

Dynamics of State Politics and its impact on Indian Federalism: A study of Assembly polls of 2023-2025

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Abstract

It has been more than a decade that the saffron party has ruled the country and seeing this pace, there seems no going back for BJP. It is even obvious to say that it's an BJP era because no opposition is here to counter the strategies of the party. After the Lok Sabha polls, the opposition took a sigh of relief when INDIA bloc got a handful seats but the results of elections immediately prior and after the Lok Sabha polls and even the Lok Sabha polls were really surprising. This paper aims at studying the recent scenario of Indian electoral politics. The paper gives a thorough analysis of assembly polls of nine states. The paper is divided into two parts: legislative assembly polls of 2023, held immediately before the Lok Sabha polls and the legislative assembly polls of 2024 and 2025 held after the polls. It will provide an overview of the mood of Indian voters and how they contribute in shaping the Indian politics. It will also help us to analyse the factors behind BJP's stronghold among the voters as well failure of opposition parties in convincing as well as retaining the faith of the voters.

Keywords: BJP, Congress, AAP, NDA, INDIA, Rajasthan, Maharashtra, Haryana, Delhi

Lok Sabha polls

The results of 18th Lok Sabha can be rightly called a draw for both the alliance. The voters which brought back BJP-led NDA to power for the third consecutive term also gave the opposition a golden chance to revive. These elections were seen as a life jacket for the Indian opposition as it managed to sail through it safely. The opposition parties under the banner of INDIA bloc presented themselves as a saviour of Indian Constitution and the federal structure. Congress being the pilot of this coalition was benefitted the most as it got a handsome number of seats as well as the post of Leader of Opposition, a post vacant for almost a decade.

After the Lok Sabha polls, BJP evaluated its performance and the reasons of its not up-to-the-mark performance and worked on them effectively which is evident from the post Lok Sabha elections in the states of Haryana, Maharashtra and Delhi. Just before the Lok Sabha polls, the states such as Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, and Rajasthan, where BJP was in power, the party saw a dip in its performance in LS elections 2024. In 2019 polls, BJP won 303 seats while this number dropped to 240 in 2024 polls. BJP analysed the factors responsible for steep downfall in the number and realised that the failure to make a balance of caste equation in Uttar Pradesh, anger of party workers for being neglected in Maharashtra, indifferences with RSS and tickets for the turncoats were major areas on which party need to work. Party worked on these particular areas in the State Assembly polls 2024 and 2025 and the efforts gave positive results as BJP got the hold of Delhi after long twenty seven years. The party made a comeback in Haryana as well as Maharashtra for third term respectively. Congress too analysed its

performance but the results shows that it was satisfied with the results and did nothing to combat BJP in upcoming State elections.

Further, polls to the 18th Lok Sabha were held in 2024 along with four states. BJP retained its position at the Centre under the NDA alliance and also bagged Arunachal Pradesh and Orissa, Sikkim swept by Sikkim Krantikari Morcha (SKM) for the second term, Andhra Pradesh NDA (kutami) with 164 seats and nil for INDIA. In Orissa, BJP won a simple majority, ending 24 years rule of Biju Janata Dal. The state poll results were very much in favour of BJP but Congress lacked behind again.

Assembly Polls of 2023: An Analysis of its impact on Lok Sabha polls 2024

The Legislative assembly elections of the Hindi heartland states: Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh, the southern state Telangana and the north-eastern state of Mizoram were held in November 2023. These states being important in one or the more aspects, were crucial in the wake of upcoming Lok Sabha polls of 2024. Since, Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Madhya Pradesh have 25, 11 and 29 Lok Sabha seats respectively, hence were important for every party to attain majority in Lok Sabha. After losing Karnataka in the elections held in the first half of 2023, BJP wished to compensate it by getting the hold of the one decade old state of Telangana. On the other hand, the Congress was thrilled after its big win in Karnataka and was aiming at a second victory in South. In order to satisfy its thirst of expanding its control in every Indian state, from East to West and North to South, BJP kept an eye even on the small state Mizoram. After being victorious in Tripura earlier this year, BJP was hopeful to bag one more north-eastern state while Congress also wanted to strengthen its position.

Result of 2023 Polls: A mix bag

	Madhya Pradesh	Rajasthan	Chhattisgarh	Telangana	Mizoram
BJP	163	115	54	8	2
Congress	66	69	35	64	1
BAP	1	3	-	-	
GGP	-	-	1	-	
BRS	-	-	-	39	
AIMIM	-	-	-	7	
ZPM					27
MNF					10
Total	230	200	90	119	40

Source: Election Commission of India www.eci.in (Retrieved on 28th December 2023)

Madhya Pradesh

BJP came back to power in MP for the sixth term and is viewed as another Gujarat for BJP. The victory was a result of the dedication and extensive campaign of the ex-CM and the party loyalists like Shivraj Singh Chauhan. The party won 163 seats in the state as well as continued its hold in the heart of India. The double engine government of BJP was projected very well in Madhya Pradesh after Gujarat. According to Lokniti-CSDS post poll survey, the electorate

were highly satisfied with BJP at Centre as well as in the State. The victory of BJP in MP reflected the strong vote base of the party in the state. Congress didn't learn from the end of one year term of Kamal Nath Government due to Scindia's defection and failed to mobilize voters. The results pointed a question on the exit polls which predicted an anti-incumbency in the state and Congress party winning with majority. But the Congress got only 66 seats. A new party Bhartiya Adivasi Party (BAP) succeeded in opening its account. The women centric welfare schemes of Shivraj Government helped BJP to attain the women votes. BJP's strong hold and the leaderships' commitment were the reasons for the outstanding performance in the state.

Rajasthan

The anti-incumbency factor had always played a major role in the politics of Rajasthan. BJP came to power in the state after succeeding Congress in the state polls 2023, continuing the Riwayat(tradition) of changing the Raaj (power). BJP came to power in the state with 115 seats while Congress had to settle with 69 seats only. Rajasthan poll results reflected a sharp decline in the charisma of Ashok Gehlot and Vasundhara Raje, the prominent and most powerful leaders in Rajasthan politics. Congress lost the hold of Rajasthan politics despite Gehlot's reach among the voters. The resentment among Gujjar voters against the ill-treatment of former Deputy CM Sachin Pilot, favoritism in the selection of candidates, failure of projection of welfare schemes among the electorates were the major factors behind Congress's failure. On the other hand, BJP targeted all the sections particularly the women voters and gave chance to new leadership and the results were favorable for the party.

Chhattisgarh

The results of Chhattisgarh were most surprising one. BJP attained a thumping majority by bagging highest ever 54 seats in the state while Congress got just 35 seats. AAP lost its deposits on all 54 seats it contested. BJP took the advantage of Congress infighting and they made every effort to consolidate the tribal vote. BJP made a clean sweep on all 14 seats of the Surguja district. Corruption allegations on the CM Bhupesh Baghel, failure to ban alcohol in the state, PSC scam, Alliance mess-up and the anger of tribal community against Congress all worked in favor of BJP.

According to Rajdeep Sardesai (2024) state election in Chhattisgarh was mainly determined by the strategical move of the duo (PM Modi and Amit Shah)

Telangana

The Telangana Assembly Polls were the only solace for Congress in the wake of Lok Sabha elections. Congress's loss in the Hindi heartland states cannot be compensated with the Telangana victory but it was enough to give a sigh of relief to the party cadre. Congress won 64 seats while BRS had to satisfy on 39 seats only. BJP got a sound vote share of 14% along with eight seats. Congress has tightened its grip in the South India with this win. AIMIM retained back its seven seats, continuing its hold in old-city Hyderabad. Corruption allegations against government, great dissatisfaction with the family rule and providing the benefit of

government's welfare schemes to a limited sections of the society were the main reasons that BRS didn't just lost the election but lost its ten year old hold in the state.

BRS's predecessor Telangana Rashtriya Samiti (TRS) was confined to one region while BRS is the result of national aspiration of the party leadership (K. Chandrashekhara Rao). BRS was responsible for carving Telangana out of Andhra Pradesh (2 June 2014) and had a dominant role in Telangana politics. The another main party in Telangana is AIMIM led by Asaduddin Owaisi. TRS and AIMIM tried to extend their scope at the national level. TRS is limited to the region while AIMIM gained strength in Bihar and Uttar Pradesh. The meager vote share of the party in State polls and General elections have indelible impact.

Mizoram

Mizoram, a small state of North-East with only 40 Legislative assembly seats have stunned everyone with the assembly polls results. **Zoram People's Movement (ZPM)**, an alliance of seven regional parties, came in majority to rule the state by winning 27 seats. It is for the first time in last 40 years that people of Mizoram elected a party other than **Mizo National Front** and Congress. Mizo National Front, the incumbent party won just ten seats, losing the power in the state. Congress Party, which ruled the state for 25 years, struggled to grab just one seat, compared to five seats in previous polls. BJP won two seats, one more than previous polls. Congress first failed its support in Central India and now in North Eastern region too. Party dynamics of the state reflects that people vote for performer. No party can encash for long on the basis of past performance.

- ❖ One thing is clear that in Assembly polls of 2023 held in second half of the year, BJP performed better than Congress in all the states except Telangana. Out of the five states, BJP got the hold of three states which reflects the proper execution of good electoral strategy and cadre work. While the Congress lost two important states. Further, in the multiparty system of India where national and state parties focused minutely from ground to national level, State parties can neither be ignored nor alienated.

Lok Sabha polls and performance in Hindi heartland States

In the Hindi heartland states, the elections were a direct faceoff between BJP and Congress and some regional actors (in case of Telangana and Mizoram) but the Lok Sabha polls were clearly BJP versus INDIA bloc. In Telangana, out of 17 seats, both NDA and INDIA alliance got eight seats each with AIMIM winning its permanent seat of Hyderabad. In both MP and Chhattisgarh, NDA nailed it as it had done in the state polls. In MP, NDA made a clean sweep with winning all 29 seats in the state and one more than previous polls whereas Congress lost its lone seat. Out of 11 seats in Chhattisgarh, NDA won 10 seats and INDIA block was left with a single seat which was one less than previous polls. The results of Rajasthan were a sigh of relief for the Congress and INDIA block as out of 25 seats, NDA bagged 14 seats while INDIA got 11 seats. The voters made a balance and tried to satisfy both the parties. While the people of Mizoram ignored both the blocks and once again voted for Zoram people's Movement (ZPM) after making the party victorious in Assembly polls.

Assembly polls of 2024: From Haryana to Maharashtra and Delhi (2025)

After the Lok Sabha polls, four states went into elections at two different times. The polls of Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir in October 2024 and the elections of Jharkhand and Maharashtra in November 2024. While the National Capital Delhi went into elections in February 2025. These states were very crucial for every party. BJP entered these polls to overcome its mistakes of LS elections while Congress aimed to take the graph of its success in upward direction.

	Haryana	J &K	Maharashtra	Jharkhand	Delhi
BJP	48	29	132	21	48
Congress	37	06	16	16	00
AAP	-	-	-	-	22
INLD	00	-	-	-	-
National Conference		42	-	-	-
JMM	-	-	-	34	-
total	90	90	288	81	70

Source: Election Commission of India www.eci.in

Haryana Assembly Polls

The Haryana polls were significant for BJP as its outcome was going to directly impact the upcoming elections of Maharashtra and Jharkhand. In the Lok Sabha polls both the alliance got five seats each, failing to provide a clarity about the voter's mood. The Assembly poll was a test for BJP's performance in the state and other issues such as farmer agitation, Agnipath scheme, opposition demand of conducting caste census after the Supreme Court verdict of sub-categorisation of Dalit quota pertained. All the things seemed against the incumbent BJP and in favour of Congress under the leadership of Bhupender Singh Hooda.

But the results disproved all the calculations. Out of the total 90 seats, BJP won 48 while Congress got 37 seats with vote share difference of only 0.85%. INLD got just 2 seats. The Haryana polls boosted up the BJP cadre as party made a hat-trick in the state. The move of changing the sitting CM Manohar Lal Khattar nine months before the polls helped the party. The party not only completed its remaining tenure but also retained its hold in the state under the new leadership.

In Haryana 2024, General and state election also reflect that the dynastic parties role performance degrade with the fragmentation of the party. Lok Dal, a party formed by legendary leader Devi Lal. After three generations, Chautala family failed to maintain its identity and the national parties Congress and BJP became two main parties in the State. Between the pull and push of local interests, masses again showed their faith in the national parties.

Caste factor in Haryana

The caste-votes were clearly divided in Haryana. BJP, as usual, focused on its broader vote base of non-Jat OBCs, Brahmins and Dalits. Jat and Dalit votes were clearly in favour of Congress but unfortunately the party failed to polarise them. The results were surprising that BJP scored better than Congress in the Jat dominant areas and its strategy succeeded as well.

Even Congress's focus on Jats alienated the other castes from the party and it benefitted BJP. BJP won on 18 seats of Jat dominated areas while Congress dropped to 12 seats one less than previous polls.

Haryana polls: A case of lost pride for Congress

Although Congress improved its tally by getting 37 seats (Seven more than 2019 polls) but it was not enough to stop BJP from making a hat-trick in the state. The sole reliance on Hooda during the campaign and even in the seat distribution upset the prominent Dalit leaders like Kumar Selja leading her to distance from the whole campaign. Secondly, over focus on Jats and ignoring the non-Jats also became the reason of party's defeat. Dalit vote which got divided among the alliances of parties such as Jannayak Janta Party (JJP) and the Aazad Samaj Party and the Indian National Lok Dal with Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP) ultimately benefitted the BJP.

Jammu & Kashmir Assembly polls

While Jammu & Kashmir which was having its elections after a decade, the main fight was between BJP and the regional parties especially the National Conference. BJP had been responsible for abrogation of Article 370, which conferred a special status to the state. The opposition has raised this issue and demanded for the restoration of special status. Apart from this unemployment, development were the main issues in the valley. The five years old Union Territory after the removal of the Ladakh region, can be clearly demarcated into two parts: Hindu dominated region of Jammu and Muslim majority Kashmir valley. The parties as well as their alliance had a clear audience to target.

Seat share in Jammu & Kashmir in Lok Sabha and Assembly polls

Political Party	Lok Sabha Polls 2024	Assembly Polls
NC	02	42
BJP	02	29
Congress	-	06
PDP	-	03
CPIM	-	01
Independents	01	
total	05	90

Source: Statistical data on Jammu & Kashmir polls 2024

From the above data, it is clear that in Lok Sabha polls, both national Conference and BJP got same number of votes but in Assembly polls, apart from NC and BJP, no party could get seats in double digits. The INDIA alliance of Congress, Nc and CPIM got 49 seats in total and formed the government. NC got 35 seats alone from the Kashmir region and seven seats from Jammu division. Even in the South Kashmir, once a base of PDP, NC got victory in ten out of total 16 seats. The anti-PDP and anti-BJP sentiments ultimately benefitted NC. Jammu & Kashmir state election results indicate that the leaders of longstanding are more popular in the State.

Maharashtra Assembly polls 2024

The assembly polls of one of the biggest as well as economically beneficial state of Maharashtra were crucial for both the national parties: BJP and Congress as well as the regional parties such as Shiv Sena, Shiv Sena Udhav Thackrey fraction as well both the fractions of NCP.

For getting the hold of Maharashtra, BJP, along with Shiv Sena and NCP under the banner of Mahayuti alliance, tightened its seat belt and went into the election. On the other hand, the Maha Vikas Agadhi (MVA) of Congress, NCP (Sharad Pawar fraction (NCP-SP) and Shiv Sena- Uddhav Balasaheb Thackrey fraction (SHS- UBT) fraction, overwhelmed with its Lok Sabha win in the state, was expecting a good show in the Assembly polls too.

Results on Maharashtra seats in Lok Sabha polls 2019 & 2024

	Lok Sabha polls 2019	Vote%	Lok Sabha 2024	Vote%
NDA	43	51.34	17	43.55
UPA/INDIA	05	32.07	30	43.71
total	48		48	

Source: Election data on Lok Sabha elections www.eci.in

Lok Sabha polls of 2024 proved to be a boon for the members of INDIA alliance especially Congress as the coalition rose from just five seats in 2019 polls to a six times better performance with 30 seats in the polls of 2024. But one thing was surprising that although INDIA alliance seat share difference from NDA was almost double but the vote share difference was only .24% even less than one percent. It means that NDA alliance lacked only in grabbing more seats but the vote share was almost similar to the INDIA alliance.

Party wise performance in assembly polls

Party	No. of seats	Vote share
BJP	132	26.77
Shiv Sena	57	12.38
NCP	41	9.01
Congress	16	12.42
Shiv Sena UBT	20	9.96
NCP (Sharad Pawar)	10	11.28
Samajwadi Party	2	
Jan Surajya Shakti- JSS	2	
Independent & others	8	13.82
Total	288	

Source: Statistical data on Maharashtra Assembly Polls 2024 www.eci.in (Retrieved on 12th December 2024)

From the above data, it is clear that BJP performed very well in this election. BJP's landslide victory gained it a rich state with a strike rate of 90 per cent. The massive gain of the party across the country is a witness of the party's strength. NCP-Sharad Pawar fraction showed the poorest strike rate of 12.79%. One more trend exhibited in this election was that NCP got 41

seats but only 9% vote share which was even less than the vote share of Shiv Sena UBT which got almost half the seats of NCP. This clearly indicates that even getting more vote share doesn't guarantee you a handful seats. Thus, BJP's strategies had paid it with consecutive third win in five states: Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Goa, Haryana and Maharashtra. It is an unusual thing to happen in last five decades. BJP's outreach to all the sections helped it to achieve an outstanding number of 132 seats alone.

Jharkhand Assembly polls

The politics of mineral rich but politically less focused Jharkhand caught the attention of all way before the Lok Sabha polls when the incumbent CM Hemant Soren was trying to save its MLAs from horse-trading and then Enforcing Directorate (ED) acting as Centre's agent against the opposition over corruption charges. Amid all this chaos, in the Lok Sabha polls out of the 14 seats, NDA won nine seats while INDIA got five seats. BJP claimed it as the victory of development over corruption and nepotism.

Assembly Polls Results

The results of Lok Sabha polls in the state were enough to ensure BJP's victory in the state too but the whole game changed in Assembly polls. The Mahagathbandhan (INDIA bloc) won 56 seats with JMM alone getting 34 seats. On the other hand, BJP got victory on 21 seats from total 24 seats won by whole NDA. The JMM-Congress-RJD coalition made a comeback in the state for the second time along with JMM maintaining its regional stronghold.

People believe in the consistent approach. It is a clear reflection of strong centrifugal force. The electoral politics in the northern and heartland states (Haryana, Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh) reflect the trend that in general, people vote keeping in mind the relationship between Centre and States, development activities and financial viability. They vote for the ruling party at the Centre. Against this assertion, it is observed in the border areas and in the Southern states, the sub-national interests and regional aspirations are more important. Regional parties compete for the power. And between this, BJP has made a balance with expanding its scope by addressing the local issues. While Congress has failed to do so.

Different Trends in State Elections of 2024 and February 2025

a) Role of Regional Players in State elections

In all the states there were some common factors like farmer's issues, employment, incumbent governments failure in fulfilling electoral promises while some states like Haryana had its own burning factors such as the farmer agitation, wrestler's protest, Jat dominance in the state, Agnipath scheme. Congress's slogan of '*Jawan, Kisan aur Pehalwan*' in Haryana, 'Caste Census' and 'Save Constitution' became monotonous with the time and failed to consolidate votes in its favour. The regional factors played a very important role in the state elections. The 'Adivasi' factor, Hemant Soren's arrest, local issues to preserve '*Jal, Jungal, Zameen*' in Jharkhand helped JMM to retain in position.

b) Polarisation versus Appeasement policy

The recent elections have reflected a new battle where BJP focused on polarisation factor while Congress was inclined to its appeasement policy. The voters are now fully aware and clear of the circumstances. In Maharashtra, Shiv Sena was predominantly a right-wing party and a strong ally of NDA but in 2019 polls, it made ties with Congress over differences with BJP. After all the *khela* before 2024 polls, the voters polled for Mahayuti which highlights that Hindu has become a dominant factor in the Indian electoral politics. One more reason of BJP becoming victorious in these elections is the RSS support, the one it lacked in Lok Sabha polls due to some inner conflicts. BJP had realised that Hindutva factor along with the RSS factor is must for its victory. On the other hand, Congress just focused on its appeasement policies.

c) Draw for the both alliance

With the time, the voters have become smart enough to go with the one who is more beneficial for them. The results of General and Assembly elections held in 2024 were never a win-win situation for any one party. Instead, the results were so balanced which made both the blocks happy. In Lok Sabha polls, BJP along with its NDA partners got the hold of power for the third consecutive term while Congress, though losing all the four states where elections were held along with Lok Sabha polls, got 99 seats along with the post of Leader of Opposition. Then during the polls of Haryana and Jammu & Kashmir, BJP got Haryana while INDIA got J & K. Then in November 2024, BJP retained Maharashtra while INDIA block got Jharkhand.

d) Leadership Crisis vs Leadership Building

The recent elections have also shown that leadership have played a pivotal role in the victory as well as defeat of the parties. Bhupender Singh Hooda, Abhay Chautala, Biju Patnaik proved as a flop show. On the other hand, BJP which had always encouraged the new leadership got its benefitted in the form of the recent victories. Prema Kundu in Arunachal Pradesh, Naib Singh Saini in Haryana, Devender Fadnavis in Maharashtra. Even in states where BJP couldn't form the government, it managed to get a good vote as well as seat share.

Prema Kundu who helped BJP to come to the power in Arunachal Pradesh for a second term. The constitutional crisis of 2016 along with imposition and uplifting of the President rule on the state, got him the Chief Ministerial position in 2016 and again in 2019 and 2024 on BJP ticket. Ravinder Raina helped the party to get 29 seats in Jammu & Kashmir. Omar Abdullah in J & K and Hemant Soren in Jharkhand ignited the hope of INDIA bloc but the win was totally based on the regional support of their respective parties.

e) INDIA bloc as an unstable alliance

These elections proved that INDIA bloc is an unstable alliance with no agenda of its own rather just responding to issues tabled by BJP. Voters are sharp enough to understand that this alliance between the arch-rival parties is totally for power gain thus, short-lived. The parties in alliance in Lok Sabha polls were seen as main contenders in the states. Thus, results show that even within the alliance, the voters voted for a particular party i.e. BJP in Maharashtra, JMM in Jharkhand, NC in J & K.

Assembly polls of Delhi 2025

Due to no elections in upcoming nine months, Delhi election was important in its own way. The voters of Delhi changed the calculations of political experts by bringing BJP to power after twenty-seven years, though it was not much surprising. The result of Delhi Assembly election show that the middle class is not easily driven by freebies in the name of development. The voters choose what's right for them. With 60.54% voters turnout, BJP won 48 seats and outgoing AAP settle for 22 seats, a sharp decline from 62 seats in 2020 polls. It was a hat trick of 'zero' for Congress in Delhi. Although, the Vote share difference between BJP and AAP was only 2.06 percent (BJP 45.61% and AAP 43.55%) but in seat share BJP got 26 more seats than AAP. BJP chose Rekha Gupta as the Chief Minister to, giving a fourth women CM to Delhi. Besides this step of women empowerment, the data shows that this time there was a drop from 8% women representatives in 2020 polls to 5% women in 2024 polls.

Apart from the anti-incumbency wave, the topics of the Corruption, Yamuna pollution, Liquor scam, the '*Sheesh Mahal*' by Arvind Kejriwal, dis-functioning of '*Mohalla Clinics*' and the way they were presented by the opposition party BJP before the voters played a very crucial role in bringing the decade old reign of AAP under Kejriwal's leadership. The scattered opposition and failure to file as a united front have once again benefitted the BJP.

The Showstopper BJP

BJP became a showstopper in the Maharashtra elections after scoring a victory in Haryana polls too. The leadership of the state as well as the Centre worked hand in hand with the party cadre. The main players like Devendra Fadnavis in Maharashtra and Naib Singh Saini in Haryana proved that a well-versed politician can bring good returns to a party. Besides Modi magic, the social engineering of BJP, party's hold over the people by addressing current issues, the strong organisational structure along with its parent organisation Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS), the leader-cadre relation along with hitting the right shot at right time strategy and the international image of strong leadership at Centre are the main reasons of BJP retaining power at Centre as well as in States. Besides some exceptions, the saffron party has almost swept whole country and it can be termed to some extent as a one-party dominant era of Indian politics along with the rise of some regional forces.

BJP's success secret is that it knows the importance of its allies, thus, it tries every hook and crook to keep them intact with it even after attaining a splendid victory at its own. For instance, in Maharashtra BJP needed only one ally to form the government still it made two deputy CMs each from the alliance partners of Mahayuti. In its revised strategy, BJP has targeted the discarded audience such as women, Dalits, Adivasis and the minority sections. These silent voters especially the women voters have played a very important role in BJP's win. BJP credits the people's faith in the party's "politics of good governance and development for its win.

Congress: A case of failed Opposition

BJP is continuously raising its power and position while the Congress has failed as an umbrella organisation whose allies came with it against the policies and strength of BJP at Centre and states. The major reason of clash between the INDIA alliance partners was their ideological differences. If we compare INDIA alliance with the Janta Party of 1977 which was a group of different political parties having different ideologies but were united with the sole objective of

removing Congress from power. It was totally different time when Janata Party mobilised the common people but still the efforts of opposition parties made it possible to keep Indira Gandhi away from power for three years. The allied parties of INDIA had always blamed Congress for its overconfident attitude throughout the election. The strained relations of INDIA alliance partners were very much clear since beginning when JDU, the main party behind the formation of this alliance, left followed by the Mamta Banerjee's TMC leaving it blaming the Congress party for its attitude and dominant nature.

After the Maharashtra polls, the MVA partners cursed Congress for lack of preparation, weak leadership and absence of strong narrative to counter the strategies of BJP and its allies. The internal bickering and lack of unity has always been a major reason behind the weakening of Congress. Lack of coordination among the allies had also backfired the MVA. The temptation of caste census worked in Lok Sabha polls but not in the Assembly polls and made it a monotonous agenda. Congress ployed against BJP and aggressively campaigned accusing the party at Centre for shifting the big projects from Maharashtra to Gujarat but everything went in vain.

Findings

The major findings of the paper are as follow:

- There is a close relation between State and national politics.
- National parties are always in race of finding state and local parties as alliance parties vis-à-vis state parties are also aspirant of the national identity.
- National polity has entered in a stage where multiple identities are emerging and micro-scope identities register their presence by joining alliance.
- Nature of Indian polity is heterogenous. Centralisation, domination, bargaining, cooperation and conflict are the features of the federal polity.
- Heterogenous state level politics is leading to more pressures at the national level.
- With growth of literacy rate and popularisation of social media, political socialisation led to the process of deepening democracy. Which has led to the linkage of 'active political individual' to the national politics.

Further, it is also observed on the basis of the electoral role performance of the state and regional parties such as BRS, AIMIM, TMC and Bhartiya Tribal Party that the state parties try to be the party of national politics by exerting their influence by managing the limited votes where they have limited vote share in the form of minority, tribal population.

Also, Indian federal polity has multiple political sub-systems. Some states have a bi-party system and regional parties in these states either do not exist or have limited importance. Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh are the example of bi-party system. But where tribal population is effective, there are parties which represent specific tribal interests e.g. Bhartiya Tribal Party (2023), Gondwana Gantantara Party (GGP) and Bhartiya Adivasi Party. Sometimes the role of these small parties become so important that big parties try to get their favour due to their influence in tribal areas.

Conclusion

There is no hard and fast rule for the Indian electoral politics. The claims of BJP of ‘*char sau paar*’ to Congress’s projection of ‘*Samvidhan khatre mein hai*’ were not digested by Indian voters. The balanced approach of voters has become very common in General and Assembly polls of different states. The vote share of the two major parties was even less than 1% in many states. BJP got its first ever Lok Sabha seat from Kerala. Rise of Bhartiya Adivasi Party and Zoram People’s Movement and the performance of the leadership and cadre of JMM in Jharkhand and National Conference in J & K and AAP’s single-party show in Delhi reflected the scope of regional powers in Indian federal system besides a strong Centre. The results of General election and State elections reflect that regional parties have a dominant role in their specific states. Their seat share and vote share has been stable in the Parliament.

The mood of voters reflect that voters need services and have made balance between regional and national issues and have even rejected the leaders who have not worked for them. The failed cases of exit polls especially in elections of ten states in 2023-2025, reflects that the voters, especially, the silent voters had made the major impact on the results. The women voters and non-dominant sections of the society have proved to be game changer especially in favour of BJP. Congress on the other hand tried to reach to the masses through the agenda’s like Save Constitution and Caste Census but it has a long way to go. The Modi 3.0 is something to be looked at as after a decade at the Centre we have a coalition government of NDA with support of its allies while on the other hand we have an opposition who have raised from the bottom after so long.

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