

Is creation of Telangana a positive step? - YES

By Gautam Pingle

<http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/opinion/is-creation-of-telangana-a-positive-step-yes/article4982287.ece?homepage=true>

Telangana is workable as a separate State. Even with a lower population (3.5 crore against the rest of Andhra Pradesh's 4.9 crore), Telangana contributes a larger share to Andhra Pradesh revenues than the rest of Andhra Pradesh, while receiving a lower share of expenditures.

If we take annual averages for 2003-06, Telangana accounts for an annual revenue of about Rs 9900 crore, against approximately Rs 11,000 crore from the rest of AP. Telangana's expenditure is about Rs 5,300 crore, against residual AP's Rs 7,000 crore. Therefore, Telangana generates an annual revenue surplus of about Rs 4,600 crore, against rest of AP's Rs 4,000 crore.

A balance of Rs 4,600 crore will usher in financial stability in the new State. The neglected development of the State can then be addressed. The first task in Telangana is restoration of its tank irrigation which has been allowed to collapse. The second is the cultivation of fallow unirrigated lands, where major efforts need to be made to introduce mechanisation of ploughings and orchard crops, requiring minimal irrigation.

The third effort is to link all Telangana villages through a robust rural road network to district headquarters. The fourth is to set up vocational training centres with hostel facilities at every district. The fifth item will take time but a complete mapping of each survey number of agricultural land, with its fertility and potential identified and advice and help given to farmers to increase their productivity and profitability. The sixth item is the development of market centres at the district level with banking and insurance facilities. Above all, there is a need to connect all villages to 24 hour electrical supply, as has been done in Gujarat and other States. These steps will initiate growth in Telangana and help meet the aspirations of the people.

There are two other main critical elements need careful handling. These involve the development of Singareni Collieries to increase coal production and to generate power based on pithead power plants. Singareni covers four districts of Telangana and its resources should be used to develop human resources and potential among the families of its workers as well as those who live in its area. Its vast lands can be developed into orchards.

Telangana industry needs only a few conditions - reliable and cheap power supply, minimal red tape and efficient and helpful regulation. Above all, Telangana should provide clean government and eliminate all corruption demand from State officials. If this is done, industrialists will flock to Telangana and exiting units will expand.

The last item is the healthy development of Hyderabad city and its hinterland. (LEFT OUT BY THE NEWSPAPER).....

While Hyderabad has seen a much lauded development in the last decade, the city has been transformed into a messy slum. The roads, footpaths, traffic, underground and on ground drains, reliability of power supply and drinking water supply, the quality of all municipal services - these are not anywhere near metropolis standards.

These will ensure that Telangana will become a more prosperous region.(THIS IS WHAT I WROTE...

By fulfilling this agenda , Telangana will be prosperous and bring prosperity to all who live here and to those who want to move here.

(The author is former Director, Centre for Public Policy, ASCI, Hyderabad.)

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