

DR. M. Channa Reddy

A Pictorial Profile

Among the few leaders, who played an outstanding role in shaping the destiny of Andhra Pradesh, Dr. Channa Reddy with his political career of over five decades, though cheered, would undoubtedly, stand as a towering personality. His rise from a humble lower middle class agricultural family, to the positions of a State Minister, the Union Cabinet Minister, and Governor of several states and twice Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh bears an eloquent proof to a fascinating saga.

Dr. Channa Reddy, has turned 75 and this pictorial profile has been brought out to mark this occasion. By any reckoning he is one of the most prominent national leaders, able administrator, and a state politician who rendered great service in political, economic, social and cultural fields.

Dr. Reddy's home life is a happy and harmonious one. In fact, Smt. Savitri Devi whom he married in 1936 is the daughter of his maternal uncle Sri K.V. Narayana Reddy.

Savitri Devi, known as 'Amma' to everyone, inspires the entire family. With her spiritual bent of mind she has been a great source of courage and inspiration to Dr. Reddy. Savitri Devi, a synonym for devotion, sees to everything that Dr. Reddy needs and to, her this is the most important mission in life.

Dr. Reddy is blessed with three sons and a daughter. The eldest son, Krishna Reddy passed away at an early age of 21 years in 1961. Even at that tender age, he was elected sarpanch Marpalli Village. Now, the elder son Ravindra Reddy, is an active member of the Rotary Organization, involving various Community Service Projects and served as the District Governor of Rotary District-315, besides managing his own printing business. The younger son Shashidhar Reddy is an agricultural scientist who secured his Master's Degree from Kansas University, U.S.A. He was elected to the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly in 1992 in the vacancy caused by Dr. Reddy's resignation on being appointed as Governor of Rajasthan. He is now a Minister in the Vijayabhaskar Reddy Cabinet. Daughter Vasudha's husband Sudershan Reddy is also in the printing line. Dr. Reddy has three grand-sons and three grand-daughters

Dr. Reddy survived a very serious car accident during 1978 elections, further he survived the Indian Airlines Plan crash at Hyderabad on 17th December, 1978 when he was Chief Minister. In June 1990, he underwent a Kidney Transplant surgery in U.S.A. To the surprise and delight of many of his friends, countless well-wishers and followers, his recovery made medical history. All these can be seen as acts of Divine Grace and makes people believe that he was born for a special purpose.

Early Life:

Dr. Channa Reddy was born on January 13, 1919 in a village. Pedda Mangalaram of the then Hyderabad District. He hails from siripuram Village, now in Ranga Reddy District near Vikarabad. The only son of Lakshna Reddy and Shankaramma, Channa Reddy had schooling under the watchful eyes of his two maternal uncles Sri K.V. Ranga Reddy (who incidentally joined the Cabinet in 1952 along with Dr. Channa Reddy and later became Deputy Chief Minister in 1957) and Sri K.V. Narayana Reddy. Even as child of 9 years, he nursed a secret ambition to study medicine and also participate in the freedom struggle. His determination grew stronger when he listened to Mahatma Gandhi addressing a public meeting at the Vivekavardhani College grounds in Hyderabad, even at the age of 10 years

During his student days Dr. Reddy organized a Debating Association and a library of which he became the Secretary. He saw that books dealing with Ramayana, Mahabharata and other mythological stories were collected and given to the members for reading and assimilating the benefits of virtuous life. This early grounding in our great epics made Channa Reddy a great adherent of the noble ideals set forth by the epic characters. He began to win laurels in all the examinations he took, including the M.B.B.S.

After graduating from the Osmania Medical College with distinction Channa Reddy has set up his own medical practice by establishing two hospitals. However, he could not do justice to his growing practice and the increasing urge of the people to espouse their cause in the fight against the repression of Nizam at the same time. He therefore gave up his medical practice and plunged headlong into the turbulent waters of public life. There was no looking back after that.

At first it was the Andhra Mahasabha – the forerunner of the State branch of the Indian National Congress of which he was the General Secretary. His organizing capacity was effectively demonstrated during the conference of the Hyderabad State Congress in 1946, when Dr. Reddy was only 27 years old. It was his desire that the struggle against the Nizam should be conducted on Gandhi's lines. Dr. Reddy journeyed all the way to Delhi to meet Mahatma Gandhi again and again, and sought his blessings in the people's fight against the Nizam who wanted Hyderabad to be an independent nation.

Dr. Reddy was not only among the top leaders in Hyderabad who were imprisoned, but was also the youngest. Later, eight leaders including Dr. Reddy were released by the Nizam to explore the possibility of negotiating a settlement with them. As a tactical move, some of the state Congress leaders established themselves outside the borders of Hyderabad State and intensified the struggle. Dr. Reddy on his part published 'Hyderabad' a Telugu weekly from Vijayawada and smuggled its copies into the State which yielded dividends in that the highly explosive writings of Dr. Reddy stirred many inside the State to fight against the Nizam.

In the wake of unprecedented violence let loose by the Nizam's Razakars, on one side the Communists on the other, Dr. Reddy braved to visit almost all the affected villages to build up the morale of the people against the Nizam. Along with Sri Burgula Ramakrishna Rao (who later became Chief Minister), Sri Kasinath Rao Vaidya (who became speaker of Hyderabad Assembly). Dr. Reddy frequently visited Delhi to impress upon the then Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Patel on the explosive situation then pervading in Hyderabad State.

When the Government of India launched Police Action in September 1948, against the Nizam of Hyderabad, it heralded a new era with merger of Hyderabad with the Indian Union. After the Hyderabad State became a part of the Indian Union, Dr. Reddy was nominated in June 1950 to Provisional Parliament of India, which converted into Constituent Assembly, after the Constitution was adopted. At 31, Dr. Reddy was the youngest Member of the Parliament. His dynamic qualities and his fiery speeches on the problems of Hyderabad attracted the attention of Jawaharlal Nehru and Rajaji. They were quick to utilize the services of Dr. Reddy as one of the four whips of the party. Dr. Reddy's speeches were so eloquent and penetrating that they were published as major stories in the national newspapers "Blood Curdling Reports of Dr. Reddy", a three column front story in Hindustan Times highlighted the atrocities committed by the Communist party.

1952-62

During the first General Elections in 1952 Dr. Channa Reddy was elected to the Hyderabad Assembly from Vikarabad double member constituency. He had his first experience of ministerial office immediately when he was appointed as Minister with Cabinet rank in the B. Ramakrishna Rao Cabinet. He was entrusted with the portfolio of Food and Agriculture as per his own choice as he was confident of successfully tackling the most difficult subject. That was the period when the food supply position was very precarious, but the insight he brought into play and the pragmatic approach he adopted to solve the problem set a record which every politician and every administrator envies even to this day.

In 1953, he established the Hyderabad Farmers' Forum and functioned as its President. This Forum published 'Kisan' a monthly farm magazine in four languages. English, Telugu, Marathi and Kannada, the circulation of which was over 10,000. In fact the journal was being published by the Agricultural Department without any regularity and at a huge cost of Rs. 1.20 lakhs, Dr. Reddy made a revolutionary change by entrusting this publication to a non-official organization with only a meager amount of Rs. 10,000 as financial assistance. The standards set by the journal was acclaimed by officers academicians and farmers.

During his term as Food and Agriculture Minister, Dr. Reddy led the Indian Delegation to the conference of International Federation of Agricultural Producers held in Rome in 1953 and also worked as Deputy Leader of the Indian Delegation that went to the FAO Conference held at Rome in 1955, He availed these visits to study the agricultural and industrial economies of 13 European Countries including France, West Germany, England and Switzerland. He brought in many reforms in the administrative set up that benefitted the tolling farming community. The use of fertilizers was uncommon then Dr. Reddy as Minister for Agriculture introduced scheme under which any farmer-owner, tenant or a share-cropper could obtain fertilizers on credit under the advice of the Agricultural Officer, with the certification of village officer that he is bonafide cultivator. The money due was deducted at the time of payment for the food grains the cultivator produced and surrendered to the government under the levy system. In the process, the farmers not only became fertilizer conscious, but also the use of fertilizers went up and food production rose phenomenally. This was one of the several measures introduced by Dr. Reddy.

Dr. Channa Reddy was one of the Agricultural Ministers of our country who fought for establishing separate Agricultural Universities to promote agricultural and veterinary sciences as distinct academic disciplines. However, there were several hurdles and difficulties which delayed the formation of Agricultural University in Andhra Pradesh. In 1962 as Minister for Planning he was able to clinch the issue quickly. As a result of his personal effort the Andhra Pradesh Agricultural University came into existence in 1964.

After the formation of A.P. on Nov. 1, 1956 Dr. Reddy remained outside the government. In 1957 he was returned to the State Assembly and was very effective in the legislature heading various committees and making very useful contributions. Dr. Reddy was the presiding member of the Sub-Committee on Planning and Development of the Telengana Regional Committee from 1958 till he became minister in the State Cabinet once again in 1962. He rendered yeoman services to the cause of the Telengana region by carrying out an incessant battle for the economic and social uplift of the people. As Chairman, he submitted 35 reports including a White Paper on 'Telengana. He strived for the development of the Osmania University by arranging Rs. 3 crores for its foundation grant from the Telengana surpluses. As a syndicate Member, Dr. Reddy made a significant contribution to the growth of the Osmania University. In 1960-61 Dr. Reddy became Chairman of the Estimates Committee and was responsible for submission of 12 voluminous reports covering all important projects ranging from Nagarjuna Sagar Project to Hyderabad Allwyn Metal Works. Some of the present major irrigation and power projects in the State were the result of his efforts.

1962-67

After the 1962 General Elections Dr. Reddy was once again elected to the State Assembly and joined Dr. Neelam Sanjeeva Reddy Cabinet, he was entrusted with the portfolio of Planning and Panchayati Raj Institutions in the state. As a firm believer in democratic decentralization. Dr. Reddy revitalized the functioning of panchayati Raj institutions. Following his spirited exhortations many people in rural areas donated their land for construction of village roads, school buildings and other community works of public utility without seeking compensation. About 10,000 miles road length works were taken up in that period. Dr. Reddy could always find a way out to provide the necessary resources when any one approached him for any development activity anywhere in the state. In 1964 Sri Kasu Brahmananda Reddy took over as Chief Minister, and Dr. Reddy was entrusted with the portfolio of Finance and Industries. It was during this period that the State Government had acquired thousands of acres of land for setting up of industrial estates. This foresight of Dr. Reddy proved to be a great boon to the rapid industrialization of the State by creating the necessary infrastructure for industrial growth. He also gave a fillip to the industrialization of the state by allocating more funds to the industrial sector and inviting entrepreneurs from outside the state.

Dr. Reddy was returned to the State Legislative Assembly for the fourth time in 1967 and continued in the Brahmananda Reddy Cabinet for a very brief period. Within a week after being sworn in as a Minister for Finance, Industries & Education, Dr. Reddy had the rare distinction of being inducted into the Indira Gandhi Cabinet as Minister for Steel, Mines and Metals with cabinet rank and became a member of rajya sabha. He was the second State Minister who became Union Minister without being a Chief Minister who became Union

Minister without being a Chief Minister. The first one was Dr. C. subrahmaniam in the Jawaharlala Nehru Cabinet Instances were there when Chief Ministers joined the Union Cabinet as Ministers of state. During his tenure as Central Minister Dr. Reddy effected several far-reaching changes in the setup of the steel industry. His role in selecting Visakhapatnam for the setting up of the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant as Union Minister will always be remembered. This was done while establishing Steel Plants at Salem in Tamil Nadu and at Vijayanagar in Karnataka. He resigned his Central Minister ship in April 1968 owing to the judgment of the supreme Court in an election petition.

1968-73

In 1955 the Government of India appointed Fazal Ali Commission to recommend the reorganization of states on linguistic basis. At that time Dr. Reddy being in the State Cabinet submitted a memorandum to the Commission against the idea of formation of a larger state for Telugu speaking people with relevant facts and figures It was his view that the state should have an ideal population and resources to enable it to grow and become prosperous the Fazal Ali Commission recommended that the Telengana state should function for the first five years. Later the elected Telangana Assembly Members based on their experience would exercise their choice to remain as a separate Telengana State or to merge with Andhra state after the commission's Report the situation became tense and the Government of India appointed a Three Mn Committee with the Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru as chairman, Moulana Abdul Kalam Azad Govind Ballabh Pant as members to look into the problems of the proposed state. The Telengana and Andhra regions were asked to send three representatives each to present their problems to the Three Man Committee. Dr. Reddy was one of the members of the Committee along with chief Minister sri Burgula Ramakrishna Rao and Kasinath vaidya from Telengana while Chief Minister Gopal Reddy Dr. Sanjeeva Reddy and kala Venkata Rao were members from the Andhra Region that discussed with the Union Government. The Outcome was the Gentlemen Agreement which was literally drafted by Dr. Reddy himself. However the agreement was not adhered to it and proved detrimental to the development of the "Telengana region. In 1969 it erupted into an unprecedented agitation popularly known as "Telengana Agitation" spearheaded by the Telengana Praja Samithi.

The period between 1968 and 1973 was a very significant one in Dr. Reddy's political life. During this period there was a great turmoil and tumult among people the manner in which the legitimate interests of the people of the Telengana region were being trampled upon by the government. The students and youths started an agitation for redressed of the grievances of Telangana people. As one who always stood by the just cause of the people Dr. Reddy could not remain indifferent to the demand of the people of Telengana to lead them in the hour of their distress. When this agitation was sought to be put down by the state Government through use of force, Dr. Reddy rebelled and wanted a separate statehood for Telengana so that people could achieve fulfillment of their aspirations. This was followed by the formation of the regional party telengana Praja Samithi, the leadership of which ultimately fell on Dr. Reddy's shoulders. He led this party to a landslide victory bagging 11 out of 14 Lok Sabha seats in Telengana region in the Parliamentary elections of 1971. This glorious victory of Dr. Reddy in the cause of Telengana people opened the eyes of the central leaders and soon they took steps to come to terms with the demands of the Telengana people. In the six-point formula that was evolved as a solution by the Central

leaders in consultation with and approval of Dr. Reddy steps were taken to safeguard the legitimate interests of the people of 'Telengana. This period established Dr. Reddy as an undisputed mass leader.

Subsequently the Telengana Praja Samithi adopted an unanimous resolution to merge with the Congress. Later, the dissenters of the resolution set up 41 candidates in 1972 Assembly elections. But all of them were defeated. In 1974 Dr. Reddy accepted the office of Governor of Uttar Pradesh the most populous State of the country. Smt. Indira Gandhi made a personal plea that she required Dr. Reddy's assistance to help her as the Governor of Uttar Pradesh which was also her home state within a period of one year after assuming charge as Governor Dr. Reddy toured 55 districts of the state meeting people from various walks of life and understood the mind and the problems of the people. During his tenure as Governor he had two spells of President's Rule There were no Advisors in the first spell. Dr. Reddy undertook the most arduous task of reorganizing the state administration. He transformed the administrative machinery of the State reinvigorated the decaying and ailing universities and educational institutions, introduced land reforms, promoted irrigation programmers rehabilitated the ex-servicemen by giving them plots to construct houses and land to cultivate. As a result of his efforts to introduce popular measures for the benefit of the people in the state Dr. Reddy came to be regarded as the 'people's Governor'. On his advice the Uttar Pradesh Cabinet appointed a team of administrators for studying the working of the Hindu Religious Endowments Acts of Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu Kerala and Karnataka Later he succeeded in persuading the Cabinet to promulgate an ordinance for constituting a statutory body to control, regulate and utilize the resources properties and establishments of the Hindu Religious and charitable endowments in U.P. The people of the State considered it as a unique achievement. However the State Government, on the advice of Smt. Indira Gandhi allowed the ordinance to lapse, just before the elections.

As chancellor of 17 Universities of the State Dr. Reddy provided unique leadership and with a surgeon's precision tried to cure the educational environment of Uttar Pradesh. He also set a practice of conferring Honorary Degrees on great scholars and renowned scientists from others parts of the country particularly, from the South. As a lover of children. Dr. Reddy paid utmost attention to children's education and their extra-curricular activities. He was instrumental in establishing a number of Bal Bhavans and promoted children's theatres and publication of useful model literature.

With his sharp administrative acumen, Dr. Reddy as Governor of Uttar Pradesh within just 55 days when the state was under the President's rule exercised full powers and brought far reaching changes. The Pioneer paid handsome tribute to Dr. Reddy when it said. "There is, however, no denying that the ability and integrity of the Rajyapal is fully tested when he has to bear the sole responsibility of administration after the state comes under the President's Rule. Uttar Pradesh has been no stranger to this kind of interregnum. Without in any way detracting from the ability and worth of Rajyapal Reddy's predecessors in office, it should be placed on record that never was so much done for so many in such a short time at the instance of a single individual".

He was once described by a Hindi Daily from Luck now as "A Restless Swimmer in the Ocean of comforts and honor" (such aur samman ke sagar may ek bechaine Tairaak).

In 1977 the people of India voted for a change, the Janata Party came to power at the Centre and Congress and Indira Gandhi were defeated. Dr. Reddy resigned from Governorship and decided to stand by Smt. Indira Gandhi when virtually every one deserted her. The Congress party was split in January 1978. Dr. Reddy became the President of A.P.C.C. while different parties opposed to Mrs. Gandhi were in power at the Centre and also in Andhra Pradesh. Dr. Reddy led the party to a landslide victory in the elections to the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly in February, 1978. Even 15 days before the polling he predicted that Congress would win 175 seats and the final tally was 176. The book 'Political Identity in South Asia' published by University of London (1979) says "the victory can be only partly explained by the support Mrs. Gandhi still enjoys among Harijans and backward classes in Andhra Pradesh (where the cruder policies of the Emergency were not implemented). It is also due to Dr. Channa Reddy having forged a coalition of enemies of birth Brahmananda Reddy (then Congress President) and the then Chief Minister Vengal Rao. Last but not least Dr. Channa Reddy is a dynamic and skillful organizer of election campaign as he demonstrated in 1971 as leader of Telengana Praja Smithi". That was yet another creditable achievement of Dr. Reddy in his political career. Naturally, the choice of Chief Minister ship fell on his shoulders in March 1978.

The period from 1978 was indeed a golden era for the people of Andhra Pradesh in the sense that Dr. Reddy as Chief Minister launched a number of revolutionary schemes unique in the country for the overall development of the state. Reservation of seats in Municipal Councils and Panchayati Raj Institutions for schedule castes, Schedule Tribes and women allocation of 15% funds of local bodies for welfare of weaker sections reduction of age of voters for local body elections to 18 from 21 years exemption of land revenue for small farmers with holding of 2 ½ acres wet and 5 acres dry conferring right of land to about 75,000 persons by distributing 1.33 lakh acres, establishment of grievances redressal cells from village level to state level opening of 600 Abhudaya schools, linked with yoga the model of which was adopted by Government of India later when they setup Navodaya schools etc. were some of the schemes deserving mention. It was during his tenure as Chief Minister in 1980, Dr. Reddy for the first time announced 25% reservation for backward classes in government jobs and educational institutions to improve their living standard and to bring about the social equality. This decision came much before the Mandal Commission report and before any demand for setting up of any such commission. Another novel self-employment scheme was started by setting up an organization called SETWIN which was commended not only within the country but also abroad by the International Labour Organization. This concept was adopted by the Planning Commission and a chapter was written by the then special officer Sri Yugender, IAS who was in charge of self-employment under Dr. Reddy. "Uru Uru ki Bus" (bus to every village) was another unique scheme in the country introduced by Dr. Reddy to link all villages in the state with public transport. "Intintiki Deepam" (Electric light) to every house was also launched to provide power supply to every home in the state. Dr. Reddy's concern for women and children is evident from the fact that he promoted and financed both the Andhra Pradesh Women Cooperative Financial Corporation and the Jawahar Bala Bhavan. Dr. Reddy quit as Chief Minister in October, 1980.

In 1982 Mrs. Indira Gandhi offered the post of Dy. Chairman of the Planning Commission. Later he was considered to be sent as the Governor of Punjab.

Dr. Reddy took over as Governor of Punjab in April '82. It was a difficult state with many problems. In June 1982 the Akalis launched their agitation which grew out of proportions. Dr. Reddy was asked by Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi to use his good offices with Akali Dal in preventing the killings. Dr. Reddy suggested to the Prime Minister to involve all the political parties to avoid and curb such an agitation and create a peaceful atmosphere. It should by no means be considered as a limited battle between the Akalis and the Congress. As agreed by the Prime Minister, Dr. Reddy took initiative and invited 10 political parties separately and each one of them gave consensus and agreed to curb the violence and also to prevent violence. Based on the consensus of various political parties, Dr. Reddy submitted a report to the Prime Minister. Unfortunately no concrete steps were taken by the Centre and things somehow slipped into chaos and confusion. In the process forces like Bhindranwale were allowed to emerge.

Dr. Reddy being forthright and frank was liked even by the Akalis. The last meeting before resigning as Governor, Dr. Reddy attended a meeting at Tohra village where G.s. Tohra Chairman, Guru Prabhndhak Committee waited outside the village to receive Dr. Reddy with garlands very respectfully. This meeting was held to inaugurate the Red Cross Hospital, which was ready for inauguration, but lying idle for a few years. Sri Tohra in his address stated "it was a great day for the village, not because the hospital was inaugurated but because it was inaugurated by a great son of the country". Such a tribute coming from Akali Dal leader even after several instances in which Dr. Reddy took a firm stand including the appointment of a Hindu Vice-Chancellor in the Punjab University at a time when all universities in Punjab had only Sikhs is remarkable, to say the least. The Akalis went to the extent as was narrated later by the then President of India Giani Zail Singh, that the Akalis were willing to accept the arbitration of the Governor if the whole matter was left to him by the Central Government. Dr. Reddy felt that things were not moving in the right direction and he started feeling that his continuation as Governor may appear as a mere political rehabilitation. He submitted his resignation only after 9 months in office with another 4 years and 3 month to complete the term!

In May, 1989, Dr. Reddy was called upon by the Party High Command to take up the reigns of the State Congress to prepare in the party to challenge the Telugu Desam Party in the elections to the State Assembly. His appointment as P.C.C. President itself had an electrifying effect on the rank and file of the Party because Dr. Reddy had always been known for his rich organizational capabilities. Within a short span of six months, Dr. Reddy strengthened the party base and activated the grass-root level workers. The "**One crore Signature Campaign**" call given by him evoked a tremendous response from the people to come out in overwhelming numbers to express their feelings against the Telugu Desam Government. Over 1.5 crore of people put their signatures on the memorandum to be submitted to the President of India. In response to his subsequent clarion call of 'Jail Bharo' programme in October 1989, lakhs of party workers courted arrest wearing Gandhi caps all over the State. This reminded people of the days of the Gandhi Era, when in response to the call of the Father of the Nation people donning Gandhi caps used to come out in large numbers to participate in the 'Satyagraha' movements during freedom struggle. In this manner, Dr. Reddy with his charismatic leadership galvanized the people in favour of the Congress Party to secure a 2/3rd majority in the Assembly elections held in November 1989. Thus, he proved many political pandits including some of those in his own party to be wrong, they felt that the Telugu Desam Party was invincible force. As in 1978, Dr. Reddy once again

lead the Congress Party to stage a comeback. Identical to his prophesy in 1978, much before the elections, Dr. Reddy predicted that the party would bag 180 seats and ultimately the party won 181 seats in the Assembly. Dr. Channa Reddy was the natural choice to Head the Government and he was sworn-in as Chief Minister on 3rd December 1989 for the second time in his political career.

This was a period of transition and great challenge to head the Government after the Telugu Desam Party had been in power for about 7 years. There were innumerable problems confronting the state and Dr. Reddy immediately plunged into action. The entire administration had to be geared up and improve the dwindled state financial position. A lot of effort was required to set-right the priorities, particularly, when certain core sectors were very much neglected.

Within three weeks the Government was immediately confronted with a diabolical challenge from the Naxalites when two M.L.A. and other public representatives were kidnapped. The sensitive situation was handled very carefully. A new approach to solve the extremists' problem was conceived which later on evolved into the three pronged programme. To tackle the root cause, he contemplated a novel scheme for the upliftment of the poorer sections of the people, particularly, in the remote areas and as early as in January, 1990 he took up the '**Remote Area Development plan**' with the Planning Commission at the time of the discussion in the Annual Plan for 1990-91. The Planning Commission readily accepted this plan and allotted Rs. 65 crores over and above the regular State Plan. The Remote Area Development Plan was launched on 1st May, 1990 in 16 districts of the State in a very unique manner so that the right kind of thrust could be ensured. Senior Secretary level Officers were made incharge of each District to personally supervise the formulation and execution of schemes. This programme could have yielded much more dramatic results, had it not been in a way disturbed by one of the worst cyclones ever Andhra Pradesh had to face.

The early warning of the cyclonic storm was signaled on 5th May, while the storm itself crossed the shore on 9th and 10th May, 1990. Dr. Reddy immediately took up the responsibility of gearing up the administration and monitoring the largest mass evacuation programme anywhere in the world till date, by arranging to shift 15 lakhs of people to safer places to avoid loss of life.

The immediate response and the precautionary measures taken by the Government saved lives of the lakhs of the people who would have been otherwise perished. This time, the intensity of the cyclone was much more severe than the earlier ones, which claimed thousands of lives.

When he became Chief Minister for the first time in 1978, he had the experience of the sufferings of the 1977 'Killer cyclone'. This was highly useful in providing relief measures during the 1990 cyclone.

He was not satisfied with short term relief measures and wanted to take up some permanent measures to prevent further loss of human life, cattle and crops, which became a regular feature of such cyclones to which the coastal belt of Andhra Pradesh was susceptible to.

Over a 100 years ago, an English Engineer by name Sir. Arthur Cotton designed the drainage system in the Godavari and Krishna delta areas and constructed a barrage over the Godavari river. All those measures proved to be a great boon to the farmers of the delta areas and transformed the entire area into a vibrant agricultural economy. However, over the years, the drainage and the irrigation system started getting silted resulting in heavy damage of crops by inundating thousands of acres of crop land, even with a rainfall slightly above the average. Over the decades the people of the area were demanding the improvement to the drainage system which at times even led to agitations. As a result of his concern for this situation and foresightedness, Dr. Reddy immediately ordered that a proposal should be drawn up to provide long term relief measures on a permanent basis.

After taking over as the P.C.C. President in May, 1989, Dr. Reddy started developing a serious health problem, but unmindful of his health, he started working tirelessly for the organization till the elections were completed and continued his work in a more untiring manner after becoming the Chief Minister. He had been advised immediate surgery even in the beginning of January 1990 and Dr. Reddy was in fact beginning of January 1990 and Dr. Reddy was in fact planning to go to the States immediately after the conclusion of the budget session and launching the Remote Area Development Programme on 1st of May, 90. However, this had to be postponed in view of the cyclone and the other related developments. Finally he left for the United States in the last week of May, fully equipped to go to the World Bank to seek assistance for his ambitious plans. Before meeting the World Bank officials, Dr. Reddy also had an interaction with a number of N.R.Is. to get them interested in investing in the State's economy.

In Washington, Dr. Reddy met Mr. Moin Qureshi, Senior Vice-President. World Bank (who later became the interim Prime Minister of Pakistan) and after discussion for just 45 minutes the Vice-President of the World Bank readily agreed for an assistance of Rs. 2,000-3,000 crores in phases; depending on the progress of the works. However an assistance of Rs. 730 crores was immediately sanctioned. Within hours of this meeting, the World Bank nominated a team of international experts to visit Andhra Pradesh for an on-the-spot study. Barely hours after the meeting with the World Bank officials, was Dr. Reddy admitted to a New York Hospital to undergo kidney transplant surgery. Before he was admitted to the Hospital Dr. Reddy was so exhausted and his health was affected in such a manner that he could not walk without assistance. It was his anxiety and determination to translate his plans into action that kept him going and delayed his treatment much against medical advice and at great personal risk at the time of the cyclone, he visited the affected areas several times along with Prime Minister, Sri V.P. Singh, Dy Prime Minister, Sri Devi Lal and the Congress President Late Sri Rajiv Gandhi and delayed his departure to United States to be able to meet the World Bank Officials.

This was the first time in the history of the World Bank that a project of this nature was sanctioned in such a short time and several schemes were grounded in a record time. There was resistance from vested interests to some of the schemes being taken up, by overcoming all such hurdles the Government went ahead. But every one realized very soon that great benefit was awaiting the people of the area in the shape of this World Bank Project which was called the Cyclone Emergency Reconstruction Project (C.E.R.P). the results of this Project will be remembered by the people of the areas for generation to come and the

farmers of this area have developed great affection and respect for Dr. Reddy and many people regard him as "Second Cotton".

However, Dr. Channa Reddy's second tenure as Chief Minister was shorter than the first one and he resigned as Chief Minister in December, 1990. Even within a period of one year, many far-reaching decisions were taken by his Government. Dr. Reddy always had a strong commitment to the welfare of the weaker sections and to provide them with better opportunities. Because, he firmly believes that unless this is done, it would not be possible to achieve an all - round development. On 15th August 1990 in his Independence Day address after the flag hoisting, he announced an extension of 25% reservations to Back ward classes (in Government jobs and admission to educational institutions) for a further period of 10 years which he had introduced for the first time in the country during his first tenure as Chief Minister in 1980.

With a view to fulfill the party's commitment to provide better housing for the Weaker Sections, the Government lifted the ban on acquiring land for construction of houses for Weaker Sections which was one of the first acts, no sooner he assumed the office as Chief Minister.

Even in the remote Area Development Plan, specific guidelines were given that the works should be entrusted only to the tribals in that area; so that they would derive benefit even at the stage of executing the works apart from long term benefits that would be available to them in view of the overall development in their particular area.

Dr. Reddy paid special attention to the needs of the people of Rayalaseema also and released substantial amounts for the on-going projects.

Dr. Reddy assumed the office of the Governor of Rajasthan in February 1992. Incidentally Rajasthan came under the President Rule in December 1992, after the dismissal of the Government headed by Shri Bhairon Singh Shekawat in the wake of the Ayodhya incidents of 6th December 1992. The convocation of Udaipur University was fixed to be held in the last week of December. This was held very successfully in spite of the imposition of the President Rule. It may be pointed out that the convocation in Udaipur University was being held after a gap of about 15 years.

For the first time, doors of Raj Bhavan were thrown open to the people. A man of masses, Dr. Reddy has initiated the system of celebrating major festivals like Id, Holi, Dussera and Deepavali at Raj Bhavan in which people from all walks of life, were invited to participate. He also held the 'Janata Darbar' on the first Sunday of every month for listening to the problems and complaints of the people to solve them on the spot. In his usual meticulous manner after acquainting himself with the people and problems of Rajasthan, Dr. Reddy has prepared "Priority Calender" for the administration to implement various policies and programmes. He exhorted the senior officers that the State Administration should function in such a way to provide immediate relief and justice to the people completes the tasks in time and generates new hope and confidence among the people at large. No delay, no postponement should be 'the watch words'. All the officers have been asked to promote harmonious relations between the administration and the people. The thrust of the Government under President rule was that the programmes undertaken for the welfare of the

downtrodden and for the people living below the poverty line should be given top priority in the implementation. As chancellor of the Universities of Rajasthan he has undertaken the task of streamlining the university education in the State. The main thrust has been to evolve a common Act, common syllabi, common academic calendar, common code and an ombudsmanic mechanism for monitoring all the universities in the State. The Law and Order situation in the State was brought under control.

From Rajasthan, Dr. Reddy went to Madras as Governor of Tamil Nadu in May 1993. Having vast experience as chief Minister twice and Governor four times, he knows the rule of the game, at both the giving and receiving ends of the position.

In his 50 years of political career Dr. Reddy has seen both triumphs and trivials, but treated them alike, and equally unmoved by them. In fact, he is a believer in ‘Nishkamakarma’. He has very often said that, ‘Even a blade of grass will not move without the will of the God’. In perception and practice his attitude towards the life is “do your best and leave the rest to God”.

On the occasion of his completing 75 years, we pray for his long life with good health and happiness and greater service to the people of the State and Country.
