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Preface

Traditional wisdom says that India is the world's largest democracy and the United States of America is the oldest one. At the same time, a few have also recognised that it is so against the odds. The Indian experience runs against the widely held view that rich societies are much more likely to be democratic than poor ones, and that societies with large minority populations are prone to ethnic cleansing and civil war. About seven decades of successful transformation of Indian democracy from crisis to sustainability, accommodative for regional aspirations and adequate arrangements for affirmative measures for the haves-not have changed the image of Indian democracy. Today, in the second decade of the 21st century, India has become an icon for all societies which are aspiring to adopt democracy as the mode of governance.

Democracy in India, a poor and very diverse country, has succeeded for more than six decades. India's democracy has proved to be substantial as well as durable. Electoral participation has been higher than in the United States. The in 2014 general elections, 66.4% of the eligible electorates exercised their voting right. The Elections were held free and fair and the transfer of power from one coalition of parties to another coalition of parties both at the Center and the States took place peacefully. Free speech and association are constitutionally protected by the judiciary and civil society and widely practiced.

This, however, does not mean that Indian democracy does not face any challenges. In fact, since the time India decided to adopt the liberal form of democracy in the 1950s, it has consistently faced many challenges in order to remain a democratic country. For instance, right from 1952 elections till 1977 the Congress had hegemonic dominance over electoral politics in India. Though the Janta experiment, directed by Jay Prakash Narayan, Congress was defeated in 1977, but it could not maintain its internal equilibrium and collapsed in late 1979. It resulted in a midterm general election in 1980, in which the Congress once again returned to power. The sudden fall of the Janta Government shattered the dreams of the common people and thus, in the midterm elections the people of India voted for the Congress, which people had completely rejected in the previous parliament elections for Prime Minister Indira Gandhi's decision to impose emergency in the country. Stability in governance was perhaps top in the minds of the common

people while voting again for the Congress just two and half years later in 1980.

Since 1989 sharp changes have been witnessed in the political power setup in India. In the general elections held from 1989 to 2009, no single party could secure the requisite seats in the Lok Sabha to form the Government on its own. In turn, political parties needed to form a coalition to run the Government. In this contest the BJP-led NDA and the Congress-led UPA political coalitions came into existence. In fact, both the common people and experts had settled themselves with the argument that coalition politics would remain a reality of Indian politics for Foreseeable future. However, the 2014 general elections reversed this trend completely, with the BJP winning 282 seats in the Lok Sabha with 31% votes. It is important to mention here that the BJP came into being as a political party only in 1980 after the failed experiment of the Janta Government. It performed bare minimum in 1984 with merely 2 seats. All of its top guns including Vajpayee lost. But in 1989 the BJP recorded a marvelous performance, winning 85 seats. In 1991, the BJP for the first time crossed landmark of 100 and got 119 seats and both in 1998 and 1999 each it got 182 seats^[1] and from its own led NDA Government and since then its number in the Lok Sabha has remained above 100 even in the case of defeat.

The 2014 mandate has been historic in many senses. Firstly, the last 30 years of fractured electoral mandates witnessed unprecedented corruption, nepotism, hegemony of regional parties and in this process the urge of good governance seems to go under the carpet. Thus, when the BJP got a clear majority in the Lok Sabha in the previous general elections, the mandate was clear for development. This mandate has also broken many myths in Indian polity. The BJP became first none Congress party after 1977 election who got its own majority with 282 seats. The Congress, which had 191 seats in 1977, 190 in 1989, 145 in 1996, 141 in 1998, 113 in 1999 elections, was reduced into ashes with only 44 seats. This bare minimum performance of the Congress is indeed historical. It also vindicated the fact that in Hindi-heartland states where roughly 300 Lok-Sabha seats fall, the Congress lost the ground due to detrimental electoral alliances with the Samajwadi Party and the Bhaujan Samaj Party in Uttar Pradesh and with Lalu's RJD and Nitish Kumar's JD-U in Bihar. In August 2015, while addressing UP Congress workers, former Rajasthan Chief Minister and senior Congress leader, Ashok Gehlot admitted this brazen reality. Due to these electorally detrimental alliances, the Congress has been pushed to the fourth position in these crucial states. Despite series of defeats in Hindi

heartland states since 1989, the Congress has not learnt any lesson and has forged electoral alliance with Nitish Kumar and Lalu Yadav in Bihar for October-November 2015 assembly elections. This alliance may increase Congress tally from present 5 but in longer terms it will make detrimental imprint on its electoral prospects.

In the meanwhile, the BJP has attracted diverse social groups into its fold in Hindi heartland states which were considered strong pockets of support for the Congress since independence. Since 1989 elections the BJP has accumulated the support of these social groups and has further added some diverse social groups to its folds on gamut of effective appeal based on good governance and Hindutva. In Assam, BJP got 7 seats which was massive performance. Many political pundits have claimed that it is due to Hindutava but they are forgetting the fact that the state is being ruled by the Congress since last 15 years and due to non performance of the state government , common people were fed up therefore they gave massive mandate for the BJP. Another allegation is that in Uttar Pradesh, not a single Muslim could be elected Member of Parliament in this election and critics attributed it due to resurgent Hindutava in the state in the backdrop of Muzzafarnagar communal conflicts. Many people perhaps forgotten that even Liaquat Ali Khan, first time PM of Pakistan got elected in 1946 election from Merrut. But these political pundits have conveniently forgotten the fact that since last one decade BSP or SP is ruling in the state. Both regional parties have not been able to ensure good governance. Despite largest state of the country, it legs behind many states in its records of human development index. In the meanwhile, these parties along with the Congress played appeasement policy to garner Muslim community support for their electoral sustenance. These appeasement efforts and crony interpretation of secularism was rejected from the people and so called secular parties must learn lesson from their historical defeat in the state. But again one has to accept that an urge for good governance and polarization of most backward castes for Narendra Modi had played crucial role in this historical electoral mandate of the state in which virtually all parties beside BJP were wiped out.

Here it is pertinent to mention that the appeal of Hindutva, despite all claims of its expansion, is still confined to certain social pockets. It is also an established fact that due to appeasement policy of so called secular parties, it is expanding and now becoming attractive for the social groups which remained at the periphery for BJP electoral calculations. Although its appeal can not be ruled out, the urge for good governance, stability and corruption free government has played major role for the mobilisation for neutral voters in favor for the BJP.

In the 2014 elections, BJP and its allies got 50.4% of the valid vote winning 336 seats out of the total 543 seats. According to the CSDS survey of the 2014 elections, 36% youth from the 18 to 36+ groups voted for the Modi-led BJP^[2]. The total number of young voters exceeded to 68%, which is more than 1 % of the total vote. Needless to say that in this highly propelled enthusiasm youngest women also included^[3]. It indicates that women in practice didn't feel that they had separate set of demands from the government. In fact, common issues like price rise, unemployment, corruption and crime were also important determining factors among women voters and in the 2014 elections they perceive that Modi could resolve these chronic problems. Therefore, they voted massively for him.

In 1984, on the wave of Indira Gandhi's assassination, the Congress got 415 seats in Lok Sabha. Since then till 2014 general elections, either the UPA or the NDA under the leadership of the Congress or BJP formed the Government at the centre with the support of regional parties. In another words, the power of regional parties had increased during this period. Both the Congress and the BJP were not able to acquire their own majority during these years. This hegemony of regional parties at the central level put the debate of federalism and centre-state relations under the carpet. During Congress dominance these demands were collective opposition demands. Indira Gandhi had nominated Justice Sarkaria commission in 1983 to look into these demands. The Commission submitted its report in 1988. Just after submission of the report, dominance of regional parties started and in the meanwhile they forgot their previous core demands against the hegemonic Congress. The 1967 general election is important in the annals of the electoral history of India because maiden time opposition came together against the Congress in the name of anti-Congressism. This umbrella unity against the Congress got torn into pieces due to phenomenal growth of the BJP during 1984 to 2014. Many regional parties for whom the Congress was untouchable joined the Congress-led UPA. Some of them adopted the BJP as their alliance partner. This transformation in the formation of alliances happened due to the rise in the popularity of the BJP among the masses. This trend may be sustainable if beside some crucial state elections, BJP will emerge victorious in the 2019 general election. But for the immediate future, BJP has become a powerful magnet of Indian politics and other parties have to adopt it or the Congress. Gradually, to remain neutral is becoming tough for them.

The 2014 electoral mandate is historic because it has set the tone of 21st century Indian democracy in a positive manner. It has proved that

the urge for good governance remains number one expectation of the Indian electorate. It has also established that good governance has become a major voting detriment for the Indian voter. Kautilya stated in his seminal book Arthashastra that “Happiness of the people is the happiness of the king,” which prompted American political scientist ‘Roger Bosch’ to declare him as the founder of ‘Socialist Monarchy’^[4]. Since independence, Indian political leaders have forgotten that democracy is based on the noble concept of ‘welfare state’.

The existing literature shows that during periods of deep-seated differences and political crisis, parties due to their functions of interest articulation and aggregation, not only reflect changes in society, but can also actively intervene. By mobilising along the fault lines of social cleavages, parties can either contribute to aggravation of existing divisions; or by building a new national consensus on conflicting issues they can help in the re-establishment of stability and legitimacy in the political sphere. A third possible form of intervention is that of “elite accommodation” by party leaders across social groups, leading to the establishment of convocational democracy in countries, which have social diversities, that cannot be easily bridged. The 2014 electoral outcome has also established that the BJP has been successful to bring neglected social groups into their fold. These groups have been numerically powerful but politically neglected due to capture of electoral benefits by socially powerful groups among backward communities. They have felt in due course of experience since last two decades that it is better to come under the umbrella of good governance instead of exploited by hegemonic backward classes in the name of social justice. The declassified data of 2014 electoral outcome vindicates these social realities in a massive way.

BJP had come to power for the first time in 1996 for only 13 days. It formed the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) in the dynamic leadership of Atal Bihari Vajpayee and subsequently, the BJP-led NDA Government came to power in 1998 and 1999 and ruled till May 2004 elections. The Congress-led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) came into power in 2004 with allies. Many progressive political pundits had written that BJP has become now archival material and it is almost impossible for the BJP to return into power. But few scholars did a balanced assessment. As Amartya Sen has pointed out, “The BJP’s powerful role in mainstream Indian politics and the might of the Hindutva movement are parts of the new political reality in India. Even though the BJP is no longer dominant, in the way it was over the last few years, it remains a politically powerful force, and is working hard to return to office.”^[5]

Hindu Nationalism is by no means an alien force on India's political landscape. As a political and ideological force, its origins are rooted in the reification of religious communities under the colonial government, the acceptance and reversal of these colonial identities by Hindu revivalist movements of the early 20th century, and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's elaboration of Hindutva in *Essentials of Hindutva* (1922), which provided the ideological foundations of Hindu Nationalism^[6]. Originally conceptualized as a social and religious movement, Hindu Nationalists soon set out to transform their movement into a political force in opposition to the Congress party and Muslim League. The result was the institutionalization of Hindu Nationalism with the establishment of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)^[7].

The fact remains that the BJP has expanded its base from its traditional core to its traditional periphery merely on the basis of an appeal for good governance and stable government. It is an open secret that despite so called wave for the BJP, it got merely 31% of the total exercised vote. According to 2011 census, Hindus constitutes roughly 79% of the entire population. In this context, merely 31% vote for the BJP vindicates that only 40% Hindus voted in its favour. If Hindutva appeal was major force for the 2014 voting behaviour, then more than half of the total Hindus would have voted for the BJP. In West Bengal, Orissa, Andhra, Telengana, Tamilnadu and Kerela, where combined 164 Lok Sabha seats fall, the BJP got only 7 seats. It is important to mention here that all these states are Hindu majority states. The BJP didn't perform well here because the BJP's organizational structural is weak in these states and it is considered to be the bastion of regional parties. AIADMK, BJD, TMC, Telgu Desam, TRS have won sizeable a number of seats in these states despite BJP waves in other parts of the country. But, one strong hope for the BJP lies in these states for 2019 elections. If Modi-led BJP Government performs well on the fronts of good governance and stability, the same region could give more than 50 seats to the BJP in 2019 elections. The reason for this would be transformation in the fortunes of the BJP is these regional parties have been ruling these states for decades and have performed below the average. In case of good performance of the central government, the people of these states may tilt towards the BJP in 2019 general elections because of its appeal and capacity to deliver good governance. Again it is important to mention that these states will not vote for BJP in 2019 for their appeal of Hindutva but for good governance. In Hindi heartland also particularly in old Uttar Pradesh and old Bihar, where the BJP got 121 out of total 134 seats, lack of governance was major issue. The BJP has

also expanded social base in these two important states in terms of number of seats and it is mainly due to absence of governance in these states. Hindutva appeal may work in both states but urge for governance and stability was bigger push factor. In this sense this mandate is a threat for the Modi government as well. If it does not deliver the promised ones, then people vote against the BJP. It could be safely stated that 2014 mandate is a challenge which it could convert into an opportunity by providing good governance.

After 2014 general elections only BJP and the Congress has remained national parties. However, after the 2009 general elections, the number of national parties was seven. Many regional parties in the Hindi heartland have lost their support and scored blank. In Uttar Pradesh, the BSP was unable to open its account in the 2014 elections. The Samajwadi Party also performed poorly. Caste remains significant in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar. But, in the 2014 general elections, the BJP have been able to shed the power of the caste to a certain extent. The Bihar assembly polls are to be held in October-November 2015 and Uttar Pradesh in early 2017. If the BJP wins in both states, a new era of governance and development will become issues of electoral politics in these Bimarau states. Southern, Northern and Western states of India have improved phenomenally on gamut of developmental fronts. But, U.P and Bihar still could be comparable to sub-Saharan Africa. Positive politics in both states will make our progress sustainable because almost half of poor lives in both states. Kautilaya had stated that the state is a body and if 20% of our state body is not perfect, then how we will be able to really ensure our sustainable development. The 21st century politics should be more mature and welfare state oriented, instead of issueless ones. We must hope that in coming election good governance, sustainable development and human rights could be the poll plank and every competing political parties should come out with their set of plans for these egalitarian challenges.

India has adopted the parliamentary form of democracy. Unlike the unitary form of government in Britain, India has the federal form of government. Federal aspects have been given prominence through constitutional provisions. But, because of four decades of one party dominance, it was virtually converted as unitary format. Since 1989 till 2014 general elections no single party could be able to secure its own majority. These 30 years of coalition era strengthened the power of the states through regional parties. Since 1984 till date the ruling parties have had no majority in the Rajya-Sabha. The Rajya-Sabha is important for smooth functioning of the government. Therefore, despite

majority governments are compelled to solicit the support of regional parties and through this federal structure are being respected. This could be considered as one of the best achievement of the coalition era. Despite BJP majority in Lok-Sabha through the 2014 elections, the status of federalism is bound to sustain, as the BJP has limited number in the Rajya-Sabha. The BJP is also ideologically committed to devolution of power to the states. In recent years, the 29 states of India's federal system have played a more prominent role in India's public life. Not least has been their contribution to helping India to live peacefully with difference. In a world where armed strife has increasingly taken the form of civil war and ethnic cleansing—of the 96 recorded conflicts between 1989 and 1996, only five were between sovereign states—India's federal system has helped keep cultural and ethnic differences within relatively peaceful bounds. It is unique achievement of Indian democracy, which could be emulated by other newly emerged democratic societies.

In thinking about something with which to compare India's federalism, the multilingual European Union seems more appropriate than does the United States. Much like the English and the Italians, the Hindi speakers of Bihar state in the shadow of the Himalayas and the Tamil speakers of Tamil Nadu at the subcontinent's southern tip speak quite distinct languages. They share little history and few points of contact. Their traditional rulers, legends, and folk cultures are distinct from one another.

Their socio-economic profiles are as different as those of Sweden and Portugal. There is widespread poverty and illiteracy in Bihar. Tamil Nadu is a prosperous and developed state. No contrast between any two of the 50 U.S states comes anywhere close. Forty years ago, there seemed good reason to fear that Selig Harrison was right to warn that India's "fissiparous tendencies," particularly its linguistic differences, would soon lead to balkanization or dictatorship. Today, such worries seem unpersuasive. The federal system has helped India to live peacefully with its marked difference.

The 2014 general election has pushed our politics towards positive direction. Since last 30 years our politics was known for corruption, non governance and lack of stability. We could not forget that Indira Gandhi was thrown out from power in 1977 due to Janta wave but Janta party could not run the government due to its internal contradictions. In the mid term election held in 1980 the people of India returned Indira Gandhi into power only due to their belief that she is able to provide stability. During last 30 years, stability was

reference point therefore people of India express a mandate for stability through this historic mandate. This election has ensured that only clean and good governance will return the incumbent government's back in power. It is an ideal situation in a matured democracy. We must hope that in coming elections this trend must be sustained and our politics should prove that we are a mature democracy.

Reference

- [1] Amartya Sen, *The Argumentative Indian*, (New York: Penguin, 2005), p-50.
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- [5] Op. Cit. No-1, pp- 50-51.
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16th Lok Sabha Elections in Bihar and Jharkhand: A Critical Analysis

Alok Kumar Gupta

Elections for 543 seats of the 16th Lok Sabha were organised in ten phases during April 7-May 12, 2015. Out of a total of 466 political parties that took part in the elections six of them were national political parties. The National Party that took part in 2014 General Elections to Lok Sabha were Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP), Bhujan Samaj Party (BSP), Communist Party of India (CPI), Communist Party of India (Marxist) [CPI(M)], Indian National Congress (INC), and Nationalist Congress Party (NCP). All the six national parties participated in both Bihar and Jharkhand in 16thLokSabha elections and contested too.

Elections for 40 seats of LokSabha in Bihar and 14 seats in Jharkhand were organized in six and three phases respectively. Out of 40 seats in Bihar six of them were reserved for SC and in Jharkhand 1 seat for SC and 5 seats for ST were reserved. Elections were by and large peaceful considering that both these state remains the hotbed of Naxalism and the violence perpetrated by the radical left wings and are well entrenched in these two states.

Table-I : Nominations Related Details

S. No.		Bihar	Jharkhand
1	Nominations Filed	40 Seats	14 Seats
	Male	655	248
	Women	54	19
	Others Total	0	0
	Total	709	267
2	Nominations Rejected		
	Male	73	18
	Women	6	1
	Others	0	0
	Total	79	19

3	Nominations Withdrawn		
	Male	22	8
	Women	1	0
	Others	0	0
	Total	23	8
4	Contesting Candidates		
	Male	560	222
	Women	47	18
	Others	0	0
	Total	607	40
5	Deposit Forfeited		
	Male	476	192
	Women	36	17
	Others	0	0
	Total	512	209

Source: Election Commission of India, General Elections, 2014 (16thLokSabha)

A total of 709 candidates filed nominations for 40 seats of Bihar out of which 655 were males and 54 of them were female candidates. On the other hand, of the 267 candidates that filed nominations for 14 seats of Jharkhand 248 were male and 19 were female candidates. Finally after withdrawal and rejection of the nominations by the candidates and the election commission respectively 607 candidates of Bihar and 209 in Jharkhand were in fray flexing their money and muscles vis-à-vis each other to win the election. The noticeable point was that only 47 female candidates in Bihar and 18 in Jharkhand were women candidates contesting elections. The total number of candidates that forfeited their deposits in both the states reveals the fact of the strong election wave in favour of BJP and the towering personality of Narendra Modi during the campaign. The deposits of 36 of the 47 women candidate in Bihar were forfeited whereas the number of women candidates (in Jharkhand) who forfeited their deposits was 17 out of 18 who contested elections. Table-I above provides the complete details of the nominations related information of the 16thLokSabha elections in the state of Bihar and Jharkhand.

Table-II : Voters Information

S. No.	Electors/Voters	Bihar	Jharkhand
1	Electors		
	Male	34121296	10710644
	Female	29676576	9639126
	Others	2288	26
	Total	63800160	20349796
2	Voters		
	NRIs	0	1
	Service	76350	13603
	Male	18748719	6859701
	Female	17124395	6122832
	Others	18	0
	Postal	19327	4092
	Total	35892459	12986625
	Pol %	56.26	63.82
	Rejected Votes Postal	4434	1210
	Votes not retrieved from EVM	1761	2475
	NOTA Votes	580964	190927
	Valid Votes Polled	35304368	12792013

Source: Election Commission of India, General Elections, 2014 (16thLokSabha)

There are over 6.38 crore electors in Bihar and over 2 crores of voters in Jharkhand. Percentage of voters turn out in the election was 56.26 per cent in Bihar and 63.82 per cent in Jharkhand. The average voter turn-out at national level was 66.38 per cent over all the nine phases of elections. Therefore, in Jharkhand the percentage turnout was higher than that of Bihar, but it is much below than many other states such as Nagaland where it was above 87 per cent and Lakshadweep with above 86 per cent. Voters turn-out was above 60 per cent in most other states like Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Karnataka and Kerala name but a few. Voter turn-out was slightly less than the national average in Jharkhand but it was far less in case of Bihar. This reveals a cause of concern as to why a state like Bihar which is so politically active and

vibrant was so low in terms of voter turn-out which was slightly above 55 per cent. The pertinent question that can be raised as to why the voters in Bihar did not turn-out to vote? Is it that they only discuss and debate politics and when it comes to exercising their right and contributing to the upkeep and strengthening of their democracy they are indifferent and insolent. Jharkhand has done fairly well in terms of voter turn-out and is somewhere nears the national figure of voter turn-out and is above 63 per cent. So far as low turn-out in Bihar is concerned indifferent and insolence may be one of the reasons but the most obvious reason that seems could be following:

- (i) A good number of voters are outside Bihar contributing into the workforce of the country in other states. Such voters return to Bihar only during festivals like Durga Puja, Deepawali, Holi, and Chhath and accordingly they ignore the festival of democracy when it takes place. There could be helplessness also as most of these workers they store their money for visiting their villages during festive seasons and they are hardly left with money to return to their village and vote for the cause of democracy.
- (ii) A good number of voters, mostly the student community or one may say the youths who are the most vibrant lot and prospective voters are outside the state of Bihar for the purpose of education. Some are into different engineering colleges, medical, and general education in Delhi, Mumbai and Bangalore preparing for competitive examination like Civil Services, SCC, Bank POs, and Bank Clerks etc. They too belong to simple family and passing through a phase of struggle and their purse does not permit that they come to their state only for voting.
- (iii) Another group of Biharis are out of their state for job and are in services all over the country in Railways, in software industries, in Universities and colleges, and in private sectors as well. They are an educated community and they understand the plight of their state quite well. Many of them are also interested in contributing their bit to change the social, political and economic face of Bihar, but they are rudderless and busy in their own profession. Their professional commitment and opportunity cost involved does not allow them to return back and vote for betterment of their state. Postal ballot may be a solution but the complexities involved fails to motivate them to take pains and do the voting.
- (iv) Of course there are voters who are away from Bihar but are less inclined to vote on the day of polling because they have this

realization that their one vote does not matter much and they are least concerned about the status of their state. Sometime they also hide their state affiliation and crib about their own state before others. Since the prevailing social, political and economic backwardness of the state does not directly impact them they may not be bothered about it.

- (v) Some voters are in government job and are serious about voting. They are posted within the state and are in such jobs that they are assigned with election duties and are unable to vote because of that. Postal voting is facilitated for them but because of the pains and risks involved in organizing elections they simply choose to forget about the postal voting, thinking such few votes hardly matters for change.

There could be many more reasons for low percentage of voting in Bihar and some of these reasons could also be relevant for other states. However, what is unique about Bihar, Jharkhand and adjacent states of Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal is that the people of these states whether illiterate, semi-literate, literate, educated, and the intellectuals, they all reveal similar behavioural patterns. They are all highly enlightened about the pedigree and profile of their leaders and the caste and religious dynamics of voting in their state but when it comes to exercising their own right they are indifferent and insolent and to put it more precisely they are selfish.

Suggestions for Enhancing the Voter Turn Out

There is hardly any doubt that if the voter's turn out is enhanced the political scenario in Bihar would change drastically. This is because a new segment of people would be facilitated and tempted to vote and such group of people may be voting going beyond their caste, religious and other parochial considerations and may be able to send qualitative candidates to both the national legislature and state assembly. Presently the quantity prevails at the cost of quality at all levels of electoral politics of Bihar.

The easiest way out to enhance the voter percentage is the implementation and use of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) to facilitate such voters. When the advent of digital technology has facilitated money transfer across the world, banking, insurance, and application like passport and other things of life; the same could be exploited in the field of elections to all levels of legislatures. The digital technology could be used in a manner that a resident/domicile

of Bihar could be registered well in advance with the Election Commission of India as a voter from a particular state and district with allotted Booth No. in which their permanent residence is berthed and he/she can cast his/her vote from his/her mobile itself. The day this is facilitated I am sure the face of democracy not only in Bihar but in the whole of India will stand changed. There are higher chances than that the hidden cost of election would also come down along with 'purchase of votes' by vested interests. It would also have potentials to change many other ills of democracy as well as malpractices during elections. Needless to say voters turn-out would shoot up substantially.

Results of 16thLok Sabha Elections

Results of the 16thLok Sabha were announced on May 16, 2014. The BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) won the majority with 336 seat with its larges partner BJP gaining 282 seats and subsequently formed the Government on May 26, 2014. However, the electoral results were quite encouraging for (NDA) in Bihar and Jharkhand which were as follows:

Table-III: Results of 16thLok Sabha and Seats won by Political Parties

S. No.	Political Party	Seats won in Bihar	%age of Votes polled	Jharkhand Votes polled	%age of
1	Bhartiya Janta Party	22	29.86	12	40.71
2	Indian National Congress	2	8.56	0	13.48
3	Nationalist Congress Party	1	1.22	—	—
4	Janta Dal (United)	2	16.04	—	—
5	Lok Janshakti Party	6	6.50	—	—
6	Rashtriya Janata Dal	4	20.46	0	1.66
7	Unrecognised	3	0.12	0	0.35
8	Jharkh and Mukti Morch	—	—	2	9.42
9	Jharkhand Vikas Morch (Prajatantrik)	—	—	0	12.35
10	AJSU Party	—	—	0	3.77
11	Independent	0	4.34	0	3.33
	Total Seats	40		14	

Source: Election Commission of India, General Elections, 2014 (16thLok Sabha)

Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) was the clear winner in both the states with 22 of the 40 seats in Bihar and 12 of the 14 seats in Jharkhand. However, in terms of votes polled BJP had less percentage of votes in Bihar compared to Jharkhand. BJP polled only 29.86 per cent of total valid votes in Bihar which was less than the national average at 31.34 per cent. BJP in Jharkhand polled 40.71 per cent of total votes polled which was a substantial vote considering the performance of other parties in both the states and was much higher than the national average i.e. 31.34 per cent. Indian National Congress got a mere 19.52 per cent of votes at the national level in 2014. Interestingly at national level BJP had polled 18.80 per cent of total votes in 2009 and Indian National Congress 28.55 per cent of the total votes. Hence in 2014 at the national level the 'percentage of vote' share of INC was substantially diminished and that of BJP substantially increased. Thus, there was massive swing of popular votes in favour of BJP and against INC.

The ruling party at the national level since 2009 the Indian National Congress which led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government fared badly in both the states. In Bihar Congress could get mere 2 seats with 8.56 per cent of votes and zero seats in Jharkhand though there it got 13.48 per cent of votes which is slightly higher than that of Bihar. The same Congress party in 2009 Lok Sabha had one seat in Jharkhand with 15.02 per cent of total votes and in Bihar it had two seats with 10.26 per cent of total votes. The obvious fact remains that the successive erosion in the vote base of Indian National Congress has been substantive and consistent. It is a national party and has failed to learn from its mistakes and is continuously trying to serve lip service to its voters who seem to have developed distaste for the party and a fatigue against its rhetoric and false promises. The party that claims to be political party of youth in the country does not seem to be young from any angle and continues to carry the burden of oldies and worn out politicians in whom the voters see only cheats and greed for power. The political party which ruled the country for a fairly long number of years after independence lost in a manner that it ceases to be even an opposition on the floor of parliament.

The remarkable development was that in both these states the ruling state parties suffered electoral devastation in terms of seats in the Lok Sabha. JDU which was a ruling party in Bihar got only 2 seats with 16.04 per cent of total votes in 2014 whereas it had won 20 seats with 24.04 per cent of votes in 2009. Therefore, it was a substantial loss to state parties and especially JDU in terms of both seats and percentage of total votes which is a sign of eroding vote base of JDU in Bihar. On

the other hand in Jharkhand the national party BJP encroached upon the vote base of all the state and national parties. BJP which polled above 40 per cent of total votes in 2014 had secured 8 seats with 27.53 per cent of total votes polled in 2009 General Elections. The ruling party JMM which had only 2 seats with 11.7 per cent of votes in 2009 was able to retain its 2 seats and fared well with 9.42 per cent of total votes in 2014, a slight gain over its performance and vote base over 2009. Jharkhand Vikas Morcha (Prajanatrik) which had one seat in 2009 Lok Sabha with 10.48 per cent of votes was able to enhance its vote base to 12.35 per cent of total votes but failed to gain any seat in the 2014 Lok Sabha.

Rashtriya Janta Dal (RJD) which ruled Bihar for a substantive number of years has shown a consistent decline in its performance in Lok Sabha elections. RJD which got 4 seats with 19.31 per cent of total votes polled in 2009 Lok Sabha elections could muster again the same number of seats with a slightly higher percentage of votes i.e. 20.46 per cent in 2014 Lok Sabha elections in Bihar. Thus, the party which once ruled the state with all its might and vigour continues to be voted out both in Lok Sabha as well as in State Assembly. RJD has no presence in Jharkhand either in 2009 or in 2014.

Surprisingly, Independents which won 2 seats both in Bihar and Jharkhand in 2009 Lok Sabha Elections with 12.12 per cent and 11.12 per cent of votes respectively failed to win any seat in 2014 in either of the states. However, they could muster nearly 4 per cent of total votes polled in both the states. Women candidates also did not fare well in 2014 elections and were completely underrepresented in the Lok Sabha in both these states. Out of 47 women candidates that contested election only three of them got elected in Bihar Lok Sabha 36 of them forfeited their deposits. The conditions in Jharkhand was quite bleak where 18 women candidates that contested none of them could make it to Lok Sabha and 17 of them forfeited their deposits. Therefore, in spite of the fact that in Bihar where 47.71 per cent of voters were women they are represented by only three of them whereas in Jharkhand where 47.15 per cent of voters were women they could not send even a single representative of theirs.

Quality of Candidates in 16th Lok Sabha from Bihar and Jharkhand

National Election Watch (NEW) has been making tremendous efforts towards analysing the quality of the candidates contesting and winning

the elections to different national and state legislatures in the country. The analysis is regarding their criminal background, educational qualification, gender etc. According to the information collected and analysed by NEW for the winning candidates of Bihar in 2014 Lok Sabha out of 40 Legislators 28 of them are having criminal cases pending against them in some court of law ranging from as many as 24 cases against Rajesh Ranjan (Pappu Yadav) from Madhepura to as least as 1 against Tariq Anwar from Katihar and many others. In case of Jharkhand there are 4 out of 14 candidates with criminal background or cases pending against them in the court. Nishikant Dubey from Godda has a maximum of 5 cases pending against him and Pashupati Nath Singh from Dhanbad and Bijay Kumar Hansdak from Rajmahal with 1 cases each against them in the court of law pending against them. These legislators with criminal background are across all the winning political parties and therefore blame lies on all of them.

Most of the winning candidates from both the states are graduates and some are also post graduate and doctorate. However, one winning candidate from Bihar is only literate, whereas 2 of them are eighth pass, 2 of them 10th pass and 5 of them are 12th pass who have been entrusted with the task of making laws and policy by the people of Bihar. Jharkhand has sent 1 legislator who is 5th pass and 2 of them are 10th pass and one of the legislator is 12th pass. Therefore, in terms of merit majority of the winners are fairly educated and have thus added value to the highest law-making body of the country. However, on the other hand their criminal background must be a cause of concern for policy makers as well as the legislators who are inadequately educated as law-making and policy-making for the citizens of the country never happens to be an easy task.

Conclusion

Casting a cursory glance over the electoral process and results of Bihar and Jharkhand one may conclude that the scenario is quite encouraging on many counts. One that many of the legislators who won the election with 1 or 2 cases pending against them suggests that given their personality and public life it may have been brought by their opponent just to malign their image. Even the educational qualifications of such candidates are sufficient enough that they could be entitled to govern and participate in the process of law-making. Exceptions are always there, and even in this case there are some candidates who smack of crime and politics nexus which may contribute towards unmaking of the governance in the country.

Cause of concern is the sagging number of women legislators as it may lead to multifarious impact. Women organizations who are asking for compulsory reservation of seats in legislatures of the country to the extent of 33 per cent, in coming days they may articulate their demand for reservation in proportionate to their presence as voters. Therefore, if the political leadership is really serious about enhancing their representation then it is high time that the political parties must facilitate their reservation at the party level itself to ensure that a substantial number of women are elected as legislators.

Last but not the least, the unprecedented advance that we have made in the area of technology must be utilized to facilitate smooth, free and fair elections in the country. Digitalization and ICT may reduce the elections cost both by candidates and by the election commission drastically on the one hand; and would facilitate the conduct of election in a free, fair and without violence on the other. Therefore, the Election Commission of India must start working in the direction of enhancing the interface between elections and technology.

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The election analysis presented here largely drawn its raw data from two sources i.e. Election Commission of India and National Election Watch.

Politics of Regionalism and 2014 Election Mandate: A Case Study of Electoral Politics of Odisha

Roshni Kujur and Amulya K Tripathy

Introduction

India as a democratic country has a multi-party system with a large number of regional and state level political parties competing for power and position. Every party is guided and recognized with its unique ideological perspectives. Every party aims to maximize the welfare approaches towards the common people by different means and sources. With this analogy its clearly becomes necessary to differentiate the political parties on the basis of their scientific and logical analysis. The quality of their governance and particularly their credibility on the count of good governance signifies through their objectives, policy making and performance too. In democratic politics, the performance of a government is critical to its legitimacy. The capacities of the political parties impress upon to represent the citizens and provide policy choices that demonstrate their ability to govern for the public good.

Regional Political Parties: A Theoretical Analysis

Regional political parties play a major role in the Indian politics. The regional parties are identified as the prior of achieving good vote bank, thereby carries the chief importance aspect for the major political parties for contesting election. These regional parties get allied to any of the major parties to get a majority number of seats to have a place in the house of the parliament. In such a type of hung parliament, the major seat holding parties have to bow down before these smaller regional parties. In such critical situation these political parties has to take the support of the regional parties otherwise they may lose the power and the parliament can be dissolved at any means. This type of insecurity puts a great impact on leading power of the country which further changes the economic status and share market of the country. With respect to the state, these parties can perform the good governance

spectrum. They can take up the problems of the state to the vision of the centre and get a resolution for the benefits of his constituency. But that requires the dedication towards the state and the citizens who have trusted these parties to take them to power.¹ The present paper has taken the significant Regional Party of Odisha, the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) to make an analysis regarding its consecutive remarkable performance and functioning for the last 11 years, without fail.

History Of Biju Janata Dal (BJD) And The Coalition Government : BJP And BJD 2000

In the state of Odisha earlier Congress faced lot many challenges, which signifies that state parties in Odisha has a old age linkage. In the 1950s, the Ganatantra Parishad, in the 1960s, the Jana Congress, and in the 1970s, the Utkal Congress were the prominent parties and were crucial partners in various coalition governments as formed in Odisha. Later on in 1997 the BJD came on the political platform after Biju Patnaik's death in 1996. Biju Patnaik, the non-congress leader autonomously operated at the state level and he formally remained with the Janata Party and the Janata Dal after his set back from the Utkal Congress.² The main reason for forming the BJD was joining hands with the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The party became a part of the NDA in 1998 and formed coalition governments by taking up the regional feelings and sentiments of the people of Odisha.

Naveen Patnaik became his father Biju Patnaik's Lok Sabha seat successor in 1996 as a member of the Janata Dal. Later in 1997, Patnaik split Janata Dal over its failure as a moving strong ally with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and formed the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) in December 1997. The BJD has participated in several ruling coalitions' with BJP both at the Centre and in Odisha and was mainly professed as one of the best secular parties of the National Democratic Alliance. Since the Odisha state came into existence, by then BJP and BJD had aligned between years from 2000 and 2008. BJD won nine seats in the 1998 general elections and Naveen Patnaik was named as the Minister for Mines. In the following year 1999 general elections, BJD won 10 seats, further in 2000 and 2004 elections won a majority seats in state legislative assembly elections in alliance with BJP. In 2000 as BJP joined hands with BJD a new chapter of success added in contesting elections in the history of BJP in Odisha. For the first time in the eastern state, the BJP bagged 38 of the 63 seats in 2000 election and backed with 32 of 63 seats in Assembly election in 2004. Further the coalition

government with flying colours won 11 Lok Sabha seats in the 2004 elections. 3

Factors Responsible For Divide In 2009 Performance Of BJP Minister And BJD: Failure Of BJP

By this time a magnificent turn could be seen in the politics of Odisha when Naveen Patnaik won second, third and fourth terms as Chief Minister of Odisha in 2004, 2009 and 2014 state elections respectively. And he then decided to break the alliance with BJP in Odisha and its support for the NDA in the centre and move alone in the 2009 general elections. In the Indian General Elections in 2009, BJD won 14 seats and secured strong 108 legislative seats out of 147 seats in assembly election of 2009. Before the Lok Sabha and assembly elections in April 2009, Odisha made news for more than one reason to boycott BJP.

Firstly the anti-Christian riots and tensions, where Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik played his cards smartly to get rid BJD from the partnership of the BJP in the wake of the communal violence in Kandhamal district in 2007-08. Though the BJD and the BJP were coalition partners in two assembly and Lok Sabha elections, they contested independently in rural and urban elections in 2007 and 2008 respectively. The BJD's performed a remarkable innings in these elections, and Naveen Patnaik didn't give a second thought to go alone without the BJP's role in the Kandhamal riots. The BJD skillfully combined its clever politics with a strong pro-poor programme and its strongest agenda by supplying of rice at Rs. 2 a kilogram for the families below poverty line. Thereby the BJD's election success focuses on to pave its way in combining the popular policies, effective performance and non-communal politics.⁴ This new political scenario was really a great set back to BJP, but the question arises whether the triangular contest would benefit Congress in taking advantage of political developments in the state.

Secondly, before the separation the two parties had together contested the Lok Sabha elections in 1998, 1999 and 2004, by winning the majority and two assembly elections in 2000 and 2004, forming successive coalition governments for the second time on 4:3 ratio, means BJD fielded its candidates in 84 seats, BJP's candidates contested in the remaining 63 seats. But the effort to save the alliance failed when the BJP rejected the BJD's proposal for lesser number of seats in both Lok Sabha and assembly segments, because BJD did not want to continue its relations with the saffron party as they had created a secret agenda with the Congress. To prevent Congress from gaining power BJD General

Secretary Damodar Rout said BJP not to demand 63 seats, as it was given in the 2004 election, by 'realising the ground reality'.⁵ While Patnaik remained silent on the number of seats the BJD wanted to contest, as because his party leaders had all along been expressing strong reservations to the old formula and favoured to cut in the BJP's seat share. Simultaneously BJP withdrew the support from the leading government and demanded imposition of President's rule in state. As because the government would be reduced to a minority following withdrawal of BJP support, President's rule should be imposed in the state, as been added by BJP Legislature Party leader and Industries Minister Biswabhusan Harichandan. Bout on the other side the BJD had 61 members in the 147-member assembly while the saffron party could manage with 30 Members in Legislative Assembly.

Thirdly, Odisha covers three regions: coastal, southern and western, likewise the Lok Sabha election varies in all these regions. The support base of the BJD in coastal and southern Orissa was larger than those of the Congress and the BJP. But in western Orissa the Congress was slightly stronger and well ahead of the BJP. Of 11 seats in coastal Orissa, the BJD won nine and one went to the CPI. The Congress won only one seat. In southern and western Orissa, the Congress and the BJD had an equal share of seats, but there was a huge difference in their share of votes.⁶ There are three and five seats from the state reserved in the Lok Sabha for scheduled castes (SCs) and scheduled tribes (STs), respectively. Given the overall success of the BJD, it is clear that the party was popular across various social sections and in rural areas too. Thus the, long-standing alliance of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) with the Biju Janata Dal (BJD) came to an abrupt end, as BJD remained as the most efficient party to rule over Odisha.

Naveen Patnaik : Winning In 2014 Election

Patnaik is known as a crusader against corruption; he also symbolises the developmental aspirations of the backward state and its regional pride. When he severed links with the BJP, his erstwhile ally made the mistake of harshly criticising him and making a hero out of him. Biju Janata Dal won a huge victory in the Indian General Elections in 2014 securing 20 of the 21 Lok Sabha seats and 117 of 147 Legislative Assembly seats of Odisha. In compare to Naveen Patnaik's Biju Janata Dal (BJD) as a state party, he himself is more efficient and a charming star than its party to hold a comfortable win for a fourth term in office. And it clearly favour Naveen Patnaik himself which is not without reason, because his created and executed agenda widely favoured his

notion for the betterment of the common masses and more development at the grassroots level in particular. Villages were impoverished with electricity benefits and water facilities even to the remote regions where it seemed for the poor masses as dreams come true. The party targeted the lower strata of the society as tribals and women whose vote banks traditionally carried towards congress pockets, but it landed on BJD's counter. The reason behind was the 100 crore package for kendu leaf pluckers mostly initiated by the tribal people where their sources of income brought goodness to their livelihood. On the otherside the women self help groups wooed lower interest rate loans which benefitted them a lot. In the last phase of his tenure Naveen Patnaik shut down the mouth of opposition by announcing the launch of 2000 projects in less than 20 days, which added one more colour to his winning flag. Further the best shot of Naveen Patnaik in his tenure was the intellectual handling of the super cyclone Phailin which made its landfall at the tourist resort of Gopalpur-on-sea on 12th October 2013. Under the supervision of Naveen Patnaik, and through the pro-active approach of the government the damage was minimized, and this effort was praise worthy. Even the UN Official admired and stated that, "Today Odisha is a global leader in disaster management and risk reduction." Again a giant turnover was seen from other party as congress, BJP, JMM and CPI (M) started to lose their significant leaders, which really strengthened the position of BJD, in the general Election, 2014. Leaders like, Bimdadar Kuanra, Golak Nayak, Hema Gamang, Anup Sai, Arun Dey, Jitu Patnaik, and Sudam Marandi Adhikanda Sethi who joined hands and tied a strong relation with Naveen Patnaik, which added a new picture to the party.

Regional Party BJD's Performances Vrs Modism: A Study On 2014 Mandate

Looking back to ten years when Naveen Patnaik became Odisha's Chief Minister, he was new champ to politics, considered immature and suffered to converse in Odia, which made him quite inefficient. But he was quite fast in picking and became a matured and able political leader and proved himself smarter than BJP leaders as his ally for last 11 years. He dropped bombshell when an emissary of L.K. Advani met him in March and was tersely told that BJD could not offer more than 31 Assembly and 5 Lok Sabha seats to the BJP. Naveen did not lose his composure even for a moment while telling Advani's emissary that the alliance with BJP was over. The BJP leaders who thought Naveen to be their most dependable ally were shocked and changed their tunes calling

him a serial killer and betrayer. The BJP's harsh words notwithstanding there is a grudging admiration for the BJD chief in the BJP circles. He is seen as a smarter politician compared with much senior ones in the BJP. More important people see him as a clean politician and who is striving to end corruption. That the campaign boomeranged is history with the BJP now reduced to near nothingness in a state where it enjoyed a considerable clout over 11 years of coalition rule with the BJD.

Naveen Patnaik has often spoken as a proposed Third Front supporter and has mentioned that the corruption of the Congress and communal politics of the BJP has really weakened the country moral politics. BJD leaders were quite confident enough to ensure in record stating that both the BJP and the Congress would not be able to secure a majority in the 2014 elections, as because their party, together with other regional parties, will play a major role at the national level. Naveen Patnaik has stressed for winning more Lok Sabha seats which would help the BJD to become a stronger player in New Delhi and able to fight for the interest and demands of the state. However, the first half of 2014 was very encouraging for the BJD with the party winning 117 out of 147 seats in the Assembly, by waving away Modi's government too.⁷ Congress and BJP were handed out a humiliating defeat by the BJD by winning 16 and 10 seats respectively. BJD's performance in the Lok Sabha election also held a great improvement as the party won 20 out of 21 seats.

The jubilation in the BJD camp over the fourth consecutive win in the Assembly polls in 2014 was just for a short-while as the CBI tightened the noose around party leaders in the multi-thousand crore chit fund scam. The arrest of three senior BJD leaders including party MP Ramchandra Hansdah, former Government chief whip and Banki MLA Prabhat Tripathy and former MLA Subarna Naik by the CBI in connection with the chit fund scam dealt a heavy blow to BJD's cultivated image of transparency in administration, which lead to further embarrassment. Leader of the Opposition in the Assembly Narasingh Mishra demanded that the CBI should also interrogate and investigate the Chief Minister who always steps down to pave way for a free, fair and impartial probe into the scam. The Chief Minister claimed that neither the State Government nor the BJD was involved in chit fund scam and honestly suspended the arrested party MP and MLA describing their role as an individual matter. The Government also came in for Opposition criticism during the period on a host of other issues including the mining, coal and land scams. The fact that BJD former minister Prafulla Chandra Ghadei was expelled from the party for indulging in anti-party activities

and even denied a party ticket in the 2014 election, which brought some adverse remarks on the Chief Minister.⁸

Even then the main Opposition Congress, however, failed to take advantage of the situation. Senior leaders including the Leader of the Opposition in the last Assembly Bhupinder Singh left the party in droves either to join BJD or BJP. President of Odisha Pradesh Congress Committee (OPCC) Jaydev Jena and the then union minister Srikant Jena, who was campaign committee chairman, failed to win from their Assembly and Lok Sabha seats respectively. The return of former Assam governor JB Patnaik to Odisha after expiry of his term brought encouragement to his followers who want him to play an active role for the revival of Congress in the State. But nothing could stop from winning the 2014 election by the BJD Government and added tenure in making Odisha a better place of opportunity and prosperity for the common masses. The BJP upbeat about the prospects of the party in the State but failed. KV Singhdeo state BJP president added that “Our aim is to form the next Government in Odisha for which we have intensified the membership drive.

Conclusion

Now the stage is set and it is an advantage for Naveen Patnaik. Once again the Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, the leader of BJD have not only proved his administrative abilities, and become one of the longest serving Chief Ministers of the country. Even he is in the hot seat with more power than before with detractors having learnt the lesson that it is not so easy to dethrone him. All these regional leaders have declared that the time has come for a Third Front of non-Congress and non-BJP parties to emerge, to come out with strong political agenda and responsibilities.

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Reviewing the 2014 Lok Sabha Poll in West Bengal: A Focus

Koushiki Dasgupta

One of the most outstanding events in Bengal's political history was the parliament election of 2014. It was outstanding in the sense that within a few years of emergence the Trinamool Congress (TMC) swept the Lok Sabha polls in the state to emerge as the fourth-largest party in the new Lok Sabha while the BJP signalled its rise as a force by eating into the vote share of the erstwhile rulers Left Front which was nearly wiped out. The Congress on the other fought hard to hold on to its pockets of strength in the state. Of the state's 42 seats, the Trinamool picked up 34, recording its best performance as it nearly doubled its 19 seat tally of 2009. However, five years back, the Trinamool had an alliance with the Congress, and this time it fought the polls alone. In the Lok Sabha polls, the BJP managed a vote share of 17% in the state, its highest ever, not far behind second-placed Communist Party of India (Marxist), which got 23% of the vote. It did especially well in the capital, Kolkata, even if it did not win any seats there. In the Lok Sabha polls in 2009, the then Trinamool-Congress-SUCI-C alliance had won 26 seats. The Congress managed to get six seats, while the SUCI won in one constituency. The Left Front had got 15 seats, with the CPI-M having 9 and other allies, i.e. the Communist Party of India, the Revolutionary Socialist Party, and the Forward Bloc - the remaining. After independence 2014 General Elections witnessed its worst show in the state for the Left Front, the poorest performance since its formation in 1977. Not only did its vote share drop to 29.3 percent from 43.3 percent in 2009, but it even finished third in half a dozen seats. The magnitude of the Left's defeat can be gauged from the results of the earlier Assembly election of 2006. Then the Left Front had won 233 seats to the Trinamool's 30. Beginning with the panchayat or local-level bodies in 2008, then the 2009 Lok Sabha elections and finally the civic polls in 2010, the Trinamool Congress had steadily increased its vote share in both rural and urban Bengal.

The politics of Bengal has ever remained a site of extraordinary developments since 2006 when the Singur-Nandigram and Lalgurh incidents gradually started moulding the character of West Bengal

politics. All of a sudden the Trinamool Congress (TMC) went from being the opposition to the most formidable contestant for power against the Left front government. It started fetching the most faithful support bases of the Left, i.e. the peasants and the underclass and the party soon morphed into a new political entity. Prior to 2006 the TMC and its master mind leader Mamta Banerjee received more or less a balanced response from the electorate of Bengal even though she had an easy access to the downtrodden. Her mass friendly image, her lower middle class background and her humble residence in a rundown area of Kolkata—all made her a more popular leader but not an intellectual Bhradralok mouth piece. A sheer conservative mentality always prevailed among the bhadraloks of Bengal and those who were anti Left or loved to be radical did not welcome TMC or her leader Mamta Banerjee openhandedly. However, it was Mamta Banerjee's popularity which turned the air. Mamta's credibility that she is able to bask in the glow of defeating the Left Front, which was in power for a long 34 years and was viewed as autocratic towards the end of its tenure by most. After a long and hard 'battle' finally in 2011 the '*people's party*' (TMC) got the better of the '*political party*' (CPM) and came to power in the State. The Left was already demoralised leaving at a point of political vacuum in Bengal and the Congress which could have emerge at a better position failed to turn the wind because of limited influence and a dearth of committed party workers. Side by side large number of left and Congress cadres started migrating to TMC since its ascendancy to power in the assembly polls of 2011, the TMC used this huge number of cadres as the most effective machinery against her opponents. Apart from this, the TMC's list of Lok Sabha candidature was full of celebrity candidates and known faces from the cultural fields and such a trick was proved to be help in capturing the public imagination in support of the party. Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose's grand nephew and Harvard professor Sugata Bose triumphed from Jadavpur, while actress Sandhya Roy won from Medinipur, Satabdi Roy from Birbhum, actor Tapas Pal from Krishnanagar, and Arjuna Awardee former Indian soccer captain Prasun Mukherjee from Howrah. In most of the cases the celebrity candidates were unknown to the places they were fighting from, the craze of Mamta Banerjee played the most crucial role. Though there has been discontent among the Trinamool leaders that political strangers were preferred over party workers, but the charisma of Mamta Banerjee proved all the assumptions and speculations wrong.

If the victory of TMC emerged as a watershed in 2014 polls, the astonishing majority of the BJP in the parliament was unexpected too. It won 282 seats out of 543 seats in the lower house of the parliament.

Actually the election results have shed light on many important issues which must not go unnoticed. In Bengal BJP had fought on its own and recorded a higher voting percentage of over 17 percent, bettering the 12 percent vote share it obtained in 1991. Bollywood singer and BJP candidate Babul Supriyo came up with a surprise win in Asansol while SS Ahluwalia defeated former Indian soccer captain Bhaichung Bhutia of Trinamool in Darjeeling. Much added to the fact, BJP Kolkata South candidate Tathagata Roy got a lead in the Bhowanipore assembly segment, represented by Chief Minister Mamta Banerjee in the assembly. The BJP finished second in both Kolkata North and Kolkata South. The 14 TMC seats that the BJP has taken a lead are ~ Bhowanipore and Jorasanko in Kolkata, Bidhannagar and Bhatpara in North 24 Parganas, Seerampore in Hooghly, Krishnanagar North in Nadia, Raniganj, Asansol North, Asansol South, Kulti and Baraboni in Burdwan, Englishbazar in Malda, Islampur in North Dinajpur and Siliguri in Darjeeling.

Hindu nationalist parties had never ever done well in Bengal politics since partition and specially after the demise of Dr Shyama Prasad Mukherjee. In its earlier form Jana Sangh, the party won two seats in 1952. One for the party founder Shyama Prasad Mookerjee from Calcutta South-East and Durga Charan Bandopadhyay from Midnapore and it was only in 1998 that BJP's first seat came when Tapan Sikdar won from Dum Dum and went on to become a union minister. Afterwards, it hold on its seats with Sikdar retaining the Dum Dum seat and Satyabrata Mookherjee winning from Krishnanagar. However, on both the cases, the BJP had an alliance with the TMC. But BJP's performance in 2014 election demands indene a special attention. No doubt Mamta Banerjee's overt courting of Muslims, and only the BJP's continued outburst against the so-called Muslim 'appeasement' has convinced sections of Bengal's Hindu middle-class that the BJP offers the solid alternative to Mamta. But the story does not end here. Contesting all the 42 constituencies in the state, the BJP's vote share leapfrogged to 16.8 %, as against around six % it won in the previous Lok Sabha elections in 2009, and the measly four % it received in the assembly polls two years later. Some of the political analysts attributed the BJP's success to the "Modi wave" but at the same time they expressed their conviction whether BJP would be able to retain such momentum or not. Definitely the Modi magic had a role in Bengal but at the same time it should not be denied that due to the Indian corporate sector's support for the BJP, which probably contributed to the massive amount of funds that the BJP spent in its campaigns—brought some fruitful results. Side by side the virtual take-over of the mainstream media by the BJP's campaign impacted a lot. In Bengal, the most powerful media

house, i.e. the Ananda Bazar group almost dedicated its entire media wings in support of BJP. It was somehow unprecedented in the history of Bengal and drew a section of the bhadralok middle class Bengalis at least for a talk on BJP. However, in 2014 BJP was seen to be eager to capture seats in Bengal that in a last moment the BJP had aligned with the Gorkha Janamukti Morcha for the Darjeeling constituency. It was a politics of survival tactics for the BJP—more of face-saving—rather than politics of gaining majority of votes. Likewise the Left the Congress faced severe crisis in post 2014 poll in Bengal. The Congress was in power in Bengal under the leaderships of Bidhan Chandra Roy, Atulya Ghosh, Siddhartha Shankar Roy, among others. The Congress suffered its biggest setback in 1998 when the then State Youth Congress leader, Mamata Banerjee, left Congress to form a new one—the Trinamul Congress. Within a decade-and-a-half in the TMC mostly disrupted the Congress base, particularly in South and Central Bengal, however, the centres of North Bengal are still under the Congress spell. Most of the Congress leaders and supporters have switched sides to the TMC. The party did not have a pre-poll alliance with any strong regional player. Since it did not have a grass root level organization in Bengal, the Congress faced a great setback in 2014 poll. After its most prominent face from Bengal - Pranab Mukherjee was made the President of the country, the Congress didn't have any popular face who can win it votes.

As far as the Lok Sabha 2014 poll is concerned, it was seen that caste and class issues reached the high before and aftermath of the election. Muslims as a vote bank are crucial to both the Left and the TMC. With 26% of the population. Apart from the Muslims the Matua Mahasangha had played a major role in influencing electoral outcomes in local, state and national level elections held in the state since 2008. On the other, Abdul Rezzak Mollah, a former CPI (M) Minister being expelled from the party has formed a combined political front of Dalits and Muslims named social justice front. In fact the alliances of the leadership of different lower-caste groups before the polls had been quite different. Some opted for the bhadralok-dominated party to, whereas others have opted for their own political position. The manifestos of all the political parties had shown how the question of SC/ST, Muslims and other minorities were important for the election. All of them were eager to capture the dalit and minority votes for their electoral success. Since the last Lok Sabha election, the BJP took another agenda. It promised to rehabilitate Hindu refugees — especially the numerically strong Matua community— in the border districts and it tops their agenda for 2016 assembly election. Prior to the Lok Sabha polls, Modi attacked

Mamta Banerjee for “protecting Bangladeshis and the BJP has since targeted Banerjee’s policy of ‘Muslim appeasement’

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Indian General Election of 2014: Rise of the BJP

Deepak Yadav

The 16th Lok Sabha elections in India have been a historic one which has created and broken down many myths of Indian politics. The so called grand old party, the Congress System has been reduced to its lowest level in its electoral history. The Congress party which ruled India for last Sixty years could not secure even minimum seats to claim the post of Leader of Opposition in the parliament. Indian general election of 2014 was held to constitute the 16th Lok Sabha, electing members of parliament for all 543 parliamentary constituencies of India. Running in nine phases from 7 April to 12 May 2014, it was the longest election in the country's history.^[1] According to the Election Commission of India, 814.5 million people were eligible to vote, with an increase of 100 million voters since the last general election in 2009, making it the largest-ever election in the world. Around 23.1 million or 2.7% of the total eligible voters were aged 18–19 years.^[2] A total of 8,251 candidates contested for the 543 Lok Sabha seats. The average election turnout over all nine phases was around 66.38%, the highest ever in the history of Indian general elections.

The results were declared on 16 May, fifteen days before the 15th Lok Sabha completed its constitutional mandate on 31 May 2014. The counting exercise was held at 989 counting canters. The National Democratic Alliance won a sweeping victory, taking 336 seats. The BJP itself won 31.0% of all votes and 282 (51.9%) of all seats, while NDA's combined vote share was 38.5% .It is the first time since the 1984 Indian general elections that a party has won enough seats to govern without the support of other parties. The United Progressive Alliance, led by the Indian National Congress, won 58 seats, 44 (8.1%) of which were won by the Congress, that won 19.3% of all votes.^[3] It was the Congress party's worst defeat in a general election BJP and its allies won the right to form the largest majority government since the 1984 general election.^[4]

Important issues during the campaign *included high inflation, lack of jobs, economic slowdown, corruption, security and terrorism, religious division and communalism, and infrastructure such as roads, electricity and water.* In another survey by Zee News for about 14% of people,

corruption is the main issue in the election. *Bloomberg* highlighted India's slowing economy amidst a record high current account deficit and a falling rupee in summer 2013. It pointed out a lack of infrastructure investment and a government increasingly likely to give subsidies that the national finances cannot afford just before the election. Other points it mentioned were stagnant policymaking and an inefficient bureaucracy. The economy was the main issue in the campaign^[5]. The lack of a clear mandate as a result of the election could lead to an increase in the price of gold in the country. Modi also brought up the issue of farmer suicides that resulted from high debt and poor yield on their crops. Former Finance Minister Yashwant Sinha criticised the incumbent Chidambaram in saying that he had a "habit that he will get a strong economy, and he will ruin it before he leaves Shri Chidambaram will be remembered in history as a spoiler, as someone who specializes in sub-five per cent growth rate, for his hubris, arrogance"^[6].

Narendra Modi and the Turn Around of BJP

Gujarat Chief Minister Narendra Modi was chosen to lead the Bharatiya Janata Party's campaign after a party conclave in Goa. This came amid controversy as Lal Krishna Advani opposed the decision and resigned from his party posts, only to later rescind his resignation. Murli Manohar Joshi and Sushma Swaraj were part of the team for the campaign. Rajnath Singh, Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishna Advani were the mentors for the BJP's campaign.^[7] A 12-member committee, led by Modi, was appointed at the Goa conclave which included M. Venkaiah Naidu, Nitin Gadkari, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Raman Singh and Goa Chief Minister Manohar Parrikar.

Publish Date	Polling Organisation	NDA	UPA	Others
12 May 2014	CNN-IBN – CSDS – Lokniti	276(+)	97 (±5)	148 (±23)
	India Today – Cicero	272 (±11)	115 (±5)	156 (±6)
	News 24 – Chanakya	340 (±14)	70 (±9)	133 (±11)
	Times Now – ORG	249	148	146
	ABP News – Nielsen	274	97	165
	India TV – CVoter	289	101	148
14 May 2014	NDTV – Hansa Research	279	103	161
12 May 2014	Poll of Polls	283	105	149
16 May 2014	Actual Results	336	58	149

Source: Final Results 2014 General Elections, Press Information Bureau, Government of India

In total there were 1.4 million electronic voting machines in 930,000 voting centres. The Voter-verified paper audit trail (VVPAT) system which enables EVM to record each vote cast by generating the EVM slip, was introduced in 8 constituencies of Lucknow, Gandhinagar, Bangalore South, Chennai Central, Jadavpur, Raipur, Patna Sahib and Mizoram as a pilot project. Also, Braille ballot sheets for the blind were arranged at polling stations. The scale of the election required 1.1 million of civil servants and 5.5 million civilian employees to handle the election. It was the first election that had the "none of the above" option and allowed Non-Resident Indians to vote; though only in India^[8]. Security was increased during the election, particularly as the Communist Party of India (Maoist) (CPI (Maoist)) called for a boycott of the election. On 12 April, even though there was no voting this day, a vehicle in Chhattisgarh hit a CPI (Maoist) landmine resulting in the deaths of two bus drivers and five election officials, with four more injured, while travelling from Kutru to Bijapur in preparation for the fifth phase of voting. On the same day, within an hour, they also ambushed a vehicle resulting in the deaths of five paramilitary soldiers in the Darbha forest. The election was the longest and the most expensive general election in the history of the country, with the Election Commission of India estimating that the election did cost the exchequer ₹3500 crore (US\$577 million), excluding the expenses incurred for security and by the individual political parties^[9]. Parties were expected to spend ₹30,500 crore (US\$5 billion) in the election, according to the Centre for Media Studies. This was three times the amount spent in the previous election in 2009, and was then the world's second highest after the US\$7 billion spent on the 2012 US presidential election^[10].

	336 BJP+NDA		58 INC+UPA		149 Others			
Party	BJP	INC	AIADMK	AITMC	BJD	SS	TDP	TRS
Votes	31.0%, 171,637,684	19.3%, 106,935,311	3.3%, 18 18,115,825	3.8%, 21,259,681	1.7%, 9,491,497	1.9%, 10,262,982	2.52%	2.1%
Seats	282 (51.9%) 282 / 543	44 (8.1%) 44 / 543	37 (6.8%) 37 / 543	34 (6.2%) 34 / 543	20 (3.6%) 20 / 543	18 (3.3%) 18 / 543	16 (2.9%) 16 / 543	11 (2.1%) 11 / 543

Source: Election Commission of India

Voting pattern

The BJP secured 39% support from first time voters, while Congress received 19% of the first time votes.^[11]The NDA won 39 of 74 seats

where Muslim voters make up between 21 to 95% of the total electorate. The BJP won all 16 seats in Uttar Pradesh. It also secured 5 out of 9 such seats in Bihar. Analyst Saeed Naqvi believes that Amit Shah managed to convince Dalits and OBC voters to elect the BJP as “Muslim appeasers in an atmosphere of perpetual communal tension”.^[12] The BJP won all 26 seats in Gujarat, marking the first time a single party won all seats in the state. The previous record was held by the Congress which won 25 of the 26 seats in the 1984 general election. The assembly segment-wise result of Lok Sabha elections in Uttar Pradesh shows that the BJP was number one in 328 seats, while the ruling SP led in just 42. Congress was ahead in 15, BSP 9 and Apna Dal 9. In 2012, SP had formed government by winning 224 assembly seats. BSP had won 80, BJP 47, Congress 28 and Apna Dal one.

Similarly, in Maharashtra BJP-Shiva Sena alliance has got a lead in 246 assembly segments out of the total 288. By securing seven of the 10 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana, BJP remained ahead on 52 assembly segments in the state. Its ally HJC could not win any of the Lok Sabha seats it contested, but its candidates remained ahead in seven assembly segments. BJP contested 8 Lok Sabha seats in Haryana, leaving two constituencies for its alliance partner HJC. BJP candidates remained ahead in all 27 assembly segments of Ambala, Karnal and Faridabad parliamentary constituencies. BJP won all seats except Rohtak where its candidate Om Prakash Dhankar lost to Haryana chief minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda’s son and sitting MP Deepender Hooda.

Conclusion

The BJP got 64.7 million more votes than the party that came closest at the all-India level, the incumbent Congress party. With 172 million votes, the BJP more than doubled the number of votes it received in 2009. This gave the party a voteshare of 31% - or nearly every third vote cast in the country – as against the Congress’ 19.3%. This also made the party’s victory far more convincing than its previous stint in power in 1999, headed by Atal Bihari Vajpayee. In that election the BJP won just 86.6 million votes - 17 million votes less than the Congress – with a vote share of 24%, but was able to form the government. The swing in the vote share away from the Congress was however smaller than the swing in the voteshare towards the BJP.

With 282 seats, the BJP has won the highest number of seats by a single party in the modern, post-regional politics era, compared with 244 for the Congress in 1991 and 206 for it in 2009. The BJP got more seats than it had in the last two elections combined. It could have formed

government on its own, a feat that no party has come close to since the 1984 election which saw a wave of sympathy following the assassination of Congress prime minister Indira Gandhi.

The BJP's biggest win came from Uttar Pradesh, where it won 71 seats despite a big coalition partner, the best performance by a single party in the state since 1984 when the Congress won 83 of 85 seats. The BJP also improved its voteshare in states where it did not have a substantial presence, with voteshares of 22% in Odisha, 17% in West Bengal and over 10% in Kerala. Kerala is now the only big state where the party does not have an MP, while the Congress has no MPs in Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Jharkhand, Delhi, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Tamil Nadu. To maintain this winning spree will be the biggest challenge for Modi government in the times to come. The humiliating defeat in Delhi immediately after Lok Sabha election is the bitter reminder for the BJP and the upcoming Bihar election will prove litmus test for the popularity of Modi government.

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Convergence of the ‘National’ and ‘State Level’: Explaining the BJP Victory in Madhya Pradesh^[1]

Vikas Tripathi

The regional specificity

Lok Sabha Election results for MP remain crucial to understand the political change in India because of four significant reasons. First MP is essentially a bipolar state with BJP and Congress being the two distinct poles. Electoral politics is deeply intertwined with the national agenda of parties and one can read a symbiotic relationship among the national, regional and local level politics in successive mandates. Secondly as per electoral calendar MP along with Rajasthan and Chhatisgarh have assembly elections just six months before the Lok Sabha elections and thus the media, politicians, political commentators as well as academicians abound in consensus that the mandate of MP legislative assembly along with Rajasthan and Chhatisgarh assembly elections remain precursor to and indicative of the emerging electoral scenario of the country. Thirdly politics in MP, Chhatisgarh and Rajasthan display remarkable similarity not only in terms of the nature and character of political competition in these respective states but also these states have distinct regions (for instance, Shekhawati region in Rajasthan and Bundelkhand region in MP) which in part holds potential to determine the nature and extent of mandate. Fourthly, MP along with Rajasthan and Chhatisgarh is characterized by lesser degree of political fragmentation and absence of a caste/community dominant party system. Essentially MP, Rajasthan and Chhatisgarh characterise a neat bipolar system in Central India and North Western region of India. Taken together they pool 65 seats to the Lok Sabha and in the Sixteenth Lok Sabha BJP has got 62 out of 65 seats which explicitly establishes an electoral sweep for BJP in Central India. Any understanding of the electoral politics in MP has to take into context this regional specificity as well as deeper nationalisation that characterise the politics in this region. However the most important aspect to explore remains the peculiarities and distinctness that characterize politics in MP, which

continue to be the major determinant of electoral change as well as stability in MP. MP, like Gujarat and Chhatisgarh has been witness to three successive BJP governments at the state level and thus is characterised by more of electoral stability than change.

Table-1 Lok Sabha Results for MP, Rajshtan and Chhatisgarh

	2014				2009			
	Total Seats	Voter Turnout (%)	BJPS eats and vote share	Congress Seats and vote share	Total Seats	Voter Turnout (%)	BJP Seats and vote share	Congress Seats and vote share
MP	29	61.60	27 (54.03)	02 (34.89)	29	51	16 (43.45)	12 (40.14)
Rajasthan	25	63.39	25 (54.94)	00 (30.36)	25	48.4	4 (36.6)	20 (47.2)
Chhatisgarh	11	69.39	10 (48.74)	1 (38.37)	11	55.3	10 (45)	1 (37.3)

Source: Election Commission of India

Modi-Shivraj Axis: political leadership, structural dividend and deeper nationalisation of politics

The mandate of 16th May has been read as heralding a new era of deeper nationalisation of party system in a substantive manner where by the state level political configurations and regional politics have been overshadowed and remain further constrained as a medium to offer political choices and alternatives. This reading of deeper nationalisation remains premised upon the idea of ‘Mandate for Modi’ or ‘Modi Wave’ and an emerging inseparability between party and personality seems to be the most significant feature of the mandate. Personality, performance, media and development have remained at centre stage invariably in major election analysis and these factors seem to have overshadowed the state politics as an autonomous electoral entity^[2]. The analogy of the wave presumes that the ‘national’ has been the principle factor for the electoral mandate of 2014 and the dynamics of state level politics have been overshadowed. Strong empirical evidence has been provided in support of such arguments. While the gains of BJP in the elections were massive, it is the arguments made in favour of ‘Modi Wave’ that requires a nuanced study. This paper is framed

Convergence of the 'National' and 'State Level':

around the hypothesis that in the light of the 'Modi Wave' characterizing the mandate 2014, the principle-derivative axis is blurring and the mandate characterizes a deeper nationalization^[3]. This paper contends that the BJP victory in 2014 MP Lok Sabha indicates that apart from 'Modi Wave', the BJP also seems to be a beneficiary of systemic and structural changes in the party system as the mandate for MP Lok Sabha election seems to suggest. The nature of mandate in the successive Vidhan Sabha elections across different states, since 2003, is symptomatic of the aforesaid changes. Therefore, one needs to revisit the structural causes of mandate at state level and look for the factors that either enable convergence or divergence of state level politics and the 'centre' politics.

The salience of 'Modi Factor' notwithstanding, the salience of state level politics cannot be swept over; the performance of state governments in many states has also led to the madate in favour of the respective parties, for instance BJD in Odisha, TMC in West Bengal and CPI (M) in Tripura. One can argue that Modi's success lies in appropriating state level politics through strategic organizational revival and reinvention of state level politics. The massive multi modal electoral multi level campaign strategized and spearheaded by BJP remained instrumental in this regard. In state level politics, the BJP's mandate is more a reflection of electoral stability rather than a neat wave. Huge electoral mandate has not been an exception in recent Assembly Elections to Bihar, U.P., Rajasthan, West Bengal, and other states. In the context of electoral gains of BJP in MP this paper indicates that the result represents deepening of BJP politics under the leadership of Shiv Raj Singh Chauhan. The electoral mantra of 'Modi-Shivraj' model in MP during the Lok Sabha election campaign represents a new 'centre-state electoral model' which really converged in making *development* the core issue^[4]. One witnessed issues like governance, road, electricity, and education remain high on the election campaign placard. At the state level ,the limitation of caste politics and the formation of stable governments through social coalition within the party has enabled the development of a strong leadership. This has, in turn made the Lok Sabha election a mandate for the performance of state level governments as well. What has occurred is that the salience of state level politics is visible in a transformed fashion amidst the cries about deeper nationalisation and demise of state level politics.

Overall, the BJP Mandate has a vast geographical spread but insularities and exceptional voting patterns are visible in different states as well. It is these insularities and exceptions that hold a potential for offering

explanation and understanding on systemic change in state level politics. Therefore, it becomes imperative to contextualize the structural changes much more rigorously, and interrogate the continuity that characterize successive mandates in MP. The rapid increase in electoral turn out and women turn out as well as inflated victory margin, during the 2014 MP Lok Sabha elections, makes it imperative to understand the distinctness characterizing the state level politics as it remains vital to explore the question of strategic organizational revival and the massive multi-modal electoral campaign strategized and spearheaded by BJP in MP.

Table -2: Positions of Political Parties in 2009 and 2014 Lok Sabha Elections in MP

Sl. No.	Political Party	2014		2009		Change from 2009 (change in vote share in bracket)
		Vote Share (in %)	Seat Share	Vote Share (in %)	Seat Share	
1.	BJP	54	27	43.45	16	11 (10.55)
2.	INC	34.8	02	40.14	12	-10 (-5.34)
3.	BSP	3.8	00	5.85	01	-1 (-2.05)
4.	Independent	1.95	00	4.91	00	0 (-2.96)
5.	AAP	1.2	00	—	—	—
6.	SP	0.7	00	2.83	00	(-2.13)
7.	NOTA	1.3	00	—	—	—

Source: Election Commission of India

Palshikar and Suri in their in-depth analysis have pointed out three most important factors that contributed to BJP's mandate first, 'dissatisfaction with the UPA Government', second relatively higher level of dissatisfaction with Congress's state governments and relative higher level of satisfaction with BJP's state governments. The Third factor, according to them, remains BJP's leadership choice of Modi^[5]. Further an overlapping consensus has developed regarding gradual transformation of the social base of BJP which is quite apparent through BJP's 2014 election strategy to expand its electoral support among OBCs and the dalits with a concomitant retention of its upper caste base. Palshikar and Suri argue, 'it is the combination of upper caste vote and the OBC vote that brings out the handsome victory for the BJP. Thus

Convergence of the 'National' and 'State Level':

while the BJP successfully attracted the OBCs, its support among the upper castes did not dwindle^[6]. Also in their own words, 'in addition to the Upper Castes and OBCs, the BJP received considerable support from the Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes^[7]'. The above made observations by Palshikar and Suri can easily be corroborated through statistical analysis of MP mandate. One way to do this remains issue of victory margin which probably hints at the intensity of mandate. The extensity of mandate can be explored by contextualizing the regional spread of victory margin. In a sense, victory margin remains of the indicators of the intensity and extensity of mandate. BJP got 27 seats with 54% vote share which in a way is a clear reflection of a broader social base in favour of the party. Table-3 clearly indicates towards an intensive victory for BJP where in more than 26 out of 29 constituencies BJP won by more than 1,00,000 votes and in more than 50% (16 out of 29) of the constituencies BJP won by more than 2,00,000 votes. Table-4 clearly reflects upon dwindling impact of rural urban divide and SC – ST divide in terms of its significant impact over electoral politics during this election. One can see that the victory in rural and ST dominated constituencies like Betul, Dhar and Khargone has been as phenomenal as urban unreserved constituencies like Bhopal and Jabalpur. On all the SC constituencies the victory of BJP has been by over 1,50,000 votes. The victory margin has been huge and evenly spread across all the major regions, Vindhya, Chambal, Mahakoshal and Malwa. BJP won all the seats reserved for SC and ST communities and the victory margin has been quite huge, which is a pointer towards an even spread of BJP's social base across all sectional divide.

Table-3: Victory Margin

Sl. No.	Victory Margin	No. of Seats
1.	Less than 10,000	01
2.	Less than 30,000	02
3.	Less than 100000	03
4.	More than 100000	26
5.	More than 200000	16

Author's own calculation

Source: Election Commission of India

Table- 4: Region wise victory margin

Sl. No	Region	Constituency	Victory Margin
1.	Chambal	Bhind (SC)	159961
2.		Morena	191314
3.		Gwalior	29699
4.		Guna	120792
5.	Vindhya Pradesh	Sagar	120737
6.		Damoh	213299
7.		Khajuraho	247490
8.		Tikamgarh (SC)	208731
9.		Satna	8,688
10.		Rewa	168726
11.		Sidhi	108046
12.		Sahdol (ST)	241301
13.	Mahakoshal	Jabalpur	208639
14.		Mandla (ST)	110469
15.		Balaghat	96141
16.		Chhindwara	116537
17.		Hoshangabad	389960
18.		Betul (ST)	328614
19.	Malwa	Rajgarh	228737
20.		Bhopal	370696
21.		Mandsor	303649
22.		Ujjain (SC)	309663
23.		Ratlam (ST)	108447
24.		Dewas (SC)	260313
25.		Indore	466901
26.		Dhar (ST)	104328
27.		Khargone (ST)	257879
28.		Khandwa	259714
29.		Vidisha	410698

Author's own calculation. Classification adapted from , '2013 Legislative Assembly Elections, Madhya Pradesh', EPW, February 8,2014, p.87

Source : Election Commission of India

Convergence of the 'National' and 'State Level':

Table-2 clearly shows that BJP has been the only party in MP which witnessed gain in both the seat share and vote share while both Congress as well as BSP witnessed sharp decline. BJP gained 10% vote share and 11 seats, Congress lost 10 seats and 5% vote share and BSP lost 1 seat and 2.5 % vote share. It is an indication towards rising index of BJP's consolidation and polarisation of politics in BJP's favour. Having gained 10 per cent vote share in the face of Congress losing 5 percent and sharp decline of all other parties including BSP, the BJP has really been the beneficiary of the polarisation at the constituency level. The BSP which secured 5.85% vote share in the last election ended up with only 3.8% in this election. The steep decline of Congress and others along with the annihilation of the BSP has contributed to the historic BJP mandate. It seems, in a neat bipolar competition, the BJP has been a beneficiary of the loss of actual and potential vote share of the principal opponent party that is Congress. The gap between Congress and BJP with respect to vote share and seat share during the 2009 and 2014 Lok Sabha elections has increased disproportionately in favour of BJP which seems to be a consequence of long term deepening of BJP politics in MP and its expansion among different social sections. As is evident from Table-5, the decline of BSP in MP has led to sharp political polarization and it in fact has advantaged BJP as Congress has not been able to regain either vote share or seat share. Bipolar contests seem to have propelled consolidation of BJP in MP. It may be argued that to an extent, the decline of BSP in MP is concomitant with the shift of dalit vote to BJP in MP. It probably speaks volume about local governance and its interdependence on state governments and remains an indication of political shift as well as consolidation.

Table-5: Position of Political Parties during 2004, 2009 & 2014 Lok Sabha elections

Sl. No.	PARTY	2004	2009	2014
1.	BJP	48% (25)	43.45% (16)	54% (27)
2.	BSP	4.8% (0)	5.85% (1)	3.8% (0)
3.	CONGRESS	34% (04)	40.14% (12)	34.9% (02)

Source : Election Commission of India

The Consolidation of Vidhan Sabha Trend

BJP performed its best in the BJP ruled states, in Rajasthan, Gujarat, M.P., Chhatisgarh, Punjab and Goa. Out of 106 seats in these states,

BJP got 92 seats. While BJP had just 30 seats in 2009, it secured 62 seats during the 2014 elections in MP, Chhatisgarh and Rajasthan. Table-1 marks out one significant trend marking the 2014 elections in this region. As compared to 2009, the voter turnout increased phenomenally for all the three states and that seems to have brought huge dividend to BJP. It has been established that the lower turnout adversely affected BJP's prospect during 2009 MP Lok Sabha elections^[8]. BJP adopted multi modal campaign strategy and it intended to bring more youth and new voters into its fold and the campaign emphasized on voter turnout. As per data, in MP, Chhatisgarh and Rajasthan, 3.4%, 4.9% and 4.8%^[9] new voters respectively, were added. Subsequent surge in voter turnout in these states clearly advantaged BJP which hints at organizational strength and electoral preparedness of BJP in these states.

Situating MP Lok Sabha mandate in the recent politics of electoral stability in MP, one finds remarkable continuity since the Vidhan Sabha election. The Lok Sabha mandate rather than being an abrupt surge in social base, in reality remains an indication of deeper Consolidation of BJP and electoral stability that has come to characterize the politics in MP during recent elections. One can get a clear hint in this regard by understanding the Vidhan Sabha elections which preceded it and which remained mostly overshadowed by the slogan, 'Shivraj Phir Se'. As per the data available with the Election Commission of India, one finds that the last Vidhan Sabha election (2013) marked the best ever performance by BJP in terms of the overall share of the votes polled. Some remarkable feature of the Vidhan Sabha results as per Special Statistics prepared by CSDS^[10] clearly hints at BJP's deeper consolidation and it remained precursor to the Lok Sabha mandate for MP. In this election BJP secured 165 seats (out of 230) and 45% vote share, it gained 22 seats and 7% vote share. Congress lost 13 seats and secured 58 seats and 36% vote share, it gained 4% vote share. BSP won 4 seats, secured 6.29% vote share but as compared to last Vidhan Sabha election, it lost 3 seats and 2.68% vote share. In all BJP and Congress secured 81% of the vote share and the verdict remained essentially bipolar in character. Some of the features of the Vidhan Sabha mandate as per special statistics prepared by CSDS are mentioned below:-

- 1.) The 2013 Vidhan Sabha election witnessed highest ever voter turnout of 72.6%
- 2.) The election remained neatly bipolar, the result sets in the trend of the decline of BSP with respect to vote share and seat share.

Convergence of the 'National' and 'State Level':

- 3.) As per data most of the BJP's victories were comfortable as compared to 2008 elections. The BJP won 67% of its total 165 seats by victory margin of more than 10,000.
- 4.) BJP performed quite impressively in all the five major regions of MP- Chambal, Vindhya Pradesh, Mahakoshal, Malwa North and Malwa Tribal. The performance remained even across regions
- 5.) The BJP's performance had been more than impressive in reserved seats for SC and ST.
- 6.) Strong performance of BJP in urban as well as rural constituencies.

Thus it can be argued that the unprecedented mandate however represents both continuity as well as change in electoral trends which emerged roughly around mid 2000 onwards and the May 2014 Lok Sabha election really remained the epitome of this trend at state level. The successive mandates have been witness to an increase in electoral turn out with an overwhelming presence of women voter. Decisive stability, leadership centric and the language of development have chiefly characterised the successive mandates. States like MP, Gujarat, Chhatisgarh and Rajasthan are bipolar state and they witnessed governments with huge majority amid a surge in electoral turn out in successive elections. Similarly multi polar states like UP and Bihar had been witness to unprecedented stable majority government. BJP-JDU alliance is an instance in this regard, moreover Mayawati (2007) government and Akhilesh government (2012) really substantiates the assertion. As UP has been a typical multi polar state and it is here one can clearly see the decisive mandate at the state level. The MP Lok Sabha mandate seen in this context, has remained leadership centred, the cult of Narendra Modi subsumed BJP and the slogan 'Dilli Mein Modi, Pradesh Mein Shivraj' could really sync with the electoral expectation and significantly the mandate transcended the caste and community framework and invoked the language of 'programme, policy and personality'. Thus, at the state level, the limitation of caste politics and the formation of stable governments through social coalition within the party has enabled the development of a strong leadership. This has, in turn made the Lok Sabha election a mandate for the performance of state level governments as well. What seems to have occurred is that the salience of state level politics is visible in a transformed fashion amidst the deeper nationalisation and modification of politics.

Reference

- [1] Based on papers presented at EECURI WORKSHOP (9 January 2015) titled 'Studying Elections: Reflections on Methods' held in JNU, New Delhi and at Workshop on 'The 2014 Lok Sabha Elections in Urban and Rural India' 19-20, August 2014 organized by ICSSR, New Delh. I remain grateful to the participants at respective EECURI workshops and wish to acknowledge the comments made by Pralay Kanungo, James Manor, Sanjay Kumar and Chirstophe Jaffrelot which have been of immense help in preparing this paper.
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- [3] Yogendra Yadav and Suhas Palshikar have established on firm grounds that, 'the political choices made at the state level are mostly "principal" and those at the national level are increasingly becoming "derivative"'. See, Yogendra Yadav & Suhas Palshikar, Principal State Level Contests and Derivative National Choices: Electoral Trends in 2004-09, Economic and Political Weekly, Februaury 7, 2009 p.56
- [4] The major electoral plank of BJP in MP remained, 'Jan Jan Ki Awaz, Dilli Mein Modi, Pradesh Mein Shivraj'
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- [5] *ibid*
- [7] Suhas Palshikar, India's 2014 Lok Sabha Elections : Critical Shifts in the Long Term, Caution in the Short Term, Economic and Political Weekly, September27, 2014 p.44
- [8] Yatinder Singh Sisodia & Ram Shankar, Madhya Pradesh: Congress Makes Unexpected Gains Economic and Political Weekly, September 26, 2009. p.128
- [9] Dainik Bhaskar, 17 May 2015.
- [10] '2013 Legislative Assembly Elections, Madhya Pradesh' Economic and Political Weekly,, February 8, 2014.

The Outcome of General Election 2014 and the Indian Polity—Some Reflections on Kerala State

Suresh R

The outcome of general election 2014 has been considered as very special in many respects. Firstly it has provided a clear mandate to the BJP led NDA to form a stable government at the federal level. It is for the first time after a gap of 30 years a single political party get the popular support to form a government. The electors turnout in the 2014 general election was 66.44 per cent, and it is the highest ever in India. One of the major issue before the electorate in India before the general election 2014 was the rampant corruption at the higher levels, the political executive and permanent executive levels. The Indian electorate have even lost their faith in the democratic system and its feasibility to deliver the welfare of the people.

The state of Kerala differs from the rest of India with regard to various human development indicators. For instance, the high literacy rate, low infant mortality rate, better sex ratio, hygiene and better health standards. All these aspects of human development can be attributed to the incessant efforts of various social organisations worked among the people. The political parties also have engaged in these transformational activities and contributed towards these developmental paradigms. However, it is a historical fact that it was social organisations that have conditioned the field for further development of the Kerala state. In this process of building a 'Kerala Model development' the role played by the social organisations such as Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam (SNDP), Nair Service Society (NSS) and Pulaya Maha Sabha are very significant. Though the Christian missionaries have also played a major role in the educational development of Kerala their prime motive was religious conversion. The Christian community in Kerala constitute only 18 per cent of the population but they managed to own more than 80 per cent of the educational institutions in the government aided sector.

Details of Kerala State

Districts	14
Revenue Divisions	21
Taluks	75
Villages	1018
Panchayats	978
Municipalities	60
Corporations	5
Development Blocks	152
Total Male Electorate	11731228
Total Female Electorate	12615887
Total Electorate	24347115

(Data compiled from the Election Commission of India documents.)

Voter Turn Out in Kerala State

Electors General (Including NRIs)	Service Voters	EVM	Postal Voters	Turn Out (%)
24251942	74708	17951637	35487	73.94

(Table prepared from Election Commission of India documents.)

The Communist led LDF and the Congress led UDF compete with each other in extending all financial support to these institutions. For instance, during the LDF government in 1998 a major decision to delink the Pre Degree course from colleges to High schools was taken. Such a decision was highly beneficial to the Christian community as more than 80 per cent of the high schools were run by the community. Similarly the UDF government also from time to time in allocating new institutions followed a policy of providing more and more special benefits to the Christian community in the name of minority rights. A similar trend is visible in the attitude of the two ruling fronts in Kerala, the UDF and LDF, in pleasing the Muslim community which constitute 26 per cent of Kerala population. In short both the fronts are competing with each other in appeasing the minority community, the Christians and Muslims in Kerala. Such a policy practiced by the two political party fronts, in fact alienated the majority Hindu community which constitute 54 per cent of the state population.

In Kerala on notable feature is that only a very small per cent of the population have membership in the political parties. However the political affiliation of the government servants, especially in the rank of lower division clerk and below rank it is very high. One of the reasons for inefficiency of the bureaucracy in Kerala is the trade unionism prevalent among the government officials especially at the lower cadre. Every action in the administrative system is based on the one's political affiliation. Once your identity by means of political affiliation is known then your appeal will be taken care by respective group working in the office. Those who have no political affiliation will have to bribe the office staff for getting the things done. Therefore, it is a paradox that in a highly literate state corruption is rampant at all levels.

Even in the Gram Sabha meetings, which have only a skeleton presence of the members of a ward, the political party member come as a group and all decisions will be taken on the basis of party stand. Thus from the lower level to higher level of political institutions party influence is well visible. The most interesting thing is that only a very small percentage of the population have direct involvement with political party. Since this small group is organised they have better command and control over the state administration.

Political Parties in Kerala

The main national political parties in Kerala are Indian National Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party and Communist Party of India (Marxist). The state political parties are Kerala Congress, Indian Union Muslim League, and Revolutionary Socialist Party. The national political party such as Indian National Congress and the Communist Party of India (Marxist) are leading two coalition front namely United Democratic Front (UDF) and Left Democratic Front (LDF) respectively. The state political party such as Kerala Congress and Indian Union Muslim League are basically communal parties as they represent the Christian and Muslim community respectively.

UDF & LDF Composition

The composition of the UDF and LDF are more or less on the same lines. Either of the two fronts in one way or other is supported by communal parties, for instance, Kerala congress represented by the Christians are partners in both the fronts.

Suresh R

The United Democratic Front mainly consist of

1. Indian National Congress
2. Indian Union Muslim League
3. Kerala Congress (M)
4. Revolutionary Socialist Party

The Left Democratic Front mainly consist of

1. Communist Party of India (Marxist)
2. Communist Party of India (CPI)
3. Kerala Congress

Elected Members - Lok Sabha 2014 from Kerala State

Sl. No	No & Name of HPC	Name of Elected Candidate	Party	Margin	% of Votes Polled
1	Kasaragod	P Karunakaran	CPI(M)	6921	39.76
2	Kannur	P K Sreemathi Teacher	CPI(M)	6566	45.08
3	Vadakara	Mullappally Ramachandran	INC	3306	43.37
4	Wayanad	M I Shanavas	INC	20870	41.20
5	Kozhikode	M K Raghavan	INC	16883	42.15
6	Malappuram	E Ahammed	IUML	194739	51.29
7	Ponnani	E T Mohammed Basheer	IUML	25410	43.43
8	Palakkad	M B Rajesh	CPI(M)	105300	45.35
9	Alathur (SC)	P K Biju	CPI(M)	37312	44.34
10	Thrissur	C N Jayadevan	CPI	38227	42.27
11	Chalakkudy	Innocent	IND	13884	40.50
12	Ernakulam	Prof. K V Thomas	INC	87047	41.58
13	Idukki	Adv. Joice George	IND	50542	46.57
14	Kottayam	Jose K Mani	KC(M)	120599	50.96
15	Alappuzha	K C Venugopal	INC	19407	46.31
16	Mavelikkara (SC)	Kodikunnil Suresh	INC	32737	45.25
17	Pathanamthitta	Anto Antony	INC	56191	41.19
18	Kollam	N K premachandran	RSP	37649	46.46
19	Attingal	Dr. A Sampath	CPI(M)	69378	45.67
20	Thiruvananthapuram	Dr. Shashi Tharoor	INC	15470	34.09

(Table prepared from [www. ceo.kerala.gov.in](http://www.ceo.kerala.gov.in))

The 'Modi Wave' after the General Election 2014

Actually the 'Modi Wave' appears to have reached Kerala state only after the formation of the BJP led government at the Centre. A large scale move towards the BJP is visible especially among the youth. They feel that only a strong and stable government can deliver development. The youth today are more pragmatic and less interested in long struggle for any ideological cause. Again the rampant corruptions at the state in almost all fields have alienated the people from the ruling front. Further the appeasement policy of the present government towards the minority community again moved the majority community, especially the youth away from the ruling front. If an emerging third front can mobilise these dissatisfied section in the society they can well establish a foothold in Kerala state polity.

Party wise valid vote polled and Percentage of valid vote polled by party in Kerala State

Sl No	Party Name	Total Valid Votes Polled in the State	Total Electors in the State	Seats Won	Total Valid Votes Polled by Party	% Valid Votes Polled by Party
1	BJP	17765332	24326650	0	1856796	10.45
2	CPI	17765332	24326650	1	1364010	7.68
3	CPI(M)	17765332	24326650	5	3880655	21.84
4	INC	17765332	24326650	8	5590285	31.47
5	Independent	17765332	24326650	2	2043666	11.50
6	Kerala Congress	17765332	24326650	1	424194	2.39
7	Indian Union Muslim League	17765332	24326650	2	816226	4.59
8	RSP	17765332	24326650	1	NA	NA

(Table prepared from the Election Commission of India documents.)

Though the vote share of the BJP in the 2014 General Election is much higher than that of some national as well as state political parties it failed to convert it into winning seats. This can be attributed to disunity among the Hindu population in Kerala. Even in the post 2014 election scenario BJP is unable to mobilise the people towards a third front due to three major factors. Firstly the state leadership have no charismatic

figure to convince the electorate about an alternative front which is capable to rule the state. Secondly there is less unity among the Hindu population which constitute the majority (54 per cent) in Kerala state. They are separated on various caste lines and have fundamental differences on basic issues. The two major groups among the Hindu community the Nair and Ezhava community are divided on the issues such as reservation in government jobs and also the recruitment policy in the temple administration boards. Third, is the failure of the BJP leadership to effectively propagate convincingly about an alternative front which could address some basic issues in Kerala, including the development issues.

Concomitantly some of the recent developments in Kerala polity further point towards people losing faith in the ruling as well as opposition political parties. Almost all the protest campaign against the governmental corruptions organised by the opposition parties led by the Communist Party of India (Marxist) had been ended without achieving anything concrete. Similarly the recent labour agitations in Munnar Tea plantations has clearly manifested the failure of trade unions affiliated to the ruling as well as opposition parties to protect the interests of the workers and also decline in the acceptability of the trade union leaders among the working classes.

In short the outcome of the upcoming Local Self Governing Institutions election in the month November 2015 would be a clear indicator towards the sea change that is happening in the Kerala politics. Though the LSGI elections are fought mainly on local issues the outcome of the election will have a long impact in the imminent Kerala Legislative Assembly election 2016. It appears that the coming LSGI election will a semi final that decide the fate of some political parties and thereby the finalist in the impending 2016 Assembly election. Thus the outcome of the General Election 2014 and its impact on Kerala politics will be belatedly reflected in the LSGI elections 2015 and the subsequent Kerala Assembly election 2016.

16th General Election : Rajasthan Scenario

Om Mahla

Democratic governance system is known as best system of governance in modern world. India is the biggest democracy in the world, where 16th general election (Lok Sabha) were held in 2014 (March-June). Rajasthan is the largest state of the country in terms of territory which has 25 Lok Sabha seats. In Rajasthan, 16th Lok Sabha elections were held in two phase : First Phase on 17 April for 20 seats and Second phase on 24 April for remaining 5 seats. The BJP swept all 25 seats.

Table-1: Results of Lok Sabha Election 2014 (Rajasthan)

S.No.	Party Name	Vote Share	Seats Won
1.	B.S.P.	2.37%	NIL
2.	B.J.P.	55.62%	25
3.	I.N.C.	30.73%	NIL
4.	Others	6.75%	NIL
		Total	25

Source : www.ceorajasthan.nic.in

Table-2: Results of Lok Sabha Election 2009 (Rajasthan)

S.No.	Party Name	Vote Share	Seats Won
1.	B.S.P.	3.37%	NIL
2.	B.J.P.	36.57%	04
3.	I.N.C.	47.19%	20
4.	Independents	9.31%	01
		Total	25

Source : www.ceorajasthan.nic.in

Table-3: Sharing of Votes in 16th Lok Sabha Election 2014 by Major Parties in some Muslim dominated Areas (Rajasthan)

S.No.	Assembly Area	Share of BJP	Share of Congress
1.	Mandawa	59,546	33,670
2.	Fatehpur	63,312	48,857
3.	Tijara	75,834	55,584
4.	Kaman	63,800	54,313
5.	Deedwana	51,576	48,738

Source : www.ceorajasthan.nic.in

Table 1 reveals that Bhartiya Janta Party got massive victory in 16th Lok Sabha Elections in Rajasthan with all 25 seats even BJP took significant lead in Muslim dominated areas too. (Table-3) The reasons for massive victory, can be analysis in two categories :

- (A) **State level factors** – In this category we have to analyse the working and achievements of outgoing congress led state government first. There are some basic ground issues which directly influence the masses every time, such as drinking water, electricity, roads, health and education facilities and communal harmony etc. There are no such specific achievements in these areas by congress led government. Lack of adequate supply of electricity and water, damaged roads even highways, no suitable transparent mechanism of grievance redressal system had tarnished the image of the then stage government. In employment sector recruitments were made on few government jobs but this exercise gone in vain due to court intervention. State government has opened few new state universities on one side hand but on other side it did not provide sufficient resources and grants to old reputed universities of the state. Even though congress led state government scraped the autonomy of state universities by making amendment in Rajasthan Universities Act in 2013 with regard to the prior approval of the state government in decisions having financial implications shall be mandatory. Congress Led State Government launched some good schemes like free medicine and check-up scheme, old age pension but these schemes could not get the desired goals due to without studying

and ensuring ground execution machinery properly. People oriented laws like right to hearing and right to service guarantee could not provide relief to the masses and mostly these schemes were introduced after over the half time of the government.

As far as the issues of communal harmony and law and order situation is concerned the Gopalgarh and Surwal matters exposed the weak governance of the than state government.

The community alienation and silent caste mobilisation politics like old v/s new OBC etc. of the then Chief Minister Shri Ashok Gahlot also played a significant role in detrimental defeat of the congress in 16th Lok Sabha elections. He nurtured new youth leaders not for congress party but for his own political interests. Such type of superficial leaders neither had commitment in democracy nor faith in congress party. It was a loyal team of Gahlot only, hence the common worker of congress feel alienated and did not work for party seriously in elections.

- (B) **National Factors** – The national issues plays a significant role in 16th Lok Sabha election in the state. These issues can be analysed as leadership of the party, corruption, development, price hike of basic commodities and anti incumbancy etc. BJP declared Shri Narendra Modi as prime ministerial candidate whereas congress and others did not declared as such. Shri Modi is a good and impressive orator, having the ability to impress the masses by highlighting the weaknesses and mistakes committed by UPA government through his common man style of dialogue delivery. He had a nationwide face compare to Rahul Gandhi, and Man Mohan Singh.

The working of UPA government was a basic factor which through the congress in a dig. The statements made by the ministers of UPA government itself revealed the level of mis-governance and non-accountability to the people. Silence of Prime Minister Shri Man Mohan Singh on serious issues like missing of hundred of files from PMO was also built the graveyard for congress.

The than UPA government always alleged the coalition but this was not true corruption issue damaged the image of UPA government in the masses nationwide. The Congress/UPA was in illusion that the minority communities specially Muslim will support congress as past but the data reveals that congress could not get edge in Muslim voters while BJP increased support in Muslims (Table 4).

As per survey (CSDS) even youth voters supported to BJP compare to congress. The data also revealed that BJP got the significant turn out of voters of all castes in 16th General Elections compare to 2009 elections.

Table-4: Castewise Lead in favour of BJP in General Election 2014

	2009 Election		2014 Election	
	Congress	BJP	Congress	BJP
Upper caste	26	29	13	47
OBCs	24	22	15	34
Dalits	27	12	19	24
Tribals	38	24	28	38
Muslims	38	04	38	08

In my view the General Election of 2014 was different from other General Elections because of (i) high voting percentage of all time - 66.4 percent (ii) First non Congress party got majority ever, and (iii) First single party majority government in last 30 years.

2014 General Elections

Some new Changes in Election Politics

Name of Party / Alliance	2014 election		2009 election	
	Vote %	Seats Won	Vote %	Seats Won
BJP	31.3	282	+12.3	+166
BJP+	7.2	54	-2.3	-29
Congress	19.3	44	-9.3	-162
Congress+	3.7	15	-0.5	-11
Others	38.7	148	-2.2	-22

As far as Rajasthan state is concerned BJP took clean sweep in 2013 in state assembly election except Karauli, Dholpur, Bharatpur and Dausa region. In 2014 Lok Sabha elections 3 seats viz. Karauli-Dholpur, Dausa

and Barmer became very crucial for BJP and especially for the star campaigner of the party Mrs. Vasundhara Raje, Chief Minister of the state. Mrs. Raje planned to visit Karauli-Dholpur-Bharatpur and Sawai Madhopur with the government machinery immediate after the historic victory in assembly elections 2013 and succeeded to convince the annoyance of people of these areas. That's why BJP won Karauli-Dholpur parliamentary seat. In Barmer where BJP dropped the candidature of Shri Jaswant Singh and declared Col. Sonaram as party candidate for that constituency. The strong Rajput lobby which generally support BJP annoyed with the decision and Shri Jaswant Singh contested in election as independent candidate. But Mrs. Vasundhara Raje took it very serious and made personal efforts to convince people of the area and BJP won this seat due the day to day effort and charisma of Mrs. Raje.

The election results reveals that no lone can make public fool for a long time. The people want development on ground, corruption free governance, adequate education, health, housing, employment, electricity facilities and good governance in government working. It seems that people allowed to a new political party at the national level for giving opportunity to provide good governance to the masses. The whole scenario of general election 2014 shows that it happened due the mis-governance of UPA government, that's why a party having 4 decades history of single party dominance is failed to got 10 per cent seats in parliament.

Rajasthan also gave massive victory for the BJP with the hope of good governance and stability at the centre. Although the state has been bastion of the BJP since independence but in 2014, national factors dominated over state factors but fortunately Raja government was new one therefore it also got benefit of doubt. Charisma of Shri Narendra Modi and utter negligence of governance by the Congress party annoyed the people. 2014 elections remain historic in the state. It also sustained the tradition of two party dominance in the state and at the same time negated the space for any regional or third party.

Economic Aspects of General Elections 2014

Sanjeev Kumar

Introduction

The General Elections 2014 in India become even more significant when we consider that India is home to one-fourth of the world's poor. Each election is thought to be a game changer for the economically and socially marginalized in the country, and is often seen as a referendum between two opposing ideologies, namely that of the Indian National Congress (INC) representing the left of centre economic policies with pluralistic social underpinnings and that of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) which represents a right wing cultural and economic philosophy. General election 2014 marks a major shift in the polity of India with the BJP not only changing the Westminster style Parliamentary elections into a US style Presidential election revolving around personalities, but also using unprecedented amounts of financial resources for its campaign. At the national level, this election turned out to be a referendum on the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate Sh. Narendra Modi.

The major issues of general election 2014 were lack of jobs, economic slowdown, corruption, security and terrorism, religious division and communalism, and infrastructure such as roads, electricity and water. In another survey by Zee News for about 14% of people, corruption is the main issue in the election

There is no question that India's economic troubles will have a direct impact on voters. In the last national election, as well as in recent state elections, there has been a greater correlation between the economic records of governments and their electoral performance. At least as far as state governments are concerned, since 2000 voters are increasingly judging incumbents on the basis of objective measures of economic performance rather than relying exclusively on considerations of identity or local patronage. In my judgment, this is an irreversible trend that signals a kind of maturation of Indian democracy.

In the General Elections 2014, BJP won 282 seats by itself, and together with its allies it now commands a formidable majority of 334 out of 543 seats. Their principal rival, the Congress, which headed the coalition that ruled India for the last ten years, was reduced to their lowest ever tally of 44 seats. While most commentators predicted that the Congress would be defeated, regional heavy weights were expected to play a dominant role in forming the ruling coalition. However, the onslaught of BJP, riding on the popular wave for Modi confined these important state-based parties like All India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (AIADMK) and Trinamool Congress to their respective states. Two important regional parties, the Janata Dal United (JDU) and Bahujan Samaj Party (BSP), lost the bulk of their votes to the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP).

Performance of BJP in General Election 2014

The significance of the general election 2014 verdict is not lost on anyone. While most political pundits had predicted that the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), a right wing coalition of around thirty national and regional political parties including the BJP, TDP, SAD and SS among others, would form the next government, it was not imagined that the BJP would singlehandedly muster complete majority in the Lok Sabha. In a house of 543 members, BJP won 282 seats independently and the total tally for the NDA reached 336. In addition to this being the best performance for the NDA.

Sh. Narendra Modi earlier served as the Chief Minister of Gujarat for three successive terms, managed to achieve this rare feat despite strong opposition from both within and outside his party. His success comes in the backdrop of his image as a leader who provided high GDP growth, guided by high private investment, in Gujarat at a time when economic growth in the rest of India was stagnating and the Congress led United Progressive Alliance (UPA) government in New Delhi was battling a quagmire of corruption scandals and bureaucratic inaction.

The results were equally historic and unprecedented during the general election 2014. According to the data released by the Election Commission of India, the 2014 elections saw the highest ever voter turnout of 68.38 per cent which not only bettered the 2009 turnout of 58.19 per cent but also surpassed the 1984 record of 64.01 per cent as almost all states saw a significant increase in the number of people who exercised their right to vote. The majority of the increase in voting percentage, it seems, translated into increasing the vote share of the

BJP that saw an increase of over 11 per cent in its vote share. The Congress on the other hand, saw a significant reduction in its popularity as its vote share fell from 28.55 per cent in 2009 to 19.31 per cent in 2014.

The performance of BJP in general elections 2009 and 2014 is given in Table 1. In addition to increasing its absolute vote share, BJP managed to break fresh ground in states like Tamil Nadu where it not only managed to increase its votes from 2.3 per cent to 5.5 per cent but also succeeded in winning a seat. Similarly, in Assam its vote share more than doubled from 16.21 per cent in 2009 to 36.9 per cent in 2014. While an increase in vote share may not always imply a corresponding increase in seats, BJP also almost doubled its seats from 4 in 2009 to 7 in 2014 in Assam. Similarly, in Bihar, its vote share increased from 13.93 per cent in 2009 to 29.4 per cent in 2014. The corresponding increase in seats was from 12 to 22.

In addition, BJP made its presence felt in the erstwhile Communist bastion of West Bengal where its vote share increased from 6.14 per cent in 2009 to 16.8 per cent in 2014. Even in the southern state of Kerala where BJP did not win seats, it managed to garner an impressive vote share of 10.3 per cent.

In Northern and North-Western states of India, BJP has expanded its ambit in the North-Eastern and Southern states to supplant Congress as the largest national party of the country. It must be noted here that while it was bringing the southern states in its fold, its traditional stronghold in states like Uttar Pradesh (UP) also solidified. BJP swept the largest state of India, Uttar Pradesh, by winning 71 out of 80 seats. Its vote share increased by over two fold from 17.5 per cent in 2009 to 42.3 per cent in 2014. Also, as expected, Narendra Modi's home state of Gujarat saw a clean sweep by the BJP in all the 29 seats while winning the confidence of 59.1 per cent voters. Likewise, in the desert state of Rajasthan all 25 seats were claimed by the BJP which increased its already high vote share from 36.57 per cent in 2009 to 54.9 per cent in 2014.

Factors that Responsible for BJP Win the Election

- **Stabilization or Decline of the Economy:** India's once-impressive economic growth, averaging above eight per cent over the last decade, slowed to below five per cent in the last year while inflation rocketed into double digits. The BJP and Narendra Modi maintained a laser focus on the economy throughout the

campaign, hammering the Congress party for stalled development projects while touting Modi's state of Gujarat as a model of success. In fact, Gujarat's growth has been mediocre compared with others of India's 28 states. But Modi's message resonated with an electorate aching for change and upward mobility, and India's corporate leaders backed Modi as a decisive administrator needed to revive industrial growth.

- **High Current Account Deficit:** India's slowing economy amidst a record high current account deficit and a falling rupee in summer 2013. It pointed out a lack of infrastructure investment and a government increasingly likely to give subsidies that the national finances cannot afford just before the election. Other points it mentioned were stagnant policymaking and an inefficient bureaucracy. The economy was the main issue in the campaign. The lack of a clear mandate as a result of the election could lead to an increase in the price of gold in the country. Narendra Modi also brought up the issue of farmer suicides that resulted from high debt and poor yield on their crops
- **Combating Corruption:** A slew of massive corruption scandals involving public funds and resources battered the Congress-led coalition. Anti-graft protests inspired a fierce anti-incumbency wave among voters and inspired the launch of Arvind Kejriwal's (AAP). In his campaign, Mr Modi has said he will serve as a "chowkidaar" or watchman, vowing he will expunge corruption from the government and bureaucracy.
- **Food Inflation:** The price of onions, a staple in Indian cuisine, faced a dramatic increase. In the lead up to the election, consumer price inflation increased more than expected while, paradoxically, industrial production fell by more than expected causing a dilemma amid slowing growth. The price of salt was also indicative of general food inflation.
- **Youth:** India's electorate is particularly young, with half the country's 81 crore voters under 35 years old and eager to secure employment with promise. Mr Modi has promised to create jobs for them. They are also averse to the political tradition of whipping up communal loyalties to secure votes from certain socio-economic groups, castes or religions.
- **Technology:** The BJP and Modi ran a high-adrenalin and tech-savvy campaign that dazzled and engaged voters directly through social media. Modi snapped campaign selfies that went viral and

even appeared as a holograph at campaign events. He has tweeted daily for years. By contrast, his main rival from the Congress party, Rahul Gandhi, shunned Twitter himself while his party took to the site only this year.

- **Infrastructure:** India's crumbling roads and ports, plus lack of adequate electricity supply, were high on the list of problems that make business projects hard to get off the ground. They are also of paramount importance to voters, one-third of whom now live in cities. In Gujarat, Mr Modi made infrastructure improvements a priority, building thousands of kilometers of highways and attracting investment to build up the country's largest modern port. He promised to bring the same focus if elected prime minister.
- **Other Factors:** These factors are; helping all segments of society move closer to their aspirations; initiating development and reform policies to fast track economic revival; bringing more transparency and accountability in governance; curtailing rising prices and inflation; and putting in place a concrete set of actions to bring down poverty.

In conclusion, one can say that the general election 2014 was based on many economic factors, which are responsible for BJP wins. It also indicates that electoral systems tend towards a top-middle alliance in the absence of a corporatist economic structure. However, on economic policy issues, particularly about liberalization and the role of the state, the responses are much more mixed. The country's economic indicators were performing well in advance of the result in expectation of a BJP win, on the perception that Modi is business-friendly. The benchmark BSE Sensex and CNX Nifty indices hit record highs and the Indian rupee strengthened following months of poor performance. On the result day, as early vote counts gave the BJP a majority lead, the Sensex reached a record high of 25,375.63 points.

Women Factor in 2014 Elections

Shweta Singh

There is a general consensus among political scientists that Inter-linkages between women and democracy should be very cordial. However, it is equally true that relationship between the two has historically been quite controversial. For instance, when the United States of America became independent from the yoke of British Empire in 1776 and decided to adopt democracy as the mode of its governance, it did not accord the right to vote to women. Similarly, France also committed the same mistake when it became republic 13 years later in 1789. The similar practice was further flowed by so called harbingers of European democracy. And it was only in the 20th century when these European countries took some cosmetic efforts towards increasing women's participation in democratic processes by extending the voting right to their womenfolk, with Switzerland having become the last country in this series to give this right to their womenfolk in 1972. It did happen in Europe, which became a self-proclaimed castle of modernity despite their historical bias against the women community.

Aristotle's views on women influenced later western thinkers who quoted him as an authority until the end of the middle Ages. In fact, his views on women are an important topic in women history. He saw women as subject to men, but as higher than slaves. In Chapter 12 of *Politics* he writes, "The slave is wholly lacking the deliberate element; the female has it but it lacks authority; the child has it but it is incomplete."^[1]

Aristotle believed that nature ordained not only physical differences between male and female but also mental differences. By comparison to man, he argued, woman is "more mischievous, less simple, more impulsive... more compassionate [,]... more easily moved to tears[,]... more jealous, more querulous, more apt to scold and to strike[,] ... more prone to despondency and less hopeful[,] ... more void of shame or self-respect, more false of speech, more deceptive, of more retentive memory [and] ... also more wakeful; more shrinking [and] more difficult to rouse to action" (*History of Animals*, 608b. 1–14). Moreover, in accord with his society's custom of allowing girls and women to eat only half as much as boys and men, he added that the woman "requires a smaller

quantity of nutriment” (History of Animals, 608b. 14).^[2] Plato however revised his position and advocated that women of higher class in an ideal state should be given equal social roles to those of man.

J.S. Mill, one of the eminent western thinkers, however advocated marvelously for the emancipation of women including the right to vote. Mill was convinced that the moral and intellectual advancement of humankind would result in greater happiness for everybody. He asserted that the higher pleasures of the intellect yielded far greater happiness than the lower pleasure of the senses. He conceived of human beings as morally and intellectually capable of being educated and civilised. Mill believed everyone should have the right to vote, with the only exceptions being barbarians and uneducated people.

John Stuart Mill wrote an essay, *The Subjection of Women*, in 1869,^[3] making an argument in favour of equality between the sexes. By the time it was published in 1869, this essay was an affront to European conventional norms for the status of men and women.

Mill argued that people should be able to vote to defend their own rights and to learn to stand on their two feet, morally and intellectually. This argument is applied to both men and women. Mill often used his position as a Member of Parliament to demand the right to vote for women, a controversial position at that time.

At the time of writing, Mill recognised that he was going against the common views of society and was aware that he would be forced to back up his claims persistently. Mill argued that the inequality of women was a relic from the past, when “might was right,”^[4] but it had no place in the modern world.^[5] Mill saw that having effectively half the human race unable to contribute to society outside of the home as a hindrance to human development.

But, despite Mill’s seminal arguments, his own country, the United Kingdom and other European countries refused to grant the right to vote to their womenfolk on the basis of equality.

Unlike in the western countries, there has been very rich history of all rounds role for women in India. Women during the early Vedic period enjoyed equal status with men in all aspects of life.^[6] Works by ancient Indian grammarians such as Patanjali and Katyana suggest that women were educated in the early Vedic period.^[7] Rigvedic verses suggest that women married at a mature age and were probably free to select their own husbands.^[8] Scriptures such as the Rig Veda and the Upanishads mention several women sages and seers, notably Gargi

and Maitreyi. In the medieval period the status of women declined, but mainly due to consistent outside attacks and alien rule.

European scholars observed in the 18th century that Hindu women are “naturally chaste” and “more virtuous” than other women.^[9] During the British Raj, many reformers such as Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar and Jotirao Phule fought for the betterment of women. Peary Charan Sarkar, a former student of Hindu College, Calcutta and a member of “Young Bengal,” set up the first free school for girls in Barasat, a suburb of Calcutta in 1847.

During freedom struggle, women had a massive role. Gandhi ensured massive participation of the women community despite societal apathy against women in the contemporary Indian society. Gandhi ensured that women must be an integral part of his activities. The women wing within Congress was started with the tacit persuasion of Gandhi. Anne Basant and Sarojini Naidu became the Presidents of Congress in due course. Mahatma Gandhi declared that women is comrade in arms and without bringing them into the mainstreaming process, India could not be a just society.

Soon after getting independence, India adopted liberal democracy as the mode of governance with the sole philosophy of equality in all sphere of life. Liberal democracy is founded on reason, law, and freedom of choice. However, different social groups do not have equal access to the social and political spaces where power is located. This is particularly true in the case of women. The nature of society or state has a decisive impact on the extent and effectiveness of women’s political presence and participation. Notions of democracy, governance and the state are often not gender neutral constructs but result from both historical factors and experiences. The state and its organisational entities reflect the same social forces as other social organisations. It is thus necessary to examine the issue of women’s participation in the political process, decision making and policy formulation. This issue is significant in the Indian context because despite women having held the top offices of the country include that of the Prime Minister, the status of Indian women has not changed much along the desired line.

By 1930 the right to vote initially benefited women from elite families. During British rule the first election took place in 1937 and many women representatives emerged victorious. Women in India now participate fully in areas such as education, sports, politics, media, art and culture, service sectors, science and technology, etc. Indira Gandhi, who served

as the Prime Minister of India for an aggregate period of fifteen years, is the world's longest serving woman Prime Minister.^[10]]

The Constitution of India guarantees to all Indian women equality (Article 14), no discrimination by the State (Article 15(1)), equality of opportunity (Article 16), and equal pay for equal work (Article 39(d). In addition, it allows special provisions to be made by the State in favour of women and children (Article 15(3), renounces practices derogatory to the dignity of women (Article 51(A) (e), and also allows for provisions to be made by the State for securing just and humane conditions of work and for maternity relief, (Article 42).^[11]

Women in India constitute nearly half the total population of the country (Census-2011), but they are poorly represented in the various governance and decision making bodies. The position depicted till the 14 general elections reflects a low representation of women in Parliament, State legislatures, in political parties and other decision-making bodies. Less than 8% of Parliamentary seats, less than 6% Cabinet positions, less than 4% of seats in High Courts and the Supreme Court, have been occupied by women. Less than 3% of the administrators and managers are women. The average percentage of women's representation in the Parliament, Assemblies and the Council of Ministers taken together has been around 10%.^[12]

Right from the first general elections (1952) women has taken huge interests in politics and got elected for Parliament and state assemblies but never in a sizeable number. In 2014 general elections 62 women entered into the Lok Sabha. It is little over 11%. However it is 3% higher than the 2009 Lok Sabha. But, given the 20% global average women representation in parliaments, it is less and needs to be upgraded. The Women Reservation Bill in Parliament was mooted in the 1990s, the Rajya Sabha had passed it in 2010 but still it is pending. By the way, it has remained part and parcel of assurances from the political parties to the womenfolk since last five consecutive general elections. How far women cause could make an imprint over the outcome of 2014 elections has been duly investigated within the ambit of this paper.

The participation of women and their engagement in electoral processes is an important formulator of the maturity and efficacy of democracy in any country. It can be defined not only in terms of equality and freedom which help them in sharing political power with men, but also in terms of liberty and space provided for women in the democratic framework of electoral politics. India is a classic country which ensures

the equal voting right to its womenfolk since the first general elections. Beside Indira Gandhi, many women Chief Ministers have shown their imprint on Indian politics. Many among them like Mayawati, Mamata and Jayalalitha are from different parties other than the Congress. For instance, Vasundha Raja took over as the Chief Minister of Rajasthan for the second time in 2013 and is considered a very powerful administrator. BJP has also many women leaders and this is perhaps the first time following the 2014 general election that six women were given cabinet portfolios in the Prime Minister Narendra Modi-led BJP Government. But the basic problem of lack of representation of women in parliament and state assemblies has still remained unresolved. In the 2014 Lok Sabha elections, as the BJP-led NDA won 336 seats, a majority of the elected women Member of Parliament belongs to the NDA. But, it needs to be emphasised here the fact that for last many general elections the BJP has continually provided more tickets to women. On the other hand, other parties are not following this trend. Till date there is no reservation for women in parliament but it does not prevent political parties to give more tickets to women in elections. Even communist parties which talk high about the emancipation of the women have not performed well as far as distribution of tickets to women in assembly and parliamentary elections are concerned.

In the 2014 elections, BJP and its allies got 50.4% of the valid vote winning 336 seats out of the total 543 seats. According to the CSDS survey of the 2014 elections, 36% youth from the 18 to 36+ groups voted for the Modi-led BJP.^[13] The total number of young voters exceeded to 68%, which is more than 1 % of the total vote. Needless to say that in this highly propelled enthusiasm, youngest women also includes.^[14] It indicates that women in practice didn't feel that they had separate set of demands from the government. In fact, common issues like price rise, unemployment, corruption and crime were also important determining factors among women voters and in the 2014 elections they perceive that Modi could resolve these chronic problems. Therefore, they voted massively for him. Of course, following the Nirbhya incident in December 2012, women safety has become an issue. But, other issues regarding women were not in the rounds during the 2014 general election. The 2014 election is historic because of a high percentage (66.4%) of voters exercised their voting right. It became possible due to heavy turnout from the women community. The gender gap of voting remains only 1.46% in 2014, which was 17% in 1957 and 9% in 1984 when the general election had taken place in the backdrop of the assassination of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi.^[15]

Concluding Remarks

The outcomes of the 2014 general elections were encouraging for women. Still many steps have to be taken. There is certainly the need to accord more effective role to women in decision-making processes. Through the 73rd and 74th constitution amendments 33% reservation in panchyati Raj Institutions and urban local bodies was provided to women and since 1993 these structural changes have produced relatively positive results.

Citizenship is linked to political participation and representation. Lack of ability and opportunity to participate in the political system implies a lack of full membership in the system. For true equality to become a reality for women, the sharing of power on equal terms with men is essential. But the reality is that women continue to be marginally represented even in areas where the various policies have a direct impact on them. There is still a great gap between constitutional guarantees and the actual representation of women in the political system in India

The 2014 general elections have narrowed down these gaps but still many positive steps have to be taken. In this era of high technology propelled knowledge world, social media is also working positively in this direction. Till a constitutional amendment is not passed, political parties need to enhance women representation in elections and in a large context, societal mindset needs to be changed. Laws have its own limitations in Indian context therefore social movements are requirements for the sustainable healthy electoral participation of the women. The 2014 general elections have eased this participation but we need to propel the momentum for its complete transformation in coming decades.

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Mandate of Lok Sabha Elections 2014 in Madhya Pradesh: An Analysis of BJP's Victory

Yatindra Singh Sisodia

The outcomes of Assembly elections 2013 and Lok Sabha elections 2014 put forward the extra ordinary performance of BJP. The main reason behind this thundering success was the charisma of Shivraj Singh which was further strengthened and consolidated by the Narendra Modi wave. The poor performance of Congress was due to the result of anti-incumbency for the Centre on the issues of inflation and corruption and also of an unorganised campaign which was designed and executed weakly. This paper makes an attempt to analyse the outcome of Lok Sabha elections 2014 in Madhya Pradesh.

I. Introduction

Madhya Pradesh[i] polity has largely been a two-party system with small or regional parties not having recorded success in elections. Till the last decade the Congress party had over dominated the political history of Madhya Pradesh. Despite the fact that the state of Madhya Pradesh has sizeable population of ST and SC and also a formidable number of middle castes population, the state polity has revolved around two major political parties and other political parties could not galvanise the votes in their favour in electoral politics. The obvious reason was the programmes launched by congress led state government during the 1980s for the upliftment of the weaker and marginalised sections in the state which made significant changes among the perception of the lower castes/classes. The initiatives of the then state government gave a strong indication that Madhya Pradesh was emerging as a state in the Indian union, taking on the mantle of state-sponsored social reforms by stoking the aspirations of the backward and marginalised sections of the population (Gupta, 2005). In the context of Madhya Pradesh, social basis of political power in terms of politics is clearly discernible. The state of Madhya Pradesh is a very strong example of the thesis of party political competition (Yadav and Palshikar, 2009)

wherein the arena of this thesis has greater autonomy in determining the quality and outcome of democracy. In Madhya Pradesh, the elections of last two decades are testimony to this fact of party political competition.

This paper makes an attempt to analyse electoral politics in the context of the outcome of Lok Sabha elections 2014 to assess the structure of competition and its relation to the election outcomes.

II. Campaign

In the Madhya Pradesh Assembly elections 2013, BJP went in fray with the face of Shivraj Singh Chouhan whereas Congress did not project anyone as its leader. Congress despite having ruled for maximum period of time found it difficult to combat Shivraj Singh Chouhan's leadership and style of functioning (delivery of political goods) which helped the BJP to override the anti-incumbency in 2008. The scenario from the point of view of state electoral polity in 2013 was also not much different from 2008. The leadership has a significant role to play in state's electoral politics which has been evident in last 20 years as Digvijay Singh and Shivraj Singh have created indispensable space in state polity during their Chief Ministerial regimes.

Congress being one of the dominant political parties of the state for a very long period of time witnessed factionalism and in-fighting from the day, the election campaign took off in the state. The Congress in Madhya Pradesh has been represented by many stalwart leaders of national stature. Most of them have been leading a separate faction within party in the state. This factionalism has created a kind of quota system within the party, which has been evident from party ticket distribution in election to portfolio distribution and to allotment of places in party organisation. Presently the Congress seems to be concentrated within three major power centres— Digvijay Singh, Kamal Nath and Jyotiraditya Scindia who are all national level politicians.

After mammoth victory in the state assembly, the momentum continued for the BJP. Madhya Pradesh went for polling for the Lok Sabha on 10, 17, 24 April, 2014 for 29 seats. The solid platform created by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan through extraordinary performance of the BJP during the Assembly elections 2013 was further strengthened and consolidated by the Narendra Modi wave in the state of Madhya Pradesh. The rank and file of the BJP was completely charged up. Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan continuously campaigned for 27 days

for 10 hours a day and addressed 150 public rallies. BJP launched the 'Modi for PM' campaign in Madhya Pradesh on the occasion of the 118th birth anniversary of Nataji Subhash Chandra Bose in January 2014. BJP subsequently set a 'Mission-29' (winning all 29 Lok Sabha seats). The campaign in Madhya Pradesh also had a feature of 'Modi tea stalls' to showcase Modi's achievement from a mere tea seller to the BJP's Prime Ministerial candidate. The campaign revolved around the fact that if the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance forms the government at the centre, the state will get an extra boost for development as Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan continuously argued in campaign that state got step motherly treatment. The Congress's abysmal performance in this election is also due to the overwhelming anti-incumbency against the United Progressive Alliance government. The Congress found it difficult to defend the performance of the UPA government (Sisodia: 2014). In the whole campaign, issues of development remained crucial for the BJP and paved the way for this huge victory.

III. Voting Pattern

The BJP got a landslide victory in Madhya Pradesh in Lok Sabha election 2014, winning 27 of the 29 seats, registering its best performance ever in the state (Table 1). The party's victory almost resonates with the results in other bipolar states in the neighbourhood such as Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh and Gujarat.

Table 1: Madhya Pradesh Lok Sabha Elections of 2014, 2009 and 2004: Comparison of Results

Party	2014		2009		2004	
	Seats Won	Vote (%)	Seats Won	Vote (%)	Seats Won	Vote (%)
BJP	27	54.03	16	43.45	25	48.13
INC	2	34.89	12	40.14	4	34.07
BSP	-	3.79	1	5.85	-	4.75
SP	-	0.75	-	2.83	-	3.20
AAP	-	1.18	-	-	-	-

Source: CSDS Data Unit

The BJP in fact had swept off the Assembly election held in Madhya Pradesh a few months ago, however the difference between the vote share of the BJP and the Congress rose to 19 per cent this time as

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compared to from 8 per cent in the earlier election. Only two Congress stalwarts, Jyotiraditya Scindia and Kamal Nath, managed to retain their seats. The result of this election is significant in the state in terms of its victory margin: victory margins which ranged from one lakh to four lakh in the 27 seats whereas the victory margins in most constituencies in 2009 election were in thousands. The BSP has a presence in pockets adjacent to Uttar Pradesh particularly in the regions of Chambal and Vindhya Pradesh. However, the base of BSP has still not spread much beyond its previous strongholds, the Chambal and Vindhya Pradesh (Pai, 2003).

Table 2: Madhya Pradesh: Region Wise Results for Lok Sabha election 2014

Region	Seats	Turnouts	BJP		Congress		BSP		Others	
			Seats	Vote (%)	Seats	Vote (%)	Seats	Vote (%)	Seats	Vote (%)
Chambal	4	52.3	3	45.6	1	38.3	-	10.5	-	5.7
Vindhya Pradesh	8	56.3	8	51.1	-	32.7	-	6.9	-	9.3
Mahakoshal	6	66.9	5	51.9	1	36.3	-	1.9	-	9.8
Malwa North	7	65.1	7	62.2	-	32.3	-	1.0	-	4.5
Malwa Tribal	4	66.9	4	54.1	-	38.1	-	1.2	-	6.6
Total	29	61.6	27	54.0	2	34.9	-	3.8	-	7.3

Source: CSDS Data Unit

BJP did exceedingly well in Lok Sabha election in all parts of the state (Table 2). The Congress managed to get the highest share of votes in Chambal as compared to other regions whereas BSP also got sizeable vote share in this region. In Vindhya, Mahakoshal, Malwa Tribal and Malwa North, the BJP was clearly dominant and importantly it had further consolidated vote share in all the regions. The gap of vote share between both the major political parties was highest with 30 per cent in North Malwa.

IV. Vote by Social and Economic Indicators

For BJP, gender did not make any difference since both men and women supported the party almost in equal proportion as mentioned in table 3. Women have a slightly higher preference for the BJP due to Shivraj Singh Chouhan's popular pro-women programmes[ii] and also due to other popular schemes which seemed to have struck a sympathetic chord. The much argued and debated NOTA button on EVMs introduced

by the Election Commission made an insignificant mark in the election results. Liking among women for BJP in Lok Sabha election boosted with 12 percentage points and further dipped for Congress.

Table 3: Gender Wise Party Outcome for Lok Sabha Election 2014

Gender	BJP	Congress	BSP	Others	NOTA	n
Men	51	35	3	9	2	576
Women	57	34	5	4	-	496

Note: Figures in per cent except n (n=total).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1129).

Table 4: Education Wise Party Outcome for Lok Sabha Election 2014

Education	BJP	Congress	BSP	Others	NOTA	n
Non Literate	46	47	6	1	-	214
Upto Primary	55	38	4	4	3	235
Upto Matric	56	33	4	7	-	318
College and above	56	25	3	12	5	305

Note: Figures in per cent (except n).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1072).

There is a clear correlation between education and party preference. Table 4 clarifies that the non-literates gave almost equal preference to both the Congress and the BJP. However, in other educational categories, there was a marked difference in preference for BJP in both the elections. This pattern of voting was almost a carryover from the past with the trend further consolidating. It is interesting to notice that voters in the College and above category endorsed others from this particular point of preference during Lok Sabha election.

Table 5: Locality Wise Party Outcome for Lok Sabha Election 2014

Locality	BJP	Congress	BSP	Others	NOTA	n
Rural	55	35	3	5	2	777
Urban	52	35	5	8	-	296

Note: Figures in per cent (except n).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1073).

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Madhya Pradesh is predominantly a rural state and urban constituencies are less in number. However, the election results have broken all the stereotypes in terms of strongholds of Congress in rural areas whereas BJP has been doing well in urban areas as well. Table 5 testifies that BJP did exceptionally well in rural areas and also made a strong grip in urban areas. Others have made a sizeable presence in urban areas. The commanding position of the BJP could be seen in the urban-rural division of seats. In a predominantly rural state (the urban population in Madhya Pradesh was less than 28 per cent in 2011), the BJP managed to wrest a 10 per cent lead in rural areas. The party did immensely well in rural areas and also retained a complete control in urban areas.

Table 6: Age Wise Party Outcome for Lok Sabha Election 2014

Age	BJP	Congress	BSP	Others	NOTA	N
Up to 25 years	61	24	4	11	-	225
26-35 years	53	35	3	5	4	334
36-45 years	53	37	3	7	-	250
46-55 years	51	39	5	4	-	150
56 years and above	50	44	6	-	-	110

Note: Figures in per cent (except n).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1069).

Table 6 brings the fact that in all age groups, there is a clear edge in the preference for BJP. The gap of voting for BJP is relatively higher in the age group upto 45 years which has slightly narrowed down in remaining two higher age groups. This extra tilt for BJP in the age group below 45 is suggestive of the fact that there is a clear edge for BJP in relatively younger age groups. When an electoral victory is so resounding and the gap between the two contestants so large, it goes without saying that the winning party must have expanded its base across all sections squarely. Yet, some sections were more enthusiastic in their support for the BJP. This time, almost one-third of the electors were from the age group of 18-25 and overwhelming support from this group has provided extra edge to the BJP.

Table 7: Economic Class Wise Party Outcome for Lok Sabha Election 2014

Income	BJP	Congress	BSP	Others	NOTA	N
Upper	55	29	2	14	-	58
Middle	53	36	4	7	-	569
Lower	56	32	4	4	4	372
Poor	48	47	4	-	-	76

Note: Figures in per cent (except n).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1075).

Table 7 portrays the party voted by the economic class. There is a sizeable tilt in favour of BJP in case of upper group and also a noticeable voting for others as well from this group. This trend for BJP even continues in middle and lower income groups with slightly lesser number. The remaining group- poor has shown improvement in voting percentage for Congress. This tells the story of political preference shift from the established vote bank pattern to new consolidation of vote banks for BJP by addressing the issues of poor. Though the poor tend to divide their vote between the two main contenders, most other income groups are clearly in favour of the BJP.

V. Vote by Caste and Community

Role of caste and community in elections has two dimensions. One is of the parties and candidates and the second is of the voters. The former seek support of the voters projecting themselves as champions of particular social and economic interests, the latter exercise their votes in favour of one party or candidate on the basis of caste consideration. The social character of the support base of the two major contenders in the state is analysed here. It is very important to have a look at the caste-community voting pattern in elections. With the highest ever voter turnout of 61.6 per cent in the state in the Lok Sabha elections, Madhya Pradesh has retained the trend of high mobilisation and politicisation. However, high voter turnouts do not necessarily ensure a broadening of the social base of politics (Palshikar and Kumar 2004). What social chemistry produced the electoral outcome? If we take a close look at table 8, the social groupings in the state take cognisable shape.

Table 8: Caste Wise Party Voted for Lok Sabha Election 2014

Caste	BJP	Congress	BSP	Others	NOTA	n
Brahmin	56	22	2	20	-	101
Rajput	69	27	1	3	-	121
Other Upper Caste	71	21	4	4	-	48
Yadav	70	16	5	9	-	43
Other OBC	66	20	4	10	-	260
SC	43	42	5	2	8	170
Bhil	59	39	2	-	-	44
Gond	54	43	1	2	-	87
Other STs	54	34	8	4	-	73
Muslims	8	92	-	-	-	92
Others	31	44	17	8	-	36

Note: Figures in per cent (except n).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1075).

OBC is numerically the biggest social group in Madhya Pradesh. BJP seems to have further consolidated its hold in this group. From among the other OBC, 66 per cent voted for the BJP and 20 per cent for the Congress in Lok Sabha election respectively. The upper castes also rallied behind the BJP. Two prominent upper castes- Brahmin and Rajput have shown extra ordinarily higher preference for BJP and a similar pattern prevailed among the other upper castes liking for BJP in Lok Sabha election.

As for dalit support, the BJP was marginally ahead of the Congress. With the BSP acquiring 5 per cent of the dalit votes, nevertheless it has been reduced to margins in Lok Sabha. As already mentioned, the BSP has remained confined to the Chambal and Vindhya regions of the state. The real enigma of the whole electoral scenario is that the BJP gave a lead in the tribal dominated constituencies of the state. The Congress got more votes from the bottom of the social pyramid, while the BJP got more votes from the upper castes and OBCs. The only exceptions were the Muslims who have always had an overwhelming support for Congress; however BJP has this time made inroads in its favour with respect to this category as well. This very clearly deciphers

that the caste wise votes of elections considerably shifted to BJP in almost all caste and class groups.

VI. Preference for Prime Minister

Notwithstanding the parliamentary form, elections to the national parliament, took a presidential form. Voters were very clear that they were voting for a leader more than for a party. The National Election Study (NES) 2014 attempted to capture the mood of the voters on the question of leadership (Table 9). When asked about their preferred choice for prime minister, in Madhya Pradesh close to half the respondents mentioned the name of Narendra Modi while a little over one-fourth favoured Rahul Gandhi. Seven of every 10 respondents mentioned the name of one of these two leaders, with Modi having an 18 percentage point lead over Rahul Gandhi. It is thus clear that both in the Lok Sabha polls, the leadership factor was critical to sway the vote in favour of the BJP in Madhya Pradesh.

Table 9: Preference for the Next Prime Minister from Madhya Pradesh

Candidate	Per cent	Frequency
Narendra Modi	44	493
Rahul Gandhi	26	288
Sonia Gandhi	2	22
Manmohan Singh	1	7
Arvind Kejriwal	3	32

Note: Figures in per cent (except n).

Source: CSDS-Madhya Pradesh Post-Poll Survey 2014; Weighted Data Set (n=1129).

VII. Conclusion

These elections were special in terms of state polity as BJP did exceedingly well in the Assembly election of 2013 whereas Congress being a principal opposition party was in fray to wrest the power back. For Lok Sabha, Congress did especially well in 2009 after long and there was an expectation for them to retain their position. The weak performance of Congress was due to its unorganised, ill designed and weakly operated campaign along with the anti-incumbency for the centre on the issues of inflation and corruption and a combination of

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several factors discussed above with respect to the elections. The fact was re-established that politics in the state is bipolar and BSP has not succeeded in breaking this bipolarity (Sisodia and Ram Shankar: 2009). The possibility of the Congress to consolidate its base among OBCs and to retain the SC-ST-Muslim vote has dithered away from its fold and BJP further consolidated its hold on all these groups.

In Lok Sabha election, Congress gave tickets to all the 12 sitting MPs and 10 got defeated due to the anti-incumbency for UPA. Out of 27 MPs from BJP, 14 were first timers, eight were sitting MPs and remaining four were former MPs.

Madhya Pradesh election politics traditionally dovetails in the national line (Sisodia: 2014a) and the Lok Sabha election, 2014 was also no exception. The extraordinary performance of the BJP was based on the solid platform created by Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan during the Assembly election. It was further strengthened and consolidated by the Narendra Modi wave. The huge anti-incumbency on the issues of inflation and corruption against UPA created a smooth passage for the BJP. Also the BJP's poll promises attracted and positively influenced the voters from all categories to a great extent. Most importantly the delivery of political goods and development agenda made it possible for BJP to be victorious convincingly.

[i] The Madhya Pradesh of today is conglomeration of Madhya Bharat (a union of states in the Malwa Plateau region), Vindhya Pradesh (a union of states in the Vindhya Mountain region) Bhopal (a centrally administered princely state) and Hindi-speaking portion of the Central Provinces. *Malwa* region occupies a plateau in western Madhya Pradesh. The region has developed its own distinct culture, influenced by the Rajasthani, Marathi and Gujarati cultures. Agriculture is the main occupation of the people of Malwa. Malwa has been a traditional stronghold for the BJP since the time of Jansangh. *Mahakoshal* lies in the upper or eastern reaches of the Narmada River valley. It has Satpura) and Maikal ranges and) also major) rivers) Narmada and Tapti. Both major political parties have equal presence in the region. *Vindhya Pradesh* was created in 1948 from the territories of the princely states in the eastern portion of the former Central India. It was named for the Vindhya Range, which runs through the centre of the province. It lies between Uttar Pradesh to the north and Mahakoshal region to the south. This region has an influence of socialist movement and also some similarity with political nature of Uttar Pradesh.

[ii] *Ladli Laxmi Yojana, Gaon Ki Beti Yojna, Pratibha Kiran Yojana and Beti Bachao Abhiyan, and Mukhyamantri Kanyadan Yojana.*

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