S1

Post-Independence Karnataka: Consolidation, Social Justice and Regional Questions

GS-1 Section II | Unit 1 · KAS Mains GS Paper 1

Syllabus: Post Independent Karnataka – Towards Political Consolidation – Attempts of Successive Governments – Backward Classes and Social Justice – Reports of: Havanur Committee – Venkataswamy Committee – Chinnappa Reddy Committee – Recent Trends – Dalit Movement – Devaraja Urs and Land Reforms. Language Issue: Gokak Movement – Issues and Perspectives. Inter-State Disputes – Boundary Disputes – Mahajan Committee Report and its impact – Water Disputes – Farmer's Movement, Regional Imbalance & Nanjundappa Committee Report.

Exam Radar: What KPSC Has Asked

Year	Marks	Question (KAS Mains GS-1)
2014	Essay	How far this statement "Karnataka is one of the first states to bring in paradigm shift in the realm of land relations by introducing different land reforms" is true? Critically analyse.
2014	Essay	Discuss the current Agrarian distress in Karnataka. Account for farmer's suicide in the state. What measures would you suggest for minimising agrarian distress?
2014	Essay	Justify the need for article 371(J) of the constitution for the development of Hyderabad Karnataka. Does this reduce the regional imbalance in Karnataka? Discuss.
2014	12.5 M	What are the major objectives of Special development Plan (SDP) introduced by Government of Karnataka to reduce regional imbalances? Critically examine the implementation of SDP.
2015	12 M	Do you consider that LG Havanur Committee report is a Bible for backward class in Karnataka? Discuss.
2015	12 M	Explain the initiatives of Government of Karnataka to implement the recommendations of Nanjundappa Committee.
2021	Essay	'Land is not for haves; but for those who are interested in agriculture'. Analyse the statement in the background of Karnataka Land Reforms (Amendment) Act, 2020.
2025	10 M | 150 w	Land reforms under Devaraj Urs were a landmark in Karnataka's agrarian history. Analyse the impact of these reforms on tenant farmers, landowners, and rural society.

Exam Trend & Probability Index — Discussed in class

Which sub-topics are most likely in the next paper

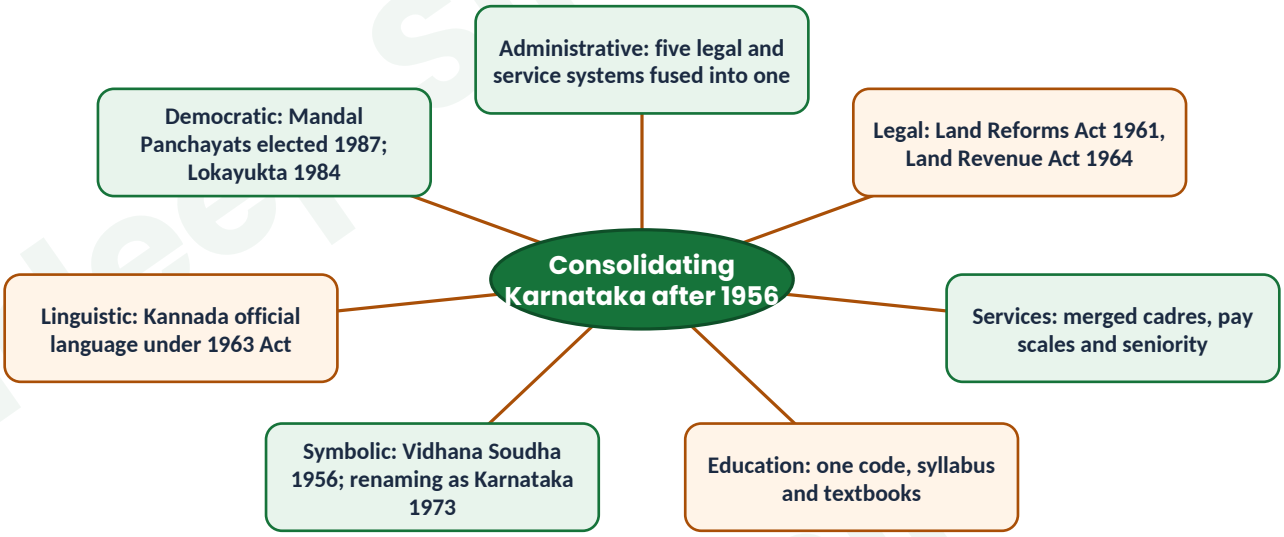
1. Towards Political Consolidation: From Mysore State to Karnataka (1956–1990s)

On 1 November 1956 a Bombay-Karnataka lawyer, a Hyderabad-Karnataka cultivator, a Mangaluru trader and a Kodava planter woke up citizens of the same enlarged Mysore State — but each still lived under different land laws, revenue systems, service rules and school syllabi. Political unification was achieved in a day; administrative and emotional consolidation took the next two decades.

The integration task after 1956

Region joined in 1956	Earlier administration	Legacy to be harmonised
Old Mysore	Princely Mysore (Wodeyars)	Ryotwari, advanced services, Representative Assembly tradition
Bombay-Karnataka (Belagavi, Dharwad, Vijayapura, Uttara Kannada)	Bombay State	Bombay tenancy law, Marathi-influenced administration
Hyderabad-Karnataka (Bidar, Kalaburagi, Raichur)	Hyderabad (Nizam's) State	Jagirdari legacy, Urdu administration, low literacy
Madras-Karnataka (Dakshina Kannada, Kollegal; Ballari from 1953)	Madras State	Coastal tenancy, Madras revenue codes
Kodagu	Part C State	Separate small legislature; jamma bane tenure

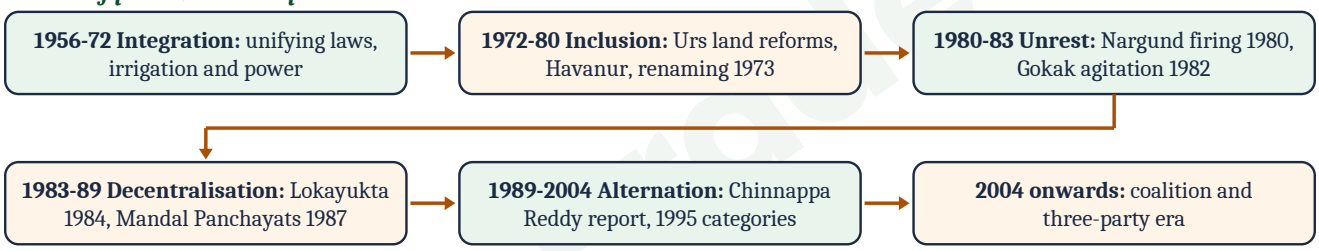
- **Administrative consolidation:** five legal and service systems had to be fused into one State apparatus — e.g. the work ran from 1959 to the mid-1960s through a series of unifying statutes.
  - **Uniform statutes:** regional laws were replaced by State-wide Acts — e.g. the Mysore (later Karnataka) Land Reforms Act 1961, the Land Revenue Act 1964 and a uniform Village Panchayats law (1959).
  - **Integrated services:** pay scales, seniority and cadres of employees drawn from five administrations were merged — a long-running source of service litigation in the early years.
  - **One education code:** a single education code, syllabus and set of textbooks replaced the Bombay, Madras, Hyderabad and Mysore patterns.
- **Symbolic consolidation:** buildings, names and language gave the new State an identity — e.g. three landmarks between 1956 and 1973.
  - **Vidhana Soudha:** built in Bengaluru under Kengal Hanumanthaiah (CM 1952–56) as a 'people's temple' of self-rule — completed in 1956, the year of unification.
  - **Renaming in 1973:** Mysore State became **Karnataka on 1 November 1973** under D. Devaraj Urs — fulfilling the emotional demand of the northern districts, which had never been part of 'Mysore'.
  - **Official language:** Kannada was made the official language of the State — e.g. the Karnataka Official Language Act 1963.



Attempts of successive governments — phases

Phase	Leadership	Defining features
1956–1972: Congress dominance	S. Nijalingappa, B.D. Jatti, S.R. Kanthi, Veerendra Patil	Integration of laws; irrigation and power; leadership drawn mostly from dominant landed communities
1972–1980: Social realignment	D. Devaraj Urs	Land reforms 1974, Havanur Commission, renaming 1973, coalition of backward classes, Dalits and minorities
1980–1983	R. Gundu Rao	Nargund firing 1980; Gokak agitation 1982; end of Congress monopoly
1983–1989: First non-Congress government	Ramakrishna Hegde, S.R. Bommai (Janata)	Lokayukta 1984; Mandal Panchayats (elections 1987, Abdul Nazir Sab); Venkataswamy report
1989–2004: Alternation	Congress and Janata Dal governments	Chinnappa Reddy report; 1995 reservation categories; Nanjundappa committee 2000–02
2004 onwards: Coalition and three-party era	Congress, JD(S), BJP in various combinations	Coalitions 2004–08 and 2018–19; first BJP-led government in south India (briefly 2007; 2008); welfare guarantees era

Phases of post-1956 State politics



KEY **Karnataka's post-1956 politics moved from integration (one state, one law) to inclusion (Urs's social coalition) to decentralisation (Hegde–Nazir Sab panchayats) — each phase widened the circle of political power.**

FACT STRIP

- **1 November 1956:** enlarged Mysore State formed from five administrations (States Reorganisation Act 1956)
- **1 November 1973:** Mysore State renamed Karnataka (Devaraj Urs government)
- **1984:** Karnataka Lokayukta Act creates a strong State ombudsman
- **1987:** first Mandal Panchayat elections under the 1983 Act (Abdul Nazir Sab)

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS

One State, one law; Integration to inclusion to decentralisation; Emotional integration of the northern districts; Vidhana Soudha as a 'people's temple'; AHINDA social coalition; Mandal Panchayat model of devolution; Coalition era and three-party competition

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Landmarks Karnataka gave to Indian governance

2. Backward Classes and Social Justice: Commissions from Miller to the Caste Survey

In 1918 the Maharaja of Mysore appointed Sir Leslie Miller to examine why non-Brahmin communities were nearly absent from public service; the 1921 government order that followed made Mysore one of the earliest regions of India to reserve posts for 'backward communities'. Every later Karnataka commission builds on this question: who is backward, by what yardstick, and how much should be reserved?

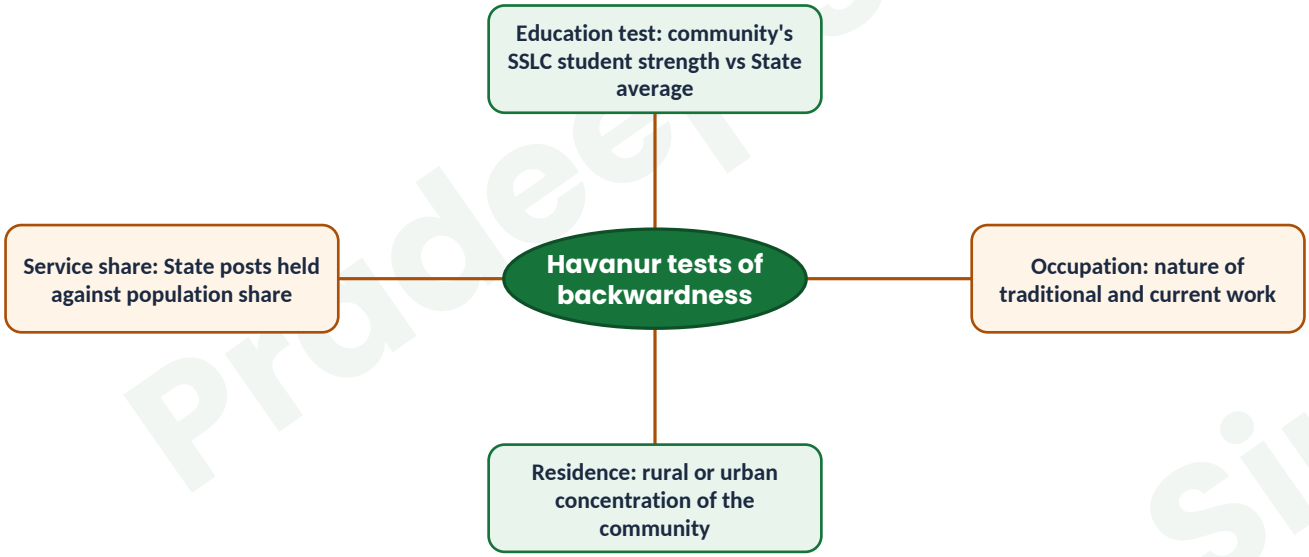
The lineage of commissions

Commission	Period	Key approach / outcome
Miller Committee	1918–19	Representation of non-Brahmins in services; 1921 order
Nagan Gowda Committee	1960–61	First post-1956 BC commission; resulting order struck down in M.R. Balaji (1962) — 50% ceiling
L.G. Havanur Commission	1972–75	Empirical, education-based criteria; three groups of backward classes
T. Venkataswamy Commission	1983–86	State-wide socio-economic survey; report not accepted
O. Chinnappa Reddy Commission	1988–90	Basis of today's category system (1995)
Permanent KSCBC	1995 onwards	Statutory commission after Indra Sawhney; revises lists
H. Kantharaj survey	2015 (report 2024)	Socio-economic and educational survey; not implemented
KSCBC fresh survey (Madhusudan R. Naik)	Sept–Oct 2025 (report 2026)	Report accepted by the government on 27 May 2026

Havanur Commission (1972–75) — the template

- **Origin and timing:** appointed by the Urs government in 1972 under L.G. Havanur — report submitted in 1975, the first backward-class report after the State's renaming.

- **Empirical method:** backwardness was treated as primarily social and educational and measured with data rather than assumed from caste rank — e.g. three tests below.
  - **Education test:** a community's student strength at the SSLC level compared with the State average was the key measure of educational backwardness.
  - **Supporting tests:** occupation, residence and representation in government service were also weighed — e.g. a community's share of State posts against its population share.
- **Three-fold classification:** communities were graded, and reservation graded accordingly — e.g. two consequences below.
  - **Graded groups:** Backward Communities, Backward Castes and Backward Tribes received differentiated shares rather than one undifferentiated OBC pool.
  - **Contested exclusions:** several numerically large landed communities were left out of the list — which triggered strong protests and litigation in the late 1970s.
- **Implementation by order:** the report was given effect largely through government orders of 1977 under Urs — executive action rather than a statute.



Is Havanur a 'Bible'? (2015 PYQ)

Why it is called a Bible	Why the label is contested
First data-driven, caste-wise study of backwardness in Karnataka	Data base was limited (school data, sample studies) — later surveys revised it
Shifted the basis from caste rank to measurable backwardness	Exclusions sparked agitation; lists had to be revised repeatedly
Gave political voice to small, scattered communities (AHINDA)	No creamy-layer filter then; benefits captured by advanced sections within groups
Cited by later national debates, including the Mandal era	Superseded legally by Indra Sawhney norms and the 1995 category system

Venkataswamy Commission (1983–86)

- **Household survey:** constituted by the Hegde government and chaired by T. Venkataswamy — it conducted a State-wide household socio-economic survey, the first of its kind in Karnataka.

- **Explosive recommendation:** it proposed to exclude certain large landed communities from the backward list — e.g. this led to intense agitations across the State.
- **Report shelved:** the government did not accept the report (1986) and appointed a fresh commission — showing that commission outcomes are shaped by political negotiation as much as by data.

Chinnappa Reddy Commission (1988–90) and the category system

- **Judicial chair:** chaired by Justice O. Chinnappa Reddy, a former Supreme Court judge — report submitted in 1990.
- **Lasting framework:** its scheme, adapted after Indra Sawhney (1992), produced the 1995 category structure still in use — e.g. Categories 1, 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B below.

Category	Share (OBC total 32%)	Broad nature
Category 1	4%	Most backward communities (with no creamy-layer exclusion)
Category 2A	15%	More backward communities
Category 2B	4%	Muslims (as a group)
Category 3A	4%	Relatively backward communities
Category 3B	5%	Relatively backward communities

Basis	Havanur Commission	Chinnappa Reddy Commission
Period	1972–75 (report 1975)	1988–90 (report 1990)
Chair	L.G. Havanur	Justice O. Chinnappa Reddy, former Supreme Court judge
Method	Education-based tests (SSLC data), with occupation, residence and service share	Revised the lists; scheme adapted after Indra Sawhney (1992)
Classification	Three groups: Backward Communities, Castes and Tribes	Categories 1, 2A, 2B, 3A and 3B (1995)
Creamy layer	No creamy-layer filter then	Income filter for 2A to 3B, not Category 1
Implementation	Government orders of 1977	1995 category structure, still in use

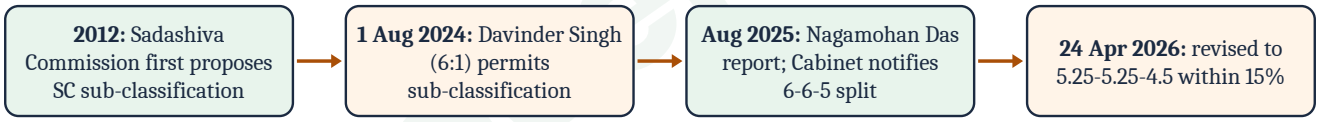
- **Within the ceiling:** with 15% for SCs and 3% for STs, the 32% OBC share kept total reservation at the 50% ceiling — e.g. 32 + 15 + 3 = 50.
- **Creamy-layer filter:** the income-based creamy-layer test applies to Categories 2A to 3B but not to Category 1 — following Indra Sawhney (1992).
- **2023 restructuring stalled:** a March 2023 decision to restructure Category 2B and create new sub-categories was challenged in the Supreme Court — it has not been given effect pending the hearing.

Recent trends

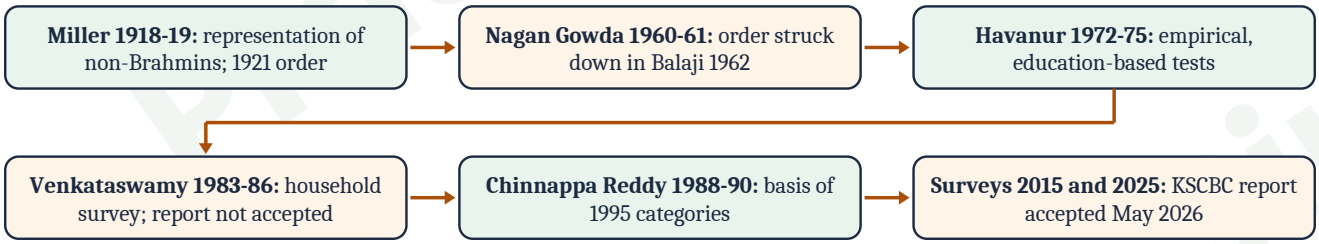
- **Caste surveys:** Karnataka has twice attempted a full household enumeration of castes — e.g. 2015 and 2025.
  - **Kantharaj survey:** the 2015 socio-economic and educational survey (H. Kantharaj) was finalised and submitted in 2024 under K. Jayaprakash Hegde — but not implemented.
  - **Fresh KSCBC survey:** conducted by the KSCBC (chair Madhusudan R. Naik) in Sept–Oct 2025 — its report was accepted by the State government on 27 May 2026.

- **SC/ST quota:** the enhanced quota has moved from legislation to reversal to judicial invalidation — e.g. 2022, April 2026 and October 2026.
  - **2022 enhancement:** an Act raised the SC quota from 15% to 17% and ST from 3% to 7% (based on the Justice H.N. Nagamohan Das Commission, 2020) — taking total reservation to 56%.
  - **Reversal and verdict:** in April 2026 the government reverted to 15%/3%, citing the 50% ceiling — on 12 October 2026 a Division Bench of the Karnataka High Court struck down the 2022 Act's provisions to the extent they breached the 50% ceiling.
- **Internal SC reservation:** sub-classification within the SC share moved from a commission idea to Cabinet decision — e.g. 2012 to 2026.
  - **Sadashiva Commission:** Justice A.J. Sadashiva Commission (report 2012) first proposed sub-classification of SCs in Karnataka.
  - **Davinder Singh verdict:** on 1 August 2024 a seven-judge bench of the Supreme Court, 6:1, permitted sub-classification of SCs — overruling E.V. Chinnaiah (2004).
  - **Nagamohan Das formula:** his one-man commission reported in August 2025 and the Cabinet notified a 6–6–5 split — on 24 April 2026 it was revised within the 15% SC quota to 5.25% (left-hand groups), 5.25% (right-hand groups) and about 4.5% for other groups including nomadic communities.

Internal reservation for SCs — the sequence



Evolution of backward-class policy in Karnataka



KEY — **Karnataka's social-justice journey runs Miller (representation) → Havanur (empirical backwardness) → Chinnappa Reddy (graded categories) → caste surveys and SC sub-classification (data-based, internally differentiated justice).**

FACT STRIP

- **32 + 15 + 3 = 50%:** OBC, SC and ST shares within the ceiling (1995 system)
- **1 August 2024:** Supreme Court, 6:1, permits SC sub-classification (Davinder Singh)
- **27 May 2026:** KSCBC 2025 survey report accepted by the State government
- **12 October 2026:** Karnataka HC strikes down 2022 Act provisions breaching 50% ceiling

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS

Empirical backwardness; Graded (categorised) reservation; 50% ceiling (M.R. Balaji, 1962); Creamy layer (Indra Sawhney, 1992); Sub-classification within SCs (Davinder Singh, 2024); Data-based social justice; Representation in services

Current Connect — Discussed in class

Status as of October 2026 — write it exactly

Examiner Lens — Discussed in class

How KPSC frames this theme

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Why Karnataka is a laboratory of OBC policy

3. The Dalit Movement in Karnataka

In 1973 B. Basavalingappa, a Dalit minister in the Urs cabinet, remarked at a public function that much of Kannada literature was 'boosa' (cattle fodder) for Dalits because it ignored their lives. The uproar — protests by students, counter-mobilisation by Dalit youth — showed that a new, self-conscious Dalit voice had arrived. Within a year it took organisational form.

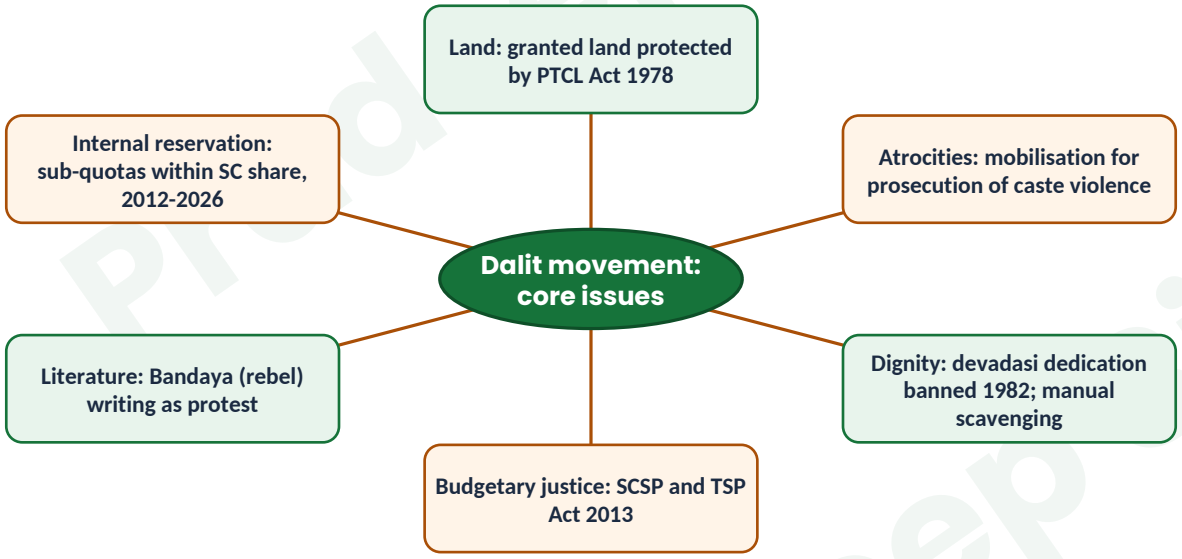
Phases

Phase	Features	Key names / events
Roots (pre-1956)	Adi Karnataka associations; Miller-era representation; Ambedkarite influence	Mysore Depressed Classes conferences
Awakening (1973–74)	'Boosa' controversy; student activism in Mysuru and Bengaluru	B. Basavalingappa
Organisation (1974–1990)	Dalit Sangharsha Samiti (DSS) formed at Bhadravati (1974); land, atrocity and dignity struggles	Prof. B. Krishnappa (founder), Devanur Mahadeva, Siddalingaiah
Literary rebellion (late 1970s)	Bandaya (rebel) literature movement — literature as protest	Siddalingaiah's 'Holemadigara Haadu'; Devanur Mahadeva's 'Odalaala', 'Kusumabale'

Phase	Features	Key names / events
Fragmentation and politicisation (1990s onwards)	DSS splits into factions; entry into electoral politics; internal-reservation demand	Left-hand and right-hand groups debate

Core issues taken up

- **Land and granted land:** landless Dalits occupied government (darkhast) land and fought to keep land granted to them — e.g. the **Karnataka SC/ST (Prohibition of Transfer of Certain Lands) Act 1978 (PTCL Act)** voids transfers of granted land, upheld by the Supreme Court in Manchegowda (1984).
- **Atrocities:** the DSS mobilised against caste violence and for prosecution — e.g. after the Kambalapalli killings (Kolar district, 2000), in which seven Dalits were burnt to death.
- **Dignity struggles:** campaigns targeted devadasi dedication, manual scavenging and untouchability practices — e.g. the Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act 1982.
- **Budgetary justice:** plan funds were earmarked in proportion to SC/ST population — e.g. the Karnataka SCSP and TSP Act 2013 made this a statutory obligation.
- **Internal reservation:** the demand for sub-quotas within the SC share was led mainly by left-hand (Madiga and related) groups, while other groups expressed concerns over the formula — e.g. Sadashiva report 2012 to the April 2026 decision.



Trajectory of the Dalit movement in Karnataka



KEY **The Dalit movement in Karnataka combined Ambedkarite politics, Lohiaite socialism and a powerful literary avant-garde — it changed Kannada literature as much as it changed policy.**

FACT STRIP

- **1974:** Dalit Sangharsha Samiti founded at Bhadravati (Prof. B. Krishnappa)
- **1978:** PTCL Act voids transfers of granted land (upheld in Manchegowda, 1984)
- **1982:** Karnataka Devadasis (Prohibition of Dedication) Act
- **2013:** Karnataka SCSP and TSP Act makes budget earmarking statutory

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS

'Boosa' controversy (1973); Bandaya sahitya (rebel literature); Dalit Sangharsha Samiti; Granted (darkhast) land protection; Budgetary justice (SCSP/TSP); Justice within the SC category; Ambedkarite-Lohiaite synthesis

Historiography — Discussed in class

Perspectives on the movement

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Names and places to drop

4. Devaraj Urs and Land Reforms

In 1951 tenant cultivators of Kagodu in Sagar taluk (Shivamogga) refused to pay excessive rent to their landlord. The Kagodu satyagraha, led by H. Ganapathiyappa and backed by socialists including Shantaveri Gopala Gowda and Ram Manohar Lohia, raised the slogan that would define Karnataka's land politics: **'Uluvavane Bhoomi Odeya'** — the tiller is the owner. Two decades later the Urs government wrote it into law.

Legal journey

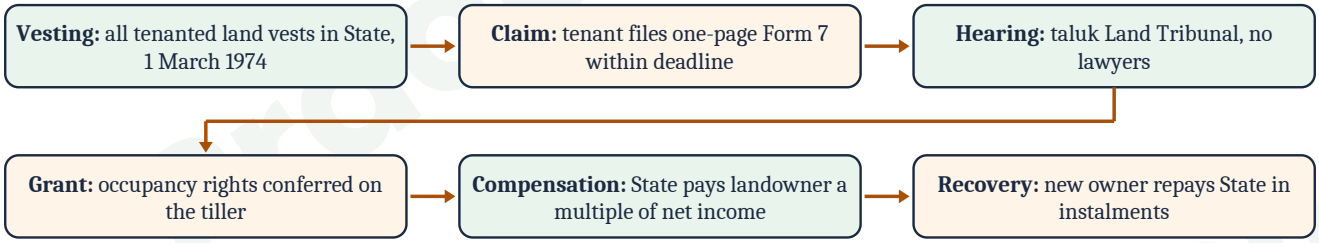
Stage	What it did
Kagodu satyagraha (1951)	Mass tenant protest in Malnad over the kolaga measure of rent; Lohia visited on 14 June 1951
Mysore (Karnataka) Land Reforms Act 1961 (in force 1965)	Unified five regional tenancy laws; tenancy regulation and ceilings, with many exemptions
1974 amendment (in force 1 March 1974)	Abolished tenancy; vested tenanted land in government; occupancy rights to tillers
Sections 79A, 79B, 79C	Restricted purchase of farm land by non-agriculturists, institutions and companies

Stage	What it did
2020 amendment	Omitted 79A, 79B and 79C — opened purchase of farm land to non-farmers (with ceiling and some safeguards retained)

Key features of the 1974 reforms

- **Abolition of tenancy:** all leased land vested in the State from 1 March 1974 — except for protected categories such as soldiers, minors and widows, who could continue to lease.
- **Form 7 claims:** tenants applied for occupancy rights through a one-page Form 7 within a fixed deadline — e.g. the claim, not a civil suit, was the entry point to ownership.
- **Tribunal, not courts:** taluk-level Land Tribunals headed by an Assistant Commissioner with non-official members, including SC/ST representation, heard claims — lawyers were excluded to keep proceedings quick and tenant-friendly.
- **State-paid compensation:** the State paid landowners a multiple of net income and recovered it from the new owners in instalments — e.g. tenants did not have to raise a lump sum.
- **Lower ceiling:** the land ceiling was lowered and computed in 'units' graded by soil and irrigation class — surplus land was to go to the landless, SCs and STs.
- **Complementary measures:** debt-relief legislation for small farmers and labourers, abolition of bonded labour and house sites for the landless — e.g. the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act 1976 operated alongside.

How a tenant became an owner (1974 amendment)



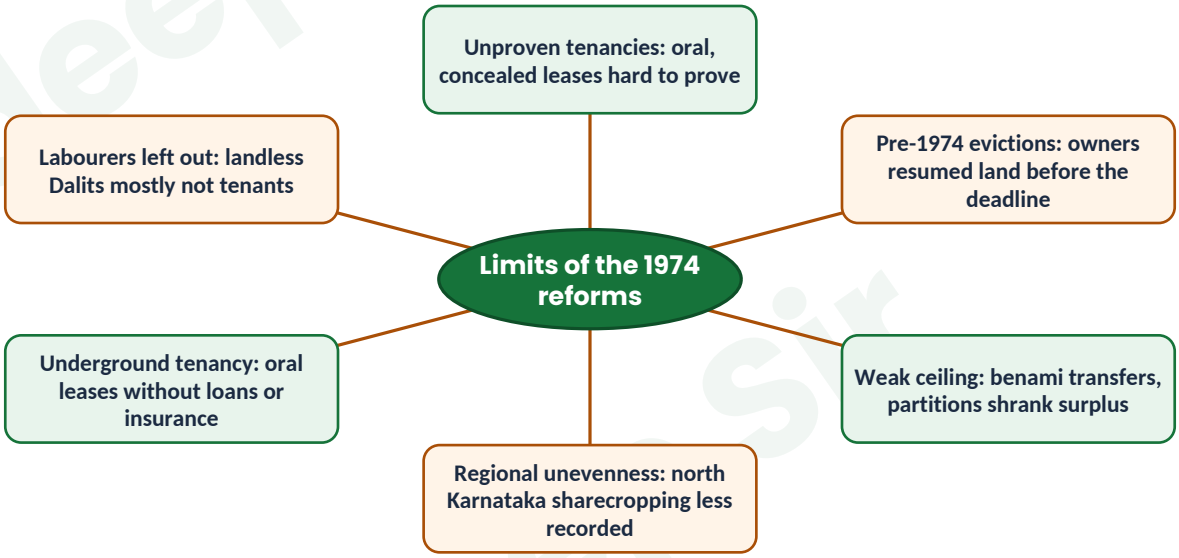
Impact (2025 PYQ dimensions)

On whom	Impact
Tenant farmers	Lakhs of tenants became owners; security and dignity; access to credit; strongest gains in Dakshina Kannada, Uttara Kannada and Malnad where written tenancy was widespread
Landowners	Absentee and non-cultivating owners lost leased land; compensation was modest; some pre-empted through resumption or recorded "voluntary surrender"
Rural society	Decline of landlordism; rise of intermediate peasant castes into political power; new rural middle class
Landless labourers and Dalits	Gained less — they were mostly not tenants; ceiling surplus distributed was limited
Politics	Built the Urs social coalition; shifted rural power away from old landed elites

Limitations

- **Unproven tenancies:** oral and concealed tenancies were hard to prove before tribunals — and evictions occurred in the run-up to 1974.
- **Weak ceiling:** ceiling implementation lagged tenancy reform — e.g. benami transfers and family partitions reduced the surplus available for distribution.

- **Regional unevenness:** outcomes differed by region — e.g. north Karnataka's sharecropping arrangements were less recorded than coastal written leases.
- **Underground tenancy:** the ban on leasing later pushed tenancy into informal oral leases — denying such tenants crop loans and crop insurance.



The 2020 amendment debate (2021 Essay)

Arguments for	Arguments against
Enables investment, agri-business and land markets	Reverses the "land to the tiller" principle of 1974
Removes litigation and corruption around 79A/79B	Risk of speculative purchase and land-banking near cities
Allows educated non-farmers, returning migrants to farm	Distress sales by small farmers; loss of food-security land
Old income cap on non-farm buyers was outdated	Weak protection for SC/ST and small holders

- **Pending cases dropped:** when the 2020 amendment removed Sections 79A and 79B, some 13,814 cases pending under them were set to be dismissed — the strongest data point on how much litigation the old sections generated.
- **Reversal still open:** reinstatement of the omitted sections has been announced in principle and debated — but as of October 2026 the 2020 changes had not been reversed.

Basis	1974 amendment	2020 amendment
Philosophy	Land to the tiller ('Uluvavane Bhoomi Odeya')	Land as an economic asset open to investment
Core change	Abolished tenancy; occupancy rights to tillers	Omitted Sections 79A, 79B and 79C
Who may buy farm land	Restricted for non-agriculturists, institutions, companies	Opened to non-farmers
Ceiling	Lowered; computed in graded units	Retained, with some safeguards
Main beneficiaries	Tenants, especially coastal and Malnad	Investors, agri-business, educated non-farmers
Main criticism	Weak ceiling; labourers gained little	Risk of speculation and distress sales

KEY **Urs's reforms were a tenancy revolution rather than a ceiling revolution: they made tillers owners, but left the landless agricultural labourer largely outside their reach.**

FACT STRIP

- **1951:** Kagodu satyagraha, Sagar taluk, led by H. Ganapathiyappa
- **1961 (in force 1965):** Land Reforms Act unifies five regional tenancy laws
- **1 March 1974:** tenancy abolished; leased land vests in the State
- **13,814 cases:** pending 79A/79B cases set for dismissal (2020 amendment)

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS

Uluvavane Bhoomi Odeya (land to the tiller); Tenancy revolution, not a ceiling revolution; From landlord to Land Tribunal; Occupancy rights; Concealed and oral tenancy; Land as social justice vs land as economic asset; Model Agricultural Land Leasing Act 2016

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Why Karnataka is cited nationally

Historiography — Discussed in class

Three readings of the Urs reforms

Answer Enricher — Discussed in class

Lines for 'paradigm shift' and 'Land is not for haves' essays

5. The Language Question: Gokak Movement — Issues and Perspectives

In April 1982 Kannada film star Dr Rajkumar joined writers and students in an agitation demanding that Kannada be made the first and compulsory language in schools. Crowds across the State turned a report on school curriculum into the largest language mobilisation in Karnataka's history — and the government yielded.

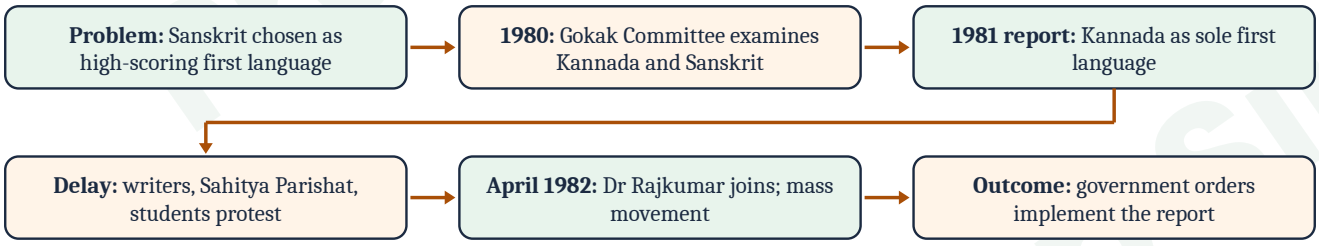
Background

- **Sanskrit as scorer:** after 1956 schools could offer Sanskrit (or other languages) as the first language — many students chose Sanskrit as a high-scoring option, sidelining Kannada.
- **Gokak Committee:** in 1980 the government constituted a committee under Prof. V.K. Gokak (Jnanpith awardee, 1990) to examine the place of Kannada and Sanskrit in the school curriculum.
- **1981 recommendation:** the report recommended that Kannada be the sole first language in secondary schools — with Sanskrit removed from first-language status.

The agitation (1982) and outcome

- **Delay sparks protest:** government delay on the report triggered protests by Kannada writers, the Kannada Sahitya Parishat and student groups — under the Gundu Rao government.
- **Rajkumar effect:** Dr Rajkumar's entry in April 1982 turned a literary protest into a mass movement across towns and villages.
- **Government yields:** the government issued orders implementing the report — later language orders and court challenges followed.

The Gokak movement — causal chain

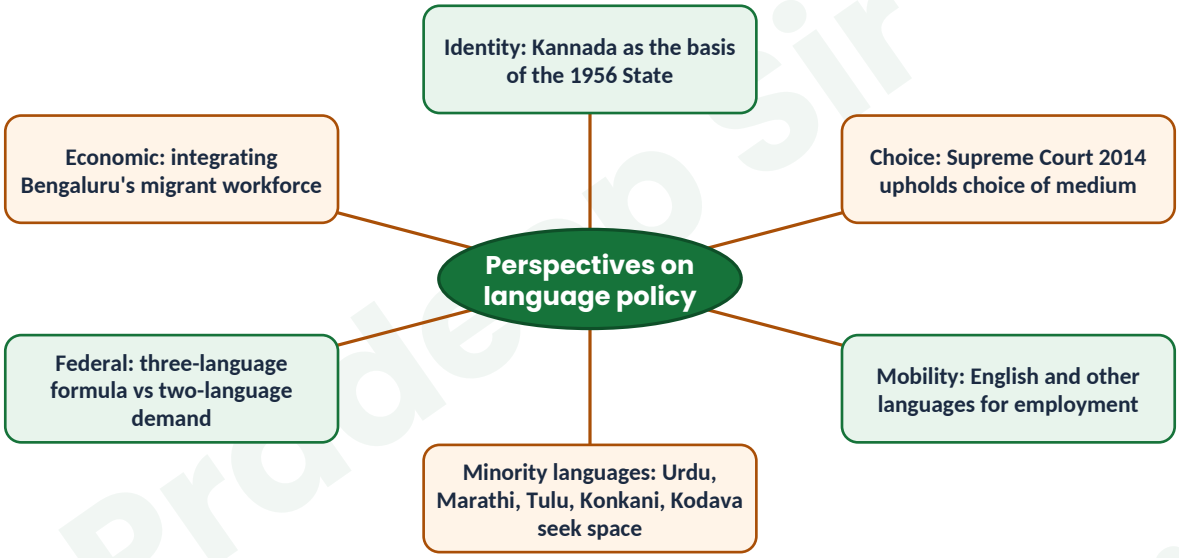


Legal and policy aftermath

Milestone	Significance
Sarojini Mahishi Committee (report 1986)	Recommended priority to Kannadigas in jobs in the State
Kannada Development Authority (1994)	Watchdog on implementation of Kannada
1994 medium-of-instruction order	Mother tongue / Kannada medium in primary classes
Supreme Court, 2014 (Associated Management of Schools case)	Parents and child have the right to choose the medium of instruction; State cannot compel mother tongue
Kannada Language Learning Act 2015	Kannada compulsory as a subject in schools
Kannada Language Comprehensive Development Act 2022	Kannada in administration, courts, education, industry, signage
2024 amendment	At least 60% of signboard space in Kannada
State Education Policy Commission (Sukhadeo Thorat), 2025	Recommended a two-language formula (Kannada/mother tongue and English)

Perspectives

Perspective	Argument
Identity and cultural survival	Kannada is the basis of the State created in 1956; must be protected in its own land
Mobility and choice	English and other languages are tools of employment; Supreme Court affirmed choice of medium
Minority languages	Urdu, Marathi, Telugu, Tamil, Konkani, Tulu, Kodava speakers seek space without conflict with Kannada
Federal dimension	Three-language formula vs two-language demand; NEP 2020 and State policy
Economic dimension	Bengaluru's migrant workforce — integration through incentives vs mandates



KEY **The Gokak movement converted Kannada from a cultural symbol into a policy principle — the task now is to balance linguistic identity with the constitutional freedom of choice and the needs of a globalised economy.**

FACT STRIP

- **April 1982:** Dr Rajkumar joins the Gokak agitation
- **2014:** Supreme Court upholds parents' choice of medium of instruction
- **2015:** Kannada Language Learning Act makes Kannada a compulsory subject
- **60%:** minimum Kannada share of signboard space (2024 amendment)

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS ***Kannada as first language; Freedom of choice of medium; Three-language vs two-language formula; Linguistic identity and federalism; Sarojini Mahishi Report; Classical language status (2008); Identity with choice***

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Karnataka's many languages

Current Connect — Discussed in class

Language in the news (2024–26)

6. Inter-State Boundary Disputes: Belagavi and the Mahajan Commission

In most winters since 2012 the Karnataka legislature has met for a session in Belagavi, in the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha. The building is an administrative statement: Belagavi, claimed by Maharashtra since 1956, is Karnataka's second seat of legislature. The dispute it answers is the oldest unsettled boundary question of the 1956 reorganisation.

Origins

- **1956 allocation:** the States Reorganisation Act 1956 placed Belgaum (Belagavi) district, with its Marathi-speaking pockets, in Mysore State — following the Fazl Ali Commission's recommendations.
- **Maharashtra's claim:** Belagavi city and several hundred villages of Belagavi, Karwar (Uttara Kannada) and Bidar districts were claimed on linguistic and contiguity grounds — the Maharashtra Ekikaran Samiti (MES) led the agitation locally.
- **Karnataka's counter-claim:** Karnataka in turn pointed to Kannada-majority areas in Solapur, Sangli (Jath, Akkalkot) and Kasaragod (Kerala).

Mahajan Commission (1966–67)

- **One-man commission:** Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan, former Chief Justice of India, was appointed by the Centre in 1966 — to examine the Mysore–Maharashtra and Mysore–Kerala claims.
- **1967 recommendations: Belagavi city to remain with Mysore**; some villages to go to Maharashtra and some areas from Maharashtra to Mysore; and **Kasaragod to Mysore**.
- **Split reception:** Mysore (Karnataka) accepted the report and Maharashtra rejected it as one-sided — the Centre did not implement it.

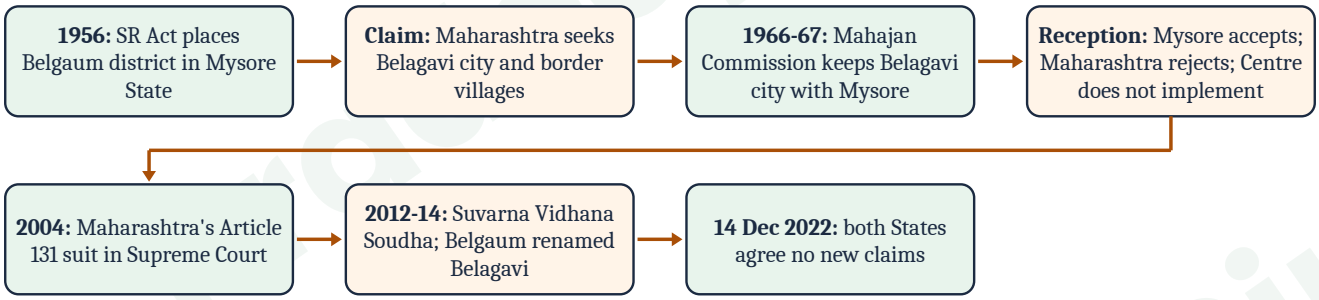
Impact

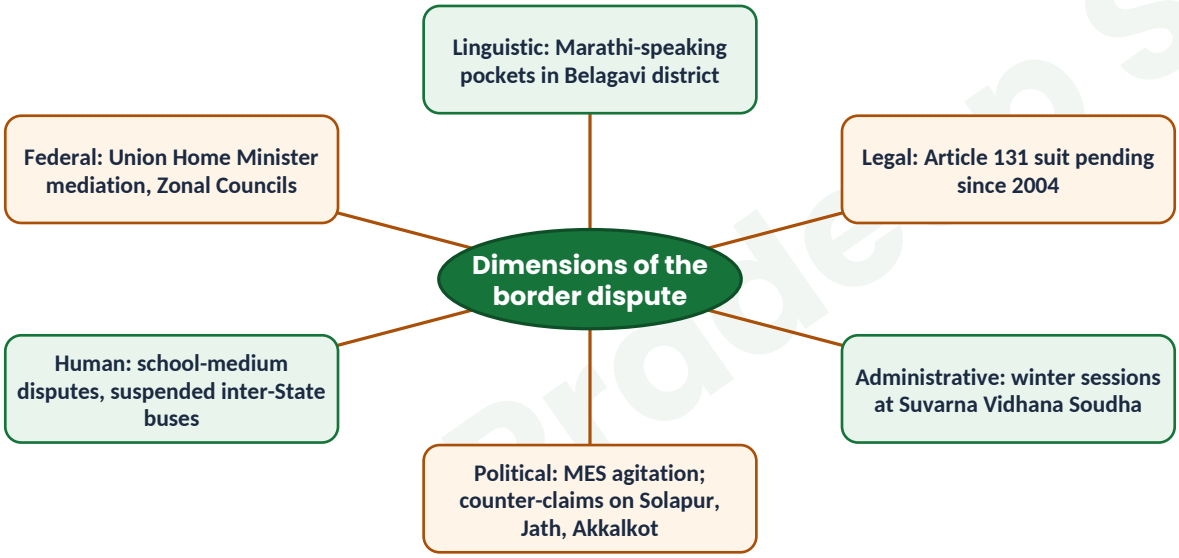
- **Two readings:** Karnataka treats the Mahajan Report as final and the matter as closed — Maharashtra treats it as non-binding.

- **Pending suit:** Maharashtra filed an original suit in the Supreme Court in 2004 under Article 131 — still pending.
- **Karnataka's assertion:** renaming Belgaum as Belagavi (1 November 2014), the Suvarna Vidhana Soudha (inaugurated 2012) and winter sessions there.
- **2022 truce:** tensions flared during border visits in December 2022 — on 14 December 2022 the Union Home Minister met both Chief Ministers; they agreed that neither State would raise new claims until the Supreme Court decides and that a ministerial team from both States would address issues.
- **Human dimension:** border residents face periodic tensions — e.g. disputes over Marathi-medium schools and suspension of inter-State bus services.

Dispute	With	Status
Belagavi, Karwar, Nippani, Khanapur areas	Maharashtra	Supreme Court suit (2004) pending
Kasaragod	Kerala	Karnataka's claim; Mahajan favoured Karnataka; not pressed actively
Hosur, Krishnagiri belt	Tamil Nadu	Kannada-speaking pockets; minor, mostly cultural claims
Akkalkot, Jath, Solapur villages	Maharashtra	Karnataka's counter-claim

Belagavi boundary dispute — timeline





KEY **The Belagavi question shows that linguistic reorganisation solved the big map but left bilingual borderlands — where constitutional adjudication, not agitation, is the only lasting route.**

FACT STRIP

- **1967:** Mahajan Report keeps Belagavi city with Mysore, Kasaragod to Mysore
- **2004:** Maharashtra's original suit filed under Article 131 (pending)
- **October 2012:** Suvarna Vidhana Soudha inaugurated at Halaga, Belagavi
- **1 November 2014:** Belgaum officially renamed Belagavi

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS

Linguistic reorganisation (Fazl Ali Commission); Mahajan Report as final; Bilingual borderlands; Article 131 original suit; No new claims till adjudication (2022); Second seat of the legislature; Cooperative federalism through Zonal Councils

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Belagavi as Karnataka's second capital

Linkage Map — Discussed in class

Connect to other modules

7. Inter-State Water Disputes: Cauvery, Krishna and Mahadayi

In September 2023, a deficit-monsoon year, Bengaluru and Mandya saw bandhs over orders to release Cauvery water to Tamil Nadu. The scene repeats in almost every distress year since 1991 — because the dispute is less about normal-year shares than about how to share shortage.

Cauvery

Milestone	Key content
1892 and 1924 agreements	Between Madras Presidency and princely Mysore; Mysore needed Madras consent for new works — seen by Karnataka as unequal
CWDT constituted (1990)	Interim order 1991 (205 TMC to Tamil Nadu) led to violence in Karnataka
Final award (2007)	Karnataka 270 TMC, Tamil Nadu 419, Kerala 30, Puducherry 7 TMC
Supreme Court verdict (16 Feb 2018)	Karnataka raised to 284.75 TMC (+14.75); Tamil Nadu 404.25; 177.25 TMC at Biligundlu; drinking water given highest priority
CWMA and CWRC (2018)	Cauvery Water Management Authority and Regulation Committee implement monthly releases
Mekedatu	Karnataka's proposed balancing reservoir for Bengaluru drinking water and power; Supreme Court (Nov 2025) rejected Tamil Nadu's plea as premature, leaving objections to CWMA/CWC processes

Basis	CWDT final award (2007)	Supreme Court verdict (2018)
Karnataka	270 TMC	284.75 TMC (+14.75)
Tamil Nadu	419 TMC	404.25 TMC
Kerala and Puducherry	30 TMC and 7 TMC	30 TMC and 7 TMC (unchanged)
Release at Biligundlu	192 TMC	177.25 TMC
Implementing body	Cauvery Management Board recommended; not set up	CWMA and CWRC (2018) for monthly releases

Krishna

- **KWDT-I (Bachawat):** the 1973 award allocated Krishna waters among Maharashtra, Karnataka and undivided Andhra Pradesh — e.g. 700 TMC to Karnataka at 75% dependability.
- **KWDT-II (Brijesh Kumar):** its 2010/2013 award allocated additional water and permitted raising the **Almatti** dam to 524.256 m — vital for the Upper Krishna Project in north Karnataka.
- **Award not notified:** litigation after the 2014 bifurcation of Andhra Pradesh (Telangana's claims) has held up notification — Maharashtra has also objected to raising the Almatti height over backwater flooding concerns.
- **Upper Bhadra Project:** irrigation for the central Karnataka drought districts — the Union Budget 2023-24 announced Rs 5,300 crore of central assistance; release of funds remains a Centre–State issue.

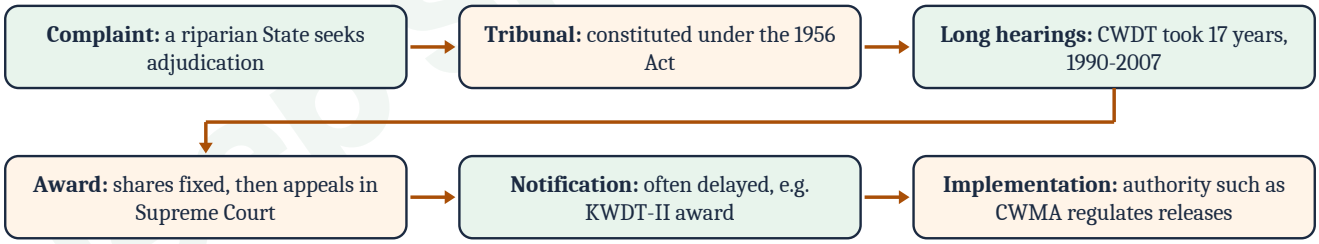
Mahadayi (Mhadei)

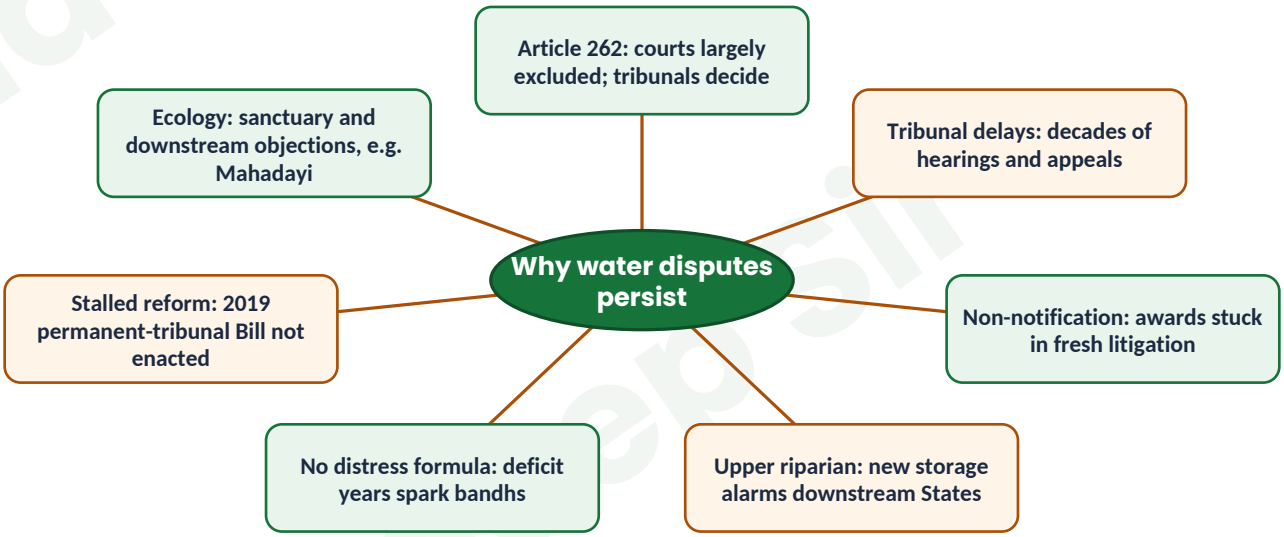
- **Diversion plan:** a west-flowing river shared with Goa and Maharashtra — Karnataka seeks diversion through the **Kalasa and Banduri** nalas to the Malaprabha basin for drinking water to Hubballi-Dharwad, Belagavi and Gadag.
- **2018 award:** the Mahadayi Water Disputes Tribunal (August 2018) gave Karnataka 13.42 TMC (including 5.40 TMC for consumptive drinking-water use), Goa 24 TMC and Maharashtra 1.33 TMC — notified in 2020.
- **Ecological objection:** Goa opposes on ecological grounds (Mhadei wildlife sanctuary, downstream needs) — in July 2026 the Union Environment Ministry returned Karnataka's wildlife-clearance proposal as the matter is sub judice in the Supreme Court.

Why disputes persist

- **Constitutional design:** Article 262 lets Parliament exclude Supreme Court jurisdiction over water disputes, and under the Inter-State River Water Disputes Act 1956 tribunals take decades — e.g. CWDT took 17 years (1990–2007), and awards then face appeals and delayed notification.
- **Upper-riparian anxiety:** Karnataka is an upper riparian in a semi-arid State with the second-largest drought-prone area in India — any new storage looks like a threat downstream.
- **No distress formula:** there is no agreed formula for sharing shortage, so deficit years turn into street mobilisation — e.g. the September 2023 bandhs.
- **Stalled reform:** the Inter-State River Water Disputes (Amendment) Bill 2019 (single permanent tribunal, Dispute Resolution Committee) was passed by the Lok Sabha but not enacted.

Life cycle of an inter-State water dispute





KEY Karnataka's water disputes are federal problems with an ecological core — legal awards decide shares, but only basin-level cooperation and demand management can share scarcity.

FACT STRIP

- **284.75 TMC:** Karnataka's Cauvery share (Supreme Court, 16 Feb 2018)
- **177.25 TMC:** normal-year release to Tamil Nadu at Biligundlu (SC 2018)
- **524.256 m:** Almatti dam height permitted by KWDT-II (2010/2013)
- **13.42 TMC:** Karnataka's Mahadayi allocation (MWDT, August 2018)

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS *Sharing distress, not just water; Upper-riparian anxiety; Drinking water as highest priority; Article 262 and tribunal adjudication; Permanent tribunal (2019 Bill); Balancing reservoir (Mekedatu); Basin-level cooperative governance*

Data Point — Discussed in class

Numbers to quote accurately

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Districts and projects at stake

Examiner Lens — Discussed in class

Never asked — and highly topical

8. The Farmers Movement and Agrarian Distress

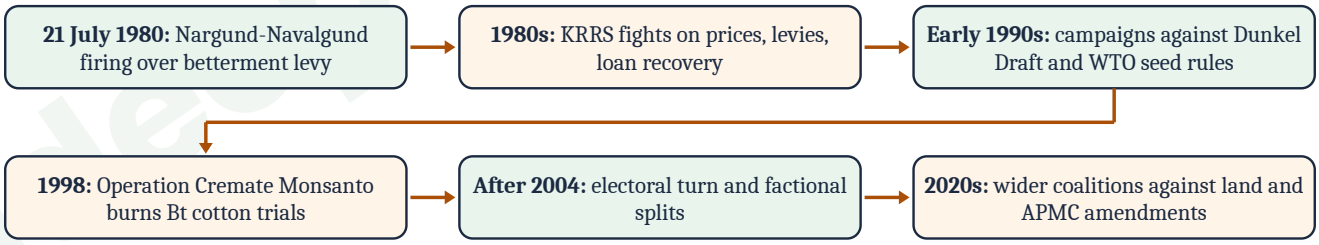
On 21 July 1980 police fired on farmers protesting in Nargund and Navalgund (Dharwad region) against the betterment levy charged on land irrigated by the Malaprabha project. The deaths shook the State, contributed to the end of the Gundu Rao government's credibility in north Karnataka, and gave birth to an organised farmers' movement.

Karnataka Rajya Raitha Sangha (KRRS)

- **Birth in 1980:** the KRRS was formed after the Nargund–Navalgund firing — leaders included Prof. M.D. Nanjundaswamy, H.S. Rudrappa and N.D. Sundaresh.
- **Green shawl:** its symbol was the green shawl (hasiru shalu) — a non-party farmer mobilisation cutting across castes.
- **Phase 1 (1980s):** remunerative prices and relief from State dues — e.g. the issues and methods below.
  - **Price-and-levy issues:** betterment levy, electricity tariffs, loan recovery and fair prices — the Malaprabha levy was the founding grievance.
  - **Direct action:** gheraos of officials and refusal to pay dues — e.g. blocking recovery of crop loans in villages.
- **Phase 2 (1990s):** anti-globalisation politics against WTO rules and multinational seed companies — e.g. the campaigns below.
  - **Against Dunkel:** opposition to the Dunkel Draft and WTO patent rules on seeds — rallies in Bengaluru in the early 1990s.
  - **Direct anti-MNC action:** attacks on multinational targets — e.g. Cargill's seed office (early 1990s) and the KFC outlet in Bengaluru (1996).
  - **Operation Cremate Monsanto:** the 1998 campaign burnt Bt cotton trial fields — making Karnataka a centre of the GM debate.
  - **Global networks:** KRRS played a founding role in international peasant networks — e.g. La Via Campesina (1993).
- **Phase 3:** electoral politics and splits weakened the movement — e.g. the two developments below.
  - **Electoral turn:** the KRRS contested elections, and internal factions grew after Nanjundaswamy's death (2004).

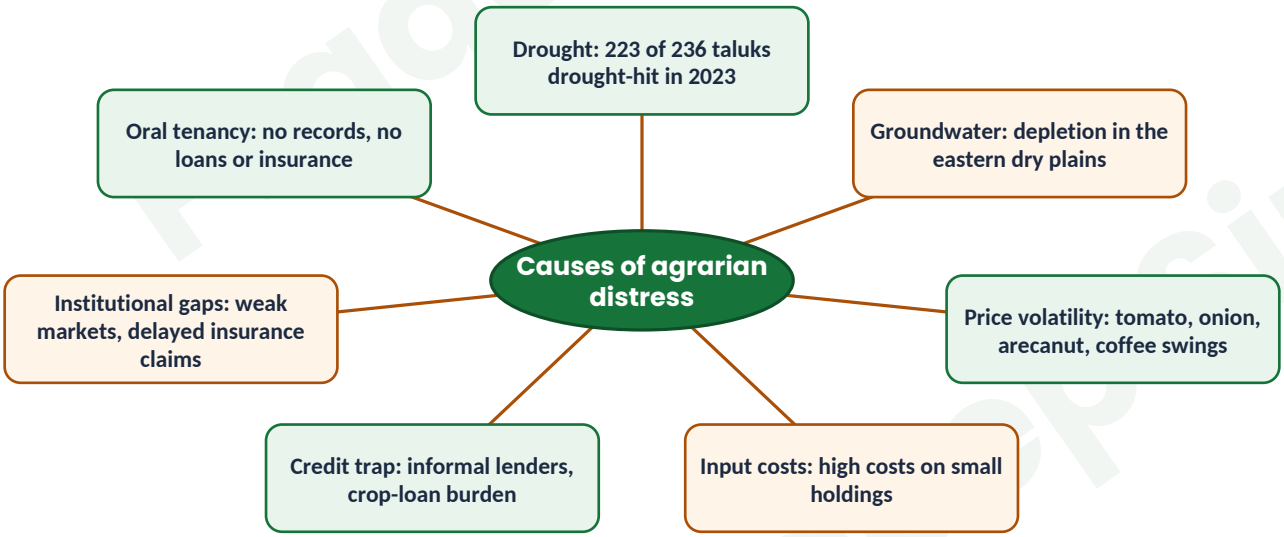
- **Wider coalitions:** factions later merged into wider coalitions on farm-law and land-law issues — e.g. protests against the 2020 land and APMC amendments.

Trajectory of the KRRS



Agrarian distress — causes

- **Ecological stress:** a large dryland area, recurrent droughts and groundwater depletion in the eastern plains — e.g. 223 of 236 taluks were declared drought-hit in 2023; most taluks were also drought-hit in 2016.
- **Price volatility:** sharp swings in the prices of tomato, onion, arecanut and coffee, combined with high input costs and small holdings — e.g. tomato crashes that leave crops unharvested.
- **Credit trap:** dependence on informal lenders and the crop-loan burden — farmer suicides are concentrated in debt-stressed districts.
- **Institutional gaps:** weak market access, delayed crop-insurance claims and informal tenancy without records — e.g. oral tenants cannot claim insurance.



State responses

- **Price commission:** the Karnataka Agricultural Price Commission (2014) recommends price support — one of the first such State-level bodies.
- **Digital farm services:** Raitha Samparka Kendras, Bhoomi land records and the FRUITS farmer database — e.g. FRUITS links land records to scheme benefits.
- **Loan waivers and relief:** crop-loan waivers (including 2017 and 2018) and compensation to families of farmers who died by suicide — e.g. the 2018 waiver covered loans up to Rs 2 lakh.
- **Input and water schemes:** Raitha Siri (millet incentive), Krishi Bhagya (farm ponds) and micro-irrigation subsidies — e.g. Krishi Bhagya targets rain-fed taluks.

- **APMC see-saw:** the 2020 APMC amendment allowed trade outside markets — a 2023 bill to restore regulation was referred by the Council to a select committee, which in February 2024 recommended undoing the 2020 changes.

KEY

The farmers' movement in Karnataka moved from local price-and-levy struggles (1980) to global anti-corporate politics (1990s) to debates on markets and land laws (2020s) — the agrarian question has shifted from land to markets.

FACT STRIP

- **21 July 1980:** police firing at Nargund and Navalgund; KRRS born
- **1998:** KRRS launches Operation Cremate Monsanto against Bt cotton trials
- **223 of 236 taluks:** declared drought-hit in Karnataka (2023)
- **Rs 2 lakh:** crop-loan limit covered by the 2018 waiver

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS

Betterment levy; Hasiru shalu (green shawl) politics; Remunerative prices; Operation Cremate Monsanto; From land question to market question; Debt trap and farmer distress; La Via Campesina

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

Nargund — a place of two revolts

9. Regional Imbalance and the Nanjundappa Committee

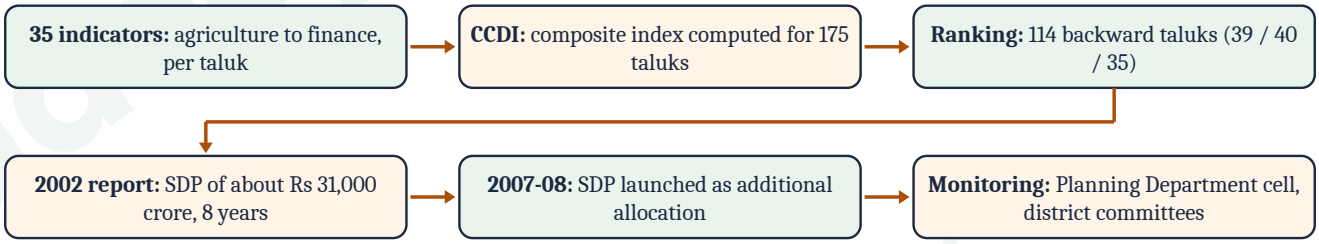
Of Karnataka's districts, only a handful — led by Bengaluru Urban — have per-capita output above the State average; the seven districts of Kalyana Karnataka, most once under the Nizam, persistently rank at the bottom on literacy, health and income. The geography of backwardness in Karnataka is in large part a legacy of the five pre-1956 administrations.

High Power Committee for Redressal of Regional Imbalances (Nanjundappa)

- **Constitution:** the committee was constituted in 2000 and chaired by economist Dr D.M. Nanjundappa — its report was submitted in 2002.
- **Taluk as unit:** the unit of analysis was the **taluk** (175 taluks then) — finer than the district-level analyses common elsewhere.
- **CCDI method:** a **Comprehensive Composite Development Index (CCDI)** was built from **35 indicators** across agriculture, industry, infrastructure, health, education, social and financial sectors.
- **Key findings:** backwardness was widespread and concentrated in the north — e.g. the figures below.
  - **114 backward taluks:** 114 of 175 taluks were backward — **39 most backward, 40 more backward, 35 backward**.
  - **Northern concentration:** backward taluks clustered in north Karnataka — the Hyderabad-Karnataka and Bombay-Karnataka regions.
- **Recommendations:** a time-bound, additional investment plan for lagging taluks — e.g. the SDP below.

- **Special Development Plan:** an SDP of about **Rs 31,000 crore over 8 years** — part from normal plan allocation and part as additional funds.
- **Weighted funding:** funds weighted towards the most backward taluks, with sector-specific plans and monitoring institutions.

From Nanjundappa diagnosis to SDP

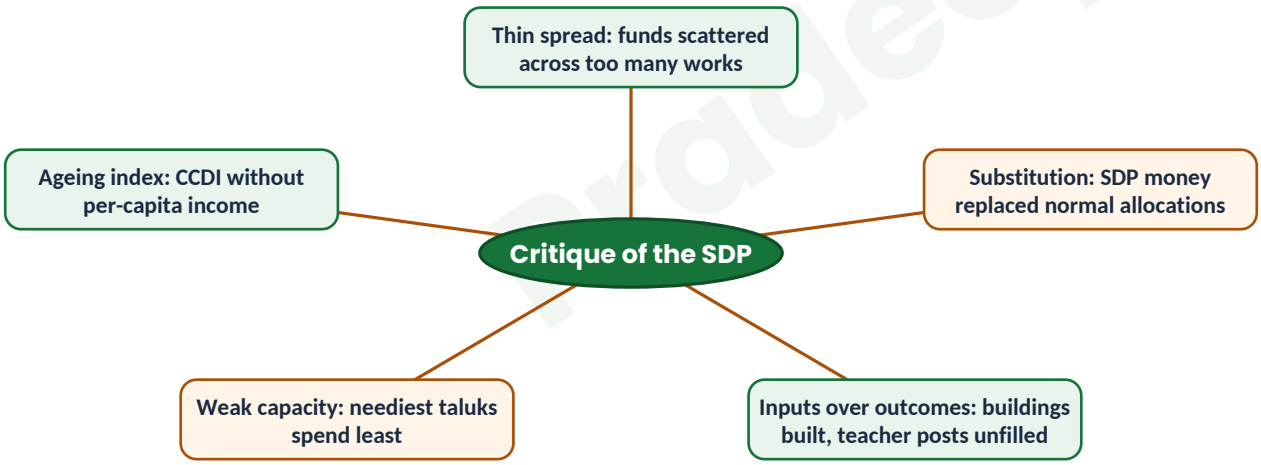


Implementation of SDP (2014 and 2015 PYQs)

Initiative	Detail
SDP launched	From 2007-08, as an additional allocation over normal plan outlays
Spending	About Rs 32,600 crore spent from 2007-08 to 2022-23 (reported)
Monitoring	Planning Department cell; district-level committees
Regional boards	Hyderabad-Karnataka, Malnad and Bayaluseeme development boards
Article 371J	Special provision for Hyderabad-Karnataka (2012) and its development board

Critique

- **Thin and substitutive:** funds were spread thinly, and SDP money often substituted normal allocations rather than adding to them.
- **Inputs over outcomes:** the focus was on expenditure and buildings rather than learning, health and incomes — e.g. schools built but teacher posts unfilled.
- **Weak local capacity:** backward districts suffer unfilled posts and poor utilisation — the very taluks needing most money spend least of it.
- **Ageing index:** the CCDI did not include per-capita income, and its indicators aged over two decades — one reason for the 2026 reassessment.



Article 371J and Kalyana Karnataka

- **98th Amendment:** the Constitution (98th Amendment) Act, 2012 inserted Article 371J — special responsibility of the Governor for a separate development board for Hyderabad-Karnataka, equitable allocation of funds, and local reservation in education and State jobs.
- **Region's districts:** Bidar, Kalaburagi, Yadgir, Raichur, Koppal and Ballari — plus Vijayanagara, carved from Ballari in 2021.
- **Renamed region:** the region was renamed **Kalyana Karnataka** in 2019 — its board is the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB).

The new Govinda Rao committee

- **Fresh reassessment:** the State's Regional Imbalances Redressal Committee, chaired by economist M. Govinda Rao, reassessed the Nanjundappa framework — its report was submitted in early 2026.
- **Quartile classification:** all 236 taluks were classified into four equal groups of 59 (most backward, more backward, backward, developed) — 177 taluks lagging.
- **Regional pattern:** Kalyana Karnataka has no 'developed' taluk — Kalaburagi division has the most 'most backward' taluks, followed by Belagavi division.
- **Rs 43,914 crore plan:** about Rs 43,914 crore over 2026–31 with priority to health, irrigation, teacher appointments and school education — plus abolition of most regional development boards, a refocused KKRDB and funding tied to decentralisation and accountability.

Basis	Nanjundappa Committee	Govinda Rao Committee
Report	2002 (constituted 2000)	Early 2026
Unit studied	175 taluks	236 taluks
Method	CCDI of 35 indicators, no per-capita income	Sector-weighted index incl. income; four equal groups
Backward taluks	114 (39 / 40 / 35)	177 (59 / 59 / 59)
Plan size	SDP about Rs 31,000 crore over 8 years	About Rs 43,914 crore over 2026–31
Institutions	Regional boards; later 371J board	Most regional boards abolished; KKRDB refocused

KEY **Two decades after Nanjundappa, the lesson is that money alone does not close regional gaps — outcome-based planning, local capacity and accountability do.**

FACT STRIP

- **114 of 175 taluks:** backward (Nanjundappa HPC, 2002)
- **About Rs 32,600 crore:** SDP spending, 2007-08 to 2022-23 (reported)
- **2012:** Article 371J inserted by the 98th Amendment
- **177 of 236 taluks:** lagging; Rs 43,914 crore plan (Govinda Rao, 2026)

KEY PHRASES FOR MAINS ***Comprehensive Composite Development Index (CCDI); Taluk as the unit of planning; Special Development Plan; Article 371J and Kalyana Karnataka; Outcomes, not outlays; Additionality vs substitution of funds; Regional equity***

Data Point — Discussed in class

Nanjundappa vs Govinda Rao at a glance

Linkage Map — Discussed in class

Cross-reference

Karnataka Angle — Discussed in class

North–South Karnataka in one line each

Pradeep Sir

Previous Year Questions: Answer Frameworks

KAS 2014 What are the major objectives of Special development Plan (SDP) introduced by Government of Karnataka to reduce regional imbalances? Critically examine the implementation of SDP.

Answer Framework — Discussed in class

Structure, examples and keywords

KAS 2015 Do you consider that LG Havanur Committee report is a Bible for backward class in Karnataka? Discuss.

Answer Framework — Discussed in class

Structure, examples and keywords

KAS 2015 Explain the initiatives of Government of Karnataka to implement the recommendations of Nanjundappa Committee.

Answer Framework — Discussed in class

Structure, examples and keywords

KAS 2025 Land reforms under Devaraj Urs were a landmark in Karnataka's agrarian history. Analyse the impact of these reforms on tenant farmers, landowners, and rural society.

Answer Framework — Discussed in class

Structure, examples and keywords

DIKSOOCHI Predicted Questions

Q1. Inter-state river water disputes have been a recurring source of tension for Karnataka. Examine with reference to the Cauvery, Krishna and Mahadayi disputes and suggest institutional reforms.

15 M | 250 w

Model Answer — Discussed in class

Write your answer, then refine it in class

Q2. What was the Gokak movement? Discuss its impact on language policy in Karnataka.

10 M | 150 w

Model Answer — Discussed in class

Write your answer, then refine it in class

Model Answers

PYQ | KAS 2025

Land reforms under Devaraj Urs were a landmark in Karnataka's agrarian history. Analyse the impact of these reforms on tenant farmers, landowners, and rural society.

10 M | 150 w

Model Answer — Discussed in class

Approach, model answer and alternative framings

DIKSOOCHI PREDICTED QUESTION

From the Havanur Commission to the 2025 socio-educational survey, Karnataka has repeatedly relied on data to define backwardness. Examine whether this evidence-based approach has resolved or deepened the politics of caste in the State.

15 M | 250 w

Model Answer — Discussed in class

Approach, model answer and alternative framings

Pradeep Sir

Pradeep Sir