

## GOND STRUGGLES IN ADILABAD AND INDRAVELLI AREAS

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The scheduled areas of Telangana regions of Andhra Pradesh have again witnessed a large mobilization of tribes mainly in the districts of Adilabad and Khammam. Mainly Gonds of Adilabad were exploited ruthlessly. Their lands were taken by the landlords and immigrant peasantry arriving from the plain areas. Several forms of economic and extra-economic coercion continued without any countenance. It now grew as a formidable community force acting as the defensive mechanism for Gonds protecting the Gonds Rights. The state government while drawing the administrative boundaries of the mandals did not respect the integrity of the scheduled area. The contiguous scheduled area was split and distributed over many mandals, and thereby; reduced the population of the tribals a minority in those mandals.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Regions, Tribes, Gonds, Lands, Economic, Community, Integrity, Split*

### **INTRODUCTION**

After a decade of silence between 1979-89 of post emergency period, the scheduled areas of Telangana regions of Andhra Pradesh have again witnessed a large mobilization of tribes mainly in the districts of Adilabad and Khammam. Mainly Gonds of Adilabad were exploited ruthlessly. Their lands were taken by the landlords and immigrant peasantry arriving from the plain areas. Several forms of economic and extra-economic coercion continued without any countenance. Meanwhile, the regrouping of CPI (ML) cadres affiliated to Peoples War Group in 1979 onwards gave birth to the militant mobilization of the tribes in the agency areas of the state. The effect of mobilization of the tribes on the issues of land and money lending practices had led to the occurrence of many events. Notwithstanding the political impact, due to these agitations, tribal regions have attracted the attention of the state which in turn had initiated several legal and developmental measures to subside the growing tensions. Gonds in Adilabad were terribly exploited by the money-lenders and landlords. Gond tribes were mobilized by the CPI (ML) (Peoples war) cadres way back in 1979 onwards. Culmination of the mobilization was the occurrence of famous Indravalli incident in 1981 April where a firing took place causing death of 113 Gonds. Several villages in mandals of Utnoor, Asifabad, Goodhatnoor, Khanapur, Adilabad etc., rose in rebellion. An assessment of the movement in the later years indicated that nearly 70,000 acres of land was distributed among the Gond either thorough newly cleared forest lands or reclaiming the erstwhile landlord controlled lands. It will be an exaggeration if it is not disclosed that the later kind of gains in land restoration remain lesser in proportion when compared to the former.

## OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of this research paper is

- To study the conditions of the Gond in Telangana districtts
- To understand the socio economic conditions of Gonds

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative method of research will be used to study about this research work. The researcher will visit the schools and colleges to collect the data which is required to analyze. The data will be collected based on both the primary and secondary sources. The qualitative research methods like ethnography, narrative, phenomenology, ground theory, and case study will be used for the research work.

## DISCUSSION

First major incident in Adilabad struggle took place in the year 1978 in "khamana" village of Asifabad taluk. Gonds raided the Sahukars (traders-cum-money-lenders) house and burnt the debt deeds. Soon, in 1980, the impact of the mobilization spread over to Pipal Dhari, Jamni, Pangidi, Vankidi and Boath areas. Tribals of these villages have led agitations for claiming over the lands controlled by the landlords. In these struggles many tribal peasantry had to face severe losses and repression form the state and landlord sections. By 1990, in Adilabad alone nearly 500 tribals were booked under TADA cases and severe repression was led loose. Still the politically motivated cadres among the Gonds stuck to their earlier perceptions and continued to raise their voice against all forms of neglect. The present Gond situation once again grew assert as they in the recent pasty began to organize under the banner of United Forum for Adivasi Tribal Rights (UFATR), operating in has been a spate of mobilizations (see chart-II) in the district aimed at addressing the issues of tribal land, Self-rule and the functioning of the development institutions. It now grew as a formidable community force acting as the defensive mechanism for Gonds protecting the Gonds Rights.

Political marginalization of the Adivasis has been on the rise. This has been done in three years.

- Shrinking the tribal area by non-inclusion of the pre-dominantly tribal populated areas in the scheduled areas there by disallowed the Adivasis from gaining the numerical strength which is an effective factor for taking over the political power. Nearly, 838 villages of this kind all over the state remain eligible for the inclusion into the scheduled.
- Effecting the changes in the boundary specifics of the mandals (second tier panchayat) in such way the majority non-tribal village is engaged on to the numerically minority tribal village and amalgamation of the villages to the benefit of outsiders.
- Rejection of few genuine Adivasis groups from the constitutional recognition as the tribals in the series of the revision list that is sent from time to time. This has damaged the rights of the Adivasis for ever and on the other the number of Adivasis all-over the state in population gets reduced. Such instances are there in case of "Nayakapu" of west Godavari district comprising of nearly 70,000 were being constantly denied of the tribal status.

This will provide a free hand to the non-tribal vested groups to operate freely and manipulated the local Institutions. Denial of the Adivasis Role in the local affairs and non-tribal hegemony over the every days life of the tribes led to a gradual realization of the "loss of the space for freedom" by the tribes. Added to this, the state government resorted to a technique of upsetting the allocations of the reserved mandals specified to the tribes and there were no rational method adopted in doing such exercise for allocation reserved mandals for tribes. Eventually, tribal youth went to the court and fought against the panchayat raj notification in the scheduled areas. Simultaneously, the whole spirit of the Bhurria Committee for tribal self-rule has become timely and tribes in the state have responded first in Bhadrachalam was back in 1993 in defen of the issue of tribal self-rule. It self in organizing a hug rally in deference of the cause.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh in February, 5, declared elections to the district and intermediate chayat Raj institutions throughout the State in bruary 1995 under the A.P Panchayat Raj Act of 1994, cluding the Scheduled Areas of the state. The elections the Gram Panchayats were deferred. The Scheduled a in the state is 30,293 Sq. kms and it is spread over districts of Adilabad, Warangal, Khammam, West avari, East Godavari, Vishakapatna, Vizianagaram, lam and Mahaboobnagar. There are 5,913 villages is area and are spread over 108 mandals (Intermediate administrative unit between the district and the revenue village). Forty six of these mandals are wholly in Scheduled Area and the rest of the mandals have partly Scheduled Areas. The state government while drawing the administrative boundaries of the mandals did not respect the integrity of the scheduled area. The contiguous scheduled area was split and distributed over many mandals, and thereby; reduced the population of the tribals a minority in those mandals. Disintegration of the areas and villages to suit the needs of the dominant non-tribal political elite is often an adopted strategy in the state. The scheduled tribe population of the state as per the 1991 census is 42 lakhs and accounts for 6.3 percent of the total population of the state.

The State Government while making reservations for the scheduled castes, scheduled tribals and women took into account the forty six mandals situated entirely in the scheduled area and they were wet apart for reserving to the scheduled tribes exclusively. The remaining sixty two mandals were grouped with the open category for the purpose of reservation to various categories. The state government followed the principle of drawing lots (picking up of mandals at random through losts) for reserving the posts of Mandal Praja Parishad Presidents (MPP's) and the Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituencies (ZPTCs) in this process the president ships of only sixteen out of the sixty two mandals having scheduled area got reserved for the scheduled tribes. The rest of the mandals were either made general seats or were reserved for other backward sections of the non-tribals. In the case of the forty six mandals situated wholly in scheduled areas, the government introduced the criteria of proportion at population that is 50 percent or more of the scheduled tribe population for reserving them for the tribals. By applying this criteria, twelve mandals located in wholly scheduled areas and having less than 50 percent tribal population were served and brought into the open category. For instance, the principle of proportionate population was not followed in the case of Koyyuru mandal in Vishakapatnam district, which wholly located in the scheduled area with 90 percent tribal population. Such instances are found more in number. The criterion of population is thus a big conspiracy against the tribal self-rule.

For reserving the Mandal parishad Territorial Constituencies (MPTCs) to various categories in the mandals located wholly in scheduled areas, once again the roportionate population criteria was used and a large number of MPTCs were deserved and thrown open for non-tribals. The policy of reservation for the tribals in Panchayat Raj bodies in the Scheduled Areas in the elections held to the panchayat raj bodies in 1987, all the elected posts in the mandal praja parishad

wholly located in scheduled area were reserved for scheduled tribes, besides reserving the seats for the scheduled tribes in the scheduled area/villages that were part of the mandals that were partly in scheduled area. The non-tribals of khammam district challenged the reservation policy of the state government in the A.P. High court in 1987. the court upheld state government policy of reservation in favor of the tribals in the scheduled areas at that time.

The whole game of de-reservation is to create a condition of under representation in the institutional process of governance. Further it leads to an institutional under representation and in experience of the knowledge relating to the legal basis of acts and rules that govern the life of the tribal people in the schedule area. Community this leads to political marginalisation through a gentle process of intelligent manipulation of the reservation system and positioning the constituencies. Mandals are not reserved where tribes constitute majority. On the other where non-tribal are in minority they were given access to the power through de-reservation. Typical system of "drawing lots were used specify the reservation system, adoption of a principle of either population criterion or territory as an authentic standard of privilege would elections held to the panchayat raj bodies in 1987, all the elected posts in the mandal praja parishad wholly located in scheduled area were reserved for scheduled tribes, besides reserving the seats for the scheduled tribes in the scheduled area/villages that were part of the mandals that were partly in scheduled area. The non-tribals of khammam district challenged the reservation policy of the state government in the A.P. High court in 1987. the court upheld state government policy of reservation in favor of the tribals in the scheduled areas at that time.

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The Hon'ble Court while admitting the writ petition, stayed the declaration of results of MPTCs and ZPTCs for the mandals wholly situated in the Scheduled Areas. Finally on 23rd of March, 1995, the Hon'ble Court in its judgment declared the application of the A.P. Panchayat RAj Act of 1994 in the Scheduled Area as un-constitutional, and set aside the elections held in the Scheduled Area.

The Government of Andhra Pradesh went in appeal to the Supreme Court challenging the High Court Judgment. The Supreme Court finally on 3rd may, 1995 gave an interim order permitting the Sec to continue the election process outside the schedule areas, while admitting the Special Leave Petition, and in the subsequent hearings of the case on 25th April and 3rd May. However, in its hearing on 3rd May, 1995 the Supreme Court in an interim order, permitted the state election Commissioner to continue with the poll process outside the scheduled areas. that is, holding zilla parishad elections with the representatives elected from the territorial constituencies not having scheduled area. The final hearing took place in the Supreme Court on August 3, 1995 and the court reserved the judgment, Meanwhile, the A.P. state government promulgated panchayat raj act for scheduled areas in November, 1997.

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