

## Bommagani Dharma Biksham: An Activist and Public Leader

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### Abstract:

*This essay focuses on Dharma Biksham and his participation in the Communist Struggle against Telangana's feudal nobility under Nizam rule. He actively participated in the Andhra Mahasabha, played a key role in turning it into a communist front group, and aggressively pursued the fight against feudalism, the harsh Jagirdari system, and the tyranny of the Nizam. He was a well-known independence fighter during the Nizam era Telangana peasantry armed resistance. He was the President of the All India Toddy Tappers and Workers Federation and a well-known trade unionist. It evolved into a potent armed people's movement for land and independence, against feudal exploitation, and against the despised Nizam's authority, led by the Communist Party and the Andhra Mahasabha.*

**Key Words:** Dharma Biksham, Telangana Armed Struggle, Communist Movement, Communist Leader, Political Activist, Peoples' Leader.

### Introduction

Historians observed that Indian society experienced close to eighty agrarian movements or revolts. One among them is the armed struggle of the people of Telangana. Hyderabad Nizam was in charge of Telangana districts. The repressive rulers during this time inflicted unimaginable pain on the State of Telangana. Nonetheless, anti-federal movements were established by personalities like as Ravi Narayana Reddy, Puchalapally Sundarayya, and Bommagani Dharma Biksham against the dictatorial government. Bommannagari Dhrama Biksham's revolutionary, intellectual, and ideological conceptions were greatly influenced by the surroundings in which he was born and raised. Along with studying Marxist, he also put his beliefs into practise. He played a critical role at pivotal moments, notably when it came to the decision to end the armed struggle. As a result, the Indian Communist Movement suffered

a significant ideological blow that continues to serve as a source of motivation for communists today.

Dhrama Biksham took engaged in a number of social movements as well as the armed battle for Telangana. He frequently took involved in disputes involving farmers and the land. Additionally, he went to Dalitwadas and Harijana to deliver lessons by the light of oil lamps. In order to improve writing abilities, he also gave out slate pencils. He makes the populace active by educating them about the political changes. He was a highly respectful and orderly student when he was in school. Students at Dharma Biksham received training to be patriots, freedom fighters, and opponents of the Nizam's regime. He enlisted the aid of Arya Samaj members to help him raise funds to build a dorm for students in order to carry out his intentions. Also, he set up multiple meetings with well-known figures to solicit funds. He spent fifteen days in a bullock cart travelling to various villages in Mahabubabad Taluq with his friends Damidi Prabhakar Reddy, Amangallu Narsimha Reddy, and Chirumarthi Sudhakar Reddy in order to raise more money. These villages included Birohaln, Maripeda, Chinnagudur, Pindiprolu, Subledu, and Bachodan. They made 3,000 rupees. While Dharma Biksham served as the organiser, a committee was established. Gavva Amrutha Reddy, Kodati Venkateshwar Rao, Uppu Venkanna, and Nakirikanti Ramalingam were chosen as Committee members, with Gavva Murahari Reddy serving as Secretary. The Hostel Warden was in charge of Dharma Biksham. The hostel was established at Gudipati Nagaratnamma's home next to the Alankar Theater. One-fourth of the hostellers received free lodging after it was decided to charge rates based on their financial situation. The hostel initially had six residents, and after a short period of time, that number rose to fifteen. In honour of Hyderabad's Reddy Hostel, it was given the name "Reddy Hostel."

The students developed a social awareness of societal issues. Dhrama Biksham served as a positive role model for the students and was well liked by them. Additionally, he used to inspire patriotism by drawing parallels between Hitler's participation in the Second World War and the heroic battle of the Soviet Union's citizens to build social equality in their country. Also, he mentally trained them on how to defend ourselves from enemies. In this way, Dharma Biksham has introduced political dynamism to the kids even throughout their educational years. He pushed former dropouts to return to the classroom. He spoke to the children's parents about it and won their approval. As a result, numerous Dharma Biksham graduates hold leadership

roles across a variety of industries. For instance, Damidi Venudhar Reddy, an accomplished doctor who immigrated to America in 1958, has done well for himself. They have developed the habit of "we should do our daily closes ourselves" as a result of Dharma Biksham. He also frequently asserts that a person's honour should be determined by his good deeds rather than by his financial standing. He was very outspoken and direct. Tudi Gopal Reddy, Tudi Narayan Reddy, I.A.S. Ayyar, Pasunuri Venkat Reddy, Mandati Prabhakar Reddy, Mandati Sudhakar Reddy, Vidyasagar Reddy, and many others were Telangana armed revolutionaries who were influenced by Dharma Biksham. So, he was a social reformer who gave many people access to education. Yet, his life was simple, and he lived in a small hut with insufficient clothing. For example, Mallu Srujana Reddy and his friends gave him two shirts and bed sheets. This demonstrates his social standing and way of life. Political specialists including Alwar Swamy, Ch. Hanumantha Rao, Dr. Paranjape, and Burgula Narsinga Rao were invited to Dharma Biksham's political training camps. This camp was the first of its sort to be established in a telangana district. Hostel students have received training to become valiant warriors for the freedom of Telangana and the Telugu people. The horrific sacrifices of Pasunuri Venkata Reddy, the brother of Dharma Biksham, have made Telangana holy. The dormitory at Suryapet has evolved into the heart of the Indian Independence Movement.

Raja Bahadur Venkat Ram Reddy, the mayor of Hyderabad, extended an invitation to Dharma Biksham on the hostel's jubilee. Participants at the meeting included young people, students, intellectuals, and a variety of other people. "This Hostel is not only a place of kids is trained as role models, and brings pride and respect to the notion," the mayor said in his speech. He stated about Dharma Biksham that "Biksham has become Dharma Biksham" because "on the one hand he requests donations and on the other side he willingly provides monies for society." He was not given the name Dharma Biksham by his parents or mother. Because of his devoted service to the people, they bestowed upon him the title of Dharma Biksham in a loving manner. In Nalgonda, Dharma Biksham has created a mess and continued his political campaigns there.

With 100 volunteers, Dharma Biksham had begun for the Chilukuru Andhra Maha Sabha. They circulated over the countryside on bullock carts while shouting "Andhra Maha Sabha Jai." They continued by delivering word about Stalin's and the red army's valiant deeds to every community. Over time, a large number of volunteers have joined. Around Chilukuru,

Bethavolu has now been reached by this huge marathon. Gopal Rao, a well-known leader there, organised a farmers' uprising. The farmers now have a lot more energy thanks to their collective marathon. In Chilukuru, a chariot was made for the procession, which also included song-singing and banner-waving. The volunteers were motivated by the participation of Commando Association members in this marathon. Ravi Narayan Reddy has discussed the need for the establishment of socialist institutions and the autocratic reign of the Nizam at this Maha Sabha. In addition to Dharma Biksham There were many people who took part in the event, including Devireddy Linga Reddy, Ponugoti Sitarama Rao, Vediri Narsimha Reddy, Vediri Ram Mohan Reddy, Uppanuthala Purushotham Reddy, Damidi Prabhakar Reddy, Mandati Sudhakar Reddy, Mandati Prabhakar Reddy, Kanya Reddy, Goli Veeraiah, and Kandi Banda Ranga The Chilukuru Andhra Maha Sabha has altered the nature of agitational ideas and tactics.

Since the number of wage labourers is enormous but their pay is low, Dharma Biksham travelled to the countryside with his Andhra Maha Sabha volunteers and students to spread awareness about wage labour. They continued walking for 40 kilometres and participated successfully in other canvassing campaigns. In 1945, the twelfth Andhra Maha Sabha, attended by 40,000 people, was held in Khammam. Dharma Biksham set up a soviet stand at the gathering. Under the direction of Dharma Biksham, Maqdam Moinuddin, Raj Bahdur, Alamkundu Meer, Kaloji Narayana Rao, and others joined the struggle against the evil deeds of businessmen and landowners. In addition to Balem, Chandupetla, Namavaram, old Suryapet, Kodur, Kommala, Khammapadu, Vallobapuram, and Durajpally villages, the movement also affected Suryapet. The village officials burned fake paperwork they had in their possession. As this movement entered Jangaon, Nalgonda, Huzurnagar, and Miryalguda Taluqs, it had already taken harsh measures. Arutla Laxmi Narsimha Reddy, Bheemreddy Narsimha Reddy, Katkuri Ram Chandra Reddy, and Yadagiri Ravula investigated the tyranny of the landowners in the Nalgonda district districts on behalf of Rythu Sangham. Every local scene resembles a battlefield. Under Dharma Biksham's direction, during this time, the farmers of Ramavaram were attacked and taxes were collected. The campaign has been supported by volunteers, Hamlies, and young people. In the Kasimpet, Thirumalagiri, and Gumpula areas, Amiruddin, Nizamuddin, and Mahbub Ali were referred to as Khalsadars and used to wield authority over the populace. Similar Karanam Lords have ruled over Suryapet, Immampeta, Vallabapuram, and Dharmapuram. There have been battles with Dharma Biksham between Devulapally

Raghavender Rao, Chakilam Thirumal Rao, Subba Rao, Bommagani Venkataiah, Katkuri Ramkrishna Reddy, Ramana Reddy, Narayan Reddy, and others. Similar movements were set up with the help of municipal authorities. Tenancy rights were obtained as a result. When Pasunuri Venkat Reddy stayed at Dharma Biksham, he oversaw the workers' operations.

The villages of Ravipadu, Kotapadu, Burkacherla, Chandupatla, and Athamalem served as the focal points of Dharma Biksham's ongoing battles with landlords. The efforts had been coordinated by Dharma Biksham out of the Party District Center in Suryapet. It was revealed to the Nizam police that Pasnuru Venkat Reddy, Sita Rama Rao, Sanjeeva Reddy, and Ramana Reddy met in secret in Kupireddygudem. In the bushes, over 300 armed police officers took up position. Through the followers, this report quickly reached the nearby villages. Dharma Biksham was about to be fired by the police. Nonetheless, he was eventually apprehended and spent a considerable amount of time at Suryapet Prison. Throughout the Telangana Independence fight, Dharma Biksham put up with all kinds of torture, including being hung upside down and being thrashed.

He served in India's 10th and 11th Lok Sabhas and later rose to become a seasoned leader of the Communist Party of India. He was three times elected to the Assembly. He served as the Communist Party of India's representative for the Nalgonda constituency in Andhra Pradesh's Legislative Assembly and Parliament (CPI). He additionally served as Suryapet's state assembly representative in Hyderabad. Election triumphs under his leadership are legendary. He won the most majority in the Hyderabad State Assembly's first general elections in 1952. He was elected to the Andhra Pradesh Assembly in 1957 from the Nakrekal constituency and again in 1962 from Nalgonda. Dharma Bhiksham pulled off the extraordinary accomplishment of winning three successive elections from three separate constituencies. He is also one of the very few individuals who have been elected to two state assemblies, namely Hyderabad State (1952) and Andhra Pradesh (1957 & 1962). He was chosen to represent the Nalgonda parliamentary constituency in the 10th and 11th Lok Sabha as a Member of Parliament of India (MP) twice, in 1991 and 1996. He was the sole South Indian M.P. for the CPI in 1991. With a margin well over 76,000 votes, he defeated 480 opponents to win the election in 1996. Dharma Bhiksham supported labour unions. He organised employees and labourers from the many areas participating in the Nagarjuna Sagar project's construction, organising a historic walkout with one lakh people for their improved living conditions. He

also established trade unions for a number of non-organized employees, including hotel staff, and is widely known for helping the community of toddy tappers. As a result, Dharma Biksham contributed in a variety of ways to a number of Telanagana society's developmental initiatives.

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