

*Navyandhra :*  
*My Journey*

Early days in the making of Sunrise State

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I.Y.R. Krishna Rao

# **NAVYANDHRA : MY JOURNEY**

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**I. Y. R. Krishna Rao**

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**Chandana Khan and Murali Sagar**  
**officers who displayed commitment and**  
**devotion to duty in protecting state interests**



# Foreword



**M. GOPALAKRISHNA**

Former Special Chief Secretary to Govt of A.P.

The Book *Navyandhra: My Journey* is a timely, relevant and useful addition to the records of contemporary administrative and political history of Andhra Pradesh. Andhra was the first State to be formed on linguistic basis in India and inaugurated on 1st October 1953 in the temporary capital, Kurnool. Later on several other linguistic states were formed, considering language as a unifying factor for taking Government to the grass root level. However, it soon became more of a divisive force when it failed to meet local politico-cultural aspirations and socio-economic needs.

Andhra State has gone through a metamorphosis from Kurnool to Hyderabad in 1956, as the capital of a larger Telugu speaking Vishalandhra and composite State of Andhra Pradesh. After formation of Telangana State in 2014, it has again become the residuary state of Andhra Pradesh.

The author, Sri I.Y.R. Krishna Rao, is an Indian Administrative Service officer of the 1979 batch, who worked during the momentous period of re-organization as Chief Secretary of the residuary Andhra Pradesh State and retired in January 2016. He held many senior positions and is known for his integrity, honesty and down to earth views and one who calls “a spade a spade”.

He had a ring-side view of the developments, pulls and pressures and trials and tribulations of bifurcation, and played an important role in the dynamics of re-organization and formation of Andhra Pradesh. Sri Krishna Rao is the author of *Whose Capital Amaravathi?* published in March 2018 by Foundation for Social Awareness. It gives a bird's eye view of the theory and practice of selection of capital cities all over the world. The selection of Amaravathi as capital of A.P. and the grandiose plan for it as a megapolis deviates from the principles and practices of securing consensus of affected persons and also the recommendations of Shri Sivaramakrishnan Committee constituted by Government of India. The suggestion of Sri Krishna Rao for location at yet another site Donakonda, where Government land was available, was also not accepted. The selection of Amaravathi despite its shortcomings and misgivings has become a controversial issue because of its large financial and ecological implications when there are more pressing socio-economic issues remaining to be solved and hence became a matter of public importance and debate. The account of the events and the issues, problems and solutions is therefore worthy of discussion and evolution of an acceptable solution.

The book details how he became Chief Secretary and the issues he faced regarding division of All-India Services officers, common institutions, organizations and employees between the two states. The challenges faced in the power distribution and power purchase agreements are also mentioned. Many unseemly situations that took place could have been avoided.

Though the A.P. Re-organization Act provided for the location of A.P. Government in Hyderabad for a period of 10 years with provision under Section 8 for the safety and security of the settlers from Andhra in Hyderabad and had assigned that specific role to the common Governor, the sudden hasty move to shift the officers and employees of A.P. from Hyderabad to Vijayawada

without adequate arrangements has been decried by all concerned and affected persons. He conjectures that the hasty decision to move to Vijayawada might have been, to some extent influenced by the media reports about the suspected role of the Chief Minister of A.P. in the “Note for Vote” case, involving legislator Revanth Reddy of the Telugu Desam Party.

At a time when statesmanship and camaraderie was the need of the hour, the absence of good relationships at the political, social, cultural and administrative levels between the two states complicated matters. Many issues could have been sorted out with mutual trust between the two states and a “Give and Take” approach. Perhaps, a common cadre of All-India Service Officers for both Telangana and A.P. State for a few years could probably have amicably sorted out many issues.

The author bemoans the lack of adequate trust, transparency and cordial relationship between the Chief Minister and Chief Secretary. The Chief Minister’s attitude of “I know everything” and that “our people have briefed me” appears to have put off the author and made him reticent. He decries the superior and condescending attitude of officers of the Chief Minister’s office as well. He contrasts this with treatment accorded to him by the Telangana Chief Minister and Irrigation Minister who invited him with due courtesy for the Ayutha Chandi Yagna held in Telangana State.

The recent erosion of the authority of the office of Chief Secretary and Cabinet Secretary as Head of Civil Services to advice the political executive on matters of state is ascribed to the growing clout of the Chief Minister’s office (CMO) and the Prime Minister’s office (PMO), which is seen to be bypassing official decision-making processes.

During the swearing in of the Chief Minister Sri Chandra Babu Naidu in June 2014, the Chief Secretary was wearing traditional Andhra dress of Dhothi, Kurta and angavastram and not the prescribed official dress. The Chief Minister seems to have remarked that the photos could raise doubts about who was being sworn in as Chief Minister!

The book lauds the extra-ordinary efforts of the entire state machinery, and in particular the district administration, which responded magnificently to the disaster caused by the “Hud-hud” cyclone which hit Visakhapatnam city during October 2014 causing much damage. The spontaneous response and support of the citizens and the Government of India is indeed heart-warming.

The book gives some unsavoury instances and features of high value urban land cases that he handled during his tenure as Chief Commissioner of Land Administration, where politicians in nexus with land sharks have occupied valuable government lands and benefitted.

Other issues relate to a potpourri of matters concerning the B.C. leader Kancha Iliah, and the difficulties faced by the author in the last two months of his tenure.

Post retirement, Sri Krishna Rao was appointed as Chairman of A.P. State Brahmin Corporation, where he tried to identify the problems and find solutions to alleviate the socio-economic conditions, employment opportunities and welfare of the poorer sections including setting up of a Co-operative Society. He expresses regret that the Act pertaining to Archakas of temples was passed in the year 2007, but rules were not framed and notified leading to loss of morale among the Archakas. He relates how he was eased out of the Chairman's post due to machinations of rival leaders of the Brahmin Community, aided and abetted by the executives in the Chief Minister's Office.



The book shows how the administrative hierarchy and processes are being eroded by vested interests and how the role of the Civil Servants is being curtailed or bypassed by politicians and powers close to them. The book raises pertinent questions about the direction of progress and how communal and casteist powers are growing stronger and can deflect purpose, process and people and affect the pace of socio-economic justice and development.

The author must be complimented for the brevity, clarity and racy manner of narration which is simple and lucid. The book makes a good case study about the travails and tribulations of the residuary state of A.P. which has earlier seen many a transformation and now a re-birth! The book should be read by all civil servants, management students, politicians, academicians, social workers and right thinking people in the society and also find a place in libraries as well.

Continuous socio-economic transformation of Andhra Pradesh holds the key to its higher, faster, stronger and better future. Good governance alone can lay the foundations for a prosperous forward-looking Sunrise State which is truly participatory and provides for real democracy of the people, by the people and for the people.

What people desire and want is “a little less of the sorrows and a little more of the joys of life!”

# Introduction



**AJEYA KALLAM**

Former Chief Secretary, Andhra Pradesh.

This book is a chronicle of various developments that Sri IYR Krishna Rao was directly or indirectly involved in before his becoming chief secretary of the new state of Andhra Pradesh, as well as the ones that he handled during his tenure as chief secretary. I knew IYR personally from my ITDA days in Khammam district. He is an outspoken bureaucrat. Outspokenness is his strength as well as his weakness. Political executive many a time feels uncomfortable with outspoken officers. He did openly express his views on the way in which the place for the new capital was chosen, which disturbed real estate gangs as well as so-called public representatives whose interests are mainly private.

I also had an opportunity to notice a few developments leading to the division of this state from close quarters. I entirely agree with IYR's views on the conduct of leaders from Andhra region during those critical days. Leaders from all political parties more or less wanted to be politically correct all the time rather than working for safeguarding the interests of the region. A majority of them never believed that the division would materialize. The reason for this also could be the double talk of certain highest authorities holding constitutional posts in private. They quite often privately vent their feelings against the division and assured Andhra leaders

that the division is next to impossible since constitutional process itself is very tedious. Having taken at face value those assurances leaders of the region thought that making demands for their region seeking amendments, etc. would be tantamount to acceptance of the proposed division and therefore kept themselves away from voicing concern about various provisions of the Reorganisation Act. Despite that a few bureaucrats burnt midnight oil and suggested several amendments which were ignored by Delhi.

Congress, the family-owned and controlled party used this opportunity with some degree of contempt. Historically Congress party encouraged two categories of leaders: one, hereditary scions of the earlier generation leaders and secondly rootless loyalists who cannot even get deposits on their own at the field level, branding them as intellectuals. To deal with AP division, the same trick was employed by entrusting it to one such loyal minister who coordinated the process with some mischievous officers of the Union home ministry, who saw an opportunity for personal exploitation of the situation. The end result was one of the substandard statute with more or less one-sided provisions at the cost of Andhra region. One such provision is fixation of boundaries. Telangana leaders went on record asking for separation of the region as it existed on 1.11.1956 before its merger with Andhra state. Why did the erstwhile Bhadrachalam region of Andhra then got included in Telangana? It was done purposefully to create problems for execution of Polavaram project as well as to claim right over Sileru hydro power. Important political leaders from AP indirectly helped this by frequently voicing concerns on the likely difficulties the new state of Telangana might face specially with regard to power, etc. in their anxiety to discourage division. As pointed out above those characters from Delhi, the minister and the senior officers of the home ministry, used every material given

by Andhra leaders and government to their advantage in order to draft provisions safeguarding Telangana interest.

IYR also pointed out several consequential non-cooperative stances of the home ministry and the not so fair a process followed for dividing officers. The sum and substance is that constitutional morality was given a go by in the entire process. Government of India never took an interest in addressing the division issues or inconsistencies in the provisions of the Act since those in power at Delhi have more political stake in Telangana. Post division too both the states unfortunately were blessed with unethical leaders who became popular only as narrators of stories more than as visionaries and who openly encouraged defections, corruption, wasteful expenditure, et cetera pushing both the states into debt trap. They have hardly any regard for public opinion, never believed in consultation, and spent all their energy mainly managing the media.

Insider's view of happenings at the government level is interestingly narrated by IYR in a vivid manner and I admire his memory. I hope the public read the book, appreciate the contents and understand the way in which our public institutions are managed or mismanaged. May God give wisdom to the citizens of both the states to choose right role models with honesty, humility and fairness as their leaders in the coming months and years to shape their state's destinies.

## Acknowledgements

It was a friend of mine who was closely following the role I was taking in resolution of issues after the division of Andhra Pradesh, who suggested it would be worthwhile to share my experiences with the public since I was personally a witness to a momentous period. I thought it was a good idea and dictated some notes immediately after retirement to my personal secretary (PS) Mr Seshagiri, but then I took up another assignment. Once I became free I expanded the scope to cover the period of four years from when I became the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration and finally came out of the Brahmin Corporation. Hence this book contains my experiences dealing with high-profile land cases of the period I was CCLA and ends up with an account of what actually led to my exit from the Brahmin Corporation, which, though I had an opportunity to explain in a press conference immediately after my removal, there are a number of things which went unsaid which this book takes care of.

When the state's division issues turned confrontational, two officers of Andhra Pradesh, Special Chief Secretary, Tourism, Mrs Chandana Khan and Additional Commissioner of Labour Mr Murali Sagar exhibited exemplary devotion to duty and faced personal hardships to protect the state's interest. I am dedicating this book to these two officers.

Since the book is autobiographical in nature covering a certain period, it discusses the men and women with whom I interacted, their nature and attitude.

I hope this will enable readers to appreciate better the issues faced during state's division, shortcomings in the AP Reorganisation

Act, post-division issues and their settlement. It also throws light on why and under what circumstances I had to leave the Brahmin Corporation.

I sincerely thank Sri M. Gopala Krishna garu, IAS (Retired), a senior colleague in service, who when I approached him went through the book and wrote a foreward. Mr Ajeya Kalllam with whom my association dates back to Khammam when I was Collector and he was PO, ITDA during 1987-89 also readily consented and wrote a foreword. I thank both of them. Mr Y S Murty, my good old friend and college and hostel mate in Silver Jubilee College, took the trouble to edit this book. He also edited my earlier book *Whose Capital Amaravathi* and I thank him for the same. My special thanks are to my PS Seshagiri who is always with me faithfully in all my endeavours.

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# [ 1 ]

## How I Became the Chief Secretary

**B**y November 2012, when Mr Kiran Kumar Reddy was the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, the possibility opened up for me to become the chief secretary of the state. Mrs Minnie Matthew, who was the then chief secretary, was retiring in January 2013. I was very much in the zone of consideration for the post. There was an issue with Mr Kiran Kumar Reddy which I thought I needed to sort out before he takes a view on the successor to Mrs Minnie Matthew.

The issue with Mr Kiran Kumar Reddy relates to the period when I was Executive Officer of the Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanam. I became EO TTD in 2009 and continued there till 2011. In November 2010, Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy became Chief Minister and from then there were rumours in Tirupati that I would be shifted shortly. On one or two occasions when I met him, I could understand from his body language that he was not comfortable about my continuation there. As rumoured, I was transferred on June 16, 2011 from TTD and posted to the labour department which till then was headed by an officer of the rank of secretary. I was by then in the cadre of senior principal secretary and on the verge of promotion as special chief secretary. When I personally met Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy and mentioned this he was good enough to accommodate me as Principal Secretary, Marketing and Cooperation though it was also not appropriate for the level of my seniority.

The background to Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy's attitude towards me could be an incident which happened when he was Speaker of the Assembly and I was the EO, TTD. There was one Sivakumar Reddy who was the additional vigilance and security officer working in TTD responsible for the temples located in Tirupati. Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy requested me over telephone to post him uphill at Tirumala. There were some issues related to this and I felt it was not desirable to post him at Tirumala. Since the request was from the Speaker of the Assembly I thought it fit to personally meet him and explain the issues. Accordingly I took an appointment and met him at Hyderabad and explained my point of view. He listened without any comments and I thought he was satisfied with the information I furnished. But in retrospect I could realise he did not take to it kindly.

Subsequently he along with Union minister Sri P. Chidambaram came to Tirumala and spent some quality time together and at that time I did take care of their visit as required according to protocol. Within a few days of this meeting Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy was chosen by the Congress high command to be the Chief Minister. One can very well understand what transpired between them at Tirumala.

When my name was in the zone of consideration for chief secretary, I thought I need to get the issues sorted out so that he will not be prejudiced by the earlier incident. An important minister in the State cabinet, who was also close to the Chief Minister, happened to be a junior of mine in the university. I approached him to speak to the Chief Minister and clarify the matter. He did accordingly and informed me that in addition to the above incident, Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy also felt that I may not be flexible enough to accommodate his interests. Though his initial response was not favourable, by the next month I got the feedback that he is inclined to take me as the chief secretary. This was told to me by another minister who was with him at Delhi during that period. But something seems to have happened in between which I am not able to know which made him to decide against my candidature

for the post of chief secretary. In the last week of January, the State government wrote to the Centre for early repatriation (from central services) of my batch mate Mr PK Mohanty for being posted as chief secretary of Andhra Pradesh. He landed by 24th of January expecting to take over as chief secretary from 1<sup>st</sup> February on the retirement of Ms. Minnie Matthew.

But who can gauge the whims and fancies of the political leadership? Having called Mr Mohanty back to be the chief secretary of Andhra Pradesh from the central service, on 26th of January the government decided to give three months' extension to Mrs Minnie Matthew. He had to wait before he could become the chief secretary. So he was accommodated as the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration for the three month period. On 1<sup>st</sup> May, after Mr PK Mohanty took over as chief secretary I was posted as CCLA. The normal tradition, unless specifically broken, is that the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration is considered the "chief secretary in waiting".

Meanwhile things were moving fast towards formation of the Telangana state. On July 30, 2013 the Congress Working committee made a resolution for formation of a separate Telangana state. The process for the bifurcation of the state gained momentum and Mr PK Mohanty as chief secretary and Mr Rajiv Sharma, Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Home, Government of India, started playing a crucial role in shaping the AP reorganisation Bill. Whatever were the reasons, the chief secretary did not involve me in the bifurcation process though I was the senior-most civil servant after him in the state, and next in line to be the chief secretary. Hence my knowledge of the Act and the division process was very little when I took over as Chief Secretary of the residuary state of Andhra Pradesh. Amidst heated discussion in the Parliament, some unparliamentary behaviour by some parliament members, in a closed-door situation, with live telecast terminated, the AP Reorganisation Bill was passed by Parliament on 18th and 20th of February 2014 by Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha respectively.

It is around that time that opportunity came in my way again to become chief secretary of Andhra Pradesh from 1st March 2014 on superannuation of Mr Mohanty. Mr Mohanty started publicly declaring that he has no intention to seek an extension and would be handing over charge to his successor on 1st march. Around 16th February Mr Ajeya Kallam, who was the Principal Secretary to Chief Minister Mr Kiran Kumar Reddy, rang me up and informed that the CM had made up his mind to make me the next chief secretary and suggested that I meet him personally. Accordingly I met the Chief Minister. Mr. Kallam informed me later in the day that the Chief Minister was inclined to sign the file appointing me CS on the same day but the chief secretary felt it could be signed and issued by the end of the month. Things again took a different turn and Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy resigned as Chief Minister on 19th of February in protest against passing of the AP Reorganisation Bill.

This led to the Governor taking over the state administration. Since by then Mr PK Mohanty was publicly declaring that he had no intention of seeking an extension, my becoming the chief secretary from 1st of March looked certain. Around 23rd February the Honourable Governor organised a religious event in the Raj Bhavan and Mr Dora, ex-DGP of Andhra Pradesh, after checking with Mr Mahendra Reddy, IG Intelligence, came to me and congratulated me.

Since it was the last few days of the month, series of farewell dinners also started and on 25th one such dinner was organised in the MCRHRD Institute attended both by me as well as Mr PK Mohanty. When I returned home from the dinner there was a call from Mr Digvijay Singh, Congress party in charge for Andhra Pradesh. I never met him earlier but could recognise his voice. He congratulated me stating that I was going to be the next chief secretary of Andhra Pradesh. Since it was from the horse's mouth I thought the information must be correct.

Things took a different turn on 26th February. Mr PK Mohanty went to Delhi on that day ostensibly to discuss the state

bifurcation issues but more specifically to explore the possibility of his extension. Another IAS batch mate of mine, a lady, who was there in the dinner on 25th evening, told me some time later that Mrs Mohanty told her that her husband was going to Delhi the next day to explore the possibility of getting an extension of service. He might have impressed the authorities in Delhi that his continuation is essential for the smooth division of the state.

February 27 happened to be Shivaratri and on the invitation of Sri MVS Prasad garu, a senior colleague in service and dharmadhikari of Sankar Mutt, Shamshabad, I went there in the evening. All those who met me there also congratulated me since by then the news got circulated that I would be the chief secretary of Andhra Pradesh from 1st of March. When I came back home from Sankar Mutt there was a phone call from Mr Ramanujam, secretary in the Prime Minister's office and a batch mate of mine. He said he was sorry to tell me some unfavourable news that a decision was taken to give extension to Mr PK Mohanty. I told him that there was only one day left and it may not be possible to go through the whole process to give extension in one day. But he told me that all those things were taken care of, and in fact the file was moving from the Cabinet Secretary, and it would be through in time. There was nothing I could say in reply. Mr PK Mohanty's lobbying in Delhi on 26th February paid him rich dividend in terms of extension. Though there was nothing wrong in working for his extension, he could at least have avoided publicly declaring that he was not interested in extension while at the same time working for it. On the evening of 28th, the IAS Officers' Association organised a dinner to welcome the new chief secretary and bid farewell to the outgoing one. But it ended up as a dinner to celebrate Mr Mohanty's extension. Anyway, I did not attend that party.

The same night I sought an appointment with the Hon. Governor since he should be in full know of things as to why there was this sudden development regarding the chief secretary. I met Mr Narasimhan at Raj Bhavan on 28th morning. There was a feeling of guilt visible in his face. He requested me not to keep

this in mind and declared that I would be the chief secretary a few months later, if not now . It was not a pleasant meeting and I left Raj Bhavan talking plainly to him without mincing any words. I came back home and wrote a letter to the Chief Secretary lodging my protest against the manner in which the last-minute decision was taken for extension, after giving me an impression till then that I would be the next chief secretary. I quoted the All India Service rules which mention that for anybody to be given an extension he should have extraordinary abilities and there is no one in the cadre who could replace him. Since both these conditions do not exist there was no ground for the extension. I also mentioned adverse comments passed by the Supreme Court against the chief secretary in a controversy relating to a case between Mr Umesh Kumar and Mr Dinesh Reddy for the post of the DGP. That an outsider would be better suited to manage the issues of division of the state is an insult to the very concept of all-India services, I wrote in the letter.

Subsequently I came to know the sequence of events on 26th February when Mr Mohanty met the Union Home secretary and informed him his willingness to continue and the Governor gave his consent on 27th. The file moved on 28 February, cleared by the Minister for Personnel around 2 PM and by the Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh at 4:30 PM and finally the actual order was issued at 10:45 PM in the night. Mr Mohanty stayed back in the office and took charge late that night. There was a public interest litigation filed in the AP High Court relating to the extension of tenure to Mr Mohanty by Mr Chandramouliswara Rao and Mr Divakar Babu. The State Government in its counter mentioned that the caretaker Chief Minister Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy refused to take a view on the issue and the Governor had taken a decision to continue the existing chief secretary. The case was heard and finally dismissed by the High Court.

Meanwhile general elections were held and Sri Chandrababu Naidu and KCR won, to become the Chief Ministers of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana respectively. I thought given the new circumstances my chances of becoming the chief secretary were

bleak. By then it was clear that an officer of Andhra origin was a *persona non grata* in Telangana and in Andhra Pradesh the scales looked tilted in favour of Mr Ramesh Kumar, special chief secretary to the Governor. He was junior to me by three years but was a special chief secretary by then and in the zone of consideration for CS post. He belongs to the same community as the Chief Minister of (new) Andhra Pradesh. Since he was working with the Governor and is considered to be very close to him, it was but natural that the Governor would be batting for him. Some of my friends informed me that hectic lobbying was going on in his favour in the power corridors. There was a debate within Telugu Desam party whether the chief secretary or the DGP should be from the community of the Chief Minister. Finally it was decided to go in for a person from their community as DGP and select someone else for the post of chief secretary. Mr J V Ramudu was the choice for the post of DGP and this led to the elimination of Ramesh Kumar from the zone of consideration for the post of chief secretary. In those circumstances my name along with that of my batch mate Mr I V Subba Rao came up for consideration. Mr J V Ramudu and I are good friends right from the time we prepared for the IAS exam and he was able to convince Sri Chandrababu Naidu that I would be a better choice for chief secretary and the chemistry between both of us would facilitate better teamwork in administration. In the last week of May I got a call from Mr Sambasiva Rao who was by then working with the Chief Minister-designate, requesting me to meet Sri Naidu as it was decided to take me as the chief secretary. Accordingly I met him and the next day accompanied him to the Governor who was to issue the order of appointment since by then the state was yet to be bifurcated and the new Chief Ministers were yet to take charge.

The extended tenure of Mr Mohanty came to an end on 1st of June and I took charge as the chief secretary of (undivided) Andhra Pradesh on the same day before bifurcation, and continued as the chief secretary of the residuary state from 2nd June. The Chief Minister, looking for an auspicious day, did not take charge till 7th June. The first one week was spent in understanding the AP Reorganisation Act and its implications and making preparations

for the swearing-in ceremony of the new Cabinet.

A lot of activity happened during Governor's rule in terms of preparation for the division of the state. All the files were copied and made available to both the states. In those days he was assisted by two advisors. A temporary division of the staff was done and division of Transco and Genco was completed. The physical area in the secretariat was divided between Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Temporary staff was also divided between the two states both in the secretariat and in heads of the department offices. The process of division of the all-India service officers started with the formation of a committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Pratyush Sinha. Though division of Schedule 10 institutions had not started, a committee under the chairmanship of Mrs Sheela Bhide was set up for division of Schedule 9 institutions and another committee under the chairmanship of Mr Kamalanathan for division of the staff on a permanent basis.

In the first one week, the immediate task on hand was swearing-in ceremony of the new cabinet on 7th June in an open area opposite the Nagarjuna University in Guntur district. A huge gathering was expected and accordingly arrangements were made. Sri Chandrababu Naidu personally rang up a number of leaders and requested them to attend the swearing-in ceremony. It was a different story altogether when he called Jayalalithaa to invite her she did not come on line and it was a little embarrassing for the Chief Minister as we were all sitting with him at that time. The auspicious time for swearing in was decided as the evening of 7th June.

On 7th we were all there at the place designated for swearing in of the new cabinet. There was a suggestion to me that the traditional Indian dress *dhori-lalchi* which I used to wear regularly as EO, TTD looks good on me and that I come in that dress for the swearing-in ceremony since the Chief Secretary has a role of inviting the Chief Minister-designate and the ministers to take the oath of office. I also felt it would be an appropriate dress and accordingly dressed in that fashion and met Chief Minister Sri Chandrababu Naidu just



before the swearing-in ceremony. He gave me a look from top to the bottom. I explained to him that I wore the special dress since it was a special occasion. He commented that if I am in this dress and he in plain trousers people may be mistaken that he is swearing me in as the Chief Minister.

The swearing-in ceremony went off well with a lot of dignitaries from the then ally of TDP, the BJP, being present as well as Chief Ministers of some states. A number of relatives of the Chief Minister came and their bloated egos made it a problem for the police to ensure people go to their designated places. There was confusion at the venue and in spite of making the best arrangements and efforts, there was pandemonium associated with such huge gatherings.

As mentioned earlier I took charge on 1st June and Mr Rajiv Sharma took charge as chief secretary of Telangana on 2nd morning. He was by then working as the Additional Secretary in Ministry of Home, Government of India, dealing with the AP Reorganisation Act. As a person who was involved in drafting the act he was well versed with the provisions of the act. He was also by then a member of the Pratyush Sinha committee appointed by Government of India for the division of all-India service officers representing the Centre. Though I was the next seniormost civil servant within the state somehow the previous chief secretary did not keep me involved in the process of bifurcation and to that extent my knowledge of the act and the process of bifurcation was very limited. For the first six months after I took charge as the chief secretary the main task was to address issues of division, and given the attitude of some of the officers of Government of India, and the clout Mr Rajiv Sharma had with them, it was not an easy task.

## [ 2 ]

### Pratyush Sinha Committee and Division of All-India Service Officers

The process of allocation of all-India service officers to the two states started much before June 2 with the formation of the Pratyush Sinha committee. The then chief secretary Mr PK Mohanty, Mr Rajiv Sharma representing the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India dealing with the division of the state, and a representative from the Department of Personnel were members of the committee. Broadly the basis for division of the officers and the criteria to be followed were decided even before the bifurcation of the state. The criteria evolved for the division of the all-India service officers was skewed in favour of Telangana. The division of officers was to take place based upon the ratio of districts in the two states, 13 :10 for Andhra Pradesh and Telangana respectively. Actually more all India service officers work in the State secretariat and heads of department offices than in the districts. Hence the ratio of districts as the criterion for division of officers is not the best. A different and more rational criterion should have been evolved. The population ratio of 58:42 relied upon for dividing a number of other items should have been a much better criterion for division of the all-India service officers in the absence of any other suitable and agreeable formula. In any case the ratio of districts was not the best formula. There was nothing much I could do at that point of time since the criteria were already decided and the Pratyush Sinha committee already had three to four sittings and broadly evolved a set of parameters to be followed while allotting individual officers to the states.

While deciding the allocation of individual officers precedents of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand were taken into consideration. Officers are divided into three categories. The direct recruit officers who are native to the undivided state of Andhra Pradesh, the promotee officers who are also native to the undivided state of Andhra Pradesh, and the officers from outside the state in terms of nativity but at the time of recruitment allotted to the Andhra Pradesh cadre by Government of India and hence belonging to AP cadre. The allocation of officers is quite a complex formula balancing the cadre in terms of seniority and reservation for both the states. First, the number of posts are divided between both the states in terms of the 13:10 formula already decided. This is done level-wise in all the three services of IAS IPS and IFS. For example, the category of special chief secretary, principal secretaries and down the line are divided in a similar manner. Then the number of posts allocated to each state based on 13:10 formula for category is again broken down into ratio between direct recruit insiders, direct recruit outsiders and promotee insiders. Within this category, again the reservation principal for SC, ST and BC categories is built-in. Where this results in the number of posts available for allocation being less than one for any one of these categories, it is rounded up to one and proportionately adjusted in another level of scale.

When cadres were divided in Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand the nativity principle was applied to the direct recruit insiders and for the promotee insiders and the “outsider” officers (I am using this word to describe the officers of all-India services not native to the state for want of a better word), the roster system was applied. In view of the bitterness already generated in the process of division of the state the insider promotee officers also wanted the criterion of nativity taken for their allocation since they would prefer to work within the state to which they belong. This issue was taken up by the Governor with Government of India during the period of Governor’s rule and Government of India has agreed for applying the principle to the promotee officers as well. But still the point remains if in a particular category the number of posts are less and the officers based on nativity in that particular category are more, the excess starting from the junior-most within that category will

be reallocated to the other state so that the proportion of the posts divided remains the same for both the states.

For the division of the officers who are not native to the undivided state of Andhra Pradesh (termed commonly as outsider officers) the roster system is followed for allocation. Lottery is drawn to decide to which state the senior-most officer would go and then the others are allocated as per the already drawn roster to ensure that officers get divided between both the states in proportion to their seniority so that both the states get officers at different levels of seniority as per the already decided ratio of 13:10. Of course in every category the quota system of reservation at different levels of seniority is scrupulously followed.

There was not much of a problem in allocating the insider officers. Certain records in terms of their nativity and place of study were relied upon to determine nativity and allocation was done. Wherever the number allocated exceeded the number of posts they were reallocated to the other state. Those who were very keen to stay in a particular state approached courts of law and obtained stay and stayed on in the state of their choice.

But allocation of the outsider officers proved a little tricky. First of all most of them preferred to stay back in Hyderabad and to that extent preferred Telangana cadre. Further the process of allocation of outside officers got into certain issues which complicated the matter.

The controversy started from the day lottery for allocation of outside officers was taken. In the second or third meeting of the Pratyush Sinha committee attended by me, the lottery for allocating the outside officers was taken. In the lottery the name Telangana came and hence it was presumed the first seniormost officer would go to Telangana and allocation of others would be based on the roster starting with Telangana. Since the roster sheets were already available with officers they started fitting in the officers in the rosters to know to which state they would be going as per the roster starting with Telangana. If the same were to be followed Mr Rajiv Sharma would have landed in Andhra Pradesh cadre.

In the next meeting it was made known that if Telangana comes in the lottery the roster starts from Andhra Pradesh. The precedents of Chhattisgarh and Jharkhand were quoted and minutes of the earlier meetings were shown to substantiate the same. Without knowing this, a number of officers made their own calculations and mentally decided that they would be going to a particular cadre and were disappointed with this clarification. The actual allocation was exactly contrary to the calculations they made.

Another important issue that complicated the division of outside officers was whether Mr PK Mohanty should be counted in or out while making the allocation of officers. He was holding the charge till evening of 1st June and handed over the charge to me then. If he is counted in, then Mr Rajiv Sharma, Chief Secretary of Telangana, will have to go to Andhra Pradesh as per the roster and if Mr Mohanty is counted out he stays with Telangana. Mr Pratyush Sinha decided not to count Mr Mohanty in. This led to a lot of resentment among a number of outside officers who felt there are strong legal grounds to count him in. All those whose calculations of the roster were upset because of this decision felt unhappy about it. They felt on such an important legal matter the Department of Personnel should have at least taken the Attorney General's opinion. I also felt that Mr Pratyush Sinha was not fair in some of these issues. In the committee generally Mr Pratyush Sinha and Mr Rajiv Sharma used to take a common view on a number of issues and I used to have a different point of view. There were heated discussions but the end result was one-sided as both of them used to vote me out on these issues. Another contentious issue was how the spouse of all-India service officer who is also in the service should be treated after he or she changes cadre after marriage. As per the rules in vogue when the spouse changes cadre on marriage he or she takes the last position in that batch in that state. The original list was prepared taking the seniority as it was after they changed the cadre consequent on marriage. But later Mr Pratyush Sinha wanted to change this taking into consideration the original seniority in the IAS combined list before they changed

the cadre consequent on marriage. This would change the roster completely. I was aware that this was being done to accommodate the cadre preferences of some officers. I strongly objected to the same in the committee meeting. I further reminded Mr Pratyush Sinha that if he insists on this we may have to reconsider the issue of counting PK Mohanty in and redrawing the roster. He did not take kindly to my objections which resulted in a heated argument. Again I was voted out 2 to 1 as Mr Sinha and Mr Sharma were together on the issue. I insisted and recorded my dissent note on the issue which further infuriated him.

Overall the criteria for the allocation of all-India service officers was skewed in favour of Telangana. The ratio of 13:10 applied for dividing the cadre officers is based upon the number of districts and this is not the correct ratio for dividing officers as explained above. Since the criteria were decided even before the division of the state there was nothing much I could do about it. In the division of the outside officers also rules were tweaked to accommodate the preferences of some officers. Since most of the outside officers preferred to stay back in Hyderabad they were able to influence the decision-making process as well as approach courts of law for favourable orders to stay back in the Telangana cadre. The fact that Mr Rajiv Sharma worked at the Centre and handled the state division process also helped.

The Central Administrative Tribunal in its orders at a later date found fault with the manner in which the Pratyush Sinha committee made the allocation of officers. But by then most of the officers got settled in their cadres, most of them as per their preferences. Time itself sorted out the remaining cadre allocation issues with officers getting reconciled to the cadres they are allotted even if it was not as per their original preference.

# [ 3 ]

## How Section 8 in the Reorganisation Act Got Eclipsed

Section 8 in the AP Reorganisation Act is a unique section not to be found in any other reorganisation acts reorganizing the states of Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and others into states of Bihar and Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh, et cetera. That is because Andhra Pradesh was the only state in which the demand for division came from an area where the capital is located. In other states the residuary state happened to be the state where the capital was located and the new states after division started looking for building their own capital. But since here the state was getting divided with the capital located in the area which is the scene of the agitation demanding division and there was substantial population from Andhra area settled in Hyderabad and there were genuine apprehensions about safety of their life and property and as the act provides for Hyderabad to be the common capital for both the states for a period of 10 years, Section 8 was incorporated in the act to safeguard the interests of people from Andhra area living in capital region and also facilitate smooth functioning of both the governments operating from the common capital.

This section in the act reads as follows:

8. (1) On and from the appointed day, for the purposes of administration of the common capital area, the Governor shall have special responsibility for the security of life, liberty and property of all those who reside in such area.

(2) In particular, the responsibility of the Governor shall extend to matters such as law and order, internal security and security of vital installations, and management and allocation of Government buildings in the common capital area.

(3) In discharge of the functions, the Governor shall, after consulting the Council of Ministers of the State of Telangana, exercise his individual judgment as to the action to be taken:

Provided that if any question arises whether any matter is or is not a matter as respects which the Governor is under this subsection required to act in the exercise of his individual judgment, the decision of the Governor in his discretion shall be final, and the validity of anything done by the Governor shall not be called in question on the ground that he ought or ought not to have acted in the exercise of his individual judgment.

(4) The Governor shall be assisted by two advisors to be appointed by the Central Government.

It should be recalled in this connection that when the process of division was going on, the Telangana leadership was very focused and had a good liaisoning in Delhi and lobbied well to get the Reorganisation Act in their best interests. On the other hand the leaders from Andhra Pradesh irrespective of party affiliations were lobbying more for their own personal interest and never cared to look into the details of the act, nor took steps to protect the interests of the new state and its population in case the division was going to be a reality. This total negligence on the part of the AP leadership could be seen at every stage and every part of the AP Reorganisation Act. We had a chief minister who was trying to build his independent political future and making his own calculations for his political future and talking of a united state but who never thought it fit to have a minute look at the reorganisation bill and suggest provisions in the interests of Andhra area. This could have been done by all the political parties irrespective of the public stand they have taken on the State's bifurcation by coming together at an informal level and lobbying for provisions in the act that would be favourable for Andhra area. That could be seen in a number of provisions of the act including section 8.



The major demand from the people from Andhra area was to make Hyderabad a union territory in case the division of the state was inevitable. From that demand to the way Section 8 is worded the gap is huge. The wording of the section made it toothless and the attitude of the Governor of the combined state and officials of the Central home ministry made the section purposeless. The final nail on the section was struck by Sri Chandrababu Naidu when he, after the vote for note case, decided to leave Hyderabad in a hurry and start operating from Vijayawada.

Since rules for operationalising certain sections need to be framed, we chalked out a plan that the rules governing this section should provide for representation for the police force from both the states, as Hyderabad was going to be the common capital for 10 years to come. The Telangana government vehemently opposed this stating that law and order is basically a state subject and as Hyderabad is located in Telangana the responsibility squarely lies with the government of Telangana. Our argument was that if it was so, where is the need for Section 8, discretionary powers to the Governor under that section, and appointment of two advisors to the Governor to advise him on implementation of this particular section. The Union Home Secretary Mr Anil Goswami was there during the process of division. As mentioned by me earlier, the Telangana leadership maintained good relations and cultivated the key officials in Government of India to get the process of bifurcation expedited and take it to its logical conclusion. He was part of this nexus and to that extent had specific preference for Telangana. The fact that Mr Rajiv Sharma who subsequently became the chief secretary of Telangana also worked as Additional Secretary, Home, in Delhi facilitated a better liaison for the Telangana government from day one. Regarding Section 8 I had a serious argument with Mr Anil Goswami. When I met him in Delhi and mentioned to him the need to have police force of Hyderabad city drawn from both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, his answer was that no self-respecting state would like to have a police force from the other state working in their jurisdiction. I shot back, saying if it is so why the division was done and a specific section incorporated in

the reorganisation act giving powers and special responsibility to the Governor for the security of life, liberty and property of all those who reside in the common capital area. Having put Section 8 in the act why was the Central government hesitating now to operationalise it? He didn't expect this from me and was taken aback. He didn't have an answer for the question. I also met the Cabinet Secretary and made a forceful plea for deploying police force from both the states in the common capital area. I took the opportunity of meeting the President of India when he was in Hyderabad and explained to him about the need to have forces drawn from both the states in the common capital area. Since the Central government has taken a view that law and order is a state subject and has to be managed by the respective states in spite of a forceful plea from Andhra Pradesh it was decided that the common capital area police force will be from Telangana and there is no provision in the act for drawing police force from both the states to manage law and order.

The role of the Union Home Secretary in implementation of the reorganisation act is very crucial. Mr Anil Goswami who was the home secretary at the time of the division of the state continued in the same post even after. He definitely had a soft corner for Telangana which had a major implication when issues concerning both the states were being sorted out. Luckily for us he got into an issue connected to a Congress leader Mr Mating Singh and had to resign. He was replaced by Mr LC Goyal, a batch mate of mine. Things looked good as I had excellent rapport with my batch mate. He was getting an appreciation of the issues and was willing to sort out the issues in a fair and equitable manner which is all that we wanted. But in spite of the fact that he was in a tenure post for two years he had to go within six months because of an issue on Nagaland agreement. The one who replaced him, Mr Rajiv Maharshi, is squarely responsible for all the subsequent problems that cropped up between our two states in terms of division of Schedule 9 and Schedule 10 institutions. He never bothered to even conduct one meeting between the two chief secretaries to sort out the issues and was unwilling even to give an appointment

to meet him when an appointment was sought. He continued to be the Home Secretary till I retired and I did not have a single meeting during that period to sort out any issue whatsoever. This led to avoidable friction between AP and Telangana in terms of division of the Schedule 10 and Schedule 9 institutions.

Meanwhile things were changing fast in Hyderabad. Haunted by the vote-for-note case Sri Chandrababu Naidu took a decision to shift the capital to Vijayawada and he started functioning from Vijayawada with his staff from the camp office built on the irrigation land. As I could find from conversations with him earlier, he never had any intention of leaving Hyderabad anywhere in the near future. He used to remark that we also have a responsibility for the Andhra population settled in the common capital area and we cannot leave them just like that and go. He got the camp office built at Vijayawada so that that would be a place for him to work while operating from Hyderabad. The manner in which 'I' block in the Secretariat at Hyderabad was chosen for AP CM's office on *vastu* considerations and renovated at a huge expense itself shows he at that time had no intention of leaving Hyderabad. It got ready by Vijayadasami time in 2014 and we moved in. But after the vote-for-note case and the subsequent developments he decided to leave Hyderabad and work full time from the camp office in Vijayawada. With this the Section 8 lost its relevance. "When your government itself is not in Hyderabad what is the need for Section 8," used to be the comment from officers from Government of India. Thus a silent burial was given to an important section in the act which never got operationalised in the first place. If the Central government was sincere about this issue they should have declared the common capital area as a union territory so that both the state governments operated from the same place just as it is happening in Chandigarh. If that arrangement was there perhaps the AP government would never have left Hyderabad. In the absence of such an arrangement, the subsequent developments such as the vote-for-note case effectively decided that Hyderabad would no longer be the common capital and would exclusively be the capital for Telangana. The two advisers to the Governor became ornamental with no work. The

most important work for the Governor under this section was more in terms of allocation of quarters wherever there was a little problem. Even that ceased to be an issue after the secretariat itself moved from Hyderabad to Amaravati. The last quarters issue in which the Governor intervened was when I vacated the quarter earmarked for the chief secretary. Andhra Pradesh government allotted it to Mrs Lakshmi Parthasarathi, Vice Chairman of Amaravati Development Corporation. The Governor intervened on behalf of the Telangana government to get it allocated to the chief secretary, Telangana.

The role played by the Hyderabad police, especially Commissioner of Police Mr Mahendra Reddy in maintaining law and order and ensuring nobody felt discriminated against in the period subsequent to the division of the state is commendable. Common people forgot about Section 8 since the purpose for which it was put in the act was served by the Hyderabad police force under his leadership.

# [ 4 ]

## The Power Purchase Agreements

One of the most contentious issues that cropped up between the two states immediately after bifurcation was honouring the existing power purchase agreements. As per the AP Reorganisation Act, power stations are to be divided between the states based upon the location. But the power purchase agreements already entered into for those plants which are already functioning and under construction need to be honoured. It was a known fact highlighted by Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy that consequent on division of the state, Andhra Pradesh would be power surplus and Telangana power deficit. This was because most of the generation units are located in Andhra area. That's why the reorganisation act specifically mentioned that the power purchase agreements will have to be honoured by both the states. At a political level the Andhra Pradesh government decided not to honour these power purchase agreements. I tried to convince the Chief Minister stating that legally we were bound to honour them but he said the decision was already taken. This one action of the AP government which was not correct and also does not stand any test of reasonableness led to the biggest gap of confidence between the two governments. Perhaps the thinking of the AP Chief Minister's could be that the government in Telangana would collapse if power is not made available to the agriculture sector. No such thing happened. The Telangana government survived, purchasing as much power as required at exorbitant rates. They were able to tide over that particular season and then concentrate on the sector to become independent of Andhra Pradesh in terms of availability of power for

the state. The role played by Sri Prabhakara Rao who was handling this sector in Telangana needs a special mention in this regard.

Soon after this incident, but I suppose independent of this, the Telangana government started putting barricades in the secretariat demarcating the areas for Andhra Pradesh secretariat and Telangana secretariat. Since till then employees were freely moving around they felt inconvenienced by this action. I thought of bringing it to the notice of Mr Harish Rao, minister in the Telangana cabinet. I rang him up, mentioned the barricading and asked him whether there is need for the barricades which may create avoidable gap between employees. He replied with a question whether the action of the AP Chief Minister in not honouring the power purchase agreements was in the direction of better relationship. I did not have an answer.

# [ 5 ]

## Challenges in the Division of Employees and Institutions

The division of Andhra Pradesh state is peculiar compared to the division of other states done earlier. When Chhattisgarh got divided from Madhya Pradesh or Jharkhand from Bihar, the demand for division came from a place where the capital is not located. The moment the division was agreed to they did not ask for any share in institutions located in the capital city but went away to establish their own capital and institutions. In the case of Andhra Pradesh it is different. The demand for division came from Telangana, an area where the capital city is located. Since the division was done against the wishes of the residuary state which is going to be located away from the capital city, the new Andhra Pradesh government started demanding for a share in the institutions located mostly at Hyderabad and had statewide jurisdiction. This equally applies to the institutions located in the Andhra area which have statewide jurisdiction. Since those in Andhra are very few and most of them are located in Hyderabad, Telangana was not keen on sharing those institutions and was happy with a formula of appropriating the institutions by the respective state governments as per their geographical location.

Most of these institutions are listed out in Schedule 9 and 10 of the act. Schedule 9 deals with the commercial organisations like the APSRTC, APIIC et cetera. Schedule 10 on the other hand deals with training institutions and universities. But the drafting of the act was so bad that even institutions like the State Election Commission,

Backward Classes Commission, Women's Commission which are statutory bodies and are neither training institutions nor education institutions, are also listed as part of Schedule 10.

Regarding Schedule 9 institutions the act proposed units located at the district level to be allotted to the State as per their geographical location and assets of the head office to be shared in the population ratio of 58:42. The process of division of the Staff as well as the definition of the headquarters was left vague. These issues where there was no clarity were interpreted differently by both the states leading to avoidable friction.

Regarding the Schedule 10 institutions Telangana government was of the view that all such institutions located within Hyderabad belong to them and they are willing to provide the necessary services to Andhra Pradesh on a mutually agreed basis. The Telangana Chief Secretary who was instrumental in drafting the bill as Additional Secretary, Home, Government of India, was firm that the institutions located at Hyderabad along with the corpus belong to Telangana. Section 75 of the act was relied upon by them in favour of their argument.

Andhra Pradesh had a different point of view on the issue. Section 75 in our opinion deals only with provision of services and as far as ownership is concerned part VI of the act applies since this alone discusses about division of assets and liabilities. Due to the totally divergent points of view on Schedule 10 institutions there was no possibility of resolving the issue harmoniously. Most of these institutions were located in Hyderabad and the local administration and police was with them; they occupied all these institutions. When we started fighting for our right it led to a lot of unpleasant incidents and confrontation between the two governments and their functionaries.

It all started with the National Institute of Tourism and Hospitality Management. Mrs Chandana Khan, who was Special Chief Secretary, Tourism in the undivided state was also chairman of NITHM. After bifurcation of the State she was allotted to the Andhra Pradesh cadre and in her capacity as the chairman of the



institute she went to attend the board meeting at the Institute. The Telangana government made exhaustive police arrangements to prevent her from going into the office. In protest, she sat on the footpath and held the board meeting and showed exemplary spirit of devotion to duty. Mr Sam Bob, who was chairman for the National Construction Academy, was also prevented from entering the office by the Telangana police. But other officers were not equal in their commitment to the cause.

In the meetings conducted by the Home Secretary, Government of India there used to be heated discussion on this issue between me and the chief secretary of Telangana. About the officers who were Central home secretaries, as explained earlier, the first one was partial to Telangana, the second one was transferred out before he could come to grips with the issues, and the third one never held any meeting.

A Forest Service officer (IFS) allotted to AP cadre was the Director of AP State Remote Applications Centre. He came to me one day and informed me that the institute had a corpus of Rs. 30 crore and the Telangana government was trying to take that money away with the help of the Telangana officers. We made our position clear to the Telangana government that we are willing to share the corpus on population basis but they were not agreeable for the same and wanted to appropriate all the assets of Schedule 10 institutions including the corpus. I asked the officer whether he can silently transfer the whole amount to a bank in Vijayawada so that we can thwart the designs of the Telangana government to take over the corpus. He agreed to attempt it and after a day came back and told me that he was able to accomplish it unnoticed by others. The moment employees from Telangana came to know of it they started an agitation and lodged a complaint to the police who were ready to arrest him. I spoke to the police commissioner and informed him that the decision to transfer the corpus was taken at my level and that if at all a case was to be booked it should be against me, not against that officer. I also told him any attempt to take action on the officer would have serious consequences. This

had its effect and the attempt to arrest the officer was dropped by the Telangana police.

After the first two incidents we realised that there was no point in trying to forcibly enter the offices and being prevented by the police. To ensure that the rights of the state are protected we started appointing officers from our side to Schedule 10 institutions. When there was a vacancy in the Centre for Good Governance I appointed the secretary GAD, Mr Meena as Director in charge. It was supposed to be a paper order required to be presented in a court of law for asserting our rights. The Telangana government, thinking that he was coming to take charge, made elaborate police arrangements to prevent him from entering the office. When we came to know of this, we had a hearty laugh as we were not interested in a confrontation with them on this issue but gave that order only to strengthen our case before the central government or in a court of law at a later date.

It was Schedule 10 institutions which led to a lot of unpleasant incidents between the two states. There was a meeting at Hyderabad organised by the then additional secretary, GOI Mr AK Singh with reference to Schedule 10 institutions. In that meeting there was heated exchange of views between me and the chief secretary of Telangana. He was insisting that Section 75 deals with the ownership of Schedule 10 institutions. I had a different point of view. I was arguing that since these institutions are built with the resources of the combined state they have to be shared between the states on mutually agreed criteria, preferably the population ratio. We were very clear that it is not Section 75 that governs the ownership of Schedule 10 institutions but Part-VI of the Act which deals with the division of assets and liabilities. I met the then Union Home Secretary Mr Anil Goswami and showed him this particular section and impressed on him that Part-VI, not Section 75 which should govern division of schedule 10 institutions. The Union law department also concurred with our view on the issue but no clarification was issued by Government of India as the file did not

get cleared in the home ministry.

We had no other go but to approach a court of law which reference to Schedule 10 institutions. It began with the State Council of Higher Education. In this case the Telangana government wrote a letter to the bank requesting them to freeze the account. When this matter was taken to the High Court, the judgement went in favour of Telangana. Applying this judgement to all Schedule 10 institutions, the Telangana government started taking control of all the institutions located in Hyderabad. We were convinced that we had a strong case and can win the appeal in the Supreme Court. Accordingly we filed a case in the Supreme Court. The then Advocate General Sri Venugopal played a very important role in drafting the affidavit and guiding us in filing this case. I constituted a small core committee with Principal Secretary Higher Education and retired IAS officer Mr Balasubramanian who had a legal background and Mr Prem Chandra Reddy dealing with the bifurcation issues in the secretariat. We carried the day in the Supreme Court and won the case. The Supreme Court also left a small window for the central government to intervene and decide the issue. I believe subsequently the central government took a view that the corpus funds of the institutions should be divided on population basis but the buildings and the land would go to the state where they are situated. This can be a fair view of the issue provided the Centre compensates Andhra Pradesh for these facilities to be created in the new state. I am not sure whether the state government has approached Government of India with any such request.

The next major issue was the division of Schedule 9 institutions. A committee under the chairmanship of retired IAS officer Mrs. Sheila Bhide was entrusted the work of division of assets and liabilities of these institutions. During Governor's rule, assets and liabilities of Transco and Genco were divided between the two states. Division of the staff including the staff of Genco and Transco was not completed during that period, and was left to be handled by a committee of chief secretaries under the

chairmanship of Union Home Secretary. As for the division of the assets and liabilities of Schedule 9 institutions, the units located in the districts were divided as per their geographical location and the headquarters assets were to be divided in the population ratio of 58:42 between the states. The only problem was with reference to definition of the headquarters. Andhra Pradesh's argument was that all common facilities established along with the head office are part of the headquarters. For example, the APSRTC workshop located at Hyderabad and processing plant of the milk Federation located at Hyderabad. The Telangana government's view was that the common facilities are not part of the headquarters and only the building where the head office is located is to be considered as head quarters. This has to some extent complicated the division process of some of the Schedule 9 institutions whose headquarters comprised more than the head office. But the more important issue which became difficult to sort out was the division of employees of the Schedule 9 institutions.

Both the state governments proposed and insisted on different criteria for division of the employees. The Six-point formula ensured that the local candidate criterion was applied for recruitment of government jobs. But no such criteria were laid out for recruitment in these Schedule 9 institutions. This led to a process of recruitment in which most of the people who got employment were from Andhra area. The contention of the Telangana government was that the nativity principle was to be adopted for division of staff since most of them are from Andhra area. We were not in favour of such criteria for the simple reason that these are commercial undertakings and any such criteria would result in more staff coming over to the corporations in the Andhra Pradesh, making them financially unviable. We felt applying any such criteria would make the division retrospective, which was not envisaged in the act. We were insisting on application of local candidate criteria and dividing them based on population ratio. This led to a virtual stalemate in division of the staff of the Schedule 9 institutions. Even

a series of meetings at the Union Home Secretary level could not resolve the issue.

Though Schedule 9 institutions were yet to be divided, the division of Transco and Genco took place at the time of Governor's rule and they started functioning as independent units for the two respective states. Employees' division was yet to take place and they were allotted on a temporary basis to work in the respective utilities. Suddenly, one fine day the Telangana Government relieved the staff working in Telangana Transco and Genco who were not native to Telangana. They started coming and reporting to the respective institutions of Andhra Pradesh but we were not prepared to take them since there was no formal allocation of the staff based upon mutually agreed criteria. The issue was brought to the notice of the Union Home Secretary who requested the Telangana government to take them back but they refused to do the same. They moved the High Court which gave an order that the salaries of the staff should be paid (shared) by both the states. Even this was not implemented by the Telangana government. There was a meeting convened in this regard by the Union Home Secretary with the chief secretaries and managing directors of the power utilities of the two states. In this meeting the Union Home Secretary, Mr LC Goyal questioned the Telangana government representatives how they relieved the staff unilaterally without consulting the Andhra Pradesh Government. Telangana Chief Secretary Mr Rajiv Sharma did not reply but Genco MD Sri Prabhakara Rao got agitated and started shouting that this is one more example of exploitation of Telangana interest. Angered by this outburst, the home secretary requested him to leave the meeting and he walked out of the meeting stating that he could not care less. We were not agreeable for the sharing of the costs as ordered by the High Court and went in appeal to the Supreme Court which gave orders that the Telangana government should take the staff back and pay their salaries till final allocation is done.

By then the Sheela Bhide committee finalised the division of the assets and liabilities of Schedule 9 institutions. But having seen

the attitude of the Telangana government with reference to the division of the staff and more particularly the way they relieved the staff from Genco and Transco based upon nativity, I got alerted. I thought that if the Sheela Bhide committee recommendations are implemented and the division of the assets and liabilities is done, what happened in Genco and Transco might be repeated in other Schedule 9 institutions and staff would be relieved from these institutions also based upon nativity. As the residuary state, responsibility for implementation of the final orders on bifurcation of Schedule 9 institutions is on Andhra Pradesh. Keeping this in mind I stalled further action in terms of implementation of the Sheela Bhide committee recommendations. I took a view that division of Schedule 9 institutions should be comprehensive including the division of the staff and till that is decided, division of assets and liabilities has no meaning and wrote a letter to the Union Home Secretary accordingly. This ensured that focus got shifted to division of employees in Schedule 9 institutions.

Another major issue was the division of the staff of different cadres working with the government between the two states. The state was divided on June 2, 2014 and immediate staff division was done on a temporary basis. The process of division of the staff was left to a committee chaired by a retired IAS officer and consisted of the chief secretaries of both the states as well as an officer from the Department of Personnel, Government of India. Two very competent officers Mr Prem Chandra Reddy from Andhra Pradesh and Mr Ramakrishna Rao from Telangana were entrusted the task of assisting this committee by the respective state governments. Both of them played a key role in ensuring the division of the staff was done in a smooth and systematic manner without any hiccups.

As was the case with the division of the Schedule 9 institutions, the main issue was deciding the criteria. Telangana was in favour of applying the principle of nativity while Andhra Pradesh was particular that the local candidate as defined for admission to educational institutions and employment should be followed. We were of the view that nativity has no legal backing and hence local

candidate should be the basis for deciding the allocation of the staff. Initially Telangana was very keen that the nativity principle should be applied but finally it came round and agreed for applying the principle of local candidate for the division of the staff between the states. The second issue was whether the division should be done taking the total cadre (sanctioned posts) into consideration or the actual posts filled up. Once this issue was resolved, division of the staff and state-wise allocation started.

There were problems from employees' associations, particularly from Telangana. They expected that once the division of the state was done and employees of Andhra origin go back to Andhra cadre, there would be vacancies facilitating quick promotions for them. But as per the formula worked out, posts were allocated on population basis and wherever the number of employees allocated to a state was more than the posts allocated to that state they were allotted back to the state where there is deficit of personal with reference to the posts as per a formula starting from the juniormost. The Telangana associations were not happy with this formula as the expected promotions did not materialise. They started protesting and complaining that Mr Kamalanathan was acting in a manner favourable to Andhra Pradesh. In fact there was no such partiality on the part of Mr Kamalanathan as he was strictly going by the rules and most of the time he was looking for unanimity between the two chief secretaries for him to start the process of division. Overall, if at all there was one area where there was substantial progress by the time I retired in terms of the division issues, it was division of the staff between the states and the contribution of Mr Prem Chandra Reddy and Mr Ramakrishna Rao needs to be specially mentioned in this regard. Issues of Deputy collectors got stuck in the courts on seniority issue and could not be completed by the time I retired. Division of the police battalions was also not completed by the time I retired.

There is one incident which happened with reference to Schedule 10 institutions which needs a special mention. One day it came to my notice that there was a corpus of Rs 1,000 crore

in the labour cess account. We had the experience of AP State Remote Applications Agency where the Telangana government tried to appropriate the Rs 30 crore corpus and we were able to successfully transfer the amount to Vijayawada and ensure that it did not happen. We were worried that the Telangana government may try to appropriate this labour cess amount. One Mr Murali Sagar working with AP government at that time was in charge of the labour cess. We thought it would be prudent to move this amount also to Vijayawada so that the amount would be safe and would also be a bargaining point at a later date regarding division of corpus of different Schedule 10 institutions. We never had an intention of appropriating the amount but were willing to share it on population basis. Unfortunately the Telangana government had a different view stating that all the Schedule 10 institutions including the corpus belong to the respective States as per the geographical location. If they apply that principle to labour cess that would be a big loss. This was apprised to the Chief Minister and with his consent I advised Mr Murali Sagar to transfer the amount to a bank in Vijayawada. When he was in the process of doing it, information leaked and Telangana employees complained to the police. They also gheraoed him. In the afternoon he came to my office to brief me on this and when he was returning to his office he was picked up by the police. I rang up the Commissioner of Police, Hyderabad and informed him that the transfer of amount was done under my orders and hence if any action is contemplated it should be against me, not against the officer concerned. After the phone call I had an occasion to go to the Telangana Chief Secretary to discuss another issue. The Commissioner of Police rushed there. The Telangana CS also looked visibly annoyed that we have transferred the Rs 1000 cr corpus to a bank at Vijayawada. For the first time I saw him losing his cool and being in a highly agitated mood. In the evening, I attended a programme at Ravindra Bharati along with our Chief Minister who also enquired about this incident. I Informed him that I spoke to the Commissioner of Police and the officer would be released shortly. By 7 o'clock in the evening he was released by the police after questioning.



The Telangana government did not leave the issue at this stage. They conducted a raid on the house of Mr. Murali Sagar and booked a case against him and went to Andhra Bank to collect evidence about the transfer of funds. When this came to my notice, as the Governor was entrusted with special responsibility for the common capital area, I rang up the Secretary to the Governor, Mr Ramesh Kumar and briefed him that the manner in which the Telangana government was pursuing this as a criminal case was not proper, as the transfer of funds is from one government bank to another. I requested him to inform the Governor and ensure that no further action is taken by the police in this regard. He discussed the matter with the Governor and tried to tell me that no such thing had happened. I had to tell him strongly that the information the Governor received was not correct and if they want I can send the Andhra Bank manager whom the police met to collect evidence. After my second phone call, the Governor got alerted and firmly told the police not to proceed further in this matter.

The next day I went to brief the Governor on this matter. By then the Telangana chief secretary had come and told him his version and left. Based upon the briefing received from him, the Governor was in an angry mood and started shouting at me why I transferred those funds to Vijayawada. Immediately I got up and told him there is nothing much to discuss if he has already formed an opinion about the issue based upon the briefing he received from the chief secretary of Telangana and I can only be in a position to explain if he has an open mind on the issue and started walking away. He then calmed down, called me back and requested me to sit and took the briefing from me. I told him what happened earlier with reference to the state remote applications agency funds and the general view of the Telangana state government that all corpus funds of Schedule 10 institutions belong to them, and the only way to save our interests was to transfer the funds to Vijayawada. After hearing me he was convinced with my argument.

The Union Cabinet Secretary called both the chief secretaries for a briefing and after hearing us requested us to sort out the issues on a mutually accommodative basis. The unfortunate thing is when there were issues on which the states did not agree, Government

of India failed to intervene and resolve the issues. Most of the time they were looking for both of us to sit together and sort out issues on an amicable basis. Since that was not happening, matters started ending up in the courts for a decision.

I introduced Mr Murali Sagar to the Chief Minister and informed him that we will have to take care of him as he stood firm in our state interests against all odds. When the final allocation of officers was made by the Kamalanathan committee, as per the formula he was allotted to Telangana. I took up the matter with the Department of Personnel and told them we would be creating an additional post to accommodate him. The issue could not be sorted out before my retirement and he came to me even after my retirement on this issue and I pursued the matter with the then AP Chief Secretary, Mr Tucker. Finally Government of India orders allocating Mr Murali Sagar to Andhra Pradesh cadre came one month before his retirement in August 2017, and he retired in September.

The latest position on each one of these contentious issues is as follows: The division of the staff is successfully completed for most of the cadres and the Kamalanathan committee is wound up. The only cadres that are yet to be divided are deputy superintendents of police, additional SPs and excise superintendents, which are stuck in courts of law with reference to fixation of seniority and other issues. Till those court cases are sorted out, division of these cadres cannot be completed. Regarding Schedule 9 institutions the Sheela Bhide committee still continues and out of 91 (89 Schedule 9 institutions and two others) referred to the committee, division of 41 institutions is completed by the committee. Final orders with the consent of both the government were issued only with respect to a few institutions though informally they all are functioning separately. Regarding Schedule 10 institutions, in about 10% of the institutions where both the states have mutually agreed, the division is completed. Since the AP government feels the central government circular about the division of corpus without division of assets is not in conformity with the Supreme Court judgement, they filed a case in High court against the Centre's order and are awaiting further orders on that.

# [ 6 ]

## Other Division Issues

The A.P. Reorganisation Act also provided for financial assistance to the new state as well as starting of some new institutions in addition to the procedures to be followed in division of employees, institutions, assets and liabilities. These are covered in different sections of the Act.

The first and most important issue was making a reference to the 14th Finance Commission to consider the new states while giving their award. This was incorporated in section 46 of the act. The President of India was to make a reference to the Finance Commission to pass separate awards for each of the successor states. Accordingly a reference was made and the Finance Commission planned their visit to Andhra Pradesh. This visit was very crucial for us since the award of the commission can have a bearing on the finances of the new state. Mr CS Rao, former finance secretary, Government of India, was appointed as advisor in the finance department exclusively to deal with the Finance Commission. He had a long experience in the finance department and is well respected. In fact some of the members of the Finance Commission like Ms. Sushma Nath worked with him when he was the finance secretary at the Centre. The fact that the chairman of the 14th Finance Commission, Dr Y Venugopal Reddy, was from Andhra Pradesh made things easier since he had first-hand knowledge of the division of the state and its problems. Tirupati was indicated as the place to meet the Finance Commission by the Chief Minister and accordingly arrangements were made. We

made a forceful presentation for giving us a fair dispensation by the Finance Commission and they were also very reasonable and considerate. When the final award came, Andhra Pradesh was the only state other than the North-eastern states to get revenue deficit grants for all the five years of the 14th Finance Commission's award. They gave an award for Rs 21,113 crores as revenue deficit grants for the five-year period.

We as officers were very happy that we could successfully get a good deal for Andhra Pradesh from the Finance Commission. But the Chief minister was not happy. He held a series of meetings and telephone conferences on this issue with officers, MPs and started crying, stating that nothing had come for the capital and what has been given is only a pittance. In one meeting Mr CS Rao, who by then lost his patience had to remind the Chief Minister that the Finance Commission goes by its terms of reference, and the issues Sri Naidu was raising do not come within the terms of reference of the commission. He said the award was generous with reference to the state of Andhra Pradesh.

The matter did not end there. In the legislative Assembly, the Revenue Minister started making a personal attack against Dr Y Venugopal Reddy. Mr CS Rao rang me up and said that Dr Venugopal Reddy was pained by these comments and requested me to bring it to the notice of the Chief Minister. Accordingly I informed the CM that Dr Venugopal Reddy was feeling bad that he should be targeted when he did his best for the state. The Chief Minister told me to convey to Dr Reddy that he holds him in high regard and he would be talking to him personally. The same was conveyed to Mr CS Rao with a request to convey it to Dr Venugopal Reddy as it was he who rang me up and informed about this. Subsequently when I enquired with Sri CS Rao whether there was any such call from the CM to Dr Venugopal Reddy, he checked with him and told me there was no such call. In our use and throw policy both Dr Venugopal Reddy and Sri CS Rao had no relevance once the 14th Finance Commission gave its award. Sri CS Rao also left the post after some time as there was no work for him before completing his tenure.

The award of the 14th Finance Commission takes care of AP's revenue deficit from 2015 to 2020. That still left the revenue deficit gap for the 10-month period from June 2014 to March 2015. The statement of the Prime Minister on the floor of Parliament covered this issue. He said the resource gap that may arise in the successor state of Andhra Pradesh in the very first year especially during the period between the appointed day and the award of finance commission would be compensated in the Union budget for 2014-15. Even before the division of the state, the Governor made a calculation of what could be this deficit and sent his report to the Union government indicating Rs 16,000 crores as the possible revenue deficit. Contrary to the assessment made by the Governor, the revenues were very buoyant and expenditure under control, and by December 2014 we knew the deficit will not cross Rs 3,000 to 4,000 crores. By January the Chief Minister started concentrating on this and was particular that higher revenue deficit be built up. He was very confident that with his political connections he would be able to get any amount from the Union government. I am sure his expectations were based on his experience when he was earlier part of NDA-1 when he used to have his way through. So, a huge expenditure was incurred in the last few months of the financial year to build up a higher revenue deficit. Certain industrial incentives which were not being sanctioned for years together were discovered and released, and industrialists who never expected it were too happy to oblige. Expenditure on the electoral promises like loan waiver, and higher amounts for pensions were all booked under this account. Accordingly a revenue deficit of Rs 16,078 crores was incurred for the year 2014-15 and the same was certified by the CAG. Stating that these are CAG-certified figures, the state government made a plea to the Centre to reimburse Rs 16,078 crores. The central Government took the view that like the 14th Finance commission they would only fill the normal revenue gap which is the result of the division of the state, but not amounts incurred on fulfilling electoral promises made by the new government. Their argument was that if they sanction the expenditure incurred on the electoral promises they will get similar demands from other states

as well. The state government's argument that the figures were certified by the CAG did not cut any ice with the Union government as they clearly said only eligible portion out of the amount certified by the CAG would be reimbursed and accordingly the deficit was determined as Rs 4,117 crores. I felt the argument of Government of India was very valid. However the state government kept on repeatedly raising this issue with no success. The Centre was willing to consider 2015-16 revenue deficit grant, as sanctioned by the 14th Finance Commission which was coming to about Rs 6,609 crore and were willing to give that amount proportionately for the 10 month period for which the state government was not agreeable. Finally the central government has gone on record through an affidavit before Supreme Court in a case filed by an individual stating that the amount that is due on this account is only Rs 4,117 crores which is the normal deficit incurred by the state government. Right from the beginning, the state government's stand on this issue was not correct and by stretching it too far they lost the possibility of getting more by making a reference to the 14th Finance commission revenue deficit grant for 2015-16.

Section 93 of the act enjoins on the Central government to take all necessary measures as enumerated in the 13th Schedule for the progress and sustainable development of the successor State within a period of 10 years from the appointed day. Accordingly a set of institutions are listed out in the 13th schedule. They are broadly divided into two categories: educational and infrastructure. While with reference to the institutions listed under the education category, it is specifically mentioned in the act that they "shall be" established, no such firm commitment is mentioned in the infrastructure category excepting with reference to one or two organisations. The mandate was only to examine the feasibility of setting up such industries and organisations.

Our first focus was on establishment of the education institutions with reference to which there was a firm commitment in the act. We were keen they should start functioning from 2015-16 academic year. We had a series of meetings with the Secretary,

Higher Education, Government of India who was reluctant to start them until the total infrastructure was ready and wanted us to wait for three to four years before the infrastructure actually materialises. We were able to put enormous pressure on GOI politically to ensure that they start operating from 2015-16. Wherever the government was able to allot the land and make temporary buildings available for locating the institutions they started functioning from 2015 and others got delayed where we were not able to provide land immediately or there was a dispute about the location of the institution. One such institution that got delayed was NIT which finally got located at Tadepalligudem. The Endowments Minister wanted it to be located at TP Gudem while another lobby close to the power centre wanted it to be located at Eluru. Finally the minister prevailed. So also was the problem with petroleum university since the state government was not able to decide whether to locate it in East Godavari or in Vizag. Most of the institutions started functioning from temporary accommodation in a record time before my retirement. Two institutions to establish which legislation was required, got delayed. It is a sad commentary on the manner in which the state government can behave when now they accuse the Central government of running these institutions in temporary accommodation when the fact is that we put pressure on them and got those institutions functioning when they were reluctant to start them until full infrastructure is available.

Regarding the infrastructure projects mentioned in the 13th Schedule, activity started in terms of examining the feasibility. The focus immediately was on Vizag - Chennai industrial corridor and Metro Rail for Vijayawada and Vizag. Regarding Vizag - Chennai industrial corridor, since funding was coming from Asian Development Bank, we had a series of meetings with them and the nodes were finalised. Since I dealt with Hyderabad Metro earlier as finance secretary and was associated with Sri Sridharan of Delhi Metro at that time, I revived my contact with him and brought him to meet the Chief Minister. By the time I retired, Vijayawada Metro project was progressing well and in fact preparations for land acquisition were being done. Subsequently both metros seem to

have been stuck at some stage. Regarding the other infrastructure projects, feasibility studies were going on by the time I retired.

The “special category status” was on the agenda immediately after I took over as the Chief Secretary. I made a visit to Delhi and sought an appointment with Mr Subrahmanyam in the PMO who is from Jharkhand cadre but belongs to Andhra Pradesh. Presently he is the chief secretary of Jammu and Kashmir. When the issue of special category status was discussed, his immediate reaction was it is next to impossible and something which needs to be decided at a level much higher than that of officers. He said that this decision needs to be taken in the National Development Council where all Chief Ministers would be present and there is likely to be strong opposition from the other Chief Ministers. He suggested that it should be taken up at political level. I came back and informed the same to the Chief Minister and left it at that. The special package proposal was not initiated when I was in service.



# [ 7 ]

## AP Formation Day

**A**ndhra or Andhra Pradesh state was formed more than once. In 1953 it came out of the Madras Presidency to become the first linguistic state in independent India. It was then known as Andhra state. In 1956 with the merger of Telugu-speaking areas of the erstwhile Hyderabad state, it became Andhra Pradesh. In 2014, consequent to the formation of Telangana State we got back a state with the same geographical boundaries as in 1953 excepting the Bhadrachalam division. Bhadrachalam division which was part of East Godavari district even after the formation of Andhra Pradesh in 1956, was made part of Khammam district during the period of Sri Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy as Chief Minister.

When Andhra state was formed in 1953 there were celebrations all over as the creation of a separate state was based on popular demand from the people of Andhra area, who felt discriminated against in the Madras Presidency. It became a reality due to the sacrifices made by great people like Amarajeevi Potti Sreeramulu and Andhra Kesari Tanguturi Prakasam Pantulu. The state formation celebrations on October 1 were held in the then state capital Kurnool and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru himself as the Prime Minister of India came to attend the function. The great lyric depicting the cultural and historical heritage of Andhras written by Sankarambadi Sundaracharya was sung on this occasion by the great singer Ms Tanguturi Surya Kumari. Celebrations were held all through the state. October 1 continued to be the state formation day till 1956 and it was shifted to November 1 after the formation of Andhra Pradesh. Keeping this historical background in mind I

circulated a file that Andhra Pradesh should start celebrating the state formation day on October 1 since we got back the state with the same geographical boundaries as it was in 1953. I not only sent the file but reminded the CM twice when I met him that it would be appropriate to celebrate the state formation day on 1<sup>st</sup> October. The file was sent sometime in August 2014 but has not seen the light of the day till now.

On the contrary, the state is spending a lot of money and conducting Nava Nirmana Deeksha on 2nd June when the state got divided. For the past four years this occasion was chosen for Congress-bashing for division of the state, though all political parties have an equal share in what is called the unscientific division. For the past one year the same platform is being used for BJP-bashing for not giving special status.

The argument put forward by the ruling political leadership is that we are in difficulties due to bifurcation of the state and hence this is not the appropriate time for celebrations. Does any one of the actions of the state government make us feel that there are financial difficulties consequent on bifurcation of the state? There is total fiscal profligacy, wasteful expenditure and still we claim we are in difficulties and hence not celebrating the state formation day.

Celebrating the state formation has nothing to do with the prosperity of the state or the financial difficulties. It is a day to take inspiration from all those who had sacrificed their lives to give us an identity and rededicate ourselves for better development of the state. Somehow I get a feeling that this government and the ruling party don't want this legacy to be remembered. Telugu Desam does not share this legacy since it was not even born when the state was formed. They may be thinking that relating oneself to such a strong legacy of sacrifice and dedication may not be politically advantageous for their leadership. This is one more example of how narrow the thinking of the present political leadership is. I have also recently written a letter to the Chief Minister drawing his attention to the need to have the state formation day celebrated on 1st of October, of course with no result.

# [ 8 ]

## Hud-hud Cyclone

**I**t was October 8, 2014. The new block that was getting ready in the secretariat is yet to be completed. It is just four months after division of the state. I was operating from a small room in the secretariat. A cyclone alert came stating that the depression near Andaman is likely to further intensify and cross the east coast anywhere between Kakinada and Paradeep by 12th October. The Chief Minister just returned from a tour on that day. I met him and informed him about the cyclone alert. Both of us decided to prepare ourselves for the eventuality.

For officers of the AP cadre, preparations for cyclone is a routine affair come October and May, starting of the cyclone season twice a year. The first cyclone I had experienced was the devastating Nellore cyclone in 1984 when I was joint collector there. My subsequent postings were not in the coastal districts but after we were posted at the state capital we used to be regularly deputed as district in-charges as and when there was a cyclone.

The same day a meeting was conducted with the DGP, various secretaries, heads of department, additional DGPs, and the NDRF battalion commander. All officers on leave were asked to report back. District Collectors were instructed to evacuate people from the warning zone to safer areas and to get the cyclone rehabilitation centers inspected. Massive evacuation to safer areas was organised in the coastal districts where cyclone was likely to make a landfall. About 370 rehabilitation centres were started.

Mr Jagannatham, Commissioner for Disaster Management, happened to be on training in Mussoorie. Hence an interim arrangement was made and another senior officer Mr Sukumar was put in charge of the post. Another senior officer Mr Aravind Kumar was immediately deputed to go to Vizag and operate from there. The Government of India flew in 12 NDRF battalions, which were stationed at different points. The Army and Navy were kept on alert.

I can see a qualitative difference in our preparedness to face a natural calamity now when compared to what it was in 1984 when I was joint collector, Nellore. Technology has made communication so much easier. During Huhud, every day there used to be a video conference by the Cabinet Secretary, Government of India which we used to attend and also the collectors from the districts under alert. There was also a facility to extend the video conference right to the mandal points as required. This was a great facility which ensured immediate decision-making and facing the calamity with full coordination. The response of the Cabinet Secretary and other secretaries of the Central government was very helpful and they asked us to feel free to disturb them at any time for any assistance. In the 1980s the communication network was very weak. Unless the police wireless systems were stationed in different places or the ham radio system is available getting across to the talukas and villages was difficult. Cell phones made communications that much easier.

For some calamity is an opportunity. Sri Chandrababu Naidu excels in this. He would try to get the maximum publicity and mileage of it. He insists on all the meetings to be live telecast by channels. He wants to demonstrate to the public that he is working hard. Other chief ministers who might have done equal or better preparation may not have done that much of publicity. What other chief ministers might have left to officers to handle he prefers to do it himself. Friendly media is always there to highlight this. Sri Chandrababu Naidu would like to give the impression to the public that he alone is working and nobody else. Strategically in public

he blames officers which his friendly media gives wide publicity. But the fact is in the process others are not allowed to work and meetings which could have been finished in a more businesslike fashion are stretched for hours. Since he takes the responsibility of micromanaging he ends up doing the work of others also which is not necessary. Well thought out publicity strategy projects him as the only one who is hard-working and a friendly media is always there to publicise it.

It was only one day before it was clear the landfall is going to be near Vizag. Till then cyclone alert was that it may cross between Kakinada and Paradeep. So the meetings with cabinet secretary on video conferencing Orissa chief secretary was also attending. In fact some of the NDRF teams were stationed in Orissa. This is the problem with all cyclones since they can change the course and the preparation has to be over long stretch of coast.

On 12th of October cyclone Hud-hud made a landfall near Visakhapatnam city. Since the radar also got broken it took some time to get accurate information about the time of the landfall. All communication systems with the district administration got broken at that point of time. Since the eye of the severe cyclonic storm crossed the coast at Visakhapatnam there was devastating damage.

That evening Chief Minister Sri Chandrababu Naidu wanted to go to Visakhapatnam and requested me to stay back at Hyderabad and coordinate the activities. There was no way he could reach Vizag on that day but he wanted to send a message that he would like to be at the centre of action. He could only reach Visakhapatnam the next day evening. He stayed that day at Rajamahendravaram.

The work done by two officers at the time of the Hud-hud cyclone needs special mention. One was Mr Yuvraj who was Collector of Visakhapatnam. In fact he was my choice for the post since he worked with me earlier and I knew he is one of the most competent unassuming officers. The first posting of collectors happened within a month of the new government coming into office and I was involved in the discussion for postings. That was the

first and the last time I had a say in the posting of the IAS officers. For reasons not known CM stopped involving me or consulting with me while finalising the posting of the officers subsequently. More on this in another chapter where I will be dealing with my relationship with the Chief Minister. The other officer who played an important role was Mr Rawat who was with me in the control room at Hyderabad and was very helpful in coordinating activities and getting a lot of essential commodities moved into Visakhapatnam. Collectors of Krishna, West Godavari and East Godavari districts, Mr Raghunandan, Mr Bhaskar and Mr Neetu Prasad respectively, provided excellent support in moving essential commodities to Vizag area. Chief minister used to assess the situation in Vizag and used to inform me what needs to be moved in to the affected area. We talked to the West Bengal chief secretary sent an officer to coordinate movement of potatoes to the affected area. Lots of onions from Kurnool as well as from Nasik were moved to the affected areas. Within a very short time we were able to ensure that all essential commodities are made available and sold freely in the affected areas so that the prices of the commodities would come down and traders stop hoarding. This approach was successful and the supply chains got restored in a short time.

The Chief Minister cabinet and a host of officers were there in Vizag for relief and rehabilitation operations all through that period. CM used to coordinate the activities in the field and I was providing the necessary support from the control room at Hyderabad. Though there was a possibility of moving into better accommodation he decided to stay in the bus which was improvised for his use. This was more to send a signal to people that he is working in adverse conditions. His staying at Vizag all through the period had its own positive and negative fallout. Positive in the sense he was able to assess the situation and take decisions. Negative since he used to hold meetings for hours together without any purpose cutting into the time available for officers to do their work. Of course all these meetings were to be telecast live so that the people feel that the Chief Minister was working so hard. He also took this opportunity of publicly scolding Mr Mittal of the telecom industry for not

restoring the connectivity though everyone knew there were issues and it takes time for restoration.

Excellent support received was from Government of India in preparing for the cyclone and in the rescue and rehabilitation activities immediately before and after the landfall. The then Defence Secretary, Mr Mathur was of great help. He was available on phone any time and promptly used to take action for necessary support as required. The Home Secretary with whom I did not have a good relation earlier was also accessible this time for rendering the necessary support.

On the whole Hud-hud cyclone rescue and relief operations were managed very efficiently through teamwork headed by the Chief Minister with each one playing his role with utmost efficiency and commitment. Hence we were able to restore normalcy in a very short period of time and put Vizag back on the map as an important destination in the development of the new Andhra Pradesh.

# [ 9 ]

## ‘Our People Briefed Me’

This is a dialogue and the voice everyone in both the states of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana is familiar with. That was telecast on June 1, 2015 in the evening. The previous day we witnessed the video from Mr Stephenson’s house. The next day I was to travel with the CM to Vijayawada for the Nava Nirmana Sadassu programme. I was just watching TV and when I saw/heard the words “our people briefed me” being telecast I could not believe myself. Later in the evening, media advisor to the Chief Minister Mr Parakala Prabhakar came in front of the media and said Hyderabad is the common capital and “is this the way Telangana government is going to behave with a Chief Minister”? He also referred to Section 8 in the Act and the special powers to the Governor with reference to law and order safety of property life and liberties of people in common capital. He promised to take all constitutional legal actions as required. Mr Prabhakar said this was recorded in the studio of T news and if there was a telephone tapping that would be illegal and finally proclaimed that the voice in the tape is not that of Sri Chandrababu Naidu.

The next morning, that is on 2nd June, I was travelling along with the Chief Minister from Hyderabad to Vijayawada on a special flight to attend Nava Nirmana Sadassu at Vijayawada. Mr Lokesh and Mr Parakala Prabhakar were the other two travelling in the flight. The Chief Minister looked visibly worried. There was no life in his face. Lokesh complimented Mr Prabhakar for handling the press well the previous night. At the Nava Nirmana Sadassu, Sri



Naidu looked absent minded, though in the public speech he was very offensive. After the Sadassu there was a meeting of the officers where again he looked tense. After some discussion he came to a conclusion that there was phone tapping and decided to file a counter case for phone tapping.

With these incidents the Government of India also got alerted about possible conflict between the two chief ministers and the Centre seems to have intervened to get both chief ministers to an understanding on their relationship post vote-for-note case. The Governor of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana also seems to have played an important role in making the chief ministers reach an agreement. The net result is that Sri Chandrababu Naidu had to exit post haste from Hyderabad which was to be the common capital of both the states for 10 years and maybe there was an informal agreement that he would not actively involve himself in Telangana politics. The case filed in Vijayawada on phone tapping gave some bargaining power to Sri Chandrababu Naidu in coming to a settlement with KCR.

Some reliable sources informed me that a budding young leader was to actually go along with Mr Revanth Reddy on that day to Mr Stevenson's house but dropped out at the last moment. It is also rumoured that phone conversation records of certain important people other than Sri Chandrababu Naidu are also available with the investigating authorities. When the case was at a crucial stage of establishing the money trail, a settlement seems to have been reached diluting further progress of the case.

Two officers played a crucial role in advising the CM at the time of the vote for note case. One was Mr Balasubramanian who earlier worked in the intelligence department, an IPS officer. Sri Naidu relied mostly on his advice in filing cases against the Telangana government on phone tapping. Once the forensic examination of his voice became an issue, he appointed post-haste Mr Gandhi, who earlier was Director of the State forensic laboratory, as an advisor.

KCR by then had nothing much to fear from the Congress which was discredited. BJP is yet to grow in Telangana. The only threat was from Telugu Desam which had a strong base in Telangana and also had necessary money and muscle power to be a threat to him. In fact it is rumoured that the vote-for-note case was only the beginning of a bigger plan to bring down the KCR government. KCR used this case to ensure that Sri Chandrababu Naidu does not pose a problem to him in the long run. Thus the vote-for-note case came as a shot in the arm for KCR to eliminate any possibility of a threat from Telugu Desam party in Telangana. From CBN's point of view this case hit hard at his levels of self confidence. It became a Damocles' sword hanging on his head. Though the case looks settled for the time being, it has all the potential of being revived at an appropriate time.

The Immediate effect was that Sri Naidu had to pack his bags and go from Hyderabad to the new capital city area Amaravati and had to make a virtue of a necessity. Anyway, "committed media" is there to project it as if he sacrificed a comfortable life at Hyderabad and came to Amaravati out of a desire to serve people better. If this case did not happen he would have continued in the common capital using the camp office at Vijayawada as a base. After June 2015 he moved to the new capital along with his personal staff but the secretariat staff was still functioning from Hyderabad. It was only a year after my retirement when the Secretariat buildings at Amaravati got completed and the staff was also moved to new capital area.

The Secretariat building was not even contemplated during my tenure. But the process of this movement was not well planned and well thought of. It is known that the Secretariat was built in an isolated area without proper accommodation and needs commuting facilities from Vijayawada. The staff were just left to fend for themselves. If only the government was keen about their welfare, they should have built proper bachelor accommodation there at the capital city area and only then moved the staff. If I was Chief Secretary at that point of time I would have definitely

insisted on the same. In the absence of such facilities the problems of the secretariat staff are unimaginable. It did not become a major issue since CBN was able to manage the association office bearers and ensure there was no agitation on this issue.

# [10]

## Chief Secretary - Chief Minister Relationship

Chief Secretary undoubtedly is an important post in the administrative set-up and carries a lot of responsibility. The institution as such which was powerful sometime back got reduced in importance over a period of time. The reasons are obvious. The powers of appointment as well as removal at any point of time are with the Chief Minister. Seniority is not a necessary criterion for selection of chief secretary and the Chief Minister has the freedom to choose from officers within the zone of consideration of the rank of special chief secretary. If a person of the Chief Minister's choice is not available there are also times when the zone of consideration is tweaked to accommodate the choice of Chief Minister. After being appointed as the chief secretary, the officer's tenure entirely depends again on the pleasure of the Chief Minister. If the boss is not happy with the chief secretary he can remove him from the post and appoint a substitute as per his choice. He cannot be removed from the service (IAS) till he retires but can be removed as chief secretary and accommodated in an equivalent post till his retirement.

Sri Chandrababu Naidu was Chief Minister of the undivided state for nine years before he took over as the CM in the second stint. During his earlier period as CM itself we witnessed a steady decline in the importance of the post of the chief secretary and the CMO becoming more powerful over a period of time. When Sri Chandrababu Naidu became the Chief Minister the first time, his first chief secretary was Mr Rajaji who was an upright officer.

Since Sri Naidu was also new to the post he relied heavily on him for administrative support. He and his immediate successor Mr Madhava Rao had an important say in the administrative decisions taken by the CM at that point of time. Subsequent chief secretaries one after the other started yielding ground to the Chief Minister's office which was directing most of the administrative decisions. CBN also prefers the CMO since they are all the time with him. But at that time the Chief Minister's office had very mature and balanced officers who always gave the necessary respect to the chief secretary and informed him and involved him in important decisions taken. The fact was that even during that period it was the CMO which was calling the shots. CBN also removed two chief secretaries mid way during their tenure as he was not happy with them for various reasons. One thing for certain was none of them was corrupt.

I have already explained the circumstances under which I became Chief Secretary of New Andhra Pradesh. Along with me, my batch mate Mr IV Subba Rao was also considered for the post and it was finally clinched in my favour by DGP designate Mr JV Ramudu who felt we could work better as a team since we had an excellent personal rapport.

In the first one month I was fully involved in the decisions. The first posting of collectors after the Chief Minister took over happened within a month. I participated in the discussion and could have one or two persons of my choice posted as collectors, like Yuvraj who went to Vizag. But from the next postings the process of consultation and involvement of the CS stopped. I am really not sure where the decisions were taken but the list used to come to me from the CMO for issuing the orders. The Chief Minister's office became a key centre of power with lot of power and no responsibility. This could be because the Chief Minister felt I will not take care of his interests in the manner in which he expected them to be taken care of.

Simultaneously certain other changes were also happening. Mr Giridhar and Mr Ajay Sahni, two very bright and honest

officers picked to be in the CMO could not adjust themselves and left on deputation to the Centre. Mr Joseph, Principal Chief Conservator of Forests, known for his honesty and integrity also could not survive in that post for more than six months and had to make way for someone else. The DGP, who is also an honest and upright officer was also feeling uncomfortable. It is clear that in the Chief Minister's agenda the role and place for sincere and honest officers was getting limited. The community angle and promotion of community interests was a main agenda item being pursued from the CMO. In fact, after Mr Giridhar and Mr Ajay Sahni left, all the inside officers in the CMO were from one community. Even the personal secretaries were picked up on such considerations. As CMO was emerging as the important power centre and since there is lack of space for others, it started representing the interests of one community. All important statutory bodies were also getting filled on those lines. The APPSC Chairman, State Election Commissioner, Vice Chairman of Planning Board, CEO Economic Development Board and a host of advisors -- all were from one community. The trend continued on the same lines even after my retirement with RERA and other bodies being filled on those lines.

I had credible information that there were discussions and serious moves to replace me twice once when I was six months in office and second time after an year. It got almost to a stage of issuing orders but was held back. May be since they thought I may not leave without making an issue such proposals were dropped and I finished my tenure and retired on 31st of January 2016.

You may lose your face if you commit with someone based on an assurance given by CBN. It happened in the case of Mrs. Chandana Khan, Special Chief Secretary, Tourism working in Andhra Pradesh government. I really had to cut a sorry figure. She is also a batch mate of mine and was retiring around December 2014. When division of Schedule 10 institutions became a contentious issue with Telangana government she displayed exemplary devotion to duty in the case of National institute of tourism and hospitality management. She held the board meeting right on the footpath and

came back when police prevented her from entering the institute premises. Quite a number of other officers when I requested them to give a fight to establish our right in the Schedule 10 institutions were reluctant to go to those offices since they thought they can get victimised as they have to live in Hyderabad after retirement. I was really impressed by the manner in which she dealt with issue of NIHTM. Just a month before her retirement she met me and I asked her what her post-retirement plans are. She said she worked in the tourism department for more than a decade and would be happy if she could find an opportunity to work in that sector. The post of Chairman of AP Tourism Corporation was vacant and I mentioned it to the CM and asked whether we can accommodate her there. He also knows her well since she worked in important assignments in his earlier tenure. He said he would like to have a politician to head the corporation but she can be considered as the MD of the Tourism Corporation with a tenure of three years. When I mentioned this to her she was happy since her preference was for the post of MD Tourism Corporation. Since the matter was agreed to by the Chief Minister I prepared the file and took it for his signature. He informed me he was going on a trip abroad the next day and would be signing on the file the moment he returns. Since the Chief Minister has agreed and signing on the file is only a formality I informed Mrs Chandana Khan and congratulated her. On the last day of the month the staff of the Tourism Department gave her a farewell which I also attended. When I was asked to speak I informed them that she was not leaving the department and would be coming back shortly as the MD of the Tourism Corporation and there was a big round of applause.

Promptly after Sri Naidu came back from the foreign tour I took back the file thinking that he would sign and I can issue the orders. He informed me that her name figures in the IMG Bharata case and asked me not to be in a hurry to issue the orders and did not sign the file. I tried to plead with him stating that she is not connected with that case as I am aware of those involved in that case. But he insisted that she is involved in the case and hence I promised to check it and get back to him. Since Mr Sambasiva

Rao who was in the CMO at that time knew the background to this case I spoke to him to find out what exactly happened. He clarified to me stating that she has no role whatsoever in that case and she had done nothing against the interests of the CM then and further informed her evidence was taken in support of CBN when a case was filed in the High Court. I requested Mr Sambasiva Rao to kindly explain this to CBN and he promised to do so. Finally nothing happened and she was not posted as MD of the Tourism Corporation and after a few more attempts I also gave up. It was highly embarrassing for me to give this information to her but she took it in the right spirit.

For those who don't know the background of IMG Bharata, a huge extent of 450 acres land was allocated to this organization in Gachibowli area for developing sporting facilities in 2003 -2004 just before the elections by CBN. It became controversial and after the Congress came to power the deal was cancelled. Though Mrs Chandana Khan handled the sports department she was not there when this allocation of land was made to IMG Bharata.

Thus there was a lack of trust in our relationship. This could be due to the Chief Minister's perception that I may not be able to deliver his requirements. Just before my retirement on the last but one day there was immense pressure on me from the CM's office to clear enhancement of rates for irrigation projects which I refused and I know the CM was not happy with my decision. After a month when I met CBN in my new capacity as Chairman of the Brahmin Corporation the only issue we discussed was about the enhancement of rates for the irrigation projects which I did not clear.

Similarly my noting on the file relating to implementation of the arbitration award for the contractor who executed the Pulichintala project was also not to the liking of the Chief Minister. When I saw the file I realised that the arbitration award was patently wrong and the award resulted in disproportionate increase in the payment to be made to the contractor. From the file it was evident there was no need to have taken this particular case for arbitration but



still it was done. One of the officers strongly wrote stating that the government should withdraw from the arbitration proceedings but still the government went ahead with arbitration proceedings. The arbitrator appointed by the government gave an award of dissent disputing the award of the majority. His dissent award was very correct and proper hence I took a stand and wrote that it would be worthwhile to explore all possibilities of stopping this particular payment and if required a criminal case be filed for any collusion at some level for giving such a patently atrocious arbitration award. When the file went to the Chief Minister he did not like the strong noting I made on that file. The amount is still pending for payment because of the strong note I have written. Recently it has come into focus again as the contractor approached the court and got a favourable judgement. Needless to say, approaching the court is to facilitate government to make payment as per the bad arbitration award and could have been suggested by some in the government to facilitate the payment.

# [ 11 ]

## Chief Secretary and the CMO

If there is one extra constitutional authority which has become a powerful body over a period of time in the state it is the Chief Minister's office. It all started as an outfit to coordinate with the chief secretary and others and be a liaison between the Chief Minister, other ministers, secretaries and the chief secretary. But slowly it started gaining strength and the office whose functions earlier used to be fixing up of appointments for the Chief Minister and ensuring the files are cleared by the Chief Minister has now emerged as the sole centre of power after the Chief Minister. The situation may not be very different in other states as well but the power wielded by the Chief Minister's office in Andhra Pradesh may be unparalleled.

The peculiarity of the situation is that this is a centre of power without any responsibility. Officers in the CMO do not sign on any file nor maintain a record of advice they rendered to the Chief Minister and to that extent the officers can easily escape any responsibility. Compared to this the way the Prime Minister's Office functions is different. It is listed as a department under the Central government business rules and they maintain a record of whatever advice they render to the Prime Minister.

When we were collectors we were interacting both with the chief secretary as well as the Chief Minister's office but we could observe the Chief Minister's office becoming stronger than the chief secretary even during those days. This is because they are always with the Chief Minister; and to that extent have a better access to

him and if they want to prejudice his mind against someone they have all the time in the world. The strength of the Chief Minister's office also depends on the relationship that is there between the Chief Minister and the chief secretary. For example, when Sri Kotla Vijaya Bhaskar Reddy was the Chief Minister and Mr Jayabharath Reddy was chief secretary, the relationship between them was so good that the Chief Minister's office became irrelevant. The type of people who man the CMO can also decide relevance and importance of the CMO. If some of them feel insecure and their own relationship with the Chief Minister is not well established it can result in their playing a role in weakening the trust levels between the Chief Minister and chief secretary for their own survival and importance.

The Chief Minister's office that supported Sri Chandrababu Naidu in his first tenure as Chief Minister was one of the best any CM could have had. It consisted of subject matter specialists like Mr Randeep Sudan who never interfered in any issue other than information technology, an area of his interest and core competence. The other senior officers who were there in the CMO were very mature and knew how best to handle any complicated issue keeping the interests of the Chief Minister in mind. The Chief Minister's office was also far more diversified with people drawn from different communities and backgrounds. This is very important since in the present day administration where ministers have no say, the chief secretary is getting sidelined and Chief Minister's office becoming powerful, if it is not broad-based some sections of the community lose an opening in the centre of power to get their problems sorted out with the help of that office. One can see even ministers pleading with the Chief Minister's office officers to get their files cleared.

When this government took office in 2014, this time the choice of officers to the Chief Minister's office was done very carefully. But the Chief Minister did not find two brilliant and honest officers Mr Giridhar and Mr Ajay Sahni competent enough to take care of his interests. Within six months they had to leave and both of

them chose to go to Government of India where they are in very important assignments. This itself is an indication of the changed priorities of the Chief Minister in his second term.

After both of them left, the choice of their successors was made in such a way that other than the outside officers all the inside officers belonged to one community until very recently when one more person was inducted. The peculiarity of this government is that they are not willing to believe anybody from the other communities to be part of the inner circle and hence right from the personal staff to the Chief Minister it is all manned by people from one community other than outside officers. I'm just making a limited comparison in this regard between the Chief Minister's office of Sri Rajasekhara Reddy and that of Sri Chandrababu Naidu in his second term. The Chief Minister's office of Sri Rajasekhara Reddy consisted of Dalit, Muslim, kapu officers in addition to some from his own community. The personal staff of YSR was also drawn from different communities. In contrast, except outside officers, all the inside officers (but for a recent induction) as well as the personal staff of CBN are drawn from the same community. It is this sense of insecurity, not trusting anyone, is also part of the reason for not trusting the chief secretary as well. Though in theory the community angle should not matter but in practice this is the most important issue and when the most powerful institution in government is manned by people belonging to one community, free and fair access to others is shut. In fact a senior journalist with impeccable reputation belonging to the same community told me once that an officer in CMO confided to him that while releasing assistance from CM's relief fund he is looking at the surnames to satisfy whether the beneficiaries belong to their community. Of course, he is no longer there in the Chief Minister's office now.

Most of the time the Chief Minister's office directly deals with senior officers and collectors. When there were mature people in the CMO the chief secretary was also kept informed of such instructions. However no such thing happens with this CMO. They function as a parallel system of administration, give instructions

and get files. I was convinced while in service that this institution should be made responsible for the aid and advice they give to the Chief Minister. After I retired I collected the necessary information and filed a public interest litigation to direct the CM's office to maintain a record of the aid and advice they give to the CM. The case is pending in the High Court and I will be taking it to its logical conclusion. The case filed by Mr Prakash Singh on police reforms in 1985 came before the Supreme Court for hearing in 1995. So one has to wait for one's turn if one fails to convince the court that it needs to be taken up on priority.

# [12]

## My Relation with Telangana CM KCR

**D**uring the period 1987 to 89 I was District Collector of Khammam. That was when NTR was the Chief Minister. Two ministers were appointed at that timeto address drought and one of them was KCR who was given the charge of Nalgonda and Khammam. He made a visit once to the district and made a review of the drought situation. Subsequently during Janmabhumi programme I went to Medak district as a nodal officer. I met KCR there and we had lunch at the R&B guest house. After lunch he explained his idea of the drainage system for Medak. It was very well thought out and I was very impressed by his knowledge of things which usually we don't find in most of the politicians. After he became Chief Minister elect of Telangana I met him and offered a bouquet and explored the possibility of his taking me as Chief Secretary of Telangana. I could sense that he already made up his mind on this issue and did not pursue the matter any further. I met him again when he came for the foundation stone laying ceremony for the new capital Amaravati.

Mr Rajiv Sharma, Chief Secretary of Telangana, once mentioned to me "KCR has a lot of regard for you in spite of the fact you are fighting so strongly on division issues". I told him it was nice of him to have a good opinion about me.

It was December 2015 when KCR performed Ayuta Chandi Yaga. One Sri Venkata Ramana Sarma who was actively involved in organising it rang me up one day and asked me when I was

coming to witness the yagam. I told him I don't have an invitation so I'm not coming. He expressed his surprise and told me there was some mistake somewhere and that he would talk to me later. Within minutes I got a phone call from the Chief Minister's office requesting me on behalf the Chief Minister to come and participate in the yagam. Mr Harish Rao also rang me up and requested me to inform by what time I would be coming so that necessary arrangements could be made. I confirmed that I would be coming in the evening and went there accordingly.

I was received by Mr Harish Rao with Purna kumbham and was taken inside. By then one part of rituals was over and Prasadam was being distributed. KCR instead of taking it mentioned to his people to give it to me and also corrected me about the proper procedure of taking it with a cloth instead of into hands directly. After a while when I got up to go, he requested me to stay back till the whole program is over and take the Prasadam. When finally I was leaving, KCR came to see me off. No wonder with this attitude he organised a grand civic reception for Mr Rajiv Sharma when he retired as Chief Secretary: unheardof for any other civil servant. I took that opportunity when he was seeing me off and mentioned to him that due to the initiative taken by me there was a separate corporation to take care of the needs of the Brahmin community in Andhra Pradesh but the condition of Brahmins in Telangana is much worse and requested him to consider whether he can set up a separate organisation for them here as well. He gestured to me that it would be done. I was happy I could convince him on the need to set up the organisation in Telangana as well.

Subsequently he organised a brainstorming session to set up an organisation for the Brahmin community and invited me and Dr K Aravinda Rao, ex DGP, to that meeting to give our suggestions. He made a note of all the information and constituted the Telangana Brahmana Parishad. He wanted me and Dr Aravinda Rao to be on the committee of this organisation but due to internal politics it did not happen. He also made a budget provision of Rs 200 crore for this

purpose. Unfortunately due to lack of commitment at bureaucratic level welfare programmes did not really take off the way they should have. His commitment to the cause is unquestionable and the way he is taking care of the welfare of the Archakas is also something worth mentioning.



# [13]

## My Tenure as CCLA and Some High-Profile Land Cases

**I**n May 2013 I became the Chief Commissioner of land Administration consequent on Mr P K Mohanty becoming the chief secretary. Land is a major business for politicians to make money and dispense favours. The one year tenure was eventful and I dealt with some of the high-profile cases of land allocation and safeguarding the lands from land sharks. One important initiative I took was to get all the vacant lands belonging to the government enclosed with compound walls. I got a special budget of about Rs 20 crore for this purpose and went ahead with this work across the state, more particularly the lands located in Hyderabad and Vizag which have high value. This had the desired effect of at least ensuring the government lands not getting into litigation at a later date as they are enclosed and boards were put up prominently declaring them as government lands.

Lands in Telangana area are more prone to litigation compared to lands located in the rest of the state. This is because of the peculiar land administration system prevalent in Telangana where huge extent of lands are mentioned in one survey number without sub division. Further, the issue is complicated with people getting hold of some old document or *firmana* issued by the Nizam and approaching courts of law for favourable orders.

While taking all the steps required to ensure that government lands are protected I focused on two initiatives which are crucial in protecting the government land. Previously the allocation of

government land used to be made by the collectors. To have better control on land allocation in the '80s this power was taken over by the cabinet. Since allocations are made by the Cabinet any cancellation also has to be made by the cabinet. This is becoming a long drawn out process for cancellations to be done by the cabinet, so if anybody allotted land was not using it for the purpose for which allocation is made or violating the other conditions of allocation it is becoming impossible to cancel the allocation as the file has to go all the way up to the cabinet. I wanted this to be changed and powers of cancellation to be handed over to the collectors. Accordingly I initiated the proposals and sent them to the government. A major fraud that was being played on government lands was by the suitcase companies who come with set a proposals stating that they would be setting up a mega project and then get huge extents of land allocated. They also put pressure at the appropriate political level get a sale deed executed transferring the ownership of the land. Since they come with a proposal to bring in investment and employment they get land allocation at a concessional rate of say Rs 10 lakhs where it may cost a crore of rupees. Once the sale deed is executed they will mortgage the land at market price of one crore to financial institutions and utilise the money so received for their own purpose after paying the necessary bribes. The industry promised will never come and when the amount falls due to the financial institution they put the land to auction and recover the loan amount. These companies are basically trading in government lands.

To put an end to this practice a proposal was sent to put a condition in the allotment of land that land cannot be mortgaged to financial institutions at a rate higher than the rate at which the land was allotted to them. I thought a condition like this would ensure that spurious suitcase companies will not have any incentive to trade in the land. Not only did I send this proposal but pursued it in the government as well as with the CM's office. Both the proposals did not go through during the period I was the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration. But when I became the Chief Secretary I was able to get one proposal through, that is

giving the power of cancellation of land allocation to the collectors, But the other proposal to put a condition that the industries which get land at a concessional rate should mortgage at that rate only to financial institutions did not go through in spite of my serious efforts as Chief Secretary. This goes to show how deep and strong are the vested interests in land and how it is next to impossible to rein them in.

With reference to protection of government land my main concentration was on Hyderabad, Ranga Reddy district and Vizag where the land values were very high. We had one Mrs Chandrakala as tahsildar of Shaikpet taluk in Hyderabad district. Jubilee Hills area comes under Shaikpet tahsildar and the lands are very valuable. She was very honest and upright and did a lot to protect the government lands in this area. I made it a point to visit all the prime location government lands and get them also enclosed with compound walls and also visited the lands which were taken by different organisations and were never put to use or conditions of allocation are violated brazenly. We were able to get back possession of a prime piece of land given to Film Development Corporation in Jubilee Hills area which was never put to use. Another huge extent of land was given to a prominent film actor for a studio. When he demolished the studio he converted it into a real estate business and made a layout to sell the plots. We gave him a notice and sincerely followed up the case. He became panicky but I'm sure by now all these problems would have been overcome by him and the land sold off as a real estate venture. At that time he tried to reach out to me through different sources but I remained firm and pursued the case.

Similarly a prime piece of land which was taken by an important film personality in Hyderabad in Jubilee Hills for construction of a music academy was converted into a multiplex theatre against the allocation conditions after keeping it vacant for a long time. His case was also vigorously pursued during that period. Another piece of prime land given to a media house was not put to use and when we issued notice, the MD of a premier

hospital in Hyderabad came stating that they bought the land from them. Successive governments have used government land as if it is their private land and allotted it as a personal favour to different persons much beyond their requirement. To pursue land matters we need a team to work consistently over a long period of time. An occasional good officer here and there will try his best to protect them but in the long drawn out process of legal cases in the end it is the land sharks who will have the last laugh. They will wait and ensure that the file does not move when they know they may get an adverse order from the officer and manage the case when there is a more convenient officer. Similarly they use all the avenues available including the courts of law to win the case in the long run to their advantage. They win over the support of politicians and officers who will ensure that the legal cases are not fought as required in the courts of law and claims of government are not properly established. With all our efforts we were successful in protecting the vacant land but were not equally successful in getting back the land which was already allotted but was not put to use and the conditions of allotment were violated with impunity. Three illustrative cases of Vizag I will be discussing below will show how difficult it is to deal with this mafia which has deep-rooted connections.

### **Case Relating to Allotment of Surplus Ceiling Land on RK Beach, Vizag**

Land belonging to one Addepalli Venkata Appaiah Sastri was declared as surplus under The Urban Land Ceiling Act and taken over by the government in Vizag right on RK Beach. Two others, Venkatapathi Raju and Kanakabrahmam applied for regularisation of the surplus lands stating that they have built houses on the land. Government accordingly regularised their possession. The Collector subsequently gave a report stating that they are not in possession of the land and produced fake electricity bills and claimed possession. The government first put the order of regularisation in abeyance but subsequently withdrew the same and permitted regularisation by collecting the highest slab price. Through a series of court litigation they managed to get this land

regularised. This issue was raised in the Legislative Council by the opposition and the minister promised to get the same enquired into by a senior IAS officer and accordingly the matter was entrusted to CCLA for enquiry by the government. When I went through the file I realised that they are in possession of land based upon government orders obtained by fraud and deceit and none of those orders have been cancelled and without cancelling the orders I was asked to enquire about the fraud involved in the case. Hence I wrote to the government immediately to cancel those orders obtained by fraud through which they are in possession of the land and then only further enquiry would serve any purpose. The right thing for the government would have been to cancel those GOs obtained by fraud and then to remit the file back to me for further enquiry. Instead of doing that, the government replied to me to go ahead with my enquiry without cancelling those GOs. It is rumoured that substantial amounts changed hands to get that particular memo issued to me without cancelling the above GOs. I started going through with my enquiry at a brisk pace to establish that there was fraud involved in this case and did not agree to give adjournments. Once they started feeling the heat they approached the High Court stating that I have already written to the government to cancel the allocations made to them and hence prejudiced against them and hence cannot continue with my enquiry and obtained a stay. The case could not proceed further as long as I was CCLA due to stay orders. When I subsequently became the Chief Secretary and went to Vizag one day on some other work I enquired with the District Collector, Mr Yuvraj about this case and this land which I dealt with as CCLA. He said a massive residential complex has come up in that land. With curiosity I visited that place to see a residential complex built by those who obtained property rights to the land by fraud and deceit. This is a classic case where the land is actually that of the government, taken possession under Land Ceiling Act, but with the right connections at right places political and bureaucratic, a real estate agency was able to get it allotted in their favour for a pittance and construct a residential complex. Hence if one has patience to wait and deep pockets and the ability to litigate, getting

government land and getting ownership regularised is not difficult.

### **Bheemunipatnam Cooperative Housing Society Land Allotment**

This is another classic case of land allocation to a cooperative housing society whose credentials are doubtful and how the litigation dragged on for almost 20 years resulting in favourable orders to the society. The land in question is about 400 acres right on the beach in Bheemunipatnam of Visakhapatnam district and was allotted to the society in 1995. The matter came to the government for fixation of the market value but in between since there were allegations that the membership in this society was not genuine, there was a floor leaders meeting conducted by the then Chief Minister in which a decision was taken still to go ahead with allocation of land for this cooperative housing society. Meanwhile the Naval authorities came with a request to allot the same land which is required for their INS Kalinga project and hence the issue got complicated. After a series of cases in the High Court one in favour of the society and the division bench judgement upholding the powers of the government to resume the land saw the case landing in the Supreme Court where finally the case was decided in favour of the cooperative society. A series of review petitions and a curative petition also did not yield the desired results. It was at this time that the then Revenue Secretary approached me when I was the Special CS, Cooperation stating that this society is not a genuine one and needs to be enquired into under the Cooperative Act. We did find that there were serious irregularities including the membership as well as withdrawal of crores of rupees in a very short period of time. Accordingly a case was built up against the society when I was the Special CS Corporation. Consequent on my taking over as the CCLA again I had to deal with the file from the revenue side. I called the cooperative department and the revenue people together and started working out a strategy to save the land because it is very valuable. We explored two options we could think of: one was to invoke a specific provision in the board standing orders and resume the land at the rate at which

it was allotted to the society. If we were to acquire the land back from the society after allotting them at a concessional rate for the Navy's purpose it would mean paying them a few crores of rupees for nothing which we were not willing to do. Essentially by this deal they would be getting rental profit for having applied for this land and were able to sustain the litigation for almost 20 years. The second alternative was, since this land is what is locally known as *Yerramatti Dibbalu* which is a declared heritage site, we could take the plea that this cannot be allotted for housing purpose. But since the possibility of filing one more curative petition in the Supreme Court was limited, alternative ways of saving the land by invoking these provisions was being considered. We did not hand over land to the society till I retired as the Chief Secretary in spite of pressures from powerful quarters. I am not sure what finally happened with this case but if at all the land was allocated to them at a highly concessional rate and again acquired for the purpose of the Navy at market rate that would have been a shining example of how the system can be manipulated by some to make a fortune from government land.

### **GITAM Institutions**

Another important land issue which I dealt with as CCLA was regarding allocation of about 34 acres of land to GITAM institutions at Vizag. There was immense pressure to allot this land to the above institutions. That was the time when it was known that the state would be divided but it was not sure where the new capital is going to be located. Even otherwise I didn't see any justification in handing over prime land of 34 acres in a major metropolis to private educational institutions at a concessional rate when they can be reserved for a better public purpose. Accordingly I put the matter in the committee constituted by the government for allocation of lands and rejected the request. When the issues involved are financial, political affiliations are irrelevant. In this particular case the same thing happened and there was immense pressure from the then Congress Chief Minister Sri Kiran Kumar Reddy's office to send the file with whatever are my comments so that they can overrule the same and allot land to GITAM.

I was reluctant to send any proposal since once I send proposals, allotment of that piece of land to those institutions looked a certainty. The GITAM management tried all tricks to get the file through me. These tricks of the management infuriated me so I decided that I'll do my best to save the 34 acres of land for a better use in the future. I found out the requirement of government institutions, both state and central, and though power of allotment of land was with the government and not with CCLA I allotted this land to central and state government institutions and directed the Collector to hand over possession of the land to them and wrote for ratification to the government of my orders. I could take this risk since my intentions were very clear and clean. As the land was only being allotted to the government institutions nobody can find fault with me. After the possession was handed over to the government organisations GITAM management went to the High Court and got a stay on the allocation and the government organisations did not go further with construction of their buildings.

But the moment there was a change of government, allotment of land to this institution became a priority. After I left as Chief Secretary I believe this item was brought before the Cabinet with an intention to cancel the allocation of land to the government organisations and then allot them to the GITAM institutions showing it as a case of targeting this institution during Sri Rajasekhara Reddy's time. But I believe there was a strong objection from one of the Cabinet ministers against allocation of this land to the GITAM institutions so finally they ended up cancelling the allocations to the government institutions without allotting the land to GITAM for fear of public outcry. But I am sure it is only a matter of time before the GITAM institutions manage to get this land allotted to them.



# [14]

## Amaravati

I have separately written a book on the capital city Amaravati. Here I am summarising the same.

During the Congress regime the matter was referred to me when I was the Chief Commissioner of Land Administration (CCLA) for looking for appropriate lands for location of the capital for the residual state of AP. I had in my mind the history of the state, the need for developing backward areas, a place which would be acceptable to people from different regions, and a place where government land is available in plenty so that the capital city's expansion will not be a problem and accordingly suggested Donakonda. A proposal was sent to the government. The moment the new government took office and I became the Chief Secretary I was aware that the political leadership had a totally different priority on the capital city, and they were also not willing to involve me in that the process of identifying the place. I was also not too keen to get involved. The Chief Minister started feeling that his image alone can get things done and he would be in a position to build a mega city within a short period of time. With that confidence he went ahead and pooled more than 30,000 acres of land without any examination of suitability of the place for location of the capital and contrary to the suggestion and recommendation made by the statutorily appointed Sivaramakrishnan committee.

If a major city was already there and doubles up as the capital of a country or a state then it is a different matter. But to organically build a new capital city as a mega city, not only the experiment is

going to end up in a disaster but it will also suck in all the resources for the capital city development depriving the other regions of funds for development. The Anglo Saxon model has much greater relevance for a state like Andhra Pradesh where the regional diversity is a reality and any process of development for a new state like this has to keep this factor in mind. Building only a functional administrative capital at Amaravati and development of other major commercial centres like Vizag and Tirupati as regional hubs would have been a better model for this state.

Secondly if large scale public investment is happening and if there is no particularly great advantage of concentrating it in an already developed area, it makes sense to shift it to a less developed area where it will have a better multiplier effect.

The place chosen for location of the capital city is one of the most fertile areas anywhere in the world with highly enterprising farmers who grow three crops a year. There was no way the government could have acquired this huge extent of land under the new Land Acquisition Act. The threat of land acquisition was shown to pressurise the farmers to join in land pooling and in the absence of any commensurate activity taking place to get good value for such huge extent of land, the capital city experiment may sooner than later prove to be a major disaster.

# [15]

## Post-Retirement Assignment

Right from the beginning I had clear plans for my post retirement life. I never wanted to be in a constitutional or other governmental post and spend the rest of my life attending office from 10 to 5 or beyond as was the case for the last 40 years. (I started working from 1977 though I joined IAS in 1979). I wanted to spend time post retirement attending to my priorities in my own way. To focus on issues of public importance I thought public interest litigation could be a proper avenue and accordingly I acquired the degree in law for practicing. I joined in an evening college when I was working as the special chief secretary marketing and I could finish the final exam within months of my taking over as the chief secretary.

While working as Chief Secretary I played in my own way a role in the establishment of the Brahmin Welfare Corporation. When it was conceptualised I was very clear that it should not be a mere political outfit being managed by some politician in a non-professional manner but should be professionally run to achieve its objectives. When the Corporation was formed I talked to some of the best people from different fields and requested them to be on the board of the corporation and took their consent. They included people like Sri Galla Ramachandra Naidu, Sri Grandhi Mallikarjuna Rao (GMR) and others. My idea was that the organisation should be professionally managed with the advice of people of eminence from different communities who can give a proper perspective and direction. For the position of managing director I talked to

Mr Venkat Changavalli, who was a professional manager and an IIM alumni. He agreed to do the job on a part-time basis devoting three days in a week for this work. Accordingly I prepared a file for constituting the Corporation and sent it to the Chief Minister for approval. While agreeing for the Managing Director's appointment, he did not agree for the board of directors as suggested by me. He wanted to fill it up with his party functionaries. Till the time I retired as Chief Secretary, the Principal Secretary, Endowments (ex-officio) was also Chairman of the Corporation.

This was one area where I was thinking of working post retirement. Coming from a lower middle class Brahmin family, I had a natural empathy to this segment of population and also sincerely believed that it is a neglected lot who need some assistance from the government. Further, if you have passionate interest in a field like this, no organisation can give you a better opportunity to work than a government organisation in terms of reach and support. The Chief Minister was already thinking of posting a political person as Chairman. In his party, talent from this community is limited and this can result in posting of an unsuitable person as chairman which can result in the professionals I brought in to work in the corporation leaving. Keeping these things in mind I thought I would offer myself for this position of Brahmin Corporation Chairman to the Chief Minister and if he agrees take up the assignment, otherwise I would be on my own.

A fortnight before my retirement, Mr Pradyumna, additional secretary working with the CM informed me that the Chief Minister was thinking of posting me as the State chief information commissioner (SCIC) and had already spoken to the Governor to bifurcate this institution early to facilitate my posting. I told him to inform the Chief Minister that I was not interested in any such assignment and was interested in only one assignment, which I would discuss with The CM. Accordingly towards the end of the month I met the Chief Minister and informed him that I would be interested to work as Chairman, Brahmin corporation and would be doing it without any remuneration and other perks. He

immediately agreed for the same and also suggested that I can draw perks and remuneration as are available to others but I politely declined the same. The file (order) appointing me as the chairman of the Brahmin Welfare Corporation was circulated and approved. In the GO, in a routine way all the remuneration and perks as are available were mentioned which I never availed during my tenure as the chairman. But when Telugu Desam leaders wanted to defame me before throwing me out they highlighted this particular order and started spreading lies that I received all those perks and remuneration as chairman of Brahmin Corporation which was a total lie.

### **My tenure as the Brahmin Corporation Chairman**

I took charge as the chairman of the AP Brahmin Welfare Corporation on 14th February 2016. Since there was excitement and a lot of expectations from the Corporation, elders of the community turned up in large numbers for the ceremony when I took charge. The office premises was located within the endowments department under whose charge the corporation was functioning and in the first year of its existence under the leadership of Mr Venkat Changavalli and the Principal Secretary Endowments they have built a strong IT platform for disbursement of benefits from the corporation.

I have seen how the other community welfare organisations in the social sector like the SC Corporation and BC Corporation got into serious problems due to over-staffing, political interference and lack of focus. They have just become subsidy dispensing units that too in a complicated manner giving scope to emergence of middlemen. Though there was expenditure from the government side what is received by the beneficiary is only a fraction of it. A bad culture also got established of making the beneficiary believe that there is no need for him to repay back the loan he has taken. Keeping this experience in mind I was very clear how this corporation should function. There will be no beneficiary and staff interference and all applications will be taken online scrutinised and money remitted by RTGS to the respective bank accounts. We have set up a strong

call centre to take complaints answer them and inform the status of the application to the applicants. There was a budget allocation of Rs. 65 crore during that year and I was confident we will be able to achieve our targets even with this limited budget since everything is going to be done in a transparent focussed manner. Beneficiaries of economic support schemes were clearly told in the beginning itself that have to do business and repay back the loan amount. To minimise the costs to the Corporation we decided not to have district officers. We decided to function with one central office and use the IT platform for beneficiary selection and disbursement of benefits. At district level we decided to go in for coordinators.

Mr Venkat Changavalli who was MD of the corporation coined very thoughtful names for the schemes like Bharati for educational assistance scheme and Chanakya for economic assistance scheme. We continued the same tradition and introduced new schemes like the Kashyapa scheme for the old-age pensions and Garuda for the assistance for last rites of those who die in destitute condition. The innovative manner in which the activities of the corporation were taken up attracted the attention of others. I was also keen once the system stabilises and benefits are rolled out on a large scale to have an interactive session with other similar organisations and share the experiences see whether there could be some learning which can be mutually beneficial. Feedback on the schemes of the Corporation as well as its implementation was very good and the corporation started functioning on sound lines focusing on the less endowed vulnerable sections within the community. We never allowed any dilution in these criteria and kept our focus on reaching out to the vulnerable sections of the community. The comfort level and ease with which the corporation was able to disburse assistance made similarly placed other communities like Tamballa and Satani community persons who are classified as backward classes to approach the revenue authorities for a Brahmin certificate to access the schemes of the Corporation rather than go to backward classes Corp for assistance. There was also a complaint from Srikakulam that most of them come from Orissa settled in the state but from the Brahmin community and the certificates

are not being issued to them by revenue authorities. We took a view that whoever is from the Brahmin community living within Andhra Pradesh whether he is Tamilian, Kannadiga or Oriya would be eligible for assistance for corporation schemes and sent out a circular accordingly. There is one community called Sista Karanams in Srikakulam and leaders of the community came and met me with a lot of information and documentation to prove that they belong to the Brahmin community and hence they should be included in the assistance from the Corporation. Chief minister of Andhra Pradesh reviewed the performance of these corporations in one collectors conference. The MD made a presentation which was well received. The Chief Minister commented and remarked that Brahmin Corporation was able to do much better with a smaller budget and the Kapu Corporation was not able to do well even though Rs 1,000 crore were given to them. The next day the managing director and his team came to me in a very elated mood stating that the Chief Minister had praised us in the collectors' conference. Knowing Sri Chandrababu Naidu very well I told them not to be over-excited. I told them our performance came in handy to show the Kapu Corporation in poor light since the the Chief Minister has given them Rs 1,000 crore and he may rely on this to say performance has nothing to do with funds and may reduce their allocation and there is no need to get over-excited about the comments.

Simultaneously the Brahmin Cooperative Credit Society was started with a Rs 25 crore seed capital to function as an independent organisation. This was thought out to be an organisation which can mobilise resources from the members as well as institutions and take up economically relevant activities on a larger scale. Membership of the credit society was divided into A and B categories, the B category to be subscribed only by those who want to help the community by strengthening this organisation but are not looking for any benefit from the organisation. The idea was to form small groups of really marginalised sections of the community and take up economic activities relevant to them and also tie up proper marketing outlets for their products. I also selected a

well qualified professional as the CEO to function part time on this work. I thought this way we can get the best talent for the Cooperative Society. In retrospect I realise a less qualified full-time executive could have done better for the Cooperative Society. In the Corporation it was just establishing the system and dispensing the benefits whereas in the Society you need a lot of interaction with the people organising them and taking up activities. The CEO could not find as much time as is required for all these activities and the Cooperative Society did not pick up to the extent it should have, because of lack of proper and full attention. The groups in the corporative society were named Arundhati and Vasishtha for women and men respectively. We conducted a major membership drive for the society. Two brothers from Srikakulam who were working with the Corporation as coordinator and executive member of the society showed a lot of interest in organising the local women for making nutritious diet which can also be used in nutrition programs of the government. From the society side we started supporting the activity and organising the women into Arundhati groups. I was prepared to support them for necessary infrastructure to take up this and other activities by these groups on a large scale. My idea of the society was that it should grow into a financial institution of some significance in the years to come. It should take deposits from the members as well as lend money to the members and make profits and develop as an organisation independent of government assistance and should take care of the marginalised sections of the community in the long run. Hence we started opening banking branches of the society in different places. The scale and finances of the society being limited, we had a problem in getting the necessary software to computerise the society's financial activities. We approached Vsoft, a company which was supplying software to multinational banks and they agreed to provide the necessary software free of cost to the society. That really sorted out a major problem for us and accordingly we started training the staff to customise the software for the operations of the cooperative credit society and start the bank branches and this process started moving forward at a fast pace.



Another area of focus for me was building up entrepreneurship in the Brahmin community and creating an environment conducive for them to think and act like entrepreneurs. Traditionally they are into government jobs and the initiative required for starting a business is lacking. So also is the necessary capital required for starting enterprises. I identified a person who has a good exposure to venture capital financing and is also into advising startup companies. We thought it would be better to have a separate subsidiary company for this purpose. Accordingly ABC Next was formed with a mandate to help start-ups with necessary finances and ideas. The subsidiary started functioning in the right direction.

I also took charge as chairman of the Archaka Welfare Trust. The condition of the priests serving in small temples was miserable and my focus was to help them out. Accordingly I was able to convince the then TTD executive officer who promised to release Rs 100 crore to support the small temples that lacked proper financial means. Out of the promised Rs 100 crore, he was the EO, TTD was kind enough to release Rs 75 crore towards this purpose by the time I left the Trust. Similarly I was able to persuade the Commissioner, Endowments to give their shares from the bigger temples with which we were able to take up a lot of activity for the small temples.

# [16]

## An Agenda Beyond Beneficiaries and Parties

After I took over as Chairman of the Brahmin Welfare Corporation in February 2016, I went to call on the Chief Minister after taking an appointment in March. As explained earlier the discussion was not on the Corporation and its activities but about a file relating to enhancement of rates in the irrigation department, which I did not clear during my last days in the office of Chief Secretary. I came back and started my work in the Brahmin Corporation. There was a fundamental difference in the approach to the activities of the corporation between him and me which is at the root of the differences that emerged slowly over time. For me it was an opportunity for consolidating the community as a force to get what is due to them politically and otherwise. For Mr Chandrababu Naidu it was more for molding the community as a vote bank for his own party. This basic difference in approach and a series of incidents resulted in a gap which got widened for a variety of reasons which I will be explaining in due course.

Since I decided that there would be no district offices for the Corporation we needed functionaries at the district level to assist us and take forward the programs and activities of the corporation. I was careful enough to consult the ruling party before making these selections. In the Telugu Desam Party, in spite of the fact that they claim to represent the backward classes, the two key functionaries who support the Chief Minister from the party's side belong to his own community: one is Mr VV Chaudary and the other is Mr Janardhan. IN my view they lack a proper perspective,

understanding and ability to guide the Chief Minister on party affairs. Their vision is very limited and narrow. For the party's rout in the ensuing general elections which looks imminent, most of the blame squarely will lie on the shoulders of these two people who did not have a broader vision of strengthening the party on a diversified base. Mr Anand Surya who subsequently became the Chairman of the Corporation thought he missed an opportunity initially because of me. He is a faithful follower of Mr Janardhan who was looking for an opportunity to carry tales against me to get his follower installed as the chairman.

One of my main agenda items was consolidating the Brahmins as a political force as they have for a long time withdrawn from the political scene thinking that it is not suitable for them. I started organising meetings of Brahmins in every district. I used to have a set pattern for these meetings. In the morning I interact with all members of the community who came and explain the activities of the corporation and the need for them to claim their rightful place in the political arena. In the afternoon I used to meet the elite members of the community from that area and impress upon them to take up the leadership as well as to get involved in the activities of the Cooperative Society by supporting the marginalised sections within the community and provide the necessary leadership. I also used to interact with the elite from the Vaisya community wherever I went since both the communities have a strong urban base and if they come together, they can be a strong political force in about 30 to 40 assembly constituencies. Needless to say, these meetings would go beyond the political party limits as they encompass all the members of the community beyond party lines. Similarly I believe there is no conflict of interests between Brahmins and Dalits and a strong relationship can be built between these communities so that they can be a strong political force together. Keeping this in view, even though there was no invitation I went and addressed the gathering in a function held in memory of Sri Damodaram Sanjeevaiah, former Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, and my presence as well as my speech was well received.

Information was carried to the Chief Minister that in all these meetings I was projecting myself and not projecting Sri Naidu which he seems to have believed blindly. In fact everywhere my speech used to run in a set pattern: the problems and difficulties of the community and how they got accentuated after independence and how the setting up of the Corporation is a step in the right direction and that all of them should be thankful to the Chief Minister for that. But of course I did not, nor can I start to praise him as the be-all and end-all and *ma-baap* of the community. If those were the expectations then my performance was falling short of their expectations. We ensured that every beneficiary of the Corporation got a letter signed by the Chief Minister. This we thought would give him a much better political mileage than praising him in the meetings *ad infinitum*.

There are a number of choultries under the Endowments Department. Most of these properties were endowed for specific purpose by members of the Brahmin community mostly in the 19th century. They are centrally located valuable properties and are mismanaged, and the full potential of those assets is not realised. Most of them were specific endowments for promotion of Vedic literature, education of poor Brahmin students and for making facilities for performance of the last rites of members of this community. Now that there is a Corporation specific for the community, all those specific endowments can be brought under the corporation. After going through the list of the endowments, I selected two such choultries, one in Nellore and another in Guntur, which are centrally located and have very good asset value. At Guntur, members of a dominant community there set their eyes on the choultry, trying to take control based on rumours that it was associated with a certain incident that took place during the independence struggle. There were other choultries as well, but I thought of taking up these two to develop them to realize the full potential from the properties and making them a success before moving on to the others. A file was accordingly prepared and sent to the Endowments Minister. I went and met him and explained the background and he was convinced and signed the file. Thus,

we were able to get both these properties under the Corporation's control. If properly managed, they can be good sources of revenue for the Corporation.

Things were moving smoothly till about October-November 2016. In October we planned the inauguration of the Brahmin Cooperative Credit Society office and the bank branch, and requested the CM to inaugurate it. It was a grand show with Arundhati group members from Srikakulam district also participating in the function. The Chief Minister spoke with passion about the services of the Brahmin community to the society and promised to extend all help for their development. In fact he promised to accommodate Brahmins in political posts and since I was also there on the dais, Sri Naidu very graciously said that he would consult me in that process. He spent full two hours interacting with the members and participated in the function. When and how things started moving in a different direction and the relations got soured... I will be dealing with that in another chapter.

# [17]

## Kancha Ilaiah and Me

I used to read Mr Kancha Ilaiah's articles in the newspapers and am aware of his views on a number of issues. As part of the activities of the Corporation one day I went to Nellore for a meeting. That day in the morning newspaper I read the remarks of Mr Kancha Ilaiah on Brahmins. As was reported in the newspaper he commented that Brahmins are lazy. In the press conference I held the same day, one of the press reporters asked me what was my opinion on Kancha Ilaiah's statement. I told him that it is not true. Quoting my own example I told them a lot of people comment that I am rigid and not diplomatic but no one said that I am lazy. The others sitting by my side were also professionals who came up in life through hard work. Hence it may not be correct to pass such sweeping generalised remarks.

The next morning I came back to Hyderabad and saw the same newspaper which carried the statement of Kancha Ilaiah the previous day also carried my statement very prominently. From the manner in which this particular newspaper was playing up the whole issue I could see a sinister design and got a doubt whether he really spoke in that manner. I went to my office and since I reacted to the news item, leaders of Brahmin organisations descended on my office stating that this issue needs to be taken up in a bigger way. I told them that seeing the manner in which the issue was being played up by one particular newspaper, I was not sure whether he really remarked in that manner and it would be better to check with him first. Some of them who had Mr Ilaiah's phone number rang

him up from my office and informed him that they were speaking from my office and requested for his clarification. He clarified that he was totally misquoted in the newspaper and is ready to announce the same thing in a press conference and requested them also to come over and be present in the press conference. Accordingly the Brahmin organisations' people left my office and I thought the matter would end there.

But as it turned out, it did not end there. In any community there are some fringe elements bent upon creating trouble and some of them seem to have misbehaved with Mr Ilaiah and also filed a series of criminal complaints on the issue. I am neither party to any of these actions nor would have advised any such action from anyone. Since the phone call was made from my office he presumed that I was behind this issue and started a vilification campaign against me. By then I did not know much about the social media and some of my friends told me that a whole campaign was being run against me in the social media. I informed them I am blissfully unaware of it. Once it came to my notice, I spoke to Mr Kancha Ilaiah and tried to tell him the sequence of events. I was told a retired judge was active in this issue. I sought his appointment to meet him and explain the sequence of events. This judge had a grouse against me that I did not properly attend to a complaint made by him when I was the Chief Secretary and was not willing to meet me. Since there were no avenues open for me to explain my stand, I left it at that till Mr Kancha Ilaiah wrote an article on this issue in Andhra Jyothi mentioning my name. That gave me an opportunity to write a letter to the editor explaining the sequence of events and the same was published prominently in that news paper. It is this incident which made me curious about the social media and that's when I started looking into forums available on the social media for expressing views and discussions. This is what triggered me to enter into the social media and express my views which certain elements made use of for their purpose at a later date.

# [18]

## How and When Things Turned Sour

Things started moving in a different direction from December 2016. One day I saw in the newspapers as well as on the TV that directors were appointed for the Brahmin Welfare Corporation. Till then we only had the official directors: Principal Secretary Endowments, the Commissioner Endowments and Managing Director, besides me as the Chairman. We were managing the activities with their help. Though it is the prerogative of the Chief Minister to appoint the directors I thought he could have sounded me or inform me before appointing them, which did not happen. That itself is a signal regarding which direction things were moving in. Six of the new director appointees landed in my office the next day. I had to face a dilemma of how far and to what extent I can go out to accommodate them. Telugu Desam party has a serious problem of leadership from this community. Traditionally, since Brahmins were never with Telugu Desam there are no strong leaders from this community in the party. They did not exhibit levels of maturity where you can accommodate their interests also and still deal with them comfortably. Already we put in a system in the Corporation where there is no scope for anyone's discretion in implementing the schemes.

As I was suspecting, the new directors wanted a say in the selection of beneficiaries which we refused. With the appointment of these directors, now a set of people were available to regularly go and complain to the party with wild allegations. If only the Chief Minister had called me and discussed the matter with me



before appointing them, I could have checked their suitability or I could have suggested one or two others who are professional in their outlook to be taken in so that they could have been a counter weight to them. All the directors so to say were of “level five or six”. If you start conceding their whims, they may start thinking that as their entitlement and demand more. So I decided not to concede and from day one they started creating problems. After one board meeting, the Commissioner Endowments who was in the meeting asked me how I am able to tolerate such people and I answered her that if you are working with a purpose these do not matter.

Simultaneously in another area also serious differences of opinion started developing. This relates to the issuance of rules under the 2007 amendments in the Endowments act. In 2007 the act was amended restoring the hereditary rights of the archakas in temples. But the necessary rules to operationalise the amended act were not issued. This came to my notice when I was the Chief Secretary and immediately I constituted a committee of officers of the Endowments Department as well as the representatives of the archaka associations for drafting the necessary rules. Rules were accordingly drafted and after being seen at different levels, finally the file reached the Chief Minister’s office. When I was Chief Secretary I mentioned the file once or twice to the Chief Minister and he promised to look into it. After I retired as chief secretary I took over as the chairman of the archaka Welfare Committee (Trust or Committee??) along with the Brahmin Corporation. As the chairman of the archaka committee I started pursuing the file relating to issuance of rules. After a lot of persuasion, the Chief Minister, after sitting over the file for six months though there was no necessity, referred it to the Advocate General for his opinion.

I met the Advocate General along with Sri Rangarajan, chief priest of Chilukur Balaji temple. As a family, both the father Sri Soundararajan and his son are deeply committed to the preservation and development of small temples and protection of Hindu dharma and are highly knowledgeable on this issue. We

clarified all the doubts the Advocate General had and he promised to clear the file but kept it with him for a long time, may be as per informal instructions from the Chief Minister, and finally cleared it after six months.

The file again reached the table of the CM and I met the Principal Secretary to the Chief Minister, Mr Satish Chandra, to clarify what little further doubts he had on the issue. He rang up the Advocate General in my own presence, got his doubts clarified and promised to talk to the CM and get the file cleared. Finally the file was cleared for preliminary notification in February 2017. It is normally a routine affair and generally the final GO is issued within one month after preliminary notification. The Archaka community really felt happy that their long-standing demand was fulfilled. Mr Janardhan from the ruling party rang me up and asked me whether something can be done to get political mileage out of this decision. I informed him that it should not be a problem since a long-felt need is fulfilled and the archakas would be willing to do the required activity for getting political mileage for the ruling party. Accordingly I held a meeting with the coordinators of the Corporation and the archaka association leaders and requested them to organise local meetings and celebrations to facilitate appropriate mileage to the government. Since they were waiting for this GO for a long time and it finally came, they were so happy they went overboard and started celebrating it across the state by putting up banners and flexes of the Chief Minister and doing Abhishekam and pujas in his name.

Some of these long drawn out cases will never have a happy ending. Someone whose perspective of the whole issue is prejudiced by his experience in TTD put in an objection petition to the preliminary notification. And by March it was clear that this GO will not be confirmed and final notification was not issued. The Chief minister went on to comment in a cabinet meeting that some people have misled him, hinting at me in this regard. It was very clear that he was not willing to confirm the GO. However, not

to give up, I met Mr Sujana Choudary and explained to him the salient features of GO 76 and requested him to speak to the Chief Minister in this regard. He promised to do so but by then “Chinna Babu” was calling the shots and Mr Sujana Choudary’s influence was on the wane. Another person whom I met in this regard was Andhra Jyothi’s K. Radhakrishna who has a one-to-one access to the Chief Minister. I also explained to him the contents of the GO and requested him to clarify issues to the Chief Minister. He was convinced and while agreeing to speak to the CM he asked me why I also could not speak to him on this issue. I told him I was trying for Sri Naidu’s interview for the last four months and was not lucky enough to get it. I was able to explain to RK how this GO does not lead to revival of Mirasi system. Mirasi system was an income sharing arrangement but there is no such provision in the rules framed in GO 76.. He suggested that I write an article on this topic, which I immediately did and it was promptly published in Andhra Jyothi. Finally nothing came out of all this.

I didn’t have many channels of communication by then to the Chief Minister. From the party side already a propaganda was started against me. The Chief Minister’s office was not all too friendly with me right from the time I was the Chief Secretary. My request for an appointment to meet the Chief Minister did not yield any results. It was in these circumstances that in February 2016 Mr Dinesh Kumar took over as the Chief Secretary. Soon after that the tenure of Mr Venkat Changavalli as MD of the Corporation came to an end. He was working as the MD on a part time basis. By then we were shifting operations of the corporation from Hyderabad to Vijayawada and the building was getting completed. I wanted a full-time MD to be appointed as it would be difficult for someone to manage the corporation from a distance. As long as it was located in Hyderabad his working part time did not make a difference as I was available full time and was attending office on a daily basis. Accordingly we started looking for an officer who could run the office on a full-time basis. I got information

that Srikakulam District Collector Mr Lakshmi Narasimham was likely to be transferred and I suggested to the Chief Secretary that he can be posted as the Commissioner of Endowments and given additional charge of the Brahmin Corporation. I knew him to be a very competent officer who can take care of both the charges. Mr Dinesh Kumar mentioned this to the Chief Minister, who was not only reluctant to accommodate my request but seems to have made some remarks against me. My request to post another officer also fell on the deaf ears. An officer was posted subsequently but the orders were with held. Hence I started managing the office of the Chairman as well as the Managing Director and continued to do so till I left that office.

As explained earlier, district coordinators for the Brahmin Corporation in all the 13 districts were selected in consultation with the ruling party. Since a major focus of mine was to build up leadership in the community, I thought of extending this arrangement of coordinators to the constituency level. When I do such large scale recruitment it may not be possible to take the preferences of the party and select all persons liked by the party, which can make the system one-sided and can also lead to litigation. We decided to recruit coordinators impartially by calling for applications and having telephone interviews. Through this process we were able to select Assembly constituency-level coordinators for about 120 constituencies by January 2017. Since the candidates were recruited without asking their political affiliation, out of about 120 coordinators, some five people belonging to the YSRCP party seem to have got selected. That was made a major issue and became a point of complaint against me. There was one lady who was chosen as the coordinator for a constituency in East Godavari. When there was a ruling party MLAs' meeting, one particular MLA seems to have objected to her selection. I was requested to relieve her. Since there was no point in continuing with someone who had a specific allegiance to the opposition party I immediately removed her. Around this time there was a conference of Collectors and

departmental heads conducted by the Chief Minister. Since I was also the in-charge MD then, I attended the conference and made a presentation on behalf of the Brahmin Corporation and listed issues that needed to be addressed by the collectors with reference to the Corporation activities. I met the Finance Minister during the course of the conference. He made a reference to this particular issue that was mentioned in the MLAs' meeting and I informed him that the lady had been removed from the post. He suggested that I meet the Chief Minister and sort out issues for which I replied to him that I was willing to do that, provided the CM gives me the time which is not happening for the last four months. It looked a little strange for someone to point a finger at me when in a selection of 120 constituency coordinators through a process, four or five who owe allegiance to the other party got selected. If the selection was by design, the number could have been much more. The only point I wanted to be careful at that time was when recruitment was being done on a large-scale if only one party functionaries are selected and no process followed, that could send a wrong signal and can lead to court cases.

I wanted the newly appointed constituency coordinators as well as the district coordinators to develop as future leaders of the community. The idea was not to confine themselves to the activities of the corporation but also get a overview of the functioning of the government departments and welfare schemes relating to other segments of the population as well. Keeping this in mind I organised a one-day training course for them in which officers of different departments and corporations came and made a presentation to them about the activities of their respective organisations. I thought this would equip the coordinators to relate to other segments of the population and emerge as local leaders. A three-day workshop was also planned and conducted for them in the HRD Institute at Bapatla at a later date. More about it later.

Meanwhile the budget for the next year (2017-18) was getting prepared and I was particular about getting a higher allocation for

the corporation. This issue was raised by me in the previous year as well. The election promise as mentioned in the TDP manifesto was to allocate Rs 500 crore to the Brahmin community but the rate at which allocation was being made at 35 crores in the first year and 65 crores yearly for four years it may not cross Rs 300 crores. For the Kapu Corporation, though the first year's allocation was meager, once Sri Mudragada Padmanabham, a prominent kapu leader, started questioning and demanded allocation to kapu corporation at the rate of Rs 1000 crore as promised in the election manifesto, the allocation was increased as promised in the election manifesto whereas the commitment given to the Brahmin corporation was being ignored. I raised this point in the previous year as well and pressed the point when I met Sri Chandrababu Naidu. He was not happy and was annoyed when I insisted, but I insisted that as it was a commitment at the time of elections it needs to be honoured, more so when it is being honoured for the Kapu corporation. Since this time he was not giving me an appointment I wrote a letter and mentioned this to the Finance Minister when I met him at the time of the collectors conference. In spite of such repeated requests the allocation was marginally increased to Rs 75 crore. This goes to show that unless you have a strong lobby and politically significant, promises made at the time of elections may not mean anything.

It was around this time when I started becoming active on the Facebook. As I mentioned earlier it was the episode involving Mr Kancha Ilaiah which made me aware of the importance of social media. By then my relationship with the Chief Minister as explained above was not good at all. During my tenure as Chief Secretary I was witness to how this government was functioning protecting and promoting the interests of a particular section of the community. In fact if we were to use Abraham Lincoln's definition of democracy to describe this government with a modification, it is a government by all, of all, but for some. Whether it is natural resources allocation, contracts, or postings one could see this unmistakable thread to an extent I never saw during my service

earlier. When I saw in the Facebook some posts which depicted these aspects of functioning of this government, I could not resist the temptation of forwarding them to my friends since it exactly reflected my feelings about this government. Similarly, I was critical of certain actions of the government which were arbitrary and unreasonable. One point I didn't realise was that once anything is posted on Facebook people beyond your friends can access it. Some of my friends reacted but the reach was limited as I just started on the Facebook. The forwarded psots were lying there unnoticed till someone with a purpose picked them up and took the trouble of making them viral.

# [19]

## Last Two Months in office

By then I was also mentally prepared to leave. I did not want to go on my own but if there was any indication from the other side was prepared to leave. It was very clear that I would not be getting much support from the Chief Minister who was not willing even to give me time to present my point of view.

The shifting of the Brahmin Corporation office from Hyderabad to Vijayawada took place in May 2017 and the office building was inaugurated on 18th May. I decided to get it inaugurated by the Endowments Minister rather than by the Chief Minister. First of all, the CM's office indicated that the CM will not be coming for inauguration of office buildings. When we got the Cooperative Society office inaugurated in October 2016 we got the CM's date because we told him it also involves interaction with the Arundhati groups. Secondly though the new building has come up well and is worth inauguration by the CM, the process of convincing his office on that is not that easy. Accordingly we got it inaugurated on May 18 by the Endowments Minister Sri Manikyala Rao in the presence of the local minister, Sri Devineni Umamaheswara Rao. I took this opportunity to publicly voice my views on the need for broad basing political power in the state in my speech. I mentioned that there are small communities in each constituency who by themselves will not be able to win a direct election but their interests need to be protected and properly represented in indirect elections. The present system of the same communities dominant numberwise and moneywise getting representation both in direct



elections as well as in indirect elections cannot continue. I also made a request for releasing the funds to the Brahmin Corporation as per the promise made in the TDP election manifesto and also stressed the need for immediately issuing GO 76 which is the long pending demand of archakas. This was very widely carried in the newspapers the next day and I am sure it was not to the liking of the powers that are.

## Eenadu

This is how my speech at the inauguration of the Brahmin Corporation building was reported in the Telugu newspaper Eenadu.

# చిన్న కులాలకు పదవులు ఇవ్వరా?

- బ్రాహ్మణులకు నామినేషన్ పదవుల్లో న్యాయం జరగలేదు
- మేనిఫెస్టోలో చెప్పినట్లు నిధులివ్వాలి
- బ్రాహ్మణ కార్మిక్లపై ఛార్జీస్ ఇవ్వాలి కృష్ణారావు వ్యాఖ్యలు
- అర్హులకు చట్టానికి నిబంధనలు: దేవారాయ మంత్రి వెల్లడి

ఈనాడు - ఆమరావతి

ప్రాచ్యుత, కమ్మర్ల, కమ్మర్ల, వాళి, బండ వంటి సంస్థానాలకు దిన్న కులాలకు రాజకీయ పదవుల్లో, ప్రభుత్వ పోస్ట్ పున్యకర్త, నామినేషన్ పోస్టుల్లో ప్రాధాన్యం వ్యవస్థపై ఈ కులాల ఏమైపోవాలని ప్రభుత్వ ఏజెంట్ల ప్రధాన కార్యదర్శి పి.సి. బ్రాహ్మణ సంక్షేమ సంస్థ ఛైర్మన్ ఇవైఆర్ కృష్ణారావు ప్రశ్నించారు. నామినేషన్ పోస్టుల్లో బ్రాహ్మణులకు ఇవ్వాలని జరిగిందన్నారు. ప్రభుత్వ పోస్ట్ పున్యకర్త ఒక కులాలకు ప్రతిపాదనం కలిగిస్తూ అది ప్రతినిధుల దీనిపై వర్ష జరగాలన్నారు. ఆమరావతిలో గురువారం బ్రాహ్మణ

సంక్షేమ కార్మిక్లపై భవనాన్ని మంత్రి డేవిస్ ని ఉపాధ్యక్షులచేత. ఈ సందర్భంగా ఇవైఆర్ కృష్ణారావు ఆవేశపూరితంగా మాట్లాడారు. నిధులు లేకుండానే భవన నిర్మాణం ఎందుకని కొందరుంటున్నారని, కార్మిక్ల పన నిధులు ముగిసిపోతున్నారే కోవరేటిన్ క్లెయిమ్ సాగైతే ఏదైనా చేసి అందులో ఉంచామని ఆ పక్షం రూ. 3 కోట్లతోనే భవనం నిర్మించామన్నారు. ఇవైఆర్ మేనిఫెస్టోలో పేర్కొన్నట్లు బ్రాహ్మణ కార్మిక్లపక్షం 5 ఏళ్లలో రూ. 500 కోట్లు ఇవ్వాలి అంటున్నారు. ఈ ఏడాది ఇవైఆర్ రూ. 75 కోట్ల కేటాయింబాదని, ఇది చాలవచ్చుంది. బ్రాహ్మణ కార్మిక్లపై ద్వారా కుల పదవులు మొత్తాన్ని ప్రభుత్వానికి తీసుకువెళ్లిపోతున్నారని ప్రతిపక్షం అంటుందన్నారు. ముఖ్యమంత్రి పక్షే కార్మిక్లపై ద్వారా అర్హి కలగలేందని ప్రతి అర్హులచేతికి తెలియజేస్తున్నామని కృష్ణారావు వివరించారు. 2007లో అర్హులకు అర్హం తీసుకువచ్చే ఇప్పటికీ నిబంధనలు రూపొందించలేదని, ఇలాంటి వాటి పట్ల నెగిజిట్ వైజేటి వస్తుందని, చట్టానికి మినహానీతి సంబంధం లేదన్నారు. ఒకరికి పూర్తిస్థాయిలో నిధులు ఇచ్చి మరొకరికి మేనిఫెస్టోలో చెప్పినట్లు నిధులు ఇవ్వలేమంటూ నెగిజిట్ వైజేటి వస్తుందని హెచ్చరించారు. 80 ఏళ్లుగా అభ్యుదయ వైజేటియన్ వర్గానికి అవసరం నిధులు ఇవ్వాలి అంటున్నారు. దేవారాయపర్వతాంతాం మంత్రి వైజేటియన్ వాటికాంతాం మంత్రియంతా, కార్మిక్లపై కార్యక్రమాంపై పట్టిడితే వైజేటి అర్హులకు సంబంధం ప్రశ్నించారు.

మన్నా అయ్యన్నారు. ఇవైఆర్ సాగు భూమిలోకి ఆహ్వానించిరా రాకండా ఒక్క రూపాయి తేలిక తీసుకో కుండా కన్నానిటికి సేవ చేస్తున్నారన్నారు. అర్హులకు చట్టపై త్వరలోనే ప్రభుత్వానికి చెప్పి నిబంధనల రూపకల్పన పూర్తి చేస్తామన్నారు.

ఒక్క ఇటుకా కట్టలేదనే వాళ్ళకి

ఇవై సమాధానం: డేవిస్ ని ఉపాధ్యక్షుల

దేవారాయశాఖ భూముల్లోనే కమిషన్ కార్యాలయం, చట్ట ని అంది గృహం, కార్మిక్లపై భవనం నిర్మించాలని, ఒక్క ఇటుక కూడా నిర్మించలేదంటున్న వారికి ఇవై సమాధానమని మంత్రి డేవిస్ ఉపాధ్యక్షులపై అన్నారు. గృహపతి పక్షే అక్షల మంది పర్యటకుల్ని ఆకర్షించి కానిన్ వంచన రానుందని, ఇవై ఆమరావతికి గేట్ వే అని మంత్రి పేర్కొన్నారు. ప్రభుత్వ సమాచార సంహారాల వరకాం ప్రభుత్వ మాట్లాడుతూ... దేశం లోనే బ్రాహ్మణులకు కార్మిక్లపై ఏదైనా చేసిన తొలి సీఎం చరిత్రాబాహుళ్యమనే అన్నారు. బ్రాహ్మణ సమాఖ్య రాజకీయకాం గురించి కూడా ఆలోచించాలి, కేవలం పదవులు అని కాకుండా రాజకీయంగా నిర్మాణాత్మక పాత్ర పోషించాలని అన్నారు. సమావేశంలో ఎమ్మెల్యే బొండా ఉమామహేశ్వరరావు, కార్మిక్లపై నీతుకే వెంకటే వెంకటే, మేనేజర్ భవానీప్రసాద్, కార్మిక్లపై వైజేటి పాల్గొన్నారు.

The last one month in office was hectic. The office along with the staff shifted to Vijayawada. I was hoping that if a regular MD is posted then I can come for board meetings and occasionally in between and leave the regular administration to him or her. My request for cadre (IAS) officers did not get any response from the CM. So I zeroed in on a private sector professional working in ISB. He agreed to take up the job and relocate to Vijayawada. I accordingly sent the proposal file but it was also not cleared in CM's office.

As I wrote earlier, I planned a three-day workshop for the district and constituency coordinators of the corporation at HRD Institute, Bapatla. I coordinated the programme with the Director General of the institute Mr Chakrapani in the first week of June. In addition to an exposure to different departments' programmes we also included programmes on personality development and on the need for social outreach. We invited Dalit intellectuals like Sri Mallepally Lakshmaiah and Sri MGK Murthy to address them. It was a grand success and the participants had very fruitful interaction. It was also well covered in the press. It was in this programme that one more irritant developed. We invited MLA, Sri Kona Raghupathy for the inaugural programme. He is the local MLA and also the lone member in the Assembly from Brahmin community. This was not to the liking of the centre of power. Mr Janardhan from the party office rang me up and enquired why a YSRCP MLA was invited. I told him that protocol demands the same and if I was not to invite him that would be a protocol breach. He murmured and kept quiet. One can well imagine the level of this party managed by morons like him. On the last day, Sri Kona Raghupathy invited all the participants to his place for high tea. Since that was a personal invitation I left it to the members but told them I was going. Everyone came. One Kiran Choudary, PS to another secretary in the party Mr VV Choudary rang up our Guntur coordinator and told him that I took all the coordinators to Sri Kona Raghupathy. A set of persons who cannot trust a person from another community as their personal staff cannot have any better perspective than this. Expecting anything better from them is also our fault. Thus this was another sour point and it was only a matter of time and the method of sending me out was what was left by then.

On the Facebook by the month of May certain posts directly criticizing me started appearing, initiated by one Neelayapalem Vijay Kumar. It was only after this episode I got educated on what tagging is, in Facebook. I presume he was able to tag me because I did not put in place any checks by then. The theme was though the corporation is doing well the expected political mileage is not

coming. Instead of my answering it, I left it to Mr YS Murty, an officer of the corporation who was looking after our newsletter and social media, to answer. He took an active role and was explaining the schemes of the corporation and how it will have political benefit for the government. This exchange was going on simultaneously while the episode of Bapatla was unfolding.

This man Vijay Kumar's posts started appearing regularly on my Facebook wall. One day on the TV channels I saw news about MP Sri JC Divakar Reddy misbehaving with airlines staff after missing the flight. The next morning there was a post from this man justifying the action of the MP. I thought that was too much and when I strongly feel on issues my reaction is instantaneous. Accordingly I wrote what I felt on the issue on Facebook. It seems to have triggered this person to go and dig out my Facebook account and get hold of old postings not favourable to the government which were there for a few months and make them viral. I'm sure decision was taken at the highest level and this person Vijay Kumar was only instrumental in operationalising it. As someone who knew Sri Chandrababu Naidu inside out I can vouch this decision would have been taken at his level only. This is the typical manner in which he generally operates while dealing with officers. First bring out some information, make it viral through his friendly media, show the officer as a culprit and then throw him out. Any number of officers have suffered in silence since there will be no avenues open for them to express their point of view and CCA rules come in the way of their going public. This *modus operandi* was also relied upon by him in my case as well. An important difference they seem to have forgotten is that I was no longer in service (retired from IAS) and was not bound by CCA rules and can come out and express my opinion freely.

### **The Climax**

After I put this posting on the JC Divakara Reddy episode the next morning a reporter from ETV called me and asked me whether my Facebook account was hacked. I told him I'm not aware of it and I have to verify. He informed me that a set of postings

of mine unfavourable to the government were going viral and asked me whether I made those postings. I asked him which were those and when he described them I informed him that they were posted by me. He then remarked there seems to be some design for these postings going viral. The whole day the Telugu Desam party ensured that these posts reached one and all through all channels of media, social as well as regular. Some newspapers friendly to the government carried my FB posts on the front page. They were made viral on the social media WhatsApp, Facebook and Twitter. I waited till the evening hoping that the Chief Minister would call me for clarification. Since nothing like that happened, in the evening I requested a friend of mine to arrange a press conference to share my version with the public the next day at 3 PM. aAround 11 AM the next day I got a call from general secretary of Telugu Desam Party Mr Janardhan asking me whether a press conference is really necessary. I told him if the Chief Minister gives me time even now I am willing to call off the press conference and come to meet him. He promised to check with the CM and get back to me. Almost at the same time, Mr Venkat Changavalli who worked with me as MD in the Brahmin Corporation called and told me that the intelligence chief was enquiring whether the press conference by me was really necessary. I replied in the same way and asked him to check with the intelligence chief whether the CM was willing to meet me. If it is so then I am willing to cancel the press conference. But none of them got back to me. Simultaneously another person claiming to be president of the NRI wing of Telugu Desam started ringing me up demanding my resignation. I told him that's none of his business. By afternoon the news was on all channels that I was removed as Chairman of the Brahmin Corporation and Mr Vemuri Anand Surya was appointed in my place. I went ahead with my press conference at 3 PM and explained my version of the issue. It was well received by the public and I had an opportunity to ensure that a balanced view is presented to the public so that they can come to a conclusion after knowing both the versions. Still there were a lot of things which could not be explained at that time, and which this book takes care of. What were meant to be private posts

restricted to a friends' group on FB were taken out and made public by certain elements for building up a case for my sacking. There was no need for all this. If only somebody from the CM's office just called me and requested me I would have sent in my resignation. There was no need to take such a circuitous route to get rid of me. This itself speaks of the quality of the advisors to the Chief Minister. With this type of advisors he doesn't need enemies.

# [20]

## CBN

**S**ri Chandrababu Naidu who is more popularly known as CBN is the one with whom I had the maximum interaction as Chief Minister. I joined the service (IAS) in 1979 and when we came for the district training in 1980, Dr Marri Chenna Reddy was the Chief Minister and in 1981 when I took over as sub collector Vijayawada, Sri T Anjaiah was the Chief Minister. The tenure of the Chief Ministers under the Congress was very short and it was only Sri NT Rama Rao who had a good tenure. Sri Chandrababu Naidu surpassed that and was the Chief Minister for about nine years in his first tenure and now for the last four and half years. In my career of 37 years I worked under him as the Chief Minister for about 11 years. Hence as officers we know as much about him as he does about us.

He came to power in very difficult circumstances. He was considered to be a backroom boy during the regime of NT Rama Rao and was known for his strategic abilities and also ability to fix deals and get things done. He had to work hard to erase this negative image and build a positive image for himself after he became the Chief Minister. This prompted him to concentrate on certain things and show results and one friendly Telugu media unit played it up more than required to give him the necessary image. Hyderabad city, waiting for someone to put it on the world map, gave him an excellent opportunity to prove himself in this regard. He worked hard to show results in some specific areas like information technology. He had a good team to support him and he relied on

their advice while taking decisions. Most of his decisions were based on merit; caste and community were not a major consideration during his first tenure. But when he came back the second time he was a changed man. Ten years out of power changed his personality completely. Caste and community became a major factor for him during his second stint. Secondly there was an unusual emphasis on preparing well financially for the 2019 election. The good set of advisers on whom he relied during his first tenure were no longer with him and they were substituted by people with questionable character. Though initially when the first round of officers were selected in Navyandhra, it was based on merit and integrity of the officers, over a period he didn't find any use for them. Mr Giridhar and Mr Ajay Sahni, both officers known for their integrity and efficiency and chosen for the Chief Minister's Office, left within six months of joining and both went on deputation to Government of India. Mr Joseph, picked up as the Principal Chief Conservator of Forests for his honesty and integrity had to leave midway. In fact he was chosen by Chief Ministers of both Telangana and AP but he decided to stay with AP. I know how the DGP Mr JV Ramulu was feeling and I was also sidelined within first three months of being in office. A certain feeling of omniscience came over him and a feeling that whatever he is doing is right and he does not need much of an advice. He started believing his image would work wonders and it is this overconfidence which led him to think of building a mega city Amaravati within a very short period of time and going in for such huge unsustainable land pooling. There was no support he could get from his cabinet colleagues and nobody was willing to stop him or question him. The Cabinet consisted of people who were limited in their own thinking and were opportunists seeking to make hay while the sun shines.

One is reminded of Shakespeare's words "Some are born great, some achieve greatness and some have greatness thrust upon them." Sri Naidu achieved some greatness, and the balance the friendly media thrust on him and he started believing he is born great. This led him to take decisions for which the state in future may have to pay a very heavy price.

Another important factor which was present now and absent during his earlier tenure was the 'son' factor. His influence became an important factor. Though by the time I left as Chief Secretary he was yet to formally get a place in the official system, he started calling shots through the Chief Minister's office.

Sri Chandrababu Naidu has a peculiar way of functioning. He leaks out information through his friendly newspapers, fixes responsibility on officers and then takes action against them. During his first tenure additional liquor shops were licensed. This led to a lot of public outcry. Immediately the next day his friendly newspapers carried "news" on how he was angry in the Cabinet meeting against the Excise Commissioner for licensing so many liquor shops and ordered his transfer immediately. The fact is that the decision to increase the number of liquor shops was taken by the cabinet but responsibility was fixed on the commissioner and he was removed. Since the officer is bound by the CCA rules he cannot open his mouth and the people will never know the truth.

Sri Naidu has this style of leaking out information through his friendly media and then show that as the basis for action against the officer concerned. The same strategy he followed while removing me from the post of Chairman, Brahmin Welfare Corporation. The only thing he failed to remember was that I was not in government service and hence not bound by CCA rules. Hence I was able to come out and present my point of view.

His desire to show to the public that he alone is working and no one else is working is having an adverse impact on the working of the government and administrative efficiency. Meetings which can be completed within half an hour drag on for hours together wasting everyone's time. Officers have to wait for hours together for their subject to be reviewed. The frequency of meetings is another problem. Meetings are held too frequently without any need just to show that the Chief Minister is working hard. They do not serve any purpose other than to waste time for everyone. For example, Sri Nadu promised to review Polavaram project works on a weekly basis. In fact there will be very little to review



on a weekly basis and his reviewing weekly is in no way going to expedite the project completion. If anything, it will delay the project. The officers have to spend a lot of time preparing for the review and, attending meetings on a weekly basis setting aside their regular work. His meetings are never on time and are not held in a business like fashion. Hence no concrete purpose would be served. Similarly when the temporary secretariat work was started, he started going there on a weekly basis and reviewing. It did not help in early completion of the project and the time as promised by the company was taken to complete the work. In fact if he works 50% less than what he is doing now the state will develop 200% more. What he is not realising is that his desire to show he is all the time working is in fact having a negative impact in terms of administrative efficiency.

Annexure:

## The Hindu Report on My Tenure as CS

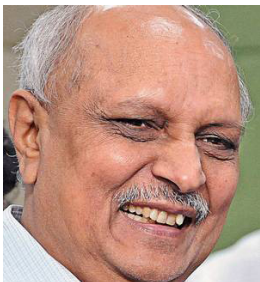
After a tenure of one year and eight months I retired on 31 January 2016. I was able to provide the necessary leadership in facing the challenges of the division of the state and facing a devastating Hud-hud cyclone during that period. I was concentrating on low hanging fruits and reviewing projects which can have immediate benefit and was practical in my outlook. A few days before my retirement *The Hindu* carried a news item which is reproduced below.

*A challenging but satisfying tenure,  
says I.Y.R. Krishna Rao*



M.L. Melly Maitreyi

HYDERABAD:, JANUARY 29, 2016



### Outgoing CS Krishna Rao goes down the memory lane

Andhra Pradesh Chief Secretary I.Y.R. Krishna Rao, who will be stepping down as the head of administration and handing over charge to his successor S.P. Tucker on Saturday, is bound to remember his tenure as a unique and challenging one given the

circumstances following the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh. He is also the most travelled Chief Secretary, shuttling between common capital Hyderabad and Vijayawada and working from both the places after Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu decided to shift to Vijayawada to be closer to people.

“But I am quite satisfied with and enjoyed my tenure though the first four to five months were tense due to bifurcation issues and with the Centre not keen to resolve issues firmly as provided under the State Reorganisation Act,” says Mr Krishna Rao. Finally, it was left to the two State governments to coordinate and ensure that the tensions did not escalate.

Known to be man who will not hesitate to speak his mind, Mr Krishna Rao’s temperament certainly helped in pushing the government agenda for shifting administration to Vijayawada.

Though employees initially were reluctant to move to Vijayawada when Hyderabad would remain common capital up to 10 years, Mr Rao did not let indecisiveness linger for long and addressed the grievances of employees by taking it up with the Centre, particularly the concern for local status of employees’ children who moved to Vijayawada in view of the Presidential Order.

### **Regular meetings**

Regular meetings with secretaries to push the agenda of the government, accessing funds from GoI for Central schemes, getting special grant for Andhra Pradesh to set off its revenue deficit to some extent under the 14<sup>th</sup> Finance Commission and setting up offices for Chief Minister, Chief Secretary in Vijayawada and promoting industrialisation and following it up regularly with those who came forward to invest in the State and laying stone for the Greenfield Amaravati capital were some of the high points.

The most challenging administrative experience, he admits was during the Hudhud cyclone where he lent logistics support to

the Chief Minister who rushed to Visakhapatnam and streamlining movement of essential commodities to the devastated city, organising Godavari Pushkarams on a mega scale though the inaugural day witnessed deaths due to a stampede.

Mr Krishna Rao, who travelled abroad to Singapore to follow up on the Chief Minister's meetings with the Singapore government, the U.S. for Pravasi Bharatiya Divas to attract investments and the UK to receive the excellence award from Indo-European business Forum initiated a move for bringing back Buddhist relics and artefacts of Amaravati from the British Museum.

He says priorities for his successor would be capital city construction, shifting of entire administration, completion of irrigation projects, managing finances.