

**BACKWARD CLASSES AND THE RESERVATION POLICY IN
ANDHRA PRADESH.**

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Dedicated to
the memory of my father.

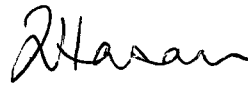




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"Backward Classes and the Reservation Policy in
Andhra Pradesh" submitted by T. Ganesh Chandra
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of Master of Philsology has not been previously
submitted for any other degree of this or any
other University. We recommend this dissertation
to be placed before the examiners for evaluation.


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INTRODUCTION

Unlike the other parts of the larger Social policy addressed to the weaker sections, the provision of reservations has been significant as well as controversial. Apart from the well defined and distinct categories of Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes, the Other Backward Classes(OBC) for whom preferential schemes are authorised are not defined in the Constitution.

In contrast to the experience of the states of South India, where the reservation policy for the Other Backward Classes emerged as a sequel to the non-Brahmin and Backward Class movements of the pre-independence period and has become comprehensive with quotas exceeding the outer limits of fifty percent suggested by the Supreme Court(Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have reservation quotas of 68 percent each) it has only been in the 1970's that electoral compulsions prompted the Janata Governments to extend the benefits of reservation to them in the northern states. Though concessions similar to those of the southern states but, on a much smaller scale were introduced for the Backward Classes of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar in the 1970's, the non-beneficiary

upper castes resorted to a violent reaction. Unlike the case of the south Indian states where the Backward Class movements could politically establish the claims for reservations in the pre-independence period, the other parts of the country, particularly the northern states had not experienced any significant non-Brahmin or Backward Class movements in the pre-independence period. Apart from the Backward Class movements having had their impact on shaping the reservation policy, the reservation issue has been largely used by political parties as a means of consolidating the electoral support of the intermediate and other lower castes. This is evident in the case of the Janata Party in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar, and both the Janata Party and Congress in Gujarat.

As the Constitution remains ambiguous about the provisions pertaining to the Backward Classes, the process by which the intended beneficiaries of reservations are identified is an extensively debated issue and the main point of debate in arriving at a consensual understanding of the term 'Backward

Classes' has been between the proponents of the view that preferential treatment should be conferred on lines of 'income' or other 'secular' characteristics that would eschew communal groupings and those who believe that 'classes' refer only to historic formations (Caste and religious groups). The two National level Backward Classes Commissions as well as several state level Commissions have recognised Caste as the basis of social and educational backwardness, and Caste and communal groups continue to be the beneficiaries of reservations in several states which follow the system of reservations for the other Backward Classes.

The present study 'concerns itself with the Andhra Pradesh experience over the issue of reservations for the other Backward Classes(OBC's). As a south Indian state which witnessed considerable non-Brahmin activity in the pre-independence period, Andhra Pradesh has evolved a comprehensive system of reservations for the Backward Classes. However, the sharp polarisation that the state witnessed following an enhancement in the quota of reservation in 1986, questioned the popular belief that the extension of concessions to the Backward Classes in the southern states had been a "smooth and painless" process.

The major issues that are discussed in the course of the study are, the nature of the Backward Class movements the state has witnessed, the electoral compulsions that have shaped the policy, and the criteria the state level Backward Classes Commissions have adopted to identify the intended beneficiaries of reservations.

As the history of the reservation policy in Andhra Pradesh can be traced back to the non-Brahmin and Backward Class movements of the composite Madras state, an attempt is made to trace the genesis of the policy from these movements. The differentiations within the non-Brahmin movements of the pre-independence period and the nature of the Backward Class movement the state has witnessed since its formation, are discussed to assess the impact of these movements in shaping the reservation policy of the state.

The major developments in the reservation policy under the Congress and Telugu Desam governments in the state are discussed to locate the electoral compulsions that shaped the policy and the consequences these developments led to in the 1970s and the 1980s.

The first chapter traces the genesis of the policy from the non-Brahmin movements of South India and attempts a comparison of the comprehensive quotas of reservation of the South Indian states with the developments in the reservation policy in the northern states and in Gujarat. The constitutional provisions pertaining to the Backward classes and the problems inherent in formulating a national consensus on the issue of reservations are examined in this chapter.

The second chapter traces the antecedents of the reservation policy in Andhra Pradesh. Apart from discussing the Backward Class movement and the evolution of the reservation policy in the state the chapter attempts an analysis of the ruling Congress party's policy towards Backward Classes prior to and after the 1969 split in the Party. The chapter also indicates the representation given to the Backward Classes by the Telugu Desam Party since its emergence as the ruling Party in the state.

The third chapter discusses the preferential treatment policies formulated by the Telugu Desam Government for mustering the support of the Backward Classes. A discussion of the Party's initiative to

enhance the quota of reservations and an analysis of the reservation centred agitation of 1986 is carried out in this chapter.

CHAPTER - I

MAJOR ISSUES AND DEVELOPMENTS IN
THE RESERVATION POLICY

The antecedents of the reservation policy as an integral part of the system of preferential treatment for the weaker sections of the population, can be traced back to the days of the British and Princely India. Reservations, along with other legislations, ameliorative programmes and schemes designed to benefit the disadvantaged sections of the society, can be viewed as an instrument of the social policy of the state. Unlike the other parts of a larger social policy such as developmental schemes and programmes for the upliftment of the weaker sections which are addressed to a long term goal of extending effective citizenship rights to the disadvantaged sections of the population, the provision of reservations has been significant as well as controversial. The wide array of programmes which are a part of the special treatment policies are not known by any specific term but, discussions related to them usually refer to "concessions", "privileges", "special provision", "reverse discrimination" and "compensatory discrimination".¹

The term Backward classes has been used in two different ways: first, as a generic term including Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes and secondly, it

also refers to those Backward groups other than Scheduled castes and tribes. For any discussion of the reservation policy for the weaker sections, it is imperative to make a distinction between the Scheduled castes and Tribes on the one hand and the other Backward classes^{o b c} on the other hand? Since the inception of the constitution of free India, the reservation policy for the ex-untouchables designated as Scheduled castes (SC) and the spatially and culturally isolated communities of tribals, designated as Scheduled Tribes (ST), has been by and large a nationally accepted programme for their upliftment. But, due to the absence of any centrally identifiable characteristics such as social segregation and spatial isolation as found in the case of SC's and ST's, the other Backward classes have constituted an 'unorganized sector' of the reservation policy.³

The concept of Backward classes, in its specific connotation referring to a section of society placed between the highest castes and the Scheduled castes, that is the other Backward classes, has been somewhat of a "Constitutional puzzle", and since the beginning of the reservation policy it has had a variety of referents and had come to mean different things in different contexts.⁴

Due to the absence of a centralized reservation policy for the OBC, the initiative rests with the state governments and some states such as West Bengal, Assam, states of the North East, Rajasthan or any of the Union Territories do not have any reservation provisions for them and it has been only since the mid-seventies that electoral pressures prompted the states of North India and Gujarat to extend the benefits of reservation to them.⁵ Among the states which follow the system of reservation for the OBC's, the percentage of reservation granted to them varies between 10% in Gujarat to 50% in Karnataka.⁶

Unlike the states of South India where the reservation policy has evolved over a long period of time and has reached a "saturation point" with a comprehensive system of quotas in virtually every sphere of public life,⁷ the anti-reservation agitations which began in the late 1970s in Bihar and spread to other parts of the country were a consequence of the introduction of measures similar to those of the Southern states and they succeeded in raising the basic issue of validity of provisions of preferential treatment for the weaker sections.

Prof. Yogendra Singh points out that the absence of a uniform national position on the issue of reservations for the Other Backward Classes has been largely due to the absence of any "operational detail in the Constitution as to how to arrive at the definition of the OBC",⁸ and the politics inherent in attempts to define the OBC defies a consensual understanding of its meaning. Besides the definition of the "socially and educationally backward" category, the question of percentages, the extent of reservations for this "heterogenous group" and the criteria of backwardness have perplexed many a Court and Commission.

In the process of development which serves as the basic means of eradicating backwardness, the provisions of reservations are primarily meant to remove social injustice that hampers development.⁹ D.L. Sheth argues that unlike the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes, the category of socially and educationally Backward classes have not been clearly defined although they have been "the first to enter the reservation system, and that too by using political means."¹⁰ The political means by which the Backward classes entered the reservation system is evident from the non-Brahmin

movements of South India and Bombay presidency. A brief appraisal of the genesis of the reservation policy reveals that the policy is an outcome of the non-Brahmin movements. It provides us an understanding of the reasons for the varied state patterns of reservation systems that exist today.

Genesis of the Policy

The concept of Backward classes has been with us for more than a century and it was used for the first time in 1880, to describe groups entitled to allowances in elementary schools in the old Madras presidency.¹¹ The term reservation in relation to Backward classes has also been in use for long and the policy of reservation evidently arose in the non-Brahmin movements of the South India and Bombay.¹² The pre-Constitutional nature of the reservation policy is evident from the fact that steps towards implementation of special programmes for the depressed sections of society were taken by the Madras government in the year 1885.¹³ In 1921, the Mysore government defined Backward classes as all communities other than Brahmins not adequately represented in the services and accordingly steps were taken to ensure their

representation.¹⁴ Similarly, in 1925 the Bombay government described Backward classes as all communities other than Brahmins, Marwaris, Parsis, Banias and Christians.¹⁵

The origin of the various reservation systems for the Backward classes as an outcome of the non-Brahmin movements is explainable by the major "structural disturbances" that the traditional social order underwent as a result of British rule. The traditional hierarchization of the Hindu social order is said to be along the lines of caste, which more or less corresponded to the political and economic hierarchies.¹⁶

The correspondence of higher occupation and ritual status with political power and economic strength, which meant mainly land in colonial India would mean that there existed a considerable correlation between caste and class at the empirical level. The introduction of western liberal education, the emergence of egalitarian ideas of Justice and equality, and the development of modern communication networks under British rule, accentuated the disparities in the distribution of economic and political power, particularly in regard to the upper and intermediate castes.¹⁷

The Brahmins, particularly in South India were the first to respond to western liberal education and were successful in converting their landed sources into more rewarding avenues of government service and professions.¹⁸ N. Ram points out that in the Madras province the 'literati' class of Brahmins began "moving into key positions as officials, professors, lower bureaucrats, writers, lawyers and editors",¹⁹ and there exists considerable evidence about the extraordinary privileges they began to acquire from the second half of the nineteenth century. For instance, by the turn of the century, the male literacy rate among Tamil and Telugu Brahmins were 73.6 percent in comparison to 6.9 percent of the Vellalas, who, later played a prominent role in the non-Brahmin movement that clearly manifested the Brahmin - non-Brahmin cleavage by the second decade of the twentieth century.²⁰ The Madras government showed that in 1912 the Brahmins made up 58 percent of Deputy Collectors, 83.3 percent of Sub-Judges and 72.6 percent of District Munsifs in higher levels of government service in which Indians were employed.²¹ In a pattern similar to the experience of the Madras province, 68 percent of the Mysore Brahmins were literate by the

turn of the century in comparison to a literacy rate of 14.1 percent among the Lingayats and Vokkaligas who, like the leading castes of the non-Brahmin movement of Madras possessed the important source of land.²²

The Brahmin - non Brahmin cleavage that appeared in Madras, Mysore and Bombay is significant with regard to the policy of special treatment for the Backward Classes because the leading castes of the non-Brahmin movements who controlled landed resources and belonged to the economically powerful sections were the first beneficiaries of the "compartmental schemes" of reservation that began to emerge in the days of the freedom struggle. This cleavage also explains the reasons for the comprehensive system of reservations that exist in the South till date, in contrast to the north where such a cleavage did not occur. The north unlike the south, experienced a different kind of cleavage between the 'twice born and forward castes' of Kshatriyas, Bhumi-hars, Kayasthas and Rajputs on the one hand, and the intermediate castes such as Ahirs and Kurmis on the other, and this came about much later.²³

Unlike the social reform movements of the nineteenth century which aimed at eliminating caste disabilities, education of women, abolition of Sati and upliftment

of the untouchables, and the movement of Jyothi Phule in Maharashtra which was committed to 'the removal of untruth, injustice and hypocrisy of the Hindu social order,'²⁴ the leading castes of the non-Brahmin movement in the South, who were one rung below the Brahmins and controlled the landed resources, demanded a share in the colonial spoils by replacing the Brahmins from their position of dominance in professions and politics.²⁵

In the forefront of the non-Brahmin movement were the leadership of the South India Liberal Federation and the Justice party,^{which} was drawn from the dominant sections of the Vellalas of Tamil areas, Kammas, Reddys and Velamas of Telugu areas and the Nairs of Malabar districts.²⁶ Similarly, the Vokkaligas and Lingayats of Mysore who possessed land, the most important source of strength, like their counterparts in Madras province, formed the Praja Mitra Mandali to voice the claims of the non-Brahmins in the fields of education and the services.²⁷ The character of the anti-caste movement in Maharashtra underwent significant changes after the departure of Jyotiba Phule. The passing of the leadership of the movement into the hands of the Maharaja of Kholapur who demanded that he should be treated as a Kshatriya and sought a favourable place for

his own community, marked the beginning of a new phase of compromise in the anti-caste movement in Maharashtra.²⁸

A common threat running through the anti-Brahmin movement of Mysore , Madras and Bombay is that the economically dominant sections which were a part of the 'movements' sought a favourable position for the 'intelligentsia' emerging from them. E.F. Erschick points out that the Justice party , financed by the landed gentry, sought to "supplant the Brahmins, while keeping the untouchables at a good economic educational and political distance"²⁹ and the land holding castes that provided the leadership for the party were not keen on broadening their bases by including the landless castes within their ranks, and showed a "marked disinclination for social reforms and amelioration of other weaker and Backward Castes".³⁰

The introduction of a clear compartmental scheme of reservation in the Madras Province in 1927, was the first significant victory for the landlord classes represented by the Justice party³¹ and by the 1930s , the party had served the historic purpose of reducing to a great extent the sense of deprivation on the part of the 'Zamindar' interests, particularly in the fields of

government jobs and education.³² The non-Brahmin castes which were provided quotas under the compartmental system of reservation were bifurcated for the first time in 1947 into non-Brahmin Hindus and non-Brahmin Backward Hindus and it was only by 1954 that the non-Brahmin forward castes like the Adi Saiva Vellalas, Kargetti Vellalas, Mudaliars, Kamma Naidus, that had provided the leadership for the non-Brahmin movement were compelled to compete with the Brahmins for jobs and seats in the open competition pool.³³ The bifurcation of the non-Brahmin communities, followed by the elimination of the forward communities from the reservation system, were not resented much by the affected communities because by the time of independence they had sufficiently penetrated the services and consolidated their political power by replacing the Brahmins.³⁴

However, the post-independence developments in the reservation system in Tamil Nadu reveal certain unique features. Most of the Backward classes under the Tamil Nadu system of classification are designated on the basis of a bifurcation of the major castes into forward and backward sub-castes categories. The Tamil Nadu Backward classes Commission(1971) had pointed out that about 11.7 percent of the total Backward classes

population, constituted by the major sub-castes groups of the forward castes, secured 37.3 percent of the non-gazetted and 48.2 percent of the gazetted posts with the minor and weaker Backward classes unable to utilise the reservations.³⁵ Thus, the sub-castes of the upper dominant castes such as Vellalas, secured a majority of the benefits under the reservation system and moreover the Backward Classes Commission points out that such a categorization "has opened the flood gates of abuse" enabling any non-Backward or forward community to claim to be "Backward" by some means or the other.³⁶

Unlike Madras, where the non-Brahmins were bifurcated into non-Brahmin forward and non-Brahmin Backward castes by the time of independence and the former 'officially' eliminated from the reservation system, the land holding sections of Vokkaligas and Lingayats of Karnataka who entered the reservation system by resisting Brahminical domination in the pre-independence period continued to retain their Backward status even after independence. Agitations centering around the reservation issue in Karnataka have consequently been different in their nature, in comparison to the anti-reservation agitations that the Northern States and Gujarat experienced in the late 1970s and early 1980s.³⁷

The Mysore system of classification of Backward classes included all the major communities other than Brahmins for a considerable period of time even after independence and the re-organisation of the states in 1956. For example, in 1958, the Backward classes were defined as all persons except Brahmins, and in 1959 it was redefined to exempt Baniyas and Kayasthas along with the Brahmins.³⁸ The Vokkaligas and Lingayats, as the dominant landed gentry in Mysore, jointly voiced the claims of the non-Brahmins in the pre-independence period and after independence, they developed a vested interest in perpetuating 'Backwardness'. This is evident from the fact that the Lingayats had to be retained in the Backward category inspite of the Nagan gowda's commission's (1958) recommendations to to the contrary, and more recently, the delisting of Vokkaligas from the Backward category by the Venkata Swamy Commission (1983) prompted a strong reaction which forced the state government to reconsider the entire issue of reservations.³⁹

The non-Brahmin movements of the Madras and Mysore provinces clearly shows that the Zamindar landlord classes belonging to different dominant castes could join hands

for a common cause of protecting and asserting their interests against the supremacy of the Brahmins in professions and politics. The Vokkaligas and Lingayats of Mysore and the Reddys, Kammas, Velamas and Vellals of the Madras province could unite under the Praja Mitra Mandali and the Justice party respectively, inspite of their separate caste associations and identity. Inspite of all the "inter-caste struggles" that have been witnessed over the past many decades, the dominant castes could establish a common forum because specific and important interests of the landlord and mercantile classes were involved.

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The non-Brahmin movements of the South make it evident that the reservation policy of the Backward classes pre-dates the constitution of independent India. As the other parts of the country, particularly the north did not experience a Brahmin-non Brahmin cleavage and the consequent reservation systems, the framing of the Indian constitution would have obviously generated considerable amount of confusion regarding the definition of the Backward classes as a distinct category from the Scheduled castes and Scheduled Tribes.



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Due to the precedents set by the Government of India Act of 1935, the precursor of the constitution of India and primarily due to the consensus hammered out between Gandhi and Ambedkar, demarcating and formulating specific constitutional measures for the protection of Scheduled Castes and Tribes did not pose major problems.⁴⁰ On the other hand, there was much confusion and ambivalence regarding the definition and demarcation of a distinct category of "socially and educationally backward classes" as is evident from the constitutional debates, and the ambiguous provisions pertaining to them.⁴¹ An examination of the major constitutional provisions with regard to the protection of weaker sections makes this point clear.

Constitutional Protection of the Weaker Sections:

Though the most striking feature of our constitution is its stress on equality, which is sufficiently made clear in the Preamble, the part embodying the fundamental rights and the part laying down the Directive principles of state policy, "it could not have afforded to loose touch with social facts as they are," observes Andre Beteille.⁴² Consequently, a wide array of preferential schemes are

authorised by the Constitution for the purpose of "achieving equality" for the weaker sections.

The balance, which the constitution tries to bring about between the formal principles of equality and social justice for the weaker sections is evident from the various provisions that it chalks out for the purpose of their upliftment.

The constitution's anchorage to policies of preferential treatment for the weaker sections, constituted by the three major categories of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and the heterogenous category of OBC's whose strength varies from state to state, is provided by special provisions enshrined in it.

Reservations in matters of public appointments and educational institutions are the most important categories under the scheme of preferential treatment programmes. Thus, the constitutional ban on discrimination in government employment is qualified by Article 16(4) which permits the state to make:

"any provision for the reservation of appointments or posts in favour of any Backward class of citizens which, in the opinion of the state, is not adequately represented in the services under the state ".⁴³

Similarly the general provisions banning discrimination by government(Article 15) and banning discrimination in government aided institutions(Article 29(2)) are qualified by Article 15(a) which provides.

"Nothing in Article 15 or Article 29(2), shall prevent the state from making any special provision for the advancement of any socially and educationally backward class of citizens or for the Scheduled Castes and Tribes".⁴⁴

Apart from these provisions in the section on fundamental rights, Articles 46 in the Directive principles of state policy declares:

"The state shall promote with special care the educational and economic interests of the weaker sections of the people, and in, particular, or the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes, and shall protect them from social injustice and all forms of exploitation".⁴⁵

Apart from the provisions in Parts III and part IV of the constitution, an important clause relating to the OBC's is Article 340, which provides for the appointment of a Commission to investigate the "conditions of socially and educationally backward classes and

the difficulties under which they labour and to make recommendations as to the steps that should be taken by the Union or any state to remove such difficulties and improve their conditions".⁴⁶

Unlike the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes whose position is clearly set out by the constitution by provisions such as those related to reservations in legislatures and other specific references to them, the position of the OBC's remains ambiguous because the terminology used to describe the intended beneficiaries of special treatment programme is neither identical nor clear.

An examination of the various provisions from which the position of the Other Backward Classes has to be derived reveals the confusion implicit in defining them. The Directive principle in Article 46 refers to 'weaker sections of the people' as also Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, Article 16(4) dealing with reservation in governmental appointments talks of "Backward Class, not adequately represented in the series", and Article 15(4) which was introduced to protect reservation in educational institutions⁴⁷ following a court case in Madras mentions "socially and educationally backward classes" in addition to Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes. The wording of

this Article, which was introduced by the first amendment is keyed to that of Article 340 which provides for the appointment of a Commission to investigate the conditions of these classes.

It is abundantly clear that the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes are the intended beneficiaries of job and educational reservations apart from legislative reservations for which a specific provision is made by the constitution. But, the phrases used to describe the weaker or Backward sections apart from the SC's and ST's are subject to interpretation and consequently it has resulted in voluminous litigation and judgements and scores of Commissions have tried to grapple with it.

As the constitution does not provide any 'operational detail' as to "how to arrive at the definition of the OBC", it has raised a whole range of issues, the most important of which is related to the question of determinant of social backwardness. That the location of the determinants of backwardness is not a mere academic exercise and has in fact been a catalyst of political upheaval is evident from the violent reactions to

attempts by state level Commissions to determine backwardness on a basis other than caste.⁴⁸

However, except for reservation of seats for the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes in Parliament and the Assemblies, other constitutional provisions pertaining to reservations are only of an enabling nature and are not mandatory. Apart from legislative reservations which are 'time bound' and 'specific' the constitution avoids presenting quotas regarding other kinds of reservation and it only mentions the claims of the Scheduled Castes and the Scheduled Tribes to 'services' and posts with the affairs of the union or of any state.

It has been argued that the constitution is deliberately ambiguous about its commitment to protective discrimination in the case of the OBC.⁴⁹ As already pointed out, the OBC's used reservation as an instrument to enter the political system in the pre-independence period. As this happened due to the non-Brahmin movements of the South, and such a development did not take place in the north, unlike the case of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes ,

the OBC's posed a different kind of problem to the framers of the constitution and this could have resulted in the 'half-hearted' approval to their claims of special treatment under the constitution.⁵⁰

Unlike the states of south India where the reservation policy emerged as a result of the non-Brahmin movements of the pre-independence period, the reservation policy was introduced in the northern states and in Gujarat in the late 1970s, as a means of consolidating the electoral support of the intermediate and other lower castes. It was the governments of the Janata party that introduced reservations in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat, as a result of which violent agitations ensued and raised the basic issue of the validity of provisions of preferential treatment. Before examining these issues it would be essential to assess the rationale of the policy as a means of achieving social justice.

Rationale of the Policy

It has already been pointed out that reservations can be viewed as a significant and controversial part of a larger social policy designed to benefit the weaker

sections of the society. Reservations constitute a part of a larger policy package composed of laws such as the Untouchability Offences Act which aim at removing disabilities, and laws which prevent alienation of tribal land: and schemes and programmes for land allotments, housing and scholarships which protect and provide physical security to the weaker sections of society.⁵¹

The thinking on question of the weaker sections, whose problems are too large and too varied is often reduced to that of job reservation alone. Consequently, it has been pointed out by Andre Beteille, that even in the case of SC's and ST's, reservation "caters only to the problems of the middle class Harijans and Adivasis, leaving aside an overwhelming majority who do not constitute this class."⁵² Andre Beteille points out that reservations can solve the problem "of only those who have nearly arrived", leaving untouched "the vast majority of those backward classes in the rural areas without access to education or land or assets", and hence economic planning can be made the starting point of the policy towards Backward classes and it should not

be a minor branch of it as it has been so far.⁵³

In the case of the OBC's, the Mandal Commission agrees that the major benefits of reservation and other welfare measures "will be cornered by more advanced sections of the backward communities".⁵⁴ But, this is justified by the Commission because "reservations will not only erode the hold of the higher castes on the services and enable OBC's in general to have a sense of participation in running the affairs of the country".⁵⁵ That the reservation policy primarily benefits the upper sections, particularly those belonging to a few communities, has been considerably demonstrated in Tamil Nadu, Karnataka and several other states.⁵⁶

Apart from prescribing quotas for job and educational reservations, several state-level Commissions on Backward Classes recommend elaborate economic programmes for the social advancement of the Backward classes, the implementation of which often involves investment of large amounts of money. These programmes, apart from several others, a few of which are already mentioned, are based on the same 'values'

and 'rationale' as the provision of reservations. But reservations turn-out to be significant probably because, as pointed out by Marc Galanter, "employment constitutes a new form of wealth in India, perhaps, next in importance only to ownership of agricultural land" and professional studies "enable people to have valuable employment opportunities in the government and non-governmental sectors".⁵⁷ In short, reservations, generate controversy because, the impact is "felt adversely by those outside the beneficiary groups, and that too in the vital area of social mobility, where the means of mobility are always scarce and competition intense".⁵⁸

Though it is obvious that the reservations benefit only the well-to-do sections among the OBC's, it needs no great empirical exercise to prove that there exist several 'communities' whose position may be either comparable or worse than the Adivasis and Harijans who suffer from the twin burdens of poverty and the stigma of pollution. For instance, the literacy rate among the Kurakulas of Andhra Pradesh (population 1,50,000) whose main profession continues to be selling vegetables, is estimated to be 0.1 percent.⁵⁹

Similarly, a majority of the Buda Bukkalas and Jogins of Andhra Pradesh maintain with their traditional occupation of begging.⁶⁰ It is obvious that job and educational reservations may never benefit a majority of such communities who belong to the lowest classes of society, and hence proper economic planning, in combination with the system of reservations can serve as a means for their upliftment.

Major Developments and Related Issues:

Unlike the case of the South Indian States, particularly Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, which have been able to evolve comprehensive systems of quotas addressed to a majority of the communities, primarily due to the non-Brahmin movements that they experienced in the pre-independence period, it was only in the 1970s that political considerations paved the way for the introduction of the reservation policy in the northern states and Gujarat. As the northern states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar and Gujarat did not experience any significant non-Brahmin or Backward classes movements in the pre-independence

period, an appraisal of the experiences of these states with regard to the policy of reservation would provide us an adequate understanding of the political impulses that shape the policy. Moreover, the anti-reservation agitations that started in Bihar in 1977 as a result of the introduction of the reservation policy by the Janata Governments of these states and the long-drawn out anti-reservation agitation of Gujarat raised the basic issue of the validity of reservations for the OBC and triggered of a debate on the question of criteria for determining backwardness.

Unlike the Brahmins of South India, the Kayasthas of Bihar were the first to take way to modern education and the professions.⁶¹ Since the pre-independence days, the political struggle within the Congress in Bihar was characterised by the conflicts and competition among the dominant land owning castes of Brahmins, Bhumihars and Rajputs and it was only after the 1960s that conflicts between these caste groups, which largely constituted the upper classes, and the lower peasant castes emerged.⁶² Harry W. Blair points out that, since the time of independence, successive ministeries in Patna

ensured that no "real change took place in the land structure after the land reforms of the 1950's",⁶³ and then followed a patronage system of rural development whereby the government "funnelled money to local elites in the form of development programmes". This factor, as pointed by Blair, resulted in the imperfect mobilization of the Backward classes, into politics and consequently it was only from the 1960s that the Yadavs, Kurmis and Keoris, characterised as the upper Backwards, became an independent political force and their numbers began to show an increase in representative bodies.⁶⁴ Following Ram Manohar Lohia's idea of uniting the Backward castes to defeat the Congress, the Samyukta Socialist Party and later, the Janata Party, patronised them assiduously. In the Janata ministry headed by Karpuri Thakur (1977) the four major upper Backward communities of Yadavas, Kurmis, Baniyas and Keoris constituted almost all the Backward membership of the Assembly and even the Ministry.⁶⁵ Karpuri Thakur asserted that the "Backwards had displaced the forwards as a dominant force in Bihar Politics" and that the "old days of dominance in public affairs from village to Vidhan

Sabha by the twice born was gone for ever".⁶⁶ The reservation policy for the OBC's, promulgated by him on the basis of the recommendation of the Mungeri Lal Commission would have ensured 20 percent reservation for the OBC's. Though only a few Backwards would have directly benefited from the quotas, and they would have been from the richer families, the policy became a symbolic issue that gripped "the imagination of virtually everyone in the state".⁶⁷ Karpuri Thakur's effort to mobilise the Backward classes by introducing the reservation policy was successfully stalled by the violent backlash of the forward castes, a majority of them constituting the upper classes, and whose political and economic domination continues inspite of the aggressiveness, industry and profit orientation of the Backwards.⁶⁸ Moreover, as pointed out earlier, the implementation of the policy would have benefited only a section of the Backward classes, particularly those belonging to the Yadav, Kurmi Keori and Bania communities. Hence, reservation serves as a symbolic force to capture the votes of the Backward classes who constitute a numerical majority, particularly in the rural

sector. A similar pattern is noticeable in Gujarat, a state which witnessed the most violent agitations against reservations for scheduled castes, as well as the OBC's.

The manner in which electoral compulsions shape the reservation policy for the OBC is evident from the experiences of Gujarat, which witnessed two reservation agitations in the 1980s. Based on the recommendations of the Baxi Commission, which was appointed in 1972 as a result of a promise made by the Congress(I),⁶⁹ reservations for the OBC, were introduced by the Janata Government in 1978. The freedom movement in Gujarat was dominated by the Brahmins, Baniyas and Patidars who had made ample use of educational facilities and had sufficiently penetrated the services by the time of independence.⁷⁰ These upper and middle castes dominated the politics of the state in the post-independence period too, and the Rajputs, who were economically much weaker in comparison the other upper castes formed the Gujarat Kshatriya Sabha, a caste association which included the Kolis in its fold.⁷¹ As Gujarat did not experience "any Backward caste" or anti-Brahmin movement similar to that in

Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra",⁷² the electoral importance the GKS began to assume as a forum of the Kshatriyas and other Backward castes has been largely decisive in shaping the reservation policy. For instance, the establishment of the Baxi Commission on Backward classes in 1972 was largely a result of the promise made by Indira Gandhi for obtaining the support of the GKS in the 1971 Assembly⁷³ elections in Gujarat. However, the exclusion of a substantial section of the Kshatriyas by the usage of caste as the criteria for determining backwardness, was opposed by the GKS because as a Ghan Shyam Shah points out "a majority of them were economically poor inspite of their superior social status".⁷⁴ A second Commission on Backward classes was appointed by the Congress(I) government headed by Madhav Singh Solanki in 1981, "to consider (whether) there were any other castes/communities/classes which fell in the category of socially and educationally backward classes".⁷⁵ but, as a substantial number of leaders of the GKS where M.L.A.'s and M.P.'s. it did not raise the issue of the criteria for determining backwardness but, merely campaigned for their inclusion in the Backward category. The implementation of a modified version of the Commission's

recommendations before the Assembly elections in 1985, which meant an increase to 28 percent in the quota of reservations, led to a large scale anti-reservation agitation, the most serious and violent of its kind witnessed in the country.

The experiences of different states, particularly Gujarat and Bihar, with regard to the policy of reservation clearly shows that different political parties have tried to use the policy as a means of consolidating the support of the Backward classes. The 'implementation' of the reservation policy in Bihar or Gujarat would have benefited the upper sections among the Backwards and the intermediate castes. In case of Bihar, the policy would have marked a victory for the upper Backwards, that is, the Yadavs, Kumis, Keoris and Baniyas in the assertion of their strength against the domination of the upper classes constituted largely by by upper castes. In Gujarat, the policy would have benefited the advanced sections of the Kahatriyas included in the Backward category and the Kolis. However, the response of the Backwards against the

anti-reservation agitations in both these states has been ineffective because of the "well-entrenched" domination of the "forward castes". In Gujarat, statistics clearly reveal that the rate of utilization of the reserved seats by the OBC's clearly falls short of the prescribed quota and there exists ample evidence to show that political parties have been generally hesitant in implementing the reservation schemes.⁷⁶

James Manor points out that the failure of Karpuri Thakur in consolidating the power of the Backward classes through the policy of reservation was because, he made the announcement of reservations "before he had either consolidated 'backward class' control in the state level political arena or developed programmes to provide 'Backward class' people with new economic and political resources in the form of substantive patronage from the government".⁷⁷ In the case of Gujarat, where political compulsions prompted the ruling parties to introduce and 'enhance' reservations for the OBC's, the Backward classes, inspite of their numerical majority could not effectively defend the reservation initiative

because of the "demographic socio-cultural and economic differentiations among different castes/communities and their isolation from the Scheduled castes".⁷⁸ Moreover, the GKS was dominated by Rajputs and was itself 'unsure' about its support for caste based reservations.

A comparison of the developments in the reservation policy of the north Indian states with the experiences of southern states, particularly Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, reveals that the latter have been able to evolve comprehensive schemes of reservations largely due to the non-Brahmin movements that were witnessed in the pre-independence days. Due to the long history of the reservation policy in these states, a large proportion of the population continued to be the beneficiaries of the policy. In contrast to the experience of south India, where a 'tradition' of reservation policy emerged from the pre-independence days, the states of North India have been largely unsuccessful in implementing reservation policies for the Backward classes not only because of the absence of such a 'tradition' but, the politically and

economically dominant classes, constituted largely by the dominant castes, have been successful in stalling the implementation of such policies, which pose a threat to their domination. The Backward classes on the other hand, inspite of their numerical majority, have either been 'imperfectly mobilised' as in the case of Bihar on economically and politically weak and fragmented, as in the case of Gujarat and several other states. Consequently, political parties have been trying to consolidate the support of the numerical majority of Backward classes, which is clearly evident in case of the Janata party in Bihar, both the Janata and the Congress (I) in Gujarat.

Criteria of Backwardness and Efforts to Centralize the Reservation Policy

Though political considerations and movements of the 'non-Brahmins and the Backward classes have given the reservation policy several of its dimensions, it also due to the ambiguous nature of the provisions enshrined in the constitution that questions related to the definition of "socially and educationally backward category", the criteria of Backwardness

and the extent of reservations to the 'heterogenous group' have been left to be tackled by the various central and state level Backward Classes Commissions, and the Judiciary has been playing a major role in giving a proper direction to the policy.

In his analysis of the Judicial encounter with compensatory discrimination, Marc Galanter points out that "it is the courts which have firmly established that gross over inclusion will not be tolerated and the Backward classes must be confined to those who are demonstratively backward by some tangible criteria and that these criteria must be supplemented by adequate data recent enough to be relied on as reflective of current conditions".⁷⁹ However, the Judicial pronouncements on defining the boundaries of Backwardness reflect the ambiguity inherent in the situation. For instance, the judgement in the famous "Balaji case" in which the Supreme Court placed a ceiling of 50 percent⁸⁰ on the total quota of reservations clearly imply that there ought to be a clear distinction between 'caste' and 'class'. But, there are other judgements as in "Rajendran's case" that 'a caste

is also a class of citizens or more strongly as in "Periya Kurupan's case", that "a caste is also a class of citizen's or more strongly as in "Periya Kurupans case", that "a caste has always been recognised as a class".⁸¹

As is implicit in the judgements of the Supreme Court, the main point of 'dispute' in assigning a meaning to the term 'classes' as it appears in the constitution is between the proponents of the view that preferential treatment should be conferred on lines of "income", "occupation, liberty or other "secular" characteristics that would eschew communal groupings and those who believe that "classes" refer only to historic social formations (caste and religious groups).

The various state level Backward Classes Commissions and the two Central Commissions, of which the second (Mandal) Commission carried out a very comprehensive survey in an effort to centralize the reservation policy, have either used caste as the 'basic' criteria or relied on other "secular" tests to identify the Backward classes.

The panel of experts led by Prof. M.N. Srinivas and the Research planning team of sociologists that assisted the Mandal Commission in carrying out its work, opined that the basic task of the Commission was to "lay down the criteria for identifying recognisable and persistent collectivities and not individuals"⁸² and that "such collectivities can be castes or other hereditary groups traditionally associated with specific occupations, which are considered to be low and impure, and with which educational backwardness and low income are found to be associated".⁸³ This statement reveals the order of importance the Commission assigned to each of the eleven indicators of Backwardness that it evolved and categorised broadly under social, educational and economic factors that contribute to the Backwardness of a caste. Each of the indicators, ranging from low social status of a caste under social factors which carry a greater weightage, and low average of family assets of a caste under economic factors which carry a lesser weightage, was assigned points and any caste that 'secured' more than eleven points out of a total of twenty two was deemed to be Backward by the Commission.⁸⁴

As the search for "collectivities" that the Commission talks of begins from the unit of caste, from which social classes are constructed, a class is not regarded as an aggregate of individuals which derives its character by virtue of the characteristics of its individual members. An individual's position 'vis-a-vis', the means of production or categories such as income, are not relied upon to demarcate social classes but, the characteristics of a group, that is, the caste to which individuals belong is given primary in identifying the potential beneficiaries.

It is pointed out that the empirical exercise carried out by the Mandal Commission, which basically looks for the "ascribed" status of individuals to determine social backwardness, ignores the fact that, factors contributing to backwardness differ in different historical formations and social situations, and that the significance of prevailing attributes of backwardness differ in regions where social mobility movements have taken place among various castes and communities".⁸⁵ Moreover, by taking the village as the unit of observation, the survey carried out by the Commission misses the community aspect of caste as a horizontal segmental division of society spread over different parts of a region or a whole state.⁸⁶

Apart from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes, the constitution leaves the option to consider

backwardness on a basis other than caste but "secular" categories such as 'income' are generally not given importance in formulating the criteria for determining backwardness. Though this is primarily due to the "unbroken relationship between caste and occupation", it remains a fact that individuals belonging to a particular caste, do not belong to the same class group. The upper classes among the communities classified as Backward corner the major benefits of reservation and due to their superior economic status and the resultant political orientation, it is these sections which constitute the major supporters of reservation initiatives undertaken by the Central or State governments. The political importance of the upper classes among those classified as Backward, becomes evident from the fact that several states have either been reluctant or unable to introduce measures such as income limitation or compartmentalization of the reservation system on the basis of the population levels of the Backward communities for ensuring that the benefits of reservation are extended to the lower classes among those classified as Backward.⁸⁷

Where an entire caste group is considered to be Backward due to the nature of the occupation that a majority of its members follow, an effective system of restricting the benefits of reservation to the economically weaker sections among them, by the usage of economic categories such as 'income' can be effective in removing social injustice.

In spite of the 'inconsistencies' in the Mandal Commission's eleven designated criteria of backwardness and its application, a national consensus on the issue of reservation for the OBC can only be a remote possibility because of the historical trends and political impulsions that have shaped the policy. A survey of the major developments in the reservation policy clearly shows that the southern states have a higher quotas of reservation for the OBC, primarily due to the social movements that shaped the policy, and, as a large proportion of the population of the south Indian states is classified as Backward, if a national consensus is equated with nation wide levelling of 'quotas' some of these communities may cease to be the beneficiaries of the policy.

It has been pointed out that compartmental schemes of reservation first emerged in the pre-independence period as a result of the movements of the non-Brahmins against the domination of Brahmins in profession and politics. Reservations enabled the economically dominant non-Brahmin castes to enter the professions and politics and in the post-independence period some communities, such as the Vokkaligas and Lingayats continued to retain their Backward status. Due to the experiences of the pre-independence period reservations emerged as a "historical trend" in most of the southern states, unlike the northern states where the dominance of the upper classes, constituted largely by Rajputs, Brahmins and Kayasthas, is sought to be replaced by the Backward classes constituted by communities such as Yadavs, Kurmis, Keoris and Baniyas. In the process, the issue of reservation has been used by political parties as a means of consolidating the support of the Backward classes. Due to the different historical experiences of different regions, the questions related to criteria of Backwardness and exclusion and inclusion of communities from the OBC category have been shaped by political considerations, at times determinable by the economic dominance of certain communities.

1. Marc Galanter prefers the usage of the term "Compensatory Discrimination" to describe the various policies that fall under the purview of special treatment programmes, because the term implies that some sections of society are left out and historical deprivations and present handicaps of the weaker sections are sought to be 'offset' by means of inclusions and recompensations.
M. Galanter, Competing Equalities, Law and the Backward Classes of India, (Delhi, Oxford, 1984), p.2
2. Andre Beteille, "The Problem", Seminar, No. 268, December 1981, p.11.
3. D.L. Sheth, "Reservations Policy Revisited", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.22, no.46, November 14, 1987, p.1957.
4. As the term Backward Classes has had a variety of referents, Marc Galanter derives ten different denotations on the basis of the variety of meanings it acquired since the pre-independence days, Galanter, 1984, op.cit., p.185. Also see Galanter, "who are the other Backward Classes - An introduction to a constitutional puzzle", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 13, nos. 43 & 44, October 1978, pp. 1812-28.
5. Sheth , op.cit., n.4, p.1958.

6. Mahesh Dav, "Backward Classes and Reservation" in Haroobhi Mehta and Hasmukh Patel, ed., Dynamics of Reservation Policy, (New Delhi, Patriot, 1985), p.97, (Table-2).
7. The reservations for the OBC's in the four South Indian States are 50 percent in Karnataka and Tamil Nadu, 40 percent in Kerala and 25 percent in Andhra Pradesh, Mahesh Dave, op.cit., p.97(Table-2).
8. The Hindu(Madras), September 16, 1986.
9. D.L. Sheth, "The Great Reservation Debate" in Haroobhi Mehta and Hasmukh Patel, ed., op.cit., p.136.
10. Sheth, n.4, op.cit., p.1958.
11. Nirmal Mukherjee, "Perspectives of a Policy: Seminar No. 268, December, 1981, p.15.
12. Ibid., p.15.
13. Ibid., p.15.
14. Ibid., p.16.
15. Ibid., p.16.
16. R.K. Hebsur, "Reactions to the Reservations for other Backward Classes", in Report of the Backward Classes Commission, Second Part, (Delhi, Government of India), 1980, p.142.

17. Ibid., p.143.
18. Ibid., p.147.
19. N.Ram, "Dravidian Movement in its Pre-Independence Phases: Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 14, nos. 7 & 8, 1980, p.377.
20. R.K. Hebsur, "Tamil Nadu: From the Non Brahmin Movement to Tamil Revivalism" in Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, op.cit., p.147.
21. N.Ram., op.cit., p.383.
22. R.K. Hebsur, "Karnataka : A Two Stages Backward Classes Movement", in Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, op.cit., p.151.
23. Hebsur, n.16, op.cit., p.141.
M. S.A. Rao classifies Backward Classes Movements on the basis of the goals they seek, support basis and extent and nature of relative deprivation. In Madras, Karnataka and Maharashtra, movements had their aim of reducing the domination of Brahmin in politics and professions and in the North, the cleavage emerged between the generally forward and twice-born castes of Brahmin, Bhuminar - Kayastas, Rajputs on the one hand and the intermediate castes of Ahirs, Kurmis and Yadavas on the other, For details, see: M.S.A. Rao, "Social Movements in India", (Delhi, Manohar, 1976), vol.1.

24. B.T. Ranadive, "Caste, Class and Property Relations", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 14, nos 7 & 8, Annual no. February 1980, p.341.
25. N. Ram., op.cit., p.387.
26. Hebsur, n.16, op.cit., p.141.
27. Hebsur, n.22, op.cit., p.151.
28. Ranadive, op.cit., p.341.
29. E.F. Irschik, "Politics and Social Conflicts in South India", (Bombay, 1961), p.183.
30. N.Ram, op.cit.,
31. Hebsur, n.20,p.148.
32. Ibid., p.148.
33. Ibid., p.149.
34. Ibid., p.147.
35. Cited from Hebsur, Ibid.,p.149.
36. Quoted from Hebsur, Ibid., p.149.
37. Unlike Bihar and other Northern States where the anti-reservation agitations took place as a result of the introduction of reservations for OBC's, agitations centering on the reservation issue in Karnataka are confined to questions related to the inclusion of exclusion of certain communities such as Vokkaligas and Lingayats from the OBC category.

38. Nirmal Mukherjee, op.cit., p.16.
39. The Nagaa Gowda Commission took the State average of the student population (6.9 per thousand) in the previous 3 years of High School Classes as the index for determining Backwardness. In spite of the "findings", and recommendations of the Commission, the Bhunts, apart from a section of the Vokkaligas, and the Lingayats were continued in the OBC category. This led to the famous "Balaji Case" in which the Supreme Court opined that social and educational Backwardness were ultimately due to poverty. Thereby, the Karnataka Government evolved a system of reservation which continued to benefit the Vokkaligas and Lingayats. See B. Sivaramayya "Equality and Inequality: The Legal Framework" in Andre Beteille, ed., Equality and Inequality: Theory and Practice, (Delhi, Oxford, 1983), p.302.

Also see, Hebsur, n.24, op.cit., p.152.

The Venkataswami Commission (appointed by the Janata Government in 1983) found the "Vokkaligas to be more advanced than the Brahmins" and thereby delisted them from the Backward category. The publication of the report prior to the Zilla Parishad elections in 1986 led to an agitation led by Vokkaligas and joined by the other delisted communities. Consequently, the State government had to enhance the quota of reservations to 92 percent and the Lingayats too were taken back into the OBC category as an 'ad hoc' arrangement. "Reservation Ruckus" Frontline (Madras), October 16-31, 1986.

40. Nirmal Mukherjee, op.cit.p.16.
41. In the Constituent Assembly meetings, the delegates from the North expressed puzzlement at the provisions for Backward classes, but, representatives from Madras, Mysore and Bombay assured their colleagues that Backward classes was a distinct term with a technical meaning. See M. Galanter, op.cit., p.159-60.
42. Andre Beteille, The Backward Classes and the New Social Order" (Delhi, Oxford, 1981),p.8.
43. D.D. Basu, Constitutional Law of India (New Delhi, Princeton-Hall of India, 1983), p.26.
44. Ibid., p.28.
45. Ibid., p.112.
46. Ibid.,p.344.
47. As article 15 did not contain any exemption similar to that in Article 16(4), the Madras communal G.O. was struck down by the Supreme Court, following the 'Champakam Dorairajan Vs State of Madras' case.
48. The Vokkaligas and Lingyats of Karnataka have been staunch opponents of introduction of any economic criteria such as income limitation to determine Backwardness.
49. Sheth, n.4, op.cit., p.1959.
50. Ibid., p.1959.

51. Ibid., p.1958.
52. Andre Bateille, n.2, op.cit., p.12.
53. Ibid., p.13.
54. The second National Level Backward Classes Commission headed by B.P. Mandal was appointed by the Janata Government in December, 1978. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, p.57.
55. Ibid., p.57.
56. For example, the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes commission points out that about 11.5 percent of the Backward communities corner a major portion of the reservation benefits in the State. See Hebsur , n.22, op.cit.,p.97.
57. Galanter, op.cit., p.97.
58. D.L. Sheth, n.4, op.cit., p.1960.
59. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1982, Government of Andhra Pradesh, p.23.
60. Ibid., p.23.
61. Hebsur "Bihar : Fragmented and Telescoped Backward Classes movement" in Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, Government of India,p.155.

62. Ibid., p.156.
63. Harry W. Blair, "Rising Kulaks and Backward Classes in Bihar: Social Change in the late 1970s." Economic and Political Weekly, vol.15, no.2, June 12, 1980, p.66.
64. Ibid., p.66.
65. Ibid., p.
66. Ibid., p.
67. Ibid., p.
68. Ibid., p.
69. Ghanshyam Shah "Middle Class Politics Case of anti-reservation agitations in Gujarat", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.12, nos. 19,20 & 21, Annual No. May 1987.
70. Ibid., p.AN-157.
71. Ibid., p. AN-159.
72. Ibid., p. AN-172.
73. Ibid., p.AN-160.
74. Ibid., p.AN-160.
75. Quoted from Shah, Ibid., p.AN-160.
76. For instances against 10 percent reservation for the OBC - students in engineering and medical colleges utilization has not exceeded even 5 percent since 1980. For details, see Mahesh Dev op.cit., p.100, Table 8.

77. Cited in the Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, op.cit., p.34.
78. Shah, op.cit., p.AN-172.
79. Quoted in the Hindu, September 16, 1986.
80. Andre Beteille, n.42, p.7, The Supreme Court, in M.R. Balaji vs State of Mysore" placed an upper limit of 50 percent on all kinds of reservations and it opined that social and educational backwardness was ultimately due to poverty.
81. Andre Beteille, Ibid., p.7.
82. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, op.cit., p.50.
83. Ibid., p.50
84. The eleven indicators of Backwardness formulated by the Mandal Commission were broadly categorised into 'Social' 'educational' and 'economic factors' that contributed to the Backwardness of a caste. While each of the indicators under social factors was assigned 3 points, an indicator under educational factors was assigned two points and those falling under economic factors carried 1 point each, thus adding up to a total of 22, Ibid., p.52.

85. I.P. Desai, "Should Caste" be the Basis for determining the backwardness", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.14,no.23, July 14,1984, p.1109.
86. Ibid., p.1114.
87. For instance, both the DMK and AIDMK governments in Tamil Nadu have not taken any initiative to minimise the cornering of a major portion of the reservation benefits by a section of the Backward communities. An anomaly in the reservation system which was pointed out by the Tamil Nadu Backward Classes Commission, See Behsur, n.12,p.147.

CHAPTER- II

DEVELOPMENT OF RESERVATION POLICY IN ANDHRA PRADESH

Andhra Pradesh has a long history of reservation policy since the pre-independence days. In a pattern comparable to the experiences of other States of the Peninsular bloc, Andhra Pradesh has evolved a comprehensive system of quotas in virtually every sphere of public life. Apart from job and educational reservations, the wide array of programmes under the system of preferential treatment policies for the OBC include schemes of financial assistance and scholarships, quotas in housing and rural development programmes and maintenance of hostels and schools. Though reservations existed in some form or the other in the pre-independence days and after the re-organization of the states in 1956, it has only been since the late 1960s that the policy attained a comprehensive nature.

Backward Classes Movement and Evolution of the Reservation Policy

Prior to the formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh as a result of a union of three reluctant partners that is, Telangana, Rayalaseema and the Circars, the Telugu speaking coastal districts of the composite Madras state witnessed considerable non-Brahmin activity. In order to counter the lead the

Brahmins had taken in professions and politics in the pre-independence period, the Reddys, Kammas and Velamas, as communities with a majority of their members possessing substantial landholdings, provided the leadership for the Justice party. Though the Telugus were always at the forefront of the movement against Brahmins. Justice party leaders such as the Rajas of Panagal, Bobbili, Pithapuram, Chellapali and Venkatagiri were not only Telugus belonging to the economically dominant castes, but primarily represented the interests of the Zamindari landlord classes.¹

term

The 'Brahmathavodhyanam', referring to a welter of movements of those other than Brahmins gained currency in the Telugu areas during the first few decades of the twentieth century.² As the Justice party's Movement in these areas was spearheaded by a class of substantial land holders hailing from communities which lacked western education and 'ritual status'; caste associations such as the Reddy Mahajana Sangham and Kamma Mahajan Sangham were promoted for purposes of educational advancement and integration of sub-sections within caste groups. These associations which

functioned independently despite the overlap in leadership with the Justice party, published official journals such as "Reddi Rani" and served as an effective means for articulating the interests of the land holders, who demanded a substantial share of administrative jobs, 'proportionate' to their contribution to the states revenue.³ The well-to-do sections that led the movement were primarily interested in the non-Brahminization of the services and did not plead for an egalitarian social order. Consequently, the first communal Government Order which allocated to them the "lions share of government jobs, ignoring the claims of the untouchables,"⁴ was heartily welcomed, and by 1940 they had begun to monopolise government jobs just as the Brahmins had done before them.

The Movement of the economically dominant sections, hailing from a few communities, fizzled out as they began to gain western education, political power and government jobs. The Belief system of the non-Brahmin movement differentiated the Brahmins and non-Brahmins but was silent about the differences within the later. The Backward Castes and untouchables

resented their domination by non-Brahmins just as much as by Brahmins. As they got very little of the privileges conferred by the communal G.O., the numerical majority of the non-Brahmin Backward Castes organized themselves and formed a League of the Other Backward Castes by 1934.

The initial efforts of the Backward Castes to find a place in the "new Social Order", were confined to measures of Sanskritization.⁵ Several occupational groups such as the Toddy Tappers, weavers (Sale, the Sanskritized version being Padma Sali) and Munnuru Kapu's formed their respective associations in the Andhra and the Telangana regions which later became a part of the state of Andhra Pradesh. From the 1930's, the associations started by the Backward Communities began to function in a pattern similar to the associations of the upper non-Brahmins of the earlier period.

The Padma Salis, the weavers of the state, undertook efforts to integrate sub-castes among them,

formed youth organizations and by 1943, the Nizam Rashtra Handloom weavers association was formed by bringing the weavers of all castes under its fold.⁶ The commercial interests of the weavers were sought to be protected by making demands to the government for distribution of yarn, through the association. Similarly, the Munnuru Kapus, another leading Backward Caste of the erstwhile Hyderabad State organized conferences which addressed to Social evils, raised funds, and constructed hostels.⁷ In the Andhra region, the first Andhra Rashtra Backward classes conference was held in 1948 and a charter of demands specifying the representation of the Backward classes in the state services and political bodies was presented to the Madras government.⁸ The Backward caste movements of the pre-independence days threw up several mass leaders who made efforts to bring about awareness among all segments of the weaker sections and founded Backward Classes associations, encompassing several backward castes.

By the time of the formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh in 1956, there existed three Backward classes associations. In the regions of the erstwhile

Hyderabad state, the Telangana Backward Classes Association was led by Konda Lakshman, who, as the leader of the weaver castes (Padma Salis) was instrumental in getting his community included in the list of Backward classes for special provisions in the Nizam's dominions.⁹ The Hyderabad state Backward Classes Association was headed by Bojjam Narasimlu, who had initiated the Munneru Kapu movement and served as a member of the All India Backward Classes Commission headed by Kaka Saheb Kalelkar.¹⁰ The leadership for the Andhra Rashtra Backward Classes Association in the coastal districts of the Andhra State was provided by Gouthu Lachanna, who had organized mass movements to highlight the problems of the Toddy Tappers. On account of a no-confidence motion moved by him on the problem of the Toddy Tappers, the Prakasam Ministry had to resign in 1954.¹¹ Following the formation of the state, the three backward classes associations of the Andhra and Telangana regions merged to form a single state-wide organization namely, the Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Association.

Unlike the sections of Kammas and Reddy's whose superior economic strength enabled them to displace the Brahmins from their privileged position and establish their domination in the politics of the region in the pre-independence period, the lower castes, a majority of whom belonged to the lower classes were left to form their respective caste associations and forums such as the Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Association for articulating their claims for positions in the services and other preferential measures.

By the time of the formation of the state, Andhra Pradesh inherited two lists of Backward Classes - one for the Andhra Region(86 communities) and the other for the Telangana region(60 communities).¹² The Composite Madras State, had identified several castes as Backward and even the erstwhile Hyderabad state had provided certain concessions to Backward communities in matters related to education. However, a series of reservation initiatives undertaken by the State Government since 1956, were annulled by the Courts and it has only been since the late sixties that the policy of reservation began acquiring a

comprehensive shape.

Though Andhra Pradesh has the distinction of being the first state to elevate a Harijan to the position of Chief Ministership in 1960, it was largely due to the political rivalry among the Congress leaders.¹³ Among the major reservation initiatives that the Ruling Congress Party undertook in the fifties and the sixties, the setting up of a Congress Sub-committee on Backward classes and initiatives to provide preferential treatment on the basis of economic backwardness by the Sanjeeva Reddy Government, are important with regard to the Backward Classes Movement in the state because these measures led to a considerable amount of resentment among Backward Class Leaders and were even regarded as attempts to divide the Backward Classes movement on party lines.¹⁴

A Cabinet Sub-Committee on Backward Classes was constituted in 1966 and a list of Backward classes drawn on the basis of a criteria which included i) Poverty; ii) Low standard of living; iii) low standard of education; iv) inferiority of occupation; v) place of habitation; and vi) Caste¹⁵.

However, efforts to implement a 20% reservation with regard to matters of admissions in Municipal Schools led to the filing of 104 writ petitions, challenging the government order. The High Court in 'state of Andhra Pradesh vs. P. Sagar' struck down the list of Backward classes for the reasons that it was not based on any statistical data. In this case, where the major issue involved was the legality of a list of Backward classes based solely on caste, the High Court defined social classes as a "homogenous section of the people grouped together because of certain common traits such as status, rent, occupation and residence" and that caste cannot be ignored for demarcating them.¹⁶ Following the annulment of the government order on reservations, a Commission was appointed in 1968 to enumerate and suggest measures for the upliftment of socially and educationally Backward classes. The Commission which used caste as the basic criteria for determining backwardness made a variety of recommendations which included a 30 percent reservation in educational institutions and the services. Based on the recommendations of the Commission, the state government in 1970, announced a reservation of 25 percent in educational institutions and the services.

The government order on reservation which was assailed by sections of the advanced classes and quashed by the High Court was finally upheld by the Supreme Court in 1972.¹⁷ The 'statistical reasoning' provided by the Commission in identifying the beneficiaries on the basis of Caste and the compartmentalisation of the beneficiaries into four categories were found to be reasonable enough by the Supreme Court.¹⁸ It is by virtue of this judgement that the State government introduced a reservation of 25 percent in educational institutions and the services.

Though the 'tradition' of reservations in the Andhra regions date back to the pre-independence period, it has already been shown that the communal G.O.'s of the earlier period primarily benefited the advanced sections of Kamma, Reddy and Velama communities which began to dominate the politics of the region from the forties. In the post-independence period, particularly after the formation of the state, the Ruling Congress Party's reservation initiatives were 'weak' and came about sporadically as in the 1966 move to introduce reservations in Municipal Schools, and moreover the Courts annulled them. The 1972 reservation initiative came at a time when the Backward Communities began to constitute a significant part of the Congress Party's support structure'.

An examination of the nature of the Backward Classes movement in the state clearly shows that it is the creation of different caste and community organizations which developed and maintained their individual identities. Apart from the organizations of a few major Backward Castes which emerged in the pre-independence period and continue to maintain their respective roles, several Backward Communities such

as the fishermen started their caste organizations much later and many others have been economically too weak to form and run such organizations. Leaders of the Backward classes organizations have generally been the leaders of their respective communities. In spite of the efforts of the Backward classes organizations to secure special provisions, it has been largely due to the change in the Congress Party's strategy of functioning since the late 1960's, that comprehensive schemes addressed to benefit the Backward classes began to emerge.

Since 1969, the Congress Party began to follow a strategy of accommodating the weaker sections. Statistical data which will be subsequently examined, clearly indicate the Party's efforts to accommodate the Backward classes. A variety of initiatives and schemes that the ruling Congress party undertook since the late sixties clearly indicate a change in the party's strategy. Backward classes organizations began to receive the party's patronage in the seventies and unlike the earlier reservation initiatives, the introduction of a 25 percent reservation in 1972, which is the lowest in the four Southern States, marked the beginning of the emergence of a series of measures by which the policy of preferential treatment began to acquire a comprehensive shape.

Since the seventies, the policy of the ruling Congress party vis-a-vis the Backward classes began to take shape on the basis of the political importance of the later. As already mentioned, the major Backward classes organizations such as the Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Associations, are basically broad forums encompassing several castes and electoral compulsions occupy a significant place among the variety of factors that shaped the ruling party's policy towards them.

Backward Classes under Congress Rule

The nationalist movement was largely dominated by Brahmins in the Andhra regions but, with the advent of independence their political power diminished. The struggle for power between Potti Sriramulu and Prakasan Pantulu in the period before the formation of the state was the last phase of Brahmin domination in the politics of the region.¹⁹ Since the 1940's economically powerful sections of Kammas and Reddy's who had actively participated in the movement against the privileged position of the Brahmins began to

dominate the politics of the Andhra regions. As the Congress party membership in the 1950s was confined to "elite members of the elite non-Brahmin castes"²⁰ and no attempt was made to "encompass low caste groups", the sections of Kammas and Reddys, whose most important source of power was their control over land,²¹ became the politically dominant groups.

Whereas the superior economic strength of sections of these communities enabled them to make ample use of the communal quotas of the earlier period, which in turn enabled them to play a significant role in the politics of the region, the economically weaker position of a majority of the lower castes prevented them from becoming the beneficiaries of such schemes.

As the leadership of the Congress party has been provided by the agricultural classes hailing from Reddy, Kamma and Velama communities, since the fifties the party began to acquire the image of a protector of the landed gentry.²² The 1969 split in the Congress party led to the initiation of a series of programmes which are often considered to be 'radical' in their nature. Since the early seventies, the concept of Welfarism was emphasised, and the party began to identify itself with the Backward classes or weaker sections.²³ Consequently, a large number of

Backward members began to be inducted into the party and the Backward classes in general began to constitute a significant part of the party's support structure!

Though a lot of legal vicissitudes preceded the formulation of a 25 percent reservation for the OBC, the policy was introduced at a time when the Congress Party had begun to patronise the weaker sections for mustering their support. The patronage the Backward Communities began to receive in the seventies is evident from the growth in their numbers at the levels of the state legislative and the Ministry. For instance, the number of Backward Class Ministers, which had never crossed 1 percent of the entire Council till 1960, rose to 20 percent by 1972, the year in which the 25 percent reservations was introduced.²⁴ By 1978, when the Janata party ruled at the Centre, Backward members constituted nearly 25 percent of the Ministry in the Congress government headed by Chenna Reddy.²⁵ Out of a total of 219 members of the Congress legislature party in 1972, 116 belonged to the weaker sections, that is, the Scheduled castes, Tribes and the OBC's.²⁶ These sections along with Muslims, Christian and Women constituted 80 percent of the Legislative party.

Apart from these indicators, several studies on the 'support structure' of the Congress party in the 'post-split' period reveal a growth in the Backward classes support to the Congress. For instance, a study of the Medak parliamentary constituency in the late 1970s argues that the Congress party derived its support from a majority of the Backward classes (72.4 percent), and apart from the low socio-economic conditions of the constituency, the low socio economic profile of the voters who supported the Congress, laid a significant role in shaping the party's move to propose Indira Gandhi's candidature for Medak constituency in the 1980 Lok Sabha Elections.²⁷

Though the initiation of a policy of giving greater representation to Backward classes and the weaker sections in the Legislature and the Council of Ministers led to considerable resentment among the dominant caste groups within the party, it was a part of the Congress strategy to transform itself into a party of the 'masses'.²⁸ Among the various 'radical programmes' that the ruling party formulated since the early seventies, the introduction of 25 percent

reservations for the OBC, and 1971 Land ceiling Act which weakened the dominance of the landed sections of Kammas and Rajus, led to the emergence of the Jai Andhra or separate Andhra movement of 1972²⁹ to counter the shift in the balance of forces in favour of the weaker sections.

The formulation of a policy of 25 percent reservation for the OBC in 1972, which was done on the basis of the recommendations of the Backward classes commission appointed in 1968, marked the beginning of the emergence of a series of preferential measures for the Backward classes. Before carrying out an analysis of these issues, a discussion of the 'methodology' and recommendations of the Backward classes Commission would be useful because as in the case of any other Backward classes Commission, it raises and involves questions which are central to the reservation policy in general. The Backward classes commission(1968), under the Chairmanship of Manohar Prasad, was entrusted with the task of formulating the criteria for determining socially and educationally Backward classes

and to prepare a list of such classes "along with their approximate numbers and territorial distribution."³⁰

The conditions under which such classes laboured were to be investigated and recommendations made with regard to the reservation of seats in educational institutions and appointments of posts.

On the basis of an analysis of the reservation systems of the other Southern States and a survey of the general principles indicated by the High Courts and Supreme Court for assessment of social and educational backwardness, the Manohar Prasad Commission formulated a "test of Backwardness" which accepted 'caste' as basic unit for demarcating backward classes. The criteria of Backwardness evolved by the Commission emphasised the coincidence of poverty, educational backwardness and inferior or unclean nature of occupation, in a caste whose position is low in the "Hindu Hierarchy"³¹ as the criteria of backwardness.

As there has been no caste wise census from 1931 onwards, the absence of statistical information with regard to the population of various communities

hindered the application of the commissions' 'caste criteria', for identifying the potential beneficiaries of the reservation policy. Apart from this problem which was sought to be 'overcome' by the commission by taking the 1921/1931 census figures on distribution of castes as the base for estimating the population figures of each of the castes for 1968, insufficient data regarding the educational and employment levels of various communities hindered the commissions efforts to identify the backward castes that were to be included in the category of socially and educationally Backward classes. 32

In assessing educational backwardness, the percentage of student population per 1000 of particular caste, was taken into consideration by the Commission. Though only those communities whose student population was well below the state average were considered backward, only 50 percent of the educational institutes could provide the commission with community wise information regarding student population. While it is true figures from 50 percent of the educational

institutions may be reasonable enough to assess the extent of backwardness of different castes, it should also be noted that the projected figures of the population of various castes was based on census figures which were nearly 40 to 50 years old. Due to the anomalies⁰ that such a statistical exercise could lead to, the personal knowledge and experience of the members of the commission, was often put to use to identify the potential beneficiaries.³³ The Commission faced a similar problem in determining the adequacy of the employment status of different communities.³⁴

The absence of up-to-date statistical information with regard to population of the various communities in the state and the percentage of literacy and employment status among them affected the 'statistical reasoning' of the Commission which, like most other Backward classes Commissions attempted to construct social classes on the basis of caste. For this reason, the Commission suggested that the Census records should make a caste-wise enumeration of the population. Such an exercise was also recommended by several individuals and representatives of caste

associations who demanded that the Commission should include their respective communities in the Backward category.³⁵

The Commission stated that "caste is a relevant circumstance in ascertaining backwardness"³⁶ and thus, the assessment of social status should be carried out on the basis of the occupations followed by individuals belonging to different communities. Consequently, the list of socially and educationally Backward castes that the commission prepared contained a note on the occupation that each of the caste groups pursue.

Though caste may be a major factor in determining the occupation of an individual, the 'methodology' adopted by the Commission ignores the changes in the "social structure," at least since the time the caste-wise figures were enumerated in the census of 1931. Moreover, inspite of the "unbroken relationship between caste and occupation", the relationship between the performer of an occupational activity and the person for whom he performs the activity may not be the same as it used to be in the past³⁷ and consequently, as in the case of several other Backward classes commissions of the 1970s , the Andhra Commission ignores this factor in its endeavour to identify Backward groups.

It is obvious that the 'mechanical uniformity' in the demands for special provisions by various communities, high or low in the 'Hindu hierarchy', came from the advanced sections among them. Caste based reservations, apart from benefiting the advanced sections among those classified as backward, tend to perpetuate caste identity and consequently the low caste groups, the majority of whom are poor and from the lower classes, do not develop a common class affinity.

Apart from recommendations a 30 percent reservation in educational institutions and the services, the Andhra Backward Classes Commission which, compartmentalized the backward groups into four categories, recommended a variety of programmes for the educational, economic and social advancement of the Backward communities that were identified by it. As noted earlier, the government initiative on reservations, based on the recommendations of the Commission, was undertaken at a time when the Backward communities had begun to form a significant part of the Congress party's support base.

The notable rise in the number of the Backward class members in the legislature since the early 1970s clearly indicates the importance given by the ruling party to the Backward communities. As a result a series of conferences organized by Backward classes associations in the 1970s received enormous patronage

from the ruling party in the state. For instance, the annulment of the government's list of Backward classes by the High Court led to the formation of a Joint Action Committee of representatives of various Backward communities which included several Congress Ministers and MLAs.³⁸ As the issue was taken to the Supreme Court, the ruling party, apart from deputing a representative (P. Shiv Shankar) to assist the Supreme Court advocate met the expenses of a well known council deputed by the 'Joint Action Committee'.³⁹

Prior to the Supreme Court's judgement, the Joint Action Committee of Backward communities sponsored an "All-India Backward Classes Conference cum Rally" which was attended by Indira Gandhi, the Prime Minister and leader of the Congress party. The Prime Minister also inaugurated the South Zone conference of Backward classes which was initiated by leaders of the Backward communities of the state, a year after the implementation of 25 percent reservations in 1972.⁴⁰ In the 1970, the Congress party's efforts to strengthen the 'major constituent' of its support base was reflected in the series of Backward classes Conferences it sponsored and supported, and the

programmes evolved by it.⁴¹ The establishment of a separate Directorate of Backward Classes Welfare, the first of its kind in the country and Finance Corporation for the benefit of the Backward communities, are the major initiative introduced by the party in the 1970s.⁴²

In the 1978 elections, the Congress party in the state continued with the strategy that it adopted in 1972 elections. A large number of candidates from the weaker sections were selected and by insisting on the 'caste suffixes', an indication of caste, alongwith the names of the candidates, the party tried to demonstrate the extent of representation that it gave to the various backward castes and the minorities.⁴³ In response to the Janata party's efforts to mobilise the support of the Backward Classes of the state in 1979, the ruling Congress Party sponsored a series of district level and state level Backward classes conferences, which apart from recommending an increase to 50 percent in the quantum of reservations, proposed a series of programmes for the benefit of the backward communities of the state.⁴⁴ However, apart from extending the reservation facilities for a period of ten years commencing from 1980, and the setting up of a Cabinet Sub-Committee to take up a follow up

action on the recommendations of the Conference, the Congress Party did not make any major changes in the reservation policy. A second Backward Census Commission was appointed by the Congress government in 1981 and it submitted its report in 1982, a year before the emergence of the Telugu Desam.

Telugu Desam and the Backward Classes

With the emergence of the Telugu Desam party in 1983, Andhra Pradesh ceased to be a citadel of the Congress party. Among the significant factors that contributed to the success of the party in 1983, the selection process of the candidates for the constituencies and the programmes that it formulated revealed that it 'could strike a better balance among different interest groups than any other well-established parties' such as Congress(I).

Apart from proposing a wide range of measures, the Telugu Desam, in its 1983 election manifesto addressed itself to the Backward communities of the state, and proposed comprehensive schemes for their benefit.⁴⁵ Though branded as a Kamma party by its detractors, the selection process of the party's candidates

for the 1983 elections reveals that unlike the Congress(I), it depended more on the Backward classes or a combination of Backward classes and the dominant caste groups in the state. For instance, of the 288 Telugu Desam Contestants in the 1983 Assembly Elections more than one third belonged to the weaker sections.⁴⁶ A total of 128 candidates belonged to the weaker sections with 73 of them hailing from the listed backward communities.⁴⁷ The position was different with the Congress(I), which fielded only 81 candidates from the weaker sections. Thus, both in terms of figures and percentages, Telugu Desam accommodated a greater number of candidates from the weaker sections, particularly the Backward communities. This factor, along with other features related to the Telugu Desam's initiatives with regard to the Backward communities, which are examined in the next chapter, provide much evidence to the effect that the Backward groups which had been a major constituent of the Congress party's support base shifted their support to the Telugu Desam.

The enhancement in the quota of reservations, undertaken by the Telugu Desam government in 1986, as a part of its effort to satisfy the interests of

the Backward communities, resulted in an anti-reservation agitation, the first of its kind in the state. This issue is dealt with in the next chapter.

CONCLUSION

A survey of the development of the reservation policy in Andhra Pradesh reveals that the convergence of the interests of the well-to-do sections of the Backward castes enabled them to forge an alliance to displace the Brahmins from their privileged position. The lower caste groups, a majority of whom belong to the lower classes could neither make use of the communal quotas of the pre-independence period, nor improve their status by emulating the upper castes. As the numerical strength of the Backward castes matters in electoral politics, political parties such as the Congress-I and Telugu Desam have sought to garner the support of these sections by introducing reservation systems and other special programmes.

As the 'tradition' of reservations existed in the state since the pre-independence days, and the policy by itself cannot lead to 'radical changes' in the social structure, resentment against the introduction of a comprehensive systems of 25 percent reservation was not articulated in the form of an anti-reservation agitation. In 1972, the Land Ceiling

Act affected the upper classes more than the issue of reservation. Moreover, the quota of reservation in Andhra Pradesh is the lowest in the four Southern states and as in the case of many other states, it has only been in the 1980s that the "reservation issue" generated controversy. The Telugu Desam government's efforts to consolidate the support of the Backward Communities by enhancing the quota of reservations was successfully countered by the upper classes in 1986.

By emphasising on the caste suffixes of their respective candidates both the Congress party and Telugu Desam have tried to demonstrate the substantially increased representation, given by them to the "lower castes" and not the lower classes. As in the case of several other Judicial pronouncements on the criteria for determining backwardness, the Andhra experience reveals the "conflicting" opinions on the issue. In 1966, the High Court opined that a caste was also a class provided sufficient data is produced by the Andhra Backward Classes Commission was regarded as sufficient enough to demarcate Backward classes on the basis of caste.

1. Most of the leaders of the Justice party were also the leaders of the All India Land Holders Association and the Madras Zamindar and Land Holders Association. See N. Ram, "Dravidian Movement in its Pre-Independence Phases", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.14, no. 7 & 8, 1980, pp. 337-401.
2. Uma Rama Swamy, "The Belief System of the Non-Brahmin Movement in India: The Andhra Case", Asian Survey, vol. 18, no.3, March 1978, p.291. On the other hand the Brahmin interests of the composite Madras state had waged a provocative and reactionary movement in support of "VARNASHRAMA DHARMA" , See N.Ram, op.cit., p.381.
3. Uma Ramaswamy, op.cit., p.296.
4. Ibid., p.296.
5. For instance, many communities such as Palli, Golla and Sale took new names like Nayi, Brahmins, Agnikula, Kshatriya and Yadavas etc.
6. K. Subas Chandra Reddy and N.Vaikuntam, "Backward Class Movement" in Reddy and Sharma, ed., Reservation Policy in India, (New Delhi, Light & Life, 1982), p.294.
7. See Bojjam Narsimlu , Munnur Kapur Kula Abhyudayam : Karyalkala Palu(1920-67), (Hyderabad,Venkatrama Paper Products, 1968).

8. Subhas Chandra Reddy, op.cit., p.290.
9. Ibid., pp.295-96.
10. Ibid., p.294.
11. Ajoypratha, "Congress Palana" Prásarita (Telugu Quarterly), vol. 53, July-September 1983, p.37.
12. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, (Hyderabad, Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1970), p.6.
13. The elevation of Damodaram Sanjeeviah to the Chief Ministership of the State was largely due to the political rivalry between Sanjeeva Reddy and Allura Satyanarayan Raju. See, G.Ram Reddy, "Andhra Pradesh - The Citadel of the Congress" in Iqbal Narain, ed., State Politics in India (Delhi: Meenakshi Prakasan,1976).
14. Subhas Chandra Reddy, op.cit., p.297.
15. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1970, op.cit., p.8.
16. Cited in the Report of the Backward Classes Commission, Government of India, 1980(Part Second), p.7.
17. Though the list of Backward classes was based on caste the Supreme Court felt that the materials before the Backward Classes Commission made it adequately clear that the entire list of castes were socially and educationally backward. Cited in the Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1980, p.18.

18. For a summary of the judgement, see *ibid.*, p.18.
19. A.Venkata Rama Rao, "Rajakiya Purvarangam", Prasarita(Telugu Quarterly), vol. 53, July-Sept.1983,p.8.
20. Carolya M. Elliot, "Caste and Faction Among the Dominant Castes :The Reddis and Kammas of Andhra" in Rajni Kothari, ed., Caste in Indian Politics (Delhi: Orient Longman,), p.168.
21. *Ibid.*, p.133.
22. B.A.V. Sharma and K. Madhusudhan Reddy, "Electoral Politics and Voting Behaviour", in G.Ram Reddy and B.A.V. Sharma, ed., State Government and Politics, (New Delhi: Sterling, 1971), p.469.
23. *Ibid.*, p.472.
24. M. Satya Narayana and G. Srinivas Reddy, "Political Representation: National State and Local" in B.A.V. Sharma and K. Madhu Sudhan Reddy, ed., Reservation Policy in India, (New Delhi, Light & Life, 1982), Table II, pp.
25. *Ibid.*, Table II, pp.340,399.
26. K.R. Acharya, The Critical Election(Hyderabad, Ramesh Publications, 1979), p.5.
27. Cited in F.D. Vakil, "Congress Party in Andhra Pradesh - A review in George Mathew", ed., Shift in Indian Politics,(New Delhi, Concept Publishing Company, 1984), p.66.

28. See B.A.V. Sharma and K. Madhusudhan Reddy, op.cit.
29. The Land Ceiling Act of 1971 which seriously affected the Landed Section of Kammas and Rajus, prompted them to start a separate Andhra Agitation. N. Inniah, "Politics of Power : The Role of Caste and Factions in Andhra Pradesh, 1880-1980, (Hyderabad : Scientific Services, 1981),p.121.
30. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1970, op.cit., p.2.
31. For the disoussion on the criteria for determining backwardness, see ibid., pp. 33-59.
32. Only 50 percent of the 2224 High Schools and Higher Secondary Schools could provide community wise figures of Student population, ibid., p.13, Also see, pp. 60-67.
33. Inspite of showing a higher educational level than the state average(4.85 per thousand), the Commission felt that some communities were Backward, ibid., p.59.
34. Ibid., p.13.
35. Ibid.,p.15.
36. Ibid., p.15.

37. See, I.P. Desai, "Should Caste be the basis for determining the backwardness", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. XIV, no. 28, July 14, 1984, pp. 1106-16.
38. The prominent Congress Leaders in the Joint Action Committee included T. Anjaiah, Bala Goud and Ratna Sabha Patti, See Subhas Chandra Reddy and Vaikuntam, op.cit., p.302.
39. Ibid., p.302.
40. Ibid., p.302.
41. The Congress Government in the State, under the leadership of Brahmaiah Reddy organized a "Backward Classes Congress" which was treated as a Wing of the Congress party. During P.V. Narasimha Rao's Chief Ministership a Backward Classes Conference was organized in Vijayada, see *ibid.*, p.303.
42. The Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Finance Corporation was established in 1974, for the "Economic Upliftment of the Members of the Backward Classes in the State". The Vangal Rao administration created a separate Directorate of Backward Classes Welfare in 1975, Welfare of Backward Classes (Department of Backward Classes Welfare; Government of Andhra Pradesh), 1976, pp. 5,17.
43. K.R. Acharya, op.cit., p.43.

44. The fourth conference of Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Association (held in February 1979) was attended by prominent Janata Leaders such as Jagjivan Ram, Karpuri Thakur and Ram Naresh Yadav apart from the Backward Classes Commission Chairman, B.P. Mandal.

In response to conference of the Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Association, the Chenna Reddy Government held a state level Backward Classes Conference on 28 & 29 April, 1979.

See Subhas Chandra Reddy and Vaikuntam, *op.cit.*, p.308.

Also, see Souvenir of the "Fourth Conference of Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes Association", held at Hyderabad on 10 & 11 February, 1979, and Souvenir of the "Andhra Pradesh Backward Classes State Conference, 1979.

45. For details, see, "Manifesto of the Telugu Desam", 1983.
46. See, M. Shatrugana, "Emergence of Regional Parties in India: Case of Telugu Desam" in George Mathew (ed.), Shift in Indian Politics, *op.cit.*, Table 5.2 , p.101.
47. *Ibid.*, p.100.

CHAPTER - III

TELUGU DESAM AND THE RESERVATION ISSUE

In the previous chapter, an attempt was made to indicate that the Backward classes constitute a significant part of the electoral support of the Telugu Desam party. Apart from the fact that a large number of the party's legislators belong to the weaker sections, particularly the Backward communities, the policy of 'social welfarism' which the Telugu Desam government began to pursue ever ^{SINCE} it came into power clearly indicates that the party was keen to win over the support of Backward communities through policy measures such as reservations. For instance, the plan priorities for the 'weaker sections' showed an enormous increase of 89.9 percent in 1983-84, the year in which the Telugu Desam party formed the government.¹ During the same year, a socio-economic survey of the families belonging to the listed Backward castes was undertaken for formulating specific schemes for their benefit. In addition a decision was taken to construct 100 more Backward classes students hostels.² Though social welfarism may not necessarily lead to 'structural changes' in society, it does have an impact on the electoral base of the party. This can be seen from the electoral support of the Telugu Desam since 1983: the Backward classes are

the chief supporters of the party.³ This chapter attempts to analyse the compulsions behind the Telugu Desam party's efforts to enhance the quota of reservations, and the consequences that it led to.

Based on the recommendations of the Muralidhar Rao Commission on Backward classes which was appointed by the Congress government in 1982, the Telugu Desam government's efforts to enhance the quota of 'reservations' was preceded by the introduction of the 'Andhra Pradesh Mandal Praja Parishad, Zila Parishad Bill, 1986'.⁴ Significantly, the Backward Classes Commission, apart from recommending an enhancement in the quota of reservations, also suggested reservations in representative bodies, and consequently 20 percent of the officers of Mandal Presidents were reserved for Backward classes.⁵

The announcement of the enhancement in the reservation quota in July 4, 1986 was preceded by the formation of an 'organization for protection of the rights of Backward classes', at the behest of a prominent congress party leaders.⁶ As shown in the previous

chapter, the Backward communities of the state had formed a significant part of the support base of the Congress party in the 1970s. As the numerical importance of these communities is considerable in electoral politics, the Congress party made a calculated effort to garner their support by forming an 'United front' of all the Backward classes organizations of the state,⁷ In order to weaken the hold of Telugu Desam among these groups. The Backward classes organizations, which had felicitated the leader of the Telugu Desam on his party's assumption of power in 1983 were promised an increase in the quota of 'reservations' , and following the government's efforts to restructure the Panchayat Raj institutions, the issue was raised by the Congress party as well as the Backward caste organizations.⁸ These developments clearly indicate the political impulses that led to the Telugu Desam's effort to augment the quota of 'reservations'. The government which had earlier feared an anti-reservation backlash at any move to enhance the reservation quota took the initiative before the Mandal and Zila Parishad elections in 1986.⁹

As stated earlier, the Telugu Desam government's initiative was based on the recommendations of the Backward Classes Commission which was appointed by the Congress party, primarily to counter the Janata party's efforts to muster the support of the Backward classes of the state.¹⁰ The Commission's report raised issues which are central to the reservation policy and in fact, add a new dimension to the 'reservation issue' by making the estimates of the Backward classes population of the state the central point of litigation, a discussion of the report is followed by an analysis of the reservation - centred agitation that took place in the state.

The Second Backward Classes Commission

The Muralidhar Rao commission on reservations for Backward classes was appointed by the Congress Government in January 1982. The Commission submitted its report six months before the formation of the Telugu Desam Government in the state.

The Commission was entrusted with the task of reviewing the recommendations made by the first

Backward Classes Commission of the state, "for the purpose of determining the need to continue the existing special provisions in their favour".¹¹

A review of the list of Backward Classes was made "in the light of the social and educational progress achieved by these classes".¹² The terms of reference of the Commission indicate that the intention in constituting the Commission was either to comply with the letter of the recommendation of the earlier Backward Classes Commission, which had recommended that the classification and quantum of reservations to the Backward Classes should be reviewed after 10 years; or, to identify a few Backward Castes which had 'progressed' using reservations during the last decade, and delete them from the list of beneficiaries. However, the Muralidhar Rao Commission considered it its "moral duty to suggest ways and means of rendering justice to the Backward classes".¹³ Consequently, without any 'well-defined criteria' for determining backwardness, the Commission recommended an increase to 44 percent in the quantum of reservations for the OBC. Apart from making an assessment of the role played by Governmental Institutes in the economic progress of the Backward Communities, the Commission's assessment of educational backwardness and 'social status' of different communities was carried out on the basis of 'oral evidence' and by eliciting public

opinion, by issuing questionnaires. In contrast to the first Backward Classes Commission of the state, the Muralidhar Rao Commission did not carry out any empirical exercise to assess the extent or nature of Backwardness of the various communities classified as Backward. Consequently, none of the communities was deleted from the list, but nine more communities were added to it.¹⁴

Apart from suggesting an increase to 44 percent in reservations related to admissions in educational institutions the Commission which estimated that the Backward classes constitute 52 percent of the state's population, also recommended a 50 percent reservation of seats in the legislature, Zilla Parishad's, Panchayat Samithis and the Municipalities. Though the Telugu Desam Government's efforts to enhance job and educational reservations led to an anti-reservation agitation unlike the case of other litigations on the reservation policy, the main point of dispute in the High Court was the Commission's estimate of the population of Backward classes.

The Backward Classes Commission s which had used caste as the basic criteria for determining backwardness on the basis of the 1931 census, the methodology adopted by the Muralidhar Rao Commission was different. By taking together the estimates the population of Forward Hindu Castes and committees estimated by the Mandal Commission at (17.58%) (which was rounded to 18 percent) and the population figures of the scheduled castes scheduled tribes and minorities of the state which were 30% of the population, the Muralidhar Rao Commission deduced that the Backward classes constitute 52 percent of the state's population.¹⁵

The Government order on the enhancement of the quota of reservations was struck down on the ground that such an estimate of the Backward Classes population was erroneous. The anomaly in the estimation of the population arose basically because the Mandal Commissions figures of the forward caste population of the state were arrived at by deducting the population of the communities classified as Backward by it. The Mandal Commission's list of Backward communities of the state did not tally with the list of Backward communities that were provided with special provisions in the state. Though both the Mandal

Commission as well as the state level Backward Classes Commission used caste as the criteria for determining backwardness, the Mandal Commission included many 'socio economically dominant castes' such as Kammas, Reddy s, Telag@s and a large proportion of Brahmins among the Backward classes and this was considered to be 'curious' by the High Court.¹⁶ Thus, the problems inherent in using caste as the criteria of backwardness becomes evident in the Andhra experience on the issue.

Though the Government order on the enhancement in the reservation quota was struck down on the ground that the estimate of the population of the Backward classes was erroneous, it has already been pointed out that the Telugu Desam party used the Commission's Report as a means of consolidating the support of the Backward Communities of the state. In spite of having become a matter of legal dispute, it remains a fact that the numerical strength of the Backward Classes can play a decisive role in electoral politics. It was because of this factor that the Telugu Desam Government order on the enhancement in the quota of reservations had added 44 percent more persons to the

list of "backward Classes evolved by the Commission, and restricted the benefits to those falling within an income limit of Rs 12,000/- per annum.¹⁷ This had led to an anti-reservation agitation, the first of its kind in any South Indian state.¹⁸ A discussion of the reservation centred agitation would reveal the factors that led to the success of the anti-reservationists in thwarting the ruling party's efforts to enhance the reservation quota.

Reservation Agitation: Nature and Dimensions

It has been pointed out in the previous chapter that though reservations existed in some form or the other in the State since the pre-independence days, the introduction of a comprehensive 25 percent reservation by the Congress Government in 1972, did not lead to any anti-reservation agitation.

The Telugu Desam leader and Chief Minister's announcement of the enhancement of the reservation quota which was given wide publicity on the other hand almost immediately led to the formation of anti-

reservationist students organizations and parents organizations which spearheaded the movement. Consequently, violent repercussions of caste-based reservations were witnessed for the first time in the state.

Anti-reservationist groups began forming in different universities of the state almost immediately after the announcement of the enhancement in the quota of reservations. The Forward caste students of Andhra University formed the "open competition students organization", the Krishna Deva Raya university students formed the "Abhydaya Vidyarthi Samithi", the Nagarjuna university students formed the "Navasangrama Parishad" and several other anti-reservationist groups emerged in different colleges and towns, culminating in the formation of Andhra Pradesh Nava-Sangarshana Samithi (APNSS), an organization of the Forward caste students which spearheaded the agitation against reservations.¹⁹

In the initial states of the agitation against reservations which had a strong resemblance to the

Gujarat anti-reservation agitation, the student leaders made it clear that they were not against the concept of reservations as such but they were opposed to the increase in the Backward classes quota from 25 to 44 percent. But subsequently, as the 'movement' began to gain strength with the support of the parents organization and the other well-to-do sections of the upper caste, their arguments primarily revolved on 'merit' and the manner in which it was destroyed by reservations. Consequently, provocative speeches began to be heard and forms of protest such as organizing a rally in 'aid of merit' and waging a 'save merit' campaign by praying in temples, mosques and churches began to be witnessed.²⁰

The Backward classes on the other hand, whose numerical strength is more than the upper castes, formed a counter-organization in the form of AP Sama Sangrama Parishad, about two weeks after the enhancement in the quota of reservations. The pro-reservationist students organizations as well as the leaders of the Backward classes organizations of the state opposed the income limitations placed on the 'beneficiaries' of reservations and a section of

of the Backward classes, particularly those from the salaried sections, joined the anti-reservationist student groups.²¹

Inspite of the High Courts anulment of the Government order on the enhancement in the reservation quota, the anti-reservationist student groups whose 64 day agitation was described as 'impressive' , particularly due to the innovative forms of protests they devised, were successful in arriving at a settlement with the Government by forcing it not to undertake any measure to enhance the reservation quota.²² In a pattern similar to the experiences of Gujarat and other North Indian states, the Backward classes, inspite of their numerical majority, failed to support the government initiative which was essentially a move to consolidate their support.

Apart from the relatively superiors economic strength of the upper castes havingplayed a significant role in the success of the anti reservationists in the state, the wide spread of the dominant landed castes contributed to their success.²³ As in the case of Gujarat, the Backward castes, inspite of

their numerical majority, could not counter the anti-reservation agitation because of the localised nature of their habitation and even some leading Backward castes such as the Munnuru Kapus are confined to certain regions of the state.²⁴

The reservation centred agitation of Andhra Pradesh revealed the amount of casteism that caste-based reservations can generate . Students of atleast some of the universities, such as the Osmania University of Hyderabad where casteism among students and teachers plays an insignificant role, became polarised on the lines of forward castes (FCs) and Backward castes following the Telugu Desam governments move to provide extra 'reservations'.²⁵

By making provocative speeches, organizing rallies in 'aid of merit' and by depicting the Backward castes as incompetents, the anti-reservationists belonging to communities which resisted Brahminical domination in the pre-independence period, ridiculed the latent Brahminism they had acquired over the years. That job and educational reservations primarily benefit the upper sections among those classified as

Backward becomes evident from the fact that the pro-reservationist student organizations as well as the leaders of the Backward classes organizations opposed the income limitation placed on the beneficiaries and a section of the Backward classes, particularly those from the salaried sections, joined the anti-reservationists in their struggle against reservations.

The Andhra experience over the reservation issue shows that in a pattern similar to the experience of several other states, the spread of education, which has fostered a keen competition in the job market, has contributed significantly to the violent expression of resentment against reservations. As has been the case of Gujarat, it was in the professional colleges - Medicines and Engineering - that the anti-reservation agitation took its most offensive form. This factor indicates that professional education and employment are the vital areas of mobility for the middle and upper classes, a majority of whom belong to the upper castes.²⁶ The phenomenal growth in the number of educational institutes,

particularly professional colleges shows that restricting the 'mobility' of the upper classes by means of reservations, can lead to agitations.

The growth in the importance of education and employment is also evident from the fact that the other parts of a larger social policy other than reservations have not led to any violent reactions from the upper classes. For instance, the increase in the allocations for social welfare programmes, particularly those addressed to the Backward classes has not led to any violent expression of resentment among the upper classes. Apart from making an effort to consolidate the support of the Backward classes by means of an enhancement in the quota of reservations, the Telugu Desam government initiated several social welfare policies specifically addressed to the Backward classes. For instance, the allocations for a new scheme initiated by the Telugu Desam government for providing infrastructure facilities for the Backward classes showed an increase of 200 percent by 1986-87, the year in which the governments move to enhance the reservation quota was annulled.²⁷ Similarly, in 1987, the pattern of allocations for the Integrated Rural Development

programme was changed to benefit the Backward classes.²⁸ These schemes, apart from other social welfare measures of the Telugu Desam government such as the subsidised rice scheme and the saree -dhoti scheme , can serve as a means of management of the electoral vote bank of the party, and do not seriously affect the interests of the upper classes or lead to any 'structural changes' in society.

It has only been with the growth in the importance of jobs and education that resentment against reservations began to express itself openly in Andhra Pradesh. Efforts to initiate an anti-reservation agitation did not fructify in the early 1980s.²⁹ and the 'issue' which was always disputed in the Courts in the 1970s assumed the form of an anti-reservation agitation following the Telugu Desam governments efforts to enhance the quota of reservations.

CONCLUSION

In the previous chapter, it was pointed out that when a 25 percent reservation was introduced

at a time (1972) when the Congress party began to concentrate on the OBC and SC, ST votes, not only in Andhra Pradesh but also in other parts of the country, it did not lead to any anti-reservation agitation. The interests of the land holding upper castes were more seriously affected by the land ceiling act of that period. The Backward classes who had constituted a significant part of the Congress party support base in the 1970s, were given more representation by the Telugu Desam party and ever since it came into power, the regional party has been initiating and emphasising upon social welfare measures as a means of consolidating the support of these sections. However, the Party's effort to enhance the reservation quota as a means of managing the electoral vote bank of the Backward classes before the Mandal and Zilla Parishad elections in 1986 led to a violent expression of the resentment of the upper castes and the importance, education and employment have attained in the recent past have contributed significantly to this phenomena.

NOTES

1. Pradhama Varshika Nivedeka, Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1984, p.34.
2. Ibid., p.38.
3. For instance, in the Mandal and Zilla Parishad Elections of 1987 the Congress (I) lost 18 out of the 26 Zilla Praja Parishads and 720 out of 1058 Mandal Praja Parishads(MPPS). In the election to the Ranga Reddy Zilla Parishad and Mandal Praja Parishad , the Congress(I) lost not only the ZPP but also 26 of the 32 MPPS. The District has Backward class population of 48.8 percent - about 10 percent more than the state average. M. Shatrugna, "TDP consolidates Rural vote", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.23, no. 6, March 19,1988, p.571.

The Backward classes support to Telugu Desam party was also witnessed in the Vayalpad and Srikalahasti bye-elections to the State Assembly. See M. Shatrugna, "Backward class support for Telugu Desam Intact", Economic and Political Weekly vol. 23, no.6, February 6,1988, p.239.
4. A scheme to restructure the Panchayat Raj institutions with the creation of small Mandal Panchayats, with directly elected Zilla Parishad Presidents, was formulated by the Telugu Desam Government in 1986. The "Bill" was introduced a month before the announcement of the enhancement in the quota of reservations, Andhra Prabha(Telugu-Hyderabad), July 29,1986.

5. Welfare of Backward Classes , (Hyderabad , Department of Backward Classes, Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1987), p.44.
6. In May 1986, two months before the announcement of the enhancement in the quota of reservations, an 'organization for the protection of the rights of Backward classes was inaugurated by the Congress party leader P.Shiv Shankar, Andhra Jyoti (Hyderabad), July 20,1986.
7. Prominent leaders of the Backward Classes Organizations of the state held a conference in May 1986 and a convention of the Backward Classes Associations was held on July 12, 1986, Udayam(Telugu), July 7,1986.
8. Andhra Jyoti(Telugu), July 14,1986
9. Due to the fear of an anti-reservation agitation the Chief Minister of the state was advised not to implement the recommendations of the Backward Classes Commission.
10. Shyama Nand Singh, "Background : Reservation Controversy in Andhra Pradesh", Mainstream, vol. 25, no.4, September 20,1986, p.32,
11. Report of the Backward Classes Commission, (Hyderabad , Government of Andhra Pradesh, 1982),p.2.
12. Ibid.,p.2.

13. Ibid., p.3.
14. The Commission issued a questionnaire to elicit public opinion on the 'social stigma' attached to each of the communities classified as Backward and educational Backwardness was assessed on the basis of 'oral evidence', *ibid.*, p.4.
15. By using the Mandal Commissions estimates of the forward Hindu population of the state(17.58 percent) and the population of SC's,ST's and minorities of the state(29.09 percent) , the Muralidhar Rao Commission came to the conclusion that the remaining population (52 percent) will account for the Backward Classes, Report of the Backward Classes Commission, 1982, op.cit., p.12.
16. Judgement on Reservation of Backward Classes, (Hyderabad, Government Secretariat Press, 1986), p.40.
17. Welfare of Backward Classes, 1987, op.cit., p.67.
18. The other South Indian States have not witnessed any anti-reservation agitation. Agitations centering on the Reservation issue in Karnataka are confined to questions related to inclusion or delisting of certain communities from the list of Backward Classes.
19. News Time(Hyderabad), July 21, 1986.

20. Apart from gheraoing ministers, picketing the Secretariat and organizing a state level bandh, the anti-reservationists launched a 'save merit campaign' on August 17, 1986, Andhra Jyoti(Hyderabad), September 10, 1986.
21. APSSS wanted the income limit to be enhanced to Rs 24,000 and a section of the Backward castes joined the anti-reservationists as they were opposed to the income limitation.
22. The Hindu(Hyderabad), September 4, 1986.
23. The dominant land holding castes of Reddys and Kammas have over the years 'consolidated' over a large area. K. Balagopal, Agrarian Classes and Conflicts, (Hyderabad, Perspectives, 1986), p.183.
24. See Balagopal, *ibid.*, p.184.
25. Udayam(Telugu), July 7, 1986.
26. K. Balagopal, "Anti -reservation: yet once more", Economic and Political Weekly, vol. 22, no.30, September 6, 1986, p.1572.

27. Welfare of Backward Classes, 1987, op.cit., p.23.
Among the prominent measures the Telugu Desam government undertook with regard to the Backward Classes(since July, 1986), exclusively for Backward classes. Residential schools at the Mandal level and junior colleges at District headquarters are planned under the scheme, *ibid.*, p.284.
28. The funds earmarked for the SC's and ST's under the IRDP programme was reduced to 30 percent : from 65 percent to give emphasis to the Backward Classes. M. Shatrugna "Helping the down trodden: NTR Way", Economic and Political Weekly, vol.22, no.51, Dec 17, 1987, p.2220.
29. Udayam, July 7,1986.

CONCLUSION

As is the case of other states of South India, Andhra Pradesh has a long history of reservation policy stretching back to the pre-independence days. The Telugu speaking coastal districts of the composite Madras state witnessed considerable non-Brahmin activity in the pre-independence days and the land holding sections of Reddys and Kammas provided the leadership for the Justice party. Though the communal quotas of the pre-independence period enabled the land holding sections to displace the Brahmins from their privileged position, unlike the case of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, the post-independence developments in the reservation policy of Andhra Pradesh did not permit these sections to continue to be the beneficiaries of the reservation policy. As pointed out earlier, the Tamil Nadu system of classification of Backward classes permits the land holding sections to continue to be the beneficiaries of the reservation policy and the reservation system of Karnataka includes a vast proportion of the population. Consequently, unlike these two South Indian states which evolved reservation quotas exceeding the outer limit of 50 percent suggested by the Supreme Court (Tamil Nadu and Karnataka have reservations quotas of 68 percent each and 90 percent of Karnataka population

is classified as Backward), It was only 1972 that about 35 percent of the population of Andhra Pradesh was classified as Backward and a system of 25 percent reservation introduced for their benefit. Though reservations for Backward classes existed in some form or the other prior to and after the formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh, it was largely due to shift in the Congress Party's strategy of functioning since 1969 that the Backward classes began to be patronised by the ruling party. The 25 percent reservation quota was introduced at a time when the Backward classes began to constitute a significant part of the Congress Party's support base (1972). Significantly, it was also in the same year that the Baxi Commission on Backward Classes was constituted in Gujarat as a part of the Congress Party's strategy of consolidating the electoral support of the Backward classes. Though a series of welfare measures were undertaken by the Congress party in the state in the 1970s, the reservation policy did not seriously affect the interests of the upper classes largely constituted by the land holding sections of Kammas and Reddys. The 25 percent reservation which is the lowest in the four southern states became an accepted

now in the 1970s and resentment against the policy did not express itself in the form of agitations. The upper classes were more seriously affected by policies such as land reform measures undertaken in the 1970s and it was only 1986 that the policy generated controversy following the Telugu Desam government's efforts to enhance the reservation quota.

As indicated earlier, only 35 percent of the population of Andhra Pradesh is classified as Backward and does not include the economically dominant sections as in the case of Karnataka. Consequently, the different directions that the reservation policy has taken in the two southern states becomes evident from the fact that almost simultaneously with the anti-reservation agitation of Andhra Pradesh in 1986, Karnataka witnessed a strong pro-reservationist agitation following the publication of the Venkataswamy Commission's Report on Backward classes, which excluded the Vokkaligas from the OBC category.

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