

THE HISTORY OF BEGINNING AND EXPANSION OF MYSORE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

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ABSTRACT

An attempt is made in this paper is to analyse the history of origin and development of Mysore Municipal Corporation. The Mysore City Municipal Corporation came into being on 10th June, 1977 to manage manifold civic affairs of the people of Mysore City. Within a short span of its existence as a corporation, it has performed its functions satisfactorily despite several limitations and obstacles. However, it has been bogged down by financial stringency, functional overloading and restricted autonomy coupled with public apathy. It is also used by power mongers for personal and political benefits. It has not yet attained adulthood even today and has failed to fulfil the aspirations of the people. The image of the municipal corporation in the public mind has been that of inefficiency, maladministration, and general stagnation. A detailed analysis and study of Mysore City Municipal Corporation in the proceeding chapters has substantiated this view. The present study unravels that the strength of the council has not been inflated proportionate to the growth in population and the expansion of the limits of the Mysore city. There are two dangers if the council is a small one. Firstly, it results in the denial of representation to smaller sections of population in the city and thus deprives them of a say in the administration of the city. Secondly, a small size of body is likely to be more susceptible to the control and influence of unscrupulous party managers. It may lead to unedifying practices and other abuses. A large sized council has a built-in corrective to such abusive practices. The elimination of even a few interest groups will provide ample around for lack of trust and confidence in the council. Thus, the increase in the corporation most representative and close to the people. As regards the inclusion of the members of the Legislative Assembly, Member of Parliament and Members of the Legislative Council who represent a part or whole of the city of Mysore, this study shows that it is not satisfactory. Their inclusion as ex-officio members is not only undesirable but also offends the principle of local democracy. It would be rather good to make provisions enabling the state government to nominate the experts with the knowledge of municipal affairs as members of the council.

Keywords: Municipal corporation, Mysore city and administration

INTRODUCTION

The Karnataka Municipal corporations act, 1976 and Karnataka Municipal corporations (Amendment) Act 1994, passed in conformity with the constitution (seventy fourth amendment) Act, 1992 and throws a light on the various powers, authority and responsibilities of the municipal corporation, included in the twelfth schedule of the constitution of India. The present state of any municipal corporation cannot be understood, without its historical background. It is desirable to familiarize ourselves with the significant details of Mysore city and to trace the early history of the growth and development and working of Mysore Municipality. The city has respectable antiquity. It is said that the 'Mahabharatha' refers to this city as 'Mahishamathi' in connection with an expedition of the Fandava prince sahadeva. the great king Ashoka sent a missionary to 'Manisha Mandala' (Mysore) in the 3rd century

B.C. to proclaim the religion of the Buddha. Raja Raja Deva, A chola prince rule over Mysore, a large area of Madras Presidency and Ceylon in the 9th century A.D. Gangas were Ruling over this territory in between 1003 and 1022 A.D. The Cholas, Hoysalas, Vijayanagar and wodeyar Kings ruled over the city in succession.

Mysore city is one of India's prime urban centers. It is situated at 12th, 18th north latitude an 16th, 42th east longitude at the North-West base of the Chamundi Hills, and it is about 2,525 feet above the sea level. geographically, the area of this ancient historical city is 37.30 square kilometers. Mysore city is famous for its aesthetics, rich cultural an architectural heritage, colorful festivals, magnificent mansions, myriad lights wide and clean roads and enchanting parks. Liltng melodies of Karnataka music, rustle of the Mysore silk, the delicate aroma of sandalwood and the ambience of a princely city with palaces, shopping malls and planned markets reveal the palpable impress left by its progenitors, the famous Wodeyars of Mysore and their illustrious dewana. this internationally reputed royal city with its palatial public buildings and well laidout roads, brings out the distinction with which civic planning was conceptualized and later executed with consummate art an dedication.. One campaigner for the city's heritage exclaims, " It is almost as if a poet-architect planner had let himself go with a computer designer and came up with an inspired mosaic of palaces, promenades, colonnaded markets, Mohall's, parks, status circles, vistas and water sheets".

Chamundi hill the cloud-capped over-looking the city is what many urban planners have described as the very "Signature of the city", It is the guardian hill with which the life and the history of the city dwellers have been my mysteriously blended through the centuries. It is also a revenue division technically and is famous as a city of gardens Much of pre-Tippu Sultan history of Mysore City is shrouded in myth and legends. But according to one legend. Mysore is the home of Goddess Chamundeshwari who eliminated the diabolic demon Mahishasura. The name mysore is etymologically rooted in reference in edicts and inscriptions such as 'Mahishapura' and Hahisooru'. It was only in 1499 A.D. that the city acquired its present name. From 1399 A.D. kati Raja wodeyar (1578 to 1618 A.D) asserted his independence form the vijayanagar viceroy, Mysore became the capital of the wodeyar dynasty. the city again gained importance subsequent to the fall of Tippu Sultan (1799). since then for nearly 32 years, Mysore was the capital.

Mysore with its hoary past an impressive scenic beauty is today famous as a picturesque city. It is also famous for its tradition in the fields of culture, dharma, education and even industrial institutions. It was the home of mummeries maestros, authors, poets, painters, aculptors and architects who enjoyed the roal patronage of the benevolent kings of the Wodeyar dynasty. as a result. In the 19th and 20th centuries Mysore became a famous cultural centre. added to these are the world renowned attention that Mysore holds for tourists. they are its palaces, th Chamudi hill, Chamarajendra technical Museum, rail Museum, Ramakrishna Ashram, Dharmic institutions, Mutts, Churches Mosques, temples, the Ideal Jawa, Vikrant Tyres Factory nod several educational institutions like the Mysore University, central food Technological research Institute (CFTRI) and defiance food Research Laboratory (DFRL) with their international reput.

The famous Mysore Palace (ambavilasa) against the backdrop of the guardian hill of chamundeshwari is one of the most beautiful palaces in India. Its construction work began in 1897 and was completed in 1912. One of the major attractions inside the fort is the golden throne of the Mysore Maharaja, which is exhibited during the dasara festival. In the past it was celebrated with great pomp and pageantry that included a grand procession of the raja on the royal elephant and the golden Howdah. the event was also a time for series of cultural

programmes. Now it has become a state festival and it continues to be one of the most captivating tourist attractions in South India, being attended by lakhs of people from various parts of the country and abroad. The illumination of the palace, the chamundi Hill and the Brindavan Garden are added attractions of Dasara at Mysore. The Mysore agricultural, industrial, and Fine arts Fair started in 1888, has grown to be a very attractive feature, now called the 'Dasara exhibition'. From the year 1957, State Level Dasara Sports are also organized at Mysore. The wrestling matches are organised in the exhibition grounds. The traditional festival continues, keeping pace with the changing times, Another great attraction is balithamahal, a palatial structure built for royal guests. the chamarajendra Zoo which celebrated its centenary in 1992, is spread over 37.25 hectares of land and houses a variety of wild animals and birds from various parts of the world.

The chamundi Hill is situated to the east at a distance of about 3.8 kilometers. One can go up either through the winding asphalted 12 kms. Road or climb 1000 steps to reach the chamundeshwari temple situated on the flat-crested hill. The hill is situated at a height of 3489 feet above mean sea level. the hill is famous for the chamundeshwari temple, known for its architectural value and period features. this pilgrim centre is the home of the dynastic goddess of the wodeyars of Mysore. She is also called Mahishasura Mardhini. Another attraction on the hill is the magnificent statue of Mahishasura. The steps which number over a thousand that take us to the temple, were installed by Dodda Raja Wodeyar, As we climb the hill, we come across a magnificent rock-cut sculpture of Nandi (Lord shiva's Bull) which measures 16 feet in height and 25 feet in length.

Another important work of civic importance is the Town hall built in memory of the famous Dewan Rangacharlu in 1884. Added to this, we have the Law courts designed according to the model of the Chicago exhibition in 1895. Another landmark is the public office building which have now become the deputy Commissioner's Office. One is bound to admire the two famous statue circles in Mysore built in memory of chamaraja wodeyar and Nalmadi Krishnaraja Wodeyar. Mysore has the famous University located in a sprawling campus of over 600 acres. The Mysore air-port is situated near Mandakalli village which is about 8 kms. From Mysore Krishnaraja Sagara, belagola, Nanjangud and srirangapatna are places of historical and cultural importance that highlight the hoary cultural past and the glorious history of Mysore, during the reign of Krishnaraja wodeyar III, the growth of the city in the east and western direction began.

Any attempt to trace the growth and development of Mysore City Municipal Corporation really begins in the 19th century. Its extent covered the old aghara, Fort, Doddapet and Lashkar Mohalla. when it was decided to involve citizens in the administration of civic bodies the government of India issued an order in April, 1861 regulating the participation of citizens in the city improvement activities. This paved the way of the installation of Municipal committees temporarily for Mysore and Bangalore on experimental basis on 8th July 1862. "This was done for the first time in accordance with the government. This committee had no statutory powers but was only consultative in nature. "In 1871. The BRITISH COMMISSION, which was then governing Mysore promulgated a regulation giving statutory powers to the Municipal Committees on a legal basis" This statute formed a milestone in the development of local self-government in the history of Mysore. The Municipal council was vested with the authority and responsibility of laying roads, maintaining underground drainage, street lighting, conservancies, health and cleanliness. In 1878-80, the Mohortharfa fee (Persian word meaning property tax) collected by the government was given to the Municipal council along with the responsibility of maintaining

police station. However, the government in 1890-91 withdrew the police administration authority.

When the Government of His Highness the Maharaja of Mysore, took over the rule of Mysore State in 1892 the deputy Commissioner of Mysore District was appointed as ex-officio commissioner of the Municipality. the council had no elected members till 1892. The practice of electing the councilors was introduced in 1892 on a restricted franchise. Accordingly, the council comprised and vice-president. Of the 20 members, 10 were elected, 5 ex officio members and the remaining five were nominated. the Deputy Commissioner of Mysore District was President and the assistant commissioner of Mysore Sub-Division was vice-president.

The development of areas and industries near by Mysore city has their impact upon the city. the social and economic changes due to developmental efforts and the problems created by rapid urbanization imposed new responsibilities upon municipal government in Mysore . Mysore City attracted industries and the consequent industrialization led to a rapid increase in the population during the last decade. this rapid urbanization created the problem of housing, public utilities and community facilities. as a result, the city environment has deteriorated giving rise to shanty extensions and slums, uncontrolled land use, unauthorized constructions. inadequate urban services such as water supply, sewerage and transport facility and deficient educational, recreational health and welfare facilities. It has become essential to plan and control urban growth; adequate public utilities and community facilities have to be provided if haphazard urbanization is desired to be checked. It is understandable, therefore, that the Municipal Corporation is Mysore city has been created to solve the problems of urban population. “The city is apt to create more problems for the municipal corporation. More and more building, poor layout, bad drainage and a defective sewerage system have caused a lot of annoyance to the inhabitants of the city” As regards its area, there is a consistent expansion.

The population growth, and demand of the Mysore people did influence the government of Karnataka to elevate the municipal council to the status of a Municipal corporation on 10th June, 1977, consequently, about 13 adjoining rural areas were brought under the jurisdiction of the Mysore Municipal corporation. According to Rule No.4 of the Karnataka Municipal Corporations Act. 1976 (Karnataka Act No.14 of 1977) the Government of Karnataka determined the new limits of Mysore City Municipal Corporation. The following maps indicate the present areas and limits of the Mysore City Municipal Corporation.

The Mysore Municipal corporation is organized in accordance with the provisions of Karnataka Municipal corporations act, 1976. The first election to the Municipal corporation was held in august, 1983 and it was constituted with 57 councilors or cooperators, of them, 11 were reserved for women and 5 for the SC/ST communities. The second election to the Mysore city Municipal corporation was held in April, 1990. The elected Legislative assembly members who represented the area under Municipal Corporation completely or partially could participate in the deliberation of the corporation. of item. 11 were reserved for women and 5 for the SC/ST communities. The second election to the Mysore city Municipal corporation was held in April, 1990. The elected Legislative assembly members who represented the area under Municipal Corporation completely or partially could participate in the deliberation of the corporation. They were, however, not empowered to vote in the council meetings of the municipal corporation. The Mayor and the Deputy Mayor were elected for a periods of one year.

The position of the Mayor of Mysore Municipal Corporation under the existing set up, is not very stable, and strong. The indirect election of the Mayor combined with his short one-year tenure makes him more a figurehead than an active and constructive functionary. Since he is elected by the councillors, not directly by the people, he cannot be said to have obtained a mandate from the city people. A demand has, therefore, been made especially by Mayors themselves to change the present system and have the Mayors elected directly by the people. In fact, in Andhra Pradesh, the system of direct election for the office of Mayor was introduced in 1980s by the Telugu Desam Government headed by N.T. Rama Rao. But this was changed by the Congress (I) government later. The one-year term of the Mayor is open to two serious objections. Firstly, it is too short to enable a Mayor to acquire insight into the corporation administration and help in planning on a long term basis. Secondly, it serves only to strengthen the bureaucracy headed by the Commissioner vis-à-vis the elected set up represented by the ephemeral Mayor. A Mayor elected for only one year, finds himself ineffective and powerless in his relationship with the commissioner who outstays him. One-year term for Mayor as against a five-year term for the council and two-year tenure for the Commissioner appear anomalous. Therefore, it may be argued here that the Mayor may be directly elected by the people for a five-year term which would be co-terminus with term of councillors.

CONCLUSION

Thus, the future of the municipal corporation in Mysore, could be very high if the state government modifies its present attitude of adhocism and neglect. The unsystematic and piecemeal efforts to improve the functioning of the corporation have not only led to the erosion of its financial jurisdiction and administrative autonomy and left it weak and emasculated. An active and sustained concern on the part of the state government is required for transforming the municipal corporation into effective instrument to deal with the challenges and complexities of civic life and enabling it to successfully encounter the problems which arise as a consequence of the process of urbanization and industrialization in a developing society. The state government must realize that the local government looms large in a locality to fulfil the immediate desires and aspirations of city people and for healthy civic management.

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