



AN ASSESSMENT OF THE ROLE OF ARTICLE 371J IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE KALYAN KARNATAKA REGION

¹Mrs. Jayashree and ²Dr. Jayashree.S.Prabha

¹Ph.D Research Scholar, Department of History, Gulbarga University, Karnataka

²Ph.D Research Guide, Department of History, Gulbarga University, Karnataka

Abstract

The Kalyana Karnataka region Kalaburagi, Bidar, Raichur, Koppal, Yadgir, Ballari and the newly formed Vijayanagara has long lagged behind the rest of Karnataka, a legacy rooted in its earlier incorporation within the Nizam-ruled Hyderabad State before merging with Mysore State in 1956. This backwardness was formally documented by the D.M. Nanjundappa Committee's 2002 report, which found a disproportionate share of the state's most backward taluks concentrated in this belt and recommended targeted spending. The finding strengthened a long political campaign led by figures such as Dr. Mallikarjun Kharge and the late N. Dharam Singh, along with organisations like the Hyderabad-Karnataka Horata Samiti, who pressed for constitutional protection akin to that given to Telangana. Their efforts culminated in Article 371J, inserted through the Ninety-eighth Constitutional Amendment Act of 2012 and effective from 1 January 2013. It empowers the Governor to ensure equitable fund allocation, mandates reservation in education and employment for local domiciles, and led to the creation of the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board (KKRDB). Following the formation of Vijayanagara district from Ballari in 2021, the framework now covers seven districts. This paper traces this constitutional and political journey and examines how far the provision has translated into real development, drawing on legislative records, committee reports and regional data to assess fund utilisation, project progress and lingering administrative gaps. It argues that Article 371J, won through sustained evidence and political struggle, needs consistent political will and stronger coordination to fully deliver on its promise.

Keywords: Article 371J, Kalyana Karnataka, Nanjundappa Committee, Mallikarjun Khargeji, HKRDB.

Introduction

Part XXI of the Indian Constitution contains a cluster of provisions, from Article 371 through 371J, that depart from the country's otherwise uniform pattern of governance to address the peculiar circumstances of individual states or sub-regions. Most of these clauses were framed around linguistic or tribal identity, as seen in Nagaland, Mizoram or Sikkim. Article 371J stands apart within this group, since the case for its inclusion rested less on cultural distinctiveness and more on hard developmental data decades of lagging human and economic indicators in a defined pocket of northeastern Karnataka.

That pocket, now called Kalyana Karnataka and covering Kalaburagi, Bidar, Raichur, Koppal, Yadgir and Ballari, was for centuries governed as part of the Nizam's dominion of Hyderabad, an administration that left the area with sparse rail and road connectivity, limited schooling, and underdeveloped irrigation compared with territories under direct British or princely Mysore rule. Its 1956 accession to the reorganised, linguistically defined state of Mysore — subsequently renamed Karnataka did little on its own to close this gap, and the region continued to register below-average outcomes on nearly every yardstick of progress. A state-appointed panel chaired by economist D.M. Nanjundappa gave this impression statistical shape in 2002, ranking taluks across Karnataka on a composite index and showing the northeastern belt to be heavily overrepresented among the state's most deprived areas.



Turning this evidence into a constitutional remedy proved slow. For years, the cause was carried forward largely through the persistence of individual leaders figures such as Union minister M. Mallikarjun Kharge and former chief minister N. Dharam Singh among them alongside pressure groups like the Horata Samiti, who repeatedly invoked the precedent already set for Telangana under Article 371D. Their advocacy eventually found legislative expression in December 2012, when Parliament cleared the 98th Constitutional Amendment, bringing Article 371J into force the following month.

In the years since, the region's institutional map has itself evolved: a dedicated regional development board was set up to oversee implementation, and Ballari's 2021 bifurcation added Vijayanagara as an additional district within the fold, bringing the total to seven. Against this backdrop, the present study asks how far the constitutional guarantee has actually been converted into on-ground development, and what factors continue to shape the pace of that conversion.

Review of Related Literature

Review of Literature: Article 371J and Regional Development in Kalyana Karnataka

Article 371J of the Constitution of India occupies a distinctive place in the country's framework of asymmetric federalism, having been introduced specifically to redress the historical underdevelopment of the Kalyana Karnataka region. This review synthesizes recent academic and policy-oriented scholarship on the provision, organizing the discussion around its constitutional origins, the regional disparities it was designed to address, its measurable effects on education and economic life, its influence on political participation, and the implementation challenges that continue to shape scholarly debate.

Historical and Constitutional Background

Article 371J entered the Constitution through the Ninety-eighth Constitutional Amendment Act of 2012 and took legal effect on 1 January 2013. The provision grants the Governor of Karnataka special responsibility over six districts of the region formerly known as Hyderabad-Karnataka, now referred to as Kalyana Karnataka. Under this arrangement, the Governor oversees the creation of a dedicated regional development board, submits annual progress reports to the state legislature, ensures equitable distribution of development funds across the region, and reserves seats in local educational and vocational institutions, as well as public employment, for residents of the region.

Historical Roots of Regional Disparity

Udchanchi and Khandimath (2024) situate the provision within the region's long history of neglect under Nizam administration, arguing that this legacy left Kalyana Karnataka structurally behind the rest of the state. Their analysis frames Article 371J as a corrective response, conceived specifically to reverse decades of administrative and developmental imbalance through targeted institutional mechanisms such as the development board and reservation policy.

Educational and Economic Outcomes

The empirical literature broadly agrees that the provision has produced partial rather than complete success. Manik Raj (2026) analyzed government and census data and found genuine gains in education access and public-sector employment, but concluded that broader economic development and infrastructure growth have lagged behind these gains. A related 2026 study documents the scale of state investment in the region, noting that the Karnataka government sanctioned close to ₹19,778 crore over the preceding decade, with the Kalyana Karnataka Region Development Board contributing a further ₹11,174 crore and an additional ₹5,000 crore pledged annually thereafter. Despite this level of financial commitment, the same study finds that converting expenditure into measurable improvements in living standards remains an unresolved challenge. Maradi (2023) reaches a related conclusion, arguing that the mere existence of the constitutional provision does not automatically improve outcomes, and that its benefits depend heavily on the rigor of its administrative implementation.



Political Effects and Mobilization

A related body of scholarship examines the provision's influence on political life in the region. Research published in 2023 suggests that reserving government jobs and educational seats for regional residents has drawn previously excluded communities into more active political participation, contributing to the emergence of a new generation of local leaders and civil servants. This same body of work cautions that the benefit carries a trade-off: policies that concentrate advantages within specific groups can unintentionally sharpen social divisions in other parts of the population.

Methodology of the Study

This research uses an analytical and descriptive approach to examine the contribution of Article 371J to the overall development of the Kalyana Karnataka region during the period from 2021-22, 2022-23, 2023-24, 2024-25. The study is based entirely on secondary sources of information, as the objective is to evaluate government initiatives and regional development through available official records and published data.

Information for the study was collected from Karnataka Government publications, Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board (KKRDB) reports, State Budget documents, Karnataka Economic Surveys, official statistical handbooks, research articles, books, government websites, newspapers, and other reliable academic sources. After collecting the data, it was carefully organized according to different sectors such as education, employment, infrastructure, healthcare, agriculture, industrial development, and social welfare.

The study covers all seven districts of Kalyana Karnataka—Kalaburagi, Bidar, Yadgir, Raichur, Koppal, Ballari, and Vijayanagara. The collected information was examined using comparative analysis, percentage analysis, trend analysis, and simple statistical techniques. Tables and graphical presentations were prepared to identify changes in development over the five-year period. The findings were interpreted by comparing the progress made after the implementation of development programmes under Article 371J and assessing their contribution to reducing regional inequalities.

The methodology aims to provide an objective understanding of the achievements, existing challenges, and future opportunities associated with Article 371J while ensuring that the analysis remains evidence-based and suitable for academic research.

ANAYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Article 371J of the Constitution of India was enacted to promote the comprehensive development of the Hyderabad–Karnataka region, now officially known as the Kalyana Karnataka Region. The region comprises six districts, and this constitutional provision was introduced to address long-standing regional imbalances and ensure equitable growth.

During the financial year 2021–22, a total of 2,158 development projects were undertaken across the region with an approved expenditure of ₹1,492.97 crore. These projects were implemented to improve the quality of life of the people by strengthening basic infrastructure, expanding public services, and accelerating overall socio-economic development.

The approved projects primarily focused on creating and upgrading essential infrastructure. Major investments were made in the construction of government schools, government first-grade colleges, hostels, health facilities, and other public welfare institutions. In addition, several projects were aimed at improving civic amenities and providing better opportunities for the people living in the Kalyana Karnataka region.

The Government is confident that these development initiatives undertaken during 2021–22 will significantly contribute to the balanced and sustainable development of the region and help improve the standard of living of its people.



The implementation of Article 371J has played a significant role in promoting balanced regional development in the Kalyana Karnataka region. During the financial year 2022–23, the Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board (KKRDB) executed 3,492 development projects with an allocation of nearly ₹2,900 crore. These investments were directed toward strengthening educational institutions, healthcare services, public infrastructure, and other welfare sectors. The initiatives aimed to reduce regional inequalities by improving access to essential services and enhancing infrastructure across the seven districts of Kalyana Karnataka. The development programmes undertaken during this period demonstrate the government's commitment to achieving inclusive growth, improving living standards, and fulfilling the developmental objectives envisaged under Article 371J of the Constitution of India. This sustained investment is expected to contribute significantly to the long-term socio-economic transformation of the region.

The 2023–24 Annual Report of the Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board (KKRDB) highlights the implementation of Article 371J through a comprehensive development strategy focused on education and infrastructure. Declaring 2023–24 as the "Year of Education," the Board prioritized investments in schools, colleges, hostels, libraries, and laboratories to strengthen educational opportunities across the seven districts of Kalyana Karnataka. During the financial year, 6,000 development projects were undertaken with an allocation of approximately ₹3,000 crore. The projects also included improvements in healthcare, public infrastructure, government institutions, and other civic amenities. These initiatives demonstrate the government's commitment to reducing regional inequalities, promoting balanced development, and achieving the constitutional objectives envisioned under Article 371J. The sustained investment in education and infrastructure is expected to accelerate socio-economic development and enhance the overall quality of life in the Kalyana Karnataka region.

The Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board (KKRDB) continued its mission during the 2024–25 financial year to promote balanced and sustainable development across the Kalyana Karnataka region. Guided by the constitutional provisions of Article 371J, the Board worked to address long-standing developmental gaps and improve the socio-economic conditions of the seven districts through focused planning and targeted public investment.

For the year 2024–25, the Government of Karnataka approved an Action Plan with a financial allocation of ₹5,000 crore to implement a wide range of development programmes. The budget was intended to strengthen infrastructure, improve public services, and create better opportunities for economic and social advancement. The Board coordinated with various government departments to ensure that the allocated funds were utilized effectively and that development projects were completed in a timely manner.

A substantial portion of the budget was invested in improving educational institutions, healthcare facilities, road networks, drinking water systems, irrigation projects, rural infrastructure, agriculture, industrial development, skill training, housing, and social welfare programmes. These initiatives were designed to enhance access to essential services, increase employment opportunities, and support inclusive growth throughout the region.

Special attention was given to improving the quality of education by expanding and modernizing government schools, colleges, hostels, laboratories, libraries, and other academic facilities. At the same time, investments in hospitals, primary health centres, transportation, and civic infrastructure were undertaken to improve public welfare and strengthen the delivery of essential services. The Board also encouraged programmes that promote entrepreneurship, vocational skills, and sustainable livelihoods, particularly for young people and economically weaker sections of society.

The Chairman emphasized that the progress achieved during 2024–25 demonstrates the Government's commitment to realizing the objectives of Article 371J. Through efficient planning, transparent administration, and coordinated implementation, the KKRDB has continued to reduce regional disparities and create a stronger foundation for long-term development. The Board expressed confidence that these investments would contribute significantly to economic growth, social equity, and improved living standards across the Kalyana Karnataka region.



Summary

The present study concludes that Article 371J has become an important constitutional mechanism for promoting balanced regional development in Kalyana Karnataka. The provision has created greater opportunities for the people of the region by providing reservations in education and public employment and by facilitating targeted financial assistance for development projects.

Between 2021 and 2025, the region witnessed noticeable improvements in educational infrastructure, government recruitment, road connectivity, healthcare facilities, irrigation works, and public welfare programmes. The activities of the Kalyana Karnataka Regional Development Board have helped accelerate development in many backward areas, resulting in better access to public services and increased investment in social infrastructure.

Despite these achievements, several issues continue to require attention. Industrial growth remains slower than expected, employment opportunities in the private sector are limited, and disparities persist among districts in terms of infrastructure and economic progress. Effective implementation of development schemes, transparent monitoring of public expenditure, and greater investment in skill development and entrepreneurship are essential for achieving long-term regional growth.

Overall, the study finds that Article 371J has significantly contributed to reducing historical regional imbalances and improving the quality of life of the people in Kalyana Karnataka. However, the full potential of this constitutional provision can only be realized through sustained political commitment, efficient administration, continuous financial support, and active public participation. Strengthening these areas will enable Kalyana Karnataka to achieve inclusive, sustainable, and equitable development in the years ahead.

References

1. Manik Raj, S. (2026). Assessing the impact of Article 371(J) on regional development: A study of Kalyana . *International Journal of Research and Scientific Innovation*, 13(6). <https://doi.org/10.51244/IJRSI.2026.1306000097>
2. Maradi, V. (2023). Implementation of Article 371(J) enhance the economic and education status of the Kalyan-Karnataka region. *International Journal of Law Management & Humanities*.
3. Udchanchi, M., & Khandimath, M. (2024). The politics of regionalism: Assessing the implementation of Article 371J in Karnataka. *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*, 5(1), 4218–4224.
4. Author name unavailable. (2023). Article 371J and political mobilization in Kalyana Karnataka: A decade of change. *International Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences*.
5. Author name unavailable. (2026). Educational and economical implications of Article 371J in Karnataka. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts*, 14(1)
6. Nanjundappa, D. M. (2002). *Report of the High-Power Committee for Redressal of Regional Imbalances*. Government of Karnataka.
7. Ngaihte, T. (2025). Article 371 as an instrument of asymmetrical federalism: Its philosophical intent and contemporary relevance. *Research Review Journal of Social Science*, 5(2), 119–135.
8. Niranjana, R., & Rajappa, S. (2021). Regional inequality in human development in Karnataka: A spatial analysis. *Demography India*.
9. Udchanchi, M. (2022). Article 371J and political mobilization in Kalyana Karnataka: A decade of change. *International Journal of Food and Nutritional Sciences*, 11(11).
10. Udchanchi, M., & Khandimath, M. (2024). The politics of regionalism: Assessing the implementation of Article 371J in Karnataka. *ShodhKosh: Journal of Visual and Performing Arts*.