

A Study on Urban Local Self-Governments Elections In Andhra Pradesh, 2021

(With special reference to Krishna District)

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ABSTRACT

The hovering question is 'Can we have the democracy without elections? or Can we have elections without democracy?' The presence of Local Institutions is by itself a significant achievement and would create an atmosphere and platform for people's participation in government. In local bodies the number of elected representatives has increased significantly. The constitution also mandated the transfer of a list of functions from the State government to the Urban Local bodies. These functions have been listed in the Twelfth Schedule of the Constitution. The responsiveness of the state and its institutions to the needs and aspirations of the people, and inclusive citizenship are imperative to good governance. The local government is a 'State subject'. States are free to make their own laws on this subject. According to dictionaries, 'self-government' is a government under the control and direction of the inhabitants of a political unit rather than by an outside authority. State Governments to constitute and empower by legislation the local bodies so that they could act as the units of self-governments.

The studies of several notable scholars on the working of the Panchayat Raj in different States and the Status Report of the Ministry of Panchayat Raj 1996 lead us to the implication that the Gandhian ideal of Gram Swaraj remains an partial agenda even after seven decades of the implementation of the Panchayat Raj on the recommendation of the Balwant Rai Mehta Study Team on October 2, 1959. 73rd Amendment was implemented by various States in 1994. Therefore, concerted, systematic and sustained endeavours are needed on the part of those for whom Gram Swaraj remains a cherished dream for the empowerment of people and for making national development of India a participatory democracy. So the author of this paper would like to give a picture of Urban Local Bodies elections conducted in the month of March, 2021 after many years and also after serious attempts put by the government of Andhra Pradesh to postpone the elections due to Covid-19 and at the same time State Election Commission succeeded through court judgements to conduct the local bodies elections in Andhra Pradesh State.

So in this paper focus is on elections for Urban Local Bodies (ULBs) conducted in Andhra Pradesh on 10.03.2021. This is useful for the development of this State.

Key Words-Participatory Democracy, Local Bodies, Responsiveness, Self -Governments

INTRODUCTION

In 1989, the central government introduced two constitutional amendments. These amendments aimed at strengthening local governments. Later in 1992, the 73rd and 74th constitutional amendments were passed by the parliament. 74th amendment made the provisions relating to Urban Local Bodies. These amendments came into force in 1993.

The statistical data is based on Directorate of Town and Country Planning, Government of Andhra Pradesh. The state of Andhra Pradesh has a total of 125 urban local bodies. It includes, 16 municipal corporations, 78 municipalities and 31 nagar panchayats. The state of Andhra Pradesh has a total of 31 nagar panchayats. Prakasam district has the most Nagar panchayats of six. Guntur district has the most municipalities.

The state election commission issued a notification to continue the election process after Gram Panchayat elections, from the stage of With draws in respect of 12 municipal corporations and 75 municipalities/ Nagara Panchayats in the state. According to the election schedule released by State Election

Commission(SEC), elections have been conducted for all urban local bodies across the state on March 10th, 2021.

Elections were not conducted for remaining 34 Municipalities and 3 Municipal Corporations due to various reasons like, Court Cases, Technical and other administrative reasons. For Nellore, Rajamahendravaram, Srikakulam Municipal corporations elections were not conducted in this month along with others due to various reasons. But Kakinada corporation is having its elected council.

Recently in this month the government declared a new Municipal Corporation based on the 1994 Municipality Act. The principal secretary of Municipal administration has given the orders by merging 11 village panchayats in Mangalagiri Municipality and 10 panchayats in Tadepalli Municipality in Guntur district. Now it is called a new Mangalagiri-Tadepalli Municipal Corporation. So, the total number of Municipal Corporations reached to 17 in Andhra Pradesh State.

Objectives

- 1.To decide the public opinion regarding the programmes implemented by the ruling party
- 2.To evaluate the impact of manifesto in the form of ‘Navaratnalu’
- 3.To understand the opinion of the voters regarding the three Capitals i.e., Amaravati, Visakhapatnam and Kurnool, which was a burning issue of today.
- 4.To witness the pulse of the voters against statements made by the opposition parties in the state in favour of Single capital i.e., Amaravati only.
- 5.To realize the voting behaviour

Methodology-

The data was collected from both primary and secondary sources, books, magazines and daily newspapers. The researcher interacted with a few voters in Krishna district and Guntur district to know the attitude towards the verdict given by the people.

Need for Study

After completion of the Gram Panchayat elections successfully in the month of February 2021, the State Election Commission has given notification immediately for Urban Local Bodies(ULB's) in Andhra Pradesh State. The Telugu Desam Party (TDP) strongly believed that they would have strong hold in Urban areas rather than rural areas as they didn't grow in the results as they forecasted. As a result that the TDP President and former Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu took campaigning programmes covering majority of Municipal Corporations including his own Constituency and District urging the people to vote TDP to remain Amaravati as One Capital. The opposition parties (TDP) Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) and Janasena Party(JSP), approaches the elections in the neighbouring areas with a prestige issue. And it would become that the results of ULB's in both the Krishna and Guntur District is the Referendum charging that bifurcation of State in to three capitals such as Legislative Capital, Executive Capital and Judicial Capital rather than one Capital i.e., Amaravati, in the name of decentralization of powers, proposed by the ruling party and opposing by the Opposition parties. The ruling party YSRCP strongly believed that the YSRCP could sweep all the Urban Local Bodies in the state. So, in this connection once again it has become an unavoidable to conduct a study on 'Urban Local Bodies (ULB's) elections in Andhra Pradesh state with special reference to Vijayawada Municipal Corporation to assess the local community verdict.

Polled votes and percentage in Urban Local Bodies in Andhra Pradesh

Table-1

Name of the ULBs	No of ULBs election conducted	Total Votes	Polled Votes	%
Municipal Corporations	12	48,09,173	27,48,013	57.14
Municipalities / Nagarpanchayats	75	29,47,027	20,82,283	70.66
Total		77,56,200	48,30,296	62.28

Source- SEC

Elections were conducted in 12 Municipal Corporations and 71 Municipalities and Nagarpanchayats. Out of 77,56,200 voters 48,30,296 voters franchise their votes with 62.28 percent. In Municipalities / Nagarpanchayats, Guduru Nagarpanchayat stood at first place with 85.96 percent of highest polling in Kurnool district. Second and third places goes to Addanki in Prakasak district and Mandapeta in east Godavari district with 83.04% and 82.24% respectively. Whereas Aadoni Nagarpanchayat showed lowest percentage with 50.05 % in Kurnool district.

Municipalities with above One Lakh voters and voting recorded

Table-2

S.No	Name of the Municipality	Total Votes	Total Polled Votes	Polled %
1	Tenali	1,47,753	90,868	61.50
2	Chilakaluripeta	1,00,307	74,448	74.22
3	Hindupuram	1,20,764	77,975	64.57
4	Aadoni	1,29,570	64,856	50.05
5	Nandhyala	1,31,547	82,111	62.42
6	Prodduturu	1,05,948	72,530	68.46

source-SEC

District Wise Polling Percentage in Municipalities and Corporations

Table-3

Municipalities/ NagarPanchayat			Municipal Corporations	
S.No	Name of the District	Polled %	Name of the Corporation	Polled %
1	Srikakulam	71.52	Vijayanagaram	63.98
2	Vijayanagaram	68.22	Visakhapatnam	56.01
3	Visakhapatnam	56.83	Eluru	56.33
4	East Godavari	75.93	Machilipatnam	71.14
5	West Godavari	62.02	Vijayawada	56.81
6	Krishna	61.31	Guntur	57.15
7	Guntur	61.77	Ongole	75.52
8	Prakasam	75.49	Tirupati	53.44
9	Nellore	71.06	Chittoor	66.06
10	Chittoor	62.21	Kadapa	54.85
11	YSR	65.01	Kurnool	49.26
12	Kurnool	55.87	Anantapuram	56.41
13	Anantapuram	66.11		

Source-SEC

East Godavari District occupies first place of highest polling with 75.93% followed by Prakasam and Srikakulam districts in second and third places with 75.49% and 71.52% respectively. Kurnool stood at last place with 55.87 percentage. Where as in the Municipal Corporations. The above table shows that the Ongole Municipal Corporation occupies first place in highest polling percentage with 75.52% followed by Machilipatnam occupies second place and Chittoor in third place with 71.14% and 66.06% respectively. Whereas Kurnool stood at last with 49.26%. Kurnool stood at least percentage polled both in district wise percentage as well as Municipal Corporation elections. In 9 districts out of 13 districts in Andhra Pradesh State after forming the YSRCP government under the leadership of Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy who assumed the charge as Chief Minister in the month of May, 2019 after general elections has upgraded 10 areas as Municipal Bodies Kamalapuram in Kadapa(Dt) Bethamcherla in Kurnool(Dt) Kuppam in Chittoor(Dt) Penukonda in Anantapuram(Dt) Buchireddy Palem in Nellore(Dt) Darsi in Prakasam (Dt) Dachepalle in Guntur (Dt) Gurazala in Guntur(Dt) Kondapalli in Krishna (Dt) Akiveedu in West Godavari (Dt) are newly formed Municipalities in the year 2020.

Wards Secured by Political Parties in Municipalities/ Nagarapanchayats in 2014 and 2021

Table-4

S.No	Name of the District	In 2014 Elections				In 2021 Elections			
		No of Wards in District	Wards Secured by Parties			No of Wards in District	Wards Secured by Parties		
			YSRCP	TDP	Others		YSRCP	TDP	Others
1	Srikakulam	68	24	37	07	74	55	17	02
2	Vijayanagaram	89	34	44	11	110	72	28	10
3	Visakhapatnam	51	09	39	03	53	37	13	03
4	East Godavari	264	81	170	13	268	218	34	16
5	West Godavari	102	25	70	07	111	91	12	08
6	Krishna	113	56	50	07	115	92	21	02
7	Guntur	217	73	123	21	233	203	26	04
8	Prakasam	85	30	46	09	88	62	13	13
9	Nellore	91	28	48	15	98	91	04	03
10	Anantapuram	303	65	207	31	308	245	54	09
11	Kurnool	219	106	101	12	250	214	15	21
12	YSR Kadapa	186	97	85	04	207	183	16	08
13	Chittoor	134	73	54	07	148	134	13	01
	Total	1922	701	1074	147	2063	1697	266	100

Source-SEC

Note- Election was not conducted for One ward in Prakasam district in 2021 elections.

The above table shows that there is a drastic change in the voters mandate when we compare the local bodies elections in 2014 and in 2021. In 2014 the then ruling part secured 1047 wards out of 1922 total wards elections held, where as the then opposition party secured only 701 wards of 1922 stating that 54.47 and 36.47 respectively. But there was a drastic change among the voters in 2021 local bodies elections though there was a fight over the shifting of state capital between the earlier government which declared that Amaravati as state Capital and the present or ruling government which is trying to form three capitals. In this 2021 elections people has give clear mandate in favour of ruling party by giving 1697 out of 2063 wards in the state. TDP became as opposition party in 2019 general elections secures only 266 wards of 2063 in the state, showing that 82% ruling party (YSRCP) and TDP with 13% of wards in the state. It indicates the that the YSRCP increased in vote bank by conducting various welfare programmes to the people after forming the government under the leadership of Sri YS. Jagan Mohan Reddy as Chief Minister of the state.

The State Election Commission by giving a notification to the ULBs, conducted elections for 75 Municipalities / Nagar Panchayats, 12 Municipal Corporations. Of these ruling party (YSRCP) won 74 Municipalities and 11 Corporations. For Eluru Corporation election was conducted but results were not declared by the judgement of High court. TDP won only one Municipality in this elections i.e. Tadipatri in Anantapur District. Really it is a big blow to the TDP which is having more than thirty-five years of history as a political party in Andhra Pradesh.

Party Wise Election Results in Municipal Corporations in Andhra Pradesh

Table- 5

S.No	Name of the Corporation	In 2021 Corporation Elections			
		Total Divisions	YSRCP	TDP	Others
1	Vijayanagaram	50	48	01	01
2	Visakhapatnam	98	58	30	10
3	Vijayawada	64	49	14	01
4	Machilipatnam	50	44	05	01
5	Guntur	57	44	09	04
6	Ongole	50	41	06	03
7	Tirupati	50	48	01	00
8	Chittoor	50	46	03	01
9	Anantapuram	50	48	00	02
10	Kurnool	52	41	08	03
11	YSR Kadapa	50	48	01	01

Source- SEC

Note – For Eluru corporation election was conducted but based on the court judgement results were not declared till today. In Tirupati Corporation election was not conducted for one Division .

View on Krishna District

Krishna district is one of the thirteen districts in the newly formed Andhra Pradesh State of the India. Machilipatnam is the administrative headquarters and Vijayawada is the most populated city in the district. It has an area of 8,727 km and had a population of 4,529,009 as per 2011 census of India.

The polling activity which began at 7am on 10.03.2021 for ULBs went on smoothly and concluded peacefully in the evening with out any need for repolling. Polling was held for 222 wards in the seven ULBs, including Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (64 wards) MTM Corporation (49) Nuzvid Municipality (30) Pedana Municipality (23) Nandigama Nagar Panchayat (20) Tiruvuru Nagarpanchayat (18) and Vuyyuru Nagarpanchayat (18) in 1,111 polling booths. In nagarpanchayats Vuyyuru (79.49) Nandigama Nagarpanchayat (77.34) in Tiruvuru (76.19) Over 66% polled in seven ULBs in Krishna District. Of the 10,66,185 voters in the ULBs, but 7.04 lakh exercised their franchise.

Despite awareness campaigns by the State Election Commission and Vijayawada Municipal Corporation, polling percentage in the city stood at 62.88%, marginally below 63.10% registered in the 2014 municipal elections. In Vijayawada of the 7,81,883 voters, over 4,91,648 exercised their franchise in the 788 polling booths through ballot voting. Vijayawada Municipal Corporation (VMC) registered lowest polling at 63%

, Pedana highest at 81%. In Nuzvid 73.68% and 72.53% in Machilipatnam. Krishna District witnessed a voter turnout of over 66.11% in the municipal polls conducted for seven ULBs on this day.

State Election Commissioner Nimmagadda Ramesh Kumar has announced that elections to Municipalities, Corporations and Nagar Panchayats were held in a free and fair manner barring a few stray incidents. And he added that this is the first time in the history that both gram panchayats as well as municipal elections could be held without going for re-polling and he thanked all the stake holders. People have to express their appreciation to the DGP and police personnel

No of Divisions Won by different Political Parties Won in Krishna District

Table- 6

Corporations/ Municipalities/ Nagar Panchayats	Total Divisions	Won by YSRCP	Won by TDP	Won by BJP	Won by JSP	CPM	CPI	Others
Vijayawada	64	49	14	0	0	01	0	0
Machilipatnam	50	44	05	0	1	0	0	0
Nuzvid	32	25	07	0	0	0	0	0
Pedana	23	21	01	0	1	0	0	0
Nandigama	20	13	06	0	1	0	0	0
Vuyyuru	20	16	04	0	0	0	0	0
Tiruvuru	20	17	03	0	0	0	0	0

Source-SEC

Welfare schemes confirmed the victory

Accrediting the victory in the elections to the Urban Local Bodies, people blessed good governance of Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. A significant mandate reposed trust in the deal of welfare schemes implemented in the last nearly two years. The clear mandate in Urban Local Body elections proved the fact that people in urban areas also endorsed the transparent, noncorrupt and dedicated governance of the C.M Sri . Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

CM Committed for Social Justice and Women Empowerment

In tune with the commitment to women empowerment and social justice, Chief Minister Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy has given six out of 11 Mayor posts in urban local bodies to women, and 10 out of 11 to those belonging to the Backward classes, scheduled castes and schedule Tribes, and minorities according to an official release. Seventy eight percent of the elected mayors and Chairpersons hail from Dalit and backward communities, according to the release. Of the 86 posts of Mayor and Chairpersons, 52 are women, against the normal quota of 42. Similarly, of the 728 posts of Chairpersons and Director of BC Corporations, 368 are women, and additionally, one of the Deputy Chief Ministers and the home Minister are the women.

Establishment of Disha Police Stations

The government has provided 50% quota for women and weaker sections in the nominated posts and works as well. Besides, in a first of its kind initiative in the country, the state government has setup DISHA police stations and special courts to deal with offences against women. To check malnourishment and anaemia among pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children aged between 6 to 72 months, the government has brought in YSR Poshana plus and YSR Sampoorna Poshana schemes to provide supplementary nutrition through anganwadi centres. The government has also brought in many schemes

focussing on financial empowerment of women such as YSR Cheyuta, Kapu Nestham and Aasara, Programmes introduced.

CONCLUSION-

The Municipal & Corporation election results show YSRCP's victory or a decisive win has mirrored peoples' confidence towards development & effective governance though the opposition leaders provoked the voters, the absolute mandate was a proof of peoples acceptance of decentralised development and to the series of welfare measures launched for different sections of the people in the entire state.

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