

MID-TERM-ELECTIONS IN ANDHRA PRADESH 1985-1989: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCES TO N.T. RAMA RAO' GOVERNMENT

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Abstract

The significant events occurred between the 1985 and 1989. The main aim of this paper is to explain these major Mid-Term-Elections in Andhra Pradesh. As in the British Parliamentary system, elections to the Lok Sabha of Parliament must be held within five years of election of Previous Parliament, but they may be called by President upon the advice of the Prime Minister at any time before the expire of the normal five-year term of the House. Reeling the TDP'S popularity in 1984 Lok Sabha elections the State Cabinet in Andhra Pradesh at an emergency meeting, resolved in favour of mid-term polls for the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. The then Governor, Dr.Shankar Dayal Sharma accepted the resolution of the State Cabinet. The twenty three month old Stage Legislative Assembly was then dissolved on November, 22 1984. The mid-term Assembly elections were scheduled for March 5, 1985. NTR, continued his clever strategy of continuing seat adjustments with the non-Congress (I) opposition parties (I), opposition parties (C.P.I), C.P.I.(M), Janata, B.J.P, in Andhra Pradesh, who stood by him during the time when he was out of power in 1984. The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections of 1985 took place in January 1985 in 294 constituencies in Andhra Pradesh for next five years. The TDP secure a huge majority winning 202 seats. The Indian National Congress winning only 50 years.

Keywords: *My topic is discussion Mid-Term-Elections in Andhra Pradesh 1985-1989.The different type of government. Sustainable Elections in TDP. Methodology; by the state of being utilized both secondary sources this paper has been attempted, Mid-Term-Elections in Andhra Pradesh. The methodology adopted in this study is descriptive and analytical.*

Introduction

1985 Mid-Term Assembly Elections Andhra Pradesh

Reeling the TDP'S popularity in 1984 Lok Sabha elections the State Cabinet in Andhra Pradesh at an emergency meeting, resolved in favour of mid-term polls for the Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly. The then Governor, Dr.Shankar Dayal Sharma accepted the resolution of the State Cabinet. The twenty three month old Stage Legislative Assembly was then dissolved on November, 22 1984. The mid-term Assembly elections were scheduled for March 5, 1985.

Telugu Desam Party utilised the Assembly elections in the State as a referendum on the performance of the two-year old N.T.R'S government. It opined that the main issue before the electorate was whether or not they wanted to retain the T.D.P. in power and Rama Rao as Chief-Minister. Another issue before the electorate was the August-September, 1984 episode in the state when the majority government of N.T.R. was toppled. The T.D.P. felt that the Prime Minister had insulted the people's since of judgements in the Lok Sabha elections when they interpreted the Telugu Desam Party's victory as the State going out of national mainstream. Congress (I)'s main criticism was on the deteriorating financial position of the State. Prime Minister Rajivi Gandhi in his elections campaign in Andhra

Pradesh said that A.P. Which a model state was before was now in financial doldrums, though the Central assistance being given to it was the highest so far. He claimed that the Centre had given 10 lakh tonnes of rice for Rs. 2/- per kg. He also sought to drive the point home that regional parties and coalition's government could not give a strong and stable government and asked the people not to be misled by false propaganda of the State Government.¹

Andhra Pradesh Cabinet shake-up

In a major shake-up of the Andhra Pradesh council of minister on July 11 in Hyderabad, the Chief Minister, **Mr.N.T.Rama Rao** dropped four cabinet ministers and five minister of state and induct five minister of cabinet rank, Six minister of state and four deputy minister. In this first three-tier minister of 36, Mr.Rama Rao has 17 ministers of cabinet rank, 15 minister of state and four Deputy Minister. A former minister, **Mr S. Gali Muddu Krishnama Naidu** and **Mr.B.V.Mohan Reddy**, Son-in-law of the Chief Minister, Dr D.Venkateswara Rao, Dr K.Siva Prasad Rao and **Mr. Siva Reddy** are the new ministers with cabinet rank. All the four Deputy Ministers are attached to the Chief Minister and will assist him in the handling of service matters Mr M. Madhava Reddy civil supplies (Mr M. Gopal Krishna), programme implementation, including 20- point programme (M C. Ramachandraiah) and information and public relations (Mr.Veerabhadra Rao).

1989-Elections

The constitution Amendment Bills on the Panchayat Raj and 1989. Rajiv Gandhi was already in an elections mode. As early 24 October 1988, NTR had initiated a national debate on electoral reforms which was attended by the representatives of twenty-four political parties excepting the Congress. The meeting agreed on an 18-point programme of reforms, including holding of simultaneous elections to the Assemblies and Lok Sabha. At the national level, the opposition leaders cast aside their differences and strove for a workable unity. The opposition parties agreed to have a straight fight against the Congress in about 80 percent of constituencies.

That NTR decided to contest from Kalkurthy surprised almost everyone. For many years, Kalwakurthy had been a segment of **Jaipal Reddy's** Parliamentary constituency. A chance remark of P.Radhakrishna, MP, apparently was behind the decision by NTR. Channa Reddy was back at the helm of the Congress campaign in Andhra Pradesh. He had replaced **N.Janardhan Reddy** was pulled out of the political wilderness in May 1989. Channa Reddy's first act was to unite the warring Congress factions. He kept up pressure on NTR with a mass signature campaign urging the President to dismiss the TDP government for misrule. He also led the '*jail bhara*' agitations protesting against NTR's anti-people policies.

NTR, atop the *chaitanya ratham* for the fifth time in seven years, was on road again starting with a public meeting in Bhongir on 1 November 1989. He did not talk of Telugu pride or self-respect. Instead, he talked of a new India even though he had announced that

¹ Ramachandra Murthy, K. and Suran Naidu, D., Parties Elections and Mobilisation, 1989-1989 Anmol Publication, New-Delhi, 2001, P.50

he was not eyeing Delhi. The Telugu Desam campaign had the imprint of NTR. Theatres in state screened a 22-minute film of NTR campaigning on the *chaitanya ratham* and an 18-minute song and dance sequence from *Brahmarshi Viswamitra*. NTR was averse to spending money on elections. Even as the chief-minister, he conducted elections campaign in *Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Haryana* and *Uttar Pradesh* in his *chaitanya ratham*, which was a basic van, always paying for diesel for the van from his purse.

By the middle of November 1989, the TDP conceded that it was facing a keen fight in several constituencies. It did not require a fortune teller to predict that the TDP was faring poorly but, despite in favourable reports and signs, NTR, ever confident of people's support for him, expected to win 25 Lok Sabha seats and close to 180 Assembly seats. The Congress party in the state was optimistic of winning 25 Lok Sabha seats and 140 Assembly seats. Channa Reddy most optimistic, not because of any survey or field reports but because *Sri Satya Saibaba* of *Puttaparthi* had told him that he would become chief- Minister. The consensus was that a resurgent Congress would improve on its previous performance of six seats in the Lok Sabha and 50 seats in the Assembly. By elections results surprised everyone, supporting none of the predictions excepting Satya Saibaba's.⁵⁰⁸²

Mid-term Election Andhra Pradesh- 1985

Name of the Party	Seats contested	Seats won	% of votes polled
T.D.P	249	202	46.2
Congress (I)	294	50	37.5
C.P.I	15	11	2.7
C.P.I. (M)	12	11	2.3
B.J.P	10	8	1.5
Janata Party	5	3	0.8
Lok Dal	14	-	0.1
Independents and Others(including Majlis)	1,375	9	8.9
	1,974	294	100.00

Source: K.Ramachandra Murthy and D.Suran Naidu, *Parties Elections and Mobilisation, 1989-1989* Anmol Publication New-Delhi 2001, p-No-51

The mid-term elections of 1985 gave a clear mandate to N.T.R and his TDP which on its own contested 249 seats and rode back to power by winning 202 seats. It was more than two-third of all the seats in the Assembly. Of the 45 seats contested by its allies 34 were won by them. The C.P.I Improved its position from 5 to 11, the C.P.I (M) from 2 to 11, the B.J.from 4 to 8 and the Janata Party from 1 to 2.Two independents supported by the Telugu Desam also won the elections. It is worth nothing that N.BhaskarRao, who had enjoyed the position of the Chief Minister of the State for a month during August and September, 1984,

² Chandrashes, K. Lakshminarayana, k., *NTR A BIOGRAPHY*, CLS Publishers, Hyderabad, 2018, P. No.508

established the Democratic Telugu Desam Party and contested 222 seats in the 294 member Assembly. Some of the important reasons for the debacle of the Congress Party and the landslide victory for the T.D. in the elections of 1985. In spite of the tragic death of Indira Gandhi and sympathy it evoked in the minds of the electorate, the people preferred the T.D.P. to Congress (I). The Congress (I) could manage to get only 49 seats against 60 in the dissolved House. The most defeat for Congress (I) was in the Telangana area where it polled only 34 per cent only of the votes and got 14 seats. In 1983 it had polled 50 per cent of the votes and contained 43 seats. In Ramayapet and Sttupalli the home constituencies of former Chief Minister, *T. Anjaiah* and *J. Vengal Rao*, respectively, fell to Telugu Desam and its allies. In Coastal Andhra, the Congress (I) secured 20 out of 35 seats it contested polling 39 per cent of the votes compared to its performance in Telangana, its showing in Coastal Andhra was better than the elections.³

1987 Assembly by-Elections

The Congress won four of the eight Assembly seats for which by-elections were held in three states and the Union Territory of Pondicherry on March 23 of the remaining four Assembly seats the Telugu Desam took one and the Rashtriya Sanjay Manch (RSM) led by Mrs. Manika Gandhi defeated the Congress constituted in the constituency. The Telugu Desam's *Mr. B.C. Govindappa* won the Kalyandurga assembly seat in Andhra Pradesh, trouncing his Congress rival, *Mrs. M. Lakshmi* by a margin of 4,798 votes the seat was held by the CPI. The former Central Minister, *M.T. Anjaiah* defeated his nearest Telugu Desam rival, *Dr. B.P. Pratap Reddy*, by a margin of over 92,000 votes in a multi-cornered contest. Congress (I) party post -Re-shuffled the Congress (I) President Mr Rajiv Gandhi on September 7. The Andhra Pradesh Chief Ministers, *N.T. Rama Rao*, on December 2, 1988, made public a list of his assets as on March 31, 1985, which had been Preserved in a sealed envelope and deposited with the state Chief Secretary. In an unprecedented operation, the Andhra Pradesh Chief- Minister *N.T. Rama Rao*, on February 15 formed a 23-member ministry, all new face. Keeping out all the 31 ministers dropped during the previous week.

State Assembly Elections

Elections to the Legislative Assemblies in the states of Andhra Pradesh, Goa, Karnataka, Sikkim and Uttar Pradesh were held in the last week of November 1989 along with the Lok Sabha poll. In the outcome, the Congress (I) returned with a big majority in Andhra Pradesh and Karnataka; the Janata Dal emerged as the largest party and the Sikkim government Sangram Pershad made a clean sweep of all seat in that State. In Goa, the results produced a stalemate with the Congress (I) and the *Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP)* sharing 36 seats and two of the independents took the side of one party. Riding the crest of an anti- NTR wave the Congress (I) returned to power in the State. The Chief Minister, *N.T. Rama Rao*, who is also the National Front Chairman, himself, lost the

³ Ramachandra Murthy, K., and Suran Naidu, D., Parties Elections and Mobilisation, Anmol Publication, New-Delhi, 2001, P.51,52

Kalwakurthy Assembly seat although he retains the Hindupur seat by a big margin. **Marri Chenna Reddy**, the septuagenarian APCC President, who led the Congress to a comeback, was sworn-in as Chief Minister on December 3, 1989, along with 12 Cabinet ministers, and six ministers of State.

Ninth Lok Sabha General Elections Andhra Pradesh-1989

During the period 1985-1989 the Congress regained its lost ground by attacking the style of functioning of N.T.R. Although T.D.P had been in power for seven years, 1989 elections turned out to be the party's real electoral test. In 1983, victory was there for asking. The vote in 1983, according to many political observers was less a mandate for N.T.R and more a verdict against the Congress misrule. Similarly, the Lok Sabha elections of 1984 and the Assembly elections of 1985 were a no contest. The Nadendla Bhaskar Rao had virtually sealed the fate of the Congress in the State. This time around, N.T, Rama Rao did not have a readymade issue to take to the people. If anything 'the 1988 elections turned out to be a referendum on his seven year rule. The Telugu Desam Party as us usual made promises to the electorate. The Telugu Desam Party its manifesto promised the people that it would extend the reservations to the Backward Class to (2000 A.D.) The arty also promised that it would generated more employment opportunities to the youth .N.T.R launched his elections campaign with a scathing attack on Congress (I) and its policies. The main Objective of the Communist Parties was to defeat the Congress (I), isolate communal forces and strength the left the decision to hold State Assembly elections simultaneously worth thoe of the Lok Sabha had upset the political calculation of the Telugu Desam Party in fact the 1989 elections was the first real reverse in N.T.Rama Rao's life. And in his seven years as a political he had never experienced the embarrassment of electoral defeat. Both Congress (I) and Telugu Desam Party together with its allies contested all the seats.⁵⁶

Ninth Genera Elections, in Andhra Pradesh -1989

Name of the Party	Seats Cntested	Seats won	% of votes Polled
Congress (1)	287	182	47.22
TDP	243	74	37.10
C.P.I	19	08	2.78
C.P.I. (M)	15	06	2.08
Janata Dal	4	01	1.37
B.J.P.	12	05	1.78
M.C.P.I	1	01	0.36
M.I.M	36	04	1.99
Independents and others	904	13	5.32
Total	1, 521	294	100.00

Source: RamachandraaMurthiK, K., *Parties Elections and Mobilization*, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2001, P.57

The Ninth Lok Sabha as well as Assembly elections in Andhra Pradesh signified the end of an era for the Telugu Desam Party supreme N.T.Rama Rao. The popular verdict in terms of seats was a reversal of N.T.Rama Rao and his style of politics. Congress (I) riding the crest of anti-N.T. Rama Rao wave swept back to power in Andhra Pradesh, with an impressive comeback after nearly seven years in the wilderness of opposition. In the Assembly elections, the Congress (I) bagged 182 of 294 seats in the State while Telugu Desam's strength was reduced from 202 in 1985 to just 74 and with all its allies put together the T.D.P.'s tally was only a meagre 94. In the Assembly elections at least 14 of the 23 ministers were defeated. Even N.T.Rama Rao was defeated in the Kalwakurthy Constituency by Chittaranjan Das of the Congress (I). The Congress (I) had also put up a spectacular show in the Lok Sabha polled simultaneously with the Assembly elections on November 22, 1989. The Congress (I) has gained 33 seats while the Telugu Desam lost Chaitanya Ratham of N.T.Rama Rao the vehicle on which he used to make his elections campaign ground to halt.⁴

Conclusion

The Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly election of 1985 took place in January 1985 in 294 constituencies in Andhra Pradesh, India. The elections were conducted to elect the government in the state of Andhra Pradesh for the next five years. The TDP secured a huge majority winning 202 seats. The Indian National Congress winning only 50 seats. During the period 1985-1989 the Congress regained its lost ground by attacking the style of functioning of N.T.R. Although T.D.P had been in power for seven years, 1989 elections turned out to be the party's real electoral test. In 1983, victory was there for asking. The vote in 1983, according to many political observers was less a mandate for N.T.R and more a verdict against the Congress misrule. Similarly, the Lok Sabha elections of 1984 and the Assembly elections of 1985 were a no contest. The Nandamuri Bhaskar Rao had virtually sealed the fate of the Congress in the State. This time around, N.T. Rama Rao did not have a readymade issue to take to the people. If anything 'the 1988 elections turned out to be a referendum on his seven year rule. The consensus was that a resurgent Congress would improve on its previous performance of since seats in the Lok Sabha and 50 seats in the Assembly. On the Configuration of political parties at the State and the Central levels that would emerge after the elections and on the future of the State of Andhra.

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⁴ K.Ramachandran Murthy and Sur Naidu D. Parties, Elections and Mobilization, Anmol Publications, New Delhi, 2001, p-No-57
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