

### **1. What were the origins of the Andhra Mahasabha? How did this organization contribute to the socio-cultural awakening of the people in Telangana?**

The Andhra Mahasabha emerged as a powerful socio-cultural and political organization in the early 20th century Hyderabad State, particularly in the Telangana region. Its origins were rooted in the collective desire to challenge the oppressive policies of the Nizam's rule and promote education, social reform, and regional identity.

#### **Origins of the Andhra Mahasabha**

##### **Initial Formation (1923):**

- The organization was originally established as the Andhra Jana Kendra Sangam following a key meeting in Hanumakonda. It was led by visionary figures such as Madapati Hanumantha Rao, with Rao Bahadur Venkat Reddy as its first president.

##### **Early Objectives:**

- The initial focus was on cultural preservation and education, including the collection of palm leaf manuscripts, historical research, and publication of educational pamphlets.

##### **Transformation (1930):**

- In 1930, the organization was renamed Nizam Rashtra Andhra Mahasabha, marking a strategic shift towards broader socio-political activism. It evolved into a grassroots movement advocating for reform and awareness in Telangana.

#### **Contribution to Socio-Cultural Awakening in Telangana**

##### **1. Promotion of Education and Literacy**

- The Mahasabha established numerous libraries and reading rooms, especially in villages, thus expanding access to knowledge and raising literacy rates.
- Example: The Andhra Parishodaka Sangam, later Lakshman Raya Parishodana Mandali, actively collected inscriptions and manuscripts for public access.

##### **2. Revival of Cultural Identity**

The organization hosted literary festivals and cultural programs, reviving interest in Telugu literature and heritage.

Examples:

- Pothanna Death Anniversary Week (1940)
  - Ramayana Kalpa Vruksha Week (1950)
- These events strengthened local pride and reinforced regional identity.

##### **3. Social Reform and Political Awareness**

- Through its Sabhas and resolutions, the Mahasabha addressed key social issues like untouchability, widow remarriage, and primary education.
- Example: The Jogipet Sabha (1930) passed progressive resolutions promoting social equality and education.
- Leaders like Bhagya Reddy Varma used the Mahasabha platform to champion the rights of Dalits and Adi Hindus, catalyzing grassroots reform movements.

#### **4. Empowerment of Women**

- Under the guidance of Durgabhai Deshmukh, the Andhra Mahila Sabhas were held in parallel with the Mahasabha, advocating for women's literacy, rights, and public participation.

#### **5. Promotion of Telugu Language and Identity**

- The Mahasabha consistently pushed for the use of Telugu in administration and education, countering the Urdu dominance under the Nizam.
- Resolutions were passed to make regional language usage mandatory in public institutions and schools, reinforcing linguistic pride and identity.

#### **Conclusion**

The Andhra Mahasabha was a transformative force in Telangana's socio-political history. From its origins in cultural preservation to becoming a vehicle for social reform, education, women's empowerment, and linguistic pride, the Mahasabha significantly shaped the collective consciousness of Telangana's people. Its legacy continues to inspire movements centered on regional identity, equality, and democratic values even today.

#### **2. Explain the cultural and social reforms started by Bhagya Reddy Varma. Why is he remembered as a strong voice against the caste system in Telangana society?**

Bhagya Reddy Varma was a pioneering social reformer and visionary leader in early 20th-century Telangana. Through a series of cultural and social initiatives, he worked tirelessly for the upliftment of Dalits and other marginalized communities, directly challenging the oppressive caste-based hierarchies prevalent in the Hyderabad State under the Nizam's rule.

#### **I. Cultural Reforms Initiated by Bhagya Reddy Varma**

Bhagya Reddy Varma believed that culture could be a vehicle for self-respect and empowerment. His cultural reforms were aimed at giving Dalits a voice and a platform for creative expression.

##### **1. Sanga Samskara Nataka Mandali (1915)**

- A drama troupe formed to involve Dalits in performing arts.
- Impact: Helped in asserting Dalit identity through theatre and promoted self-respect within the community.

##### **2. Vishwa Gruha Paricharika Sammelanam (1916)**

- Organization aimed at improving the lives of domestic workers, especially women.
- Impact: Focused on women's education, training, and socio-economic empowerment.

##### **3. Adi Hindu Youth Gymnastic Competitions (1925)**

- Organized with support from Kodi Rammoorthy Nayudu.
- Impact: Encouraged physical fitness, unity, and pride among Dalit youth, promoting their social visibility.

##### **4. Exhibition of Portraits and Sculptures (1925)**

- Held in Residency Bazar to showcase Adi-Hindu art and sculpture.
- Impact: Broke stereotypes by presenting Dalits as culturally sophisticated and artistically talented.

#### **II. Social Reforms Initiated by Bhagya Reddy Varma**

His social reform agenda focused on education, self-respect, social justice, and public health, aiming to build an egalitarian society.

### **1. Jagan Mitra Mandali (1906)**

- Established to create awareness about education and unity among Dalits.
- Impact: Led to the founding of primary schools like the one in Islamia Bazar (1910), opening up access to education.

### **2. Self-Respect Movements**

- Conducted across Hyderabad and Andhra regions to fight untouchability and assert dignity.
- Impact: Instilled pride and self-worth among Dalits, challenging deeply rooted social stigma.

### **3. Adi Hindu League Conferences (1921–1924)**

- Organized to address Dalit issues and strategize reform.
- Impact: Provided a common platform for the Dalit community to unite and demand justice.

### **4. Volunteer Medical Camps (1925)**

- Set up during cholera and plague outbreaks in Hyderabad.
- Impact: Helped build public trust and showcased Dalits' capacity to contribute to society's welfare.

## **III. Why Bhagya Reddy Varma Is Remembered as a Strong Voice Against Caste Discrimination**

### **1. Redefining Identity through 'Adi Hindu'**

- At the First Adi Andhra Conference (1917), he proposed the term “Adi Hindu” to replace derogatory labels like Panchama and Pariah.
- Impact: His efforts led to official recognition by the Madras Government in 1922, restoring dignity to Dalit identity.

### **2. Campaigns Against Social Evils**

- Actively fought against child marriage, devadasi system, and lack of widow remarriage.
- Founded the Devadasi Eradication Organization, reflecting his progressive vision for marginalized women.

### **3. Leadership in Dalit Political Movements**

- Organized the All India Adi Hindu Social Conference (1922) in Hyderabad.
- Impact: Brought Dalit concerns into mainstream political discourse and demanded representation and rights.

### **4. Advocacy for Education as a Tool of Empowerment**

- Emphasized compulsory primary education for Dalits.
- Opened Adi Hindu schools, creating pathways out of ignorance and dependency.

## **Conclusion**

Bhagya Reddy Varma was not just a reformer but a revolutionary voice against the caste system in Telangana. His cultural innovations and social reforms fostered self-respect, dignity, and unity among Dalits, while his fight for education, gender equality, and social justice laid the foundation for a more equitable society. He continues to be remembered as a trailblazer who challenged caste oppression through constructive and inclusive reform.