

Parasa Satyanarayana, CITU, Hyderabad

He was born on 4th June 1924 in a village 8 miles away from Amaravathi in Guntur district. Educated in Guturena Zilla Parishad High School. Then SSLC (Senior Secondary Leaving Certificate) in Guntur. Then discontinued for personal reasons; went to Warangal. His father was a poor peasant. He got educated with the help of his maternal uncle. Went to brother's place in Khamman District, who was a Patwari (revenue collector), then went to Kothagudem center of Singareni Collieries. Singareni Collieries were in the Khammam part of Warangal district. He joined there as a clerk in 194 with the help of a Telangana martyr Com D. Seshagiri Rao, who was the founder member of Singareni Collieries workers' union affiliated to AITUC. Thus, came into contact with TU movement. He had to work underground because these areas were Nizam's State. Seshagiri Rao was already doing secret work. TU activities picked up during Second World War in the State. Second World War helped development of coal, railway, etc. industries due to demands of the war.

He and his associates tried to explain the benefits of TU movement to the workers, through underground activities. Stories about foreign workers' movement and movements in other parts of the countries were told. The workers had no rights whatsoever, including that of petitioning. Source of petitions and organisations would be sought out through tortures etc. The situation somewhat relaxed after the end of War. In 1945, the ban on Singareni workers' union slackened. P. Satyanarayana participated in the 12th Andhra Mahasabha conference in Khammam. There he came in contact with Ravi Narayan Reddy, Raj Bhadur Gour, etc. and was very inspired. In the meantime P. Satyanarayana became the office secretary of Singareni workers' union. He was dismissed from the job, the very next day; huge demonstration in Kothagudem of 4-5 thousand, first such in that area. There were only 3-4 pits. Officers were British, Mr. Bailey the chief conceded and agreed to take him back. He addressed the workers and announced his continuation in the job. A special labour officer was appointed to consider his case. After inquiry of one month, Satyanarayana was taken back. The union then asked him to resign the job to help the underground organisation in 1946; others were either underground or arrested. Somebody had to do full-time work. Since then regular activist till today.

Trade Union and Party activities went on under the banner of Andhra Mahasabha. There were textile mills, railways, collieries, etc. Edited a paper, the Union news bulletin, later 'Colliery Worker', of colliery workers' union. He was the general secretary of the Union, also. Participated actively in Telangana armed struggle, travelling long distances through jungles, etc. Some of his underground associates later on worked in different organisations.

P. Satyanarayana was in favour of withdrawal of Telangana armed struggle, while, according to him, Makhdoom Mohinuddin was against withdrawal. He organised iron-ore workers in the same district (Kothgudem). Also Barium Chemical Workers' union in the city. Outside the district or state he did not organise any unions as such, though he was office-bearer of a number of them. He got elected to state assembly in 1962. Up to 1973, he was in Kothgudem, after that moved to the state center. He was underground during the period of Emergency 1975-77. Just after, he participated in movement against CDS (compulsory deposit scheme). Then the pressure came his comrades to form separate TU in Singareni. So under compulsion he had to organise a separate union affiliated to CITU.

He mainly concentrated on Kothgudem, later touring all over state organising CITU. In 1946, under and against Nizamshahi, he struggled. He was to go to Calcutta AITUC conference in February 1946, he and Seshagiri Rao were about to be arrested, but he escaped from a public meeting. He could not attend. He was arrested in December 1947 from the colliery areas. Satyanarayana helped coal workers participate in the armed struggle; thus coal workers were important. He was not in the discussions in the TU/Party on BTR line and independence because of being in jail. He escaped from Aurangabad Central Jail in Jan. 1949, went on long hunger strike in jail. Was in forest area in 1949-50. He was an area commander, but kept contacts with coal workers, and did not organise armed acts as such. He restarted Singareni workers' union activities after Telangana, and continued his TU activities after release upto 1967. He acted as the vice-President of the Singareni Union. He fought for the rights of coal-cutters. He was in jail from 1964-1967. After his release he took up the cause of the coal-cutters again.

He at first refused to form a separate union. But after the formation of CITU in 1970, pressure increased, and he was forced to form separate union. Just before the split, he was the working committee member of the AITUC. He was one of the secretaries of All India Coal Workers' Federation (AITUC). Now he is CITU general council member, working committee member and one of the vice-presidents. In early years, in the 40s and 50s, and even today there were and are the so called 'Burma workers', 'Gorakhpuris', 'Punjab', etc. They have today areas and quarters thus named, as also named after the contractors.

P. Satyanarayana participated actively in the mass movement for Andhra Steel Plant in the '60s. Many MLAs and MPs of CPM resigned. The demand was conceded. On this and other questions of liberalisation, the agitation is still going on including BMS, but minus TDP.