



THE ROLE WOMEN IN TELANGANA ARMED STRUGGLE

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Abstract

The Telangana Armed Struggle of the 1940s represents a significant chapter in India's history, characterized by active participation from women who defied societal norms. This period marked a transition for women from conventional welfare roles to pivotal involvement in political activism and armed resistance against the feudal regime of the Nizam. Organizations like the Navjivan Mandali played critical roles in mobilizing women and providing platforms for their participation. Women not only engaged in the struggle for land and labor rights but also took on brave roles in the face of brutal repression by the Razakars and police forces. Despite facing severe challenges, including violence and societal ostracism, women's involvement led to a redefinition of their roles in society and contributed to the broader movement for socio-economic transformation.

Keywords: *Telangana Armed Struggle, Women's Participation, Feudalism, Political Activism, Navjivan Mandali, Land Rights, Socio-Economic Transformation, Nizam, Peasant Struggles, Indian History.*

INTRODUCTION

Not just on the battlefield, the "Telangana Armed Struggle" holds a special place. both in India's history and the history of the liberation of the people. The world's struggle. Halfway through the 18th century, the Peasants and industrial workers of the Burgeoisie (middle class) fought. revolution against monarchy that took place across Europe. Feudal Despotism, with the slogans "Equality, Liberty, and." Fraternity.

Women Participation in Telangana Armed Struggle

A new era in Hyderabad state politics began in the 1940s. A new and radical phase was ushered in by the conflict, the issues brought up, and the ideology that underpinned it. Moving from demands for freedom of social expression and organization, which were essentially concerns of the Urban middle class of Hyderabad, the focus now was on the forms of oppression, the feudal nature of the state and the. forces that require a change in activity from urban and semi-urban areas to rural villages. These developments unavoidably had an impact on women's organizations, requiring difficult decisions. Given their class nature, the majority of women leaders and organizations chose to avoid this radical stage, but some did.

The Navjivan Mandali and other Hyderabad-based organizations consciously chose to back the Communists. by the close of the 1940s. Participation in both urban and rural areas was validated by the opportunities or spaces they established for themselves. urban middle class educated women a valid public forum for participation, a process that society supported and enabled. In contrast, it could be described as a place where women played a prominent role but were unable to publicly express their complaints because they were and still are frequently



viewed as illegitimate. Women in the Telangana region gradually and steadily expanded their sphere of activities and political participation in the first half of the 20th century, moving from welfare and recreational activities to active participation in radical armed struggle at the other end of the spectrum. This is significant given the feudal nature of society, where women, regardless of religion or caste, were in Purdah or had little opportunity to learn about the outside world.

At this time, the nature of women's participation changed. Poor agricultural labourers were the majority of participants. The feudal exploitation that persisted till the beginning of the armed peasant struggle was the main feature that dominated the socio-economic life of the people of Hyderabad. Out of the 53,000,000 acres in the state, about 30,000,000 acres are unused. Roughly 60 percent of the land was under the Governmental land revenue system. About 30 percent were under the Jagirdari system, and 10 percent were under the Nizam's direct estate. The sarf-e-khas system.

Income or booty from agriculture of Sarf Khas area of Rs. 20,000,000 per year was entirely used for fulfilment the expenses of the Nizam family and its retinue. The whole area was considered his private property. He was not required to spend any amount economic and social benefit or development of people's livelihood v that area. The peasants in these areas were nothing but shackled - slaves or total serfs under the Nizam. Even the small rights in which it existed the diwani area was denied them. Jagir areas constituted 30 percent of the total number of states. In these areas Paigas, Samasthanams, Jagirdars, Ijavadars, Banjardars, Muktedars, Inamdars or Agraharams were different types of feudal complexes. Some of them used to have their officials who collected the taxes they imposed. Some of these and the 4 Jagirs Paigas samsthanams, especially the largest, had their own separate police, tax, civil and criminal systems. They were sub-feudal states under the Nizam's state of Hyderabad, which itself was a powerful original state under the British princely states.

Women played a vital function in the warfare for Telangana:

Women played an important role in the struggle for Telangana, they he actively participated in the movement for land, for wages for agricultural work of the struggles against the seizure of land and grain against the "Briggs Plan". to evacuate the Koya, Chenchu and Lambadi people from their villages in forest areas or from their scattered villages in the plains. They were with their husbands and brothers in the fight against the Razakars and Nizam Police. They joined militant political units and underwent all the hardships and joys of life in the forests and hills. and in the fields, in the rain and in the sun. They acted as couriers, as political agitators and in the new centres as organizers of the popular movement and mass organizations. They were the worst victims of brutal torture and atrocities committed by the Razakars and Nizams and later by the Indian Police and Army. They had to face harassment and rape, apart from beatings on a large scale. They had to see their babies and children being tortured and killed right in front of their eyes. They had to see their beloved husbands or brothers persecuted, arrested and killed. They had to everyone is suffering, they stay in their houses and villages and take care of it what is left of them, very young and very old, when their men people had to

fight to escape the fury of the army and police attacks, or they had to be left to join fighters and guerrillas in distant secret places.

The tale in their heroic and stubborn resistance to shield their personal non-public dignity

The story of their heroic and stubborn resistance to defend their own personal dignity, against harassment, torture, and rape, is inspiring one. Their awakening to a new social equality, to a new moral and cultural life, their stubborn militancy, gives us an insight that tremendous revolutionary spirit and energy that solders women. It was Chakali Ailamma of Palakurthy village, Jangoan taluk, who was the first to fight bitterly to retain her land and crops from Deshmukh's confiscation. She inspired her entire family of sons and daughters to be with the Party in everything. Her house was the centre of anti-proprietary activities of the Andhra Mahasabha and the Communist Party. She was not just fighting for her personal cause – it just symbolized and signalled the beginning of the mighty struggle of the Telangana peasant. In Miryalagudem taluk, in Mukundapuram In the village of Sahukar, Kummari had Mattaya tortured to death because he refused to give up the land he had obtained from her Sahukar. His wife accepted the challenge. She stuck to the ground and he refused to give up. The police brutally raped her, but she still refused them. She rallied people to support her and succeeded detention, country. A Lambadi peasant was killed in the centre of Vadapalli because he too refused to release the acquired land to the landlord. But his wife took his place and managed to grow a piece country despite police terror.

In Kondrapolu village, another Lambadi farmer cultivating two acres wet land, of which even the found piece was spent by the landlord Dattudu. Here again his wife stepped forward and succeeded defend your right to land. At Subaramigud, Golla Muttayya was killed for not giving up some of the land he was cultivating, but his wife intervened and continued to cultivate, preventing the enemy from taking possession of the land. In Moddulukunta, a lambadi seized land from the owner Ramakrishnan, who tried to seize it with the help of the police. Lambadi was beaten to a pulp and forced to leave his house and farm. But his wife refused and insisted. She grew it and managed to bring home a harvest. Veeraram, a farmer from Lambadi and his wife defied their land dimensioned men of the landlord and the police. The police stepped on it a woman who was pregnant and died. The fact was that dozen thousands of women stood with their men in this struggle for soil. A large percentage of agricultural workers are women. There are very many of them, perhaps as many as the men themselves, for they too have to earn if they are to get even one meal for their children and themselves. They cannot rely on the earnings of their men. It is therefore not surprising that women participated in large numbers strikes of agricultural workers or during the confiscation of grain from landlords and 7 Deshmukh's and gadi warehouses.

In Kondrapalli centre and other neighbouring centres in masse agricultural labourers went on strike to increase the number of villages their daily wages to four seers out of the then existing 2 or 3 seers. In women participated in the demonstrations in large numbers with flags their hands. Finally, force the landlords to settle down, they had to raid and start taking the grain. Landlords were forced receive requests. There were women who stayed in their villages,



defended their homes, fought against the oppressors and the police, and suffered immensely, but kept on fighting. Many demanded to be taken to guerrilla units, to an area of the forest, perhaps partly under the pressure of enemy attacks as the only means of escape. The party allowed only a few women into forest areas and even fewer into guerrilla units. Nevertheless, there were a relatively large number of women in various professions, both political and militant, in the forest and plain areas. Village women helped guerrilla units in their raids. They provided water and food to the squad members while the battles raged for hours together.

The women went in disguise to collect information about the military camps and pass it on to the units. They also participated in battles with pots of chilli powder, kept vigil on the roads of the police and killed them. Hundreds of such raids took place across Telangana.⁸ During the Nizam days of 1946-47, Nizam police and levy officials raided the villages of Akunur and Machireddypalli in Jangoan taluk. They raped a dozen or more women. This incident was accepted even by the Congress leaders as a big problem, as an insult to the honor of women and as a disgrace to the national honor. Padmaja Naidu was at the forefront of this agitation and a huge wave of anger swept the entire country. In Ragipad (Suryapet taluk), a woman who gave birth only three days ago was raped. In Narigud (Bhuvanagiri taluk), a woman who had given birth the day before was raped. A woman in an advanced pregnancy was raped in Tangunta. Even girls as young as 10 were raped in Yenapadu, Bhuvanagiri taluk and Pushpapur in Khammam taluk. There were many reports of women being raped by 5-10 military policemen at once. More than 100 women died of brutal rape. In the first year alone, reports showed that more than a thousand women were raped. It is no exaggeration to say that several thousand women were raped during all three years of the regime of police and military terror. But women and people waged a constant and bitter struggle against this barbaric attack on women, in many cases they defeated the police and saved them from this torture.

Spouse of the nearby organizer, Balakoti become stuck preserve of through the navy:

Soldiers from Nawabpet village (Jangaon) camp went in civilian get dressed to Vaddicherla village unarmed and raped women. The humans of the village got wild. Hundreds of humans surrounded the residence which the infantrymen had entered. While escaped the alternative were beaten to demise. In Proddutur village the army raided and after beating up villagers, shot useless 4 local militants. They attempted to seize a few ladies, but all the relaxation of the ladies of the village surrounded them and were given their sisters launched. In Madarugudem, Miryalagudem taluka, the wife of the local organizer, Balakoti become caught preserve of by means of the army. She resisted and fought again, and escaped from their clutches. In Jalalpuram an army man attempted to rape a pregnant lady. She talked to him to get him into room after which bolted it from the outside and amassed a crowd of girls. When the armed police have been attacking the villages of Balemula, Patasuryapet, Mallareddygudem, Devarapalle and in a number of different locations, women had been on the aspect of their guys, handing them stones for their slings. Along with their men people they confronted brutal lathi-prices and firings.



In the Mallareddygudem fight, a women who was offering stones standing through the aspect of her husband, changed into shot dead. Women resisted their men folks being lively away in Lorries and demanded that they need to accompany them and face all of the outcomes. The police may want to pass best once they took the combating ladies in the Lorries alongside their guys people. In the Kottagudem Koya hamlet, in Gundala location, in September 1950 the ladies and men of the whole village resisted the navy atrocities and, in that combat, killed a subedar and 3 of his men and seized their weapons. After this while the navy came in large pressure in entire village needed to take shelter inside the deep wooded area. That was the heroic way the women lived through the ordeal, no longer even permitting their kids to cry out, will constantly rouse admiration and be an instance of the dedication and stubbornness of which girls are successful. In Rajaram centre, a man and lady of a lambadi tanda have been taken to the camp, the police suspecting them of assisting the guerrillas. They have been made to stand up for days and nights without food and water. When they fell down, a little water turned into given and as soon as they became aware became once more made to get up. Their legs became swollen, however even after this torture each of them might have as an alternative given up their lives than deliver any statistics approximately the guerrillas. The enemy then allow them to off. It was a commonplace feature in the complete preventing place that ladies took terrific precautions to look after the guerillas and squads, sheltering and billeting them of their homes and in a huge range of cases keeping night or day vigil while the guerillas or leaders have been slumbering or resting.

The ladies fed guerillas and birthday celebration organizers at any time of the night or day with tremendous care and affection. They took meals and elements to the guerilla hideouts within the forests on hills and suffered terrible tortures and indignities once they were found out. In the village of Bendalapadu, a peasant women Rajamma was caught. She and her husband had been tortured with pink warm irons, her waist and arms have been branded as if wearing adorns but no longer a single word did, she utter approximately the squads. The fee changed into that she turned into taking meals to the squads within the forests. In this conflict, girls had participated equally together with the guys and due to this it became less complicated for the gram committees, Sangham and celebration to marketing campaign towards the age old ideas universal within the society that girls had been not as good as guys. Women had been elected to village Panch committees. As cited earlier the Urban Women's Organizations in Hyderabad cut up on problem of aid to the growing radical motion.

Issues of peasants and agricultural labourers and so on:

In 1945, there have been rival conferences of the Andhra Mahasabha. One was held at Warangal and became attended by using non-Communists. The other changed into held at Khammam and turned into attended via Communists and their sympathizers. Both the groups mentioned the issues of famous Government, illustration for exclusive religious businesses, problems of peasants and agricultural labourers and so forth. It needs to be referred to that these have been additionally the ultimate crucial meetings of the two wings of the Andhra Mahasabha. While the liberals slowly became part of the kingdom branch of the Indian



National Congress, the radicals joined arms with the Communist party. Within the Congress additionally there had been organizations which include conservatives and revolutionary-nationalists. The girls who were energetic in the nationalist movement and also inside the welfare and reformative sports steadily evolved into numerous agencies due to the effect of the Communist ideology. The businesses like the All-India Women's Conference had stopped its members of the family with the sports of the Andhra Mahasabha saying that the Andhra Mahasabha had links with the Communists. The Navjivan Mandali had hyperlinks with the Communists and that they worked very actively in the battle time and at the time of ingredients and also in the dalams in the freedom struggle.

The women from the Andhra Yuvathi Mandali who had been very energetic in nationalist politics were the founder member of the organization Yellapragada. Sita Kumari. Burgula Anantha Lakshmi had participated inside the Mahasabha conference. Though Anantha Lakshmi participated inside the politics earlier, after independence she stopped her sports. She became not eager on involvement in political activity. She turned into very inquisitive about the Andhra Yuvathi Mandali Activities. Her purpose become to look it as an person self-sufficient institution and it became fulfilled. Even now she keeps to visit the organization. Smt. Sita Kumari become very inquisitive about politics. She pioneered the thoughts which she propagated and within the process she has become the member of the Legislative Assembly. The organized Satyagraha movement launched by way of the States Peoples, Conference in 1938 was best the start of the humans' conflict. It became at such time that the Communist party referred to as upon the All-India Trade Union Congress, the All Hyderabad Students Union and the ladies who were prepared in a few towns, to enroll in arms with the Andhra Mahasabha and to come out boldly and guard the lifestyles of the humans.

Men and ladies organized themselves to face the Nizam. Women performed an crucial role in the Telangana Armed Struggle. They who had suffered and starved below the regime of extortions of the Nizam and the Deshmukhs, now noticed the possibility of a brand-new existence, and that they actively participated in the land movement, inside the seizure of the landlords' grain, and inside the warfare for higher wages. They fought the Razakars and the Nizam's police and later the Indian Army, standing shoulder to shoulder with their men. Ordinary girls in the villages heroically defended their land. It is a widely recognized truth that tens of heaps of girls stood along with their men in this war for land, women fashioned a big consistent with- centage of the participants in the agricultural labour strikes. In demonstrations, the girls with crimson flags in hand came in massive numbers and finally they participated in seizing the grain of landlords who have been then compelled to concede their demands of four 'seers' of grain as every day wages, raising it from the prevailing rate of two or 3 'seers'. Even though the girls had hitherto now not been drawn politically into the motion or politically skilled, they now rose to first-rate heights of heroism and sacrifice within the direction of the struggle. Not handiest did they combat of their villages and their homes, however many demanded to be taken in the guerrilla squads and fight inside the forests. The leaders admitted best a totally few girls into the woodland area and less inside the guerrilla squads. Mallu Swarajyam who become energetic whilst a young girl within the Andhra Mahasabha, later



joined the Communist motion and prepared males and females to take part in the Telangana war.

The Navjivan Mandali, a composition organization in particular of non-Telugu women of whom there has been a large quantity inside the metropolis, did terrific paintings in the metropolis. Among the most lively become a young village female from Marathwada, named Padma Deshpande. She performed a critical position in organizing the activities, going from faculty to high school and taking the message of the demonstration to the female college students. Another person who performed a huge role turned into Sarojini from Dhoolpet, who turned into a difficult operating and dedicated employee. She turned into now not most effective in the leading edge of the warfare for the introduction of meals rationing but also took the responsibility of writing and dispensing the ration playing cards, working day and night time through the Mahila Navjivan Mandali. She earned first rate recognition and he or she used all her organizational abilities to evoke women towards the activities and the injustice of the Razakars. She accumulated round her a good range of sympathizers who have been a big asset to the anti-razakr motion. N. Sathyavathi running in the Andhra Yuvathi Mandali was interested by operating among Telugu speaking ladies and their organization. Yashodaben changed into any other member of the Navjivan Mandali at some point of the Razakar duration.

When the human being's anger was mounting in opposition to their atrocities, she played a dominant and galvanizing role. She changed into a main spirit directing the activities of the Navjivan Mandali. The tale of Jamalunissa Begum, fondly called Baji isn't always most effective inspiring however also substantial because in the one's day's Muslim girls by no means participated in any movement that opposed the Nizam. In 1926- 27 she decided to surrender the purdah and to boycott foreign garments. She invested all the Rs. 10,000 she got from her coverage to start an Urdu paper which for all purposes was a paper of the Communist birthday party.

This courageous Muslim girl achieved her modern venture courageously in a scenario where rarely any Muslim woman dared to assist the exceptional Telangana Armed battle or the Communist birthday celebration which changed into its spearhead. In this first-rate warfare ladies showed their courage and fortitude and within the manner liberated themselves from the feudal chains that had bound them down for centuries. But, the purpose such a lot of girls participated in main the warfare became because of the good work done among women and by using the girls' cadres. From the beginning of the 40s a mass organisation of girls turned into constructed. Pramela Mahendra one of the energetic comrades in Hyderabad, says that the general ecosystem helped the Communist program. Their programmers were for the complete womenfolk no matter caste and creed. There was no friction amongst individuals.

CONCLUSION

Communist women gave a new flip to the women's motion. Most of the organisations of girls produced from the centre and upper middle and and their club became restricted in numbers. The way wherein Communists labored and the manner Navjivan Mandali became



popular did bring credit score to its contributors. It helped the Communist celebration to advantage recognition in the town. For the first time peasants, people, the downtrodden inside the bustees in urban areas, the rural women, decrease centre magnificence girls, side via aspect with lower middle-magnificence intellectuals and activists all converged into a huge flow. The women's corporations have become a huge mass motion concerning city and countryside. The significance of the motion became the building of a flow- mint which questioned the very basis of the society based on exploitation, inequality and indignity. It demanded a socioeconomic transformation of society.

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