Karnataka Primer

History

In the pre-historic age, Karnataka was known as **Karunadu,** which means elevated land or high plateau. Before independence, Karnataka was distributed as **20 different administrations** such as Mysore State, Madras Presidency, Bombay Presidency, Nizam State, Kodagu, Kolhapur, Sangli, Meeraj, etc. The handicaps & suffering of people were severe in those days. After independence, **states were reorganized based on linguistic and other criteria**. The **Kannada-speaking population** came together to form the present-day Karnataka under Mysore. The former Maharaja ruled the Mysore state as its governor till 1975. A Maratha king ruled the state in the Kannada region and conducted administration in Marathi, where no Kannada schools existed.

In other states, Kannada districts were few, and the **Kannadigas were few in the minority**; their sufferings were many. They had **no share** in development activities and no access to minimum facilities such as roads and bridges. The Kannadiga voice was considered the **voice of wilderness,** creating an intense yearning for Unification.

State Formation

Dharwad became the centre of the **Movement for Unification, with Shri Alur Venkataro's** brain behind it. Nine Unification conferences were held between 1926 and 1947 along with literary figures, Kannada newspapers & **Kannada organizations working hard** for unification.

In 1947, Karnataka came under **five different administrations,** i.e. Bombay, Madras, Kodagu, Mysuru, and Hyderabad states. **Minor 15 princely states,** such as Jamkhandi, Ramadurg, Mudhol, etc., were merged with the neighbouring districts soon after independence. The **'Karnataka Ekikarana Maha Samiti'** was formed in 1947 which changed its name in 1952 as 'Karnataka Ekikarana Sangha' with S.Nijalingappa as the President.

The agitation continued further when in 1953, Andhra Pradesh was formed, and Ballari district was handed over to Mysuru state. Several political leaders, along with Shri S.Nijalingappa, propagated for the unification of Mysuru State. A major **satyagraha** was launched by the Akhanda Karnataka Rajya Nirmana Parishat in 1953, with Shri K.R. Karnath as its president. In December 1953, Fazl Ali Commission linguistically united Mysuru state, which came into existence on 1st November 1956 with Shri **S.Nijalingippa as its Chief Minister**. During Shri D.Devraja Ur's regime, the state was **renamed Karnataka** on 1st November 1973 as the long-cherished desire of the Kannadigas.

Instability of Government since the 1970s

From 1970 to 2019, Karnataka has faced **ten political crises**, of which five of them happened between **2006 & 2019**. The chronic political instability in Karnataka is primarily due to fractured mandates barring a few exceptions. **Caste Differences and the firm footing of local leaders** have made it difficult for one party to get a majority.

Shri Devaraj Urs, the architect of Smt. Indira Gandhi's political resurrection after the emergency is the **only Chief Minister of Karnataka who has finished a full five-year term** and been re-elected. Here accounts the f**irst case of Karnataka** when the government collapsed due to MLA poaching. However, the equation between the two worsened on Shri Sanjay Gandhi's return to Congress Party after the emergency.

This state of affairs led to the **split of the Congress party into two,** Congress (Indira) and Congress (Urs). With no vote of confidence with Congress (Indira), Congress (Urs) proved the majority and continued to hold its power with more MLAs. Despite that, a floor test was demanded by Congress (Indira) in 1980.

Chief Minister Shri Ur lost his power over the state after serving for **678 days and was replaced by Shri Gundu Rao, leader of Congress (Indira)** and finished the remaining term. Henceforth, the first coalition government of Karnataka was formed in 1983 when the **Janta Party joined hands with Kranti Raga** (a party by Shri Devaraj Ur) and the BJP.

Shri Ramakrishna Hedge became the Chief Minister of the coalition government. During this time, an independent member of the assembly, Shri C Byre Gowda, accused Congress leader Shri **Veerappa Moily of offering him two lakhs** to abscond Congress (Indira). Intentionally, Shri Byre Gowda **recorded the conversation** on a walkman and produced the tapes as evidence. Although the case was later dismissed when an investigation was ordered into the matter as it **could not verify the authenticity of the tape**.

Further, in 1984, post-Indira Gandhi's assassination, Congress won **24 out of 28 seats** in Karnataka beside the sweep in General Elections under the Leadership of Rajiv Gandhi. **Ramkrishna Hedge dissolved his government in 1984,** taking responsibility for the loss and calling for fresh elections. Once more, in 1985, the people of Karnataka brought Janta Party into power (Hedge continued to be the Chief Minister) with a large majority who had earlier voted for Congress in the Parliamentary elections.

In Karnataka, during this time when **Andhra Pradesh was caught in a political crisis, witnessed the first instance of resort politics.** Andhra Pradesh's Chief Minister Shri NT Rama Rao sought Shri Hedge's help to save his government. Telugu Desam Party MLAs were taken from Karnataka to two resorts in Mysuru and Bengaluru. Shri Rama Rao later won the floor test. Several **allegations of corruption** were levelled against Shri Ramakrishna Hedge in 1988, which made him further resign as the state's chief minister. Shri S R Bommai, the senior leader of the Janta Party who replaced Shri Ramakrishna Hedge, several political developments and the court case which followed became legal precedents for many other political crises in the country during his tenure.

After that, the **Janta party merged with the Dal Party** and formed Janta Dal Party in 1988. One of the legislators gave a letter of withdrawn support from the Karnataka government along with other 19 MLAs to the then governor of Karnataka, Shri P Venkatasubbaiah, and defected the party. The r**eport was sent to the President,** informing them that the Shri

Bommai government does not have the required majority running the government. Not only this, but later on, seven **MLAs distanced** themselves from the letter, as a consequence of which Shri Bommai was given a chance to prove his majority. Still, the state governor dismissed Shri Bommai's government, leading the way to the infamous SR Bommai vs Union Case.

Restrictions were spelt out by the Supreme Court to **prevent the misuse of Article 356** of the constitution, which included mandating a floor test before dissolving the government & giving adequate time to the state before dissolving the government, among others.

Subsequently, after five years, on Thursday, 11 July, **Congress legislators** were seen whisking away MLA Shri D Sudhakar after submitting his resignation due to an ongoing political crisis. Shri Sudhakar later made an allegation that he was maltreated in the process. **Janta Dal Party won the elections in 1994**, and a meeting was called to choose the chief minister by the legislators. During the meeting, one of the party workers **assaulted former Chief Minister Shri Ramakrishna Hedge with footwear.** Shri Deve Gowda was elected as the Chief Minister of Karnataka. Fractured Mandate was again witnessed in 2004 after 1983. **BJP emerged as the single largest party in Karnataka in the 2004** assembly elections with 79 seats. But then also, Congress and Janta Dal formed a **coalition with Congress's Shri Dharam Singh as the Chief Minister**.

The coalition formed began to **crumble down after 19 months** due to several reasons. After 19 months of ruling, Janta Dal withdrew support from Congress, and within a few days, **BJP & Janta Dal forged a new deal** to form a new government.

The deal was done to **share the chief ministership** between Shri Kumaraswamy and Shri BS Yediyurappa. Shri **Kumaraswamy refused to step down** from the position, which forced Shri Yediyurappa and all his ministers to resign from the party on 5 October 2007. **BJP formally withdrew support** from the Kumaraswamy government.

President's rule was declared in Karnataka until the Janta Dal & BJP decided to continue with the alliance with Shri Yeddyurappa as the Chief Minister sworn in on 12 November 2007, which lasted only for seven days before Janta Dal again withdrew its support. Two years later, **Rebellion was staged against BS Yedyurappa** by the BJP leader Jandardhana Reddy who

made 43 MLAs resign. Yeddyurappa offered a compromise by offering MLA cabinet berths and refusing to accept resignations. A few months later, Shri **Kumaraswamy was accused** of bringing together dissident BJP MLAs, making 18 BJP MLAs withdraw from his government. Once more, after nine years, the 2018 assembly elections presented a **fractured mandate**. Again, **BJP emerged as the single largest party with 104 seats**, and Congress & Janta Dal Allied more often.

Despite that, the governor of **Karnataka invited BJP to form the government with Shri BS Yeddyurappa to take an oath as a Chief Minister** on 17th May. Meanwhile, Congress moved Supreme Court against the governor's invitation to BJP.
On 19 May, Shri **Yeddyurappa announced the floor and resigned.**

Zonal Level Details of Karnataka

Zone	Districts Name	Total Vidhan Sabha	Major Caste	Remarks
Hyderabad-Karnataka	Bidar, Billari, Kalburgi, Raichur, Koppal, and Yadgir	31	Vokkaligas, Dalits, Muslims	
Mumbai-Karnataka	Belgaum, Dharwar, Bijapur, Haveri, Gadag, Bagalkot, and Karwar(North Kanara)	50	Lingayats	
Coastal Karnataka	Dakshina Kannada, Udupi Kannada, and Uttara Kannada	21	Hindus, Muslims, the Mixed proportion of all caste	

Central Karnataka	Tumakuru, Davanagere, Haveri, Chitradurga, Shimoga, Raichur, and Koppal	35	Veerashaivas, Muslims, Dalits	
Bengaluru-Karnataka	Rural and Urban Bengaluru		Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Jains	
South-Karnataka	Bengaluru Urban&Rural, Mysuru, Mandya, Kodagu, Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Chikkaballapur, Tumkur, Ramnagara, Kolar, Hassan, Chamarajanagar, Davanagar, and Chitradurga		Vokkaliga, Muslim, Lingayat	

Caste Proportion in Karnataka

Caste	Percentage	Population
SC	18%	1.08 crore
Muslim	12.5%	75 lakh
Lingayats	9.8%	59 lakh
Vokkaligas	8.16%	49 lakh
Kurubas	7.1%	43 lakh

ST	7%	42 lakh
Brahmins	2.1%	13 lakh
Edigas	2.2%	14 lakh
Christians	2%	
Kuruba	7.1%	43 lakh
Jain and Buddhists	2%	

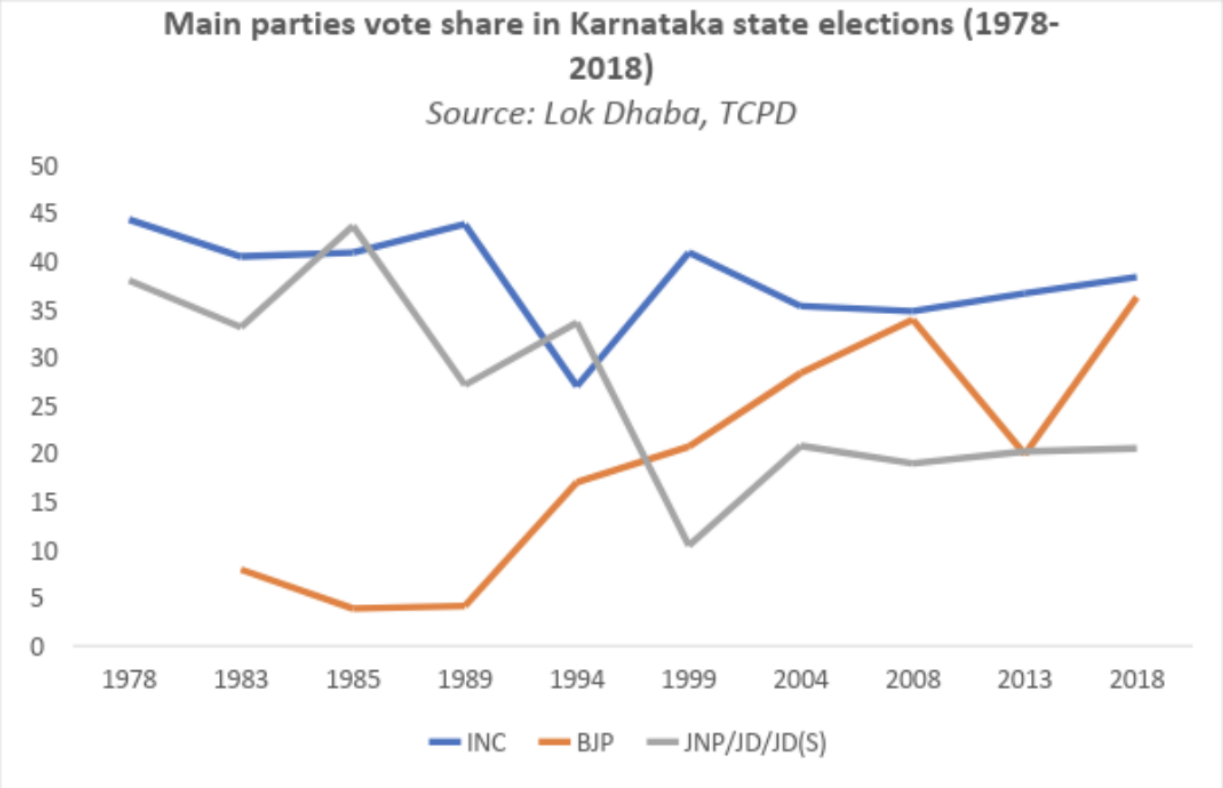
Religion wise population in Karnataka

Religion	Percentage	Population
Hindus	84.00%	51 million
Muslim	12.92%	7.8 million
Christian	1.87%	1.1 million
Jains	0.72%	
Buddhists	0.16%	
Sikhs	0.05%	
Other religions	0.27%	

Political History and Past Electoral Performance

Party	2004 VS	2004 LS	2008 VS	2009 LS	2013 VS	2014 LS	2018 VS	2019 LS
BJP	28.3%	34.8%	33.9%	41.6%	19.9%	43.4%	36.2%	51.7%
INC	35.3%	36.8%	34.8%	37.6%	36.6%	41.2%	39.0%	32.1%

JD (S)	20.8%	20.4%	19.0%	13.6%	20.2%	11.1%	18.3%	9.7%
Others	9%	-	6.9%	-	16.9%	-	4.2%	3.9%



Past Election Result Analysis

In 2004 **Assembly & General Elections** of Karnataka revealed an interesting duality of trends. a clear vote was in **favour of the Indian National Congress by 35.3% and 36.8%,** whereas the anti-congress vote got split between the BJP and the Janta Dal (s). The two-party dominance in the State was moving towards a **competitive multipolarity** with the strong Janta Dal (s) showing in the State polls.

The **verdict of Karnataka voters** did not come much as a surprise in 2004, unlike in other states. Exit polls more or less **predicted that BJP would do well** in Lok Sabha elections, while in Assembly elections, the race would be close. The State witnessed a **split verdict** for the

second time. **Congress retained its status as a ruling party** and provided those vital seats in the Centre, thus forming the **government at the Centre.**

For **BJP**, Karnataka was the State as its **launching pad in the South**, and this was not only the State where it had its presence but also the main partner in the alliance. For the **Janta-dal**, this was a **do-or-die situation** when its continued relevance depended on its reasonably good performance, especially in the Assembly elections.

Several other efforts were made by other political parties in the State to encash the support which they believed they had in the State, such as the **Bahujan Samaj Party made a consistent effort** to expand and increase its base in 2004. Howsoever, the **coalition government** was formed in the Karnataka post-elections **2004 by Indian National Congress and Janta Dal, who agreed to share the Chief Ministership.**

The State came under the **president's rule in November 2007** when **Janta Dal refused** to share the ministership, and re-elections were called upon in 2008.

In the 2008 elections, there were **224 constituencies, but there was no uniform distribution of constituencies** across regions in the State. The Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) won 110 seats, Indian National Congress (INC) won 80 seats, Janta Dal Secular JD(S) won 28 seats, and the Independent 6. BJP formed the government with the help of 5 independent candidates, by which the ruling alliance secured 115 seats out of 224 by the end of June. The total **polling percentage was 64.75%**, as per the Election Commission. The BJP won a **near majority** because it spectacularly performed well in some areas of the State. At the same time, its performance was **poor in some important regions** of the State, which made it fall short of the majority. An increase in the **number of urban constituencies** in the State worked well in favour of the BJP.

The **political developments** in the State necessitated an early poll. MLAs and MPs were chosen simultaneously by the voters of Karnataka in 1999 and 2004. **Clear Mandate** was given to Congress in 1999 and 2004, where no single party had a majority. The 2004 elections led to uncertainty and political developments, which provided the **backdrop** for the upcoming assembly elections.

An **intense campaign** was seen distinctly in the State with three major players Congress, the BJP, and the Janta Dal(s). **Congress anticipated benefits from the recent coalition convulsions** and saw itself as a natural choice that voters would favour a single-party government. The **BJP hoped for 'sympathy'** for having been denied its rightful share of power by the coalition government. **Janta Dal party hoped to reap the benefits of the goodwill** that its former Chief Minister Shri Kumaraswamy earned.

In the 2009 general elections, **BJP retained itself in Karnataka by winning 19 seats** out of 28 Lok Sabha Constituencies in the State, one more than what it had secured in the 2004 general elections. Anyhow, the **ruling party BJP experienced a major defeat** by the defeat of the Minister for Shri **Muzrai and Housing Shri V.Somanna from the high-profile Govindarajanagara constituency in Banglore city.** A new corner was brought to politics by a **25-year-old Smt. Priya Krishna of Congress, defeated four-time MLA Shri Somanna** of BJP by a large number of votes, i.e. 5239.

Congress suffered a **major setback by winning six against eight** it had in the previous elections. On the other hand, Janta Dal (S) bagged three seats, one more than it had last time. But in the **2013 assembly elections** of the State, **Congress takes over the reins of the State with the debacle of the Bhartiya Janta Party.**

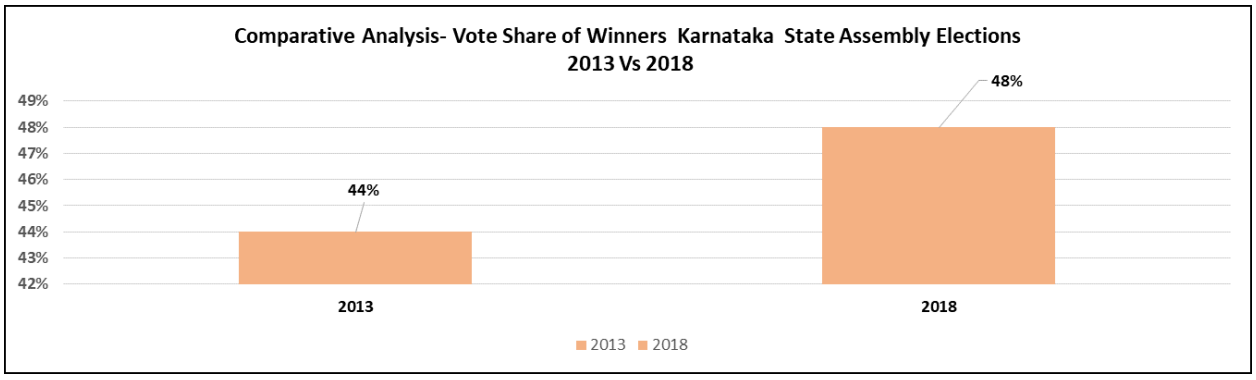
A **region-wide analysis** reflected that even though the **gains of Congress were not dramatic,** the voters delivered a clear mandate. Congress won 1**21 establishing a simple majority**, but BJP's performance was abysmal because it merely won 40 seats in these elections.
Blatant corruption, aggressive Hindutva, and factionalism led to the demise of the BJP in the southern State. The election results led to a **major setback for BJP by at least 20 years** when in the 1994 elections, **Janta Dal had a major victory**, and BJP only won 40 seats. The **Janta Dal and BJP got 62.32 lakh votes,** whereas BJP saw a vote **loss of 13.96%**. Shri **B S Yeddyurappa, who broke away from BJP** to form his own Karnataka Janta Paksha, clearly affected BJP prospects in several regions.

BSR Congress Party of Shri B Sriramulu, another breakaway fraction of the BJP, severely affected the BJP's performance in the Central area of Karnataka.

In the 2014 General Elections, **BJP Shri BS Yeddyurappa came back by winning** the Shimoga parliamentary seat by a margin of 3,63,305. BJP bounced back in the State by **bagging 43% of the votes compared to the 40.8% vote share** of Congress, securing 17 seats out of 28. Congress won nine seats, gaining three seats as compared to 2009. The **Lingyat strongman returned to the BJP,** which got its act together ahead of the Lok Sabha Polls. BJP derived much of its strength from North Karnataka.

Howsoever **JDS was confined to its traditional Vokkaliga** stronghold in Shri **Hassan and Mandya by securing an 11% voting share** in the State. The poll outcome **dampened Congress,** which set an ambitious target of winning 18 to 20 seats. After several months BJP, in a speech, made it clear that this was possible only due to the **Modi Magic to do the trick for its turnaround in its fortunes.**

In the 2018 Karnataka Assembly elections, **83 political parties and independents** were in the fray, including six national political parties, eight state political parties, and **69 registered unrecognized parties**. There was a **41% increase in the number of political parties** contested in 2018 from 2013. The voter turnout for the assembly in 2018 was **74% compared to 71% in 2013.**

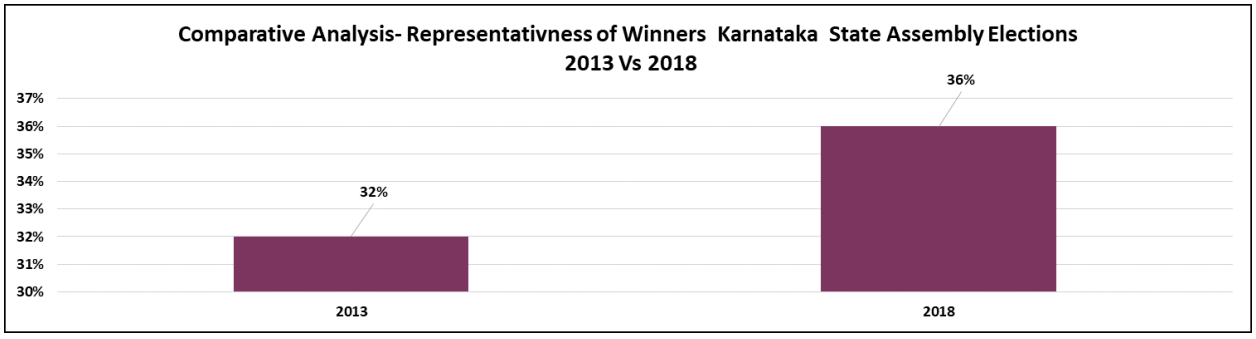


The top 3 winners who have attained the highest vote share during the Karnataka State Assembly Elections, 2018 are given below:

S. No.	Winner	Party of Winner	Constituency	Total Registered Voters	Total Votes Polled	Votes for the Winner	% Vote share for Winner
1	Shri R. AKHANDA SRINIVASAN URTHY	Indian National Congress	Pulakeshinagar	231913	126432	97574	77%
2	Shri D K Shivakumar	Indian National Congress	Kanakapura	220409	186152	127552	69%
3	Shri Dr. Ashwath Narayan C.N.	Bhartiya Janta Party	Malleshwaram	213537	123665	83130	67%

Table: Winners with the highest vote share

Out of **104 winners of the BJP,** 51% won less than 50% of the total votes polled in their constituencies. 61% of the 78 winners of INC, 50% of 38 winners from JDS, and 100% from KJP and BSP have won **less than 50% of the total votes polled in their constituencies**. All the winners in the state won with an average of 36% of the total registered voters.



After **ten days of the election** results, Kumaraswamy's government won the vote of confidence in the Legislative Assembly amidst the walkout by the BJP MLAs. With the support of **37 JD (S) MLAs, 78 Congress MLAs, and a few others, the JD(S)-Congress** post alliance managed to

sail through the trust vote while asserting that Congress-JD(S) coalition would complete its five-year tenure. He **promised a new kind of coalition government** for the country.

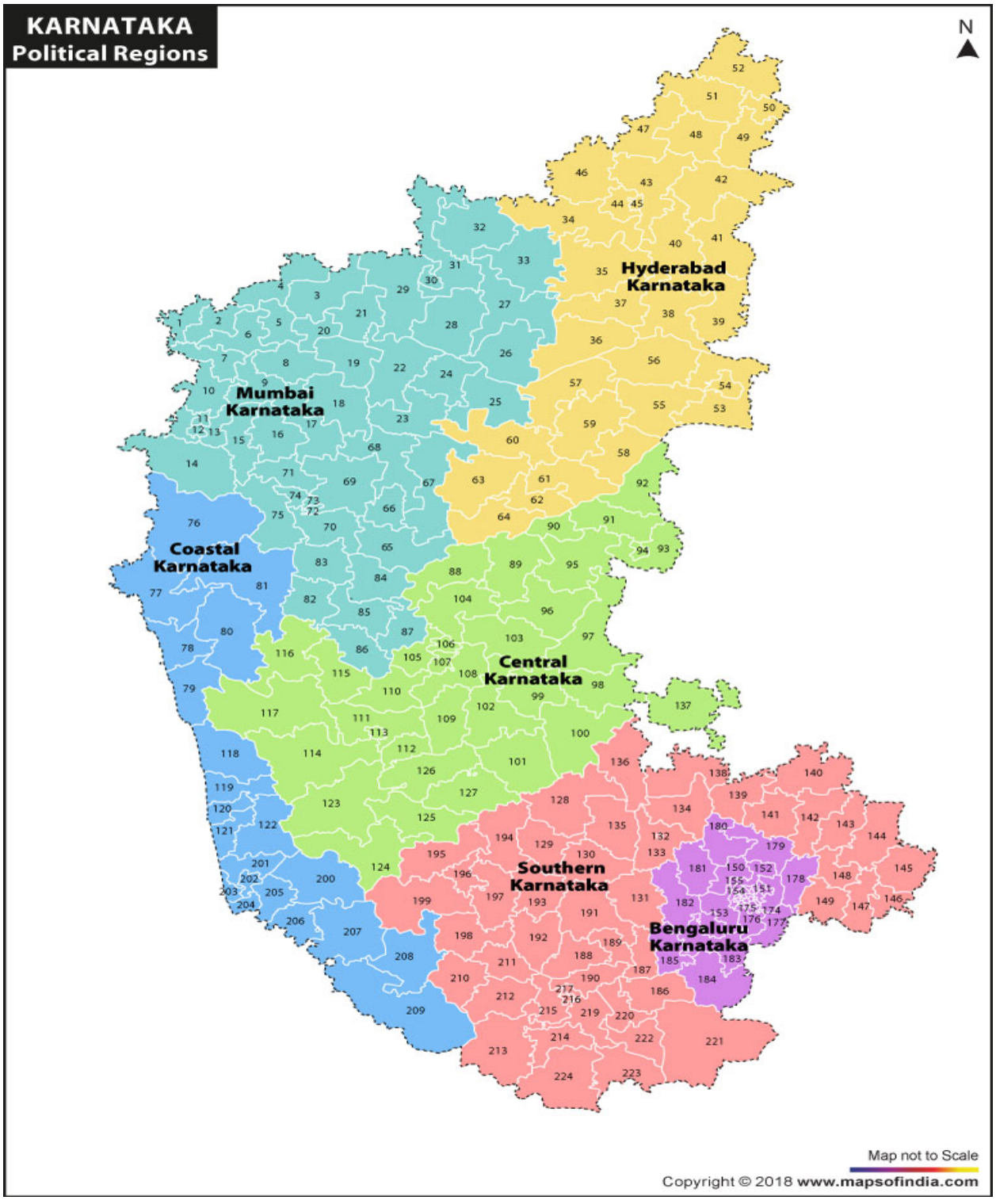
A year later, **BJP swept 24 parliamentary constituencies** out of 28 postings, a considerable setback to the coalition government of **Congress-JDS,** who only managed to win one seat at a time. This **surge in Karnataka** did not even spare the traditional strongholds of coalition partners in the **Old Mysore region, l**eaving the alliance virtually in tatters. This surge **exposed the chinks in the electoral partnerships** between Congress and JDS. The inability to make any discernible electoral gains has posed questions about the chemistry between the two parties.

Shri Shivkumar Udasi, a BJP leader, has **won the Haveri Lok Sabha Constituency** for the third time in a row by securing **6,83,660 votes.** BJP continues to hold over its **three coastal districts in the State, with Members of Parliament maintaining high leads.**

The **loss of a candidate** from Mysurr led to a significant **setback for former Chief Minister Shri Siddaramaiah,** known for playing a pivotal role in the **Congress refusing to cede the Mysuru seat.** A clean sweep was witnessed for **BJP in North Karnataka,** a clear case of voters repudiating the coalition government in Karnataka.

Zone Political Analysis

To secure a majority by any political party in Karnataka, a magic number of 113 seats should be crossed. A single strategy by any party will not lead to winning the entire elections in the state as different issues affect different voters in different regions. The votes in Coastal Karnataka are dependent upon Hindutva whereas this plays an insignificant role in the Old Mysuru region. There are a total of six regions that make up the political map of Karnataka.



These are the six regions that make Karnataka's political map.

Southern Karnataka is the **heart** of the Old Mysuru region. The region accounts for **one-fourth of the seats** in the state, i.e. 51 seats. The **Vokaligga community** has a significant **political presence** in this region. **Muslim and Lingayat** are the backward communities in this region.

A **good vote base** from the **Lingayats community** favoured BJP, whereas Congress was an influential party among the Muslims. **Stiff competition** between the **Congress and the Janta Dal** can be observed in the past electoral history. However, **BJP has tried hard to succeed** in this region and has gained some.

The **Hyderabad-Karnataka region**, known as the **Kalyana-Karnataka,** comprises Bidar, Billari, Kalburgi, Raichur, Koppal, and Yadgir, with **31 seats** in the State legislative assembly. This region includes some of the **most backward regions** in the State. This region's **urban population comprises a mixed caste cluster,** whereas the **Vokkaligas community** dominates the rural region.
This region was a **Congress pocket** traditionally. Nevertheless, Congress has l**ost significant votes** from this region, with voters **switching their allegiance**. Before becoming part of the Karnataka state, the growth of this region was hindered severely as the **Nizam of Hyderabad** neglected the region.

A special package known as the **'Special Economic Package'** was given to this region comprising **special services and treatment in the education, health, and job sector by the Congress-led UPA in 2013.** Siddaramaiah's government has made consistent efforts to uplift the region in the past decade. Ah**inda community, consisting of Dalits and Muslims** in the State, has a significant presence in Hyderabad-Karnataka. The **community prefers the Congress party** in the upcoming state assembly elections. The region is home to the least developed areas of the State. Although the region is blessed with abundant natural resources, **Congress has still failed to uplift the masses**. Congress party has often been **blaming BJP** for not releasing and channelizing funds granted to the region.

Mumbai Karnataka, or Bombay Karnataka, formerly a part of the Bombay Presidency under British Rule, played a **notable role** in the formation of the State government in the last

four elections, including the Lok Sabha elections. The region consists of the present-day districts of Belgaum, Dharwar, Bijapur, Haveri, Gadag, Bagalkot, and Karwar(North Kanara). **Lingayats community,** with former leaders such as Shri **J H Patel, Shri Ramakrishna Hegde, and former Chief Minister of the state Shri S R Bommai,** have dominated the political scene in the region. Earlier, the region was a **Janta Dal (s) bartizan**, but in recent times, **BJP has gained prestige** with Janta Dal political leaders switching their alliance with BJP. In 2008, the party had a **significant victory by winning 16 seats** out of the 18 seats in the region. A similar win was seen in the next year's elections by adding one more seat in the 2009 assembly elections. Under the leadership of **congress leader Shri Siddamairah, BJP won only four seats.** However, in 2014, Shri Siddamairah reunited BJP again, which led to a **significant victory by winning 16 seats** out of 18 in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections. The BJP State President of Karnataka, Shri **BS Yeddyurappa, has played an essential role** in gaining electoral ground in the region.

Frequent droughts and the **Mahdavi river issue** have affected the **region's farmers several times**. Originating in Karnataka, the Mahdavi river is **sharing its water** with the states of Goa and Maharashtra, which has created an **enormous plight** for the farmers. The farmers and the local communities have protested this region to divert the upstream water to the drought-prone area of the region. However, **no conclusive steps** have been taken up till now.

Coastal Karnataka has been the **hardline of right-wing politics** since the 1990s. Dominant inroads have been made with the help of **Sangh Parivar** and other right-wing fringe groups in Coastal Karnataka. Part of the **Mysore Kingdom** under British rule, the region incorporates present-day Dakshina Kannada, Udupi Kannada, and Uttara Kannada regions of Karnataka. The region is a **mix of different cultures** and religions, which has **seized the opportunity** at the right time to influence the people in the region.

Religions have brought opportunities for the region to **dominate the political scenario** in the region many times, with a sizeable catholic base joining forces with the **Hindu Communities** in the region to stand against Muslims. The politicians have used **social complex structures** at the time of election campaigns in the region to reap the benefits. Appeasement politics had played

a significant role in the region, **swinging the tide in and against the political parties.** From the 1990s, **Hindutva politics** dominated the region, a significant political issue.

In contrast, **Sangh has dominated** the region since the 1940s, opened up Shaks, and mobilized fringe groups to appease the public. This region is one of the stronghold regions of **BJP's Hindutva politics**. One of the persistent issues to date is **Communal violence** by the political party to take advantage of the divided population in the region.

Central Karnataka was a part of the **Princely State of Mysore** under the rule of Wodeyars. **Veerashaivas, a dominant community** in the region, have usually given their vote and support to **Congress** for a long time. However, for now, they have shifted their vote base to **allegiance**. The region comprises the present-day Tumakuru, Davanagere, Haveri, Chitradurga, Shimoga, Raichur, and Koppal districts. The region's demography is a preponderance of the **Veerashaivas community and several backward castes such as the Muslims and the Dalits.**

Shri Siddamairah-led congress government has dominated the region and recently has been vocal about the **minority status of the Lingayats, which has caused a great divide between the Lingayats and the Veerashaivas.** Although Veerashaivas do not want to create this divide, the action has been set in by Congress to affect the party's vote base in the region. **BJP is trying to capitalize** on the lost grounds of Congress to woo the Veerashaiva community. **Janta Dal** enjoys a **significant vote base** from the Veerashaivas community, to which the party is looking to strengthen its vote share in Central Karnataka and gain a significant number of seats in the upcoming assembly elections.

Appalling **water crises** are faced by the majority of the region, which is a result of governments' inadequate planning and water management. This situation has emanated **degradation of freshwater resources.** Lack of irrigation systems, Minimum Support Price, and farming loan debts have agitated the plight of **Coconut, Acrecnut, and sericulture farmers**. The situation has **worsened** for farmers due to improper implementation.

Bengaluru-Karnataka region, which comprises present-day **districts of rural** and **urban Bengaluru, was a part of the Princely State of Mysore**. The people of this region have

voted for the candidates who can work for the **region's development** and day-to-day life issues.

Until the 1980s, I**ndian National Congress has been a dominant party** in the region, but the urban population of the region elects those parties and candidates. The **Hindu majority** population in the region has shown its support for BJP since its rise in the region. The **Hindutva Brand of politics** has gathered significant support from the region. **Congress** and **Janta Dal** have gathered reinforcement from the **minority population of Bangalore** consisting of **Muslims, Christians, and Jains.**

Problems such as mass displacement, including slum settlements, health epidemics, and pollution have become **standard** for people living in the Bangalore-Karnataka region due to **rapid urbanization and fast-growing population,** which is one of the rapidly developing cities in the country. As every coin has two sides, similarly along with such beautiful developments, the city is on the verge of experiencing '**Day Zero'**. It is set to join 'Cape Town' regarding **water shortage**. Local authorities and **government** have time and again failed to restructure the **water usage** in the city, which has **choke up** the sewage and drains.

Major Voter Groups

Religion and Caste Groups

Religion Groups	Percentage
Hindus	84.00%
Muslim	12.92%
Christian	1.87%
Sikh	0.05%
Buddhist	0.16%
Jain	0.72%
Other Religion	0.02%

Not Stated	0.27%

Caste Proportion

Caste	Percentage
Dalits	19.5%
Tribals	5%
Muslims	16%
Kurubas	7%
OBCs	16%
Lingayats	14%
Vokkaligas	11%
Brahmins	3%
Christian	3%
Buddhists and Jains	2%
Others	4%

Karnataka's **political, cultural** and **literary** icons are mainly influenced by **Lohiatite Socialism.** Karnataka still **preferred Congress and Devaraj Urus**, who initiated relatively radical **land** and **political reforms** that privileged backward castes in the political corridors and other institutions of power. His regime **broke the dominance** of entrenched **privileges** of the upper and dominant castes, comprising Brahmins, Marathas, Linagayats and Okkaligas. **Vokkaligas** is the **most powerful caste** in Karnataka.

Vokkaligas

Vokkaligas form the **landed-gentry** and **warrior class** of Karnataka. They are also present in the neighbouring state of **Tamil Nadu.** The **standard titles** which Vokkaliggas carry are **Gowda, Hedge, and Gounder.** The Vokkaligga group has **several subgroups** under it such as Gangadikara Vokkaligga, Morasu Vokkaliga, Kunchitiga Vokkaliga, Namdhari Vokaliga, Hallikar Vokkaliga, Tulu and Kodalu Vokkaliga, Jogi Vokkaliga, Nonaba Vokkaliga, and Sardars.

Some of the well-known Politicians from Vokkaligas of Karnataka are

Name	Post
Shri Chikkamagaravalli Thimme Gowda Ravi	Current National General Secretary of Bharatiya Janata Party and four-time legislator from Chikmagalur Constituency of Karnataka State.
Shri Chakkere Puttamade Gowda Yogeshwara	Indian Politician and Actor from the state of Karnataka who served as the Minister of Tourism, Environment, and Ecology Department of Karnataka from 21 January 2021 to 26 July 2021. He is a member of the Karnataka Legislative Council and is a former member of the Karnataka Legislative Assembly representing the Channapatna constituency
Shri Daradahalli Byregowda Chandregowda	Former Speaker of Karnataka Legislative Assembly, three-term MLA, one-term MLC, and Member of Parliament—three-term from Lok Sabha and one-term from Rajya sabha
Shri Doddalahalli Kempegowda Shivakumar	Currently serving as the President of the Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC). He was the state minister of irrigation in the cabinet of H. D. Kumaraswamy.
Shri Devaragunda Venkappa Sadananda Gowda	Central Ministers of Chemicals and Fertilizers of India in the Second Modi ministry from 14

	November 2018 to 7 July 2021. He also served as the Minister of Statistics and Programme Implementation of India from 5 July 2016 to 24 May 2019 in the First Modi ministry. He is representing the Bangalore North constituency. He also held Ministry of Railways and other cabinet positions in the First Modi ministry. He also served as the 20th Chief Minister of Karnataka.
Shri Haradanahalli Doddegowda Deve Gowda	Served as the 11th prime minister of India from 1 June 1996 to 21 April 1997. previously the 14th Chief Minister of Karnataka from 1994 to 1996. He presently is a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha representing Karnataka. He is the National President of the Janata Dal (Secular) party.
Shri Haradanahalli Devegowda Kumaraswamy	18th Chief Minister of Karnataka from 23 May 2018 to 23 July 2019. He is a former president of the Karnataka State Janata Dal (Secular) and the son of former Chief Minister of Karnataka & former prime minister of India H. D. Deve Gowda.
Shri Kadidal Manjappa	The third Chief Minister of Karnataka (then, Mysore State) for a short period of time in 1956 (19 August 1956 – 31 October 1956).
Shri Ramachandra Gowda	Senior leader of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in Karnataka, India.
Shri M. V. Rajeev Gowda	Former member of parliament in the Rajya Sabha and a national spokesperson for the Indian National Congress. He also currently serves as Chairman of the "Congress Research Department

Kurubas

In Karnataka, the **Kurubas of Karnataka** are classified as **Other Backward Class** in the Indian reservation system. The Kurubas population in Karnataka is around fifty lakh (five million), which forms **8-9% of the state's total 6.5 crores (65 million) population.** Mainly inhabited in the **eastern parts of Karnataka,** they have three divisions: **Unnikankan, Hattikankan and Hande.**

Communities subsisting on the **wool economy wear a *Unnikankan*** (wool bracelet), while those in **agriculture wear a *Hattikankan*** (cotton bracelet). Hande Kurubas claims a higher position and prefers to be called Nayakas. They were an **essential part** of the armies of Hyder Ali and Ankusagari Poligars. **Oder Kuruba** is recognised as the priestly class of Kurubas. The Kannada-speaking Dhangars of **southern Maharashtra** can easily be called Kurubas, divided into **Unnikankan** and **Hattikankan Dhangars** as subdivisions of Kurubas.

Some of the well-known Kurubas Political leaders are

Name	Post
Shri Siddaramaiah,	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka and current Leader of the Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Assembly.
Shri D. K. Naikar,	Former Karnataka PCC President (1995-1996), was a Member of Parliament from the Dharwad North constituency in Karnataka State, India. He was elected to the 7th,8th,9th & 10th Lok Sabha
Shri C. S. Shivalli	Former minister in the Government of Karnataka.
Shri Adagur H. Vishwanath,	Former minister in the Government of Karnataka, former Member of Parliament from Karnataka, and current member of the Karnataka Legislative Council.

H M Revanna	Former minister in the Government of Karnataka and current member of Karnataka Legislative Council
Shri K. S. Eshwarappa,	Current minister in the Government of Karnataka, former Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka and former Leader of the Opposition in the Karnataka Legislative Council
Shri Bandeppa Kashempur,	A former minister in the Government of Karnataka

Current Political Status of Kurubas in the State

Shri Siddaramaiah will again become the **centre of attraction** for the Kuruba community due to former **RDPR Minister Shri KS Eshwarrapa** being pushed to the political wings. Congress and Siddaramairah expect to gather rolling support from a **politically influenced community of Kurubas.** BJP does not have a favourable frontline on the Kurubas except to project Shri Byrati Basavaraj, Shri H Vishwanath, and Shri MTB Nagaraj as community leaders. It is believed and can be seen that Shri **Siddamairah has a golden opportunity** of making himself a **supreme leader of the Kurubas community** once again.

Lingayats of Karnataka

Lingayats are found predominantly in Karnataka, especially in **North and Central Karnataka,** with a **sizeable population residing in South Karnataka.** Lingayats are estimated to be about **16% of Karnataka's population** and about **6-7% of Maharashtra's population**. Lingayat, also known as **Veerashaiva,** is a community in India that adhere to **Lingayatism.**

Some of the Lingayat Political leaders of the State

Name	Post
Shri S.R. Bommai	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka and Union Minister of Human Resource Development
Shri S. R. Kanthi	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka
Shri Veerendra Patil	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka
Shri Jayadevappa Halappa Patel	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka
Shri B. S. Yeddyurappa	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka
Shri Jagadish Shettar	Former Chief Minister of Karnataka and Leader of opposition, Karnataka Legislative Assembly, Present Minister for Heavy and Medium Scale Industries, Government of Karnataka
Shri Basavaraj Bommai	Current Chief Minister of Karnataka, former Minister for Home Affairs, Law and Justice, Legislature, Parliamentary Affairs, Water resources and Co-operation, Government of Karnataka
Shri Laxman Savadi	Former Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Transport and Minister for Co-operation, Government of Karnataka
Shri J. C. Madhu Swamy	Minister for Law and Parliamentary Affairs, and Minor Irrigation, Government of Karnataka
Shri B. C. Patil	Minister for Agriculture, Government of Karnataka
Shri V. Somanna	Minister for Housing, Government of Karnataka
Shri C. C. Patil	Current Minister for Public Works Department, former Minister for Mines and Geology, Government of Karnataka
Smt. Shashikala Annasaheb Jolle	Minister for Women and Child Development, Senior Citizen and differently-abled Empowerment, Government of Karnataka and MLA, Nippani

Shri. M.P. Prakash	Congress Leader and Former Deputy Chief Minister of Karnataka
Shri M. B. Patil	Former Minister for Water Resources, Government of Karnataka
Shri H.Siddhaveerappa	Former minister for Home, Industries and Health, Leader of opposition, Government of Karnataka
Shri B. Y. Vijayendra	Vice-president of Bharatiya Janata Party Karnataka state unit.
Smt. Lakshmi Hebbalkar	Member of Legislative Assembly and former President, Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee women's wing
Shri Vinay Kulkarni	Former Minister for Mines and Geology, Government of Karnataka, and MLA, Dharwad

The **Lingayats of North Karnataka** supported Shri **Ramakrishna Hegde,** the Chief Minister from the High Command of the Janata Party, as their leader. They braced him in a big way in 1985. Later, the **dismissal of a highly respected Lingayats Chief Minister, Shri Veerendra Patil,** by Rajiv Gandhi in 1990 further distanced the Lingayats from Congress. The **party lost its vote share in 1994** against Janata Dal when Shri Deve Gowda, the most respected leader of Okkaliga, **joined with the Lingayats** under the Janata Dal (JD) to defeat Congress.

This development decimated Congress in subsequent elections. They were **left with only 35 seats**. The **BJP** also vied for the political space that opened up and **garnered 17 per cent of the vote share, 44 seats and formed the major opposition party in the house**. Most of the Lingayats in the state are divided by **Janata Dal (United) and BJP.** Lingayats are slowly **consolidating** under BJP as it forms the **Central government** of the country now.

Current Political Status of Lingayats

The **lingayat community of Karnataka** has long been demanding different **religious minority statuses** for their community. **Caste-based political dynamics** are deep-rooted in the state at the time of elections. The community goes beyond r**eligious and social constructs.**

Lingayata and Vokkaligas have dominated caste politics in Karnataka since 1997. The Karnataka state cabinet has approved giving **religious minority status to Lingayats**. **Congress mainly does this just before the elections**. This approval can be **challenged in court by the BJP and Verrashaivas** as they are against this community division. Also, the **Lingayat-vokkaliga alliance** has become an **alternative competitor** in the state.

BJP Organization in the State

Abbreviation	BJP
Leader	Shri Basvaraj Bommai
President	Shri Nalin Kumar Kateel
General Secretary	Shri Arun Singh
Foundation Date	6 April 1980
Seats in Lok Sabha	25/28
Seats in Rajya Sabha	6/13
Seats in Karnataka Legislative Assembly	121/224
Seats in Karnataka Legislative Council	40/75

Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP Karnataka is the affiliate of the Bharatiya Janata Party for the State of Karnataka. Shri **Nalin Kumar Kateel** was appointed president of the BJP Karnataka till 2023, when Shri **B. S. Yediyurappa became Chief Minister of Karnataka for the**

fourth time. To date, there have been **4 Chief Ministers** who have served Karnataka from the Party.

For several years, the **BJP support base was mainly Brahmin** but later expanded to include more **Lingayats**. Most of the **party-state leadership is either Lingayat or Brahmin**. **Utilizing communal issues** as mobilizing factor, Party gained support from **OBCs, Dalits and Vokkaligas** by the 2000s (albeit with limited success).

BJP made an appearance as the **single largest Party with the highest number of votes in the State in the 2018 elections,** but votes were not enough to form the government in the StateState. The meeting was held with the state governor of Karnataka with BJP **chief ministerial candidate Shri BS Yeddyurappa and Janta Dal (Secular) candidate to form the government in the State.** Janta Dal (Secular) was able to secure only 40 seats in the State.

Even though **BJP could not confirm a majority in the State**, they still managed to **advance in several areas** compared to previous elections. However, the **governor of the State did not accept the appeal from BJP and Janta Dal (Secular)**.

If we talk about gains in the Central Karnataka region, **BJP's vote share was only around 15 per cent in 2018.** The total vote share for BJP and KJP (Karnataka Janta Prakash) was around **46% in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.** BJP came **third in the central Karnataka** region by winning **five seats out of fifty assembly constituencies** in 2013. In 2018, the number of seats won was more than two-thirds in the area. In Coastal Karnataka, the results were quite devastating as **BJP won only three out of the twenty-one seats** in the region in 2018. In the **Old Mysuru region, BJP bagged important constituencies,** including crucial seats such as Tiptur, Tumkur, and Hassan.

During the **2013 elections, BJP was divided** when the Chief Ministerial candidate Shri **BS Yeddyurappa walked out of the party** and formed his own Karnataka Janata Party (KJP). The **party formed by the candidate got 9 per cent** of the vote share and **six seats** in the State.

Simultaneously Shri **BS Ramulu and the Reddy Brothers** formed their own **Badavara Shramikara Raitara Congress,** which won only four seats in the State. Combining all this, **BJP got 33.5 % of the vote share in 2013, which increased to 36.2% in 2018.**

BJP's **vote share in the State declined marginally** from the 2014 Lok Sabha Elections when they got a **43% share in the State**. However, earlier in 2014, their vote share in the State increased significantly from **19.9 per cent in 2013** Assembly polls to more than **36.2 per cent in 2018.**

It is necessary to note that Shri **BS Yedyurappa fought polls separately** in 2013, under **Karnataka Janta Prakash (KJP)** Banner. **Historically** when we compare, BJP was never able to **cross the vote share of Congress** in any assembly election till 2018. Nevertheless, it has now shown up that BJP increased its vote share from **4% in 1989 to 36 % in 2018.**

Electoral History

Legislative Assembly Elections

Year	Party Leaderder	Seats won	Change in seats	Percentage of votes	Vote swing	Outcome
1983	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	18 / 224	▲ 18	7.93%	–	Outside support for JP
1985	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	2 / 224	▼ 16	3.88%	▼ 4.05%	Opposition
1989	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	4 / 224	▲ 2	4.14%	▲ 0.26%	Opposition
1994	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	40 / 224	▲ 36	16.99%	▲ 12.85%	Opposition
1999	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	44 / 224	▲ 4	20.69%	▲ 3.70%	Opposition

2004	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	79 / 224	▲ 35	28.33%	▲ 7.64%	Opposition, later Government
2008	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	110 / 224	▲ 31	33.86%	▲ 5.53%	Government
2013	**Shri Jagadish Shettar**	40 / 224	▼ 70	19.89%	▼ 13.97%	Opposition
2018	**Shri B. S. Yediyurappa**	104 / 224	▲ 64	36.22%	▲ 16.33%	Opposition, later Government

Lok Sabha Elections

Year	Party leader	Seats won	Change in seats
1984	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	0 / 28	–
1989	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	0 / 28	–
1991	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	4 / 28	▲ 4
1996	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	6 / 28	▲ 2

1998	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	13 / 28	▲ 7
1999	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	7 / 28	▼ 6
2004	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	18 / 28	▲ 11
2009	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	19 / 28	▲ 1
2014	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	17 / 28	▼ 2
2019	Shri B. S. Yediyurappa	25 / 28	▲ 8

BJP is trying hard in the state of Karnataka to secure a second term. The electoral history of Karnataka provides evidence that **voters in Karnataka have permanently opted for a different perspective regarding Legislative and Lok Sabha elections. Dissimilar patterns are followed in both elections,** which may pose an obstacle for BJP, the ruling party in the state.

BJP has adopted **various approaches** to win elections in the state. According to statistics and elections in 2014 & 2019 and the recent assembly elections in 2018, the **Modi factor has played a significant role** in securing seats in the state. Since the **Prime Minister's campaign was ramped up** in the **second half** of the assembly elections, the following party performed well in the **second phase of the elections.** Data analysis indicates that if Modi were not the Prime Minister candidate, **voters' preferences would have changed**. An **aggressive attack**

on Congress is the second most critical evident BJP strategy as **Congress party was securing electoral support** for the work done by the incumbent state government.

Congress organization in the State

The **decline of Congress share** in the state was seen clearly from 122 seats in 2013 to only 78 seats in the 2018 elections. Congress **still lost power in Karnataka without any visible anti-incumbency wave.** The 2018 elections were a **significant blow** for the Congress Party in the StateState.

Many reasons and explanations were pointed out and described for the significant fall of the Congress party in the State. Some of the primary reasons or issues discussed widely are **Congress's gambling strategy of taking a significant vote share from the Lingayat community,** which is 15% in the StateState, by offering them the **status of minority religion.** Lingayats presumed this move by Congress as **an attempt to divide the Hindus.**

Nonetheless, the **Lingayat community** stood firmly behind BJP and its Chief-Ministerial Candidate. The **strategy of Congress** leader Shri Siddaramaihah AHINDA (Kannada acronym for minorities and backward classes) failed. The **Muslim community consolidated in favour** of Congress, considering that Janta Dal might go with BJP in case of a hung verdict.

Dalits and tribals did not vote for Congress, which led to the **division of the Dalit vote** between the Congress and the Janta Dal (Secular). Shri **Siddaramaihah's move** to unveil a separate flag in the State by making the **Kannada language as a mandatory subject** in schools failed to yield the desired electoral dividends for the party in the State. The welfare schemes formulated by Shri Siddaramaihah worked well on the ground. However, Shri **Siddaramaihah turned complacent in the wake of surveys** that Congress would return to power without any anti-incumbency in the StateState.

Primary dependence for the election campaign was laid upon Shri Rahul Gandhi, who undertook Jan Ashirwad Yatra, which spread in nine phases across the State. Shri Siddaramaihah also campaigned selectively and did not cover the entire State.

Bitter infighting was going on among the Congress leaders in the State. Constituencies such as Mandya, where congress leaders worked against the party's official candidate. It seemed that Congress leaders in some constituencies had their own **personal interests to be fulfilled and kept those at priority.** Some examples are Shri **G Parameshwara, who aspired to become the Chief Minister of the State in case the party felt short of a majority**.

The former Janta Dal (Secular) leader Shri **Siddaramaiah is always considered outside Congress.** Among all these circumstances, organizational weakness can be witnessed within the party as it is losing State after State in India and has not been able to resolve this issue to date. Despite being in **power** in Karnataka, Congress workers at the booth level remained at the mercy of their leaders, reflecting their organizational missing on the ground. **Booth-level management failure** by Congress is one of the main impetus for Congress's back-to-back fiasco in Indian states. **Poor selection of candidates** in the party has also affected Congress' **long-term performance** to a large extent.

Congress organization in State is **struggling to regain its winning vote share** of as small as 40 per cent in the State. Improvements can be seen from **36.55 per cent in 2013 and 38 per cent in 2018**. This **increase was also indirectly attributed** to Janata Dal (Secular) leaders who joined Congress in 2006.

President	Shri DK Shivakumar
Chairperson	Shri Siddaramaiah

Parliamentary Chairperson	Smt. Sonia Gandhi
General Secretary	Shri L. Narayan
Rajya Sabha Leader	Shri Mallikarjun Kharje
Seats in Lok Sabha	1/28
Seats in Rajya Sabha	7/13
Seats in Karnataka Legislative Assembly	68/224
Seats in Karnataka Legislative Council	29/75

Legislative Assembly Election

Year	Party leader	Seats won	Change in seats	Outcome
1952	Shri K. Chengalaraya Reddy	74 / 99	▲ new	Government
1957	Shri S. Nijalingappa	150 / 208	▲ 76	Government
1962	Shri S. R. Kanthi	138 / 208	▼ 12	Government
1967	Shri S. Nijalingappa	126 / 216	▼ 12	Government
1972	Shri D. Devaraj Urs	165 / 216	▲ 39	Government

1978		149 / 224	▼ 16	Government
1983	Shri R. Gundu Rao	82 / 224	▼ 67	Opposition
1985		65 / 224	▼ 17	Opposition
1989	Shri Veerendra Patil	178 / 224	▲ 113	Government
1994	Shri Veerappa Moily	34 / 224	▼ 144	Opposition
1999	Shri S.M. Krishna	132 / 224	▲ 98	Government
2004		65 / 224	▼ 67	Opposition
2008	Shri Siddaramaiah	80 / 224	▲ 15	Opposition
2013		122 / 224	▲ 42	Government
2018		80 / 224	▼ 42	Opposition

Organization of Janta Dal in the State

The **emergence of the Janata Party** in the State paved the way for the **discontented social base.** The erstwhile Congress Party, with the increasing support base, the **Janata Party defeated Congress in 1983 for the first time.**

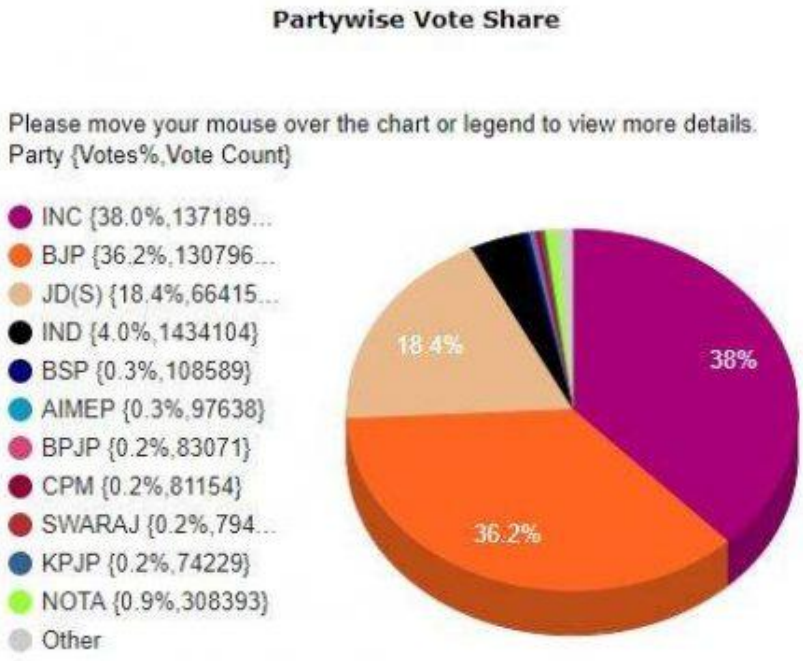
In 1999, Janata Dal was split into **two parts, Janata Dal (Secular) and Janata Dal (United)**, at the national level. **Janata Dal (Secular) was recognized as a party of Okkaligas** (primarily concentrated in South Karnataka) in Karnataka. The party can also manage the site

and support base among the Muslims and the section of Dalits. The vote share of **Janata Dal-Secular rounds off around 18-20 per cent with 30-40 seats only.**

Just obtaining one of the lowest vote shares in the State, which was even lower than Congress in the 2018 elections, Janata Dal-Secular was well placed to lead a government in the State. **The JDS got 63.39 lakhs votes in 2013.** Though its vote share decreased from 20.7 per cent to 18.4, three lakh more voters voted for the JDS in 2018. The party secured only an **18.3% vote share** in the State, while **Congress still managed to win a higher percentage of 38 in the 2018 elections.**

The vote share of Janata Dal was recorded as the lowest in the past two decades since 1999 when it had the lowest **vote share of only 10.4%.** Still, Janata Dal largely retained its influence by winning 37 seats which were fewer than the 40 seats won in 2013.

However, it was decided that the Janata Dal-Congress alliance would form the state's government. **BJP could not form a similar alliance** with Janata Dal in the state. **'Resort Politics' was taken upon Congress** and Janta Dal leaders to keep them out of reach of the BJP.

President	Shri H. D. Deve Gowda
Lok Sabha Leader	Shri Prajwal Revanna
Rajya Sabha Leader	Shri H. D. Deve Gowda
Founder	Shri H. D. Deve Gowda
Foundation Date	July 1999
Alliance	Left Democratic Front (Kerala) JDS + BSP (2018- present)
Seats in Lok Sabha	1/543
Seats in Rajya Sabha	1/245
Seats in Karnataka Legislative Assembly	30/224

Seats in Karnataka Legislative Council	11/75