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31st district Vijayanagara to have six taluks, Hospet as HQ

TIMES NEWS NETWORK

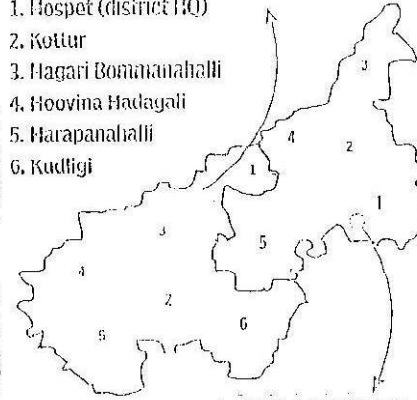
Bengaluru/Ballari: The government on Monday issued an official gazette notification for formation of Vijayanagara district.

With this, Karnataka has officially got its 31st district. On November 18 last year, the cabinet had given in-principle approval for creation of the new district by carving out six taluks from the mine-rich Ballari district.

The government's plan to create Vijayanagara district had run into stiff opposition, especially from MLAs of the ruling BJP, in-

VIJAYANAGARA TALUKS

1. Hospet (district HQ)
2. Kottur
3. Nagari Bommanahalli
4. Hoovina Hadagali
5. Marapanahalli
6. Kudligi



BALLARI TALUKS

1. Ballari 2. Kurugodu 3. Siraguppa
4. Kanplfi 5. Sandur

cluding G Somashekara Reddy, Minister for infrastructure development, haj and wakt, Anand Singh, who is also Ballari district in-charge, had anchored the efforts for the new district.

On December 14, the government had invited objections and suggestions on the new district till January 13, 2021. Ballari administration received 4,739 objections against the formation of Vijayanagara and 10,513 letters in favour. Based on this, the government issued the notification.

The plan was first officially mooted by chief minister Yediyurappa in September 2019, when Singh, one of the 17 disqualified MLAs whose rebellion led to the fall of the previous HD Kumaraswamy led

Congress-JD(S) coalition government, had put forth the demand for a separate Vijayanagara district. As consensus eluded meetings held in this regard in October 2019, the CM had deferred a decision on it.

Though there was more opposition after the cabinet approved the proposal in November last year, it's said the government went ahead with the notification since Singh is said to be unhappy with portfolios allocated to him during the cabinet rejig last month, party sources said. Singh, who was forest, ecology and environment minister, was first moved to tourism

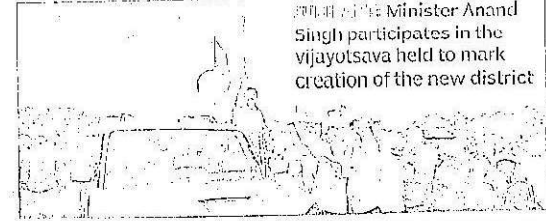
and was divested of forest, leaving him with ecology and environment. This was again changed, and he got infrastructure development, haj and wakt.

However, senior government officials said carving out the district will be a long-drawn exercise, with existing land records and files of more than 30 departments required to be bifurcated from Ballari. In addition to the need of getting adequate funds and officials across various cadres, including those from All India Services, it would be a Herculean task to build the basic civic infrastruc-

ture for setting up offices.

Politically, Yediyurappa will have to continue firefighting as BJP legislators led by Ballari city MLA Somashekara Reddy are miffed with the decision. "We will not take up this issue with Yediyurappa as we know he will not last long as CM. We will take it up with the new CM and again fight for a unified Ballari district," Reddy told a news channel.

Pannaraj Srigeri, convener and leader of Akhanda Ballari Jilegagi Horat Samiti, said they were disappointed with the bifurcation despite vehement opposition.



Minister Anand Singh participates in the vijayotsava held to mark creation of the new district

BS Yediyurappa thanks chief minister BS Yediyurappa and revenue minister R Ashoka for creating Vijayanagara district.

It was a long-pending demand of people from the west taluks of Ballari, which has finally been fulfilled. The new district will greatly help the public as the administration will be taken to their doorstep. We are in the process of drafting a blueprint on establishing government offices at a convenient place. The offices of deputy commissioner, SP, CEO and others will start functioning within a month. We will fight unitedly if there is any border issue pertaining to Ballari district in future

Anand Singh | INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT MINISTER