

Andhra Pradesh State Legislative Assembly Elections 2009: Participation and Performance

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ABSTRACT

The elections are quite important because the electorate makes crucial decisions affecting the nation. The electoral outcome, in reality, determines as to who will manage the affairs of the government and makes suitable public policies. The selection of leaders could be regarded as a political process through which the people with their ability are made to assume political power. It is equally true that the political elite may not always act as they promise, but the choice of elite provides a form of popular control of policy outcomes. The General Elections and voting is regarded as the most obvious means of influence because it enables the general public to select political leaders / elite who represent their opinions, and continue to decide the destiny of the people or the government for the next stipulated term. Therefore, democracy is regarded as another form of 'vox populi'. The citizens also control the government officials, correspond through the media, engage themselves in various forms of political participation, and thereby the general public involve themselves in a variety of formal and informal methods of political discussions and articulating their points of view on the manner and method of functioning of the government. In this paper an attempt is made to analyze the electoral participation and trends in 2009 Andhra Pradesh State Legislative Assembly. These elections assumed prominence as the Indian National Congress (INC) regained for second consecutive term after 35 years.

1. Introduction

The earliest mention of the Andhras is found in Aitereya Brahmana (2000 BC). They were originally an Aryan race living in the north of Vindhyas; later they migrated to south and mixed with non-Aryans there. Regular history of Andhra Desha begins with 236 BC. During the following centuries it was ruled by Satavahanas, Sakas, Ikshvakus, Chalukyas and Kakatiyas. During the mediaeval period it was ruled by Vijayanagar, Qutub Shahi and Nizam dynasties. From the 17th century onward the British had annexed territories of Nizam and constituted a composite province of Madras.

A prolonged mass agitation in the early 1950s led by the Andhra stalwart T. Prakasam, who ultimately had to sacrifice his life in the cause of the Andhras, resulted in the creation of Andhra Pradesh on Oct. 1, 1953. It was the first State in India formed on a purely linguistic basis. Kurnool was made its capital.

2. The Emergence of Andhra Pradesh

From the Andhra State to the Andhra Pradesh it was only a short jump so to say. The Visalandhra idea of course was on old one. Shortly after the formation of Andhra State, the possibility of a general reorganization of States came to be considered by the leaders of the country. Andhra leaders continued to dream of the day when they would be united with their Telugu-speaking brethren in the Telengana region of the Hyderabad State. Nehru stated in the Lok Sabha on December 2, 1953 that a commission would be appointed to examine the general question of reorganization of the States. On December 29, 1953 the Government of India appointed a States' Reorganization Commission consisting of Justice Saiyid Fazl Ali (Chairman), H.

N. Kunzru and K. R. Panikkar as members, raising hopes in the minds of Andhras since there was virtual unanimity among the people of Hyderabad that the State should be broken up and each linguistic area should be attached to the respective linguistic State. They also hoped that all the outlying Telugu areas in Mysore, Orissa, Tamil Nadu and Madhya Pradesh would be incorporated in the Visalandhra to come. Though the people of Hyderabad State were unanimously for the dismemberment of the State, there was a difference of opinion among the people of Telengana regarding their future, some favouring its inclusion in Andhra to form Visalandhra with Hyderabad as its capital, and others wanting to maintain the identity of Telengana as a separate State. While the Communists on the basis of the principle of self-determination had consistently supported the formation of Visalandhra, all the other parties including the Hyderabad State Congress were divided in their opinion on the issue.

The possibility of a general reorganization of States gave a boost to the demand for Visalandhra, but immediately the protagonists of a separate Telengana intensified their demand. K. V. Ranga Reddy, President of the Hyderabad State Congress, and his nephew, Dr. M. Chenna Reddy, who had originally favoured Visalandhra changed their stand and became very articulate in their plea for a separate Telengana. The States Reorganization Commission visited Hyderabad in June-July 1954, received memoranda and heard the views of the various sections of the people. The Commission in its report submitted on September 30, 1955, recommended the disintegration of the Hyderabad State since "public sentiment, both within and outside the State, is overwhelming and insistent on the need for the disintegration of the State". It suggested that

the Kannada-speaking and the Marathi-speaking areas be incorporated in Mysore and Bombay States respectively.

As regards Telengana, the Commission observed: "The case for Visalandhra thus rests on arguments which are impressive. The considerations which have been urged in favour of a separate Telengana State are, however, not such as may be lightly brushed aside." After examining the case for Visalandhra and separate Telengana the Commission which felt that "the advantages of the formation of Visalandhra are obvious and nothing should be done to impede the realization of this goa.

The report created a great deal of adverse reaction in the various parts of the Andhra State and led to intensive lobbying by the advocates of both Telengana and Visalandhra. While the Communists reacted quickly and announced that they would resign and contest the elections on that issue, K. V. Ranga Reddy and Dr. M. Chenna Reddy hailed the recommendation regarding Telengana. But a majority of Congress legislators from Telengana and seven out of the ten District Congress Committees supported Visalandhra. When the issue was raised in the Hyderabad Assembly, out of the 174 members, 147 expressed their views, and of these 103 supported Visalandhra, only 29 wanted a separate Telengana; 15 remained neutral.³⁷ In Andhra almost all the leaders favoured Visalandhra, and only Ranga on an earlier occasion had opposed Visalandhra. Again there were violent incidents and finally the Congress High Command accepted Visalandhra. The decision was partly influenced by the arguments of B. Ramakrishna Rao, Chief Minister of Hyderabad State in favour of Visalandhra. The hard core of Telengana protagonists stuck to their demand for a separate Telengana. In order to avoid misunderstanding between the two regions of Andhra and Telengana, the Congress High Command arranged a meeting of the leaders of the two regions in Delhi on February 20, 1956. Andhra was represented by B. Gopala Reddy, Chief Minister of Andhra, N. Sanjiva Reddy, G. Latchanna (Ministers) and Alluri

Satyanarayana Raju, President of the APCC, and Telengana region by B Ramakrishna Rao (Chief Minister of Hyderabad State), K. V. Ranga Reddy, Dr. M. Chenna Reddy (Ministers) and J. V. Narasinga Rao, President of the Hyderabad Congress Committee. The meeting resulted in an agreement over the formation of Visalandhra by providing certain safeguards to Telengana. This was known as the Gentlemen's Agreement, signed by the eight participants who all belonged to the Congress Party. The Government of India gave statutory recognition to the provisions of the Agreement by incorporating them in the States Reorganization Act. In the draft Bill the new State was named Andhra-Telengana. Andhra leaders objected to the name as stressing the difference between the two regions, and the joint select committee of the Lok Sabha changed the name to "Andhra Pradesh". Nehru inaugurated the new State of Andhra Pradesh on November 1, 1956, and Sanjiva Reddy became the first Chief Minister and C. M. Trivedi the first Governor.

The State has a bicameral legislature. The Legislative Assembly consists of 295 members. It also has one nominated member. 48 seats are reserved for the SCs and 19 for STs. It has 18 seats in the Rajya Sabha.

3. 2009 Assembly Elections

The elections to the Thirteenth Legislative Assembly were held on 16th, 23rd April, 2009. These elections were held after delimitation of constituencies. Simultaneous elections were held Legislative Assembly and Lok Sabha. The House was constituted on 19th May, 2009 with 294 elected members and its first sitting was held on 3rd June, 2009. The Members of the Thirteenth Assembly took their Oath on 3rd June, 2009 and elected the Speaker on 4th June, 2009. Table 1 gives the electoral particulars of 2009 elections.

Table 1
Electoral Particulars of 2009 Assembly Elections in Andhra Pradesh

S. No	Particulars	Figures
1	Type of Constituency	Number
a)	General	227
b)	SC	48
c)	ST	19
	Total	294
2	Electors Participation	Number
a)	No. of Electors	57892259
b)	No. of Electors Who Voted	41898927
c)	Polling Percentage	72.37
d)	No. of Valid Votes	NA
e)	% of Valid Votes among Polled Votes	NA
3	No. of Contestants in A Constituency	No. of Such Constituencies
a)	1	0
b)	2	0
c)	3	0
d)	4	0
e)	5	1
f)	6to10	94
g)	11 to 15	145
h)	Above15	54
		294
4	Results	No. of Candidates

a)	No. of Contestants	3655
b)	Elected	292
c)	Forfeited Deposits	2942

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2009 to the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh, Election Commission of India.

Table 1 reveals that the number seats reserved for Scheduled Castes increased from 39 to 48 and Scheduled Tribes from 15 to 19 seats in the State Legislative Assembly. There are 57,892,259 registered voters in the state. Among them 41,898,927 voters constituting 72.37 per cent cast their vote in elections. The number candidates contested in elections reached highest number of 3,655 since the formation of state. It

is pertinent to note that in 293 constituencies the contenders for each seat is 6 and above. Nearly in half of the constituencies there are 11 to 15 contenders for one seat. There are 6 to 10 contenders in 31.97 per cent of constituencies. In 18.37 per cent constituencies the contenders is above 15. Among the contestants about 80.49 per cent of contestants forfeited their deposits.

4. Performance of Political Parties

The details of party wise performance of political parties in 2009 elections are presented in table 2.

Table 2
Performance of Political Parties in 2009 Assembly Elections in Andhra Pradesh

S. No	Party	Seats			Share In Valid Votes Polled In State		Vote % In Seats Contested
		Contested	Won	FD	Votes	%	
National Parties							
1.	BJP	271	2	263	1192814	2.84	3.10
2.	BSP	270	0	270	441917	1.05	1.14
3.	CPI	14	4	4	514682	1.22	26.80
4.	CPM	18	1	6	603407	1.43	23.35
5.	INC	294	156	8	15374448	36.55	36.69
6.	RJD	26	0	26	28776	0.07	0.79
		893	163	577	18156044	43.17	
State Parties							
7.	TDP	225	92	6	11826457	28.12	36.46
8.	TRS	45	10	13	1678906	3.99	27.02
		270	102	19	13505363	32.11	
State Parties - Other State							
9.	AIFB	1	0	1	110	0.00	0.07
10.	JD(S)	2	0	2	1039	0.00	0.49
11.	JD(U)	13	0	13	3977	0.01	0.20
12.	MUL	2	0	2	546	0.00	0.24
13.	RSP	1	0	1	283	0.00	0.21
14.	SHS	4	0	4	2322	0.01	0.47
15.	SP	17	0	17	13008	0.03	0.54
		40	0	40	21285	0.05	
Registered (Unrecognized) Parties							
16.	ABJS	2	0	2	514	0.00	0.15
17.	AIMIM	8	7	1	349896	0.83	39.83
18.	AJBP	6	0	6	2380	0.01	0.28
19.	ANC	7	0	7	3832	0.01	0.38
20.	APNPP	1	0	1	274	0.00	0.16
21.	BCUF	11	0	11	5523	0.01	0.35
22.	BHSASP	41	10	41	29344	0.07	0.49
23.	BJSH	6	0	6	1248	0.00	0.14
24.	BSP(AP)	12	0	12	8104	0.02	0.49
25.	BSSP	6	0	6	2333	0.01	0.27
26.	CPI(ML)(L)	17	0	17	9591	0.02	0.41
27.	DABAP	3	0	3	1702	0.00	0.34
28.	GRIP	5	0	5	3365	0.01	0.43
29.	IJP	2	0	2	4017	0.01	1.22
30.	JMBP	3	0	3	722	0.00	0.16
31.	KKJHS	1	0	1	130	0.00	0.10
32.	LSP	246	1	245	739627	1.76	2.09
33.	MANP	4	0	4	26475	0.06	4.68
34.	MBT	2	0	1	48721	0.12	22.89
35.	MCPI(S)	17	0	17	13257	0.03	0.52
36.	PBHP	1	0	1	746	0.00	0.53

S. No	Party	Seats			Share In Valid Votes Polled In State		Vote % In Seats Contested
		Contested	Won	FD	Votes	%	
37	PP	11	0	11	6281	0.01	0.38
38	PPOI	185	0	185	190135	0.45	0.71
39	PRAP	288	18	165	6863509	16.32	16.72
40	PRSH	11	0	11	4397	0.01	0.29
41	RDHP	15	0	15	7805	0.02	0.37
42	RKSP	24	0	24	13474	0.03	0.38
43	RPC(S)	2	0	2	565	0.00	0.23
44	RPI	5	0	5	4926	0.01	0.75
45	RPI(A)	11	0	11	6630	0.02	0.43
46	RPI(KH)	2	0	2	670	0.00	0.23
47	RRS	1	0	1	350	0.00	0.26
48	SAP	4	0	4	4862	0.01	0.88
49.	SJP(R)	1	0	1	196	0.00	0.16
50.	TPPP	84	0	84	97478	0.23	0.81
51.	UWF	1	0	1	185	0.00	0.12
		1046	26	914	8453264	20.10	
Independents							
52.	IND	1406	3	1392	1922490	4.57	4.73
		1406	3	1392	1922490	4.57	
	Grand Total	3655	294	2942	42058446	100.00	

Source: Statistical Report on General Election, 2009 to the Legislative Assembly of Andhra Pradesh, Election Commission of India.

It is evident from table 2 that with 36.55 per cent vote share the ruling national party i.e. INC retained its power by bagging 156 out of 294 seats. The performance of the then main opposition party i.e. TDP with 36.46 per cent vote share managed to get victory in 92 constituencies. It is important to note that compared to 2004 elections, the difference in vote share between INC and TDP has increased highly from 0.97 per cent to 8.43 per cent. However the gap in number of seats won by two parties is lessened. With 3.99 per cent vote share the TRS won in 13 seats. Its strength decreased from 17 seats in 2004 to 13 seats in the 2009 elections. Among 6 state parties of other states 4 parties vote share in elections is 0. Among the registered (unrecognized) parties the newly founded PRAP with 16.32 per cent vote share won in 18 constituencies. Another new party namely LS with 1.76 per cent vote share is able to

won in 1 seat only. With less than 1 per cent share the AIMIM party won in 7 out of 8 constituencies it contested.

5. Conclusion

As part of political trends the chapter analyses the voters' participation in Assembly Elections in Andhra Pradesh in 2009. It also analyzes the 2009 Assembly elections with reference to nomination and contesting candidates, social category wise candidates in fray, number of candidates per constituency, party type wise performance of political parties, winning candidates analysis over total valid votes and party wise winning candidates margin of votes in 2009 elections in Andhra Pradesh.

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