

Anand: 'An extension of struggle for self-respect'

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VISAKHAPATNAM: The CPI (Maoist) has said that the Centre should first take a political decision on the creation of a Telangana state and then engage all the stakeholders, including political parties, in talks to sort out issues relating to separation in an amicable manner. The party is of the view that the 'doubts of a few people in the Andhra region' are being exploited by vested interests of that region to prevent formation of Telangana.

"There is no need for any concern among the people since they could go anywhere in the country for education or living and the same holds good even in respect of Telangana," the party said. In an interview to Express, Anand, a member of the CPI-Maoist politburo and secretary of the central regional committee, spoke at length on the Telangana issue as well as other statehood agitations. Anand is one of the top ranking leaders of the outlawed group and has worked in the Telangana region before moving to the central committee.

According to him, the ongoing Telangana movement is an extension of the prolonged struggle of the people of the region for a separate identity and self-respect. Cautioning the people of Telangana that neither the Congress nor the Telugu Desam Party has genuine interest in the formation of Telangana state nor in addressing the grievances of the region, Anand said students and others should continue the agitation till the goal is achieved. "The Maoist way of 'militant praja udyamam' (militant people's movement) is the only way through which this can be achieved," he asserted.

On Union Home Minister P Chidambaram's December 23 statement calling for wide-ranging consultations, Anand argued that they were mere tactics to delay the process of bifurcation. Pointing out that the Centre does not require concurrence from the state Assembly, he felt it was also futile to try for a consensus among all parties on issues such as division of a state. Anand said the Maoist party, in general, is in favour of smaller states, whenever just and real demands come up from the people. His comments on other aspects linked to division of the state:

Status of Hyderabad

Hyderabad has been geographically, politically and historically a part of Telangana and is a part of the distinct identity of Telangana and there can be no compromise.

Concerns of the people of Andhra region

There will not be any denial of opportunities to the people of the region, if and when a Telangana state is formed. If people can go to Mumbai or Delhi for education or living, why can't those from Andhra come to Hyderabad for the same?

The way forward

The present movement has come from the people and politicians can no more hijack it for their personal interests, like Marri Chenna Reddy did in the late 60s. It is refreshing that students are playing an active role, which is very important for any struggle, whether it be the French Revolution or the Telangana movement. The students should be involved in any talks relating to the separation of the state. But, they should be cautious of the Centre's coercive methods which is why it has brought ESL Narasimhan, who was involved in the military offensive in Chhattisgarh, as the Governor of Andhra Pradesh.

Irrigation

When we are giving Krishna water to the people of Tamil Nadu on humanitarian grounds, we (people of Telangana and Andhra regions) would certainly be able to settle the issue of sharing river waters across the table. Although Telangana and Rayalaseema happen to be the upper riparian regions of Krishna, they have been denied their due share. A harmonious formula could be evolved by which neither Andhra nor other regions would suffer.

Vision for Telangana

The Telangana state, whenever it is formed, should be one which would guarantee its people their basic rights such as 'jal, jungle aur jameen' (water, forests and land) and be a state where aspirations of all the sections of the people are kept in mind while framing policies.

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