

BELONGING, COEXISTENCE & FRACTURES

DOCUMENTING
STATE ATROCITIES AND
FRACTURED COEXISTENCE
IN TELANGANA



Association for
Protection of
Civil Rights

BELONGING, COEXISTENCE & FRACTURES

**DOCUMENTING
STATE ATROCITIES AND FRACTURED
COEXISTENCE IN TELANGANA**



**ASSOCIATION FOR PROTECTION
OF CIVIL RIGHTS (APCR)**

INDEX

I.	Foreword	5
II.	Acknowledgement	6
III.	Executive Summary	8
IV.	Methodology	10
V.	Introduction	11
VI.	Socio-Political and Economic History of Telangana	13
VII.	Demographic History and Migration Trends	15
VIII.	District-Wise History and Present Status	19
IX.	Additional Districts with Tension/History	34
X.	Preexisting Laws and Current Effects	41
XI.	Testimonies	46
XII.	Key Recommendations	78
XIII.	Conclusion	81

I. FOREWORD

This report was undertaken in response to the rising instances of communal tension, hate crimes, and social unrest in various parts of Telangana, particularly in areas where Adivasi, Dalit, Muslim, and oppressed caste communities live and work alongside one another. While these incidents are often presented in public discourse as isolated or spontaneous, our engagement on the ground shows that they are connected to deeper, longstanding issues of land, livelihoods, cultural identity, and political mobilisation.

The aim of this report is to document recurring patterns of violence, intimidation, and social polarisation, and to situate them within the broader social, economic, and political context of the region. The findings are based on field visits, discussions with affected communities, and consultations with local activists, researchers, and civil society groups. Our hope is to bring to light the experiences and perspectives that are often overlooked in mainstream narratives, and to highlight the structural conditions that enable violence and marginalisation.

We recognise that this report is not exhaustive. It offers only a partial perspective on a far larger and more complex set of realities. Many voices, especially those of women, young people, and marginalized community members, remain undocumented due to fear, social constraints, or lack of access. We also acknowledge that there may be unintentional errors or omissions in this report. We are open to correction, dialogue, and learning, and hope that this work serves as a starting point for further inquiry and engagement rather than a definitive account.

At its core, this report is guided by the belief that peace, justice, and dignity cannot be achieved by deepening divisions among marginalized communities. Communal polarisation often benefits those in positions of power while leaving ordinary people to bear the costs of violence, insecurity, and fear. We hope that this report contributes to greater understanding, encourages accountability, and supports collective efforts toward coexistence, solidarity, and the protection of vulnerable communities in Telangana.

II. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Reports and written documentation are essential for keeping records, preserving memory, and building repositories that can be returned to at moments when issues may no longer occupy the news cycle, yet continue to persist in people's lives. However, reports in and of themselves are never enough. As many in academia and activist spaces recognise, research and documentation may be produced with rigour and care, but if they are not sustained by the people who shape them and remain connected to the communities they speak of, such documents risk gathering dust—becoming inaccessible to the very publics for whom they were intended, and for whom they may matter in small and large, tangible and intangible ways.

The work on this report was led by a person who does not belong to any of the minority communities discussed here, and who comes from a position of considerable social privilege and a savarna caste background. This positionality may have produced blind spots within the report and its analysis—areas that may not have been adequately addressed, or may have been understood imperfectly despite sincere intent. We therefore invite and urge those engaging with this report to share the blind spots they notice, as well as any errors or inaccuracies. These documents can only become living documents through continued engagement, critique, rewriting, and unlearning. We would be deeply grateful for such feedback.

6

The team that shaped this report is diverse in its professional, class, caste, and gender locations. This work was carried out by people sitting in farms in their home villages; by those who made time for long conversations about the social and political contexts of Telangana while navigating personal difficulties; and by individuals working through illness, uncertainty, hope, and an unwavering commitment to see this report through. What brought everyone together was a shared desire to do justice to the task of holding up a mirror to inter-community relations between Adivasis and Muslims in Telangana—relations shaped not only by the communities themselves, but by larger political, economic, and ideological forces that often do not have their best interests at heart.

While there may be names unintentionally left out of this acknowledgement, we extend our sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to this report in any capacity, small or large.

We would like to express our gratitude to the APCR team members from Delhi and Telangana who came together to conceptualise and implement this report, including the fieldwork and the many follow-ups that followed. Some members of the field team have also recently joined APCR; we extend a warm welcome to them and look forward to continuing this collective work in the pursuit of justice and accountability.

Our thanks also go to those whose conversations, guidance, and insights shaped this report in critical ways. Without their intellectual and public engagement, this work would not have been possible. We are grateful to Vinay, Ayesha Minhaz, Meera Sanghamitra, Geddam Jhansi, and Ravi Kanneganti.

A special acknowledgement is due to Puli Kalpana, P. Shankar, and the Dalit Bahujan Front, who accompanied the ground team and played a crucial role in facilitating access to survivors and families affected by grave caste-based atrocities that continue to take place across Telangana.

It would be remiss not to acknowledge those who worked closely with the material—audio, text, and otherwise—and those who supported the team and the process in crucial ways. We extend our heartfelt thanks to Krishanu, Insha Arsh, Sainath Ganuwad, Swapnil Ware, and Ayyub Muhammad.

Finally, our deepest gratitude is reserved for the families and survivors of atrocities and hate crimes who chose to speak with us—who shared their stories, their grief, and their experiences of solidarity or, at times, devastating inaction by neighbours, state institutions, and the judicial system. To recount one's trauma with the hope that it might help prevent similar harm to others, or strengthen struggles for accountability and better systems, is an act of profound courage and generosity.

As with this report, we hold on to the belief that hate can only be countered by people from diverse backgrounds coming together—to listen, to learn, and to struggle collectively for a more inclusive, anti-caste, gender-just, and equitable world.

III. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report documents incidents of communal violence, hate crimes, and rising social polarisation across multiple districts of Telangana, particularly in regions where Adivasi, Muslim, Dalit, and other marginalised communities live in close proximity. Moving beyond event-based explanations, the report examines how small, local tensions are increasingly manufactured, amplified, and communalised through organised political intervention, primarily by right-wing groups and their local networks.

Drawing on field visits, interviews with survivors and families, discussions with community members and activists, and secondary research, the report finds that many incidents begin as limited disputes or everyday frictions—related to religious practice, local power dynamics, rumours, administrative decisions, or interpersonal conflicts. These situations, which might otherwise be resolved locally, are deliberately escalated through inflammatory speeches, misinformation, public mobilisations, and selective policing, transforming them into communal flashpoints.

Across districts, the report observes a pattern in which Adivasi, Muslim, and other minority communities are positioned against one another, despite sharing similar experiences of economic insecurity, weak access to state welfare, and vulnerability to administrative abuse. Right-wing organisations have systematically invested in exploiting these vulnerabilities, often working through cultural interventions, local leadership, and election-time mobilisation. The resulting polarisation serves political interests while diverting attention from structural issues such as unemployment, land alienation by the state or private actors, and the erosion of public services.

Issues such as land ownership and inter-community relationships appear in the report not as primary causes, but as narratives selectively invoked to legitimise hostility. In some locations, anxieties around land transfer or inter-faith relationships were raised during conversations; however, the findings suggest that these concerns are frequently magnified and framed conspiratorially by external actors, rather than emerging organically from sustained community conflict.

The report also highlights serious concerns regarding state response. In several cases, policing was delayed, excessive, or biased, with victims—particularly from Muslim, Dalit, and Adivasi communities—facing false cases, custodial violence, intimidation, or pressure to abandon legal remedies. Oversight mechanisms such as the SC/ST Commission and NHRC were found to be either inaccessible or ineffective on the ground, further contributing to impunity.

Importantly, the report does not portray communal relations in Telangana as uniformly fractured. In many districts, communities continue to coexist, interact, and resist polarisation despite sustained political pressure. Civil society groups, local activists, women, and youth have played a crucial role in supporting survivors, documenting abuses, and attempting to prevent escalation.

This report does not claim to be exhaustive. It offers a partial but grounded account of broader trends shaping communal relations in Telangana today. Its central argument is that communal violence in the state is not inevitable, nor driven primarily by communities themselves, but is increasingly produced and sustained through political strategies that benefit from division. The report is intended as a contribution to ongoing efforts to document and challenge communalisation, strengthen accountability, and support collective resistance rooted in justice, dignity, and coexistence.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The methodology comprises primary research (i.e., group interviews, semi-structured interviews¹, narrative data² collected from testimonies, official documents including copies of notices, FIRs, and letters) and secondary research (news articles, testimonies derived from therein). The data collection was done using primarily qualitative research methods, while the analysis and setting out of the larger context included mixed research methods, i.e., qualitative and quantitative.

The inclusion of secondary research data has ensured the inclusion of perspectives of involved persons who were otherwise difficult to reach out to in person. It has also ensured that the findings are contextualized based on an exhaustive foundation of evidence and perspectives, which is crucial, given the aftermath of the incidents and the tensions in different part of Telangana.

The fact-finding team documented the accounts of various persons involved in the incident and its aftermath, and recorded their testimonies, most of which have been anonymized for privacy, although those names have already appeared in media reports and notices/FIR copies.

1 Matthews, Bob and Liz Ross. "Chapter C5: Focus groups." *Research Methods: A Practical Guide for the Social Sciences*. Pearson Education Limited. Essex, England. (2010): pp. 218-233.

2 Ibid, 264-275.

V. INTRODUCTION

Telangana has a long and complex history shaped by land struggles, caste hierarchies, tribal resistance, and political movements. Large parts of the region, especially north Telangana, were once part of the Nizam's Hyderabad State, marked by feudal land relations and deep social inequalities. Adivasi communities such as Gonds, Kolams, Koyas, and others have lived in these forested regions for generations, with their own languages, cultural practices, and systems of life. Muslim communities have also been part of this region for centuries, particularly in towns and market centres, while Dalit and oppressed caste communities have sustained agrarian and informal economies through their labour. These communities have coexisted through shared histories of exploitation, survival, and resistance, long before the formation of Andhra Pradesh or the state of Telangana.

Telangana is also known for its strong history of resistance and political mobilisation. The Telangana armed struggle, communist movements, and peasant organising left a deep imprint on the region. For decades, these movements created political awareness and offered some protection against communal polarisation. However, over the last 15 to 20 years, this landscape has changed. Shifts in land ownership, employment opportunities, education, and political power have created new insecurities. These insecurities are increasingly being redirected into conflicts between communities rather than towards the structures and policies that produce inequality.

In recent years, northern Telangana has witnessed repeated incidents of violence, intimidation, and social tension involving Adivasi, Dalit, Muslim, and oppressed caste communities. These incidents are often presented as simple clashes between two groups, particularly as Adivasi versus Muslim conflicts. Such framings hide the deeper and more complicated realities on the ground. The tensions are shaped by struggles over land, jobs, reservations, political representation, and cultural identity, and are frequently intensified by organised political forces.

A major source of conflict in the region has been the question of Scheduled Tribe identity and access to reservations. The inclusion of Lambadas in the ST category, their relatively better access to education and political power, and their growing presence in state institutions have led to sharp tensions with other Adivasi communities such as Gonds and Kolams. Conflicts over land ownership, government jobs, livelihoods, and representation are often framed as community rivalries, even though they are rooted in unequal state policies and lack of meaningful redistribution.

At the same time, right-wing organisations have expanded their presence in tribal and rural areas through cultural, religious, and welfare activities. Adivasi religious practices have increasingly been reshaped, local languages and rituals have been altered, and new religious authorities and symbols have been introduced. These interventions often draw Adivasi communities into a broader Hindu identity while portraying Muslims and other minorities as outsiders or threats. This process has played a key role in deepening mistrust and creating conditions for violence.

Muslim communities in these regions have historically lived alongside Adivasi and Dalit populations, often without large-scale conflict. However, tensions tend to emerge when Muslims experience social or economic mobility—through land ownership, business, or inter-community relationships. Interfaith relationships, particularly involving women, allegations of land encroachment, and rumours around “love jihad” have become flashpoints for violence. These incidents are rarely spontaneous; they are shaped by sustained campaigns of misinformation, moral policing, and political mobilisation.

This report also finds that communal violence in Telangana is rarely limited to two communities alone. Oppressed castes, local elites, political leaders, and state institutions often play a decisive role in escalating or containing violence. Young people facing unemployment and uncertainty are frequently mobilised during moments of tension. Institutional responses—by the police, administration, and statutory bodies—are often delayed, biased, or inadequate, allowing impunity to persist.

Based on field visits, fact-finding, and engagement with affected communities in districts such as Komaram Bheem–Asifabad, Adilabad, Nirmal, Medak, and surrounding areas, this report documents patterns of violence, hate crimes, and social polarisation. It seeks to show that these incidents are not isolated events but part of a broader process of social engineering, political manipulation, and institutional failure.

By foregrounding the experiences of Adivasi, Dalit, and Muslim communities, this report aims to contribute to a clearer understanding of how tensions are manufactured, how they spread, and how they can be challenged. It argues that lasting solutions must go beyond law-and-order responses and address land rights, livelihood security, gender justice, cultural autonomy, and collective action among marginalized communities.

VI. SOCIO-POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC HISTORY OF TELANGANA

Telangana's socio-political and economic history is shaped by long-standing struggles over land, labour, political power, and regional identity. Contemporary conflicts in the region, including communal violence and the politicisation of inter-community relations, must be understood against this historical background. Telangana's past reveals how structural inequalities, uneven development, and political mobilisation have intersected with questions of identity and governance over time³.

Before Independence, Telangana was part of the princely Hyderabad State ruled by the Nizam. The agrarian economy was dominated by feudal landlords, locally known as durras or doras, who exercised extensive control over land and labour. Large sections of the rural population—particularly Dalits, lower-caste peasants, and Adivasi communities—were subjected to forced labour (vetti), high rents, and severe social oppression. Land ownership was highly concentrated, and access to justice was limited for marginalized communities⁴.

These conditions led to the Telangana Armed Peasant Struggle (1946–1951), one of the earliest and most significant agrarian uprisings in independent India. Led by the Communist Party of India, the movement mobilised peasants against feudal exploitation and authoritarian rule under the Nizam. At its height, the struggle spread across thousands of villages, redistributed land, challenged caste hierarchies, and established village-level self-governance. Although the movement was suppressed after Hyderabad's integration into the Indian Union, it permanently transformed rural political consciousness in the region⁵.

In 1956, Telangana was merged with Andhra State to form Andhra Pradesh following the recommendations of the States Reorganisation Commission. This merger was met with apprehension in Telangana, where there were concerns about political domination and economic neglect. Over subsequent decades, grievances emerged around water sharing, government employment, and public investment, contributing to regional discontent. The 1969 Telangana agitation reflected these concerns, as students and employees mobilised for greater autonomy and safeguards⁶.

From the late 1960s onwards, Telangana also became a significant centre of the Naxalite (Maoist) movement. Persistent land inequality, poor implementation of land reforms, caste oppression, and state neglect—particularly in forested and tribal regions—created conditions conducive to radical mobilisation. Districts such as Warangal, Karimnagar, Adilabad, Khammam (including

3 Ramachandra Guha, *India After Gandhi* (HarperCollins, 2007).

4 A. V. Krishna Rao, *History of Andhra Pradesh* (Sterling Publishers, 2010).

5 P. Sundarayya, *Telangana People's Struggle and Its Lessons* (CPI(M), 1972).

6 Government of India, *States Reorganisation Commission Report* (1955).

present-day Bhadradi Kothagudem), and parts of Nalgonda were known strongholds of Left-wing “extremist activity”. While the intensity of the movement has declined in recent years, its historical presence continues to shape governance and security approaches in these regions⁷.

The demand for a separate Telangana state gained renewed momentum in the early 2000s, drawing on decades of accumulated regional grievances. The Telangana statehood movement brought together students, civil society organisations, political parties, and cultural groups. The Telangana Joint Action Committee played a key role in coordinating mass protests and strikes. In 2014, Telangana was officially formed as India’s 29th state, marking the culmination of a prolonged struggle for political recognition and regional self-governance⁸.

Since statehood, Telangana has pursued rapid economic development, particularly in urban and industrial sectors. Despite these gains, structural inequalities remain pronounced, especially in rural and Adivasi-dominated areas. Issues of land alienation, forest rights, displacement, and access to livelihoods continue to affect marginalized communities, forming an important backdrop to contemporary social tensions⁹. The Forest Department presents challenges in day to day life of the tribal residents, they act as the police, the machinery functions similarly. This progression towards a police-like functioning is a legacy of their role in quashing the Naxal movement.

Human rights scholars such as K. Balagopal have offered critical frameworks for understanding social conflict in Telangana and the wider Andhra region. Balagopal argued that political and communal violence cannot be separated from underlying issues of land relations, caste hierarchy, and the denial of democratic rights. His work cautions against viewing social conflict purely through a communal or law-and-order lens, emphasising instead the structural conditions that allow such conflicts to be mobilised and redirected¹⁰.

Viewed in this historical context, recent incidents of communal violence in Telangana should not be treated as isolated events. Rather, they reflect a longer pattern in which economic insecurity, land disputes, and political mobilisation intersect with identity-based narratives. The deliberate pitting of one marginalized community against another obscures these structural roots and diverts attention from enduring issues of land, governance, and social justice that continue to shape the region.

7 K. Srinivasulu, *Caste, Class and Social Articulation in Andhra Pradesh* (Manohar, 2002).

8 I. Thirumali, writings on the Telangana movement; Government of India, *Andhra Pradesh Reorganisation Act* (2014).

9 Government of Telangana, Economic and Social Survey Reports (post-2014).

10 K. Balagopal, *Ear to the Ground: Selected Writings on Class and Caste* (Navayana, 2011).

VII. DEMOGRAPHIC HISTORY AND MIGRATION TRENDS

Telangana's demographic profile is marked not only by religious and caste diversity but also by significant internal differentiation within communities. These differences, shaped by occupations, regional histories, state policy, and migration, are crucial to understanding contemporary social tensions and the political mobilisation of identity. Simplistic portrayals of conflict as clashes between "communities" often obscure these layered realities, particularly in contexts where marginalized groups are positioned against one another despite shared histories of economic and social vulnerability¹¹.

Muslims in Telangana constitute approximately 12.7 per cent of the population, with concentrations in Hyderabad, parts of Medak, Nizamabad, Adilabad, and urbanising districts¹². However, the Muslim population is far from homogeneous. It includes multiple occupational and social groupings that historically emerged under the Hyderabad State and earlier Deccan polities.

Ashraf groups (such as Syeds, Shaikhs, Pathans, and Mughals) traditionally occupied positions of administrative, religious, or military authority under the Nizam. Alongside them are Ajlaf and Arzal groups, often referred to in contemporary policy discourse as Pasmanda Muslims, including communities such as Qureshis (butchers), Dhobis (washerfolk), Julahas (weavers), and other artisanal or service-based groups¹³. These groups historically faced social and economic marginalisation comparable to that experienced by Dalit and OBC communities among Hindus.

In Telangana, most Muslim communities are classified under the Backward Classes (BC) category for the purpose of affirmative action, though the internal hierarchies within Muslim society continue to shape access to education, employment, and political representation. Understanding these internal distinctions is important when analysing communal narratives that portray Muslims as a singular, economically dominant group, obscuring the reality of widespread precarity among working-class and artisanal Muslim communities. A similar kind of bifurcation exists even within the tribal groups in the state.

Telangana is home to a substantial Adivasi population, officially classified as Scheduled Tribes (STs), constituting approximately 9.3 per cent of the population¹⁴. Major Adivasi communities include Gonds, Kolams, Naikpods, Pardhans, Thotis, Koyas, Chenchus, and Lambadas (Banjaras). These communities are unevenly distributed across districts such as Adilabad, Bhadradi Kothagudem, Mulugu, Jayashankar Bhupalpally, and parts of Warangal.

11 Ramachandra Guha, *India After Gandhi* (HarperCollins, 2007)

12 Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, *Census of India 2011: Telangana*

13 Imtiaz Ahmad (ed.), *Caste and Social Stratification Among Muslims in India* (Manohar, 1978); Abusaleh Shariff, *Economic Conditions of Muslims in India* (OUP, 2016)

14 Office of the Registrar General & Census Commissioner, India, *Census of India 2011: Telangana*

Historically forest-dependent and agro-pastoral, many of these communities experienced systematic land alienation under colonial forest laws and later under post-independence conservation and development regimes. A part of the state was under Nizam rule until 1948 and the rest was under British occupation. Scholars note that Adivasi displacement in Telangana has been driven not only by state policies but also by informal land transfers, debt, and encroachment by non-tribal populations¹⁵. The land tenures enacted here were complicated, just below the superior landholders like the Velamas, some of the landholders just below them were



Kamas who were brought in from Andhra by the Nizam to bring the forest under cultivation. These processes continue to shape contemporary conflicts over land, forests, and local political power. Descendants of these groups continue to hold large amounts of lands in tribal areas. In the post-independent India, there was a huge and uncontrollable influx of capitalist and farmers mostly Savarna from the Delta and Coastal regions of Andhra Pradesh to interior lands near water sources in Telangana. In 1959 Andhra Pradesh government passed the Land Transfer Regulations which prohibited any land transfer from a Tribal to a Non Tribal individual. With this the large influx of settlers stopped but it came with another challenge. The non-advasis living in Tribal areas bear the burden of proof and need to show evidence that indicates that they bought the land before the Act came into place. This aspect particularly has been used to harass Muslim families and villages who have lived in the area for a long time.

The Lambadas (Banjaras) occupy a particularly complex position. They migrated from Maharashtra in two waves. Traditionally nomadic traders, they were notified as Scheduled Tribes in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, granting them access to ST reservations. However, this classification has been contested by other Adivasi groups, who argue that Lambadas' historical mobility and later sedentarisation distinguish them from forest-based tribes. Non-lambadas harbour anger due to the dominance of the Lambada community over land as well as welfare schemes. This intra-ST tension has periodically surfaced in political mobilisation and local conflicts¹⁶.

Beyond SC and ST groups, Telangana has a large population of Backward Class (BC) communities whose livelihoods have historically depended on agriculture, pastoralism, and artisanal work. These include Kurumas (shepherds), Gouds (toddy tappers), Munnur Kapus (peasant cultivators), Padmashalis (weavers), and Marathas. Most of these communities are classified under BC categories in Telangana, reflecting their historical exclusion from land ownership, education, and state power despite numerical strength¹⁷.

15 Virginius Xaxa, *State, Society and Tribes* (Pearson, 2008)

16 K. Srinivasulu, *Caste, Class and Social Articulation in Andhra Pradesh* (Manohar, 2002)

17 A. V. Krishna Rao, *History of Andhra Pradesh* (Sterling, 2010)

These communities occupy an intermediate position in the social hierarchy: neither historically “untouchable” nor dominant landholders, yet deeply affected by agrarian decline, mechanisation, and shrinking rural employment. Their economic vulnerability has increased in recent decades, contributing to migration and competition over local resources.

An important feature of India’s affirmative action system is that caste and community classifications vary by state, reflecting region-specific histories of social disadvantage. For example, the Lambadas are classified as STs in Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, but in Maharashtra, Banjaras are often categorised under Vimukta Jati and Nomadic Tribes (VJNT) rather than ST. Similarly, communities such as Gonds and Kolams are recognised as STs in both states, but differ in sub-classification and access to local benefits¹⁸. These differences arise from colonial ethnographic surveys, regional political negotiations, and post-independence state-level decisions on backwardness. As scholars note, these classifications are administrative tools rather than fixed reflections of social reality, and they often produce new hierarchies and contestations, particularly in border regions¹⁹.

Migration into Telangana from Maharashtra, Karnataka, and Chhattisgarh has been a long-standing phenomenon, particularly into northern districts such as Adilabad and Nirmal. Shared linguistic, cultural, and kinship ties, especially among Gond, Kolam, and Marathi-speaking communities, have facilitated cross-border movement for agricultural labour, forest work, and seasonal employment²⁰.

Post-independence agrarian distress, uneven development, and displacement due to irrigation and mining projects have intensified such migration. Migrants often carry their home-state caste or tribal classifications, which may not align neatly with Telangana’s reservation categories, leading to bureaucratic exclusion and local resentment. In such contexts, economic competition and administrative ambiguity can be mobilised through communal or ethnic narratives, obscuring shared material conditions of insecurity.

Since the 1970’s Lambadas from Maharashtra have migrated to Telangana in large numbers. Lambadas now form a large part of the total tribal population in the state, with over-representation in state bodies and administrations. The non-lambadas have led a movement for bifurcation in reservation which takes into account such disproportionate conditions of different tribal groups and proposes a proportional reservation scheme commensurable with representation and need. During our field visit we spoke to Ravi Kanneganti who shared “BJP and the RSS have infiltrated the non-lambada tribal communities and have benefitted from their collective work. RSS has *shakhas* in these areas and Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad is also active here, they run their schools, hostels and construct temples and have people on whatsapp groups. An attempt to Hinduise the non-lambadas.” Divisive groups who run the politics of hate are able to leverage such complicated intra-tribal dynamics that are further complicated by the state to their use. What the co-option

18 National Commission for Scheduled Tribes, Government of India reports; Government of Maharashtra, Social Justice Department notifications

19 Christophe Jaffrelot, *India’s Silent Revolution* (Permanent Black, 2003)

20 NSSO, Migration in India, 64th Round; Walter Fernandes, Development-Induced Displacement in India (2008)

by BJP of the non-lambada movement does is that they give the movement representatives by electing leaders from the community for some political positions and the demand eventually dies down.



The state has an equal role to play in further intensifying conflicts and contestations over land. Tribal owned land and assigned land has historically been allocated for industrialisation or other government projects. With assigned land comes a clause that it belongs with the families and can pass down as inheritance, but assigned land cannot be sold and the government can take the land back when it wants. Earlier they would give too low compensation or even sometimes no compensation, it was with the case of Mekala Pandu, that similar to patta land holders even the assigned land holders get

compensation as per market rate. The 2016 Land Acquisition Act has removed steps and has made it easier to acquire land for government use. Through such policies, agricultural land is under attack directly; if the government acquires 1 thousand acres of land, 4 thousand acres around it shall be used for real estate development. And because such large amounts of agricultural land is being taken for development, the labourers who tilled these lands are now unemployed, the landless labourers also do not get any compensation when such acquisitions are made. Such interventions of the government in corporate interests further aggravate the insecurities of land income and livelihood.

As K. Balagopal and other scholars have argued, when land rights, livelihoods, and state accountability remain unresolved, social anxieties are rarely expressed in purely economic terms. Instead, they are often reframed through religious or ethnic identities²¹. In Telangana, demographic change driven by migration, displacement, and agrarian decline has created conditions in which marginalized communities (Adivasis, Dalits, BC groups, and Muslims) can be positioned against one another fueled by extremist groups like RSS and Vanvasi Kalyan Ashram and their shadow organisations, despite facing overlapping forms of vulnerability.

Understanding the differentiated composition of these communities, and the historical reasons for their classification and migration, is therefore essential to analysing recent incidents of communal violence. Such an approach reveals how communalisation diverts attention from structural inequalities and provides breeding grounds for divisive and hate politics which reframes conflicts rooted in land, labour, and governance as conflicts between communities.

21 K. Balagopal, *Ear to the Ground* (Navayana, 2011)

VIII. DISTRICT-WISE HISTORY AND PRESENT STATUS

Hyderabad/Secunderabad

BALAPUR

In August 2025, Balapur, located in southern Hyderabad near the Old City and Chandrayangutta area, experienced prolonged tension following a dispute related to a masjid and adjoining waqf land. The issue centred around an earlier agreement that allowed Darul Uloom Nomania, headed by Maulana Akbar Khan, to run a madrasa on the waqf land and conduct five daily prayers at an existing masjid structure. For a period of time, this arrangement functioned smoothly, and relations among local residents remained largely peaceful.

The situation began to deteriorate when disputes arose over the management and control of the waqf property. What started as an internal issue within the Muslim community escalated after the mutawalli allegedly attempted to interfere with or undermine the agreed use of the land. These actions were widely perceived as being driven by personal or financial interests rather than community welfare. As a result, tensions deepened both within the Muslim community and between Muslim residents and sections of the local Hindu population.

Protests began to emerge targeting the continued presence of the madrasa, with demands that the chairman vacate the premises despite the investments made and the contractual understanding in place. Over time, right-wing groups became actively involved in mobilising protests at the site. Participants later acknowledged that the agitation was motivated largely by political and vote-bank considerations rather than genuine local grievances. This mobilisation transformed what was essentially a property and management dispute into a communal issue.

On 19 August 2025, Hindutva activists led by BJP leader Ramkrishna Reddy, along with BJP state secretary Srinivas Reddy and others, staged a dharna outside the madrasa. The protesters demanded the closure of the institution, alleging that it was being run illegally, that it housed Rohingya refugees, and that it caused inconvenience to local Hindu residents. The protest lasted for approximately two hours and included slogan-chanting such as “Jai Shri Ram,” along with openly anti-Muslim rhetoric. Although the police were present at the site, several residents and observers criticised the authorities for failing to intervene firmly against the provocative sloganeering.

Despite approaching higher authorities and Muslim political and community leaders for support, Maulana Akbar Khan reported receiving no meaningful intervention or relief. In the absence of effective administrative action and amid continued pressure, the decision was eventually taken to shift the madrasa to another location to ensure the safety of students and staff. The institution continues to operate elsewhere, while the dispute over the waqf property remains unresolved.

The Balapur incident demonstrates how disputes over waqf land, religious property, and contractual agreements can be rapidly escalated into communal flashpoints when combined with polarising political narratives and organised mobilisation. The role of right-wing groups in amplifying the conflict highlights the instrumentalisation of local disputes for ideological and electoral gains. The lack of timely and impartial intervention by administrative authorities and influential leaders has reinforced perceptions of injustice, forcing relocation rather than resolution. This case raises broader concerns about the protection of waqf properties, the autonomy of religious educational institutions, and the urgent need for stronger legal and administrative safeguards to prevent such disputes from being weaponised into communal conflict.

Medchal Malkajgiri

CHENGICHERLA

In Chengicherla, located in Medchal–Malkajgiri district, communal tension emerged around a place of worship following a dispute related to the use of loud DJ music during a religious event. The incident took place in a densely populated locality where a masjid and a temporary pandal erected for the Ganesh festival are situated in close proximity. The area is largely inhabited by Hindu and Muslim residents from marginalized and lower-caste backgrounds, many of whom are engaged in small businesses such as meat shops and other forms of local trade.

According to local accounts, the immediate trigger for the conflict was a request by Muslim residents to reduce the volume of the DJ music being played as part of the festival celebrations. This was followed by an alleged physical altercation involving a woman from the other community, which led to heated arguments and the rapid escalation of tensions. What might otherwise have remained a local dispute soon took on a communal dimension due to the charged religious context and the visibility of the conflict in a tightly packed neighbourhood.

Multiple First Information Reports were registered in connection with the incident. Some of the accused were released on bail after furnishing sureties, while three individuals, reportedly migrant residents originally from Bihar, left the locality and are believed to be evading the police. Their departure reflects the heightened sense of fear experienced by those with weaker social or political protection in moments of communal tension.

During the field visit, residents directly affected by the incident were consulted, along with local leaders such as Mazhar and Ibrahim, who played an important role in explaining the sequence of events and the broader social dynamics of the area. Discussions with members from both communities highlighted that, despite the recent violence and anxiety, people continue to live in close proximity and interact in everyday life. However, an undercurrent of mistrust and unease remains visible.

The Chengicherla incident illustrates how everyday coexistence between marginalized Hindu and Muslim communities can be disrupted by relatively minor disagreements when combined with religious symbolism and festival-related sensitivities. The close proximity of places of worship and the use of loud music create a volatile environment in which issues of space, respect, and noise quickly acquire communal meanings. The involvement of political actors and right-wing organisations, driven by vote-bank considerations, appears to have sustained and deepened polarisation rather than allowing space for local dialogue and resolution. At the same time, the continued cohabitation of both communities suggests that the social fabric, while strained, has not been fully ruptured, and that there remains scope for peace-building and confidence-building efforts.

Narayanpet

In Narayanpet district, interactions with local youth groups revealed a growing climate of intimidation surrounding efforts to work on issues of social justice, education, and employment. Members of these groups reported that their attempts to raise concerns about communal tensions and discrimination in the area have been met with targeted retaliation. Several individuals associated with this work have faced false criminal cases, while others have experienced damage to personal property, including vehicles and parts of their homes. In some instances, FIRs and case documents related to these incidents are available, pointing to a pattern of harassment aimed at discouraging dissent and community organising.

An impromptu interaction with women in the Utkoor area further highlighted how these tensions are affecting everyday life, particularly in educational spaces. Women spoke about discrimination in the distribution of scholarships and educational concessions, alleging that Hindu students receive a disproportionate share of benefits while Muslim students receive significantly less, despite similar levels of need. Such practices, they noted, deepen feelings of exclusion and contribute to long-term educational disadvantage for minority children.

The women also spoke about interfaith and inter-community relationships, describing them as genuine and rooted in everyday social interaction rather than provocation. However, the prevailing narrative around so-called “love jihad” has created an atmosphere of suspicion and hostility, making it increasingly difficult for such relationships to survive. Couples often face family pressure, social isolation, or threats of violence, leading many to abandon their relationships rather than risk harm.

Local leaders and youth activists expressed the view that Narayanpet is being deliberately used as a testing ground for communal polarisation by BJP-linked organisations such as the Vishwa Hindu Parishad and Bajrang Dal. According to them, methods of mobilisation and provocation trialled in Narayanpet are later replicated in nearby areas. They also pointed to the role of influential local professionals, including doctors, in shaping and spreading Hindutva narratives, not only within the district but also across other parts of Telangana. These dynamics have contributed to a sense that communal tensions in Narayanpet are not incidental but carefully cultivated, with significant implications for social cohesion, education, and the safety of those who challenge dominant narratives.

Medak

In Medak district, interactions with members of a madrasa committee brought forward concerns about what they described as selective policing and administrative harassment of the Muslim community, particularly around the time of Eid. The discussion referred to incidents where cattle kept in farmhouses for the purpose of Qurbani were targeted, with reports of farmhouses being attacked and cattle seized or removed. These actions, according to those consulted, created fear and uncertainty among community members during a religious festival.

Committee members pointed out that, in the period leading up to Eid, the administration routinely issues advisories discouraging Muslims from keeping cattle in their possession and urges them to restrict Qurbani to smaller animals. They questioned why such regulations and heightened scrutiny appear to be enforced primarily during Muslim festivals, while similar restrictions are not visibly applied during festivals or religious practices of other communities. This differential treatment was perceived as discriminatory and as an attempt to limit the religious practices of Muslims under the pretext of maintaining law and order.

The interview also reflected resentment over what was seen as inconsistency in state action. Reference was made to instances in other parts of the region where animal sacrifice reportedly takes place in non-Muslim religious contexts without attracting comparable administrative intervention. Such contrasts reinforced the belief that the law is applied unevenly, contributing to a sense of injustice and alienation.



Participants expressed that the conduct of the police and higher administrative authorities during Eid creates an atmosphere of fear rather than reassurance. Instead of facilitating peaceful observance of the festival, the heavy-handed approach was described as intimidating, leaving families anxious about raids, seizures, or legal action. This has had a broader impact on the community's sense of security and belonging.

Despite these grievances, those consulted emphasised their identification as citizens committed to the country and expressed a desire for equal treatment under the law. The Medak accounts point to a wider pattern in which routine religious practices are increasingly securitised, deepening mistrust between minority communities and state institutions, and turning festivals into moments of heightened vulnerability rather than celebration.

Nizamabad

In Nizamabad district, the death of Riyaz in what the police described as an encounter triggered serious public concern and objections from community members. According to the police version, Riyaz was involved in illegal activities such as circulating fake currency and selling stolen motorcycle parts, and was shot in self-defence while attempting to seize a police weapon. The family, however, strongly contested this account, describing the incident as a fake encounter and alleging severe custodial violence. Their claims were supported by the postmortem report, which indicated extensive injuries consistent with beating prior to death.

Family members reported that police violence extended beyond Riyaz to his wife, mother, and children. They described acts of extreme cruelty, including physical assault and the use of chilli powder, which left lasting physical and psychological trauma. Following the incident, the family travelled to Delhi to approach the National Human Rights Commission and the Women's Commission in search of justice. Despite these efforts, they continued to face obstacles, including difficulties in accessing the postmortem report required to obtain Riyaz's death certificate, further prolonging their distress.

In the aftermath of the incident, the family was offered various assurances by local leaders and government representatives, including a promise of a 2BHK house, financial assistance of two lakh rupees, and educational support for the children. Riyaz's son expressed an aspiration to join the army, a goal the family hopes can be supported through these commitments. At the same time, fear remains pervasive. The family has installed CCTV cameras at their home, and both they and their neighbours continue to live under a sense of unease. While the neighbourhood mourns Riyaz's death, the family has expressed reluctance to pursue a prolonged legal battle, citing exhaustion, fear of retaliation, and uncertainty about institutional support.

Interactions with Riyaz's wife and mother revealed deep emotional distress and a strong belief that the official narrative does not reflect what actually occurred. Local residents and leaders have provided moral and financial support, but this has also shaped the family's decision to rely on assurances rather than actively pursue judicial accountability. The police continue to maintain that the killing occurred in self-defence and have reiterated claims about Riyaz's alleged criminal involvement and role as an informer.

The Nizamabad case raises grave concerns about custodial violence, extra-judicial killings, and the use of disproportionate force, particularly against marginalized families. The contradiction between the police account and postmortem findings underscores the need for independent and transparent investigations. The family's vulnerability—marked by economic precarity, fear, and bureaucratic obstacles—highlights how access to justice is often out of reach for marginalized communities. The incident also points to the broader erosion of trust in law enforcement and the dangers of communal framing in cases involving Muslim victims. It underscores the urgent need for independent probes, timely access to postmortem reports, and strong witness and victim protection mechanisms to prevent families from abandoning legal processes due to intimidation or fatigue.

Nirmal

In Nirmal district, communal sensitivity remains present despite the absence of large-scale violence during the period of the visit. The visit coincided with panchayat elections, during which overt mobilisation and visible polarisation appeared restrained. However, residents spoke of recurring minor incidents and a steady undercurrent of tension shaped by inflammatory political rhetoric, particularly from BJP-linked actors and affiliates. While these incidents were often described as “small” or “manageable,” many felt that they contributed to an atmosphere of fear and mistrust that could easily escalate under different circumstances.

Group discussions with local residents suggested that the district is currently stable, with no immediate signs of mass communal mobilisation. At the same time, participants emphasised that repeated speeches and messaging by political figures have planted seeds of communal hostility, keeping the area in a state of latent tension. This has created a sense of alertness among residents, who remain wary despite the outward calm.

Beyond communal rhetoric, several structural issues affecting marginalized communities were raised. One lower-caste resident described an ongoing land dispute in which he alleged attempts by state-backed actors to take over his property. Despite repeated efforts, he reported receiving no meaningful administrative relief, highlighting the vulnerability of marginalized landholders and the lack of institutional support in such cases. These land-related conflicts were seen as a significant source of insecurity, particularly for Dalit and lower-caste families.

Another incident discussed involved alleged misbehaviour by a doctor, which escalated into a physical confrontation. In its aftermath, FIRs were filed against six to seven individuals, bail was denied, and rowdy sheets were reportedly opened against those involved. Those affected spoke of being unable to access legal assistance and facing prolonged legal uncertainty. The handling of the case was widely perceived as heavy-handed and disproportionate, reinforcing fears of police overreach and selective application of the law.

Residents also pointed to documentation-related issues faced by Muslim families in the district. Many reportedly lack proper documents or are unable to produce them when required, which further increases their vulnerability during police verification, administrative processes, or moments of heightened scrutiny. This lack of documentation compounds existing marginalisation and contributes to anxiety during periods of political or communal tension.

The situation in Nirmal illustrates how communal polarisation does not always



manifest through large-scale violence, but can persist through everyday intimidation, political messaging, and unresolved grievances. Longstanding issues such as caste-based land disputes, inadequate access to justice, and police excesses continue to erode trust in institutions. Historical incidents of violence, combined with recent experiences of administrative inaction and legal harassment, underscore the need for vigilance against organised incitement, stronger action against hate speech, and meaningful support for victims of both communal and caste-based injustice.

BHAINSA

Bhainsa, located in Nirmal district, remains one of the most communally sensitive areas in Telangana due to its long history of repeated riots and political polarisation. A roundtable discussion held with leaders from various political parties highlighted how past incidents of large-scale violence continue to shape everyday life in the town. Participants referred to a major riot that took place nearly two years ago, noting that its impact is still deeply felt, particularly among Muslim families who lost homes, livelihoods, and a sense of security.

Those present at the discussion emphasised that communal tensions in Bhainsa are often deliberately intensified during election periods. According to them, right-wing organisations exploit these moments to provoke hostility between Hindu and Muslim communities for political gain. Youth are frequently mobilised during such periods, only to suffer long-term consequences once violence subsides. Several participants pointed to a pattern in which Muslim neighbourhoods are targeted for vandalism and attacks, while police responses are perceived as biased in favour of the majority community. This is often followed by the filing of multiple criminal cases, many of which are alleged to be false or exaggerated, disproportionately against Muslim residents.

The continuing impact of these practices was illustrated through the case of a young man named Kashif, who works in a government hospital. Although he has secured employment, the regularisation of his job has been delayed due to an old case registered against him during a previous period of unrest. His situation reflects the broader reality faced by many young people in Bhainsa, whose futures remain uncertain because of cases linked to communal violence, regardless of their current conduct or aspirations.

Reference was also made to a particularly horrific incident in a nearby village, where a Muslim house was set on fire, resulting in the death of six members of the same family. Participants attributed this act to the climate of hatred fostered by sustained right-wing propaganda and the failure of institutions to intervene decisively against such violence. The memory of this incident continues to haunt the region and reinforces fears of repetition.

Community members expressed deep frustration and a sense of abandonment, repeatedly asking what forms of external support and intervention might be possible. They sought information about civil rights organisations and their past work, reflecting both desperation and a desire for accountability. Leaders across political affiliations agreed that restoring trust in Bhainsa would require more than temporary peacekeeping. They stressed the need for impartial investigations into past cases, review of false or fabricated charges, rehabilitation of affected youth, and strict

monitoring of hate speech and inflammatory political activity.

The situation in Bhainsa demonstrates how cycles of communal violence are sustained through electoral politics, biased policing, and the long-term criminalisation of marginalized youth. Without meaningful institutional accountability and sustained peace-building efforts, residents fear that each election cycle will continue to reopen old wounds and reproduce the same patterns of loss, fear, and injustice.

Adilabad

BHIM COLONY

In Bhim Colony, Adilabad, residents have been engaged in a long-standing struggle to secure legal title to the land they have occupied for nearly 25 years. Framing their demands as a fundamental right to shelter and dignity under Article 21 of the Indian Constitution, the community has undertaken highly visible actions, including a barefoot march from Adilabad to Hyderabad, to press the state government for official allotment. Amid these efforts, a public gathering of around 150 people organized by an associate named Vinod addressed core land rights issues, but also included inflammatory speeches and slogans targeting the Muslim community, particularly in the context of inter-faith marriages. This blending of legitimate advocacy with communal rhetoric diverted attention from the central land struggle and introduced the risk of heightened tensions in an area already sensitive to inter-community disputes.

During the visit, team members met with Ganesh, who highlighted systemic deficiencies in government-supported residential schools for SC/ST students. He described persistent corruption and bureaucratic barriers that block effective grievance redressal, leaving marginalized students without access to basic facilities and perpetuating inequalities despite constitutional protections. Ganesh expressed frustration over his limited ability to address these issues independently and sought collaborative support for monitoring and intervention. Separately, sensitive land matters in Jainoor, involving residents Tuba and Ikram, were discussed privately with Advocate Mohiuddin, reflecting ongoing legal proceedings and the importance of maintaining confidentiality to avoid prejudicing court outcomes.

Community leaders from Bhim Colony emphasized the urgency of formal land allotment, while Associate Vinod facilitated the gathering where both land rights advocacy and communal rhetoric were voiced. The combination of socio-economic demands and divisive messaging illustrates how legitimate grievances can be co-opted for broader communal purposes, potentially escalating tensions in districts like Adilabad where inter-community land disputes are frequent. Residents also pointed to the need for transparent land regularisation, legal support, and careful monitoring of public events to prevent the spread of hate speech alongside rights-based mobilization.

The Bhim Colony experience underscores wider challenges faced by Adivasi and marginalized communities in securing both land and access to quality education. Persistent corruption in SC/ST educational infrastructure deprives students of basic rights and undermines affirmative action policies. At the same time, the blending of communal narratives with socio-economic advocacy highlights the delicate balance required in supporting vulnerable communities: advancing their constitutional rights while ensuring that public mobilization does not inadvertently exacerbate inter-community conflict. Ethical fact-finding, discreet handling of sub-judice matters, and external advocacy play critical roles in safeguarding both the legal and social well-being of these communities.

ADILABAD, UTNOOR

In Utnoor, Adilabad district, discussions with a member of the SC/ST Commission provided insight into inter-community tensions, Adivasi concerns, and the mandate of the commission. The official emphasised government support for her work and the mechanisms available for addressing grievances, but offered limited detail on ongoing disputes, often responding with guarded optimism. This suggested a gap between institutional narratives and on-the-ground realities, underscoring the challenge of accessing candid information from official channels.



Later, a night meeting with local residents, including Mubarak Chaus and his sons, alongside Shakil and Intekhab, focused on the riots in Jainoor between Muslims and Adivasi groups. Conflicting accounts emerged regarding the causes of the violence. Mubarak depicted the situation prior to the riots as generally stable, while Intekhab stressed persistent land disputes as the underlying source of tension. All participants agreed that land scarcity and unresolved claims form the core of local disputes. Interfaith marriages, particularly involving Adivasi women and Muslim or upper-caste Hindu men, were viewed by some as attempts to acquire Adivasi property, reflecting deep-seated anxieties around inheritance and ownership.

The discussions also highlighted how recent violence in Jainoor, triggered by a sexual assault case, escalated into broader communal clashes. Muslim-owned shops, mosques, and vehicles were reportedly attacked during bandhs and protests led by Adivasi groups, illustrating how legal or personal disputes can quickly take on communal dimensions. Stakeholders' perspectives demonstrated both the resilience of local communities and the vulnerability of inter-community

relations, which can be manipulated by political or ideological interests.

The Utnoor case illustrates several key dynamics in Adilabad's tribal and minority landscape. Official narratives, while positive and structured, often conceal unresolved inter-community disputes. Divergent accounts from residents reveal how land scarcity can escalate into communal tension, particularly when combined with suspicions surrounding inter-community marriages. Political mobilisation and bandhs further exacerbate mistrust, highlighting the need for transparent land reforms, stronger enforcement of anti-atrocity laws, and proactive interventions to safeguard Adivasi rights. Independent verification of narratives through multi-stakeholder engagement is essential to reconcile conflicting accounts, promote equitable access to resources, and prevent disputes from transforming into recurring cycles of communal violence.

GUDIHAATNOOR

In Gudihatnoor, Adilabad district, a serious case of caste-based sexual violence highlighted the vulnerabilities faced by marginalized communities in rural Telangana. A minor girl from a Scheduled Tribe or Scheduled Caste background was subjected to sexual abuse, prompting the family to register a case under the POCSO Act as well as relevant sections of the ST/SC atrocity laws and local penal codes. The incident underscores how violence in these areas often intersects with caste discrimination, targeting the most vulnerable members of the community.

Stakeholder engagement revealed the determination of the victim's family to pursue justice despite socio-economic challenges, potential intimidation, and societal stigma. Meetings with the family allowed the fact-finding team to understand both the incident and the ongoing struggles to navigate the legal system. The survivor and her guardians conveyed a strong commitment to seeing the case through, reflecting resilience amid systemic barriers that often hinder effective redress.

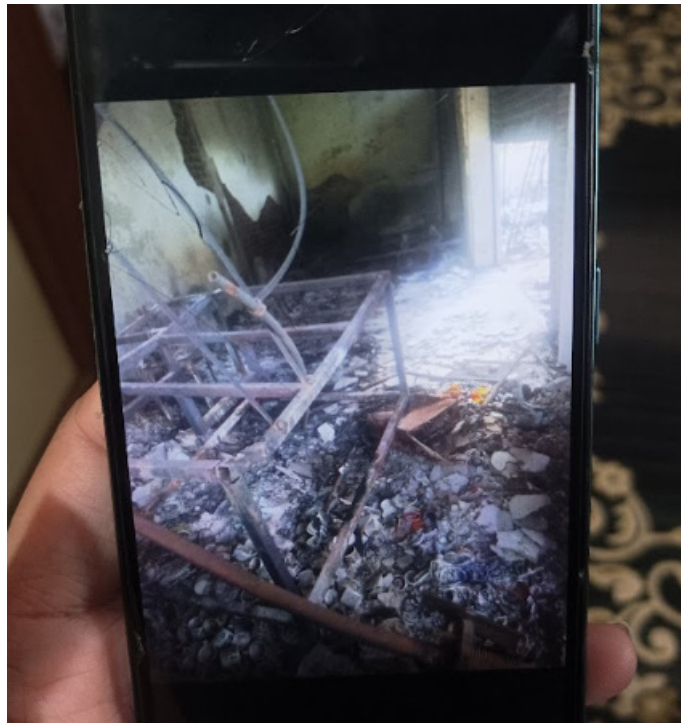
This case illustrates the critical importance of legal frameworks such as POCSO and the ST/SC Act in addressing sexual and caste-based violence. However, it also highlights systemic weaknesses, including delays in judicial proceedings, insufficient victim protection, and broader social attitudes that can discourage reporting or prolong legal battles. The Gudihatnoor incident reinforces the need for fast-track judicial mechanisms, robust legal aid, and proactive community sensitization to prevent similar abuses. It also demonstrates the role of monitoring and advocacy by organizations like APCR in ensuring that vulnerable girls and their families receive both justice and support while addressing the structural hierarchies that perpetuate such violence.

Kumuram Bheem Asifabad

JAINOOR

In Jainoor, Asifabad district, recent communal riots caused severe economic and social disruption for Muslim traders and families. Shops, showrooms, and a masjid were set on fire during the violence, resulting in estimated losses of 70–80 crore rupees. The unrest was triggered by a sexual assault allegation against an auto driver, Sheik Maqdoom, involving a tribal woman, but quickly escalated beyond the immediate case. Residents reported that the violence appeared planned, with police instructing Muslim shopkeepers to close the day prior for a Hindu festival procession, and right-wing groups such as the RSS and VHP allegedly mobilizing and training local tribals to foster hostility. While the area now shows no visible signs of the riots, the social and economic aftermath continues to affect the community.

Local Muslims described the massive devastation caused by targeted arson and emphasized the lack of government compensation, despite official announcements and revenue officials collecting loss data. Interviews revealed that non-local actors participated in the violence, pointing to orchestration rather than spontaneous escalation. Beyond the immediate trigger, long-standing land disputes arising from tribal land acts have displaced many settled Muslim families whose forefathers had lived there for generations. These structural issues, coupled with inter-faith marriages between Muslims and Adivasis or among Adivasi groups themselves, often serve as flashpoints, perceived by some as attempts to acquire land, further inflaming tensions.



Stakeholders consulted highlighted the role of political and external actors in amplifying local grievances into broader communal and economic attacks. They described both the practical hardships caused by displacement under tribal land acts and the recurring disputes around inter-community marriages, which are often interpreted as strategic moves to claim property. These dynamics illustrate how individual incidents, such as a sexual assault, can be rapidly communalized and politicized in contexts with underlying socio-economic and identity tensions.

The situation in Jainoor underscores the intertwined nature of property, identity, and communal relations in Telangana's tribal and minority areas. Failure to provide timely compensation erodes trust in administrative authorities, while unaddressed land disputes and inter-faith marriage suspicions create recurring flashpoints. Effective interventions require community dialogue,

legal safeguards, enforcement against hate speech, and impartial investigations to prevent similar episodes. Addressing both structural inequalities and immediate grievances is essential to rebuilding trust and reducing the risk of future communal flare-ups in the region.

KAGHAZNAGAR

In Easgaon village near Kagaznagar, a disturbing case of mob violence highlighted the challenges faced by young people in inter-community relationships. A 19-year-old youth named Abid was brutally assaulted and tied to a tree by local residents after being seen with a girl from another religious community. Despite Abid's insistence that there was no inappropriate conduct, rumors about their relationship escalated into a violent overnight attack. The assault continued from approximately 1:30 AM until police intervention around 8:00 AM the next morning, during which Abid's mother was also physically attacked and the police vehicle vandalized. The incident led to cases being registered under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, 2023, and the POCSO Act, while a counter-case was filed against the girl's family and local residents for obstruction and property damage.

Interviews with Abid and his mother provided a detailed account of the assault and the threats they faced from the mob. Law enforcement officers confirmed the registration of cross-cases, highlighting both the complexity and communal overtones of the incident. Abid maintains that the POCSO allegations are baseless, emphasizing the communal motivations behind the attack and expressing hope that justice will prevail through the courts. The case is presently under trial at the JFCM Court in Sirpur-T, scheduled for hearing on 7th January 2026.

The Easgaon incident illustrates the convergence of patriarchal norms, communal prejudice, and intolerance toward inter-community interactions. Protective legal provisions, such as the POCSO Act, can be misapplied in these contexts, weaponizing laws meant to safeguard children against consensual social interactions. The case underscores the urgent need for strict accountability against mob violence, sensitization of local police forces to inter-community youth relationships, and legal support for those falsely implicated. Abid's resilience amid societal hostility reflects both the personal trauma endured and the systemic failures to protect constitutional rights to dignity, liberty, and equality under Articles 14, 19, and 21 of the Indian Constitution.

IX. ADDITIONAL DISTRICTS WITH TENSION/HISTORY

Mahbubnagar²²

Mahbubnagar district has witnessed serious caste-based violence and social conflict that reflect entrenched caste hierarchies and resistance to inter-community assertion. In November 2025, the brutal murder of an 18-year-old woman named Bhavani, alleged to have been killed by her father and accomplices after she eloped with a Dalit youth from her village, sparked widespread outrage and underlined the dangers of caste-motivated reprisals tied to consensual relationships. The violent killing followed family opposition to their inter-caste marriage and elicited condemnation from civil society and police investigations, drawing attention to systemic hostility toward personal choice in relationships across caste lines. Recent incidents also include protests over alleged sexual assault and the arrest of a youth in late 2025, which triggered demonstrations by Dalit organisations in Mahbubnagar, underscoring unresolved concerns around gender-based violence and caste marginalisation. Additionally, municipal actions, such as the demolition of dozens of homes in urban areas labelled as illegal constructions, have added to perceptions of administrative insensitivity toward vulnerable populations, particularly when informal homeowners claim long residence and lack of prior notice. The district's social dynamics suggest a combination of caste tensions, economic insecurity, and contested governance that contribute to periodic outbreaks of conflict and protest.

22 Caste killing sparks outrage in Palamuru (Bhavani/Chandrasekhar case) <https://english.rtvlive.com/caste-killing-sparks-outrage-in-palamuru/>

Mahabubnagar farmers/BRS protests on Rythu Bharosa (context of rural distress) <https://telanganatoday.com/mahabubnagar-brs-workers-stage-protests-demanding-rs-15000-under-rythu-bharosa>

Wanaparthy²³

Wanaparthy's social tensions have been shaped less by overt communal violence and more by enduring agrarian distress, economic grievances, and political contestation, which occasionally spill into protest movements. Farmers in the district have repeatedly mobilised in large numbers to demand state support for agricultural inputs and procurement, including calls for the release of crop bonuses and pledges under the *Rythu Bharosa* scheme, along with loan waivers and fair crop procurement arrangements. These protests have involved direct actions on roads and in front of government offices, where farmers submitted representations and raised slogans highlighting their economic frustrations. Delays in land compensation have also drawn judicial scrutiny, with the Telangana High Court summoning top officials over failure to comply with orders to disburse payments to farmers whose land was acquired for public projects. Tensions have further escalated in localized disputes, such as attempts to rally farmers with political overtones, where party activists and elected representatives have clashed or criticised rival parties over perceived neglect of agricultural needs. While these movements are economic rather than communal in nature, they highlight the district's deep socio-economic strains that intersect with caste and community identities, particularly where land and livelihood security remain central concerns.

23 Wanaparthy farmers stage protest on Rythu Bharosa and bonus <https://telanganatoday.com/wanaparthy-farmers-stage-protest-demanding-rythu-bharosa-and-bonus>

Farmers stage protest demanding government procurement of stocks in Wanaparthy <https://telanganatoday.com/telangana-farmers-stage-protest-demanding-govet-to-procure-their-stocks-in-wanaparthy-narayanpet>

Telangana High Court summons officials over delayed compensation for farmers in Wanaparthy <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/telangana-high-court-summons-top-babus-for-compensation-delay-to-wanaparthy-farmers/articleshow/126710575.cms>

Rangareddy²⁴

In Rangareddy district, social tensions occasionally arise around land, development, and community disputes, even though large-scale communal violence is not prominent in recent reporting. Instances include incidents of protest against land use or infrastructure decisions that evoke local discontent. For example, farmers staged demonstrations outside the Rangareddy Collectorate, at times resorting to dramatic protests such as a farmer attempting self-immolation over perceived unfair land acquisition and lack of compensation. Such acts reveal the depth of frustration among farmers facing pressures from urban expansion and land reclassification without adequate redress. The district has also seen tensions around infrastructure projects in residential areas, where court interventions were necessary to halt contested developments after residents' welfare associations raised health and safety concerns. In addition, environmental conflicts have arisen, such as reported clashes over attempts to extend a road into the compound of a church in Janwada village, which sparked quarrels and highlighted how infrastructure decisions can sometimes spiral into larger communal or social disputes. Though not widespread communal violence, these incidents reflect how land, development, and identity dynamics intersect in Rangareddy's peri-urban and rural spaces.

24 Cow-protection related tension—vehicles with animal carcasses set on fire <https://www.indiatoday.in/india/tehangana/story/cow-protection-group-sets-on-fire-vehicles-carrying-animal-carcasses-mailardevpally-division-ranga-reddy-2737908-2025-06-09>

Example of infrastructure/land use dispute mischaracterised as social tension <https://organiser.org/2024/02/15/221994/bharat/tehangana-fact-check-churchgoers-obstruct-road-widening-project-in-janwada-twisted-as-attacks-on-scs/>

Nalgonda²⁵

Nalgonda district has a long history of caste-based violence that has shaped social and legal discourse around honour crimes and inter-community relationships. One of the best documented cases is the 2018 honour killing of Pranay Perumalla, a Dalit man murdered after marrying a woman from another caste. This case later resulted in convictions, including a death sentence for the primary accused in 2025, underscoring both the persistence of caste resistance to inter-caste unions and the role of the judiciary in addressing such crimes. The Pranay case became emblematic of systemic caste hierarchies and the struggle for legal accountability, drawing national attention and legal analysis. These dynamics situate Nalgonda as a district where historical patterns of caste conflict continue to influence present perceptions of social justice, equality, and the risks attached to defying community norms.

25 Pranay honour killing — death sentence & verdict <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/death-to-1-life-terms-to-6-in-pranay-honour-killing/articleshow/118858066.cms>

Background on Pranay Perumalla honour killing

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Killing_of_Pranay_Perumalla

Honor killing (Vadlakonda Krishna/Bunty) reported by ABP Live <https://news.abplive.com/news/india/telangana-dalit-man-found-dead-months-after-intercaste-marriage-wife-accuses-her-family-of-dishonour-killing-1747271>

Vikarabad²⁶

Vikarabad district has been a focal point of intense land conflict related to proposed industrial and pharmaceutical projects. In late 2024 and into 2025, protests against land acquisition for a large “pharma village” or special economic zone (SEZ) escalated into violent confrontations, with villagers in Lagacharla and neighbouring Dudyala mandals attacking district officials, including the collector and other authorities, during public hearings. Protesters pelted stones, chased officials, and clashed with deployed police, reflecting deep frustration over compulsory acquisition of fertile agricultural land without broad consent or compensation deemed fair by local farmers. At least 55 villagers were detained, and multiple FIRs were registered in connection with the violence. The National Human Rights Commission also took cognizance of complaints alleging harassment, torture, and false implication of protesting villagers, particularly members of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes, and Other Backward Classes, urging state authorities for a detailed report on the matter. In response to sustained resistance and legal challenges, district administration later withdrew certain land acquisition notifications, though tensions over land rights and industrial development remain a defining feature of Vikarabad’s social landscape.

26 Vikarabad violence during pharma land acquisition protests <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/vikarabad-violence-police-details-former-brs-mla-patnam-narender-reddy/articleshow/115176948.cms>

NHRC takes cognizance of harassment during Vikarabad land protests <https://nhrc.nic.in/media/press-release/nhrc-india-takes-cognizance-complaint-alleging-harassment-torture-and-false>

Land acquisition notification withdrawn in Vikarabad after resistance <https://telanganatoday.com/lagacherla-controversy-vikarabad-district-administration-withdraws-land-acquisition-notification>

Sangareddy²⁷

Sangareddy district has seen localised social and political tensions linked to land use and development pressures. Farmers and community leaders have protested infrastructure projects that they perceive as threatening agricultural land and livelihood security, such as the rerouting of the Regional Ring Road, which local representatives and farmers claimed would disproportionately affect poor and middle-class agricultural families. These protests involved vocal opposition to land acquisition processes and appealed to elected officials for protection of farming interests. While these tensions are rooted in economic and livelihood concerns rather than overt communal conflict, they intersect with community identities in Sangareddy's mixed rural landscape, where perceptions of inequitable development outcomes can fuel wider dissatisfaction.

27 Residents protest proposed dumpyard in Pyranagar (social tension) <https://www.newindianexpress.com/states/tehrangana/2025/feb/07/residents-of-pyranagar-protest-against-proposed-dumpyard-in-tehrangana-2812575.html>

Opposition to Regional Ring Road alignment affecting farmers (social/land tension) <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/hyderabad/farmers-hit-as-tehrangana-govt-changing-rrr-alignment-says-harish/articleshow/123907201.cms>

Mancherial²⁸

Mancherial district's social tensions are more visible in contexts of adivasi land rights, environmental governance, and resource allocation than in direct communal violence between religious groups. Reports have documented clashes between adivasi residents and forest officials over the demolition of huts and destruction of crops within the Kawal Tiger Reserve, where tribal communities protested actions they viewed as threatening their traditional land and livelihood security. These confrontations have sometimes turned violent and led to the detention of adivasi residents, illustrating how state conservation policies can clash with adivasi claims and ignite broader disputes over land, livelihood, and institutional accountability. These land and governance conflicts reflect underlying structural tensions that affect marginalized adivasi groups in Mancherial.

28 Tribal–forest official clash in Kawal Tiger Reserve <https://telanganatoday.com/tension-prevails-as-tribals-forest-officials-clash-in-mancherial>

Displaced tribals continue protest in Kawal Tiger Reserve <https://telanganatoday.com/displaced-tribals-continue-protest-stay-in-kawal-tiger-reserve-for-sixth-day>

X. PREEXISTING LAWS AND CURRENT EFFECTS

Constitutional right to life and land

The Supreme Court of India has expansively interpreted Article 21's right to life and personal liberty to include the right to shelter and adequate housing as essential to dignified existence, encompassing secure livelihood, stable residence, and protection from arbitrary eviction. Landmark judgments like *Olga Tellis v. Bombay Municipal Corporation* (1985)—which protected pavement dwellers by mandating resettlement before eviction—and *Chameli Singh v. State of U.P.* (1996)—which required fair compensation and rehabilitation in land acquisitions—established that evictions must follow due process. Recent “bulldozer” demolition cases, notably the November 2024 ruling in *In In Re: Directions in the Matter of Demolition of Structures (2024 INSC 866)*, further condemned extra-judicial property demolitions targeting minorities as unconstitutional under Articles 14 and 21, mandating 15-day notices, personal hearings, reasoned orders, and rehabilitation alternatives before any action, directly countering right-wing misuse of land disputes to displace vulnerable communities without legal recourse.

The Constitution also establishes a comprehensive scheme for protecting Adivasi/Scheduled Tribes land rights through Article 244(1)'s special administrative framework for Scheduled Areas (declared by the President), where Governors hold executive powers to prohibit land transfers/alienation to non-tribals, regulate allotments only to tribal members, control money-lending targeting STs, and modify/exempt ordinary central/state laws via regulations—supported by mandatory state-level Tribes Advisory Councils (at least 3/5th ST members) for welfare advice and local Gram Sabha consent requirements for land-related decisions. Complementing this, Article 19(5) permits reasonable restrictions on citizens' rights to acquire/hold property for ST protection, while Article 46 directs the State to promote educational/economic interests of weaker sections including STs (implicitly safeguarding land-based livelihoods). Article 338/338A (National/State Commissions for STs) monitor land rights implementation, and Article 243M (Part IX) exempts Scheduled Areas from standard Panchayat laws, extending self-governance protections—collectively forming a safeguard against dispossession while enabling tribal autonomy over ancestral domains.

These Constitutional protections for “Fifth Schedule” or “Scheduled Areas” are implemented through a series of state-specific regulations. In Telangana, tribal lands are governed by special regulations that severely restrict transfer of tribal land to non-tribals, notably the A.P. Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959 (hereinafter “1959 Regulation”) and its later amendments. These regulations empower Agency courts and revenue authorities to declare alienations to non-tribals “null and void”, cancel or revise non-tribal titles, and restore land to tribal communities, though implementation has been uneven and slow. It also creates a regime of presumptive

illegality in terms of land ownership by non-tribals in notified areas. Tensions arising out of its implementation are exacerbated by bureaucratic corruption and high-handedness. These tensions have also been exploited by Hindutva groups to polarise local communities along communal lines.

Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959

The Andhra Pradesh Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959, was enacted to curb rampant tribal land alienation through exploitative sales, mortgages, and leases that had dispossessed Scheduled Tribes (STs) of their economic base. The 1959 Regulation covers areas which are notified under the Fifth Schedule of the Constitution, which are referred to as Agency tracts or Agency areas under Section 2 of the Regulation. Its primary objective was to regulate transfers by declaring ST-to-non-ST transactions absolutely null and void under Section 3(1)(a), while creating a presumption of illegality for non-tribal possession via Section 3(1)(b), placing the burden of proof on possessors. Section 4 empowers Agents (Collectors/ADOs) to inquire suo motu, evict occupants, and restore lands to STs without Limitation Act constraints, fulfilling the Fifth Schedule's protective mandate. The long-term goal was tribal empowerment by preserving land as an inalienable resource, reinforced by later amendments and rules specified under the legislation.

While the 1959 Regulation has had some redistributive impact, it has also generated significant tensions due to administrative delayed and lopsided implementation. Long delays in government inquiries allow rich money lenders and non-tribals to continue occupying tribal lands illegally, while in districts like Adilabad, Jainoor (Asifabad), and Khammam generationally settled families, including Muslims, face the threat of evictions. Section 4's restoration powers, combined with Section 9's override of civil courts, have led to administrative evictions without compensation, fueling perceptions of bias and transforming land disputes into communal flashpoints. Right-wing narratives increasingly focus on attacking any sort of social relations between Muslim and Tribal communities as attempts to take over land, for instance framing interfaith marriages as "land grabs," culminating in riots like the violence in Jainoor in 2024. While essential for tribal protection, the manner of implementation of the 1959 Regulation exacerbates polarization, necessitating reforms like bona fide regularization and mediated dispute resolution to balance restitution with social harmony.

Forest rights and Adivasi livelihoods

- ◆ The Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act, 2006 (FRA) legally recognizes individual and community rights over forest land and resources for Adivasis and other traditional forest dwellers in Telangana. Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA) primarily under Section 3(1) legally recognizes individual and community rights of forest-dwelling Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (OTFDs) over forest land (habitation, cultivation) and resources (minor forest produce, grazing, fishing, community forest management). Section 4 prohibits evictions until claims are settled through Gram Sabha verification, while Section 5 mandates community consent for any relocation.

- ◆ Despite statutory recognition, tardy implementation means that large extents of land formally recognized by courts and committees have not been fully restored on the ground, intensifying insecurity in districts like Adilabad, Asifabad and other tribal belts referenced in the report.

State land and assigned land regimes

- ◆ The Telangana Land Revenue Act, 1317 F, vests ultimate ownership of all lands in the State, while allowing assignment of land for special purposes and empowering the State in matters of classification, assessment and resumption. Section 13 of the Act vests ultimate ownership of all lands—including public roads, water bodies, forests, and other properties wherever situated, along with all appertaining rights—in the State Government, subject only to pre-existing private rights legally established. This core provision enables the State to assign lands for special purposes (like cultivation or house sites for the landless poor), classify lands through surveys (Sections 14-18), assess and collect revenue (Sections 39-50), and resume or reassign government lands (Sections 19-22).
- ◆ The Telangana Assigned Lands (Prohibition of Transfers) Act, 1977 prohibits transfer of government-assigned land (for cultivation or house sites) by landless poor beneficiaries, deems contrary transfers void, and authorizes eviction and forfeiture, ostensibly to ensure the land remains with the intended poor allottees. Sections 3 and 4 of the Telangana Assigned Lands (Prohibition of Transfers) Act, 1977 form the core of these provisions: Section 3(1) prohibits any transfer (sale, gift, lease, mortgage, etc.) of government-assigned land given to landless poor persons for cultivation or house-sites, declaring all such transfers void ab initio (never legally valid), so no title passes to buyers or acquirers; Section 3(2) explicitly bars landless poor beneficiaries from transferring and others from acquiring such lands. Section 4 then authorizes the District Collector or authorized officer to inquire into violations, evict unauthorized occupants (after reasonable notice), forfeit crops, structures or improvements left behind, resume possession, and reassign to eligible poor persons, ensuring the redistributive intent is upheld. Section 5 adds appellate remedies.

Land acquisition, pattadar passbooks and documentation

- ◆ The Telangana Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Rules, 2014, made under the central 2013 Act, regulate compulsory acquisition, requiring compensation and rehabilitation when land is acquired for public purposes.
- ◆ The Telangana Rights in Land and Pattadar Pass Books Act and related rules aim to create conclusive, digitized records of land rights through pattadar passbooks, but gaps in documentation and access—especially among Muslims and lower-caste groups noted in the fact-finding—translate into heightened vulnerability to dispossession and denial of compensation.

Region specific land laws

1. Hyderabad-Secunderabad (Balapur)

Waqf land disputes like Balapur's madrasa eviction highlight general revenue laws and the Telangana Land Revenue Act, 1317 F, vesting State control over disputed properties, often without due process for minority institutions. Right-wing protests weaponised internal waqf management issues into anti-Muslim rhetoric, forcing relocation despite contractual rights, underscoring failure to enforce Article 21 protections against arbitrary dispossession.

2. Medchal Malkajgiri (Chengicherla)

Urban fringe tensions over space and noise near religious sites fall under municipal and revenue classification powers (Land Revenue Act, 1317 F), but lack of clear land titles for migrant and minority residents fuels vulnerability to FIRs and flight. Right-wing interventions deepened mistrust in mixed neighbourhoods, highlighting how undocumented occupation is exploited to target Muslims without invoking tribal-specific laws.

3. Narayanpet (Utkoor)

No explicit tribal land issues noted, but the general assigned lands regime under Telangana Assigned Lands (Prohibition of Transfers) Act, 1977 prohibits sales by landless poor beneficiaries, deeming transfers void—yet poor enforcement leaves lower-caste and Muslim youth exposed to false cases amid “love jihad” narratives. Right-wing testing of violence models here exploits documentation gaps to implicate activists, bypassing constitutional safeguards.

4. Nirmal (Bhainsa)

Land grabbing targeting lower-caste residents invokes Telangana Land Revenue Act for State resumption powers, but reported state-backed snatching without relief violates Article 21, while Muslim documentation deficits (noted explicitly) make them easy targets for riots and property destruction. In Bhainsa, right-wing election-time incitement turns historical riots into ongoing home losses for Muslims, with no Forest Rights Act or tribal transfer protections extending to non-ST minorities, like muslims, despite shared vulnerabilities.

5. Adilabad (Bhim Colony, Utnoor, Gudihatnoor)

- ◆ **Bhim Colony:** Demand for pattas after 25 years invokes assigned lands laws and Article 21 right to shelter.
- ◆ **Utnoor/Jainoor context:** **Andhra (Telangana Tribal Areas) Regulation, 1359 F** and **AP Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation, 1959 (Reg. 1/1959)** prohibit non-tribal transfers, void alienations and mandate restoration via agency courts—yet invoked conspiratorially against Muslim-Adivasi inter-marriages as “land grabs”.
- ◆ **Forest Rights Act, 2006 (FRA)** recognises Adivasi cultivation and community resource

rights, but implementation gaps leave even tribals insecure, amplifying right-wing narratives pitting them against Muslims.

6. Kumuram Bheem Asifabad (Jainoor)

The “two tribal land acts” of displacing long-settled Muslims refer to **1959 Scheduled Areas Land Transfer Regulation** (restricting non-ST purchases) and **1359 F Tribal Areas Regulation** (special administration), fuelling riots where RSS/VHP-trained tribals burned Muslim shops citing land fears. No compensation despite announcements breaches Article 21 rehabilitation duties, as right-wing mobilisation turns FRA-protected Adivasi grievances into minority-targeted arson.

Other districts (Mahbubnagar, Wanaparthy, Rangareddy, Nalgonda, Vikarabad, Sangareddy, Mancherial)

Where incomplete, general protections apply: Telangana Rights in Land and Pattadar Pass Books Act for title documentation (exacerbating Muslim vulnerabilities noted in Nirmal); Assigned Lands Act, 1977 against poor beneficiary transfers; and overarching Article 21 against arbitrary eviction. Right-wing groups consistently exploit these—especially in peri-urban and tribal interfaces—to frame Muslims as “encroachers”, inciting violence over pattas, waqf and assigned lands without due process.

These laws’ poor enforcement enables right-wing instrumentalisation, converting socio-economic disputes into hate crimes against minorities while sidelining Adivasi rights, demanding urgent reforms for impartial implementation.

XI. TESTIMONIES

Below are the testimonies of the eyewitnesses, survivors and victims and/or their family members across various districts. The testimonies have been repurposed for chronological coherence and clarity while retaining the details of what the persons had shared.

Names have been anonymized/changed for privacy reasons unless the person's name is already in the public domain.

Medak

01. **Doctor NK:** I have been running a hospital since 2009, and before that I operated a pharmacy starting in 1998. Throughout this period, I have worked with doctors and staff from different communities, most of whom are non-Muslims, and we have always maintained a professional and respectful work environment. I have never had disputes with people from any community, and I have always treated everyone with dignity.

On the day of the violence, a mob reached our hospital after attacking properties along the way. Before they arrived, hotels, gyms, and Muslim-owned establishments were being set on fire or vandalised. A young man named Kaif, who worked with us, came running to the hospital seeking treatment, which is when we realised that violence had broken out nearby. Shortly after that, the mob reached the hospital premises. This happened after sunset, at a time when nurses, attendants, patients, and their family members were present inside.

The mob damaged the hospital extensively. They broke computers, cardiac scan machines, monitors, CCTV cameras, air-conditioning units, and the hospital's signboard. They also vandalised the medical store outside the hospital. The destruction appeared deliberate and targeted. Only properties belonging to Muslims were attacked. We had no connection to the original issue or conflict that had taken place elsewhere, and there was no cattle-related matter or any other dispute involving us. In my view, the hospital was targeted only because it is owned by a Muslim.

When the mob was moving towards the hospital, the police did not stop them. I believe the violence was pre-planned. Some of the people involved were from neighbouring villages, not just locals. I later learned that those involved were coordinating through WhatsApp groups that operate every few kilometres. One of our doctors received a phone call warning him about the mob, after which he immediately left the area.

We filed a case of vandalism on the same day, naming around 25 people. After the incident, senior government officials, including those from the administration, visited the hospital, inspected the damage, and assured me that compensation would be provided. I have met

these officials four times since then, but I have not received any compensation so far. My total loss is approximately ₹50 lakh.

What pains me deeply is that I had done nothing wrong to deserve this. I cannot recall a single instance where I spoke rudely to anyone or treated anyone unfairly. Despite this, my hospital was attacked, my livelihood was damaged, and my patients and staff were traumatised. The next day, life in the area appeared to return to normal, but the losses we suffered remain unresolved.

I believe that the police could have intervened and prevented the attack but chose not to. In my understanding, this inaction occurred under political pressure. While the physical damage is significant, the fear and sense of injustice that remain are equally severe.

02. **Member of Madarsa-e-Arabia Madinat-ul-Uloom:** I am placing on record my account of the events surrounding the incident that took place on 22 April, in the early evening.

The incident occurred around 6:30 pm. By 10 pm, the situation had escalated into a full-scale attack. What later unfolded was not spontaneous—it was the result of planning that had been building for some time.

This area is now under a municipality. Earlier it was largely rural. The Muslim population here has steadily declined. At present, there are only about 12–14 Muslim households left; earlier there were nearly 500. Most families have shifted to cities because they believe there are no opportunities for education or livelihood here. Farming is common in the area, but many Muslims have either given away or lost their land over time.

On the day of the incident, a mob of around 300–400 people arrived. Some were local, but many were outsiders from nearby areas. We later identified that RSS-affiliated individuals were part of the mob. A local BJP leader, Pratap Reddy—who already has multiple cases registered against him—was also present in the mob.

The violence did not begin suddenly. It was linked to an ongoing land dispute. There is land in the northern part of the area which has been contested for nearly two years. Earlier, when a Muslim family that had shifted to the city attempted to bury a deceased family member here, they were initially prevented from doing so. Only after police intervention was the burial allowed. After that, attempts were made to take over the land—nearly 5 acres (around 10 bighas).



This land was originally donated by a former MLA for public purposes, including a college and government labour use, but no proper boundary was ever constructed. Over time, portions of this land—belonging to a dargah—were encroached upon, and structures like huts, a water tank, and even a hospital came up.

In this context, a false allegation was made that madrasa children had broken a religious idol. This allegation became the immediate trigger. The truth is that the children were new admissions. As per normal practice, new students are allowed some rest and movement before formal classes begin. They had gone to a nearby hill area, unaware that stones placed there would later be projected as idols. The idol that was shown as “broken” had already been damaged days earlier.

A local media person circulated false information. This was amplified on WhatsApp and Facebook. Slowly, a crowd began to gather. After 8 pm, the attack started. Doors were broken using iron rods. CCTV cameras captured the entire sequence of events.

It is important to note that nothing was looted. The intent was not theft but destruction and intimidation. Later, the police hurriedly conducted overnight cleaning, which appeared to be an attempt to hide their failure to control the violence.

During the attack, nearly 80–90 children were present in the madrasa. Out of fear, they locked themselves inside the masjid so that no one could enter. Police forces were stationed about 200 metres away, but only 2–4 constables were present on site. They were unable to control the situation.

When senior officers arrived, there was visible hesitation in using force. One officer was even pushed by the mob but still did not order a lathi-charge.

Importantly, no cases were registered against any Muslim individual from our side. However, the situation became so volatile that Muslim youth from Hyderabad rushed here in large numbers at night. Section 144 was imposed immediately to prevent further escalation.

Throughout this period, we repeatedly felt pressure to compromise. We were told that compensation would be given only if we agreed to settle the matter. I made it clear that I would not compromise.

“Wo log compromise ke liye bol rahe the, main compromise nahi karunga. 10 saal tak to chalna hai, uske baad dekhenge.”

Even now, despite multiple FIRs being registered and clear video evidence, most of the accused are out on bail. One of the main accused still comes to the area openly.

The administration’s behaviour during Eid and religious occasions further deepens our fear. It feels as though an atmosphere of intimidation is deliberately created.

“Eid ke mauke par dehshatgardi ka mahaul bana rahe hain.”

Despite everything, we have always lived alongside our Hindu neighbours. People from nearby areas still come to us for water, for medical help, and during emergencies. There has never been a history of Hindu-Muslim conflict here.

“Jab se ye pramandal bana hai, kabhi Hindu-Muslim ki ladai nahi hui. 40 saal me pehli baar RSS ki rally hui—wo bhi is ghatna ke baad.”

After the incident, fear gripped the children and their families. Nearly half the students were withdrawn by their parents. Many never returned.

Even so, our commitment to this country has not changed.

“Hum Hindustan ke shehri hain. Apne mulk ke liye jaan dene ko bhi tayyar hain.”



Medchal-Malkajgiri

03. **Usman:** Everything is alright now. At that time, it was the month of Ramzan. Near the masjid there is a slaughterhouse, where people clean and sell organs and animal parts. It was Holi, and a group was playing DJ music and dancing in front of the masjid.

Some young people from the masjid told them that it was time for namaz and requested them to stop the music for a while and play it later. They stopped initially, but during the namaz they again started playing the loud DJ.

It was election time, with MP elections approaching. Political groups benefit from communal violence during such times. They had already decided that they wanted some kind of conflict. There was a small scuffle between a woman and someone from the DJ group. This escalated very quickly, and within 5 to 10 minutes around 500 people had gathered there.

Muslims from nearby areas also gathered. After that, a communally driven rampage began. Muslim-owned properties were damaged and Muslims were beaten wherever they were found.

After this, I went and spoke with ministers and senior administrative officials. We were able to get the people who were detained released.

Local people are generally peace-loving and rarely clash with each other. There are certain people who follow a particular ideology, and they are the ones creating communal violence. We live in a democratic country and should respect one another and live together peacefully.

The people who incited and continued the violence were outsiders. Later, local people came and helped calm the situation.

There was a road blockade and a kind of lockdown for a few days after the incident. During that time, it was difficult even to go out to get food.

One of the major problems is language. They do not know Hindi or Telugu and speak the Lambadi language.

The police arrested 12 to 15 boys from both sides, and they were later released. This incident happened in March 2024. Young people do not always have the ability to judge what is right or wrong. If someone gives a call, they all gather. It is the responsibility of local leaders to intervene and guide the youth in such situations.

The people who follow BJP ideology are the ones creating these problems. WhatsApp groups are used to mobilise people for communal violence.

04. **Muhammad:** Cases were registered against both Hindus and Muslims following the incident. All the accused are currently out on bail and move around freely. There were a total of eleven accused persons. The cases were filed separately—Muslims had separate cases, and non-

Muslims had separate cases. Of the total accused, seven were non-Muslims.

This entire matter had been discussed beforehand. The local Congress leader, Angresh Yadav, was involved, and discussions had taken place with him. He had extended his support. The individuals involved were financially well-off. The area in question is known for drug activity, involving both men and women, and people from our own community are also involved in drug supply.

The locality is called Pittala. There is a masjid there, and people from that area often invite me for events such as 26th January celebrations. There was no earlier hostility between communities. The people who came during the incident were associated with BJP and RSS. A prior clash had taken place during Ramzan, around six months before this incident. That earlier matter involved a boy and a girl. A compromise was reached at that time, but resentment remained. One of the individuals involved was an RSS worker at the district level and is a local resident.

The girl involved in that earlier matter was above 18 years of age. That issue was closed. Soon after, Ramzan began. A few days into Ramzan, Holi took place. Holi celebrations and functions were organised, and later that same evening, a clash occurred between Hindus and Muslims. Some Muslim boys pushed a woman, which escalated the situation. The woman was an Adivasi woman from Maharashtra.

Following this, Section 144 was imposed. Before the clash occurred, I had spoken to a local leader and asked Muslim boys not to step out. I also told the leader that allegations were present on both sides and that violence was not justified, and that everyone needed to be made to understand this. RSS members were also present at the time. One boy sustained a hand injury. Eventually, that matter was closed.

After this, injustice began to take place. Over the phone, instructions were given to control law and order by detaining people from both sides. Some RSS members were saying that only Muslims should be jailed. During the month of Ramzan, Muslims were prevented from offering namaz. Police personnel stood there and told people that namaz could not be offered. Only two people were allowed to pray, but rumours were spread that namaz was completely banned.

I took permission and went there myself. I informed the authorities that rumours were being spread. After receiving permission, I offered namaz and gave a public message stating clearly that namaz could be offered. I communicated this through a video call and later made a video stating that prayers were allowed. This message circulated widely, reaching around 2,000 people, including many senior leaders.

Initially, non-Muslims created disturbance, and later Muslims attempted to gather but were stopped. Because they were stopped, people went to the police station and created a ruckus, resulting in a dominating and tense atmosphere. Later, I intervened and secured bail for six boys, after which the matter was closed.

The Holi-related incident and the earlier boy-girl issue were connected. Such tensions had been recurring intermittently. Around ten minutes before the clash, azaan was being given, and someone requested that loud sound be stopped for five minutes. Instead of agreeing, abuses were hurled and attempts were made to provoke people.

I again made a video after offering namaz. Subsequently, messages were circulated saying that non-locals should not come to offer namaz, and that outsiders create problems for locals. People were told to offer prayers only in their local masjids. After this message was conveyed, the call was ended.

Normally, recording videos during azaan or namaz is not permitted, but I did so because it was necessary to reassure people that the situation was under control. The issue had escalated to such an extent that it could have ignited violence across the entire city. If Muslims had reacted aggressively, it would have given Hindus an excuse to attack.

BJP leaders and MPs attempted to mobilise a large mob and enter the masjid. The situation could have deteriorated severely. Posters were not shared publicly online; they were circulated within Muslim groups, especially student groups. BJP supporters were the first to spread provocative material. Violence occurred first, and calls and messaging followed afterward.

When BJP MPs and leaders were arriving, I coordinated with our Congress in-charge. I took responsibility and managed to control the Muslim community. Leaders such as Raja Singh, Kishan Reddy, and Mandi Sanjay visited during this period. Elections followed soon after, and these leaders were successful.

The police support us because we organise milad, feed the poor, cook food, and spread positive messages. This place had remained closed for two years. On milad days, we invite the needy, and even people from Pittala basti come and eat. At present, the atmosphere is largely calm, although there is some influence of RSS.

Neighbourhood relations are generally good, and people live together peacefully. Those involved in the conflict were largely outsiders, not locals. There were one or two local RSS youths, but RSS primarily uses such incidents to mobilise youth from outside. These individuals are migrants from other cities who live here, burn scrap for a living, and spend their earnings on alcohol. That constitutes their daily life.

RSS instigates and provokes such individuals. They create divisions between communities. Locally, people do not engage in Hindu-Muslim conflict. Even now, during Ram Navami or Hanuman rallies, I advise Muslims to remain calm, respect festivals, and not react, even if slogans are raised. Outsiders often come during these rallies and shout slogans in front of Muslims, but I consistently urge restraint and peace.

Local youth are not well educated. Most have studied only up to the 8th, 9th, or 10th standard and run small businesses. RSS does not support education in this area.

My house is located behind this area. I interact with all communities, and I do not view

anyone with bias. In my understanding, RSS is the primary force instigating these tensions.

At present, the situation is normal. After 2023–24, no major incidents have occurred. Prior to elections, BJP and RSS attempted to create Hindu-Muslim tensions to remain in the media. They managed to do so for about 10–15 days but could not sustain it. State media did not significantly carry the issue, though some coverage did appear, including on NDTV.

A major crisis was ultimately averted. The incident involving the girl was exaggerated; it was more performative drama involving colours rather than a serious assault.

There is a vast difference between Adivasi communities living in forests and Adivasis who have lived in Hyderabad for over 200 years. The difference between these groups is significant.

05. **Nizam:** This incident took place in March 2024, around the time of Holi and Bakr-id. There was a boy who was intoxicated and playing loud music near the masjid. This led to a small altercation. What should have remained a minor issue was later deliberately turned into a Hindu–Muslim matter.

There were people who had come from outside the area who objected to the slaughtering of goats for Bakr-id. During this time, one Muslim boy was transporting cattle in his vehicle. His vehicle was set on fire.

The local community in this area has been living together peacefully for a long time, and even after the incident, there have been no issues among local residents. The local people themselves came forward and stated clearly that there was no problem between communities.

06. **Salman:** I have lived in this community for nearly 45 years, and the people here (both our families and those across from us) have grown up together like friends. We have shared the same neighbourhood for decades, but recently, political parties like the BJP and RSS have intervened, instigating conflict where there was none. They encouraged people to place sound boxes behind the mosque and play loud music, which caused a significant disturbance during our Asar and Maghrib prayers, as well as during Iftar.

When we went to ask them to stop the music for just fifteen minutes so we could pray, they refused. Despite the fight that followed, I want to be clear: we are still on speaking terms with our neighbours; we still live like friends. The real escalation happened because of outside interference; for instance, Kishan Reddy came here to take statements and stir the issue further.

Following the incident, cases were filed against 21 people. Eight of us were



arrested, while others, including myself, had to seek anticipatory bail. I was charged even though I wasn't actually involved in the fight. There is a lot of confusion in the FIRs; for example, the name "Sohail" is listed, but there are three or four people with that name here, and the police haven't clarified which one they mean. Some of the men involved, who were labourers from Bihar and Maharashtra, fled back to their home states out of fear.

The legal process has been a heavy burden. My bail cost me ₹20,000, and for others, the surety required is around ₹10,000 per head,. Many of the workers haven't surrendered or sought bail because they simply do not have the money.

The situation was further sensationalised by the media. It wasn't just on WhatsApp; it was spread on YouTube and even national channels like Aaj Tak. They even tried to file cases against us under the SC/ST Act, claiming the complainants were from those categories, though they are actually Pardi, which falls under OBC or other categories. We were recently told that those specific SC/ST charges have been removed.

Right now, we are trying to coordinate with those who fled to Bihar to get their details and arrange for their bail so they can have some peace of mind,. It is exhausting because even those of us who were just bystanders are being targeted, and the threat of arrest remains constant as long as these cases are open.



Ranga Reddy district

07. Balapur Madrasa Darul Uloom Nomaniya's Maulana:



I began my educational and religious work in the Sultanpur area, which was approximately two to two and a half kilometres from our previous location, after being approached by local residents multiple times to revive an ancient, deserted mosque,. Before moving, I ensured we signed a ten-year agreement with five specific conditions, the most critical being that there would be no interference in our administrative or educational affairs from the mutawalli, local committee, or local leaders. We operated peacefully for about two years, but during 2018–2019, the local president, Mohammed Rafi, sold several nearby plots and attempted to designate 200 yards of the mosque land for parking. When we attempted to construct a small room for a watchman on those 200 yards, a dispute was deliberately manufactured because Rafi incited the community by claiming the madrasa intended to grab the entire land,. This matter eventually reached DCP Sunita Madam, who initially pressured us to vacate to avoid communal tension, though CI Sudhakar and other police officers were very impressed by our organised management after visiting the premises. Despite the police support, Mohammed Rafi collaborated with BJP leaders to escalate the situation, leading to a notice from the Education Department claiming the madrasa was illegal and threatening a fine of ₹1 lakh per day,. I responded to this by citing Articles 19 and 25 of the Constitution, later discovering the notice was sent only due to political pressure rather than any genuine legal violation,. Around this time, our own advocate, Sameer Ali, began acting as a double agent by pressuring me to remove the madrasa's signboard and holding secret meetings with local leaders like Narsimha Reddy and Madhav Reddy at the police station to negotiate our exit,. Local Congress and TRS leaders offered us alternative land in Sharif Nagar, but they wanted us to occupy government land illegally and demanded to be included in our Trust, which I flatly refused. This refusal led to increased hostility, with leaders using foul language and even threatening my father at our home,. The opposition finally found their “golden opportunity” when a minor incident occurred where our vehicle's pipe slightly brushed a structure, which they used to create a 24-hour drama involving the police to force us out,. Following this orchestrated pressure, we were given just eight days to vacate, and local leaders like Narsimha Reddy provided ₹5 lakh as a supposed gift to help us set up elsewhere,. I used that money to renovate a rented building in Sharif Nagar where we have now shifted our 60 to 70 students. Currently, the Sultanpur mosque is managed by an imam appointed by the locals, but I still hold the original ten-year agreement and am considering seeking a court stay to return since our relocation was the result of intimidation and political manoeuvring.

Narayanpet

08. **Arshad Fazail:** My name is Arshad Fazail, I run a jewellery shop and am also the President of Jamaat-e-Islami Hind in Narayanpet. Over the last few years, the atmosphere in this town has shifted significantly. This is the only place in the state that elected a BJP Municipal Chairperson, and the communal tension often surfaces during festivals. I have witnessed a growing strategy to polarise the community, often orchestrated by influential “cream layer” professionals like doctors and teachers who are recruited to spread anti-Muslim narratives in rural areas. For instance, a local doctor named Sai Baba, whose clientele was 70% Muslim, once released a deeply poisonous video against our community, causing immense tension.

The most recent incident occurred during the Milad-un-Nabi festival, following the Ganesh Visarjan celebrations. We had planned a peaceful initiative to distribute 250 gift packets containing sweets and a book by Swami Lakshmi Shankaracharya about the life of Prophet Muhammad to our non-Muslim brothers to foster better understanding. I personally distributed many of these packets and even met with RSS and Bajrang Dal leaders who initially reacted positively. However, the timing was delicate because of ongoing disputes over the removal of orange Ganesh flags and the placement of green flags for our rally. One of my employees, a boy named Zubair, mistakenly distributed a gift to an Asha worker in a sensitive area called Palla late at night. This gesture was misinterpreted by locals as an attempt at religious conversion, leading to a mob of 250 to 300 people gathering. To prevent violence, the police took Zubair into custody and moved him to another station for his safety.

Although I was not present, I soon found myself targeted by local minority leaders who misguided the police into believing I was the mastermind behind the distribution. The police even told Zubair’s family that they would only release him if I was handed over. On the advice of Advocate Shafiullah Qadri, I travelled to Hyderabad to seek legal protection and file a writ petition. When our delegation met with the Superintendent of Police, he admitted that the material we distributed was not wrong and our intent was good, but he maintained that the timing and situation were inappropriate given the local tensions. Despite this admission, my name was eventually added to the chargesheet for trespass based on a confession statement. I even received calls from high-level BJP leaders who offered to help “compromise” the case, which felt like a strategic political move.

This incident is part of a larger, systematic effort to create fear and division through misinformation. Social media platforms like WhatsApp and YouTube are used to circulate misleading videos, such as one from Manipur that was falsely claimed to show Muslims attacking Hindus in Bangladesh, just to incite local anger. Furthermore, I have seen NGOs like Aarogya Vahini, which are funded by NRIs, provide free medical services in villages to build a “chain system” of influence that can be activated during elections or communal flashpoints. There is also a troubling pattern involving inter-community marriages that are exploited to stir up communal reactions, often leaving the women involved in difficult positions. These experiences have convinced me that we must establish a legal defence wing to train advocates and create awareness, ensuring we can counter these planned communal strategies through the justice system.

Mehboobnagar

09. **Govind anna:** I am from Mehboobnagar. For the last thirty years, I have been actively involved in movements for Dalit–Bahujan communities, including Scheduled Castes (SC), Scheduled Tribes (ST), Backward Classes (BC), and other marginalised groups. I work independently and especially with the Madia Gond community. I am connected with the organisation MRPS (Madiga Reservation Porata Samithi), and my work spans across multiple districts of Telangana, including Adilabad and surrounding regions.

Through my years of experience, I have seen how political power functions on the ground. When people from marginalised communities raise their voices, they are rarely heard. Even when we speak directly to elected representatives such as MLAs or sarpanches, there is no real response. On the surface, they may listen, but later they align with the police or with those in power. The police often call us to sit and talk, but no concrete action ever follows.

Across Telangana, many Adivasi communities live in different districts. In the northern districts like Adilabad, their presence is more visible, while in districts like Sangareddy there are fewer. There are several ST communities, including the Yerukala community, which also falls under Scheduled Tribe. The Yerukala people are not Lambadas. Lambadas are relatively more advanced socially and economically, while communities like Yerukala are far more backward and marginalized. Despite this, certain groups enjoy full reservation benefits, while others remain excluded or pushed further behind.

From my experience, whenever there is tension between communities, whether among Dalits, Adivasis, SCs, or STs, small issues are deliberately magnified and given a different angle. Ordinary disputes are turned into major conflicts. These situations do not arise naturally; they are created. Someone always benefits from this escalation. The result, however, is always the same: there is no justice.

Even when cases go to court, punishment is almost never given. Compensation may be announced or even distributed in some cases, but convictions do not happen. By the time matters reach the courts, victims and witnesses are intimidated. They are told not to speak. Pressure is applied from all sides. Corruption is widespread, and political power shields the perpetrators. I have seen cases where a man is killed, leaving a woman alone, and those responsible say openly, “*Hum dekh lenge*”—we will manage everything.

I regularly organise meetings, bringing together people from Dalit and ST communities, to discuss these realities. Recently, there have been extremely serious incidents. One such case involved a young couple from the Dalit (SC) community. The girl was from a Dalit family, and the boy was also from an SC community. They had married. The boy was abducted in the middle of the night, taken into the forest, petrol was poured on him, and he was burnt alive. This happened about a month ago, and he later died.

Although some news coverage appeared, the familiar pattern repeated itself. An FIR was registered, some people were arrested, and within a few months they were released. There

was no punishment. This has become a routine pattern in such cases.

I want to state clearly that these incidents are not being caused by minorities here. There is no such issue locally involving minorities. What we are seeing instead is violence directed at Dalits. During certain times, especially around festivals like Ram Navami, attempts are made to deliberately create disturbances and provoke conflict.

Most Dalit communities are landless. They do not own agricultural land. Many are forced to migrate to cities like Hyderabad, where they work in hotels or as daily-wage labourers. Even when some families have small pieces of assigned land, they lack the financial resources needed for cultivation. This economic vulnerability makes Dalits and Adivasis easy targets for exploitation and violence.

Meetings like this are extremely important. There is a strong need for coordination, collective discussion, and legal support. I am open to taking guidance from organisations like yours and working together to understand how these incidents occur and how they can be challenged effectively. Legal assistance is essential, but unity and sustained struggle are equally necessary.

Nizamabad

10. Riyaz's family member:

Reyaz was taken by the police on 17 October, a Friday, after he went out to offer prayers at around 2:30 pm. He did not return home that day and was reportedly intercepted by the police on the road. Following his detention, the family was effectively placed under house arrest. Female police personnel were stationed at their residence from Friday until the following Sunday. Reyaz's wife and other family members were taken on Friday night to a town location described as a Mahila Mandal, where they were detained until Saturday night.

According to the family, severe physical abuse was inflicted by the police on Reyaz's wife, mother, and children. The women allege that they were beaten so badly that they experienced intense pain in their legs and were unable to walk properly. They stated that police personnel forcibly removed their burqas, conducted intrusive checks, and took away their jewellery. They further alleged that chillies were inserted into their private parts and that they were beaten with shoes and sticks.

The children were also allegedly subjected to violence. The family stated that the police held the children by their necks, twisted their heads, and hung them upside down while applying chillies. One of the children was around seven years old at the time. These acts were described as deeply traumatic and physically painful.

The family also reported violations of their home and privacy. They stated that the police broke open the doors of the house despite it being locked from the inside. A newly purchased mobile phone belonging to Reyaz's wife was allegedly seized and has not been returned. The family claims the police have continued to say that they are "searching" for the phone.

The family strongly disputes the official police narrative regarding Reyaz's death. While the police claimed that he was killed in an encounter or while attempting to snatch a weapon, the family pointed to visible bullet injuries and signs of severe physical torture on his body. They described injuries including a broken neck and damage to his nose and mouth. The family further alleged that some police personnel celebrated Reyaz's death, including reports of officers dancing. They stated that the authorities have refused to provide them with the post-mortem report and did not allow access to CCTV footage from nearby shops in the area where Reyaz was taken.

After the incident, several political leaders and organisations provided financial assistance to the family. Leaders from the BRS reportedly provided ₹5 lakh. A Congress leader provided ₹5 lakh and assured that the children's school fees would be covered until Class 5. Representatives associated with the NHRC also provided ₹5 lakh each. In addition to monetary support, the family was promised a double-bedroom government flat and a government job for Reyaz's wife. However, these promises have not yet been fulfilled, with officials reportedly citing the upcoming elections as the reason for the delay.

Representatives from the Association for Protection of Civil Rights (APCR) and other activists have been in conversation with the family and have encouraged them to pursue legal action. A case was reportedly filed with the National Human Rights Commission in Delhi, but there has been no update for over a month. No complaints have yet been filed with the Women's Commission or the Child Protection Commission.

The family described being under immense fear and pressure. Reyaz's wife's parents are reportedly hesitant to pursue the case further due to fear of continued police harassment and a belief that justice should be left to God. Activists involved in the discussions urged Reyaz's wife to show courage and continue seeking justice, stressing that financial assistance alone cannot substitute accountability. They argued that silence would only enable further abuse by the police, both against this family and others, and emphasized the importance of legal action to challenge what they described as illegal and inhumane conduct.

The family is economically vulnerable and lives in a rented house. They had earlier lived in Armour. Reyaz was approximately 28–30 years old at the time of his death. His wife has studied up to the second year in Urdu medium. The couple has two children, a daughter studying in the third class and a son studying in the second class.

Nirmal

11. Kashif's case, Bhainsa town:

Another man narrates that in his village a road was supposed to pass alongside his farmland. He had agreed to a 13-foot-wide road. However, the Reddy people of the village - that is, the upper-caste people, decided that the road should be 18 feet wide and insisted on it. In the process, they completely filled up the canal that ran next to his land. One day, while doing this, they gathered the entire village and went onto his farmland.

The Reddys went to the house of every person from their own community in the village and told them that if anyone did not come, they would be fined ₹500. Because of this, the entire village gathered and came to his farm. It was clear to him that they had come prepared for violence. Therefore, he did not go to the spot and instead tried to lodge a complaint with the SP (Superintendent of Police).

However, due to the political connections and influence these people have, they had already instructed the local leaders and the police. As a result, the police were not even willing to register his complaint.

This same man had earlier donated two gunthas of his own land to the villagers to build a Hanuman temple. He did not take any money for it; he gave the land for free. Now, when the issue of the road passing through his farmland has arisen, all these upper-caste people have come together and are using intimidation. When he goes to file a complaint, no one registers it.

Dada says that just like in old films where Dalits were abused and treated in a way that no one paid attention to them, he is experiencing the same treatment now—no one is listening to them, because phone calls are coming from higher authorities everywhere. Due to this, no one is paying attention to their problem.

On the other hand, his son, who is around 24–25 years old, posts statuses and inspirational quotes on the phone such as: *“If you build a temple, you will create beggars; but if you build a school, you will create scholars.”* Someone told the SP about this, saying that this young man speaks against all Hindu gods and deities. So when they went to file a complaint, the woman officer said to him, “You write against all Hindu gods and goddesses. why should we listen to you?” In this manner, his land issue was dismissed.

Later, they took this matter to the SC–ST Commission. However, the police only registered a simple complaint under the BNS. They did not register an atrocity case. Even after insisting that this was an atrocity and that an atrocity complaint should be filed, the police refused. They only registered a basic BNS complaint.

He further says that they work for the people in the village. When others saw this, they felt that he might influence votes during elections. Because of this fear, they socially boycotted him.

Out of anger, this time they voted against them. It was a general seat, but they collectively decided to vote against those people. Whenever they file complaints or cases, the response is straightforward social boycott.

Even the FIR that has now been registered was done only after ten days. Initially, when they complained, the police refused to register the FIR. Only when people from surrounding villages came together, gathered collectively, and went to the police station, did the police register the complaint under pressure.

Adilabad

12. **Ahmed:** I am speaking as someone from Adilabad who has seen this situation unfold closely. What happened here did not begin suddenly. For months before the violence, businesses were shut, markets were closed, and people were threatened. When livelihoods are blocked, it affects not just one person but entire families—Adivasi families, Muslim families, everyone who depends on daily work to survive. If someone's business is forcibly shut down, fear spreads, and retaliation becomes inevitable. This cannot continue indefinitely.

When we tried to understand how this dispute began, it became clear that the real issue was not religious. At its root, there has long been tension between Lambada and Gond communities, especially around reservation benefits, access to loans, and economic dominance. Lambadas often take loans in the names of Gonds and trap them in debt. This conflict has existed for a long time. But people knew how to divert this issue and turn it into something else. That is how it was converted into a Hindu–Muslim and Adivasi–Muslim conflict.

The woman whose assault became the trigger for violence herself said she was not attacked. She later surrendered voluntarily. Despite this, churches were damaged, shops were burnt, and destruction took place openly, even while the police were present. Entire markets were looted and set on fire. Most of the people involved in the violence were not local villagers; they were outsiders brought in tractors from nearby regions, some not even from this district or state. Local people suffered the consequences, while outsiders escaped.

The damage caused was immense. Shops were completely destroyed, livelihoods were wiped out, and families had nothing left. Many young boys were arrested, and their families had to sell household items and even gold to secure bail. Those with money did not come forward to help; the burden fell entirely on ordinary people. False information was also spread to activists and organisations, claiming the situation was normal when it was not.

During the elections, this situation worsened. Political pressure, intimidation, and threats were used to influence voting. Business competition, especially in markets dominated by Banjara traders, was turned into a communal issue. Old rumours were revived, including claims that Muslims were marrying Adivasi women to take land. These are not new allegations and are not limited to any one community; exploitation has happened across castes. But only Muslims are singled out and blamed. This selective targeting is deliberate.

Another major concern we raised was the systematic influence of RSS organisations among Adivasi youth. Alcohol, money, and religious symbolism are being used to draw young people into a manufactured Hindu identity. Festivals that were never part of local culture are now promoted aggressively. Children between 18 and 30 are being targeted, trained, and mobilised. Hatred is being planted slowly. Earlier generations lived with mutual trust, but today's youth are being pulled into divisive politics.

We also spoke about fear. Fear is now part of daily life. Police presence is concentrated near mosques, not to protect but to control. Any new disturbance immediately turns toward

Muslim localities. Even when deaths occurred later due to illness, rumours were spread to inflame anger. The atmosphere remains tense, especially during elections.

Despite everything, we believe that coexistence is still possible. Many Gond customers still come to Muslim shops with trust. Relationships built over decades have not disappeared entirely. But if people stop talking to each other, if educated and conscious people withdraw, others will step in to provoke and manipulate. Peace does not survive on its own, it requires effort.

The real losses were to businesses, not homes. Legal help, documentation, and accountability, especially from the police and political actors, are urgently needed.

Our main message was this: violence was engineered, not spontaneous. Economic competition, reservation conflicts, and political interests were deliberately communalised. Outsiders were brought in, local harmony was broken, and ordinary people paid the price. If we do not address the real issues: land, livelihood, youth manipulation, and political accountability, this cycle will repeat.

13. **From a public program gathering in Bhim Colony:** We gathered here in Bhim Colony to speak openly about the problems our community is facing. At the beginning of the programme, an elderly member of our community spoke and requested help with the serious issues related to land acquisition. He asked that advocates assist us by approaching the High Court, so that some form of relief or protection can be secured for our lands and our families.

This meeting was not meant to be a formal speech programme, but a space for discussion. We were reminded that we fought together for a separate Telangana and achieved it through struggle. That history shows us that justice does not come automatically—it comes only when people fight for their rights. If we do not raise our voices, our problems will remain unresolved.

We spoke about how, even today, many basic issues in our colony continue to exist. Families here do not have proper sanitation, electricity, drainage, or safe toilet facilities for women. When we approach the police to file complaints about these everyday problems, our complaints are often not registered. Despite voting for our representatives and placing our trust in them, they have failed to take responsibility for our living conditions.

We were told clearly that the people we voted for are accountable to us. Because they received our votes, it is their duty to ensure water, electricity, cleanliness, and dignity in our lives. If they do not fulfill this responsibility, then we will have to secure these rights through collective struggle. We were encouraged to attend the upcoming public hearing in Hyderabad and raise these issues directly, so they can no longer be ignored.

Another speaker from the Dalit–Bahujan Front addressed us and reminded us that we are not asking for power, positions, or wealth. We are not demanding someone else’s land, vehicles, MLA posts, MP seats, or the Chief Minister’s chair. We are only asking for our basic rights—the minimum conditions required to live an ordinary and dignified life. This land belongs to us; we are the original inhabitants, and we are only asking for what is rightfully ours.

Kumuram Bheem - Asifabad

14. Jainoor residents' life and property losses post the 2024 incident and subsequent rioting were assessed and discussed in a conversation with some of them:

I am speaking as a resident of Jainoor, along with others from our community who were directly affected by the violence of 4 September and everything that followed. After the incident, we were called to the Secretariat and met three ministers. We were assured that ₹16.5 crore had been sanctioned as compensation. More than a year has passed since then, and not a single rupee has reached us. We have met officials from several departments, including Minority Welfare, multiple times. Funds were raised by civil society groups and individuals, but no government compensation has been disbursed.

Instead, around 14 to 17 men from the Muslim community have been implicated in cases. Because cases were registered both on the day of the incident and earlier during the Parliament election period, their names have reportedly been entered into police surveillance records, affecting their ability to work and live normally.

What happened on 4 September was not spontaneous. It was pre-planned. Attempts were made earlier, but they could not carry it out then. The tension had been building since the Parliament election, when a quarrel took place between groups. After that, BJP–RSS elements openly said they would take revenge. On the day of the election itself, organised groups were already stationed outside Jainoor. A fight broke out between Gond and Muslim youth, and people from both sides were injured. When injured Muslim youth went to the police station to file a complaint, they were told that an ST candidate had been injured, and a counter-complaint was registered naming around 17 Muslims. From there, things escalated.

After that, there were repeated provocations—asking us to close shops during Ram Navami and other Hindu festivals, stone-pelting while shouting “Jai Shri Ram,” and intimidation. RSS-linked shadow organisations had already been active in the area for years, training people in conducting pujas and Hindu festivals. This organisational groundwork had been laid long before the violence.

Lambadas are already a largely Hinduized group, and Banjaras are a denotified tribe.

“Ek vaakhya hua, lekin uski haqeeqat ek hai—usko istemaal karke Adivasi groups ko bhadkaanaa alag baat hai.”

A single incident was deliberately used to provoke Adivasi communities against Muslims. RSS pracharaks have worked here for a long time, and this time they openly instigated violence. The mob came prepared, carrying petrol bottles, sprinkling fuel from below, and setting shops on fire from the inside. Minority-owned shops were identified and mapped in advance. The mob included some local Gond STs, but also large numbers of outsiders from distant areas.

Another major narrative used to provoke people is around tribal land laws. False claims are made that Muslims are trying to capture Adivasi land or that tribal protection laws require non-Adivasis to be removed. This is not true. The 1964 and 1970 Acts prohibit the sale of tribal land to non-tribals; they do not mandate the removal of non-Adivasis who were already living there. Muslim families have lived here since before the 1950s, some even since the 19th century. *“Humko ‘nahi rehna’ bolke koi Act nahi bana.”* Despite this, cases are filed accusing Muslim landowners of land capture. Because most old transactions were oral and undocumented, cases now depend heavily on the ideology or leanings of judges. These disputes have only emerged in the last four to five years.

Another false narrative spread is that Muslim men marry tribal women to grab land. We do not have a single documented case of this. In neighbouring tribal regions, women often do not inherit land at all. *“Ye bilkul bebuniyaad baat hai.”* Land here is also not very valuable, and after the violence its value has fallen further. No one wants to buy land here now. *“Lambadas ka gussa hum par nikal rahe hain.”*

There is no permanent peace committee in Jainoor. Police only form temporary peace committees once or twice a year during Ganpati. *“Ek coordination committee honi chahiye, lekin hai nahi.”* The violence was one-sided, not a clash. There were no deaths on 4 September. The day before, police issued an advisory asking shops to close because of a procession. Many families had gone out of the village. Around two to three thousand people gathered outside Jainoor and entered the village through the police station, while the SP and DSP were present. *“Aisa lag raha tha jaise koi VIP procession ho.”*

When shops and houses were burning, we begged officials to call the fire brigade. We were told none was available, even though a fire engine was parked nearby. Only after repeated pleading did they act. None of the police officers were prosecuted. Instead, they were transferred or sent to the police academy, and some were later promoted.

I am Muhammad. I lost around ₹80–85 lakh in my clothing business. I was inside my house because of police instructions. Policemen were stationed outside, yet no one warned us when shops were being torched. Imran’s hardware and general store was burnt completely. Another shop started decades ago by Sahil’s father was reduced to ashes. One person lost ₹20–25 lakh in a clothing shop. Ayyub’s general store was looted first and then burned, even his documents were destroyed. Goods were loaded into trucks and tractors and taken away.

Nadeem’s mobile shop in the commercial complex suffered losses of more than ₹2.3 crore. Many shops supported two to three families each, including workers and their dependents. Government surveys identified 118 people eligible for compensation, but nothing has been paid. In the absence of compensation, people were forced to take heavy loans to restart livelihoods. Some could not return to business at all.

We filed separate complaints, but the police clubbed around 120 complaints into just three or four FIRs. The main conspirators do not have cases against them, while random arrests were made from our community. We do not even know whether a chargesheet has been filed.

After the incident, the administration prevented us from opening our shops for four months. Hawking and vending were banned. Access to groceries, water, internet, and schools was restricted. This collective punishment deepened our losses.

RSS-linked organisations such as Adivasi Kalyan Parishad and Eklavya Foundation provide money, incentives, and even monthly payments of ₹9,000 to ₹15,000 to influence tribal youth. Around 200 to 300 people, mostly outsiders, were mobilised. Laws like the Forest Rights Act were created to protect tribal culture. If such protection exists for one group, we too need protection and relief, because we are long-standing residents whose lives and livelihoods have been destroyed.

What happened in Jainoor was engineered, not accidental. One minority was turned against another. Outsiders carried out the violence. The administration failed us, and instead of justice, we have faced criminalisation, silence, and neglect.

15. **Mohinuddin & family (this person's version was alleged to be common within the community but we could not independently verify this claim):** We have lived here in Jainoor for over 50 years, and throughout that time, we have always shared a close bond with the Adivasi communities. Even now, we have business dealings with tribal drivers worth lakhs of rupees; we lend them money without interest during the rainy season when they are in need. We have always lived together, Muslims and Adivasis, and if there was ever a problem, we resolved it by talking to one another.

The incident that has been portrayed as a “rape” in news articles is being completely misrepresented. The truth is that the man and the tribal woman involved had been in a relationship for nearly 15 to 20 years; she was a widow, and they had been together for a long time, possibly even having a nikah. On that night, they were travelling together in an auto-rickshaw. Some say she fell, others say she jumped because the driver (who is hard of hearing) didn't hear her request to stop, but it was not an assault. Initially, the woman herself did not blame him and gave a normal statement. It was only later that the narrative was changed to “forced assault” to incite the Gonds and create a communal issue.

This whole situation was stirred up just before the Lok Sabha elections, and it was clearly politically motivated. The violence that followed was not the work of our local neighbours; we believe outsiders were brought in to cause the unrest. The destruction happened incredibly fast; in just 20 minutes, five or six shops were burnt to the ground. What hurts most is that the police were standing right there while it happened; they watched and did nothing to stop the fire or the mob. We sent our youth away early because we sensed trouble, so while our property was destroyed, thankfully, no lives were lost.

The atmosphere in Jainoor remains very tense and sensitive, especially following the recent panchayat elections. Our candidate won, which has made the opposition very angry. There are right-wing groups like the RSS working behind the scenes to keep the communities fighting. Recently, they even demolished a cemetery wall to provoke us. They also spread lies that we only marry tribal women to take their land, using it as an excuse to cause friction.

We are currently living in a state where we have to stay on guard every night, sometimes with four people staying awake to keep watch. While the administration is currently strict, we fear that if the secular police officers (like the current SI) are moved out, we will be targeted again by those who want to cause a riot. We just want to live in peace as we have for the last five decades

16. **A 19-year old boy from Kaghaznagar:** My name is Asif. I am 19 years old. Three days before the incident, I had returned to my village, Easgaon, from Hyderabad. I knew a girl whom I had met during my Class 10 board exams, she was a Bengali. After that, we stayed in touch over phone calls—sometimes I called her, sometimes she called me.

On her birthday, she asked me to meet her. I initially refused, but she insisted repeatedly. Eventually, I agreed and told her I would meet her near her house. That night, I went there and parked my bike nearby. I called her several times, but she did not come out. After some time, her family members and a few villagers arrived and caught hold of me.

They accused me of having done something wrong with her. I want to say this very clearly: “*Main kasam kha ke kehta hoon, aisa kuch bhi nahi hua.*” I did not do anything wrong. Around 1:30 in the night, they tied me to a tree and began beating me brutally. I was beaten continuously throughout the night, until the police arrived the next morning at around 8 a.m.

68 My mother also reached the spot. She was crying and pleading for them to spare me, but the villagers pushed her and assaulted her as well. They kept saying, “*Aaj hum Asif ko maar denge.*” When the police finally arrived, the mob even vandalized the police vehicle. By the time I was taken away, my entire body was swollen from the beatings.

After this, a case was registered against me under Sections 75, 78, and 351(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, and Section 12 of the POCSO Act. I am saying again that all these allegations are false. The police also filed a case against those who vandalized the police vehicle, but so far there has been no update on any action taken against them.

I want to say only this: I did nothing wrong. “*Maine kuch galat nahi kiya.*” I still believe in justice, and I place my faith in the court that the truth will prevail.

Civil Society Leaders, Activists, Official Heads

17. Ravi Kanneganti (activist and founder of *Rythu Swarajya Vedika*, a collective of farmers and agricultural workers that works on issues of agrarian crises, focusing on tenant farmers, women farmers, and suicide prevention):

I have been working on agrarian distress and rural issues in Telangana for several years. One of the initiatives we started is a distress helpline called *Kisan Ekta*. It was initially set up when farmer suicides were extremely high. The helpline operates across six to seven districts and has counsellors who listen to farmers' problems and help pursue cases with the administration. We also campaign with district collectors to popularise the helpline so that farmers know there is a place they can reach out to.

One of the biggest challenges farmers face today is that they do not receive a fair price for their produce. Even though the Minimum Support Price for paddy has been declared at ₹2300, it is not implemented on the ground. Private traders come in and offer ₹2000 or even ₹1700, and farmers are forced to sell because they have no alternative. In most cases, farmers end up spending much more than they earn. The composition of the farmer population also varies by district—rural districts have a much higher percentage of farmers, while urban districts have far fewer.

My work broadly focuses on three areas: farmer suicides and indebtedness, environmental pollution, and education. I do not approach issues specifically through a minority lens. Instead, I look at government schemes, budget allocations, and the development model being pursued, and ask who is actually benefiting from it. If we talk about minorities in agriculture, Muslims today form a very small percentage—around ten percent—and most of them are either self-employed or work as labourers rather than being landholding farmers.

There are many Adivasi communities in the areas where the helpline works. In Telangana, about 25 lakh acres of assigned land were historically allotted to Dalit communities through land ceiling laws and redistribution movements. However, according to recent reports, Dalit landholdings have come down to around 13 lakh acres. Assigned land comes with conditions—it can be passed on as inheritance but cannot be sold, and the government retains the power to take it back whenever it wants. Earlier, compensation for such land was either very low or sometimes not given at all. In some cases, court interventions later mandated that assigned landholders should also receive market-rate compensation. However, the newer land acquisition policies have made it much easier for the government to acquire land in the name of development.

What we are seeing now is that agricultural land is under direct attack. If the government acquires one thousand acres for a project, another four thousand acres around it often get converted into real estate. When land is acquired, landless labourers and tenant farmers get nothing at all. They lose their livelihoods but receive no compensation.

Within Adivasi communities, there are long-standing internal inequalities. About sixty

percent of the tribal population in Telangana are Lambadas, who are largely a landed community. Non-Lambda Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups cultivate land but often do not have ownership rights. Previous governments promised to transfer ownership to them, but that has not happened. The Forest Department does not allow Adivasi communities to build houses, raise animals, or develop community infrastructure. Instead of facilitating their rights, the department has increasingly begun functioning like a policing force. This approach is a legacy of how forest administration operated during the period of suppressing the Naxalite movement.

There has also been long-standing resentment among non-Lambda communities due to the dominance of Lambadas over land and welfare schemes. This conflict has existed for decades and has sharpened over time. The BJP and RSS have entered these regions systematically. Organisations like the Vanvasi Kalyan Parishad run schools, hostels, temples, and WhatsApp groups. There is a clear attempt to Hinduise non-Lambda tribal communities such as the Koya and Gond. When genuine movements emerge, they are often co-opted by offering leaders political positions, after which the demands slowly die down.

Since 2020, Telangana has not had any crop insurance scheme. Farmers currently receive ₹10,000 per acre as crop loss compensation, but this goes only to landowners. Tenant farmers are excluded entirely. According to a study we conducted in 2022, around 36 percent of farmers in the state are tenant farmers, yet they are not officially recognised. Because they lack recognition, they cannot access institutional credit, compensation, or schemes like Raitu Bharosa. Women farmers and Podu farmers in tribal areas face similar insecurity. A major fear among tenant farmers is that if they mobilise openly, landowners will stop leasing land to them. This prevents collective action unless political parties themselves raise these issues and apply pressure.

From what I have seen, there are not many documented conflicts between communities over resources. I am not saying such conflicts do not exist, but they are not widespread in our experience. However, we do have documented cases where men from outside communities marry tribal women for land and later abandon them, even after having children. Organisations working with single women in areas like Bhadrachalam have encountered many women with similar stories of abandonment.

One incident that stands out is the violence in Jainoor, where Muslim houses and shops were burnt. Most conflicts historically have been between Lambadas and non-Lambadas, but this incident, which took place during BJP rule, marked a shift. Given the growing influence of the BJP and RSS, such incidents could increase in the future.

Telangana is a suicide state, even though people are not ready to accept it. Liquor worth ₹36,000 crore is consumed in the state, while the total salaries of industrial workers amount to only ₹10,000 crore. Local youth do not have jobs. Industries prefer migrant workers because local workers unionise and demand rights. When young people are left without work or direction, they are drawn into culture wars. This is where the RSS steps in and provides Muslims as the enemy.

If we do not understand the material conditions that lead to such radicalisation, then simply attacking the ideology of the Sangh will not be enough. An academic report alone will not help. The report must identify where the work needs to begin after understanding the current situation. The only way forward is collective participation across movements, not just symbolic solidarity. If the Congress also comes out with anti-people policies, then we must oppose Congress as well. Civil society is often unwilling to do this.

I do not claim to have all the answers. I am still trying to understand what the way forward is and which issues we must prioritise. But unless we address land, livelihood, unemployment, and political manipulation together, these forms of violence and polarisation will continue.

18. **Geddam Jhansi (National Convenor of *Dalit Stree Shakti*, an organization founded in 2006 to address the rights of dalit women and girl children. As per their website, about one lakh eighty five thousand women from 1200 villages are organized in women's collectives for voicing their human rights and dignity. DSS is currently based on Telangana and Andhra Pradesh). This particular testimony follows an interview format since that is how the discussion went, which was conducted primarily in Telugu. P is the ground team member:**

P: *Can you tell us about the 16 Days of Activism that just concluded?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Today is the last day of the 16 Days of Activism. Our entire team works across Telangana and Andhra Pradesh, and most of them are leaving today. I stayed back specifically for this interview, and later I also have a meeting at SVK. These 16 Days of Activism are organised by Dalit Stree Shakti. Our organisation has completed 19 years, and this is our 20th year. For all these 19 years, we have consistently conducted this campaign. This year, the UN's theme is digital violence, but our focus has always been on violence faced by SC, ST, Dalit communities, and women. That has never changed for us.

P: *We are currently working on reports documenting patterns of violence, and APCR's work involves understanding how these patterns emerge. Have you observed any patterns in violence against Dalits and minorities, especially with the increasing presence of right-wing organisations and the kind of polarisation they create?*

Gedamma Jhansi: What I see is that no one is really trying to bring SCs, STs, BCs, and minorities together around one clear, common issue. Political parties only look at combinations that benefit them electorally. If SC-ST unity helps them, they focus on that. If Muslim-Christian unity helps them, they focus there. Everything is about political advantage. No one is thinking seriously about uniting all these communities under one collective struggle.

P: *So does that mean no one is attempting to bring all these groups together?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Such unity is not allowed to happen.

P: *Who is stopping it, and why?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Leadership plays a very important role. What kind of leadership it is, what the leader's intentions are, whether they are working for personal benefit or for the collective—this decides everything. In our organisation, although I am a Dalit woman, people from many castes and religions work together - Nayaks, Brahmins, SCs, BCs. Everyone works for a single purpose, without personal gain. That is why we have been able to sustain our work for 19 years.

But many organisations today work only for their own caste or only for political parties. Madiga organisations work only for Madigas, Mala organisations work only for Malas. Each one represents just one community. There is no leadership that can bring everyone together under one umbrella. Leadership is being created around caste identities, which helps political parties, but it does not help communities collectively.

P: *I will try to rephrase and ask again. Have you observed any pattern in atrocities against Dalit, minority, and Adivasi women, and has that pattern changed over time?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Gender violence and caste-based violence still exist. They have not disappeared. Their form has changed, but they continue in different ways. What has changed significantly is awareness. Women are speaking up more now. They are resisting more and reporting violence. Earlier, many atrocities never came out at all...they were suppressed. Now those cases are coming into the open. That awareness has increased.

(An elderly man nearby comments in Hindi that all minorities (Christians, Muslims, BCs) must unite and resist what is happening in the country.)

Gedamma Jhansi: When people's movements emerge and awareness grows through mass struggles, the impact is very different. My father and my husband were both part of people's movements. My father was a teacher who later joined the Naxalite movement. When awareness is built through such movements, entire communities unite around a common cause. But when movements become political, for instance when they turn into parties like BRS, then the struggle becomes only about politics. That is the difference between a people's movement and a political party.

Today, if you go to villages, you will see "Jai Shri Ram" written on the walls of almost every house. When our organisation asked villagers why it was written there, they said they did not ask for it. People from right-wing organisations came and wrote it. They are afraid that if it is not written, they will be attacked. Even minorities keep "Jai Shri Ram" written on their walls out of fear. Fear is the most important factor. In Janwada village, even the church was attacked and "Jai Shri Ram" was written on its walls.

When inter-caste killings happen, like the murders of Nagaraj or Pranay, there is no mobilisation if it is BC-SC violence. But when violence involves Muslims, SC leaders are paid by right-wing leaders to protest. Violence involving Muslims is deliberately turned into a big issue, while similar violence involving BC-SC relations is ignored. This is done intentionally to create conflict between Dalits and Muslims.

(Another man nearby adds that across India, Dalit–Muslim conflicts are deliberately instigated and that hundreds of Dalit organisations have been created to divide the community.)

Gedamma Jhansi: We have tried to bring everyone together. We formed collective committees, but when we go to the village level, it becomes very difficult. Dalit-Bahujan communities do not trust upper-caste leadership. They believe that during elections these leaders will come to them, but afterward they will harass them again. Because of this experience, unity at the grassroots level does not happen easily, even though attempts have been made.

P: *There is increased awareness and more reporting of violence against women, but is there a clear pattern to this violence?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Violence against women has definitely increased. But I cannot say there is one single, clear pattern...it manifests differently in different places.

P: *Is land acquisition being used as a narrative to create conflict between minority communities—for example, claims that Muslims marry Adivasi women to acquire land—for political benefit?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Not only Adivasi land, Dalit land is also being grabbed. In Pathankut, around 1,000 acres of land are being targeted by Reddy elites and political leaders from all parties, BJP and Congress included. Big companies are expected to come there, and huge profits are involved. The same leaders who are grabbing the land are also the ones people are forced to approach to solve their problems. The oppressors and the problem-solvers are the same people.

P: *Are land issues specifically used to create conflict between minority communities?*

Gedamma Jhansi: This does not happen in our area, but it does happen in some parts of Adilabad.

P: *How does Dalit Stree Shakti work on the ground, and what challenges do you face?*

Gedamma Jhansi: In the early years, we faced many problems: threats, police cases, arrests, intimidation. After 19 years, these things are no longer new to us. Recently, the government has taken suo motu action on 50 cases we are handling and has appointed Prajavani hearings for them.

These cases include murder, gang rape, suspicious deaths, cheating in the name of love, and other serious atrocities. All concerned departments were called for discussions. Our journey, from being arrested and threatened to having the government take suo motu action on our cases, shows how far we have come in 19 years.

P: *Are Dalit women affected by these conflicts even when they are not directly involved?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Most perpetrators of atrocities are from BC and OC communities. Only a very small percentage come from minorities like Muslims or Christians. When atrocities are

committed by BC or OC communities, they try to prevent police cases. If SCs still file cases, they face social boycotts in villages. Victims often have to return the next day to work in the same fields owned by the same people. Fear plays a huge role. Even those who support the victims can face boycotts.

P: *Have there been instances where different minority communities united to protest violence against women?*

Gedamma Jhansi: We now have a Joint Action Committee. Under this JAC, Dalit rights groups, Muslim rights groups, Christian rights groups, transgender rights groups, and women's rights groups work together. We do fact-finding, follow up on cases, and pursue justice from FIR to final judgment under one umbrella.

P: *Is there an attempt to Hinduize Dalit communities, similar to what is happening among Lambada tribes, as per what we have heard?*

Gedamma Jhansi: Yes, this is happening among Dalits too. In every village, something called an "SC Morcha" has been formed. They promote the idea that everyone is Hindu and should unite under that identity. Their real goal is to create a political cadre, not to improve Dalit lives or fight for Dalit rights.

(A man nearby adds that this has been happening since 2009 and has resulted in MLAs being elected in several districts.)

P: *Are conflicts between minority communities deliberately created for political gain?*

Gedamma Jhansi: There is not much conflict between Muslims and Christians. But there is significant tension between SCs and Muslims. Socially, Dalits and Muslims attend each other's weddings, and so do Adivasis. Discrimination mainly comes from dominant castes i.e. BCs in Telangana and OCs in Andhra Pradesh.

As I always say, there is no upper caste or lower caste. When we call someone upper caste, we place them above ourselves. The real issue is dominant castes - those who have money, power, and control. Those are the dominant castes.

19. SC-ST Commission member, Telangana (this particular testimony follows an interview format since that is how the discussion went, which was conducted primarily in Telugu. A is the ground team member):

A: What was the situation before you joined the SC-ST Commission, and what kind of work are you doing now? With the atrocities happening today and the problems around them, how do you deal with them? Also, how do you look at the divisions and polarization among Muslims, Adivasis, and Bahujan communities?

SC/ST Commission member: In our area, there are not many atrocity cases. There were one or two incidents in between. One happened in Jainoor, and one in Asifabad. Otherwise, such cases are very few here. We all live together peacefully, mixing with each other, so such problems usually don't happen.

But if something does happen, we go there as the SC-ST Commission, understand what happened, do a panchnama, and provide all the facilities that the state government can give.

Earlier, in one case, we helped a family start a business. In another case in Khanapur, we helped the family set up a livelihood, got their children admitted to residential schools, gave them three acres of land, and ensured they received government compensation.

Recently, in a village called Geri in Asifabad, a nine-month pregnant woman was murdered. She was due to deliver within a few days. It was an inter-caste marriage; the man was BC and the woman was ST. The woman's Father in law killed her.

We went there, spoke to the collector, and the case is ongoing.

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/telangana/telangana-pregnant-tribal-woman-killed-by-father-in-law-over-intercaste-marriage>

A: Earlier in Jainoor, when an atrocity happened against an Adivasi woman, there was strong anger against Muslims. Why do you think that happened, and what is your view on it?

SC/ST Commission member: That can happen due to political reasons. But otherwise, Muslims and Adivasis generally live together peacefully. Sometimes political parties and their influence create such situations.

A: Because this incident involved a Muslim person, did the reaction become sharper or more intense this time?

(A man sitting nearby says that right-wing organizations like the Vishwa Hindu Parishad made the situation more extreme.)

SC/ST Commission member::

Such things may happen once in a while, but generally we live together peacefully. One or two incidents can happen, but otherwise there are no major problems. Yes, sometimes there is anger and emotional reaction. For a few days there was tension, markets were closed, people were upset that such an incident happened to a woman from their community. But now everything is normal and there is no problem there.

A: Are there any challenges you face in your work?

SC/ST Commission member: Sometimes witnesses are pressured, or people are pressured

not to file cases. In one such case earlier, we went to the National Commission and ensured action was taken against the concerned officials. Such pressure can happen sometimes, but we are not afraid. Even if there is political pressure on us, we do not fear anyone. Right now, I don't think there is any such pressure, and even if there is, we will not be scared. We always take proper action.

A: In Telangana, Adivasis and Muslims live together. Do disputes arise due to inter-community marriages or land ownership issues?

SC/ST Commission member: In this district, everyone lives together, Marathi people, Gond, Lambada, Muslim communities.

A: When they live together, are there disputes related to land? Like if a Muslim man marries an Adivasi woman, are there accusations that Adivasi land is being taken?

SC/ST Commission member: Small issues happen sometimes, but nothing major. One or two incidents occur, but overall things are fine. The only major case was the Jainoor incident involving Muslims and Adivasis. Apart from that, there are only a few cases, Jainoor, Asifabad, and the Samantha case.

A: Is there a possibility that such incidents will increase?

SC/ST Commission member: No. Gond, Lambada, Marathi, Muslims, everyone lives together. Even people who come from Maharashtra live peacefully here. Big cases happen in cities, but since I joined the Commission, only these three major cases have happened here.

A: Many minority communities live here and their problems are often common. Can the SC-ST Commission work collectively on these issues?

SC/ST Commission member: Our Commission works to resolve SC and ST issues. Adilabad is an agency area, so land cannot be bought or sold freely. General category people cannot buy or sell Adivasi land.

A: If a Muslim man marries an Adivasi woman, does the land get transferred to him?

SC/ST Commission member: No. Adivasi land remains with Adivasis only. It cannot even be registered in someone else's name.

A: What should be done to improve the working of the SC–ST Commission?

SC/ST Commission member: I feel everyone should live together peacefully, like brothers and sisters in our villages and districts. If we live united, such cases will not happen.

A: If secular people working for SC–ST rights came into power, would it help in implementing schemes and getting funds?

SC/ST Commission member: Funds are coming properly now. There is no such problem. Everything is fine here. I believe everyone in the country, SC–ST, Muslims, everyone, should live together peacefully without fighting.

A: Are there organizations here that try to divide people and create conflict between Adivasis and Muslims? Do right-wing groups have influence here?

SC/ST Commission member: No.

XII. KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations for SC/ST Commission

- ◆ Take **urgent and suo motu cognizance of incidents** of violence, hate crimes, land alienation, and discrimination against SC/ST communities, especially in tribal and communally sensitive regions.
- ◆ Initiate **time-bound inquiries** into such incidents and make findings and follow-up actions public.
- ◆ Hold **regular district-level hearings** in tribal districts such as Komaram Bheem–Asifabad, Adilabad, Utnoor, and Nirmal.
- ◆ **Monitor and ensure registration of FIRs, filing of charge sheets, payment of compensation, and implementation of rehabilitation measures.**
- ◆ Strengthen **community outreach** so Dalit and Adivasi communities are aware of the Commission’s powers, procedures, and limitations.
- ◆ **Examine the demand for bifurcation of ST reservations**, particularly in relation to the Lambada community, through a transparent, consultative, and evidence-based process.

Recommendations for NHRC

- ◆ Take cognizance of the pattern of **abandonment of Adivasi women** after marriages with non-tribal men, often linked to land capture and economic exploitation.
- ◆ Treat such cases as **serious human rights violations** involving gendered violence and land alienation, not merely private disputes.
- ◆ Recommend **special protection and entitlements** for abandoned Adivasi women and their children, including housing, livelihood support, pensions, legal aid, and land security.
- ◆ Investigate **labour rights violations** in rural and tribal areas where local Adivasi and Dalit workers are excluded and migrant labour is employed at exploitative wages.
- ◆ Conduct **on-ground fact-finding missions** in affected regions rather than relying only on desk-based assessments.

Recommendations for the Police

- ◆ Ensure **independent and impartial investigations** into incidents of communal and caste-based violence.

- ◆ Monitor and ensure registration of FIRs against hate speeches and take strict action against any attempts to polarise Muslim and tribal communities on communal lines.
- ◆ Initiate disciplinary and criminal action against police officers found complicit through inaction, bias, or direct involvement.
- ◆ Register all cases involving SC/ST communities promptly under appropriate sections of the IPC and the **SC/ST (Prevention of Atrocities) Act**, without dilution or delay.
- ◆ Provide effective **victim and witness protection**, particularly in small tribal settlements where intimidation is common.
- ◆ Conduct mandatory training for police personnel on tribal land laws, the SC/ST Act, gender-sensitive investigations, and communal harmony.
- ◆ Maintain transparency by publicly disclosing data on FIRs, arrests, charge sheets, and convictions.

Recommendations for the State Government

- ◆ Reinstate and implement the **Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition Act, 2013**, instead of the diluted 2016 framework, as promised in the election manifesto.
- ◆ Grant **ownership rights over assigned land** to Dalit and Adivasi families to prevent land alienation.
- ◆ Recognise **tenant farmers**, including women farmers and Podu cultivators in tribal areas, to enable access to institutional credit, crop insurance, compensation, and schemes such as Rythu Bharosa.
- ◆ Fulfil the pre-election commitment to tenant farmer recognition through **clear guidelines and timelines**.
- ◆ Ensure specific recognition and support for **women farmers**, including single and abandoned women, through joint or individual pattas and targeted welfare measures.
- ◆ Ensure that **all persons affected by the Jainoor violence** receive timely and adequate compensation.
- ◆ Provide rehabilitation beyond monetary relief, including livelihood restoration, housing repair, healthcare, and education support for children.
- ◆ Ensure implementation of guidelines laid down by the Supreme Court in ***Tehseen Poonawala v. Union of India*** to clamp down on incidents of mob violence, and ensure compliance with the directions of the Supreme Court laid down in ***Shaheen Abdullah v. Union of India*** regarding registration of FIRs in cases of hate speech.

Recommendations for Civil Society

- ◆ Form **inclusive peace committees** in communally sensitive areas with representation from Adivasi, Dalit, Muslim communities, women, and youth.
- ◆ Develop **early warning and rapid response mechanisms** to identify and address emerging communal tensions.
- ◆ Support and strengthen **Adivasi counter-culture and resistance initiatives** that challenge dominant narratives and promote community identity and coexistence.
- ◆ Move beyond symbolic solidarity towards **collective action** through coordination among Adivasi, Dalit, Muslim, farmers', workers', and women's movements.
- ◆ Strengthen **systematic documentation** of hate crimes, land alienation, gendered violence, and institutional failures.
- ◆ Conduct **legal literacy and rights awareness programmes** to enable communities to access justice and state entitlements.

XIII. CONCLUSION

The district-wise accounts in this report make clear that communal violence in Telangana cannot be understood in isolation from questions of land, caste, livelihood, and state accountability. What emerges repeatedly is not a picture of inherent hostility between communities, but one of shared precarity that is deliberately fractured through political mobilisation and administrative neglect. Adivasi, Dalit, and Muslim communities, despite their distinct histories, are often pushed into competition over shrinking resources while those responsible for structural dispossession remain unchallenged.

The findings show how ordinary social interactions, be it friendships, marriages, religious practices, or economic activity, are increasingly surveilled and moralised, especially in rural and semi-urban areas. When combined with inflammatory rhetoric, selective policing, and weak institutional responses, these pressures can quickly escalate into violence, long after the original trigger has faded. The costs are borne disproportionately by the poor: through destroyed homes and shops, criminal cases, loss of employment, psychological trauma, and lasting fear.

At the same time, the report underlines the limits of documentation alone. Fact-finding can expose patterns and provide evidence, but it cannot substitute for sustained political will, legal accountability, and grassroots peace-building. Without follow-up action by state institutions, commissions, and civil society, reports risk becoming records of injustice rather than tools to prevent it.

This report therefore calls for a shift in approach: away from viewing communal violence as episodic law-and-order problems, and toward addressing the structural conditions that make such violence possible. This includes securing land and livelihood rights, ensuring impartial policing, strengthening statutory bodies, protecting survivors and witnesses, and resisting the communalisation of social life.

Finally, this work is offered in a spirit of humility. It reflects only one effort to understand a complex and evolving reality, shaped by the voices that were willing and able to speak. There will inevitably be gaps, errors, and perspectives missing from these pages. We remain open to correction, dialogue, and learning, in the hope that this report can serve not as an endpoint, but as part of a longer, collective struggle for justice, dignity, and coexistence in Telangana.



**Association for Protection
of Civil Rights**

📍 E-57/1, 4th Floor, Hari Kothi Lane, Abul Fazal Enclave -1, Jamia Nagar, New Delhi-110025

☎ 011 - 41052797 ✉ apcrindia@gmail.com 🌐 apcrindia.in