

# Three-Capital Plan of Andhra Pradesh

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**Context-** Andhra Pradesh CM has stated that Vishakhapatnam will be the new capital of the state.

## **Key Highlights**

- Andhra Pradesh needs a new capital since Hyderabad, the capital of undivided Andhra is presently with Telangana.
- The two states have been sharing the capital for a temporary period.
- Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority (APCRDA) Act, 2014 has been scrapped by the state government.

## **Capital dispute**

- After the division of Andhra Pradesh, the state initially proposed the creation of a Grand capital in Amravati and it enacted the Andhra Pradesh Capital Region Development Authority Act, 2014.
- The state government after the recommendations of the High Power Committee passed the Andhra Pradesh Decentralisation and Inclusive Development of All Regions Act, 2020.
- The Act stated that Amaravati would be the **“Legislative Capital”, Visakhapatnam the “Executive Capital”, and Kurnool the “Judicial Capital” of the state.**
- Cultivators of the Amravati organised themselves under the banner of the Rajdhani

Rythu Parirakshana Samithi.

- A petition was also filed in the Andhra HC challenging the Decentralisation decision.
- After the HC verdict the state government decided to scrap the decentralisation law.
- The SC Bench had sought responses from the Centre, the Andhra Pradesh government, and also from the Amravati Samiti.

## ***Significances of three capital formation***

- Governmental activities are the fulcrum around which several developmental activities spring up and boost the local economy bringing in greater productivity and employment for locals.
- **Balanced Regional Development:** By having three capitals, it is believed that the development of different regions of the state can be balanced, leading to an improved economic and social development.
- **Increased Investment:** The formation of new capitals is expected to attract investment and to create new job opportunities, boosting the local economy.
- **Improved Accessibility:** The decentralization of the capital city is expected to improve accessibility to government services for citizens in several parts of the state.
- From the urbanisation angle, it is better to work against a primate city with high population density and move in favor of mid-sized cities with certain decent economies.
- **Reduced congestion:** The decentralization of the capital city is expected to reduce congestion in the current capital and improve the quality of life for its residents.

## ***Challenges with three capital formation***

- Separation and distance between the Legislature and the Executive will affect coordination during assembly sessions.
- Decentralisation and inclusive development will not get served by declaring three capital alone but also functional and financial decentralisation and empowerment down to the third tier of governance is required, which makes local bodies self-governing institutions.
- **Consensus of all stakeholders is not there:** Investors who had put in money and farmers who had contributed land had done so in the hope that the gains will flow out of their initiatives.
- **Financial concerns:** The cost of developing three capitals is estimated to be much higher, and there are concerns about the financial feasibility of the project.
- **Lack of infrastructure:** The selected locations for the three capitals may lack adequate infrastructure that could pose challenges for development and implementation.
- **Disengagement with Appointed Experts and Organisations:** The World Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, etc. have wound up their funding commitment. It is bound to strengthen the ill reputation of course reversal on account of Internal Politics.
- **Environmental impact:** The formation of new capitals could impact the environment, including deforestation and loss of biodiversity, as well as social impacts on local communities.

## Examples of Multiple Capitals

- **Global**

- South Africa has a separate capital for its judicial, legislative, and executive branches at the federal level (Pretoria, Cape Town, and Bloemfontein).
- **Countries with 2 capitals:** Bolivia has capitals in Sucre and La Paz, Chile has capitals in Valparaíso and Santiago, and Georgia has capitals in Tbilisi and Kutaisi.

- **Indian**

- In Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, and Kerala capitals are at Lucknow, Bhopal, Gandhinagar, and Thiruvananthapuram whereas the High Courts of these states are located at Prayagraj, Jabalpur, Ahmedabad, and Kochi respectively.
- Some states move their legislative assemblies to a different city for part of the year.
- These include Maharashtra (Mumbai and Nagpur), Himachal Pradesh (Shimla and Dharmshala), and Karnataka (Bengaluru and Belgaum).

## Way Forward

- **Consultation with Stakeholders:** The government must engage in consultation with various stakeholders, including local residents, political leaders, and experts, to understand their perspectives and address any concerns they may have.
- **Feasibility Study:** A comprehensive feasibility study must be conducted to assess the technical, financial, and administrative viability of the project.
- **Infrastructure Development:** Adequate infrastructure must be developed in all three proposed capitals, including transportation, housing, and basic amenities, to ensure their viability as functional cities.
- **Environmental Impact Assessment:** An environmental impact assessment must be conducted to ensure that the formation of new capitals does not have adverse effects on the environment and local communities.
- **Implementation Plan:** A detailed implementation plan must be developed to ensure the smooth and efficient rollout of the three capitals, including the allocation of resources and responsibilities.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation:** The progress of the project should be monitored and evaluated, and any necessary modifications should be made to ensure its success.