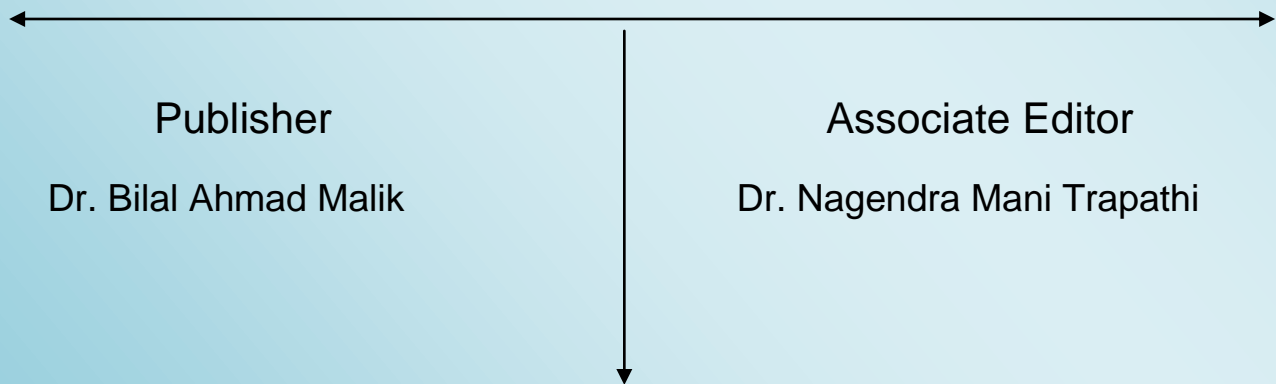


North Asian International Research Journal Consortium

*North Asian International Research Journal of
Social Science & Humanities*

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NAIRJC JOURNAL PUBLICATION

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ISSN NO: 2454 - 9827

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HISTORY AND STATUS OF RURAL LOCAL SELF GOVERNMENT IN KURNOOL DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Kurnool district was for a long time not a composite unit as its component parts were ruled at different periods of time by various dynasties. The dynasties that held sway over this district include the Nandas, Mauryas, Satavahanas, Pallavas, Chalukyas of Badami, Rashtrakutas, Chalukyas of Kalyani, Yadavas, Kakatiyas, Rayas of Vijayanagar, Bahmanis, Adil Shahis of Bijapur, Qutb Sbahis of Gol-konda, Mughals and Asaf Jahis, besides the local rulers, namely, the Nalas, Kadambas, Telugu Cholas of Badinenipalle, Vclanadu Cholas, Kayasthas, Vclugodu chiefs, Nandyal chiefs, Owk chiefs, Kandanavolu chiefs, Kurnool Nawabs, Bmganapalle Nawabs and palegars. The present paper presents a brief picture of developments in rural local self government during colonial era. In this paper an attempt is also made to analyze the caste wise and party wise electoral trends in 4th ordinary elections held in 2014 in Kurnool district.

INTRODUCTION

The history of modern local self-government in the district stretches back to a little over 150 years when it was a part of the composite Madras Presidency. Even if we ignored the Local Fund created in A. D. 1854 by an executive order for the maintenance of district roads, the first legislative measure was taken in A. D. 1866 when the District Road Cess Act was passed authorizing the levy of a cess of half *anna* in the rupee on the rental value of occupied land for the purpose of laying and maintaining roads. For a clearer and more enlarged conception of local administration, we have to come as far as A. D. 1865 when the Towns' Improvement Act, establishing municipalities, was passed. Soon after, the Local Funds Act was passed in A. D. 1871 establishing Local Boards. Under both these Acts, the intention was to establish a common fund for roads, education, public health and sanitation. Under the Local Funds Act of 1871, a Circle Board was created for Kurnool district which then comprised the taluks of Pattikonda, Nandyal, Koilkuntla. Siruvel or Sirvel (now Allagadda), Cumbum (now Giddalur, Prakasam district), Dupadu (now Markapur). Ramallakota (now Kurnool and Dhone) and Nandikotkur. The District Collector was the president of the Circle Board which consisted of 33 members (sixteen officials and seventeen non-officials). In all the Circles created in the Presidency, roads and educational as well as medical

institutions were transferred to the Local Boards and were made a charge on their funds. The income of the Circle Board of the district chiefly consisted of land cess, tolls, road cess and the Provincial grants. By the time of its abolition in A. D. 1885, the Kurnool Circle Board was running one normal school (training school for teachers), one middle school and 61 elementary schools besides maintaining two hospitals, five dispensaries, ten public bungalows and nine choultries. It was also maintaining about 505 miles (808 kilometres) of roads. The next major landmark in the district in the field of local administration was the establishment of a District Board on the 1st of April 1885 under the Madras Local Boards Act of 1884 which repealed the earlier Act of 1871. The board was constituted with 34 members, of whom eight were officials and twenty-six non-officials, the District Collector being the president. Although the Act also provided for the formation of a Taluk Board for each taluk or a group of taluks, no such boards were formed in the district till about the close of A. D 1880s, chiefly due to the backwardness of the area. The first of the Taluk Boards to be formed in the district was the one established in A. D. 1889-90 with headquarters at Nandyal. Three more Taluk Boards with headquarters at Kurnool, Cumbum and Peapally (Pyapali) were sanctioned in the very next year and with them, each of the revenue divisions in the district had one board. Each of these Taluk Boards had twelve members, four officials and eight non-officials, all of whom were appointed. The revenue officers in charge of the divisions were ex-officio presidents of the boards. The chief sources of income of the Taluk Boards were (a) one half of the proceeds of the land cess levied by the District Board in the Taluk Board's area, (b) fees such as licence fee for markets, (c) rents on choultries, fisheries and ferries and (d) contributions from Provincial funds and allotments from the district funds. The taluks of Adoni and Alur, then in Bellary district, were originally included in the Gooty Circle Board in Bellary district. Consequent on the formation of Anantapur district in A. D 1882, these two taluks were added to the Bellary Circle Board but were finally included in the Adoni Taluk Board constituted subsequently. The Taluk Boards in the district were reconstituted in the early 1910s consequent on the formation of Dhone taluk and the establishment of a revenue division at Koilkuntla and their number rose to live. In 1932-33, their number was further increased to nine so that each taluk had a separate board.

The next important landmark was the passing of the Madras Local Boards Act of 1920, de-officialising to some extent the structure and functioning of the local bodies. The Collector and the Revenue Divisional Officers ceased to be the ex-officio presidents of the District and Taluk Boards respectively. The elected component of the membership was to be not less than three-fourths of the total. It may be said that under this legislation, the Local Boards became virtually autonomous reducing the possibility of governmental interference only to the event of emergency or proved maladministration. The Taluk Boards were given the option under this Act to levy an

additional land cess of three pies in the rupee in addition to the land cess shared equally by them with the District Board. They were also empowered to impose three new taxes, namely, the profession tax, the companies tax and the pilgrim tax. The next legislation was the Madras Local Boards (Amendment) Act of 1930 which made the office of the presidents elective and also effected the provincialisation of the services under the Local Boards. It provided for i) the extension of franchise to every income-tax assessee, (b) the appointment of a District Panchayat Officer, (c) the constitution of a Village Development Fund and (d) the conduct of general triennial elections to the Local Boards. It abolished nominations and introduced direct elections to the District Boards and provided for the removal of chairmen and presidents by a vote of no-confidence. The Kurnool District Board and the Taluk Boards were reconstituted under this Amendment Act by 1932. The Taluk Boards were, however, abolished in 1934 and their rights and responsibilities entrusted to the District Board. The Village Development Fund was also similarly abolished. At the time of their abolition, the Taluk Boards were maintaining about 93 miles (149 kilometres) of roads, 34 medical institutions, 4 high schools, 3 middle schools and 706 elementary schools.

The District Board was superseded in October 1942 during the period of the Second World War and was placed under the charge of the Collector who functioned as its Special Officer. Though reconstituted in February 1943, the term of the members of the board was terminated in 1946 and it was again placed under the charge of the Collector. The Collector continued to function as the Special Officer till the 16th of September 1949 when the District Board was reconstituted and fresh elections were held. During the same year, the jurisdiction of the District Board underwent a change consequent on the merger of the erstwhile Banganapalle State. The area of the board further expanded with the transfer of the taluks of Adoni and Alur from Bellary district in 1953 but the number of member of the board continued to be 52. Since Kurnool became the capital of the newly formed Andhra State, the headquarters of the District Board was shifted to Banganapalle where it remained till it was re-shifted to Kurnool after the formation of the Andhra Pradesh State. The term of office of the Distinct Board was extended up to July 1953 and the next elections to the board were suspended till the end of November 1959 when it was ultimately abolished consequent on the formation of the Zilla Parishad. During the interim period, the Collector functioned again as the Special Officer of the board.

The Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samithis and Zilla Parishads Act ushered in the three-tier pattern of democratic decentralization. The Kurnool Zilla Parishad was constituted on the 1st of December 1959, with 54 members including Panchayat Samithi presidents, members of the Legislative Assembly and Council, co-opted

members, non-Block representatives and the District Collector. It has seven standing committees, of which the District Collector is the ex-officio chairman. At the time of its formation, the Kurnool Zilla Parishad took over from the erstwhile District Board about 1,216 kilometres of roads, 52 secondary schools, 1,498 elementary schools and 54 medical institutions. So far as the Zilla Parishad is concerned, the main sources of income are (a) the funds allotted by the Central or State Government, (b) grants from All-India bodies or institutions for the development of cottage, village and small scale industries, (c) a prescribed share of land cess or local cess, State taxes or fees, (d) income from endowments or trusts administered by the Parishad, (e) surcharge on stamp-duty and (f) donations and contributions from the Panchayat Samithis and the public.

PANCHAYAT SAMITHIS

The Community Development Programme was introduced in the district on the 2nd of October 1952, with the inauguration of the Kurnool-Cuddapah Canal Community Project. This was one of the two community projects sanctioned for the Andhra area and, lying in the districts of Kurnool and Cuddapah, it was a common venture for both the districts. The project was normalized on the pattern of National Extension Service Blocks and the area in this district covered by the project was delimited into the Blocks of Bandi Atmakur and Mallareddi vedanagar. These two Blocks entered the post-intensive phase from the 1st of October 1956. Panchayat Samithis were constituted in the district in December 1959 under the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samithis and Zilla Parishads Act of 1959 and there were nineteen Blocks in the district by then. The number of Samithis rose to 25 by the 1st of April 1964. A general delimitation of Blocks was done in the district in 1964 on the recommendations of the Block Delimitation Committee set up for the whole State and the number of Panchayat Samithi Blocks in the district was reduced to seventeen. Each Panchayat Samithi consists of ;a) all the Sarpanches of the Gram Panchayats in its area, (b) members of the State Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council representing a constituency which comprises the Block, (c) two women, (d) a representative of the Scheduled Castes, (e) a representative of the Scheduled Tribes if their population in the Block is not less than five per cent (otherwise another representative of the Scheduled Castes) and (f) two persons interested in rural development. Each Panchayat Samithi has seven standing committees for the various items of its developmental administration and the Samithi president is the ex-officio chairman of all these standing committees. In this connection it may be observed that at the level of the Samithi, which has a good deal of executive functions, the non-official president has been made the ex-officio chairman of all the standing committees. The sources of income of these Samithis are (i) funds transferred along with the institutions by the Government or Heads of Departments, (ii) funds relating to Community Development Programme, (iii) aid from the Central and State Governments and All-India

bodies and institutions, iv) donations and contributions from Panchayats, town committees as well as the public, (v) a prescribed share of land revenue and state taxes and (vi) proceeds from taxes, fees and contributions.

PANCHAYATS

Local administration at the village level was introduced on a statutory basis for the first time with the enforcement of the Madras Local Boards Act of 1884 under which Union Boards were constituted for a single village or a group of villages with not less than five members wholly appointed or partly elected. The first Union Board to be constituted in the district was the one at Nandyal which was formed by A.D. 1888-89 and the number rose to twenty by 1922. Under the Local Boards Amendment Act of 1934, all these Union Boards were either abolished or converted into Panchayat. In addition to the Union Boards, some informal Panchayats, which were bodies nominated by the district authorities, were also formed but these did not have the legal sanction for levy of taxes. An important landmark in the evolution of local self-government at the village level was, however, the Madras Village Panchayat Act of 1920 which provided for the formation of Panchayats in the rural areas with fully elective bodies. The Act also empowered the Panchayats to levy house and profession taxes, besides fees on several items. The Local Boards (Amendment) Act of 1930 repealed the Madras Village Panchayat Act of 1920 and brought village Panchayats within the scope of the Local Boards. The formation of Panchayats gained impetus with the enforcement of the Madras Village Panchayats Act of 1950 which provided for the compulsory formation of Panchayats for every village with a population of 500 and more and for grouping villages with less population for the purpose of forming Panchayats. To make them more self-supporting units of administration, the Panchayats were also empowered to levy a land cess at the rate of three pies in the rupee on the rental value of all occupied lands and additional taxes like vehicle tax, house tax and tax on agricultural lands.

The Panchayat is the basic unit of the three-tier pattern of local administration envisaged under the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samithis and Zilla Parishads Act of 1959. The latest legislation in respect of Panchayats is the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act of 1964 which came into effect from the 18th of January 1964 repealing the Andhra Pradesh (Andhra Area) Village Panchayats Act of 1950 and the Andhra Pradesh (Telangana Area) Gram Panchayats Act of 1956. The Act of 1964 is an integrated Act bringing within its scope Panchayats in the Andhra as well as Telangana areas of the State. According to this Act any revenue village or part thereof or any part of a revenue taluk (excluding the area included in a municipality) may be constituted into a Gram Panchayat consisting of not less than five and not more than seventeen members with a term of office fixed at five years. There shall be for each Panchayat an elected Sarpanch (president) and a Upa Sarpanch (vice-president). The

highlight of the integrated Act of 1964 is the creation of the Gram Sabha consisting of all persons whose names are included in the electoral rolls of the Panchayat. The Sabha shall meet twice a year to consider problems like the formulation of the works programme and proposals for fresh taxation or enhancement of the existing taxes. The chief sources of income of a Gram Panchayat are (a) such share of land cess as is realized in the village under the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act of 1964, (b) three-fifths of the duty levied on transfers of property within its jurisdiction, (c) house tax and profession tax which are compulsory, (d) vehicle tax which is optional, (e) receipts from remunerative enterprises and dangerous and offensive trades and (f) ex-gratia grants from the Government for running schools and laying roads. Certain obligatory and optional items of expenditure to be defrayed by the Gram Panchayat are defined by this Act. By the end of March 1966 there were 909 Panchayats in the district, 40 of them being 'notified' Panchayats.

GEOGRAPHICAL DIVISIONS OF PANCHAYAT RAJ SYSTEM

The Panchayat Raj system in the Kurnool district is divided into Zilla Parishad, Mandal Parishads and Gram Panchayats. The district level body is named after its district headquarters namely Kurnool Zilla Parishad, which in turn divided into 54 Mandal Parishads. The Mandal Parishads are further divided into Gram Panchayats. At present there are 889 Gram Panchayats in the district.

The Gram Panchayati is the lowest unit of the local government. Every Gram Panchayati is known by the name of the particular village. The Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act of 1994 classified Gram Panchayats as notified and non-notified on the basis of the income of a particular Gram Panchayati.

COMPOSITION

There are four constituents in every Gram Panchayats. They are 1. Gram Panchayat Members, 2. Sarpanch & Upa Sarpanch, 3. Panchayat Secretary; and 4. Gram Sabha.

Gram Panchayat Members

Panchayati is the deliberative legislative wing of the Gram Panchayati. It consists of a President, Vice-President and some ward members. It meets at least once in every month. Its members are elected by the registered voters of the village every five years. The membership of the Panchayati varies from five to twenty

one. Table 1 gives a clear picture of the total strength of the ward members in Kurnool district on the basis of population.

Table1
Reservation of Seats of Ward Members in Kurnool District in 2013 Elections

S. No	Social Category	Men/Women	Women	Total		
1	Scheduled Tribe	56	115	171	67.25	1.80
2	Scheduled Caste	1163	789	1952	40.42	20.59
3	Backward Classes	1858	1824	3682	49.54	38.84
4	Others	1612	2063	3675	56.14	38.77
	Total	4689	4791	9480	50.54	100.00

Source: Election Report of State Election Commission, 4th Ordinary Elections, to Gram Panchayats Andhra Pradesh, 2013

It is clear from table 1 that nearly 61.23 per cent of ward member seats were reserved for weaker sections of the society in Kurnool district in 2013 4th ordinary elections. Among them 38.84 per cent were reserved for backward classes, 20.59 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 1.80 per cent for the Scheduled Tribes. The per cent of reservations for women in different social categories is varied. Among the 171 Scheduled Tribe reserved seats, nearly 67.25 per cent of ward seats were reserved for women. In case of Scheduled Castes 40.42 per cent seats were reserved to women. Among Backward classes 49.54 per cent of seats were reserved for women. Nearly 56.14 per cent seats were reserved for women in general category. In all 50.54 per cent of ward member seats were reserved for women in Kurnool district.

President and Vice-President of Gram Panchayat

Every Gram Panchayat has a President. The President is the political head of the village. The President of the Gram Panchayati is elected by all the registered voters and continues in office for a period of 5 years unless or otherwise removed from office. The Vice- President of a Gram Panchayat is, however, elected by the ward members. Table 2 gives the social category wise Gram Panchayat Presidents in Kurnool district.

Table 2
Reservation of Seats of Sarpanch (Village President) in Kurnool District in 2013 Elections

S. No	Social Category	Men/Women	Women	Total		
1	Scheduled Tribe	12	11	23	47.83	2.59
2	Scheduled Caste	104	104	208	50.00	23.40
3	Backward Classes	203	203	406	50.00	45.67
4	Others	126	126	252	50.00	28.35
	Total	445	444	889	49.94	100.00

Source: Election Report of State Election Commission, 4th Ordinary Elections, to Gram Panchayats Andhra Pradesh, 2013

According to table 1 nearly 71.65 per cent of Sarpanch seats were reserved for weaker sections of the society in Kurnool district in 2014 4th ordinary elections. Among them 45.67 per cent were reserved for backward classes, 23.40 per cent for Scheduled Castes and 2.59 per cent for the Scheduled Tribes. The per cent of reservations for women in is exactly half of total seats reserved for a particular caste in case of Scheduled Caste, Backward Classes and forward castes. In case of Scheduled Tribe nearly 47.83 per cent of Sarpanch seats were reserved for women. In all 49.94 per cent of Sarpanch seats were reserved for women in Kurnool district.

Mandal Parishads

The mandal Parishads were introduced in Andhra Pradesh State in 1985 in by replacing Panchayat Samithis. A Mandal Parishad is constituted for revenue mandal in rural areas, as such, both the Mandal Parishads and the revenue mandals are co-terminous. Mandal Parishads shall be constituted by the government by notification from time to time, and with effect on and from such date, as may be specified therein constitute a Mandal Parishad for each mandal.

Composition of Mandal Parishad

Every Mandal Parishad shall consist of the following members namely;

- Persons elected under Section 151 of A.P Panchayat Raj Act 1994.
- The Member of the Legislative Assembly and Member/s of Legislative Council of the State representing a constituency which comprises either wholly or partly the Mandal concerned.
- The Member of the House of the People representing a constituency which comprises either wholly or partly the Mandal concerned.
- Any Member of the Council of States who is a registered voter in the Mandal concerned.
- One Co-Opted member.

The District Collector, Sarpanches of Gram Panchayatis and the Presidents of Agricultural marketing committees in the mandal are the permanent invitees to the Mandal Parishad meetings. Table 3 gives the clear picture of MPTC members elected in 2014 ordinary elections in Kurnool district.

Table 3
Party Wise MPTCs Elected for mandal Parishads in Kurnool District

Party	Total	BC	BC (W)	Total	S C	SC (W)	Total	S T	ST (W)	Total	General	General (W)	Total
YSRCP	365	71	66	137	35	38	73	3	3	6	80	69	149
TDP	320	57	71	128	36	28	64	5	4	9	66	53	119
CPI	4	0	1	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2
CPM	4	3	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
INC	41	13	11	24	4	4	8	1	0	1	2	6	8
Independents	19	5	4	9	2	2	4	0	0	0	1	5	6
STRP	13	0	0	0	2	1	3	0	0	0	1	9	10
Total	766	149	153	302	80	73	153	9	7	16	151	144	295

Source: State Election Commission, 4th Ordinary Elections, Andhra Pradesh, 2014.

The data in table 3 reveals that nearly 47.65 per cent of seats were bagged by Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) in Mandal Parishad Territorial Constituency (MPTC) elections held in 2014 in Kurnool district. The ruling Telugu Desam Party (TDP) bagged around 41.78 per cent of seats. The Indian National Congress (INC) bagged 41 seats constituting 5.35 per cent of total seats. The Communist Parties bagged 4 seats each. Independents bagged 2.48 seats. STRP bagged 13 seats constituting 1.70 per cent of total. In all 39.43 per cent of MPTC seats were reserved for Backward Classes. Around 19.07 per cent of MPTC seats in the district were reserved for Scheduled Castes. For Scheduled Tribes 16 (2.09 per cent) out of 766 MPTC seats were reserved. The remaining 38.51 per cent were unreserved. Among The Backward Classes 50.66 per cent were reserved for women. In case of SCs and STs 47.71 per cent and 43.75 per cent were reserved for women. In all 49.22 per cent of seats were reserved for women.

Zilla Parishad

At the district level, the Zilla Parishad was functioning as coordinating agency with a supervisory role over the Mandal Parishads with powers to approve their budgets, to coordinate their plans and to distribute grants allocated by the government from time to time. In 1986, the *Zilla Pranalika Abhivrudhi Mandali* was constituted to decentralize the process of planning and to have a comprehensive approach to the formulation and implementation of development activities and to have effective coordination along various developmental agencies in the district.

Zilla Parishad

The Zilla Parishad is a corporate body having perpetual succession and a common seal. It is competent to construct, acquire, and hold property, movable and immovable whether within or without the limit of the area, over which it has authority and may in its corporate name, sue, and be sued.

The Zilla Parishad is a coordinating, planning and supervisory body. It examines and approves the budgets of Mandal Parishads and distributes to the Panchayat funds allotted to it by the State and Central Governments, Elementary Schools have been brought under the control of the Mandal Parishad and the secondary schools under the Zilla Parishad. In addition to these, it is entrusted with executive functions in establishing maintaining or expanding Primary and Secondary Schools.

CONSTITUTION OF KURNOOL ZILLA PARISHAD

According to the provisions of the A.P. Panchayat Raj Act 1994, the Kurnool Zilla Parishad was constituted through a notification issued by the Government of Andhra Pradesh. It consist of 1.Elected Members, 2. Co-opted members, 3. Ex-officio members and 4. Permanent invitees.

1. Elected Members

These members are directly elected from Territorial Constituencies which obviously is a Mandal. At present the Kurnool Zilla Parishad consists of 52 elected members. Table 4 gives the clear picture of ZPTC members elected in 2014 to Kurnool Zilla Parishad.

Table 4
Elected ZPTCs to Kurnool Zilla Parishad

Party	Total	BC	BC (W)	Total	SC	SC (W)	Total	S T	ST (W)	Total	General	General (W)	Total
YSRCP	29	7	6	13	2	2	4	0	0	0	6	6	12
TDP	20	4	4	8	2	3	5	0	1	1	3	3	6
CPI	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
CPM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INC	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
Independents	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
STRP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	52	11	11	22	4	5	9	0	1	1	10	10	20

Source: State Election Commission, 4th Ordinary Elections, Andhra Pradesh, 2014.

As per table 4 nearly 55.77 per cent of seats were bagged by Yuvajana Sramika Rythu Congress Party (YSRCP) in Zilla Parishad Territorial Constituency (ZPTC) elections held in 2014 in Kurnool district. The ruling Telugu Desam Party (TDP) bagged around 38.46 per cent of seats. The Indian National Congress (INC) bagged 2

seats constituting 3.85 per cent of total seats. The Communist Parties failed to win in any ZPTC seat. Independents bagged 1.92 seats. In all 42.31 per cent of ZPTC seats in Kurnool district were reserved for Backward Classes. Around 17.31 per cent of ZPTC seats in the district were reserved for Scheduled Castes. For Scheduled Tribes only one seat (1.92 per cent) out of 52 ZPTC seats was reserved. The remaining 38.46 per cent were general seats. Among The Backward Classes 50 per cent were reserved for women. In case of SCs and STs 55.56 per cent and 100 per cent seats were reserved for women. In all 51.92 per cent of seats were reserved for women.

CONCLUSION

The constitution of Zilla Parishad, Mandal Parishad and Gram Panchayat was discussed in this paper. The statistical data with regard to party wise and caste wise ZPTCs elected in 2006 elections, profile of the chairpersons of Kurnool Zilla Parishad from 1959, caste wise and mandal wise distribution of MPTCs in Kurnool district, performance of various political parties in 2006 MPTC elections, mandal wise and division wise list of Co-Opted members, caste wise and party wise list of MPPs elected in 2006 elections, Mandal wise list of Gram Panchayats and Wards in Kurnool District and Mandal wise and caste wise Gram Panchayat Presidents in Kurnool District was presented in this paper.

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