

Sub Theme: Socio-Economic Condition of Indian Women in Rural and Urban Areas

Title of the Paper : Economic & Social Oppression That Leads To Communist Movement in East And West Godavari Districts 1940-1965 – A Study

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Abstract: After the Russian Revolution, vague socialist ideas began to spread among the young intelligentsia. The youth welcomed these ideas with energy and enthusiasm. They started reading Karl Marx as eagerly as an earlier generation had read Mill or Mazzini. ‘everywhere there was a new spirit of energy and growing discontent with older ideologies ‘However it is difficult to examine and perspectives the status and function of left parties without talking about their background, origin and development. So also their attitude towards Indian nationalist movement. It is important to recognize whether Communist movement in India has been one of the many movements to achieve Indian independence. It can be said that nationalist movement was a profound influence and inspiration for Communist movement although they significantly disagreed with moderate nationalist movement viewing it was more reformist than radical. It is rightly observed by A.L.Basham, “The nationalist movement was at once a reassertion of traditional values and symbols against alien intrusion, and itself an alien, modern, untraditional phenomenon. This paradox is found embodied in the different brands of nationalism represented by such figures a Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Dayanada and the Arya Samaj, Aurobindo, Tilak, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh School, Annie Besant, and above all Gandhi and the national congress as he

influence it. It is hardly surprising then if the paradox has continued to echo in the subcontinent since independence was won.”

Key Words: Intelligentsia, Ideologies, radical

Introduction:

The Communist Movement in East & West Godavari (1940-65) was a land mark in the history of freedom movement and social reforms movements in the Godavari districts. Geographically this territory situated in a crucial area in the midst of coastal region. These two districts are familiar as rice bowls of Andhra Pradesh and also this area has rich cultural, economical, political exposure in state and central level aspects. The East & West Godavari districts are significance of birth places of several social reformers, poets, patriots. For last 100 years this area plays a prominent role by its contribution to the Indian Freedom Struggle, literary and social reforms movements in Andhra Pradesh. In this context I would like to reveal some hidden facts, heart touching incidents, which were happened in Godavari districts from 1940-65.

Objectives of the Study:

Between 1940-65, the communist activities led to violence in this region, particularly in Godavari districts. Even though India had freedom from British rule, there was no change in people's living standards. At that time feudalistic sect strictly ruled the society. Majority of the fertile land was centralized in their hands. Approximately 20 years of time span, there is a lot of violence and conflict was happened in this area and society divided into 2 sects. Feudal lords, who owned heavy assets one side, and the people with no food was another side, fought for 2 decades. The government tried to sweep up the communist movement cruelly. In this conflict lot of people were died and destruction touched the new heights. So I want to take this movement in East & West Godavari districts to light. The social and economical conditions of our state are one at the same. But we cannot find this kind of mindset and enlightened manner among the suppressed class in other areas of our state. Which factor led them to fight against state violence, without having weapons, guidance and money? What factors inspired them to build their future by struggling with their Hercules enemy. This is the main object to study this communist movement in Godavari regions.

Methodology & Source Material:

For my research paper, plenty of sources are available. The intensity of the subject is vast, and it is giving a chance to excavate the hidden factors that led to drastic changes in this region. The government documents, government orders, confidential reports, jail documents, revenue records, government survey reports of agriculture sector and gazettes taken as primary sources. Newspapers, periodicals, souvenirs, pamphlets, booklets and interviews with who alive today are taken as secondary sources. With these sources I will follow the historical method which essentially includes the interpretation of above said evidences.

Area and Period of the Study:

“Communist Movement in East & West Godavari Districts from 1940-1965. This is the topic which I had chosen. In the early 1920s Gandhian era begun in Indian Freedom Movement. In every part of our country happily accepted the leadership of Gandhi. The people of our country thought that Gandhi could succeed in getting freedom to the nation, and congress party would solve all the problems of poor people. But the entire scenario was changed due to social, economical and cultural reasons. The hopes of common men were collapsed. The Indian National Congress party became helpless in fulfilling the desires of poor people. The congress party represented only for higher caste people and their prosperity. So the normal people and peasants need a new choice for their requirements. In the decade of early thirties, India has also suffered with the impact of great recession, which was badly influenced the world economy. By the result, the Russian kind of communism spread all over the world. The communism has reached our country too. Gradually in India, communist party got the hold among the poor people, peasants and factory workers. In this connection, communist party has entered into the Godavari region too. This area was ruled by the British Government then. They introduced western education, irrigation facilities and hospital facilities in the Godavari region. And also christianism flourished with the aid of British Government and foreign individuals. By this novel systems, there was drastic changes occurred in this area. This area people got good literacy rate, when compared with the other areas. This liberal western education inculcated the new thoughts among the people. At the time of Second World War, in this region communism became a light and only path for the down trodden people. As far as concern the suppressed class for centuries together, have come to know that there is no difference whether they were in British ruled India or independent India. Their main struggle is to get basic needs like food, shelter and cloth.

Result of the Study:

Labor troubles, dacoities, agrarian outrages, riots and disturbances were took place in the name of communist movement in this region. The Madras Province government and the independent union government strictly oppressed these movements. The governments looked after these issues as law and problems. Instigated by communists, 4,000 labourers in the west Godavari district staged a Hunger March to Tanuku to meet Revenue authorities. Prohibitory orders under section 144, Criminal Procedure Code, were promptly obtained and a party of the Special Armed Police was sent immediately to the affected area. The mob was flouted the warning, pelted stones as the Police party and advanced determinedly. As the secretary of the Andhra Congress Socialist Party, P Sundarayya had the responsibility to educate the workers on several socio-political issues. He had issued many circulars to the cadres on how to organize various mass organizations, public meetings and other gatherings. The small booklet that He wrote in early 1938 gave a broad outline on the organizational pattern to the communists and their sympathizers. Except for a few minor changes, the booklet helped a lot in raising the consciousness levels among the cadres.

Similarly, they organized classes to educate the illiterate masses on political issues. They organized one such school at Kothapatnam in Ongole district, in May 1937, just after the completion of the provincial elections. At that time, the Congress did not accept ministerial posts in the government. An interim government led by Kurma Venkata Reddy Naidu was installed by the Governor. But still they organized the political school under the umbrella of the Congress Socialist Party. The Youth League members participated in it in a big way. Most of the delegates who participated in that school joined the Communist Party of India within a short time. P Sundarayya has got a list of those who attended the classes. Annapragada Kameswara Rao organized that school mobilizing the Leftist elements in the Congress as well as the supporters of the Congress Socialist Party. He left for Moscow, got trained there and later on went to East Africa. After coming back, he joined the Communist Party. He was also one of the leading comrades and was taken into the Andhra committee along with Madduri Annapurnaiah.

In several areas the party led armed struggles against a series of local monarchs that were reluctant to give up their power. Such insurgencies took place in Tripura, Telangana and Kerala. The most important rebellion took place in Telangana, against the Nizam of Hyderabad. The Communists built up a people's army and militia and controlled an area with a population of three million. The rebellion was brutally crushed and the party abandoned the policy of armed struggle. BTR was deposed and denounced as a 'left adventurist'.

In Andhra region the party became a force to reckon with through the agrarian struggles led by P Sundarayya. At the 1951 congress of the party, 'People's Democracy' was substituted by 'National Democracy' as the main slogan of the party.

Communist party conducted movements for land reforms; trade union movement was at its peak in Andhra in the fifties. Achievement of communists in Andhra placed the communist party in the forefront of left movement in India. Andhra Pradesh produced some of the legendary leaders like P Sundarayya, mass leaders like Chandra Rajeswara Rao, intellectual giants like Kambhampati Satyanarayana and Moturi Hanumantha Rao.

The whole organizational apparatus was scattered throughout the state; the party headquarters was not confined to only one place, especially after 1949 when they started shooting the comrades in Andhra too. The police used the technique of surveying the households rented out to new tenants in different towns in Andhra and keeping a watching on them. Normally, nothing much happens during the day time since they do not move outside. Only during unscheduled times like in the middle of the night if they find any strangers the police would follow him and trace the persons he would meet. They would not raid the houses at the first instance. After confirming their suspicion fully, they would launch simultaneous raids on the houses. The police were more efficient and experienced in intelligence gathering, so the communists had to set up a counter-intelligence cell. Any mistake at any link would have exposed the entire chain to danger.

Conclusion

The millions of our peasants constituting eighty per cent of our people are ground down as before. Those who have land and can cultivate it, through exorbitant rents and interests, and by the manoeuvres their fruits of labour are looted by the landlord and the moneylender of the capitalist market and taxes of the state. But three-fourths -of the peasantry have practically no land of their own. "Those who have no land and find no work live in conditions of perpetual pauperism. And those who do find work on the landlords' and sowcars' (moneylenders) estates, as agricultural labourers or poor tenants, have to work like serfs and slaves, hardly getting even a subsistence wage for the family. As a result production of food and industrial raw materials is falling, leading to the worst food crisis in the country and starvation and death to millions. While the government run by the landlords and profiteers shouts about abolition of landlordism, it only hatches schemes of compensation of millions of rupees to those oppressors of the people, to enable them thus to indirectly realise their rent through the state from the toil of the peasant. The struggles of the

peasantry for land for reduction of rent, interest and taxes are also drowned in blood and their organisations suppressed, along with the struggles and organisations of the working class. Whole villages, talukas and districts are handed over to military and police occupation, because the peasants and landless labourers have dared to ask for land, for reduction of rent and interest and for increased wages and the establishment of better conditions.

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