tribals are under 50 year old pattas or pre-1970 of pre-1959 pattas is a

rationalization of the administrative system's incapacity to cope with the magnitude of the problem, of putting every case under scrutiny under LTR."

Conclusion

And the Report goes on to detail case after case in Adilabad, Warangal and Khammam districts, which make for painful and sad reading. This will be obvious by just reading the above extracts, and confirmed by a reading of the whole 80-page report.

Yet the SriKrishna Committee, who has access to this extraordinary report as well as submissions based on it, has chosen to ignore the whole sorry situation of tribal dispossession. It dealt with the Tribal issue as a demand for a Tribal state ("Manya seema" or a Dandakaranya State") based on deprivation of their culture, habits, languages, jobs and sentiment (but not land). This was aimed at countering the issue of the Telengana State issue. The tribal state contemplated by some of the tribal leaders envisages a state carved out of nearly three or four states and has no relevance to the deprivation of the Telengana tribal land by the "Andhra settler" influx.

SKC was criminally remiss in ignoring what "Andhra settlers" had done to the tribals of Telengana. Instead SKC said in case Telengana state is formed, "settlers" property should be protected. This means that according to SKC these illegal lands acquired from tribals the Telangana state should allow these lands to be retained by the non-tribals. All this shows how little application of mind SKC brought to the pressing problems of Telengana.

A separate Telengana State would be the main bulwark of the tribal population and would rectify and correct the injustices done to the tribal populations by the GoAP and "Andhra settlers".

Thus is a wonder that despite the facts SKC ignored the tribal land issue - it talked about everything except land! It concluded that: "Thus Telangana has a higher proportion of tribal communities and both Adivasi and other tribal groups have expressed strong opinions on the demand for Telangana."(p.372). But on the next pages it says: "As discussed in detail later in this section, Adivasis residing in districts of Telangana prefer to remain in united Andhra or have their own state of Manya Seema".(p.373). Each page seems to have been written by a different person!! The SKC Report is a confusion of a defense of vested interests of "Andhra settlers" by ill-organized minds and ill-intentioned persons

Part VII : SRIKRISHNA COMMITTEE IGNORES TELANGANA LANDLESS LABOURERS

The Srikrishna Committee while speaking about the poorest of the poorer - the landless agricultural laborers - in Telangana - says the following:

On the other hand, the Telangana region is **experiencing a considerable erosion of relative income amongst the relatively poorer sections**, although the richest seem to have gained during the reference period. (p.107)

This analysis provides credence to the fact that **the most of the deprived communities in Telangana are facing hardship**. (p.108)

Such deepening inequities in Telangana can not only sustain the separatist agitation but it can also carry it further and increase its intensity. (p.119)

But, what is revealing is the fact that **considerably larger proportions have reported themselves as agricultural labourers in Telangana which has increased from 38% to 47%**, and in Rayalaseema this share has increased from 24% to 39%. In coastal Andhra region, the share of agricultural labour has increased only by about one percent. (p.101)

While the farmers in all regions have shown stable income or income which has hardly changed; **the real income of the agricultural wage labour has declined considerably in Telangana**, whereas it has increased considerably in coastal Andhra region (See Figure 2.39). (p.108)

However, while it refers one to charts etc, it does not deal in the text with the real figures – instead it hides them in the Appendix Volume. Here they are:

In Volume 2, Appendix Table 2-1 on page 121 , SKC the rural population in Telangana is 18.2 lakhs, in Rayalaseema 9 .0 lakhs and in Coastal Andhra 21.4 lakhs. Actually the figures are wrong- SKC missed decimal place! They are 182 lakhs for Telangana, 90 lakhs for Rayalaseema and 214 lakhs for Coastal Andhra- small mistake!!! Thus 47% of the rural population being agricultural laborers in Telangana means that nearly 85.5 lakhs are in this category. SKC admits that the **“real income of the agricultural wage labour has declined considerably in Telangana”** and refers us to another chart.

This Chart when closely examined indicates that in the decade between 1993-94 and 2004-05 this group of Telangana people (nearly 90 lakhs persons) **has seen a DECLINE of 35.9% in their income!!**

Over the same period, the 42.7 lakhs of the Rayalaseema group have suffered a real income decline of ONLY 6.7%. Wonder of wonders is that the same group in the Coastal Andhra over the same period – no figures are given by SKC for their numbers – but SKC says has ONLY increased by ONE percent and the real income of the whole group has INCREASED by a phenomenal 42.2%!!!

So while real income (i.e., purchasing power) of Telengana's worst placed economic group amounting to nearly ten million persons fell by 36% that of the same group over the same time in Coastal Andhra ROSE by 42%. Even trying to discount the deprivation in Telengana by comparing it with Rayalaseema (the SKC's standard method) does not work as the decline in Rayalaseema is one-fifth of that in Telengana

How does SKC explain it? They avoid it altogether and tell us stories of Telengana region GDP being great (Appendix 2.4 shows increases between 1993-94 and 2000-01 of 38%!), that the region is not backward (despite Government of India identifying 9 of the 10 Telangana districts for relief through the Backward Region Grants), irrigation increase is "whooping" (despite the fact that government irrigation acreage fell by 11 lakh acres) and crop productivity is as high or higher than in Andhra or Rayalaseema. Go tell all this to the ten million agricultural laborers whose real income fell by a third while their Andhra cousins saw an increase of 42%. No wonder their children are in revolt and their parents are solidly behind them and the cause for a Telangana state.

Who did SKC talk to when they wandered around Telangana? Not, apparently to landless agricultural laborers.

Data Sought and Hidden

As reported in the Deccan Chronicle on April 24th, 2010 that:

The committee sought the district-wise data of fund flow and expenditure pattern since inception of Andhra Pradesh in 1956. The state officials, however, offered data pertaining to last 10-12 years. Incidentally, the successive governments have been spending funds in Telangana region higher than the two other regions in the past 15 years in view of the revival of the T struggle.

"The Accountant General and State treasury officials informed the member that the data could be available from the year of computerisation 10-12 years ago," a senior official said. Dr Shareef, however, wanted the officials to give as much data as possible and make extra efforts to collect old data.

Dr Shareef handed over a seven-page proforma seeking details of district-wise expenditure in social sector, land development, irrigation, pachayats

and urban development, plan and non-plan expenditure, revenue from taxes, land revenue, central grants and state government and cultivable area.

With the bifurcation issue largely revolving around the state capital, the panel wanted the data of Hyderabad to be separated in the revenue and expenditure (<http://www.deccanchronicle.com/hyderabad/srikrishna-panel-fails-get-economic-data-767>)

Where is this data and why did SKC not use or even refer to it after it was so laboriously collected over nine months by the State Government through its District Pay and Accounts Offices which maintain a manual record for the last 54 years expenditure and revenue?

Missing Chapter

In the SKC Main Report, Chapter 8, entitled “Law and Order and Internal Security Dimensions” exists on only one page – page 423. That says just this:

8.1.01 During the Committee’s tenure, immediate law and order problems, and also the long-term internal security implications, including the growth of Maoist/Naxal activities were examined. These apprehensions had been expressed in the memoranda submitted by the Political Parties and various other groups, and also during interactions with different stake holders at the State level meetings as well as when the Committee visited the districts and villages.

Besides, the Member Secretary had one to one discussions on this subject with senior officers of the State Government, Police Department and local administration (in seventeen districts). Inputs were also obtained from various other sources. A note on the above covering all aspects has **been prepared and is being submitted to the Ministry of Home Affairs in a separate cover** along with this Report. The Committee has kept these dimensions in view while discussing various options included in Chapter 9 of the Report, i.e., “The Way Forward”(p.423) (emphasis mine).

No only does the Member Secretary who was a former Home Secretary of Government of India has confidential conversations outside the purview of the Committee with personnel in 17 districts – leaving out 6 other (for what reasons?), but the Committee admits to this highly irregular and improper conduct of the Member Secretary. And to compound it this, the entire Chapter, obviously drafted by the same Member Secretary, is made secret and given separately to the Ministry of Home Affairs. This also is openly admitted! What kind of behavior is this of a Committee presided over a former Supreme Court Judge. The Report therefore – apart from all the mistakes, omissions,

commissions is faulty on this ground alone and should be dismissed as irregular and junked as a waste of public funds and time.

Main Conclusion

Whatever the reasons why SKC has not considered important aspects of the Telengana case, the Report has become controversial as it is deeply flawed and hence treated with suspicion by the Telengana people . SKC has worked on the principle enunciated by the Latin adage *supressio veri; suggestio falsi* – suppress truth and suggest falsity.

Fundamentally, It would seem that SKC was asked to drag on the whole exercise; hope against hope that like the times past in a year, Telengana would “slowly” subside like a soda water (champagne?) as when uncorked would become flat and uninteresting. This time it did not work as all the people were involved and stood firm. In the Sri Krishna *tulabharam*, the weight of Satyabhama’s (Andhra) gold will be countered by Rukmini’s (Telangana) *tulasi* leaf. As long as the villages stay firm, the entire world cannot deny the statehood they so passionately want regardless of it being second best or no best. For them it is the best. That should do!