

Politics of Karnataka

Shreenivas H Koppal

Assistant Professor of Political Science, Government First Grade College Hubli;
Karnataka State, India

Abstract

Karnataka is bordered by the Lakshadweep Sea to the west, Goa to the northwest, Maharashtra to the north, Telangana to the northeast, Andhra Pradesh to the east, Tamil Nadu to the southeast, and Kerala to the southwest. It is the only southern state to have land borders with all of the other four southern Indian sister states. There was in no way like a unified Karnataka and an assembled investigation of Karnataka Government and Politics before first November, 1956. The Karnataka-speaking zones were isolated into nineteen differed regulatory units till at that point. Karnataka has a parliamentary system of government with two democratically elected houses, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly consists of 224 members who are elected for five-year terms. The Legislative Council is a permanent body of 75 members with one-third (25 members) retiring every two years.

In the modern period of Karnataka history has been a systematic ideological transformation of Karnataka from a geographical and cultural concept into a political concept. In this process it is necessary to identify of the politics of Karnataka. Karnataka also known as Karunadu formerly Mysore State is a state in the southwestern region of India. It was formed as Mysore State on 1 November 1956, with the passage of the States Reorganisation Act and renamed Karnataka in 1973. The state corresponds to the Carnatic region. Its capital and largest city is Bengaluru.

Karnataka is bordered by the Lakshadweep Sea to the west, Goa to the northwest, Maharashtra to the north, Telangana to the northeast, Andhra Pradesh to the east, Tamil Nadu to the southeast, and Kerala to the southwest. It is the only southern state to have land borders with all of the other four southern Indian sister states. The state covers an area of 191,791 km² (74,051 sq mi), or 5.83 percent of the total geographical area of India. It is the sixth-largest Indian state by area. With 61,130,704 inhabitants at the 2011 census, Karnataka is the eighth-largest state by population, comprising 31 districts. Kannada, one of the classical languages of India, is the most widely spoken and official language of the state. Though several etymologies have been suggested for the name Karnataka, the generally accepted one is that Karnataka is derived from the Kannada words karu and nadu, meaning "elevated land". Karu Nadu may also be read as karu, meaning "black" and nadu, meaning "region", as a reference to the black cotton soil found in the Bayalu Seeme region of the state. The British used the word Carnatic, sometimes Karnatak.

There was in no way like a unified Karnataka and an assembled investigation of Karnataka Government and Politics before first November, 1956. The Karnataka-talking zones were isolated into nineteen differed regulatory units till at that point. These were: 1) Bombay Province, 2) Madras Province, 3) Princely State of Mysore, 4) Princely State of Hyderabad, 5) Chief Commissioner of Province of Coorg, 6) Princely State of Kolhapur, 7) Princely State of Sagnili, 8) Princely State of Miraj (Senior) 9) Princely State of Miraj (Junior) 10) Princely State of Kurandawad (Senior) 11) Princely State of Kurandawad (Junior) 12) Princely State of Jamakhandi, 13) Princely State of Mudhol 14) Princely State of Ramadurg, 15) Princely State of Jath, 16) Princely State of Akkalkot 17) Princely State of Aundh, 18) Princely State of Savanur and 19) Princely State of Sondur. The State has seen at least three major political shifts since the 60s which changed the nature of its ruling class. It was around 50 years ago that Karnataka politics began to witness certain fundamental changes. Early in the 1970s, the social power blocs in the State's ruling class began to undergo a transformation, a process which changed the face of power politics for ever. In the mid-1980s, the monopoly of the Congress ended with the emergence of a centrist alternative in the Janata Party (renamed later as the Janata Dal). The eventual disintegration of the Janata Dal in the late 1990s paved the way for Karnataka becoming the first State in the South to host the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party.

Karnataka has a parliamentary system of government with two democratically elected houses, the Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council. The Legislative Assembly consists of 224 members who are elected for five-year terms. The Legislative Council is a permanent body of 75 members with one-third (25 members) retiring every two years.

The government of Karnataka is headed by the Chief Minister who is chosen by the ruling party members of the Legislative Assembly. The Chief Minister, along with the council of ministers, executes the legislative agenda and exercises most of the executive powers. However, the constitutional and formal head of the state is the Governor who is appointed for a five-year term by the President of India on the advice of the Union government. The people of Karnataka also elect 28 members to the Lok Sabha, the lower house of the Indian Parliament. The members of the state Legislative Assembly elect 12 members to the Rajya Sabha, the upper house of the Indian Parliament.

For administrative purposes, Karnataka has been divided into four revenue divisions, 49 sub-divisions, 31 districts, 175 taluks and 745 hoblies / revenue circles. The administration in each district is headed by a Deputy Commissioner who belongs to the Indian Administrative Service and is assisted by a number of officers belonging to Karnataka state services. The Deputy Commissioner of Police, an officer belonging to the Indian Police Service and assisted by the officers of the Karnataka Police Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining law and order and related issues in each district. The Deputy Conservator of Forests, an officer belonging to the Indian Forest Service, is entrusted with the responsibility of managing forests, environment and wildlife of the district, he will be assisted by the officers belonging to Karnataka Forest Service and officers belonging to Karnataka Forest Subordinate Service. Sectoral development in the districts is looked after by the district head of each development

department such as Public Works Department, Health, Education, Agriculture, Animal Husbandry, etc. The judiciary in the state consists of the Karnataka High Court (Attara Kacheri) in Bangalore, Hubballi-Dharwad, and Kalaburagi, district and session courts in each district and lower courts and judges at the taluk level.

Politics in Karnataka has been dominated by three political parties, the Indian National Congress, the Janata Dal (Secular) and the Bharatiya Janata Party. Politicians from Karnataka have played prominent roles in federal government of India with some of them having held the high positions of Prime Minister and Vice-President. Border disputes involving Karnataka's claim on the Kasaragod and Solapur districts and Maharashtra's claim on Belagavi are ongoing since the states reorganisation. The official emblem of Karnataka has a Ganda Berunda in the centre. Surmounting this are four lions facing the four directions, taken from the Lion Capital of Ashoka at Sarnath. The emblem also carries two Sharabhas with the head of an elephant and the body of a lion.

Karnataka consists of 28 parliamentary constituencies from which 28 members of parliament get elected to the Lok Sabha. Several politicians and bureaucrats from Karnataka have served at the center at various times in different capacities. Deve Gowda, who hails from Hassan served as the Prime minister of India in 1996. C. K. Jaffer Sharief from Chitradurga is a veteran Congressman and 9-time MP and former Minister of Railways of Government of India. B. D. Jatti from Bijapur served as the Vice President and also as acting President in the past. S.Nigalingappa from Chitradurga was Congress I president. Now Mallikarjun Kharge president of Indian National congress. The State has seen at least three major political shifts since the 60s which changed the nature of its ruling class It was around 50 years ago that Karnataka politics began to witness certain fundamental changes. Early in the 1970s, the social power blocs in the State's ruling class began to undergo a transformation, a process which changed the face of power politics for ever. In the mid-1980s, the monopoly of the Congress ended with the emergence of a centrist alternative in the Janata Party (renamed later as the Janata Dal). The eventual disintegration of the Janata Dal in the late 1990s paved the way for Karnataka becoming the first State in the South to host the rightist Bharatiya Janata Party. Political contests that emerged in response to these shifts ensured a more even distribution of political power amongst various social groups, diminishing the dominance of the two major caste groups the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas although they continue to enjoy, till date, a disproportionate share of power and influence in State politics.

2008 State Elections: In 2007, a sudden inquiry occurred between H D Kumaraswamy and Yeddyurappa over the denial of powers which hurled the state into emergency and the intervention of Presidential rule. In the midst of the choices on 10, 16 and 22 May 2009, the BJP smashed both the close-by gathering and also the Congress making Yeddyurappa the undisputed Chief Minister of the state. The BJP about achieved a lion's offer, and came to control in a state unprecedented for South Indian political history. Political observers ensure that the main role behind the whipping of the Congress was a direct result of its mistake of the certifications to the all-inclusive community of Karnataka in issues of enhancement activities, development and genuine drought in

Karnataka. Other than in-trip in Karnataka Congress party provoke powerlessness in issues of Chief-Minister convey. Regardless, inside one year, BJP moreover ended up being to a great degree disdained in view of debasement claims against the priests and in light of its enthusiast mien towards various sections in the overall population.

Political contests that emerged in response to these shifts ensured a more even distribution of political power amongst various social groups, diminishing the dominance of the two major caste groups — the Lingayats and the Vokkaligas — although they continue to enjoy, till date, a disproportionate share of power and influence in State politics. The politics of Karnataka is represented by three major political parties, the Indian National Congress, the Janata Dal (Secular) and the Bharatiya Janata Party. The Janata Dal (Secular) and Indian National Congress led coalition government was in power in the state since May 2018 till July 2019. H.D. Kumaraswamy of the Janata Dal (Secular) was the chief Minister from 23 May 2018 to 23 July 2019. Now Basavaraj Bommai of BJP is incumbent, forming the government since 26 July 2019. The tenure of Karnataka Legislative Assembly is scheduled to end on 24 May 2023. Legislative Assembly elections are scheduled to be held in Karnataka on 10 May 2023 to elect all 224 members of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly. The votes will be counted and the results will be declared on 13 May 2023.

References:

1. Charles O. Jones (1994). *Separate but Equal Branches: Congress and the Presidency* (Chatham, N.J. Chatham House)
2. K.R.G. Nair (ed), *Regional Disparities in India*, Agricole Publishing Academy, 1981
3. Ajitkumar, Singh, *Patterns of Regional Development*, New Delhi, sterling Publishers Pvt. Ltd, 1972, Vol. 8, No. 3
4. Lucian pai *Aspects of Political Development an analytical study*, New Delhi, 1972
5. *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 48.No. 4, October-December, 1987