

THE CONTRIBUTION OF ANDHRA KESARI TANGUTURI PRAKASAM PANTHULU TO POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF ANDHRA

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Abstract

This paper is made to examine the contribution of Andhra kesariTanguturiPrakasamPanthulu to political development of Andhra.

In the days when the entire nation was in a political upheaval, the freedom movement of Andhra found a great champion in TanguturiPrakasamPanthulu who was a rare combination of a great lawyer, Journalist, nationalist and a politician.

It is no wonder that his lifelong, exertion in such diverse fields in the service of nation has earned him the honour of “Andhra Kesari” conferred on him by the people of Andhra Pradesh.

TanguturiPrakasampanthulu was the architect of modern Andhra Desa, he was a genius for conducting constructive programmes. Every moment of his life, he spent in the service of the great nation India.

Key words: Andhra kesari,Prakasam,Chief Minister

Intoduction:

TanguturiPrakasampanthulu won widespread admiration and his service to the state through dauntless courage and sacrifice. His life was ideal for all and he had fought for the legitimate rights of Andhra people and stood for ethical values throughout his life.

Andhra kesariTanguturiPrakasamPanthulu was one of the outstanding leaders in the nation’s socio – political firmament. He was a multi – faceted personality – a valiant freedom fighter, eminent parliamentarian, erudite scholar and a brilliant administrator. The modern state of Andhra Pradesh is a shining example of his vision.

He was the first in Andhra to give up legal practice at the call of Mahatma Gandhi and join the freedom movement. Shri Prakasam’s contribution to the formation of Andhra

Pradesh is a legend in itself. His life and deeds indeed constitute a new era of progress and prosperity not only for Andhra Pradesh but also for the entire country.

2. **Objectives:**

1. To study the contribution of Andhra kesariTanguturiPrakasamPanthulu (1872-1957) to the political development of Andhra.
2. To examine the efforts of Shri Prakasam to establish an efficient, responsive, honest and people-friendly government.

3. **Methodology and Data source:**

This study is purely based on the secondary data only. The secondary data is collected from “Andhra kesariTanguturiPrakasamPanthulu” byAgarlaEshwar Reddy, Sri Prakasam’s autobiography titled NaajeevithaYatra (My Lifes Journey) 4 volumes, Builder of modern India (Andhra kesari T Prakasam) – Dr T Suryanarayana Rao; Prakasam – A political study by G Rudrayyachowdari, Lok Sabha Secretariat report on Andhra KesariPrakasamPanthulu, Swarajya Magazine byKhasaSubbarao.

4. **Review of Literature:**

- G.M.C Balayogi (former speaker of Lok Sabha) pointed out that Andhra KesariTanguturiPrakasamPanthulu was one of the outstanding leaders of our Freedom Movement. He was an important source of inspiration for the people of Andhra Pradesh in joining the Movement in large numbers during a crucial phase of its history. As a lawyer, journalist, freedom fighter, parliamentarian and administrator, he left an indelible imprint of his personality in every area he chose to tread in life. Through the remarkable leadership he provided to the State of Andhra Pradesh as its Chief Minister in its formative years, and through the pathbreaking initiatives he took in office, he earned a legendary image for himself during his life time itself. The impact he made on the socio-political life of Andhra Pradesh is unparalleled. Our nation, particularly the people of Andhra Pradesh, owes a lot to the memory of this great leader.
- Late Pramod Mahajan (former minister of Parliamentary Affairs & Information Technology) pointed that Shri Prakasam attained national stature and fame during the Non-Cooperation Movement of 1920-22. He was the towering figure in the movement from the province of Madras. He was a member of the Central Assembly and his contributions to the fields of journalism and administration can never be forgotten. It was befitting that when the State of Andhra came into being in 1953 he was prevailed upon to head the first Andhra Ministry. Shri Prakasam always remained an idol of the

masses. The heroic deeds of the man, his unparalleled services in the nation's cause and his hold on the affections of millions of people are now part of legend.

- Man Mohan Singh (former PM of India) pointed out that Shri T. Prakasam was a distinguished leader who played a very important role in India's freedom struggle under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. As a Minister in the Congress Government which came to power in the composite Madras State in 1937, and, later, as Chief Minister of this composite State, he pioneered a spate of revolutionary reforms inspired by the Gandhian constructive programmes involving, in particular, programmes relating to the uplift of Dalits, Handloom Weavers and other deprived sections of the community. The programme of rural development that he introduced came to be looked upon as a precursor of the community development project that was later to change the fate of rural India. Shri T. Prakasam was a great champion of the cause of a separate State of Andhra Pradesh formed on linguistic basis. It was a fitting tribute to his qualities of head and heart that he was prevailed upon to head the first Andhra Ministry in October, 1953. His thirteen months' administration was packed with significant events and the launching of major irrigation projects. Shri T. Prakasam's life and work will continue to inspire the coming generations of people of our country who will remember with gratitude the magnificent services he rendered first as a great freedom fighter and then as a distinguished administrator.
- A B Vajpayee (former PM of India) pointed out that Shri Prakasam was one of India's leading freedom fighters. He rose from a humble background to become one of the towering statesmen of the land, both before and after independence. He was also a good administrator, both as Chief Minister of the composite Madras State and later as the first Chief Minister of Andhra, in the creation of which he played an important role
- C Rangarajan (former Governor of Andhra Pradesh) pointed out that Shri T Prakasam was one of the most courageous personalities of the freedom struggle. A foremost leader of the Independence Movement, it was Shri Prakasam's dauntless courage and sacrifice that won widespread admiration. His act of bravery exhibited during the Simon Commission Boycott Movement earned him the title Andhra Kesari. He was the first Chief Minister of Andhra. The people of Andhra Pradesh have derived much inspiration from his life and achievements as a leader and administrator. May his memory continue to govern our actions.

- P M Sayeed (former Dy Speaker of Lok Sabha) stated that Shri Prakasam was among the distinguished leader of our freedom moment. A man of extraordinary courage and determination and a true patriot, he strode the political horizon like a colossus for nearly four decades. As the chief minister of Andhra, he made remarkable contributions towards the Socio-economic reconstruction of the new state. His ideas on land reforms and cooperative movement are as relevant today as they were nearly half a century ago. He was always remembered for his lofty values and ideals.

5.Andhra Kesari political contributions:

Andhra KesariTanguturiPrakasam was a prodigious giant in the national freedom struggle, who played an important role. A man with a great vision, an able administrator and a legal luminary. Prakasam dominated the political scenario of South India in general and the Andhra area in particular by sterling qualities of his personality for long years.He earned A permanent place in the hearts of his countrymen, particularly the Telugu people who hold him in utmost respect with a profound sense of pride in the legacy he left behind.

6.Prakasam journey as a parliamentarian:

Andhra KesariTanguturiPrakasam distinguishing himself as a significant parliamentarian in all the representative bodies of which he was a member. He was elected to the Madras legislature, the central legislative assembly and the Andhra state legislature. He was also a member of the constituent Assembly.

Sri Prakasham impressed everyone with his razor sharp analysis of issues, cogent arguments deep insight and above all with his wallet oratorical skills . Principle's always stood far above positions. As a Congress Member in Central legislative assembly, when the congress decided to withdraw from the assembly in 1929 Prakasam duly resigned even though he personally disapproved of the party decision.

7.Prakasam during Simon commission:

In 1928, when Simon commission visited Madras, Prakasam displayed unique courage. He led the agitation against the Simon commission, he bared his chest to meet the British bayonet that was pointed at him. The British officer was so much struck by his act of

bravery and he ordered the mounted police to withdraw. After this incident he gained the title “Andhra Kesari”.

8. Prakasam as an able administrator:

In 1937, Congress came into power in the Madras province, Prakasam became Revenue Ministers under Shri Rajagopalachari leadership. In that capacity, he headed the Zamindari Abolition Committee. He recommended that the tiller of the soil should become the owner and also prepared a detailed report about the structural distortions in agriculture perpetrated due to Zamindari system followed by the British government.

9. Prakasam as chief minister of Andhra:

On 01 October 1953, separate Andhra state was formed on linguistic basis and Shri Prakasam became the chief minister with Kurnool as the capital of the new state. His 13 month administration from Kurnool was packed with significant events, the launching of a major irrigation project the Nagarjunasagar, a Barrage - cum - regulator on river Krishna at Vijayawada, which is now called the Prakasam Barrage, a High Court for the state, a new University (Sri Venkateswara University) to maintain the regional balance one session of the Andhra Assembly was held at Andhra University (First summer session of the Andhra State under the chief ministership of Tanguturi Prakasam in 1954).

When Sri Prakasam was chief minister in 1946, one early morning at about 3 AM Ismail Saheb, An opposition leader knocked at the door of Prakasam and he informed Prakasam about the communal riot that broke out in Vaniyambadi. Tanneries and properties of the muslims were set ablaze.

Ismail Saheb urged Prakash Prakasam and to instruct the Inspector General of Police (IG) to send force to quell the violence, with dexterity Prakasam responded:” Ismail Sahib, you are the opposition leader and I am the CM. What can IG do? I and you must go there, come on; let us move.”

IG Was informed and Prakasam along with Ismail rushed to the spot. When they reached: “The whole place was as bright as daylight.....After restoring peaceful conditions there, in the evening, Prakasam returned to Madras.

In 1954, to mark the states first anniversary, he declared a general amnesty for over 2000 convicts all over the state. This action, which was shocking to the bureaucracy, is still

looked upon by sociologists as an experiment in criminology. Contrary to the general expectations, the released prisoners turned a new leaf and settle down as reformed members of the community.

Shri Prakash and spent his whole life in the service of the people. When Prakasam Pantulu, first CM of Andhra had no money for his own treatment. His son Hanumantha Rao had to ask for his fathers medical expenses from Turlapaty Kutumba Rao a personal secretary of his father. This incident is both shocking and emotional to see such a great personality in such poverty. Turlapaty Kutumba Rao compiled this incident in his book. He was the only chief Minister, probably who died homeless.

• **Prakasam on linguistic state:**

Prakash had explained his position in the following words:

“When we demand separation we do not mean, and we cannot mean that we cut away from our brethren all together. Separation is only for the sake of administrative convenience and development of each area. All other bonds of businesses, Friendship and relationship remain intact.”

• **Prakasam death and tributes:**

Shri Prakasham died on 20 May, 1957 at the age of 85, a few months after the formation of the state of Andhra Pradesh. His life and times reflected the tumult of the era When the foundation for a modern nationstate was laid. His Towering Personality brought him closest to the people and dear to the leaders of his times. Therefore, it is little wonder that he rose to be the first chief minister of Andhra and laid firm foundation for the future development of the state.

Appreciating his qualities, the Prime Minister, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru said:

“There is no doubt about the certain tremendous dynamic energy which he possessed.....A great figure has passed away, not only great in terms of Andhra state of which he might well be said to be the founder in a sense, but a great figure in the all - India scene.”

Sri AnanthasayanamAyyangar, The then speaker of LokSabha,PraisedPrakasam in the following words:

“He started with humble beginnings and rose to the position of the foremost statesman in Andhra. He was a person of indomitable will and courage.”

Conclusion:

Shri Prakash proudly declared thus:

“I was determined to serve the country and my people, whatever the consequences. It did not matter even if I lost everything, including my properties in the bargain. In fact all my money came from the people. It would be pre - eminently Proper that this money should go back to its original source - the people themselves. I had the satisfaction of utilising all my money and material position for the service of the country.

Prakasam endeared himself to the people by the sterling qualities of his personality - unimpeachable Integrity, courage of conviction, firm determination, Untold bravery and a generous disposition. He wrote in his autobiography about his relation with the people thus:

“By frequent touring the various districts and taluks of Andhra, I learned one thing in particular. I could realise that every village and hamlet of this province belonged to me and every person was my friend. I established such an instant report and a close identity with the people that I could say with confidence that the word Andhra meant Prakasam and Prakasam meant Andhra.”

Prakasham was a Dominant figure for four decades In the political scene In Andhra and in India. He saw the causes near to his heart succeed, and the dream of Visalandhra Come true. He laid down his comforts, his pleasures, his entire life and made a bridge of human claims over which crores could cross the sea of life. As long as sacrifice is regarded sacred, Prakasam is immortal.

A TRIBUTE TO

ANDHRA KESARI

on his Birthday

by

VISWANATHA SATYANARAYANA

(Poet Laureate and Gyanpeeth Award Winner)

Of all the towering personalities that the Land of Andhra

has given birth to,

Prakasam shines as the personification of all the glory

That the Telugus cherish and pride themselves in.

Today, Prakasam stands as a glittering Emerald

Alongside Jawahar in the struggle against Imperialism.

At long last, after many hardships,

When the Fragrance of Freedom is in the air,

Our seventy-five year old Premier walks tall as

a shining example of courage.

This is the story of Freedom,

our story also is a saga of our struggle for Freedom.

This tribute is an emotion sweeping all through

The Land of Andhra as a sweet memory

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