

Demand of Small States in India: A Comparative Study of Telangana and Vidharbha.

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Abstract

Due to the declaration by UPA government on 31st July, 2013 about the division of Andhra Pradesh and formation of Telangana as an independent state, the demands for the small states, have seemed from many large state in India.

Telangana was established as an independent state on 2nd June,2014.The issue of demand for Vidharbha state was not raised at that time or after that BJP is in power at the Central and it has been motivating for the making of small states. But the demand of separate Vidhrbha state hasn't been paid proper attention in the term of young Chief Minister Mr. Devendra Fadanvis.The present article discusses some important following issues regarding how Telangana could become an independent state and why Vidhrbha can not become an independent state.

Keywords:

Formation, Agreement, Cultural differences, Organization, Discrimination, Movement, Political Convenience, Leadership, Sub region, Power, bilinguals

1) Basic trends at the time of establishment of new state:-

Telangana is a Telagu speaking region. But at the time of establishment of the state there was no administrative connection between Andhra and it. Before independence, this region was under the control of Nizam of Hydrabad. Telangana has become a part of Andhra Pradesh as per the linguistic restructuring of the states. Still there was a demand of separate Telangana.

At the time of formation of Andhra Pradesh, an agreement was signed in which it was decided that the CM and the deputy CM should be from Telangana. But the 'Gentleman's Agreement', as it was called at that time, was not followed. It was one of the reason's for the people from Telangana to feel injustice for them. The education institutions like university in Hydrabad have become the centers of keeping this issue burning for all the time. University and Students' protests have played the vital role in the demand for independent Telangana, but not in case of Vidharbha.

Telangana couldn't adjust completely with Andhra Pradesh.The leaders of Andhra Pradesh also haven't taken such stands. At the time formation of Andhra Pradesh, Pandit Jawarlal Nehru had said that being together is like a marriage , in which we have to understand each other inspite of good or bad things. We shouldn't impose the things on each other .But in reality this expectation was not followed. It was tried to change the eating habits of Telangana people. In Telangana , Jowar and Bajra were the main food grains in their food culture. But the government provided them rice in ration instead of Jowar and Bajra.

The similar condition can be seen in other parts of Maharashtra. Though the language of both region is the same but there is a cultural differences between them. According to some scholars, there are cultural,social and administrative differences between these regions. These differences can be seen in their dialects and agricultural revenue system.

At the time of creation of central province C.P. and Berrar ,it was demanded that Nagpur should be created as an independent state by including 8 districts of Maharashtra. A resolution proposed by Barrister Ramrao Deshmukh on 1st November,1938,was passed in the Vidhansabha for creation of Vidhrbha state. 'Mahavidarbha Sabha' was also established under the leadership of Barrister Deshmukh on 18th August 1940.

2) First Phase of the Protest:

A protest from the students of Usmania University against the discrimination in the government sector jobs. This protest was spread in other parts of the state . Telangana Praja Samiti was established in 1969. The basis objective behind the establishment was formation of Telangana as an independent state. The committee has raised a big protest for the same purpose.

In the elections of 1971, Telangana Praja Samiti won 10 seats out of 14.In the elections of 1957 in Vidarbha, 'Nag-Vidarbha Andolan Samiti' has thought independently but they had to accept the defeat. Mr.Jambuvantrao Dhote has made the agitation more aggressive during the period of 1970-85. He worked hard to take that protest in every corner of Vidarbha. This was resulted into the victory of 12 MLAs of Vidhrbha Rajya Samiti in the elections.

3) Telangana,Vidarbha and Indira Gandhi's Role:

The Protest by Telangana Praja Samiti in 1969 was turned violent 369 people were killed in it by the police. In the formation of any new state, the roles of central government and protest play the vital role of PM Pandit Nehru was very important. Then in 1969,Indira Gandhi's ,in rejecting Telangana as an independent state, was a crucial one as the PM of India when they found Indira Gandhi's stand unfavourable for them, Telangana Praja Samiti was emerged into the Congress Party. It is observed in reference with Indira Gandhi's power politics to groupism ,that the proponents of Vidhrbha like Mr.Nasikarao Tiprude, Vasantrao Sathe

Jambuvantrao Dhote were used as puppets. Therefore, the protest for Vidrabha was becalmed. When Indira Gandhi offered a seat to Jambuvantrao Dhote, he entered into the Congress party. As a result of it, protest for Vidhrbha state was disarmed.

4) Roles of leaders in the State:-

Regarding the stands of leader about separation of Vidhrbha and Telangana movements, it was observed that except the leaders like K. Chandrashekhr Rao, no other leaders were consistent in their stands on the above issue.

Telangana Praja Samiti was established in 1969 under the leadership of Dr. Chenna Reddy. Then Dr.Chenna Reddy himself entered into the Congress party and Telengana Praja Samiti was merged in Congress party. In July 2008, Mr.Devendra Gaud and Peduri Reddy resigned from Telagu Desam Party and establish Nav Telengana Praja Party (NTPP). Actor Chiranjivee established Praja Rajya Party (PRP) and gave support to the formation of Telangana. Later NTPP was merged into PRP and then PRP was assimilated in Congress. In 2009 Chandrababu Naidu and his party supported Telangana and did alliance with 'Telangana Rashtra Samiti' of Chandrashekhar Rao. But after the announcement of Hyderabad as the Capital of Telangana, Chandrababu and his Telagu Desam Party revoked their support for Telangana supported for Andhra Pradesh as a whole and independent state.

Barrister Ramrao Deshmukh with Bapuji Aane initiated the demand for independent Vidhrbha state. They have also signed Akola agreement. But at the time of Nagpur Agreement they become the proponents of united Maharashtra. Abasaheb Khedkar, well-known as Vidhrbha veer, and Jambuvantrao Dhote entered in Congress party in 1978.

Unlike Chandrashekhar Rao's sacrifices for Telangana as a leader, Vidhrbha couldn't get such leader. Abasaheb Khedkar and Madhusudan Vairale were on their proponents of Vidarbha. Later on they, with Marotrao Kannamwar, are seen supporting the united Maharashtra.

5) Political Parties, Emergence of Organisations and Movement for Independent States:

It is observed that in the movements for Vidhrbha and Telangana, various political parties and unions are created. Some of them have played important roles for some time, some are merged in the parties like Congress.

Telangana Praja Samiti was founded by former union minister Dr. Chenna Reddy to establish Telangana as a separate state. Telangana Praja Samiti won 10 seats out of 14 in 1971 elections. Yet it was not seen that prime minister is not willing to establish Telangana as an independent state. So Telangana Praja Samiti was merged in Congress. Devendra Gaud and Peduri Reddy resigned from 'Telagu Desam Party' and they established 'Nav Telangana Praja Party (NTTP)'. Film actor Chiranjivee supported Telangana state by establishing his party 'Prajarajym'. Later on NTTP was merged in 'Prajarajyam' and both were merged finally in Congress party.

As far as Vidhrbha is concerned Barrister Ramrao Deshmukh founded 'Mahavidarbha Sabha' on 18th August 1940.

'Nag-Vidarbha Andolan Samiti' fought 1957 Vidhan Sabha elections but it was defeated in it. 12 MLAs of 'Vidarbha Rajya Samiti' were elected under the leadership of Vidarbhaveer Jambuvantrao Dhote from 1970 to 1985. Former Deputy CM Nasikrao Tirpude founded 'Vidarbha Vikas Mahasabha'. 50 MLAs from all the parties of Vidhrbha formed 'Maji Amdar Vidhrbha Samiti' to compel the government to sanction the proposal of independent Vidhrbha in the Winter Session of parliament on 1st September, 2000. In line with the establishment of Chhattisgarh and Jarkhand, for awareness of people, Vidhrbha state determination Ralley was organized by Vidhrbha Rajya Sangharsh Samiti, Vidhrbha Rajya Gan Parishad and Vidhrbha Mukti Morcha. It was organized on 15th November, 2000. But it is a fact that Vidhrbha didn't have a party like 'Telangana Rashtra Samiti', which played a crucial role in formation of Telanganan as a separate State.

6) Views of Congress on Party Vidharbha and Telangana Movements:-

It is seen that the Congress Party has a negative attitude towards the movements for small states. It is proved from the point where Congress offered the seats and preference to the leaders who were participants in the movements for separate Vidhrbha and Telangana, who resigned from their posts. It was an attempt to becalm them and their efforts for separate small states.

'Telangana Praja Samiti' was the first party in Talangana which was merged in Congress. Now Talangana Praja Paksha and Prajarajyam Paksha were assimilated in Congress party. Chiranjivee, the leader of Prajarajym was given a seat in central ministry in the same way, Dr. Chenna Reddy was also given important department in the ministry.

After 1957 elections in Vidarbha, many MLAs submitted their resignations for the demand of an independent Vidarbha. Marotrao Kannamvar supported his MLAs for the save of Congress when Pandit Nehru convinced him. Later on Kannamvar was elected as the Chief Minister and Deputy CM of Maharashtra. Vidarbhaveer Jambuvantrao Dhote was offered at seat in Loksabha and his party forward block was also merged in Congress Party.

7) Equivocal Stands of the Leaders:-

Supporters of Vidhrbha are always taking equivocal stands about Vidarbha. Not a single leader was firm on his stand when Mumbai was established as a bilingual state, some leader took part in the movement for united Maharashtra. They ignored the demand for separate Vidarbha. Some leaders preferred post of Ministers in the ruling parties based on the anticipated possibilities of success and failure in elections. The same thing happened in Telangana but K. Chandrashekhar Rao took the firm stand.

8) Protest for Independent State for Political Convenience:

The opposition party always tries to entrap the ruling party by their unexpected demands. In 2001, the then opposition leader of Loksabha Mrs. Sonia Gandhi put forward her demand for an independent Telangana through a letter written to the then Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Chandrababu Naidu from Andhra Pradesh was active in politics at the national level. He was playing an important role in the Politics. Congress was not in power in Andhra Pradesh at that time. This was one of the basic reasons behind the demand for Telangana State. In fact, before Vajpayee government not only in Andhra but also in other states of India, Congress was the ruling party. During this period, the issue of separate Telangana was neglected by the Congress Party. But when the Congress Party lost the power, congress remembered it. The establishment of Telangana Rashtra Samiti,

separation Chandrashekhar Rao and Chandrababu on Telangana issue and letter from Congress, all these are issues from the year 2001. It means, as far as Congress Party is concerned, Telangana can be considered for political convenience for it.

It was the same condition for Vidarbha. In 1995, in order to entangle/ entrap the government leaders from Congress used the weapon of demand of separation of Vidharbha from Maharashtra.

In the Vajpayee government, the Congress leaders met Vajpayee and demanded for an independent Vidarbha. It is clear that, congress leaders demanded Vidarbha, though they don't belong to the same state. They did for political convenience.

9) Role of the Leadership: Resignation and Fasting:-

100 MLAs from Andhra Pradesh Vidhansabha resigned for the demand for an independent Telangana state. Against the delay in the creation of Telangana State, 12 out of 15 ministers, 13 out of 17 members of Lok Sabha, 01 member of Rajyasabha and 20 members of Vidhan Parishad have resigned for the same demand. It is not seen that such a big number of leaders have resigned for the demand of Vidharbha.

On 29th Nov. 2009 T.R.S.(Telangana Rashtriya Samiti) President K. Chandrashekhar Rao started the fasting till death for the demand of bill for Telangana. After eleven days of fasting his health was worsened. As a result, the government took notice of all these events declared, on 9 Dec., 2009, that the process of formation Telangana state will be started. On the contrary, there was no such strong leadership and sacrifice for Vidharbha in Maharashtra.

For an independent Vidharbha, there was mere protest. It was not a movement. The movements should be consistent. The protest are not permanent. If we considered Vidarbha, the protest doesn't seem consistent and regular. According to Dr. Shripad Joshi, people from all walks of life should actively participate in Vidharbha Movements. It should be thoughtfully supported by the followers from all fields. It should be well- planned and long- term. The strong will power of the people should pressurise the government to take the positive decision.

Trustworthiness of Leadership in Vidarbha:- It is not appropriate to say that if the people want resigns, we shall resign. The leaders must have commitment to the public. Such kind of language cause the trust to be broken.

10) Ubiquity of Public Mass Protests:-

There was the widespread protest or agitation for Telangana. The people from Telangana region spontaneously supported Chandrashekhar Rao during his fasting. There was bandh on 6th and 7th December, 2009. Many students' unions, labour unions, etc, took part in the bandh. Later, on 17th February, 2011, the government employees from Telangana started the non- cooperation movement. It was going on for 16 days, in which 16 lakhs employees had participated. It caused nearly Rs.100 Crore loss of the govt. Similarly, in September, due to such movement and strike the government had to bear the loss of Rs.14000 Crore In 25 days.

Telangana Sanyukt Kruti Samiti organized a Million March on 10th March,2011 in Hyderabad. Before the March, the police have already arrested 10,000 activists. Still, 50 to 60 thousand people reached at the place of programme unknowingly.

T.R.S.(Telangana Rashtriya Samiti) has called a public meeting at Karimnagar on 12th sep., 2011. More than 10 lakh people were present and they actively participated in it. The people from all fields did the protests for Telangana on 13 sept., 2011. Especially government employees, lawyers, mine-workers, employees from Healthcare dept. etc. declared the strike for uncertain period. In some days, teachers, state transport employees, electricity board employee, some trust, cleaning workers etc. also participated in the strike. It caused the collapse in the administrative and legal work. Due to strike in Singare coal mine, there was a problem of electricity of South India. In whole Telangana region, national and state highways were blocked. Railways were blocked. Auto rikshaw unions also participated in the strike for Telangana. The strike was going on for 18 days. As a result of it, a serious electricity problem was created. The Telangana March was organized on 30 sept.,2012. Two lakh people participated in it. All this type of protest resulted positively into the declaration of separate Telangana state by Congress Party on 30th July 2013.

In Maharashtra, such widespread participation and agitation for Vidharbha is not seen.

11) Accute Struggle in Sub Regions:-

Accute Struggle for Telangana has been one of the main features of politics in Andhra Pradesh. Border region and Telangana had intense opposition and disbelief for each other. It is not seen in Maharashtra between Vidharbha and other regions.

12) Role of Major Political Parties on Independent Vidharbha:-

Congress Party, Nationalist Congress Party, BJP, Shivsena, Maharashtra Nav Nirman Sena are major political parties in Maharashtra. These parties don't have similar views regarding an independent Vidharbha State. Congress Leaders from Vidharbha only think about Vidharbha when they are not in power. But it can be seen that the Congress Party didn't take a firm stand on this issue at central level. In 2004 Congress has declare to appoint the second state restructuring commission but it was not implemented practically. At the State level, the party has separate congress samiti for Mumbai city, but it is not for Vidarbha. The Congress party didn't fight election on this issue. It wasn't also the issue for election propaganda. The Congress Party has raised this issue in front of the ruling party, especially when they are opposition party. BJP is seen to be in favor of small states but it also didn't pay proper attention at the issue of Vidharbha in NDA government. It was because the other ruling party, Shivsena always supported united Maharashtra and therefore the NDA government was not ready to take any risk and BJP had certain limitations in taking decision on independent Vidarbha.

Shivsena and Maharashtra Nav-Nirman Sena don't support the separate Vidharbha state. Yet people from Vidharbha didn't reject them. Specially, Shivsena has got seats from Vidharbha in Lok Sabha and Vidhansabha elections.MNS also has got success at the local level. On this Jambuvantrao pessimistically said that what is need of Vidharbha state, if the parties like Shivsena and MNS, which opposed independent Vidarbha, are getting their candidates elected from the same region.

After the Lok Sabha election, BJP leaders took the defensive stand on Vidharbha issue. The pointed towards the proper time for it to discuss on it. But the question is when that proper time will be? Presently BJP has clear majority of their own. They have strong leadership as a PM. Therefore, the followers of Vidharbha can have some hopes for separate Vidarbha.

Though the condition is favorable, some important issue should not be ignored. There is a main competition for power between BJP and Congress. As far as other regions of Maharashtra are concerned, the roles of NCP in western Maharashtra and Shivsena in Marathwada are important. Vidhrbha its great share in the success of BJP or congress in Maharashtra. So, in such condition, both these parties will not afford to lose such regions which are at the base of their success. In Rajiv Gandhi's term as PM a report of small states was submitted to him. It was prepared by P.A.Sangma there was the recommendation of Vidhrbha and Telangana as independent states. But the leaders from Vidhrbha were doubtful of losing the proper after the separation of Vidarbha, therefore this issue was closed by them. In 1957 elections, the committee got victory on the issue of united Maharashtra still Vidhrbha people didn't reject Congress Party. It should be remembered here that congress had a great of the bilinguals to gain power. It also cannot be denied that BJP has forgotten the same thing about Vidarbha.

Vidarbha, Shivsena and 'Swatantra Bharat Paksha Farmers' union, led by Sharad Joshi, established 'Swatantra Bharat Paksha'. This party was a part of alliance. Sharad Joshi became a member of Rajyasabha because of the support by Shivsena. According Sharad Joshi, the districts from Vidhrbha were not the part of Maharashtra. Historically, Vidhrbha has its independent existence. It was earlier known as Berrar, which was on lease under the control of the British. It was taken from Nizam of Hyderabad. After the independence, people from Berrar were not ready to go back to Nizam. At this point of time, the voice was raised for an independent Vidhrbha for the first time. The followers of Shivsena have also supported Vidarbha. Therefore, leaders from Shivsena can be convinced on the demand for an independent Vidhrbha state.

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