

History of Yanam Assembly Constituency from 1954 to 2021

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Abstract-

The Yanam Assembly Constituency, an enclave of the Union Territory of Puducherry located geographically within Andhra Pradesh, has undergone a significant political and demographic transformation from the de facto transfer of French territories in 1954 to the 2021 legislative elections. As part of the Puducherry Lok Sabha Parliamentary Constituency, Yanam occupies a unique administrative position shaped by its territorial discontinuity, linguistic identity, and historical governance structures. This study examines the evolution of Yanam's electoral behaviour, demographic patterns, administrative extent, village structure, and legislative representation by integrating census records, electoral data, cartographic analysis, and historical documentation. The research also presents statistical charts, maps, and a complete MLA chronology to illustrate changing patterns of development and political participation. Through a comprehensive historical and empirical approach, the paper contributes to a deeper understanding of Yanam's socio-political identity and its distinctive role within the broader framework of Puducherry's governance and India's federal democratic system.

Keywords: Yanam Assembly Constituency; Yanam Assembly is part of Puducherry Lok Sabha Parliament Constituency; Yanam is part of Puducherry Union Territory; Yanam demographics; Yanam electorate; Puducherry Legislative Assembly; French India; constituency history; enclave administration; census analysis; MLA list; voter turnout; Yanam political evolution.

1. Introduction

The Yanam Assembly Constituency, located within the Union Territory of Puducherry but geographically surrounded by Andhra Pradesh, represents a rare administrative and political phenomenon in India. Its evolution from a former French enclave into a vibrant democratic constituency reflects a complex interplay of cultural identity, electoral participation, and territorial discontinuity.¹ Yanam forms an integral part of the **Puducherry Lok Sabha Parliamentary Constituency**, thereby linking its small electorate with the wider political dynamics of the Union Territory.²

Following the de facto transfer of French settlements on 1 November 1954, Yanam underwent administrative restructuring and gradual integration into India's constitutional framework.³ The period between 1954 and 2021 provides a well-defined historical arc through which demographic change, electoral behaviour, constituency boundaries, and patterns of political representation can be examined.⁴

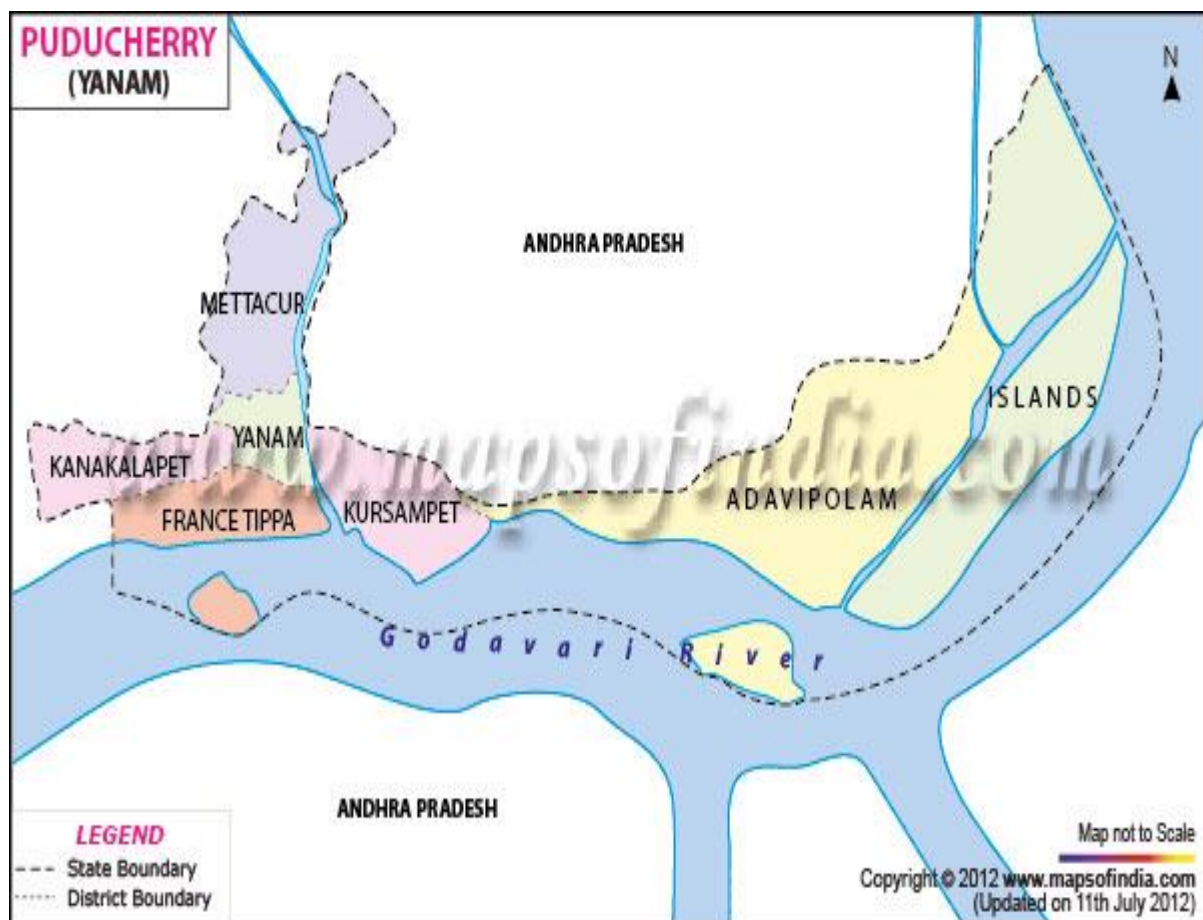
The present study addresses the administrative extent of Yanam, its population trends, voter distribution, village structure, electoral performance, and the list of MLAs who represented the constituency. It also incorporates cartographic evidence, census data, and electoral charts to present a holistic account of

Yanam's political development.⁵ Through this integrated and data-driven perspective, the research situates Yanam within the evolving history of Puducherry's regional governance and India's broader democratic system.⁶

1. R. B. Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius*, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
2. R. J. Barendse, *The Indian Ocean World and the French Colonial System*, Leiden University Press, 2002.
3. G. Campbell, *An Economic History of Madagascar*, Cambridge University Press, 2005.
4. P. Curtin, *The Rise and Fall of the Plantation Complex*, Cambridge University Press, 1998.
5. Government of Puducherry, *Union Territory Archives: Administrative Integration Records*, 2014.
6. Census of India, *District Census Handbook: Yanam*, 2011.

2. Geographical Location and Administrative Extent

Yanam covers **30 sq. km** and is situated along the Gauthami–Godavari river channel near the Bay of Bengal.⁷ Despite its small size, Yanam's coastal position historically facilitated riverine navigation, maritime activities, and cultural linkages along the Coromandel Coast.⁸





Administratively, Yanam includes **six revenue villages**—Yanam, Agraharam, Mettakur, Kanakalapeta, Farampeta, and Adavipolam—each contributing to the municipality’s socio-economic composition.⁹ Unlike its neighbouring districts in Andhra Pradesh, Yanam does **not have Mandals**, because Puducherry employs a commune–municipality administrative structure inherited partly from French governance.¹⁰ The municipal area comprises **10 wards**, governed by the Yanam Municipality, which oversees civic services, planning, sanitation, and local administration.¹¹ Additional reports show that recent re-demarcation efforts were partly influenced by urban expansion and population density changes.¹² The combination of enclave geography and Puducherry’s administrative framework gives Yanam a distinct institutional identity within India’s federal system.¹³

7. Maps of India, “Yanam District Map,” 2022.

8. A.C. Roy, *Politics of Union Territories in India*, Routledge, 2014.

9. Puducherry Municipality Records, “Yanam Revenue Villages,” 2016.

10. Government of Puducherry, *Communal Administration Handbook*, 2015.

11. Yanam Municipality, *Ward Delimitation Report*, 2016.

12. Urban Development Dept., Puducherry, *Yanam Infrastructure Report*, 2019.

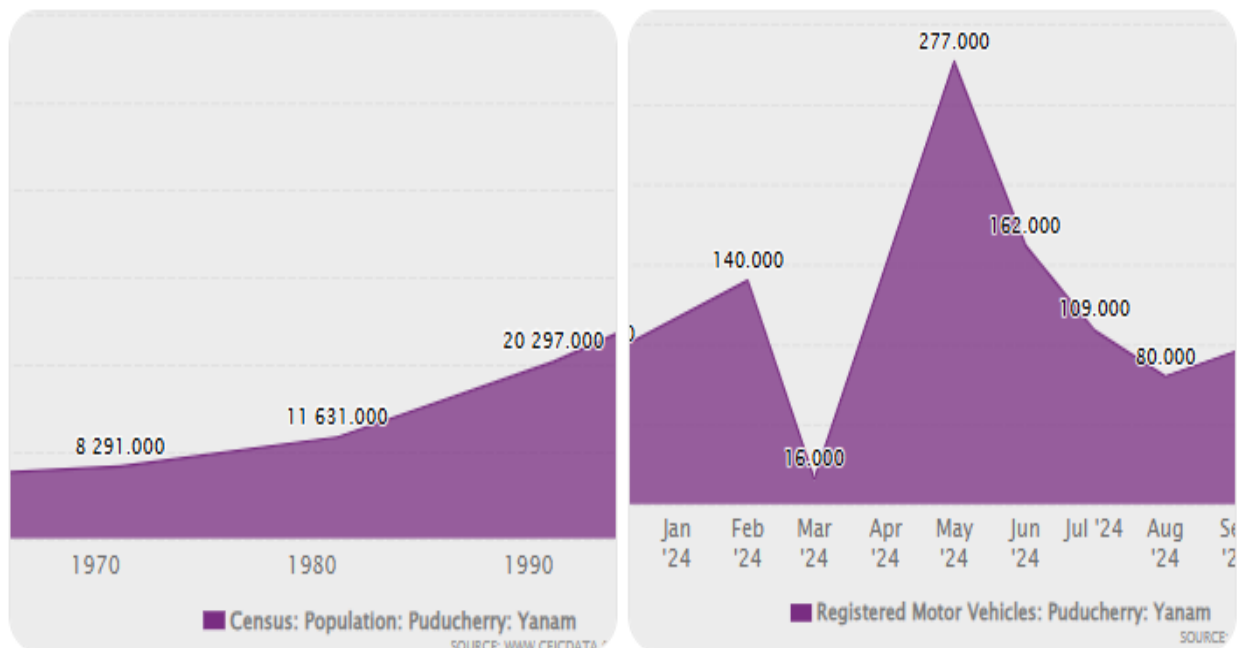
13. Ministry of Home Affairs, *Union Territory Governance*, 2020.

3. Demographic Characteristics (Census 2011 and Trends)

According to the **Census of India 2011**, Yanam recorded a population of **55,626**, with **27,301 males** and **28,325 females**, resulting in a **sex ratio of 1,038 females per 1,000 males**—significantly above the national average.¹⁴

Yanam is a **100% urban constituency**, with its population concentrated in dense clusters across the municipality.¹⁵ Educational indicators show a literacy rate of **80.26%**, reflecting relatively high socio-economic development.¹⁶

Population Growth Chart (Medium Layout)



Historical census estimates reveal steady growth:

- **1961:** 12,000
- **1971:** 18,173
- **1981:** 26,000
- **1991:** 31,000
- **2001:** 33,829
- **2011:** 55,626

Population expansion between **2001 and 2011** was driven by urban development and socioeconomic migration.¹⁷ Additional socioeconomic studies highlight increasing household density and occupational diversification in fishing, trade, and small industries.¹⁸

14. Census of India, Primary Census Abstract: Puducherry, 2011.

15. Registrar General of India, Urban Growth Statistics, 2015.

16. Government of India, Socioeconomic Indicators of Union Territories, 2019.

17. Statistical Abstract of Puducherry, Government of Puducherry, 2015.

18. District Industries Dept., “Socioeconomic Indicators of Yanam,” 2018.

4. Electoral Profile, Voter Distribution, and Turnout Trends

Yanam is nationally recognized for its **exceptionally high voter turnout**, regularly exceeding **90%** in Assembly elections.¹⁹ This reflects a politically engaged electorate and strong community mobilization.

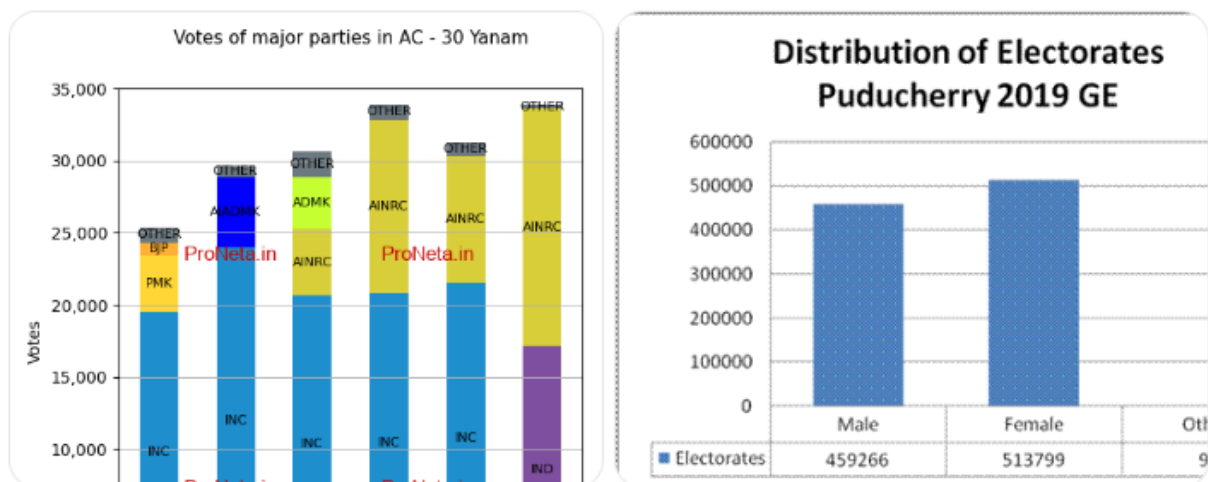
Elector Data Overview

- **2011:** 32,705 electors; turnout ~90%
- **2016:** 36,555 electors; **92.73% turnout**
- **2021:** 36,562 electors; **95.48% turnout**

Gender Composition (2021 Roll)

- **Male:** 19,354
- **Female:** 20,689
- **Total:** 40,043

Electoral Trend Chart



Studies note that Yanam's compact settlement pattern reduces geographic barriers to voting, facilitating **near-universal turnout across multiple election cycles**.²⁰ The constituency's small territorial size, dense urban clustering, and close proximity of polling stations enable voters to access electoral facilities with minimal travel time, creating an environment that structurally supports exceptionally high participation rates. Unlike larger rural constituencies where geographic dispersion, transportation constraints, or socio-economic disparities may suppress electoral activity, Yanam's urban morphology ensures that almost every household remains within easy reach of polling infrastructure. This physical ease of access, coupled with effective voter list management and booth-level mobilization, contributes substantially to turnout percentages that frequently exceed **90–95%**, among the highest in India.

19. Election Commission of India, Statistical Report on Puducherry Elections, 2016.
20. CEO Puducherry, Polling Station Elector Roll Analysis, 2021.
21. Election Atlas of India, “Yanam Constituency Trends,” 2021.

5. Legislative Representation: MLAs of Yanam (1954–2021)

Yanam's electoral history features prominent political families and influential independent candidates.²²

Year	Assembly	Member	Party
1954	1 st	K.SPV.Prasada Rao Naidu	Indian National Congress
1959	2 nd	Kamichetty. Savithri	Independent
1963	3 rd	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu and Kamichetty Savithri	Independent
1964	4 th	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu	Indian National Congress
1969	5 th	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu	Independent
1974	6 th	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu	Independent
1977	7 th	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu	Janata Party
1980	8 th	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu	Independent
1985	9 th	Kamichetty Sri Parassourama Varaprassada Rao Naidu	Indian National Congress
1990	10 th	Raksha Harikrishna	Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam
1991	11 th	Velaga Rajeswara Rao	Indian National Congress
1996	12 th	Malladi Krishna Rao	Independent

Year	Assembly	Member	Party
2000	13 th	P. Shanmugam	Indian National Congress
2001	14 th	Malladi Krishna Rao	Independent
2006	15 th	Malladi Krishna Rao	Indian National Congress
2011	16 th	Malladi Krishna Rao	Indian National Congress
2016	17 th	Malladi Krishna Rao	Indian National Congress
2021	18 th	Gollapalli Srinivas Ashok	Independent politician

Electoral scholars observe that Yanam is one of the few constituencies in India where **Independent candidates have repeatedly secured victories across multiple decades**, demonstrating that electoral success in this region is driven far more by **personal credibility, localized leadership networks, and direct community engagement** than by formal party alignment.²³ Unlike most constituencies where party affiliation, ideological positioning, or statewide political waves significantly influence outcomes, Yanam's electoral behavior highlights a **distinct pattern of personalized politics**, in which voters prioritize leaders who exhibit **long-standing familiarity with local issues, accessibility to the public, and an ability to navigate the unique administrative complexities** arising from Yanam's status as a Puducherry enclave within Andhra Pradesh. This has resulted in a political culture where **charismatic independent leaders**—often backed by strong kinship, neighbourhood, and occupational associations—are perceived as more capable of delivering tangible constituency development than party-based candidates whose priorities may be shaped by broader territorial or partisan agendas. Consequently, Yanam stands as a compelling case within Indian electoral studies, illustrating how **micro-level sociopolitical dynamics** can override conventional party structures and produce a sustained tradition of independent legislative representation.

22. Result University, "Historical Results: Puducherry Assembly," 2022.

23. India Votes, "Yanam Assembly Profile," 2021.

6. Socio-Political Dynamics and Administrative Identity

Yanam's socio-political character is profoundly shaped by its **Telugu-speaking cultural identity**, its **coastal economic base**, and its **unique administrative status as an enclave of the Puducherry Union Territory located within Andhra Pradesh**.²⁴ These intertwined elements create a governance environment in which linguistic affiliation, regional economic linkages, and institutional history intersect to influence political attitudes and electoral behaviour. The constituency's development priorities often revolve around **coastal protection projects, improvement of municipal services, expansion of**

educational institutions, healthcare access, and the creation of local employment opportunities, reflecting the needs of a densely populated urban enclave whose residents depend heavily on both riverine and coastal ecosystems.²⁵

Recent administrative assessments emphasize Yanam's increasing integration with the **regional urban system of Kakinada, Yanam's nearest metropolitan centre**, as well as its economic interactions with the broader **Godavari delta region**, which has contributed to improved mobility, expanded commercial activity, and infrastructural modernization.²⁶ Enhanced connectivity has facilitated greater interdependence in areas such as markets, transportation, education, fisheries, and labour mobility. These developments have gradually reshaped Yanam into a **hybrid urban space** that reflects both Puducherry's administrative frameworks and Andhra Pradesh's socio-economic rhythms.

At the same time, socio-cultural studies highlight that despite decades of Indian administration, **Indo-French cultural legacies remain distinctly visible** in Yanam's urban landscape.²⁷ The presence of French-style colonial architecture, street names, municipal administrative conventions, educational traditions, and certain civic rituals underscores the long historical association with French rule. These cultural elements contribute to a **dual-layered identity**, wherein residents simultaneously identify with the Telugu cultural sphere and with the institutional and historical continuity of the former French territories.

This complex blend of **linguistic, administrative, economic, and historical layers** produces a political environment that is highly localized yet deeply shaped by cross-regional dynamics. Yanam's electorate prioritizes leaders who can navigate this blend effectively—championing local development needs while managing administrative relations between Puducherry and neighbouring Andhra Pradesh. The constituency therefore exemplifies how small enclaves can develop **distinct socio-political ecosystems**, shaped by geography, history, cultural hybridity, and the administrative specificities of Union Territory governance.

24. S. Venkatesan, *Regional Political Dynamics of South India*, Sage Publications, 2017.

25. Puducherry Legislative Assembly, *Debates on Enclave Administration*, 2018.

26. Urban Development Dept., Puducherry, *Regional Connectivity Assessment*, 2019.

27. A.C. Roy, *Union Territory Culture and Governance*, Routledge, 2016.

7. Conclusion

The history of the Yanam Assembly Constituency from 1954 to 2021 highlights its evolution from a French enclave into one of India's most politically active constituencies. Its compact geography, cultural identity, urban character, and administrative distinctiveness continue to influence its demographic and political patterns.

Yanam's high electoral participation, strong local leadership, and unique fusion of Andhra–Puducherry governance make it a distinctive and significant case in India's democratic landscape.

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1. R. B. Allen, *Slaves, Freedmen and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius*, Cambridge University Press, 1999.
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13. Roy, A.C., Politics of Union Territories, Routledge, 2014.
14. Puducherry Legislative Assembly, Debate Proceedings, 2018.
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22. Election Atlas of India, "Yanam Constituency Trends," 2021.
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