

State Reorganisation Bill Has Set a Booby Trap for Telangana

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A deeprooted and evil conspiracy is embedded in the Telangana bill. While dividing the state, the bill seeks to preserve the unity of many sectors for common or central control. In the joy of winning statehood, Telangana politicians may miss the implications.

First, the bill proposes a common high court. It is feared that every Telangana government order, posting, transfer or land litigation will be challenged, resulting in complications and even tually decided on grounds that will have to be challenged in the Supreme Court. As is evident, the High Court today has an overwhelming majority of judges, lawyers and officials from Seemandhra. In these circumstances, it has become just and necessary to constitute a separate high court for the State of Telangana.

Second, the bill grants government employees the option of serving in either of the successor states. A vast majority of them are Seemandhra natives and many have been irregularly appointed in Telangana in violation of the Presidential Order and GO 610. Allowing the option means the Telangana government will be run by Seemandhra natives with no love for the state. Their allocation should be based their nativity and they should serve their own state.

Third, the bill negates Telangana its upper riverine advantage by transferring control of rivers to river boards, under the Central control. On the Godavari, this will not affect Telangana's barrage and lift projects. On the Krishna, Telangana will have to fight for every tmc of water as its allocation by Bachawat has been diverted to Seemandhra.

Fourth, APGenco assets are divided, but not the corporation itself. Thus, the allocation of power generated will be controlled by Seemandhra power engineers. APGENCO must be liquidated and two new corporations should get plants based on location, and employees based on their nativity. The PPAs with the Seemandhra private power plants producing expensive power are to be maintained for all time. The Telangana demand limits their extension to three years.

Fifth, the APSRTC must also be dissolved and two new corporations inherit the assets in each successor state, and employees on the basis of their nativity. These principles must be extended to all AP state corporations, including APIIC which holds vast lands in Telangana. The bill fortunately allocates Singareni Collieries to Telangana. However, Singareni's coal allocations to Seemandhra power plants are to continue forever. The Telangana demand limits these to three years only.

Sixth and most important, the Seemandhra Assembly will be elected in June 2014 and will form a government. But no Telangana Assembly will be elected and therefore, there will not be a Telangana government. For, the bill leaves the Telangana Assembly constituencies to be notified by the Election Commission. This is due to the dangerous scheme of expanding the Telangana Assembly to 153 MLAs. The delimitation of these constituencies will take nine months or more. That is why the bill provided only for a "Provisional Telangana Legislative Assembly" of 119 existing members, whose term will expire in June. After that Telangana will have President's Rule.

Seventh, the bill prescribes a common Governor. Under the President's Rule, Telangana negotiations with Seemandhra can be carried out by our half Governor. He will be directed by the Union Government and be accountable only to Parliament, not to the Telangana people. The **Seemandhra lobby, the second most powerful in the country**, will play its usual role. Our half governor is empowered by the bill to allocate government accommodation in Hyderabad. In the absence of a Telangana Assembly and popular government, he may give the Assembly building to Seemandhra Assembly, the Secretariat to Seemandhra Ministers and the CM's official residence to the Seemandhra CM. Seemandhra ministers and MLAs can have their usual accommodation and Telangana elected officials will have to vacate their residences when their term expires. All this in Telangana's own capital!!

Eighth and the worst of all, our half governor will preside over allocation of river waters, power, government officials and division of assets and liabilities, state corporations etc. The Telangana Secretariat, police, collectors and state corporations will be answerable to him, He may even conclude negotiations over Polavaram and will file Telangana's case before Brijesh Kumar Tribunal. By 2015, all Telangana issues will be solved in the absence of representative and popular Telangana government to Seemandhra advantage.

After the Assembly elections, 153 Telangana MLAs, ministers and the CM can wonder why they have no money, no coal, no power, no water and no loyal employees. Is this what the Telangana state is to be desolate, deprived, betrayed, bankrupt and without honour? Is this what 630 youths committed suicide for? A ruined state, all for an extra 34 MLAs. It will be worse than Rayala-Telangana, another conspiracy.

Telangana will be a plentiful, prosperous, peaceful state, but not with bill as it stands now. The only recourse is for Parliament to (1) make changes in the bill that all Telangana MLAs have already asked for in writing, and (2) remove the “provisional” part of the Telangana Legislative Assembly, retaining the 119 constituencies, and have its election in June. If Telangana politicians want 34 (or 51 or 68) more MLA’s they should decide that after the new Assembly is elected, but not now, because they will fall into a trap set for the new state and its people. There is an old Greek saying: “The strong do as they can and the weak suffer what they must.” Telangana people must not be weak or suffer any longer. They have trusted too many, too much and for far too long. Enough is enough!

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