



Electoral Victory of Yuva Jana Sramika Rythu Congress Party: A Review

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ABSTRACT

Following the sudden death of his father, Jagan Mohan Reddy sought to continue his father's legacy, especially his popular pro-poor and welfare-oriented policies. In 2011, disillusioned with the Congress party's refusal to appoint him as Chief Minister, Jagan Mohan Reddy resigned from the Congress and launched the YSR Congress Party. Jagan contested the by-election from Kadapa, who won the Kadapa seat by a staggering margin of 545,043 votes. This overwhelming win not only solidified his position as a prominent political leader in Andhra Pradesh but also signalled a clear rejection of the Congress Party's handling of the state after his father's death. The 2012 by-elections became a direct contest between the ruling Congress and the newly-formed YSR Congress Party. The by-election results were a major victory for YSRCP, as the party won 15 of the 18 assembly seats and the lone parliamentary seat up for grabs. In the 2014 Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, despite the strong anti-Congress sentiment, the YSRCP secured a notable presence in the elections, winning 67 seats in the 175-member Assembly, despite not winning a majority. In the 2019 Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections, the YSR Congress Party achieved an overwhelming victory, securing 151 out of 175 seats in the assembly. In the same election, YSRCP also performed exceptionally well in the 2019 Indian General Elections. The party secured 22 out of 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh, a stunning victory that reflected widespread discontent with the ruling TDP.

Introduction:

Elections hold significant importance for political parties as they serve as a key mechanism for securing political power, shaping governance, and influencing public policy. For a political party, an election provides the opportunity to present its vision, policies, and leadership to the public, allowing voters to decide which party should govern. A successful election outcome ensures that the party has the mandate to implement its policies, address public issues, and fulfil its promises. Elections also provide political parties with the chance to assess their support base, refine their strategies, and engage with the electorate to understand their concerns. A victory in an election boosts the party's credibility, strengthens its organizational structure, and can lead to increased resources and support from various sectors. Furthermore, elections allow parties to challenge their rivals, positioning themselves as viable alternatives to the current leadership. In essence, elections are crucial for the survival and growth of political parties, as they determine their ability to influence national and regional governance, shape future policies, and maintain public trust.

Background of YSR Congress

The YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) was established in 2011 by Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, the son of the late Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, a prominent political figure who served as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh from 2004 until his untimely death in 2009. The formation of the YSR Congress Party was primarily influenced by a political vacuum created after the demise of Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy and the subsequent internal struggles within the Indian National Congress (INC) party, to which he had belonged.

Following the sudden death of his father, Jagan Mohan Reddy sought to continue his father's legacy, especially his popular pro-poor and welfare-oriented policies. Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy had built a strong following

through initiatives such as the "*Rajiv Yuva Kiranalu*" program, which focused on poverty alleviation, healthcare, and rural development. His government was highly regarded for its ambitious projects, including the implementation of welfare schemes like "Aarogyasri" (health insurance for the poor) and "Rythu Bharosa" (support for farmers). After Rajasekhara Reddy's death in a helicopter crash, Jagan Mohan Reddy expected to succeed his father and take over as the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh. However, his ambitions were thwarted by internal dissent within the Congress party, particularly from other leaders who were hesitant to support him as the successor. Despite being a key figure in the Congress and his family's long-standing influence in the state, he was denied a chance to take leadership, especially by the Congress high command led by Sonia Gandhi.

In 2011, disillusioned with the Congress party's refusal to appoint him as Chief Minister, Jagan Mohan Reddy resigned from the Congress and launched the YSR Congress Party. The party was named in honour of his father, Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, and aimed to continue his political legacy. The YSR Congress Party positioned itself as a party that would uphold Rajasekhara Reddy's ideals, particularly in championing the rights of the underprivileged, marginalized communities, and the rural population. The background of the YSR Congress Party can be traced to several critical developments. One of the key factors that shaped its rise was the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh in 2014, which led to the creation of the new state of Telangana. The bifurcation left many in Andhra Pradesh feeling aggrieved, especially due to the promises made regarding special assistance, such as the demand for Special Category Status (SCS) to the state. Jagan Mohan Reddy strongly opposed the bifurcation and used this issue to rally support for his party, positioning himself as a leader who would fight for the state's rights and its economic development.

Kadapa By Elections – 2011

Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, the president of the YSR Congress Party, faced a pivotal by-election from the Kadapa constituency in Andhra Pradesh. This by-election held significant political implications as it was seen as a crucial test of his popularity and leadership after the formation of his party. Jagan Mohan Reddy, having left the Indian National Congress (INC) in 2011 due to the party's refusal to make him Chief Minister, had established YSR Congress Party with the intent of carrying forward the political legacy of his late father, Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy. His leadership and the future of the party were under intense scrutiny during this by-election, as it would demonstrate whether the new party had the support of the people, especially in the stronghold of the Y. S. family.

Jagan contested the by-election from Kadapa, which had been a traditional stronghold for his family. His father, Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, had represented Kadapa for many years, and his popularity in the region remained high even after his death. The by-election was seen as a direct challenge to the Congress party, which had tried to marginalize Jagan after his departure. The result was a resounding victory for Jagan Mohan Reddy, who won the Kadapa seat by a staggering margin of 545,043 votes. This overwhelming win not only solidified his position as a prominent political leader in Andhra Pradesh but also signaled a clear rejection of the Congress Party's handling of the state after his father's death.

In addition to Jagan's victory, another important win came from his mother, Y. S. Vijayamma, who contested the Pulivendula Assembly constituency, a seat that had been traditionally held by the Y. S. family. In this by-election, Y. S. Vijayamma emerged victorious by a margin of 85,193 votes, defeating her opponent, Y. S. Vivekananda Reddy, a relative and a former Congress leader. Her victory further strengthened the position of the YSR Congress Party and demonstrated the enduring support for the Y. S. family in the region.

The success of Jagan Mohan Reddy and his mother in these by-elections had profound political ramifications. It marked a decisive moment in the rise of YSR Congress Party as a formidable political force in Andhra Pradesh. The massive margins of victory underscored the popularity of the Y. S. family and their deep-rooted connection with the people of Kadapa and Pulivendula, regions that had benefited from the welfare policies of Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy. Moreover, the by-elections also revealed the growing dissatisfaction with the Congress-led government at the time, which had failed to meet several expectations, particularly after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh.

By Elections for Andhra Pradesh Assembly – 2012

The 2012 by-elections in Andhra Pradesh were a significant political event that followed the resignation of several legislators and leaders, primarily in the wake of the death of the former Chief Minister Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy in 2009. These by-elections were seen as a crucial test for both the ruling Congress Party and the emerging YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), led by Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy's son, Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy.

The 2012 by-elections were held for 18 assembly seats and one parliamentary seat across various constituencies in the state. The by-elections were necessary due to the vacancies created by the resignations of several elected representatives who either defected from the Congress Party or resigned in protest against the leadership of the party. Many of these resignations were in protest against the Congress high command's refusal to appoint

Jagan Mohan Reddy as the Chief Minister after the death of his father, which resulted in the formation of the YSRCP.

The 2012 by-elections became a direct contest between the ruling Congress and the newly-formed YSR Congress Party. Jagan Mohan Reddy's leadership and the growing popularity of his party were put to the test in these elections. The elections also witnessed the TDP (Telugu Desam Party) trying to establish itself as the alternative to both the Congress and YSRCP, despite the growing sentiment for YSRCP. The by-election results were a major victory for YSRCP, as the party won 15 of the 18 assembly seats and the lone parliamentary seat up for grabs. This was a remarkable performance, as it demonstrated Jagan Mohan Reddy's rising political influence and the popularity of his leadership, particularly among the rural population and those who felt alienated by the Congress Party. The success in these elections significantly strengthened the position of YSRCP as a major political force in the state.

The outcome of the 2012 by-elections was seen as a rebuke of the Congress leadership, especially due to the growing public resentment towards the party's handling of the state after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh and the failure to fulfil promises made to the people. It also marked a clear political shift in the state, indicating the increasing influence of YSRCP and the potential for Jagan Mohan Reddy to challenge the ruling party in the upcoming general elections.

Andhra Pradesh Assembly General Elections – 2014

The 2014 Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections were a landmark moment in the state's political history, held shortly after the bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh to create Telangana. The election results revealed key insights into the political dynamics post-bifurcation, where various factors such as leadership, regional sentiments, and the promise of development played crucial roles.

The Telugu Desam Party (TDP), led by N. Chandrababu Naidu, emerged as the clear winner, securing 102 seats out of 175 in the Assembly. TDP's victory was largely attributed to Naidu's leadership, his image as a development-oriented leader, and his ability to position himself as the best candidate to rebuild the state after the bifurcation. Naidu's promise to bring in economic growth and infrastructure development resonated with urban voters and the business community, particularly in the newly formed state of Andhra Pradesh. His strategic alliances with the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) at the national level also helped him secure a foothold in the post-bifurcation political scenario.

The 2014 elections were also a test for the Congress Party, which was the ruling party when the bifurcation decision was made. The Congress was deeply unpopular due to its role in the bifurcation and the perceived failure to fulfil promises made to the people of the state. YSRCP capitalized on this discontent, positioning itself as the alternative to the Congress and the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the other major political player in the state.

In the 2014 Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections, despite the strong anti-Congress sentiment, YSRCP faced challenges from TDP, led by N. Chandrababu Naidu, who also emerged as a strong contender. However, the YSRCP secured a notable presence in the elections, winning 67 seats in the 175-member Assembly, despite not winning a majority. Jagan Mohan Reddy's popularity and the loyalty towards the YSR family, especially among the rural and farming communities, played a crucial role in these results.

The YSRCP's strong showing in the 2014 elections marked its establishment as the principal opposition party in the new state of Andhra Pradesh. Though it did not manage to form the government, it laid the foundation for future success, especially with its focus on welfare programs such as farmers' welfare, women's empowerment, and health care. The party's clear stance on protecting the interests of the people, especially regarding issues like SCS, gained it considerable popularity.

The 2014 Andhra Pradesh Assembly elections marked a significant shift in the state's political landscape. While TDP's win indicated strong support for Naidu's leadership and development agenda, the success of YSRCP showed the enduring popularity of the Y. S. family and their welfare-centric approach. The results also underscored the deep dissatisfaction with the Congress Party, primarily due to its handling of the bifurcation. The 2014 elections set the stage for a new political era in Andhra Pradesh, where regional aspirations and the fight for the state's rights would remain central issues in the years to come.

General Elections – 2019

The 2019 General Election in India was a defining moment for the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP), led by Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy. The party, which had been relatively less influential in the state's politics after its formation in 2011, emerged as a significant political force in Andhra Pradesh. The election not only marked the rise of YSRCP but also led to a political shift in the state, which had previously been dominated by the Telugu Desam Party (TDP), led by N. Chandrababu Naidu.

In the 2019 Andhra Pradesh Legislative Assembly elections, the YSR Congress Party achieved an overwhelming victory, securing 151 out of 175 seats in the assembly. This was a historic win, as it allowed the party to form the government with a clear majority. The result demonstrated the people's strong support for Jagan Mohan Reddy, who had campaigned vigorously on a platform promising welfare, economic development, and corruption-free governance. His commitment to continuing the legacy of his late father, Y. S. Rajasekhara Reddy, who had been a popular Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh, resonated with a large section of the electorate.

In the same election, YSRCP also performed exceptionally well in the 2019 Indian General Elections. The party secured 22 out of 25 Lok Sabha seats in Andhra Pradesh, a stunning victory that reflected widespread discontent with the ruling TDP. The TDP, which had held a significant presence in the state, only managed to win 3 seats, marking a dramatic decline in its fortunes. The overwhelming victory of YSRCP in the General Elections showcased the success of its campaign, which focused heavily on issues such as farmers' welfare, job creation, healthcare, and the development of backward regions. One of the key reasons for YSRCP's success in the 2019 General Election was the party's ability to build a broad coalition of supporters. Jagan Mohan Reddy's promises of welfare schemes, such as the Rythu Bharosa (financial aid to farmers), Amma Vodi (financial support for mothers to send their children to school), and Arogya Sri (healthcare for the poor), resonated deeply with the rural electorate, which had been neglected under the previous TDP government. His promises of good governance and transparency in administration also played a critical role in garnering public support.

The result of the 2019 elections was also seen as a strong rejection of the TDP-led government's policies and its alliance with the BJP. Many voters in Andhra Pradesh were disillusioned by the state's bifurcation in 2014, which had led to significant economic and political challenges. The TDP's failure to secure special status for Andhra Pradesh and deliver on promises made during the 2014 elections contributed to its downfall in the 2019 polls. The YSRCP, under Jagan Mohan Reddy, capitalized on this discontent by promising to fight for the state's rights and ensuring the implementation of policies that would benefit the common people. The 2019 General Elections marked a significant political shift in Andhra Pradesh, with the YSR Congress Party emerging as the dominant force in both the state assembly and the Lok Sabha. The party's strong performance reflected the electorate's desire for change and its faith in Jagan Mohan Reddy's vision of welfare-driven governance. The overwhelming mandate given to the YSRCP was not only a testament to the popularity of its leader but also a clear indication that the people of Andhra Pradesh were ready for a new direction in the state's political landscape.

Conclusion:

The electoral victory of the YSR Congress Party (YSRCP) in the 2019 General and Assembly Elections was a historic and decisive moment in the political landscape of Andhra Pradesh. Under the dynamic leadership of Y. S. Jagan Mohan Reddy, the party secured an overwhelming mandate, winning 151 out of 175 assembly seats and 22 out of 25 Lok Sabha seats in the state. This remarkable success was a clear expression of the people's desire for change and their belief in Jagan Mohan Reddy's vision of governance focused on welfare, transparency, and development. Ultimately, the electoral success of YSRCP in 2019 was a testament to the power of grassroots mobilization, effective campaign strategies, and a leadership that understood the aspirations of the people. The landslide victory not only established YSR Congress as the dominant political force in Andhra Pradesh but also signalled a new chapter in the state's governance, with a focus on improving the lives of ordinary citizens and ensuring that development reaches every corner of the state.

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