

TELANGANA language n culture

Premeditated Discrimination and Degradation in Unified State of Andhra Pradesh

1.1 Introduction:

Even after 54 years of geographical merger of two states (Andhra and Hyderabad States), both regions have not been completely integrated. There is vast divisiveness in terms of emotions, language, literature and culture of both the regions.

As we trace the entire 3000 years of history of Telugu speaking people, it is very clearly found that only for three to four hundred years, both Telangana and Andhra regions were under the rule of a single kingdom. Due to the fact that these regions were never together under one kingdom and ruled by different kings and kingdoms, both the regions of Telangana and Andhra have developed distinctly different thoughts, experiences, languages, literature, culture and its overall identity.

In the unified state of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana language, literature, history and culture are being subjected to massive discrimination and degradation. While both the regions were merged due to linguistic factors, unfortunately, even in the context of language, there was no unified feeling among the people of both the regions.

The Andhra leaders, who led the government of AP, over the years, have maliciously removed the Telangana language, literature, culture and history from our education so as to enslave the minds of Telangana People. Further, they discredited Telangana literature and also made an effort to devastate the history and cultural identity of Telangana and there by ascertained the political and economic control on the people of Telangana.

In the unified state of Andhra Pradesh, every government failed to extend any form of justice to the people of Telangana. Following description will throw some light on the issues of discrimination and degradation of Telangana language, literature, history and culture.

1.2 Discrimination towards Telangana Language:

a) The so called literary experts of Andhra region have unilaterally claimed their language, i.e. Andhra language, as Standard Language and condemned the Telangana language as an Ordinary Dialect. So called Standard Language, claimed by Andhra experts, is actually a dialect that too spoken only in two districts, while Telangana Language that is spoken in more than nine districts is degraded as a mere dialect and causing serious humiliation to people of Telangana.

b) Text books, for schools and colleges, published by government are completely written in Andhra Language and not even a single word of Telangana language is used in these text books. If any students write their examinations in Telangana language, students are deprived of their due share of marks. Hence, both the students and teachers of Telangana are subjected to unnecessary additional effort to learn the others language i.e., Andhra language.

c) While speaking in Telugu, if there is a usage of Sanskrit and English words, it is projected as a great achievement. However, if there is a sparing usage of Urdu words, it is ridiculed as "Thourakyandhram" or Thuraka Telugu" (Thuraka means Muslims, which means Muslim Telugu).

d) Telugu film industry, largely promoted by Andhra Capitalists, Writers, Actors, Directors, is immensely humiliating the people of Telangana by characterizing Telangana language as an exclusive language for villains and comedians.

e) In the name of entertainment, Telangana Language and culture is poorly projected by private and government TV channels and Radio channels,.

f) In most of the films and other programs, characters of Telangana leaders and their Telangana Language are shown as laughing stocks demeaning the stature of Telangana Leaders. Former Chief Minister Sri T Anjaiah, a Telangana leader was subjected to such a serious embarrassment continuously by one of the news papers.

g) Unfortunately, Government never encouraged and rewarded Telangana writers to promote Telangana Language.

1.3 Neglect of Telangana History:

a) Government has not made significant efforts to take up excavations to explore the Telangana history, heritage, culture and the archeological monuments of Shatavahana dynasty.

b) Despite uncovering few historical and archeological monuments in Telangana Region, every effort was made to suppress the history and heritage of Telangana and only projected the history of Andhra region..

c) For example, in the year 1942, during the regime of Nizam, excavations were taken up in Kondapuram, Medak District and discovered the historical evidences such as the signs of Buddhism, coins, utensils etc. But, ironically, even after sixty years, these excavations are not completed. Whatever the uncovered, historical evidences and monuments, are not properly protected in a museum. Andhra officers, who are made responsible for excavations, are openly shifting the historical evidences and monuments to Amaravathi, Guntur district and there is none to curtail such a fraud.

d) Kotilingala in Karimnagar district was the capital city for Shatavahana dynasty. During the year 1970-74, excavations were held in Kotilingala and Doolikatta and uncovered a lot of historical evidences and archeological monuments. Unfortunately, in spite of repeated appeals, these excavations were stopped with a lame excuse of lack of funds.

e) Neither Government of AP nor Tourism Corporation made sincere efforts to protect the rich heritage and culture of Telangana. Several historical Telangana monuments such as forts, buildings, temples are being neglected by government. For example, there is no action taken by the police and archeological department, when the main doors of Tekmal and Medak forts are stolen by miscreants.

f) Government is immune to several representations to convert the forts of Yeligandula, Bhongir, Ramgiri, Medak, and Nizamabad into tourism centers. Historical temples such as Ramappa Temple, 1000 pillar temple. Keesara are neglected by government not being actively renovated and unfortunately they are on the verge of total deterioration.

g) Government, deliberately most often, entrusted the responsibility to Andhra experts to author the text books. As a result, Andhra authors have always

neglected and not appropriately incorporated the Telangana history and culture in the text syllabus. For example, in the eighth class social sciences text book, there is a detail presentation of Dhavaleshwaram Barrage, but not even single mention of Sriramsagar project. This is a clear illustration of their deliberate discrimination and distorted presentation of facts. Even the books published by NCERT and SCRT do not have the details of Telangana history.

h) Even in Telangana, there were several freedom fighters and they were never projected appropriately in our history books. For example, histories of freedom fighters, who fought against Britishers namely Turebajh Khan, Ramji Gond and Komaram Bheem who fought against Nizam, were never incorporated as part of the text book syllabus.

i) Even in the books published by government agencies such as Telugu Academy, the historical facts of Telangana are distorted. Modern AP history published by Telugu Academy cunningly projected Telangana movement as selfish and opportunist movement, while Andhra movement was presented as progressive movement

j) **Mallinatha Suri** is the only Telugu poet who wrote comments on all the five mahakavyas of Sanskrit including Sanjivini Vyakhaya on Kalidasa's Raghuvamsam. He is otherwise known as 'Vyakhyana Chakravarthi.' He was born during the year 1150 B.C. in Kolichelama village, just 15 km from Medak town, now known as Kolcharam. After so much of persuasion, Government took over his dilapidated building more than two decades ago to construct a memorial and set-up a bronze statue. But so far no progress has been made and it is a clear reflection of the extent of respect that the Andhra rulers demonstrate towards Telangana poets.

k) **Bammera Potana** (1450-1510) was born in Bammera, a village twenty miles away from **Warangal**. But, deliberately, people of Andhra region taken up a controversy that Pothana belonged to Ontimetta of Cudapah, but not of Bammera. Thirty experts, appointed by Andhra Pradesh Sahithya Academy, did immense research and proved with all facts that Pothana belonged to Warangal district only. Even then, ex chief minister, encouraged to conduct Pothana celebrations in Cudapah district to distort the history of Telangana while Telangana leaders raised their protest against such celebrations.

l) While our country got the freedom on August, 15, 1947, people of Telangana got the freedom from Nizam only on September, 17, 1948. In order to signify

the historical importance of the Telangana freedom movement, there has been a demand to government to officially celebrate September 17th as an Independence Day for people of Telangana. But so far, government has not responded positively and people of Telangana are deprived of official celebrations of their illustrious freedom struggle.

1.4 Telangana Cultural Suppression:

a) Over the years, there has been a serious attack on Telangana self respect by the people of Andhra. Telangana people are ridiculed that there is no specific culture of Telangana; that Telangana language is not suitable for any literary purposes and even made a mockery of festivals, dress and the living patterns.

b) Even before the formation of unified state, Telangana and its culture was belittled by the people of Andhra and Telangana was called as NIZAMANDHRA. During the year 1934, one of the Andhra poets, wrote an article with utter contempt on Telangana titled as "NIZAMANDHRA LO TELUGU KAVULU POOJYAM" (It means There are no Telugu poets in Telangana). As a strong response to it, one of the famous poets of Telangana, Suravaram Prathap Reddy, compiled and published the writings of 350 poets. But unfortunately, his writings were not adequately projected.

c) Bathukamma Panduga (Bathukamma Festival) is the largest and legendary festival of Telangana. It was started centuries ago and still celebrated as grand cultural event in this place. The legend of Bathukamma Panduga is mentioned in one of the historical texts scripted in Telugu. But such a large festival is neither recognized by the government nor does the government even extend the official greetings to the people of Telangana on the day of Bathukamma Panduga. Unfortunately, government media (Doordarshan and All India Radio) does not give any importance to cover this legendary festival. Further, reflecting the sheer discrimination, Bathukamma Panduga is not even exhibited in national youth festivals and other programs held by government.

d) Holi is regarded as one of the ancient and important festivals to the people of Telangana. Holi is celebrated with lot of enthusiasm, energy and happiness, irrespective of caste, creed, sex, age etc, by sprinkling colors on each other. In the year 2006, a group of Telangana professors, intellectuals, writers were obstructed and threatened by the local police inspector (belongs to Andhra Region) and went to an extent of even detaining them. This is a clear incident of

how intolerant are the officers from Andhra region towards Telangana region and its culture.

e) It is so pathetic to note that of all the statues at the Tankbund, one would not find a single statue of Telangana legendary personalities. There were several Great people of Telangana who deserve to have their statues such as eminent poet like Dasharadhi, Padmavibhushan award recipient Kaloji, Vattikota Alwaru Swami, man who lead the Library movement and others. Despite several representations made by Telangana leaders on this issue, government ignored and downplayed the historical and legendary personalities of Telangana.

f) Even though Telangana leaders held the prestigious positions such as chief ministers and prime minister etc, but as a mark of respect to them, no single garden or public institutions are named after them. Where as almost all the gardens (NTR Park, Sanjeevaiah Park, Kasu Brahmananda Reddy Park etc); universities (NG Ranga Agriculture University, Potti Sriramulu Telugu University, NTR Health University) and even stadiums and streets were named after the leaders of Andhra such as Balayogi, Sanjeeva Reddy, Kotla Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy etc. The same Government which named new universities in Andhra region after poets such as Nannaiah and Vemana, refused to name the new universities of Telangana after Pothana and Somanna who were renowned Telangana poets. This is yet another clear sign of prejudice towards Telangana.

g) Unified state always played a partisan role and discriminated Telangana in terms of promoting literary and cultural activities. While Andhra cultural and literary organizations are funded indiscriminately, when it comes to Telangana organizations, government always refused to offer the right share of funds.

h) Most of the students of Telangana, who belong to poor and deprived sections, depend on libraries for their regular studies and competitive examinations. However, government deliberately does not allocate adequate funds to the libraries of Telangana and ensure that the relevant books are available. Most of the times, library staff of Telangana region are not paid their salaries regularly. The department of public libraries is always biased enough to buy only the books of Andhra writers and publishers. Further, it is disgusting to note that historical libraries (Bollarum, Secunderabad, Shalibanda etc), which contributed to cultural growth of Hyderabad, are deteriorating and on the verge of collapse. But the department does not have any interest to protect such old libraries of Telangana.

- i) It is disheartening to note that most of the government schools in Telangana, particularly in Hyderabad, are in miserable condition without pucca buildings, basic infrastructure and other amenities. Andhra rulers are making efforts to unlawfully convert the Government school lands into real estate projects (For example Chaderghat School Land) and some of the school lands (for example Bollarum School Lands) are being illegally occupied by land grabbers and Government is a mere spectator and not making any effort to protect the lands

ii)

1.5 Conclusion:

2. Historically it has been proved that if any society has experienced the everlasting development in terms of its literature, culture and heritage, it happened only when the rulers were committed enough to encourage, promote and support such growth

3. However, it has been proved in more than several occasions that Andhra rulers are determined to disrespect, degrade and destroy the cultural identity of Telangana.

4. In this context, the only avenue to safeguard Telangana language and literature; to preserve the oldest traditions, heritage and cultural identity of Telangana; and to protect the self respect of Telangana poets, writers, artists, leaders and others is through political empowerment and self governance.

5. Hence, we make earnest appeal to restore the separate statehood for the Telangana region and help us to preserve one of the oldest and traditional cultures of India.