

## Analysis on Andhrapradesh Statepolitical Parties, Agitation and Defections

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### ABSTRACT

A significant paradox existed in Andhra Pradesh State politics when NTR, the patriarch of the TDP, was shamefully removed from power and party position barely a few months after his landslide victory in the December 1994 elections by the MLAs and Ministers of his party This mutiny against NTR took place during the 'coup' against him in 1984, and NTR's younger son-in-law Chandrababu was a key actor in preventing TDP MLAs from deserting him, for which he publicly thanked him. Once again, it was a conundrum. Andhra Pradesh entered a new chapter marked by pragmatism and economic progress when Chandrababu Naidu (hereafter Chandrababu) succeeded NTR as Chief Minister and Party President. Paradoxes contain traits that appear to be in opposition to one another, but they have a logical explanation. It's possible to view NTR's demise (in retrospect, of course) as the tragic result of NTR's own politics. To see how a democratic upsurge among the populace may be leveraged to construct an autocratic state, look no further than the rise of the TDP. In spite of the fact that NTR blasted the Congress for preserving family control in the country, in Andhra Pradesh he was far more aggressive. Because the ruling class viewed political power as a personal possession that they might transfer to their heirs, the subject of power succession arose throughout NTR's lifetime. The actor had named his actor-son Balakrishna the one who would be his successor apparent in politics. Two of his party's most important sons-in-law objected to his dynastic ambitions. In addition, NTR's other family members and other senior party leaders were alarmed by his wife's growing authority, who had been unfairly criticised.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

According to the country's constitution, India is a union of states, with state authority being shared between a central (federal) government and the governments of the individual states. 1 These states are significant because of their diverse social structures, well-developed languages and cultures, and long histories that go beyond their size or population. Different political systems have emerged in different states as a result of this enormous variation. Almost all of a government's regular functions are handled by the state government, including passing legislation, carrying it out, keeping the peace, adjudicating disputes, and providing for the needs of the private sector.

In India's last 50 years as a republic, States have risen to prominence in the political system as a whole. Political processes at the state level became significant when Congress lost authority in the late 1960s. Politics has become increasingly divided between states and the federal level since the emergence of state-based parties in 1980. As party structures and electoral outcomes have diverged from state to state over the previous two decades, the United States has become much more diverse (Manor, 1988). Because of the rise of coalition governments involving State parties since 1989, the State has taken centre stage. In the early 1990s, when liberalisation policies began to take hold, it gained even more notoriety. By working with national and international financial organisations and agencies, as well as enterprises and industrial houses to determine policy priorities that match those set by the state's ruling party, state governments have taken a more active role in infrastructure development.

It's almost cliché to say that India is a multiethnic nation with a wide range of socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds that is always undergoing revolutionary transformation. Because of the dizzying array of political structures at the state level, observers of Indian politics would conclude that the country is in a constant state of flux, or "pattern less," or utter anarchy. It's possible to have a better understanding of Indian politics today by considering the country's national

politics as a collection or conglomeration of various state politics. Both national policy frameworks and political situations affect how the States operate, and the Centre must work within the constraints set by state politics dynamics in order to do its job.

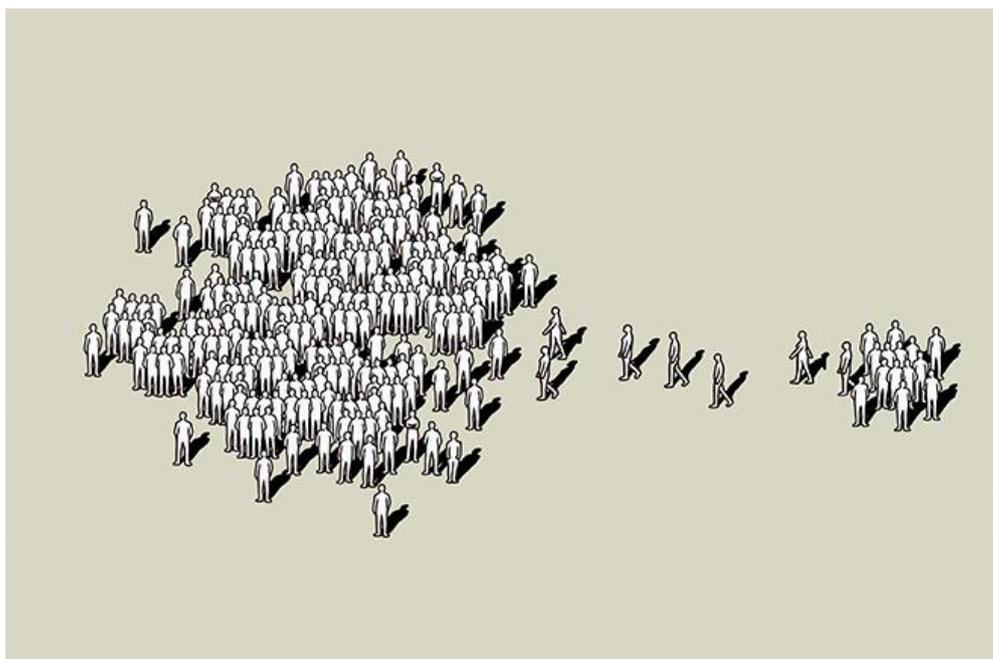
When India gained its independence, it was confronted with the problem of rapid transition, as described by Rajni Kothari (1970). All at once, it undertook the monumental task of reshaping the social structure, encouraging economic growth, and establishing democratic political institutions. Elections have subsequently become the primary mechanism by which democracy has been strengthened after this country's Constitution served as a social covenant, guaranteeing its citizens liberty, equality, and a fair society. According to Indian political analysts, a scenario like this leads to both political development and deterioration. New groups of individuals have been brought into the political fold, involvement in politics has been more accessible, and activists and leaders have been found and fostered.

At the same time, demands on the state have increased from newly mobilised segments of the population. To achieve a balance between the often opposing demands for political power, riches, and other possibilities made by different groups of society, efforts have been made throughout history. It's been proven to be difficult in recent years. People's perceptions of the country's state and government have shifted since the advent of liberalism and economic reforms. With the current economic policies focusing on deregulation, privatisation, and de-statification, there are now new concerns regarding economic progress and social welfare. The tensions that arise at a period of transition are exorbitant. An ever-increasing number of members from various social groups can now participate in local decision-making bodies as mandated by the Constitution's new Panchayati Raj (traditional institution of local rural self-governance).

## **2. INDIA: UNDERSTANDING THE STRUCTURAL DRIVERS FOR POLITICAL DEFECTIONS**

### **2.1 AMBAR KUMAR GHOSH**

The basic reasons that provide fertile conditions for defection must be uncovered through a more in-depth examination of the workings of party structures and leadership style.



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Defections from one political party to another are a common occurrence in Indian democracy. Trinamool Congress (TMC) supporters in West Bengal have recently defected to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), which has been making steady gains in the state's elections. In Arunachal Pradesh, legislators from the JD (U) have defected to the BJP.

Defections by high-profile politicians have re-ignited the conversation over it. After an election, the party system and electoral representation are changed significantly by legislators who defect from their old party to their new party.

## **2.2 Setting the context**

Antagonism toward desertion has long been a commonplace in Indian political discourse, as it is in many other democracies. Defections from one party to another have become commonplace in Indian politics, causing democratically elected governments to be overthrown repeatedly by competing parties using planned defections, particularly at the state level.

Defections have continued uninterrupted even after anti-defection law was put in place, as political developments have revealed since then.

As a result of the rise in these kinds of activities, India passed an anti-defection law in 1985. After that, as political processes unfolded, it became clear that anti-defection law had failed to stop the threat of defections, which is still occurring today. Since the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) became India's main political force in 2014, defections from the Congress and other regional parties, which joined the BJP at various periods in the last six years, have continued the pattern.

### **Ethical paradox**

Political defections have always raised a perplexing ethical challenge about democracy's functioning. Even after winning an election under the banner of the previous group, transferring to a new party (typically an opponent group) is seen as a political blunder and an attempt to gain an advantage.

Even so, it's difficult to tell the difference between defections motivated merely by political expediency and those motivated by ideational or ideological considerations because the two elements are frequently intertwined. However, a person's decision to defect may not be the result of corrupt politics.

Separating defections motivated merely by short-term political benefit from those motivated by longer-term ideological or ideational considerations is difficult and factually impossible.

Defections, on the other hand, could be viewed as tools for defending democratic norms such as equality, accommodation, and fairness. If you're looking to safeguard your political autonomy and uphold democratic values and justice, you may want to consider defecting, according to political scientist Gopal Guru. As a result, upon defecting, these individuals may look for a "higher" cause.

If you look at it from the perspective of the defector, leaving is a moral protest meant to promote democracy within the defecting party as well as throughout the country. In their self-righteousness, such defectors may find the worth of justice in the act of switching sides. To put it another way, such defections are welcomed as if they were motivated by a greater sense of fairness and dignity on the part of the party rulers toward their leaders. Electoral democracies are left with an unsolvable ethical quandary about the act of defecting.

## **2.3 Anti-defection law**

Despite the anti-defection statute, defectors have continued to fuel political instability, therefore the focus of discussion has switched to measures to improve anti-defection regulations. Politics necessitates political solutions. Political analyst Chakshu Roy says "a judicial approach has been employed to deal with the problem of defection."

Roy went on to say that enacting legislation to deal with politicians' shifting political allegiances is fraught with difficulties. While the legal framework places emphasis on punishing defectors for switching parties, Roy argues that political parties should be held accountable for defections as they are the ones responsible for arranging defections and undermining democratically elected governments.

In addition, the nature of party organisation and the degree of internal party democracy have a significant impact on the type of defections that occur inside Indian political parties. Scholars Pradeep Chhibber, Francesca Refsum Jensenius, and Pavithra Suryanarayan argue in their important paper, *Party Organization and Party Proliferation in India*, that parties with stronger organisational discipline, where rules of political mobility, decision-making, and election ticket distribution are clearly established and transparent, see fewer instances of political defection.

### **3. ANDHRA PRADESH: A PROFILE**

Andhra Pradesh became a state in 1956. Despite the fact that Telugu and Andhra have no phonetic or etymological affinities, the phrases are commonly used to refer to the state's primary language. <sup>2</sup> The creation of the State was divided into two phases. People who spoke Telugu predominately lived in the former multilingual state of Madras and the princely state of Hyderabad at the time of India's independence. <sup>3</sup> 'Andhra State,' with Kurnool as its capital, was created on October 1, 1953, by separating the Telugu-speaking areas of Madras into their own state. Both the Andhra area (commonly referred to as the Andhra) and the Rayalaseema region (located in the south interior) were divided into two regions. Andhra Pradesh was created on November 1, 1956, when the State Reorganization Act merged Andhra State with the Telugu-speaking areas of the historical Hyderabad State (known as Telengana area). Previously known as the Nizam State Capital of Hyderabad, it now serves as the expanded State Capital of (Rao, 1988; Narayana Rao, 1973; Sarojini, 1968; Venkatarangaiah, 1965). For the first time in Independent India, a state was created on the basis of linguistic unity, with all of its citizens speaking the same language.

Politicians from various regions had to haggle and compromise for a long time before the State was created as a result of their hard fight. The economic development levels in the three regions at the time of state formation were influenced by numerous key elements, such as political legacies, land relations, rainfall and soil fertility, terrain and cropping patterns, and other agricultural practises. Regional disparities and the politicisation of regional identities, particularly in the Telengana region, have affected state politics and elections since the state's foundation. While the State's backward regions have made significant strides over the last four decades, this 'congenital disability' remains. There are still gaps in the social, cultural, emotional, and economic integration of Andhra Pradesh despite its reputation as a "State of the Telugus." In recent years, calls for the state to be divided and for Telengana to become an independent state have resurfaced, occasionally taking on the dimensions of a large-scale movement marked by violent confrontation. The coastal residents of Andhra Pradesh believe that they could have developed much more quickly if they weren't burdened by the Telengana region, while the middle class, upper castes, and political leadership in Telengana believe that their region has remained backward because of the 'raw deal' meted out to the region by successive governments and the disproportional benefits reaped by people from the coastal region.

Because of this, Andhra Pradesh is commonly thought of as having three distinct regions: the coastal 'Circars,' or Andhra region, which includes nine districts (Srikakulam, Vizianagaram, Visakhapatnam, East Godavari, West Godavari, Krishna, Guntur and Prakasam) and is home to 41.7% of the state's population; the inland 'Rayalaseema,' or the interior Andhra (Census of India, Andhra Pradesh, 2001). Although the region is officially called "Telengana," Rayalaseema and the coastal parts are often known to as "Andhra," instead.

Andhra Pradesh's rural framework is made up of 28,123 villages. Except for forest communities, all settlements are revenue settlements with well defined revenue limits. Together, the State's 117 "Statutory Towns" (including the six Municipal Corporations of Hyderabad, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada, Guntur, Warangal, and Rajamundry) and 93 "Census Towns"<sup>4</sup> form the urban framework. Administratively speaking, each district has been divided into Mandals (intermediate territorial and administrative units) and Gram Panchayats since 1986 as part of the decentralisation of the administrative structure. Local government units that are responsible for a certain geographic area. During the state's local body elections in July–August 2001, a total of 22 Zilla Parishads (excluding Hyderabad, which is entirely urban)

as well as 1094 Mandals and 21,943 Gram Panchayats were elected. At the end of the year 2000, there were 50.58 million registered voters in the state. The state is well-represented in Parliament with 42 Lok Sabha seats and 18 Rajya Sabha seats (the upper house of Parliament). The Legislative Assembly has a total of 294 members.

### **3.1 Nature and environment**

As a cultural and geographical crossroads, Andhra Pradesh serves as a vital link between northern and southern India. Latitude: 13–20° north; longitude: 77–85° east. Location: Tropical region. Bay of Bengal forms its eastern border, Orissa forms its north-eastern border, Chattisgarh and Maharashtra form its northern border, Karnataka forms its western border, and Tamil Nadu forms its southern border. Andhra Pradesh boasts India's second-longest coastline, stretching from Ichchapuram in Srikakulam district to Sriharikota in Nellore district, all the way to the southern tip of the country. Visakhapatnam is one of the state's major ports; the other two are intermediate ports (Kakinada and Machilipatnam).

Andhra Pradesh has a tropical–monsoonal climatic type. The south-west and north-east monsoons bring rain to the state. The amount of rain that falls in different parts of the world varies greatly. The average annual rainfall varies greatly from the south (about 74 cm) all the way up to the north (around 200 cm). There are no secured irrigation facilities for more than 60 percent of the net sowing area, therefore rain plays a critical role in determining the agricultural performance of the country and its general economic health during monsoon seasons. Telengana and coastal Andhra have good rains in most of the year. Because of the region's unstable rainfall (about 69 centimetres annually) and a notoriously unreliable monsoon season, Rayalaseema is affectionately known as the "stalking ground of famines" (kshamaseema). Depending on the year, rainfall fluctuations can be so extreme that certain areas are frequently hit by floods or drought. Drought and floods are both as disastrous when they occur in excess. Coastal Andhra is frequently devastated by cyclones and floods, destroying standing crops and putting the region's economy in jeopardy.

## **4. AN OUTLINE OF POLITICS AND ELECTIONS IN ANDHRA**

### **4.1 Politics in Andhra Region (1947–1956)**

When Andhra gained its independence from the British Empire, the Congress Party was torn apart by factional strife, which frequently drew on caste identities. The APCC was divided into two distinct camps: (Andhra Provincial Congress Committee). Andhra Kesari, also known as the "Lion of Andhra," was leading one of the armies (Rudrayya Chowdary, 1971). On the other hand there was a group led by Pattabhi Sitharamayye, a senior Brahman Congress official who would eventually be all-India congress president from 1949 to 1950. (Prasanna Kumar, 1978). A showdown between the two factions was generated by the elections for the APCC President and the Madras Congress Legislative Party Leader in the same year. Pattabhi-backed Sanjiva Reddy defeated Prakasam-backed Ranga in the APCC leadership race in April 1951. Andhra Pradesh's post-Independence Kamma–Reddi rivalry erupted during the conflict between Ranga and Sanjiva Reddy, which many saw as a watershed point.

Prakasam and Ranga left Congress as a result of the election results, and they formed a new party named the Praja Party (PP). In June 1951, the Praja Party of Andhra Pradesh merged with the KMPP, which had just been formed. As a means of separating himself from Prakasam, Ranga founded the Krishikar Lok Party (KLP) in August 1951. He was the party's chairman at the time (Lingamurthy, 1994b). As a result, unlike in other States, the Andhra Congress appeared divided and rapidly disintegrating. Whereas the Congress Party appeared to be struggling in the state, maybe even more so than in other large Indian states, the Communist Party appeared to be gaining ground.

Before Andhra Pradesh was formed, the Communist Party grew rapidly in both Andhra and Telengana. 12 It wasn't until after WWII that Soviet-trained communists became well-known as leaders of peasant organisations and organisers of peasant uprisings across the country. Andhra Pradesh saw the Communist Party of India (CPI) declared illegal in January 1948 after years of armed struggle by Communists in the state. Because of this restriction, communist parties and their mass fronts, particularly the student wing, were able to get more involved in Andhra State's agitation.

In the first Madras Assembly general elections in 1952, the popularity of the various political parties became obvious. Many of the party's ministers and stalwarts were defeated, dealing a significant blow to the Congress in the Andhra region. Andhra had 63 seats up for grabs, with the Communist Party taking 25% of the vote and winning 41 of them. While this is true today, Andhra used to be the only state in India where the communist party was as popular as it is today. Despite receiving around 30% of the vote, the Congress only managed to gain 40 of the 133 seats up for grabs (Table 1). In the central coastal region, the Communist Party enjoyed tremendous success. Peasant and agricultural worker support, as well as the party's desire for independence from the United States, all bolstered its standing. There was a general consensus that Congress' poor performance was due to internal factional struggle, the presence of competing parties like the KMPP and KLP inside its ranks, and the party's top leaders' avoidance of questions concerning the party's ambition for a distinct linguistic state.. After the general elections, KLP members agreed to become "Associated Members" of the Congress Legislature Party (CLP). Praja Socialist Party was formed as a result of a merger between the KMPP and Socialist Party (PSP).

With the support of the KLP and independents, Congress was able to assemble an even larger group of 60 members by the time Andhra State was formed in October 1953. Thus, a coalition government was the only option. Prakasam, the PSP's President, agreed to rejoin the Congress in exchange for the position of Chief Minister. Because of his ambition to become Andhra Pradesh's first Chief Minister, Prakasam (born in 1872), resigned from his position as President of the PSP and joined the Congress Party. Prakasam wasn't able to do it either. As a result, the KMPP faction that backed the Prakasam Ministry split from the PSP and established the rival Praja Party. Chief Minister N. Sanjiva Reddy's deputy was N. Sanjiva Reddy, who had also run for Chief Minister.

#### **4.2 Emergence of the Telugu Desam Party: Politics of Populism and Confrontation**

Andhra Pradesh's political landscape changed dramatically with the establishment of the Telugu Desam Party (TDP). There was a ripe foundation for a regional party to be born and thrive in the State because of growing public unhappiness with Congress's way of functioning and overall degradation, as well as the failure of national opposition parties, both liberal and communist. A new era in Andhra Pradesh politics began on March 29, 1982, when 60-year-old multi-millionaire movie star NT Rama Rao (better known as NTR) announced the formation of a new political party in Madras.

It is not from long-term fights and persistent activities that regional parties like the Akali Dal in Punjab or the National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir or social movements like the DMK in Tamil Nadu are created. It's also not fully correct to argue that the TDP's electoral win in Andhra Pradesh was due to NTR's film popularity. There's another way to look at it. With a variety of parties and independents in the electoral mix, the non-Congress/anti-Congress opposition vote in Andhra Pradesh politics was always large before to 1983 Assembly elections. Former Swatantra Party, Lok Dal and Socialist Party officials as well as members of the Janata Party who later joined the Telugu Desam joined forces. The Telugu Desam was formed by joining the voting bases of these several political groups (the Telugu nation). There could be some merit to the theory that the TDP is an amalgamation of Andhra Pradesh politics' disparate anti- and non-Congress factions. NTR's film stardom served him well because it meant that the Andhra Pradesh electorate was familiar with him and he could use his celebrity to effectively communicate his political message to them. It was well-received because the voters was also yearning for an alternative — a leader who could save the State from Congress rule's irresponsible factionalism, endemic corruption, and political morass.

Their first targets were the Congress and the state's "eunuch" leadership, as well as the constant "puppet shows" on the Andhra political stage. As pledged in the party's manifesto, it would work to remove pointless and unreasonable limitations on industrialists in order to attract foreign capital and to support the state's entrepreneurial industrialists. Rather than providing farmers with remunerative prices for their products, the Congress, the TDP claimed, was pro-merchant and anti-peasant. It vehemently opposed any idea of taxing farmers' income. The TDP claimed that Indira Gandhi had turned the States of India into glorified'municipalities' in her attempt to maintain family dominance over the country. In its manifesto, the party proclaimed its support for full federalism and argued against the notion that giving more power to the States would weaken Ottawa. It demanded that the Centre should only deal with defence, foreign policy, currency, and communications issues, according to the document it cited. The Centre, NTR went on to say, was

a "conceptual myth." That's why conservative industrial progress and pro-farmer agricultural policies of the TDP were viewed favourably by the region's industrialists and rich peasants, both of whom sided with the Republican Party during the 1970's. To some extent, the TDP adopted the idea of the erstwhile Swatantra Party, and as a result, it successfully weaned a significant portion of Congress and Janata Party voters away from both parties.

## CONCLUSION

All political parties are under pressure from the backward castes to run more candidates from their communities, and many of these groups have state-wide associations. Caste organizations are increasingly making appeals to their caste members, asking them to vote for their caste's candidates regardless of the candidates' political allegiance. Independent dalit organizations began to emerge during this time period, particularly after attacks on dalit communities by upper caste residents in various areas, which the upper caste residents claimed were aided by party officials from TDP and Congress. Co-opting community leaders and encouraging them to take an active role in caste groups, political parties have made significant efforts to mobilize the votes of these communities. Political parties have done a remarkable job of accommodating people from lower socioeconomic classes and castes, such as dalits and tribals, in recent years. Despite the appearance of a simmering cauldron at times, tensions in Andhra Pradesh society were never permitted to approach critical levels.

As a major experiment in Andhra Pradesh's democratic grassroots politics, providing reservations to the state's BCs, SCs, and STs in local bodies is significant. Already, thousands of people from these areas are serving in representative bodies at all levels and receiving training in the nuances of politics as a result of the movement. They will most likely start looking for jobs at the state level in the near future. The issue of caste is further complicated by the growing assertiveness of the lower castes and the dalits. The justice issue was brought to light as a result of the Madigas' demand for reserve classification based on sub-castes and for a "fair share" of political power. The political elite in the State faces a severe problem in resolving the conflicts between conflicting social groups' demands for greater political democracy.

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