Unification Movement in Hyderabad Karnataka Region – A Study

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Abstract

The present paper seeks to explore unification movement in Hydarabad Karnataka region, under various forces of freedom movement and Nizam rule. An intensive awakening was rose in places of Hyderabad Karnataka, which was under the Bombay province. Due to the efforts made by the great personalities, like Chennabasappa, Sir Walter Eliot, Russell and many others the Kannada language was safeguarded and the new Kannada schools were opened. Hyderabad Karnataka has a glorious past from the ancient times. The struggle for the unification of all Kannada speaking areas began in the late 19th century. Historians point out that the origin of the movement for linguistic provinces can be traced to same time e.g., the demand of the Oriya speaking people and the demand for Sylhet district to be transferred from Bengal to Assam. "Even before independence, the consciousness of linguistic unification among the Indians was stimulating. They opposed British policies of devide and rule. As bruisers tried to deviated people by dividing them linguistically.

During the period Britishers and Christian missionaries spread English and western education in India. This was the period during which industrial revolution developing in England and it's impact was seen in India too. Transportation and communication facilities expanded and urbanization set in on large scale. This led to emergence of the middle class which was responsible for the modernization and renaissance. Printing also had been introduced in Kannada during the same period. The first Kannada printing was done at Calcutta in 1817. There were around 86 printing press by the end of 19th century. The first Kannada news papercalledMangalooruSamachara from Mangalore in Karnataka began in 1843 when Hermann Mögling, a minister from Basel Mission distributed as the primary Kannada daily paper. The first Kannada magazine, MysuruVrittantaBodhini was begun by BhashyamBhashyacharya in Mysore. Not long after Indian Independence in 1948, K N Guruswamy began the organization, The Printers (Mysore Private Limited) and began distributing two daily papers Deccan Herald (in English) and Prajavani (in Kannada). Many printing presses such as mission press at Bellary, Ambavilas press at mysore palace, govt gazette press, Basel mission press in Mangalore, govt press at Bangalore were the most famous which spread the idea of renaissance in Kannada literature and arouse the feeling of unification of Karnataka. This paper aims at studying unification movement in Hydarabad Karnataka region, with special attention to Nizam's rule

Keywords— Hyderabad Karnataka, Kannada, Mysore, news papers, Indian scripts, Indian Independence

Introduction

Kannadigas not only did not have a state of their own as they were distributed into 20 different administrations like those of Bombay, Madras, Mysore, Hyderabad, Coorg {Kodagu} and Kolhapur. That also led to the decline of Kannada as a language in many of these areas. The movement for Unification of Karnataka had originated in Dharwad region. Alur VenkataRao was the man who put forward the idea and cherished it. In 1928, a Committee headed by Motilal Nehru was set up by the Congress to draft a constitution for India. With the help of Sevadal, Dr. Hardikargathered 30,000 signatures supporting unification and submitted a memorandum in support of Unification. "A Case for United Karnataka" written by Diwakarfor submission to the Committee.

Though Siman commission also accepted the approach of linguistic provinces. The Nehru Committee opined that Karnataka can be a feasible province but the Karnataka Congress did not submit any memorandum to the Commission, because the Congress had announced the boycott against Commission. It also pressurized non-congress groups, not to submit any memorandum to commission. This resulted in the delay of Unification process, which could have been approved by the commission itself. The Sixth Karnataka Unification Conference, under the presidentship of Dattopant Belvi, was held at Dharwad in 1936. The need to unite all Kannada speaking areas was becoming an urgent one. The Karnataka VidyaVardhakaSangha formed at Dharwad in 1890 was the first public organization to take up this very cause. Famous leaders like AlurVenkataRao, Justice Setlur and BenagalRama Raostarted to demand the unification of all these areas. AlurVenkataRaowrote the celebrated work Karnataka GathaVaibhava". The holding of the Kannada Writers Conference (1909), the establishment of the Kannada SahityaParishat (1915) and the Karnataka Sabha (1916) prompted the reinforcing of this movement.

After the Fourth and last Anglo-Mysore War, Mysore State was reduced to a small principality and vast Kannada speaking areas were merged with Bombay presidency, Madras and Hyderabad and other small princely states. Kannadigas were subjected to twenty different administrations. Thus the Kannada language was on the verge of decline. They had to adopt the respective languages like Marathi, Tamil and Telugu and forced to cultivate the culture of these regions. Thus the Kannadigas did not have any renowned cultural, linguistic and political homogeneity. They were not well treated in those states. Discriminatory activities was meted out to them and they were even suppressed. For example, in the princely states of Mudhol and Jamakhandi, Kannadigas had no place in public life including schools and offices. The pathetic conditions of the Kannadig as lived in these various administrative units were unaccountable. This prompted the Kannadigas to struggle for unification. These all popularize the national heros, historical figures and empire builders, artists and poets renaissance helped them to develop a feeling that glorious and great past of Karnataka could be restored.

Objective:

The present paper seeks to explore unification movement in Hydarabad Karnataka region, under various forces of freedom movement and Nizam rule.

Kannada speaking regions and Hyderabad Karnataka

After the formation of separate provinces like Assam, Bihar, Orissa on linguistic basis created a thirst for independence and also Unification of the Kannada-speaking regions. Publication of books on Karnataka's history, the freedom movement and the inspiring writings of AlurVenkataRao, HuilgolaNarayanaRao, Kuvempu, Bendre and others encouraged this movement.

AlurVenkatRao, who was called "Kannada Kula Purohita", for arousing the awareness of Kannadigas, rendered yeoman service for the cause of Unification. In 1916 AlurVenkataRao formed the EkikaranaSabha at Dharwad, with unification of Karnataka as its goal. As early as in 1903, Benagal Rama Rao delivered a lecture at Dharwad, stressing the need for the unification of Kannada speaking regions into a single Presidency. A separate Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee was constituted for the Kannada speaking regions in 1920. At the all-India Congress session held at Belgaum in 1924, the Kannada anthem, "UdayavagalinammacheluvaKannadanadu", calling for the creation of beautiful Kannada state, composed by HuilgolNarayanaRao was sung. The first Karnataka Unification Conference was also held at Belgaum and presided over by Sir SiddappaKambli. The Karnataka EkikaranaSangha was established at the conference and it held its meetings on numerous occasions. In 1926, the Hindustani Seva Dal, founded by Dr.Hardikar conducted a signature campaign in favour of Unification and collected 36,000 signatures. But it was not a simple task to bring people who were under 20 different administrative regions in a single province and it was felt that with the country attaining the freedom, unification could also occure.

After Independence, the President of the Constituent Assembly formed a linguistic provinces committee on 17th June 1948 with S.K. Dhar as Chairman. The Dhar Commission was asked to report how many new provinces were to be created and also state 'the administrative, financial and other consequences' of the creation of new provinces. The Commission in its report submitted on 10th December 1948 expressed itself against any reorganization of provinces being undertaken in the then prevailing circumstances. To consider the question of linguistic states and review the position in the light of the findings of the Dhar commission, the Congress appointed another committee known as the J.V.P.Committee consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and PattabhiSeetharamaiah at the Jaipur session of the Indian National Congress in December 1948. After thorough deliberation, the committee came to the conclusion that formation of linguistic provinces should be postponed by a few years. Claims and counter claims over various regions, such as Bombay city being proclaimed by both the Maharashtrians and the Gujaratis or Madras by the Tamils and the Telugus, being considered as main problem. But it conceded the demand for the formation of Andhra province.

K.P.P.C. in North Karnataka

On the eve of the first general election in 1951-52, the Congress in its election manifesto claimed that the formation of linguistic provinces was in its agenda. But after coming to power it did not take any step in this direction. The 'Akhanda Karnataka RajyaNirmanaParishad' was set up in Karnataka with K.R. Karanth as President. It was formed with a view to pressurize the Central government to concede the demand for the formation of linguistic provinces. In Madras, PottiSrirmanulu undertook his epic fast on 19th October 1952 to press for the formation of Andhra province and on 15th December 1952 he died. The widespread violence in Andhra region followed after the death of PottiSrirmulu. This led Nehru to announce the formation of the Andhra state. This resulted in the district of Bellary being transferred to Mysore. At a K.P.P.C. meeting held at Hubli during the period an unprecedented scene of violence followed when a crowd trying to demonstrate in favour of Unification turned turbulent. ShankargoudaPatil of Adaragunchi, a Congress worker near Hubli was holding 'fast unto death' at the time of the meeting. Finally on December 29, 1953, the Government of India appointed the States Reorganisation Commission with Fazl Ali as Chairman, HridaynathKunzru and K.M.Pannikar as members to investigate the whole question of the reorganization of the states of the Indian union. So that the welfare of the people of each constituent unit as well as of the nation as a whole can be promoted. The Commission submitted its report on 30th September 1955.

The recommendations of the Commission among other things are the merger of the following regions for the formation of a United Karnataka. They involved Mysore state, including Bellary district, the districts of Dharwad, Bijapur, North Kanara and Belgaum (except Chandgadtaluk), South Kanara district (except Kasargodtaluk), Coorg (Kodagu), Gulbarga district (expect Kodangal and Tandurtaluks), Raichur district (except Alampur and Gadvaltaluks) and Bidar district consisting of Bidar, Bhalki, Aurad and Humnabadtaluks. Kollegaltaluk from Coimbatore district of Madras Province was merged with Mysore district. The Commission also recommended the abolition of the post of 'Rajapramukh'. The new state had 19 districts.

On November 1st 1956 President Rajendra Prasad inaugurated the new Mysore state at Bangalore. Hhereby the big map of the new state of Mysore was brightly lit. After invocation, famous vocalist P.KalingaRao sang the popular Kannada anthem "Udayavagalinammacheluva Kannada nadu". Huilgol Narayan Rao had composed the song as early as in 1924 and P.KalingaRao who made it to suitable tune and popularised it. Then JayachamarajendraWodeyar, being sworn in as the new Governor of the state and S.Nijalingappa as the new Chief Minister. Thus the long cherished dream of the Kannadigasof a state was realized. To console the hurt sentiments of the anti-mergers in Mysore, the state was called New Mysore after unification and only in November 1973 it could be renamed as Karnataka.

Consciousness of linguistic unification

The struggle for the unification of all Kannada speaking areas was carried on, along with the struggle for freedom. The protagonists of Indian nationalism also used language as a tool to fight against English domination. Historians point out that the origin of the movement for linguistic provinces can be traced to the end of the last century itself, e.g., the demand of the Oriya speaking people and the demand for Sylhet district to be transferred from Bengal to Assam. Lord Curzon partitioned Bengal into two in 1905. That made the question of language a national issue. An agitation was launched for its cancellation and finally the partition was annulled in 1911. It was a victory for popular sentiment. It has been pointed out that even British statesmen like Lionel Curtis and H. H. Risley strongly advocated that language should be the basis for any territorial re-adjustments. "Even before independence thus was the consciousness of linguistic unification among the Indians. They opposed Britishers when they tried to deviated people by dividing them linguistically. Much intensity of this awakening was found in places of Hyderabad, which was under the Bombay province. Due to the efforts made by the earnest personalities, like deputy Chennabasappa, Sir Walter Eliot, Russell and many others the Kannada language was safeguarded and the new Kannada schools were started. Karnataka has a glorious and enviable history from the ancient times. Geographically it is situated in the center of the Deccan plateau. "It is one of the oldest spots on the earth indicative of the life of primitive man, who was living and carrying on his activities here long before the civilization, and introduced the means of advanced social and scientific contacts." 2 Kannadigas not only did not have a state of their own. They were actually subjected to 20 different administrations like those of Bombay. Madras, Mysore, Hyderabad, Coorg {Kodagu} and Kolhapur. That also led to the neglect of Kannada as a language in many of these areas. The movement for Unification of Karnataka had originated in Dharwad. Alur Venkata Rao was the man who floated the idea and nurtured it. In 1928, a Committee headed by Motilal Nehru was appointed by the Congress to draft a constitution for India. Dr. Hardikar with the help of Sevadal collected 30,000 signatures supporting unification and submitted a memorandum in support of Unification. Diwakar wrote a book entitled "A Case for United Karnataka" for submission to the Committee. The Nehru Committee opined that Karnataka can be a viable province. Even the Simon Commission too had accepted the idea of Linguistic States. But the Karnataka Congress did not submit any memorandum to the Commission, as the Congress had announced the boycott against Commission, it pressurized non-congress groups too, not to submit any memorandum. This resulted in the delay of Unification, which could have been approved by the commission itself. The Sixth Karnataka Unification Conference was held at Dharwad in 1936, and Dattopant Belvi of Belgaum presided over it" 3 The need to unite all Kannada speaking areas was becoming a felt need. The Karnataka Vidya Vardhaka Sangha. Founded at Dharwad in 1890, some historians point out. It was the first public organization to take up this cause. Leaders like Benagal Rama Rao. Justice Setlur and Alur Venkata Rao began to demand the unification of all these areas. Alur Venkata Rao is the author of the celebrated work 'Karnataka Gatha Vaibhava". The holding of the Kannada Writers'Conference (1909), the formation of the Kannada Sahitya Parishat (1915) and the Karnataka Sabha (1916) led to the strengthening of this movement.

Kannada-speaking people scattered in administration

The causes for the unification of Karnataka: After the Fourth Anglo-Mysore War in 1799, Mysore State was reduced to a small principality and vast Kannada speaking areas were merged with Bombay presidency, Madras and Hyderabad Karnatakaand other small princely states. Kannadigas were subjected to twenty administrations. They were forced to cultivate the culture of the states in which they lived. They adopted the respective languages like Marathi, Tamil and Telugu. Thus the Kannadigas did not have cultural, linguistic and political homogeneity. They were not well received in those states. Discriminatory treatment was meted out to them and they were even suppressed. For example, in the princely states of Mudhol and Jamakhandi, Kannada had no place in public life including schools and offices. The misery of the Kannada-speaking people scattered in these various administrative units was unaccountable. This prompted the Kannadigas to fight for unification of Karnataka. After 1947, Kannada speaking people were grouped under five different administrations viz., Bombay, Madras, Coorg, Hyderabad Karnatakaand Mysore. However, the formation of Karnataka was further delayed. At its Jaipur session (1948), the Congress appointed a committee consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and At its Jaipur session (1948), the Congress appointed a committee consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya to study the situation and submit a report. This committee, popularly known as the J.V.P. Committee, rejected the claims of all states except that of Andhra Pradesh. Eminent literateurs like Gorur Ramaswamy Iyengar and K. V. Puttappa and leaders like S. Nijalingappa and K. Hanumanthaiah inspired the people to strive harder to achieve the goal. Meanwhile leaders like K.R. Karanth who advocated a more aggressive approach formed an organisation named Akhanda Karnataka Rajya Nirmana Parishad. Nothing concrete was done even after the elections of 1951-52. Meanwhile in Andhra, Potti Sriramulu died (15-12-1952) on the 58th day of his fast and soon after that. The formation of Andhra Pradesh was announced. Circumstances compelled the Prime Minister to appoint a States Reorganisation Commission (SRC) in December 1953. It consisted of three member"s viz., Fazl Ali (Chairman), K.M. Panikkar and H. N. Kunzru. This Commission is also often referred to as the Fazl Ali Commission. This Commission, which submitted its report about two years later, favoured the formation of a much enlarged Mysore State on the basis of language. The re-constituted Mysore State came into existence on the first of November (Rajyotsava Day) 1956 with the Maharaja as its Governor and S. Nijalingappa as the Chief Minister. But unfortunately all Kannada speaking areas were not included in it. The state was renamed Karnataka on the first of November 1973. Devaraj Urs was the Chief Minister at that time. The various stages in the unification of Karnataka: In Karnataka state the freedom movement and the movement for the unification of Karnataka went hand in hand and were often interconnected. it was initiated and supported by a renaissance and rise of nationalism brought about by educational institutions and spread of English education.

Social reform movement: Karnataka

Social reform movements like the Arya Samai and Theosophical society. development of printing and publication of books and newspapers, Kannada Sahitya Parishat and creation of a pride in Karnataka's glorious past represented by Vijayanagara. As the Indian National Congress represented the national movement at the time, the first aim of the movement was to convince the national leadership of the need for bringing all Kannada Speaking regions under one administrative unit as against the 20 units in which these were distributed at the time. The Nagpur Congress of 1920 permitted constitution of a separate provincial Congress Committee for Karnataka. The first Unification Conference was held at Belgaum in 1924 during the Congress session and it adopted a resolution for unification of Karnataka.

This was followed by founding of the Karnataka Ekikarana Sabha (later renamed Sangha) which held as many as 12 conferences subsequently. the last being at Kasargod in 1947. The Ekikarana Sangha worked in close co-operation with the Karnataka Provincial Congress Committee. The Nehru Committee of 1928 favored establishment of Karnataka as a single province. The Congress included this demand in its election manifesto of 1937. With the establishment of the Constituent Assembly in 1946 efforts were renewed with redoubled vigor. Two conventions were held at Bombay and Davanagere urging the Constituent. Assembly to take immediate steps to form Karnataka as a province. The state legislatures of Bombay and Madras passed resolutions in 1947 favoring formation of linguistic provinces while the Mysore State Constituent Assembly adopted a resolution inviting neighboring 'Kannada speaking regions to merge with Mysore. The Dhar Committee appointed by the Central Government to study the issue of formation of linguistic states disfavored such a step. This was strongly opposed by the Jaipur session of the Congress in 1948, which set up a three member J.V.P. Committee comprising of the three great national leaders Jawaharlal Nehru, Vallabhbhai Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya.

This committee favored early formation of only Andhra Pradesh. After 1952 Karnataka saw formation of an aggressive body called the Akhanda Karnataka Rajya Nirmana Parishat which started an agitation in which over 5000 person's courted arrest. Within the Congress party there was conflict. Meanwhile Potti Sriramulu had died fasting demanding the formation of Andhra and this resulted in riots in the Andhra area. Consequently the State of Andhra came into being in 1953 and under the report of Wanchoo Commission; several talukas of Bellary district were merged with Mysore state. This was the first step towards formation of Kamataka. "A meeting of Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee was held at Hubli on April 13-14 (1953). On that occasion there was an unprecedented gathering of people, and demonstration in favour of unification which turned violent causing lot of damage. Under these circumstances, the Central Government appointed a three-member Fazl Ali Commission to look into the issue of Linguistic States. The Commission recommended for the formation of Linguistic States including Karnataka"

Finally the central government appointed the States Reorganization Commission (SRC) in 1953 under Fazl Ali which reported in favor of immediate setting up of new Mysore state, among others. Its report was implemented in 1956 and thus was born the new Mysore state comprising of almost all the Kannada-speaking regions. The history of unification movement after independence: After 1947, Kannada speaking people were grouped under five different administrations viz., Bombay, Madras, Coorg, Hyderabad Karnatakaand Mysore. However, the formation of Karnataka was further delayed. At its Jaipur session (1948), the Congress appointed a committee consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and at its Jaipur session (1948), the Congress

appointed a committee consisting of Jawaharlal Nehru, Sardar Patel and Pattabhi Sitaramayya to study the situation and submit a report. This committee, popularly known as the J.V.P. Committee, rejected the claims of all states except that of Andhra Pradesh. "The Constitution did not create linguistic states. A non-party Unification Conference was organized at Haveri by Hosmani Siddappa in May 1951.

The newly founded Ekikarana Parishat demanded the resignation of all people"s representatives (MLAs, MLCs and MPs), and to implement its resolution, a committee of three headed by Hosmani was set up. The Parishat put up candidates in the 1951-52, general elections on behalf of the Karnataka Ekikarana Sabha against the Congress. The Congress mentioned in its manifesto that Unification of Karnataka was its goal. Therefore, no candidate of the Ekikarana Paksha won the election". 5 Eminent literatures like Gorur Ramaswamy Iyengar and K. V. Puttappa and leaders like S. Nijalingappa and K. Hanumanthaiah inspired the people to strive harder to achieve the goal. Meanwhile leaders like K.R. Karanth who advocated a more aggressive approach formed an organization named Akhanda Karnataka Rajya Nirmana Parishad. Nothing concrete was done even after the elections of 1951-52. Meanwhile in Andhra, Potti Sriramulu died (15-12-1952) on the 58th day of his fast and Minister to appoint a States Reorganization Commission (SRC) in December 1953. It consisted of three member"s viz., Fazl Ali (Chairman), K.M. Panikkar and H. N. Kunzru. This Commission is also often referred to as the Fazl Ali Commission. This Commission, which submitted its report about two years later, favored the formation of a much enlarged Mysore State on the basis of language. The reconstituted Mysore State came into existence on the first of November (Rajyotsava Day) 1956 with the Maharaja as its Governor and S. Nijalingappa as the Chief Minister. But unfortunately all Kannada speaking areas were not included in it. The state was renamed Karnataka on the first of November 1973. Devaraj Urs was the Chief Minister at that time.

Conclusion

Although the roots of the word 'Karnataka' are very old, the territory of present day Karnataka was split into over 20 different administrative units including different princely states, the Madras and Bombay presidencies, and the Nizam's Hyderabad state. Before independence, today's Karnataka state didn't even exist. The Kannada speaking population was dispersed in several areas that fell under the princely states including the princely state of Mysore, Nizam's Hyderabad, the Bombay Presidency and the Madras Presidency. While Almost the entire southern half of Karnataka was then under the princely state of Mysore ruled by Nalvadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar, the northern half was under Nizam (Hyderabad-Karnataka) and Bombay presidency(Bombay-Karnataka). However, the language divides soon became the issue.

Kannadigas in the Hubli-Karnataka region that fell under the Bombay Presidency felt that Marathis was being imposed on them at the expense of Kannada, while those in the Hyderabad-Karnataka felt that Urdu is being imposed on them under Nizam rule. To save the Kannada language from extinction scholars and activists launched a movement to protest this linguistic oppression. However, the movement later developed into a demand for separate state coalescing all the territories from the presidencies that were majority Kannada-speaking. This was called the Ekikarana or 'Unification' movement. The resentment and protest had started as early as 1856. However, later the movement gained momentum and led to decades of struggle by different organizations like Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha, Kannada Sahitya Parishat and the Karnataka Samithi for the creation of Karnataka state. The struggle continued for years. However, it was in 1890 that the protest intensified with the arrival of Aluru Venkata Rao. He was inspired by the protests that followed after British partitioning of Bengal. In 1903, speaking at a meeting of the Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha, he made a case for integrating all Kannada regions of Madras Province and north Karnataka with Mysore kingdom.

The idea of Separate Karnataka state was also ratified by the Nehru Committee in 1928. The Committee recommended the formation of a single province by uniting all Kannada speaking areas. The Nehru committee stated in its report that there was a "strong prima facie case for unification" and it believed Karnataka could also be a financially strong province. This recommendation aided the movement.

The movement for the unification of Karnataka began in the late 19th century, with the formation of the Karnataka Vidyavardhaka Sangha in Dharwad in 1890 by RH Deshpande. Records show that the Sangha passed a resolution in 1912, calling for the merger of the Kannada-speaking areas under the British.

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