



DISTRICT REORGANIZATION AND DEVELOPMENTS IN KARNATAKA.

KEY WORDS

District, Local Area, Decentralization, Public Good

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ABSTRACT

Formation of small district do lead to good and effective governance and quality services. It is believed that reorganisa- tion of the districts is a step towards stimulating participatory governance and inclusive development. The reorganisation of districts would definitely help in effective monitoring and implementation of welfare schemes, so that they reach the needy. The government and the officials will be able to pay attention to the development activities with the creation of the new districts..

Most common theoretical justification for decentralisation is to attain allocative efficiency in the face of different local preferences for local public goods. Historically, the district remained the most imperative unit of administration. But, over a period of time, the tasks of district administration have registered extraordinary expansion. After the anti-poverty and rural development programmes started dominating the public policy, the coordinating and synthesising functions of district administration in such efforts attained gigantic importance. The essence of creating smaller units of administration was felt. It is mentioned in the Second Administrative Reforms Commission that the cutting edge of a government's function is at the district levels. India lives in districts. Smaller districts are therefore essential for effective provisioning of education and health facilities for improving human infrastructure, providing physical infrastructure, improving economic opportunities for marginalised sections of society, preparing the society at large to face the challenges of disasters, etc. Many of such functions are better performed at the district level rather than at the state level. Smaller districts can promote best practices in good governance, promote innovation and enhance greater people's participation in governance. As the democratic India saw more and more enactments, the responsibilities of the district administration grew manifold. With the increased State engagement with people as democracy got deep roots, the administrative tasks performed by the district administration continue to swell.

Karnataka has been a middle ranking State among 15 major States of India on a variety of development indicators. There are **30 districts** in Karnataka. **30 districts are further** divided into 4 administrative divisions, 270 towns and 29406 villages. The Government of Karnataka's decision to form new districts is a step to take the administration closer to the people. When the state was formed on linguistic basis the amalgamated areas had bigger districts. Supervision and control was difficult and people were finding number of problems as the district headquarters were quite far away. Keeping in mind the grievances of general public Government of Karnataka attempted to reorganize the districts during 1970's and 1980 but somehow it was not materialised. There was always a demand for new districts. In 1986 Bangalore was divided into Rural and Urban districts. Government of Karnataka on August 2, 1997 in Bangalore that resulted in the creation of seven new districts in the Indian state of Karnataka. The new districts created were **Chamrajnagar** district from Mysore district. **Davangere District** from Chitradurga District, Bellary District and Shimogga Districts.. **Bagalkot District** from Bijapur District. **Gadag** District from Dharwad District. **Haveri** from Dharwad District. **Udapi** District from Dakshina Kannada. **Koppal District** from Raichur District. With this the number of districts in Karnataka increased to 27. Once again in 2007 government of Karnataka created two more districts namely Ramanagar and Chickaballapur which are formed bifurcating Bangalore rural district and Kolar District respectively.

Now the Number of Districts are 29. Again in 2009 another new district named Yadgir district was created bifurcating Gulbarga District and this was 30th district in the state. On December 30, 2009, **another district was** carved out of Gulbarga district and officially declared the 30th district of Karnataka. and i.e. Yadgir District. With this one can imagine the efforts of Karnataka to make headways in catering to the needs of the public welfare.

Formation of small district do lead to good and effective governance and quality services. It is believed that reorganisation of the districts is a step towards stimulating participatory governance and inclusive development. The reorganisation of districts has definitely helped in effective monitoring and implementation of welfare schemes. The government and the officials will be able to pay attention to the development activities with the creation of the new districts. With the creation of new districts lot of opportunities emerge. The Government of Karnataka had taken a policy for the creation of new districts for administrative efficiency and convenience, of which Gadag was one. Most of the people in the area now foresee sustained development and more job opportunities.

Better administration is possible with smaller area of administration. As such, the need or demand for creation of new and small states has been sounding which now spread over to deem the necessity of creating new districts. Karnataka government has created 30 new districts with a motto of improved governance. As a matter of fact people felt that improved partition of administrative area leads to better governance. In Karnataka prior to 1997 there were more number of districts with huge geographic area and population and the administrative head quarters were far away. Due to geographical area maintenance of law and order situation was difficult. Hence there was great demand for reorganization of districts. It was felt more focused administration means good responsiveness. Creation of new districts lead to improved facilities for public good in that area. Decentralisation of administration and power indeed helps to focus on region specific issues. Further it makes District Administration more accessible to people. People who demanded for new districts were of the opinion that the new district will increase economic activities and will create employment opportunities for the public at large. Creating new districts makes new cities, which in turn will act as engines of growth for the district. Growth among the people of districts with resource distribution could be equitable and evenly monitored. The creation of new districts has led to inclusion of local stakeholders in decision making which in turn corresponds to bottom-up strategy in development. Thus, the decision of the then government of Karnataka of creating more districts is a unique contribution to the overall development of the state at large. In Karnataka, with the creation of new districts the development activities were enhanced and huge grants were allocated to bring about changes in the newly created districts. The areas which were once left out of development process began to gain. With the new

district tag development activities brought significant socio economic and cultural changes.

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