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## WORKING OF PANCHAYAT RAJ INSTITUTIONS IN ANANTHAPURAMU DISTRICT OF ANDHRA PRADESH

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### ABSTRACT

**W**hat matters very much in the actual organizational set up of Panchayati Raj in Ananthapuramu district is not merely the legal and administrative frame-work as provided or laid down by law, but the type of men and women who constituted these bodies, and the kind of influence they brought to bear on the working of these institutions. Thus, from this angle it would be of utmost importance to deal with the social, educational and political background of members who constituted the Panchayati Raj bodies in the district and examine objectively at length how far their experience and background were of any consequence in influencing the actual working of the Panchayati Raj bodies in the district. After assumption of power the Telugu Desam Government, in 1983



realised that development activities and welfare schemes had not been taking place in adequate measure in the three-tier structure of Panchayati Raj Institution. A Cabinet Sub-Committee of the government examined the mandal system recommended by Ashok Mehta Committee (1978) and made its recommendations based on which Andhra Pradesh Mandal Praja Parishads, Zilla Praja Parishad and Zilla Abhivrudhi Mandals Act was enacted in 1986 repealing the earlier statutes. Under the provision of new Act, 1104 Mandal Praja Parishads (MPPs) came into existence in January

1987 in place of 330 Panchayati Samithis. As per the new act in Ananthapuramu district 63 Mandal Parishads were established. At present the Panchayati Raj Institutions in the district are functioning on the bases of Andhra Pradesh Panchayati Raj Act, 1994.

**KEYWORDS:** actual organizational, legal and administrative frame-work, educational and political background of members.

### INTRODUCTION:

Historically, Anantapur district is a perpetually drought prone area. The district is also socially and economically backward

when compared with the other districts Kurnool, Kadapa and Chittoor in the Rayalaseema, region. Geographically, Anantapur district is the largest district in the state it has the area of more than 19,000 Sq.Kms.

In view of this, it is no wonder even if this district remained an area of backwardness for years. In the pre-independence era apart from the regular administrative apparatus in the district headed by Collector and District Magistrate, there were institutions like Village Panchayat, Taluk Boards and District Boards. But there was hardly any other institutional set up which could be compared favourably with the present day Panchayat Raj set up. This institutional set up in the post constitutional period was an administrative corollary of development planning and allied nation – building programmes.

When the political and administrative efforts were initiated to implement the proposals of the Balwanth Roy Mehtas study Team, the importance of district as the principal administrative unit did not lost its sight.

The Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Samiti and Zilla Parishads Act, 1959, was the legislative effort in the direction of establishing Panchayat Raj bodies in Anantapur district. This legislative enactment followed by Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act, 1964, provided the much needed legal frame –work of Panchayat Raj set up in the district. The implementation of these two legislative enactments completed the establishment of Panchayat Raj bodies in the district. Gram Panchayats at the village level, Panchayat Samities at the block level and Zilla Parishad at the district level. Establishment of the three-tier Panchayat Raj set up in the state was in consonance with the recommendations of the Balwanth Roy Mehta's Study Team.

The setting up of Panchayat Raj needed some clarification at this Juncture. Andhra Pradesh agreed to act in pursuance of this report; the state government got two separate legislative enactments passed in 1959 and 1964 respectively. The former provided for the setting up of Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads and the latter paved for constituting Gram Panchayat. Since all these institutions constituted the three institutional ingredients of the Panchayat Raj were set up in terms of democratic decentralization, one could feel (or) question about the need for getting two separate legislative enactments, and instead of these two legislative enactments one comprehensively legislative enactment would be sufficient. It is difficult to deny the force of logic which underlies the arguments of this kind. But there was nothing wrong or unusual in getting enacted two pieces of separate legislative enactments.

An analysis of above two said enactments would not fail to keep conviction in this regard. Unlike the Panchayat Samities and Zilla Parishads that were designed to be the institutional agencies of rural development, village Panchayats were created to play a dual role, agencies of rural locally self-government and instrument of rural development. By considering this dual role of Gram Panchayat, it is not something unusual or unwanted to separate and district legislation was enacted pertaining Gram Panchayats. Besides this, there is also another formidable reason. Before the advent of the Panchayat Raj set up, GPs were an integral part of the rural local self-government set up.

When Andhra Pradesh was formed in 1956 there were three separate laws, which deal with the village / Gram Panchayats those were in force in three different administrative regions-viz Madras, Hyderabad and Mysore. There was an urgent need for rectifying this administrative anomaly. This rendered necessary-gave the passage of a single and comprehensively legislative enactment to deal with the institutional set up of Gram Panchayats throughout the state. This fundamentally administrative need had no less consequence in getting the Andhra Pradesh Gram Panchayats Act, 1964, passed separately.

The actual organizational set up of Panchayat Raj in Anantapur District is not merely a legal and administrative frame-work provided or laid down by law, but the type of men and women who constituted these bodies, and the kind of influence they brought to bear on the working of these institutions. Thus, from this angle it would be utmost importance to deal with the social, educational and political background of members who constituted the Panchayat Raj bodies in the district and examine objectively at length how far their experience and background had any consequence in influencing the actual working of the Panchayat Raj bodies in the district. The Telugu Desam government which got power in 1983 brought revolutionary changes in the functioning of Panchayat Raj bodies in the state. As per the 1986 Act, 63 Mandals were created in the district in place of 16 Panchayat Samities. At present the Panchayat Raj institutions in the district are functioning as per the Andhra Pradesh Panchayat Raj Act, 1994.

### ZPTC Electoral Trends

The particulars with regard to Caste wise, Gender wise and Party wise ZPTC members elected in 2014 elections is presented in table 1.

**Table-1**  
**Gender Wise, Caste Wise and Party Wise ZPTCs Elected to Ananthapuramu Zilla Parishad in 2014 Ordinary Elections**

Social Category	Total	TDP	YSRCP	Others
<b>Women</b>				
BC	10	6	4	0
SC	5	3	2	0
UR	15	11	4	0
ST	2	1		1
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Men</b>				
BC (G)	9	8	1	0
SC (G)	5	2	3	0
UR(G)	15	9	6	0
ST(G)	1	1	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Zilla Parishad, Ananthapuramu.

It is evident from table 1 that the women are outnumbering men in ZPTC elections. Nearly 51.61 per cent of ZPTCs elected in the district are women. Among the women ZPTCs, the share of women belonging to unreserved category stood at 46.88 per cent. The share of Backward Class women is 31.25 per cent. Among the women, the share of Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe women is 15.63 per cent and 6.25 per cent respectively.

Party wise position of reveals that the share of women won on TDP ticket is 51.61 per cent. In YSRCP Party the share of women APTCs is 50 per cent. The one Independent candidate won in ZPTC elections is also a women.

Gender Wise MPPs

Table 2 gives the particulars of the Mandal Parishad Presidents (MPPs) elected in 2014 ordinary elections in Ananthapuramu district.

**Table-2**  
**Gender Wise, Caste Wise and Party Wise MPPs Elected to Mandal Parishads in Ananthapuramu District in 2014 Ordinary Elections**

Social Category	Total	TDP	YSRCP	Others
<b>Women</b>				
BC- W	18	16	1	1
General(W)	14	11	3	
SC (W)	8	6	2	
ST (W)	1	1	0	0
<b>Sub-Total</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Men</b>				
BC (G)	10	9	1	0
OC (G)	9	8	1	0
SC (G)	3	2	1	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>53</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>1</b>

Source: Zilla Parishad, Ananthapuramu.

It is evident from table 2 that the share of women among total Mandal Parishad Presidents stood at 65.08 per cent. Among the women MPPs 34 women, constituting 53.91 per cent of total women representatives belong to TDP party. Around 9.52 per cent of them belong to YSRCP party. One independent MPP also belong to women category. Within Telugu Desam Party MPPs, the share of women MPPs stood at 64.15 per cent and within the YSRCP party the share of women MPPs stood at 66.67 per cent.

**Gender Wise Vice MPPs**

Table 5.8 gives the particulars of the Vice Mandal Parishad Presidents (MPPs) elected in 2014 ordinary elections in Ananthapuramu district.

**Table-3**  
**Gender Wise, Caste Wise and Party Wise Vice- MPPs Elected to Mandal Parishads in Ananthapuramu District in 2014 Ordinary Elections**

Social Category	Total	TDP	YSRCP	Others
<b>Women</b>				
BC (W)	11	9	1	1
UR (W)	11	11	0	0
Sub Total	22	20	1	1
<b>Men</b>				
BC General	30	23	6	1
General	9	7	2	
ST	1	1	0	0
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>2</b>

Source: Zilla Parishad, Ananthapuramu.

The data in table 3 indicates that the share of women among Vice MPPs is lower than men compared to ZPTCs, MPPs, Gram Panchayat Presidents and Gram Panchayat Ward Members. It is due to nominated nature of these posts, the women got low representation. The share of women among total Vice MPPs stood at 35.48 per cent. Within the party the share of women in TDP and YSRCP stood at 39.22 per cent and 11.11 per cent respectively.

**Gender Wise Gram Panchayat Presidents**

Table 4 gives the particulars of the Gram Panchayat Presidents elected in 2014 ordinary elections in Ananthapuramu district.

**Table – 4**  
**Gender Wise and Caste Wise Gram Panchayat Presidents Elected in Ananthapuramu District in 2014 Ordinary Elections**

Social Category	Male	Female	Total
Scheduled Tribe	20	28	48
Scheduled Caste	79	98	177
Backward Class	129	164	293
General	222	263	485
<b>Total</b>	<b>450</b>	<b>553</b>	<b>1003</b>

Source: District Panchayat Office, Ananthapuramu.

It is clear from table 4 that the share of Schedule Tribes in total Gram Panchayat Presidents stood at 4.79 per cent. The share of Scheduled Castes among total representatives is 17.65 per cent. Around 29.21 per cent of

representatives belong to Backward Classes. The remaining 48.35 per cent of Gram Panchayat Presidents elected from general quota.

The share of women representatives nearly 44.87 per cent are women. in general category 49.33 per cent, in Scheduled Caste category 44.63 per cent, in Backward Classes category 44.03 per cent and in Scheduled Tribe category 41.67 per cent of Gram Panchayat Presidents are women.

**Gender Wise Gram Panchayat Ward Members**

Table 5 gives the particulars of the Gram Panchayat ward Members elected in 2014 ordinary elections in Ananthapuramu district.

**Table 5**  
**Gender Wise and Caste Wise Gram Panchayat Ward Members Elected in Ananthapuramu District in 2014 Ordinary Elections**

Social Category	Male	Female	Total
Scheduled Tribe	126	296	422
Scheduled Caste	613	1153	1766
Backward Class	1488	1689	3177
General	2646	2439	5085
Total	4873	5577	10450

Source: District Panchayat Office, Ananthapuramu.

The data in table 5 shows that the share of women in Gram Panchayat Ward Members in Ananthapuramu district stood at 46.63 per cent. Among the total ward members 48.66 per cent got elected from general category seats. Around 30.40 per cent of ward members belongs to Backward Class Community. The share of Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes in total ward members stood at 16.90 per cent and 4.04 per cent respectively.

With regard to caste wise women share, in General Category 52.04 per cent were women. Among Scheduled Caste representatives the share of women is 34.71 per cent. Nearly 30.54 per cent of representatives in Backward Class Community were women. The share of women in Scheduled Tribes stood at 29.86 per cent of total ST representatives.

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