

Report from AP

Take Immediate Drought-relief Measures Demands RCS (AP)

The Chief Minister of AP has been acting in such a fashion that there is no urgent problems to attend than the building a new capital. Every day he announces a programme, in the name of involving the people in building the new capital named as Amaravati, bringing soil, water and bricks from every village, bringing waters from all the rivers in India, bringing the soil from all holy places of worship etc. All his ministers and bureaucrats are engaged in collecting these and rallying the people for these programmes. The main opposition party, YSRCP, has been pre-occupied the Special category states for AP. Both of them are wantonly neglecting the burning problems of the people.

The state is reeling under drought. The state government has not yet identified drought hit areas. No immediate relief measures have been taken up. There has been a spate of suicides committed by the peasants. The reasons for these suicides are apparent: withered away crops due to drought, denying even the minimum support price for tobacco growing farmers and indebtedness. Yet the government feigns ignorance. It ordered an enquiry by its officials why the peasant suicides are more in five districts-Kadapa, Kurnool, Anantapur, Chittoor and Ongole. The government is thinking about creating a fund for the rescue of distressed farmers. According to the information revealed by the state agricultural Minister, this fund will only be used to refinance the banks which have registered unpaid loans taken by the farmers. Also it will be used to promote alternative sources of income for the peasants such as deing fans, pounlty, etc, which are not within the reach of peasants now. The state government, instead of announcing the drought-hit areas, recommended to the union government to declare 199 mandals in the state as drought hit.

The state executive of Rythu Coolie Sangham (AP) met in the last week of September and demanded the government that

- Declare all mandalas with 19% deficit rainfall as drought hit and take up immediate relief measures.
- Bring down the prices of all the daily necessities like onion, creals, edible oil etc.
- Opposed the land Acquisition notices issued for capital city, Machilipatnam Port, Bhoga-puram under the expired ordinance of land acquisition.

It also gave call of agitation at all the centre of mandals. Accordingly the RCS (AP) has conducted various agitational programmes in the districts.

Nellore:

The RCS (AP) district unit organised rally in Nellore town and a dharna before the collectorate. It demanded declaration of the district as the drought hit and immediate supply of drinking water to 177 villages in the district. It brought a leaflet detailing the prevailing drought conditions and widely distributed in the district.

Ongole:

The district unit of RCS (AP) organised dharna at the collecto-rate demanding immediate drought relief measures and remunerative prices for tobacco.

Guntur:

The district unit of RCS (AP) organised dharnas in the mandal centres of Piduguralla, Macherla, Durgi, Pedakakani demanding immediate drought relief measures, supply of drinking water, expansion of public distribution system etc.

Krishna:

The district unit of RCS (AP) organised dharnas in the mandals of Chandralapadu, Kankipadu and Bandar. They accused the govern-ment that it had not supplied irrigation water of the peasants

while keeping the full level water at Prakasam barrage to supply it to Thermal stations. It demanded immediate release of irrigation water, supply of drinking water, and creation of jobs through NREGA.

West Godavari:

The Agency Girijan Sangham and RCS (AP) organised a rally and dharna at Polavaram and demanded immediate implementation of drought relief measures. At Gopalapuram Mandal head quarters, RCS (AP) organised a dharna and demanded immediate and permanent relief measures to mitigate the drought conditions.

East Godavari:

The district unit of Agency, Girijan Sangham has organised a dharna at Devipatnam and demanded all the 11 mandlas in the agency areas of the district to declare as drought hit.

Vizianagaram:

The district unit of RCS (AP) organised dharna at collectorate demanding the declaration of district as drought hit, completion of pending projects like Jhanjha-vati, Ramathirdhasagar and others; taking measures to bring to full use of all completed projects, and taking up immediate drought relief measures.

Srikakulam:

The district unit organised a dharna at the collectorate demanding immediate drought relief measures.

Anantapur:

This is the worst drought affected district in AP. Hundreds of villages have barren look while people are migrating en mass in search of work. The district unit of RCS (AP) organised a dharna at district collectorate. It demanded immediate drought relief measures, extensive implementation of NREGA, filling of 49 tanks for drinking water, release of 50 TMC water through high level canal from Tungabhadra project, immediate supply of fodder etc.

All the programmes were held in the last week of September.
