

THE BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY'S  
GROWTH FACTORS IN 1990'S:  
A STUDY ON ITS ELECTORAL PROCESS

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**CERTIFICATE**

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For my parents

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# 제1장 Chapter 1

# Introduction

## 1. Overview

The BJP has played an important role in Indian politics during the 1990's arena. The BJP was established in December 1980. Its founding President, A. B. Vajpayee stated in his inaugural address that the BJP was not just a new name for the old Jan Sangh, which drew its ideological lessons from the RSS.<sup>1</sup> He indicated that the policies and program advocated by Mahatma Gandhi constituted the basic ideals behind the formation of the BJP. In the 1984 election, the Congress(I), under the leadership of Rajiv Gandhi, got a massive support but the 1984 to 1989 days were unfortunate for Indian politics. For the first time a Prime Minister was blamed for direct involvement in corruption. The credibility of Rajiv Gandhi & Congress(I) came down. The political scene was marked by turmoil and instability and in such a situation the BJP showed its ability of expanding its base.

With this background of an ideological legacy inherited from the Jan Sangh as well as the electoral performance of the Jan Sangh during 1977-79, the BJP has developed its own electoral strategy and performance. In participating in almost all national and state level elections the BJP has performed with credit except for the debacle it suffered in 1980 and 1984 due to the pro-Congress(I) wave in both elections. From 1989 onward it has been on the course of regular improvement in electoral performance.

Between 1989 and 1992, the BJP became the most dynamic political force in Indian party system. In the 1989 elections, it emerged as the third largest party in the Lok Sabha after the Janata Dal and the Congress(I), winning 85 seats and 11.56% of the vote. In state legislative assembly elections held thereafter in 1990, the BJP won a majority of seats in Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh and the largest number of seats in Rajasthan, becoming the ruling party in the first two states and the leader of the ruling coalition in Rajasthan. It also made major gains in Gujarat. Then, in the 1991

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<sup>1</sup> Yogendra K. Malik & V. B. Singh, *Hindu Nationalists in India: The Rise of the Bharatiya Janata Party*, Vistaar Publications (New Delhi), 1995, p. 29-31.

elections, riding on the wave produced by the *Rath Yatra* of its leader, L. K. Advani, and the movement to construct a temple to Ram in Ayodhya, the BJP achieved its greatest electoral victory since its formation, becoming the second largest party in the Lok Sabha with a strength of 120 seat and a popular vote share of 20.8%.<sup>2</sup> The real success of the party was, however, in Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and UP where it formed the government.

On 6 December 1992, a large group of Hindus led by L. K. Advani, Murli Manohar Joshi and other leader of the RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal with a crowd of 200,000 – destroyed the Babri Mosque at Ayodhya. Following the demolition, the BJP government of UP led by Kalyan Singh resigned. Immediately after, all the three remaining BJP governments in the states of Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan were dismissed by Central Government. In the State Assembly elections of 1993, the BJP got only 96 seats out of 200 in Rajasthan, 117 seats out of 320 in Madhya Pradesh and only 175 seats out of 425 in Uttar Pradesh. The State Assembly elections of 1993 decisively proved that the Hindus did not vote for the so-called party of Hindus, which had destroyed the Babri Mosque.<sup>3</sup>

In the 1996, the BJP launched its election campaign with five major planks. The basic principles of the BJP are as follows: (1) Sanscritic Rashtravad (Cultural Nationalism), (2) Swadesh (Economic nationalism), (3) Shuchita (Probity in public life), (4) Samajik samarasta (Social harmony) and (5) Suraksha (Security for the Country and the people).<sup>4</sup> The 1996 Lok Sabha had a fractured verdict with no party getting an absolute majority. It was for the third consecutive time a general election had thrown up a hung Parliament. The leader of the BJP, the single largest with its tally of 161, had been sworn in as the Prime Minister but could not muster majority support and A. B. Vajpayee submitted resignation after a 13 days wait for some other groups of Members of Parliament to come and join him. The Congress(I), for want of number and also the confidence, decided to support a United Front government without being a part of it. True to history, the Congress repeated what it had done earlier to Charan Singh and Chandra Shekhar. Deve Gowda and I. K. Gujral were allowed very short stints. Both the Congress(I) and the United Front adopted rigid postures leading to another round of Lok Sabha election within a period of two years. Meanwhile, in the UP Assembly election of 1996, the BJP had lost 93 seats –41 to the SP, 20 to the BSP, 13 to the

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<sup>2</sup> Paul R. Brass, *The Politics of India Since Independence*, Cambridge University Press (Cambridge), 1994, p. 87.

<sup>3</sup> C. P. Bhambhri, *Bharatiya Janata Party: Periphery to Centre*, Shipra (Delhi), 2001, p. 18.

<sup>4</sup> V. Henry Devadas, *Elections 1998, Ideologies of Political Parties: A Pre-Election Study*, Navdin Prakashan Kendra (New Delhi), 1998, p. 30.



Congress(I), 5 each to the JD and the Bharatiya Kisan Kamgar Party (BKPP), and the rest to others. Of the 91 new seats which the BJP has gained, 37 were with the SP, 29 with the BSP, 12 with the JD and 9 with the Congress(I).

The United Front government led by I. K. Gujral fell on 28 November 1997 following withdrawal of support by the Congress(I). So, India has faced again the new election in 1998. In this poll, the BJP entered the fray with two major planks – better governance and stable government. It projected A. B. Vajpayee as its Prime Ministerial candidate.<sup>5</sup> Finally, the BJP, with its allies, has emerged as the largest party. It is for the first time in Indian electoral history that any party or combine has overtaken the Congress(I) in this respect. Although in 1996, it managed to squeeze a few more seats, which made it the largest party in terms of seats. It appeared stuck at around 20% of the voter share, and even with allies could not reach the 25% mark. In 1998, BJP's success is much more apparent. It has broken the 25% barrier in its own right, and the allies add a crucial 6% to the total. The BJP itself was able to manage 182 seats with 25.5% votes. After 98 polls, A. B. Vajpayee was sworn in to the second time as the 13<sup>th</sup> Prime Minister and BJP-led coalition government on March 28, 1998 won the vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha by 274 to 261 votes. But, after 13 month, April 17, 1999, this minority coalition government led by BJP lost a vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha, by just one vote. The BJP-led government fell because one of its alliance partner, the AIADMK, withdrew the support of its 18 member Lok Sabha delegation.<sup>6</sup> Another mid-term election was called after Congress(I) fails to form an alternative government.<sup>7</sup>

After all, the 13<sup>th</sup> general elections held 5 September 1999 to 28 October 1999. The NDA, BJP-alliance combined, gained a total of 296 seats, with BJP alone having 182 seats, giving it comfortable lead of 23 seats to be firmly in the saddle once again. The results clearly showed people's declining faith in the Congress(I) and their preference for the continuance of coalition. The BJP managed to retain its previous election score of 182, though not from the same constituencies. Except for Uttar

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<sup>5</sup> Partha S. Ghosh, *BJP and the Evolution of Hindu Nationalism: From Periphery to Centre*, Manohar (New Delhi), 2000, p. 132.

<sup>6</sup> The AIADMK is led by Jayalalitha Jayaram. Although Jayalalitha provided a few reasons for her threatened withdrawal of support, most observers believe her motive was to avoid standing trial in a series of corruption cases, which her alliance with the BJP had not prevented; she hoped that the Congress(I)-led government would be of more help. Philip Oldenburg, 'The Thirteenth Election of India's Lok Sabha (House of the People)', *Asia Society*, September 1999.

<sup>7</sup> Ramashray Roy & Paul Wallace eds., *Indian Politics and the 1998 Election: Regionalism, Hindutva and State Politics*, Sage (New Delhi), 1999, pp. 12-13.

Pradesh and Punjab where the BJP performed badly, the party individually scored well in states like Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Haryana, Bihar, Rajasthan and Orissa.

The rise of the BJP to power and a consistent rise in its vote share with every election since 1984 has been accompanied by a three-dimensional expansion in the 1990s. In geographic terms it has expanded much beyond its north Indian, Hindi heartland core to include Gujarat and Maharashtra in its core areas. More importantly it has developed substantial presence in Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Orissa and Bihar and a foothold in West Bengal and Tamil Nadu. In social terms it is no longer an urban bania-brahmin party. It has developed a formidable rural base, extending well into the lower OBC's and some adivasis. The BJP and its allies were the highest vote getter not only among the upper caste Hindus but also among the OBCs as a bloc. In political-ideological terms, the party has expanded to win the confidence of various allies who have little patience with its Hindutva ideology.<sup>8</sup>

## 2. Aim of This Study

In this study an attempt has been made to find out that which areas BJP advantages for BJP in its march for power and what proved to be disadvantages, which resulted in electoral reversals. For the above stated purpose, the empirical data has been used. With the help of this data, this research would attempt to locate the reasons for the growth of BJP.

Lot of scholars in the recent times, have analysed the performance of BJP. Craig Baxter, Bruce D. Graham, Walter K. Anderson and Shridhar D. Damle, Christopher Jafferlot, Peter van der Veer explanations either by looking into the internal organization and strategies of the BJP and its cadre or they have explained the growth of BJP by linking it with political process and Hindu cultural ethos of India. These scholarly studies provide lot of insights into the internal dynamics of 'Joint Hindu Family' and they have linked their explanations by bringing out the changing dynamics of Indian politics which has facilitated the growth of BJP. The focus of any study on the phenomenal growth of BJP and various Hindu religious organizations should be in finding an explanation for the need of Hindus to accept the party of Hindutva in the

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<sup>8</sup> Yogendra Yadav, 'Electoral Politics in the Time of Change: India's Third Electoral System, 1989-99', *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol. XXXIV (34-35), Aug 21-Sept 3, 1999, p. 2395.

1990s.<sup>9</sup>

Most of the scholars, by and large, feel that these are five-dimensions/ reason, which are considered as responsible for the growth of BJP. These are as follows:

- a. Decline of the Congress(I)
- b. Indian political culture: The specific character in Indian election features is that the people emphasis to personality of the leader strongly instead of policy competition. The strong preference of Nehru family made dominant one-party system of Congress(I). However, after Rajeev Gandhi's assassination, it failed to provide a charismatic leader. In the Meantime, BJP was successful in providing alternate leader to Indian politics in the form of Vajpayee. The Congress(I) tries to use Gandhi's family reputation again through Sonia Gandhi, but it was too late. This election shows the presidential style mind-set. The 1999 vote was for Vajpayee and against Sonia Gandhi i. e., the BJP's victory was the direct result of a presidential contest.<sup>10</sup>
- c. Social Cleavages and its base change/ shift: Last decade saw a sharp rise in political mobilization on the basis of social cleavages based on ascriptive identities. The literature on the determinants of links between social cleavages and party systems offers a number of contending theories. Lipset and Rokkans argument relied on a form of sociological determinism whereby parties are influenced by social change, but not the other way around. On the other hand, E. E. Schattschneider rejects the view that in his book, *The Semisovereign People*(1960), because there are a variety of cleavages within any society, parties must necessarily arise to reflect those cleavages, and that the resulting party system will be simply a reflection of these social divisions. Instead, He argues that among the many division within a society only some will become dominant and form the focus of division between parties. Other cleavages become overridden and largely irrelevant to political competition. What resonates about this perspective vis-à-vis Indian politics in the post-Congress dominance years is the denial of any natural order of conflicts in a society. Rather, it is ambitious political leader who impose that order themselves through their efforts to

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<sup>9</sup> C. P. Bhambhri, *Ibid.*, p.52.

<sup>10</sup> Yogesh Atal, *Mandate for Political Transition: Reemergence of Vajpayee*, Rawat (Jaipur), 2000, p. 163.

develop cleavages that will advantage them. It is, also, matter connected with BJP's organizational forte.

- d. BJP's organizational forte and powerful leadership: Unlike its decaying Congress(I) in the last decade, BJP has effective leadership, dedicated party cadres, and a coherent ideology of Hindutva. Moreover, it has demonstrated an ability to mobilize large masses of the Hindu population around its subsidiary goals, principally the removal of the mosque at Ayodhya and its replacement by a temple to the Hindu god Ram. Now the BJP, the political party spokesman for Hindu nationalism, appears to be ascendant, heading toward the achievement of its goal of attaining national power.
- e. BJP's strategies and campaign: BJP has shown its effectiveness in electoral strategies and campaign. In 1989 it was the part of National Front coalition where main theme of campaign was corruption and anti-Congressism. In 1991, seeing the strong movement against Mandal, it silently withdrew itself from Mandal debate and took aggressive postures on the Mandir issue. So for 1991 the issue was Mandir. 1996 and 1998 the issues become 'able leader and stable government' and 'Ram, Roti and Rogar (God, Bread and Employment)'. So BJP has effectively judged voters emotions and accordingly it has focused on issues in campaign. In 99 elections, the BJP made use the Gargil crisis to the best advantage. It appealed to Indian nationalism and the people responded. This is clear from the results of election. Now the people regard BJP as embodiment of nationalism. This trends, going with world trend that emphasized the nationalism. Its electoral strategies have also been notable. It was shown how opportunistic alliances can be made. In places of limited mass base, BJP readily became a junior partner and it has shown fluctuation in its position like a regional party. It has accepted even opponent as partners and cleverly isolated its allies who lost credibility.

This work does not aim at creating some new reason but it is based on secondary data, i.e., books, articles, write ups in various newspapers, journals and magazine. So, this study is an attempt to look at the reason of growth of BJP by survey of literature and by identifying the reasons in a systematic and integrated manner.

The growth of a party shows its popularity and success in the masses. This

success is based on the voters' perception of the different parties and perception of issues. It is also the test of political position put forward.

This study is divided in four chapters. The first chapter, 'BJP and development of party system in India', deals with the phases in which party system developed and contains journey of Indian party coalitions. It also contains the specific development of BJP as a party and then discusses the transformation of Indian party system.

The second chapter, 'BJP's march for power: 89 to 99', deal with the growth of party in parliament during this phase. This chapter includes the general losses and gains because of which the party is having its enlarged strength.

Chapter third, 'Change of BJP's Lok Sabha seat', is an election-wise statistical account of the performance of BJP since 1989 to 1999. It shows the zone wise detail of the growth of BJP. It explains that in which seats or states BJP was successful and at which places it lost. The latter part of the chapter also contains the details, that who gained from BJP or to whom did BJP lose its seats.

Chapter fourth, 'BJP's growth factors', contains the reason identified in the course of study for the growth of BJP. It tries to answer, why it happened. In this chapter an attempt has been made to explain zone-wise, state-wise and also generally (talking a wholestic view) the reasons which helped BJP in its march for power.

### 3. Voters' Perception

This study first attempts to see how the voters perceive the elections, what functions do elections serve in a democracy and what factors affect voters because of which they choose one party or another.

There are two views regarding the functions of an election. The followers of the first view fell that: (a) the elections allow the citizens to choose the government and restrain those political leaders who try to gain political advantage; (b) but it acts as a link between public attitudes and governmental policy; and (c) it is a peaceful means of political change. According to the second, the elections are just symbolic and are secular rituals of democracy.

Indian's cultural, social, ethnic, religious and linguistic integrity comes out into the open dramatically during elections. Elections have sometime become akin to national festivals. Electorates of different areas look upon the issues and react to them

differently through votes.

A voter's mental space is affected by two different set of facts viz., physical facts and world of facts.<sup>11</sup> The physical facts include types of election, political activities, nomination and seat adjustment. At first, a voter perceives what type of election it is –whether national (Lok Sabha) or regional (assembly) or local (municipal or panchayat). He, then perceives political activities i. e. campaign technique of the candidates. It is supposed to be one of the most important phenomenon in the electoral environment because a party's success depends upon it. So, it should be correctly conceived, and planned steps should be taken in those constituencies where the support among the rival parties are more or less equally balanced and hopeless seats are logically ignored. In recent years, the campaign technique has degraded. Now, it is based on manipulating the religious sentiments of different communities. Seat adjustments also affect voter's decision. It is perceived through contest intensity and opposition unity.

World of facts include culture, personality factor, wave factor and performance of a particular party. Here, it is essential to note that the different psychology of the masses belongs to different strata and groups as it serves to explain the electoral process and its outcome. On the other hand, an election helps us to understand the diverse aspects of the Indian psyche that is more collectivistic than western culture in nature. The wave factor is sometimes prominent. At times, there may be multiple waves blowing simultaneously in different directions at the same time. To understand the impelling force of a political wave, which helps a candidate or party to sweep elections at any level, say in a constituency or a region, requires an understanding between neighbors and those belonging to different social categories.

So, voting is a very significant phenomenon, as it is the individual who recruits the decision maker, and at the same time, expresses his assessment of decision making in the immediate past. During the Emergency (1975–1977), all those who were arrested, prosecuted and harassed by the government, became the virtual heroes of the Indian masses, and Indra Gandhi faced a crushing defeat in the 1977 elections. But, when the Janata Party came to power in 1977, they committed the same mistake by prosecuting Indra Gandhi and even putting her into jail for ten days. Now the sympathy turned in her favour and there was a landslide victory for the Congress(I) in the 1980 mid-term polls. In 1984, emotional as well as cognitive factors moved the masses, and Rajiv Gandhi was brought to power The vital national institution which is

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<sup>11</sup> Ajin Ray, *Election: Democratic Miracle (1952~1996)*, Horizon Publishers (Allahabad), 1997, pp. 83–89.

supposed to serve as check on government's, wrong doing have been debased for political gain. Thus, emphatic relation prevails which involves personalities as a whole. This interaction includes the need and aspirations of persons and groups.

#### **4. Methodology**

Covering a period of a decade, this study has followed data based analytical approach to the subject. It is based on the empirical data of various elections published by government and other scholars and organization, showing gains and losses of political groups and shifts in social base. The study has also used different articles, write ups, published by various newspapers, magazines and journals. Different book related to the subject has also been used and the study has also used earlier research works done in the field by different individuals and organizations like Centre for the Study of Developing Societies(CSDS).

# Chapter 2



# BJP and Development of the Party System in India

## 1. Phases in the Development of the Party System

The framers of the Indian constitution were greatly influenced and guided by the long-tested system followed in the United Kingdom. They adopted parliamentary democracy based on Universal Adult Suffrage, as against the limited franchise and communal representation in legislative bodies before independence. Indian constitution enshrines the basic principles of 'one man, one vote' and one common roll in which all eligible citizens are entitled to be registered as voters irrespective of caste, creed, sex, race or religion.

In India, simple majority system is followed. But it does not help truly to reflect the popular mandate. Very often, the representation of the contesting parties in terms of their seats in the legislative bodies, especially the ruling party is disproportionate. In other word, there no correlation between the votes secured and seats gained by the ruling party. Since the very first Lok Sabha elections of 1952, the ruling party secured well below 50% of the votes polled and was able to gain disproportionately large percentage of seats. The mismatch between the votes secured and seats gains were always evident in almost all the Lok Sabha elections.<sup>12</sup>

After simple majority system, new Indian party system, so called 'post-Congress system', emerged in 1989 Lok Sabha elections and was maintained by 1991, 1996, 1998 and 1999 polls. The old system, which was earlier variously called the 'Congress system' by Rajni Kothari<sup>13</sup>, a 'one party dominant system' by W. H. Morris-Jones<sup>14</sup>, a 'predominant party system' by Giovanni Sartori<sup>15</sup>, is no longer in existence. This new party system's transmission coincided with BJP's rise. So we have to explain the

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<sup>12</sup> Ajin Ray, *Ibid.*, pp. 76-77.

<sup>13</sup> Rajni Kothari, *Politics and The People: In Search of a Humane India*, Vol. 1, Ajanta Publications (Delhi), 1990, pp22-25.

<sup>14</sup> See W. H. Morris-Jones, *Politics Mainly Indian*, Orient Longman (New Delhi), 1979.

<sup>15</sup> Giovanni Sartori, *Parties & Party System*, Vol. 1, Cambridge University Press, 1976.

interrelation between the new party system and BJP's rise to adequately conceptualize and analyze this system. To begin with, I would briefly introduce the major phases of the evolution of the Indian party system after Independence. One can talk about at least six-party systems in India after Independence.<sup>16</sup>

The first phase may be called the "Congress system" in Rajni Kothari's terms and may be dated from 1952 to 1969. This was a phase of one-party dominance<sup>17</sup> as only the Congress was voted time and again with an overwhelming parliamentary majority on plurality (not majority) of votes in democratically contested elections. It coincided with the Nehru premiership, the Shastri premiership and the premiership of Indira Gandhi. The second party system was a brief spell of multi-partisan configuration following the 1969 Congress split between the Indira faction and the Syndicate faction when the Indira Gandhi government was reduced to a minority status and survived with the support extended without formally joining the government by leftist and regional parties. The third stage may be called the Indira Congress system of one-party dominance. It may be dated from 1971 to 1977. The imposition of an authoritarian emergency regime in June 1975 was the most marked feature of this period. It signaled the erosion of the popular support of the Congress Party. The nineteen months emergency regime accelerated the process of institutional decline and the weakening of the party system by suspending civil liberties, particularly freedom of the press and representative government. Relations between the Congress and the opposition worsened. Opposition leaders and activists faced imprisonment, while power within the Congress was further centralised. Concentration of power in the party, the government and in the office of the Prime Minister was the critical feature of the new pattern of party system. Strict discipline was imposed on the Congress Party. The fourth phase is the phase of bi-partisan tendency. For the first time in India a two-party system appeared and it was in existence from 1977 to 1979 when only two parties, the Janata and the Congress accounted for over 80 percent of both votes and seats. The fifth stage of the system may be called the Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi phase of Congress restoration. It may be dated from 1980 to 1989.

Some opposition parties possessed considerable promise and potential than is suggested by the 1980 and 1984 results. The Communist parties and the BJP retained

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<sup>16</sup> Mahendra Prasad Singh, 'The Party System', in Mahendra Prasad Singh & Himanshu Roy eds., *Indian Political System: Structure, Policies, Development*, Jnanada Prakashan, (New Delhi), 1995, p.215.

<sup>17</sup> That is, a multi-party system in which free competition among parties occurred but in which the Indian National Congress(I) enjoyed a dominant position, both in terms of the number of seats that it held in the Lok Sabha as well as the Vidhan Sabha in the states.

the support of important group and possessed an effective organization and ideology as well. Another political party, the BLD, that represented the interests of the peasant proprietary groups in North India, continued to play an important role both in the Hindi-speaking states and at the Centre. The new political situation that emerged from the 1984 election was one in which the Congress was dominant at the Centre but not in most of the states. 'Waves' contributed to the uncertainty of national election outcomes since 1971 and this was very much in evidence in 1984 as well. 'Wave' is produced by the response of large segment of people to a combination of issues, images and personalities that a party projects at a particular time to transcend local, regional and more enduring considerations. The sixth is the phase of a multi-party system. It formally took effect in the 1989 Lok Sabha elections. It had a very bumptious, unstable start, a very precarious existence for about a year. Then, 1991 election was held but it again brought about a 'hung parliament'. And after the 1996 elections to Lok Sabha the situation underwent a major change. Both the major national parties—Congress(I) as well as BJP could not capture power on their own. The regional parties shared power at the center.

Looking back and taking an overview of the functioning of the party system it is imperative to mark out some of the important features that have emerged since 1967.<sup>18</sup> First, there is a long list of coalition governments, which became established in the states. Second, the creation of 'fronts' has also not produced any lasting impact on the party system. The only front that has established a lasting arrangement is the Left Front. Third, there has been the phenomenon of waves on the occasions of some of the general elections. In 1971 it was 'garibi hatao, in 1977 it was the anti-emergency, anti-Indira Gandhi wave and three years later, after the fall of the Janata Party Government it was the "Indira lao, Desh bachao" (Bring Indira, Save India) wave. In 1984, the assassination of Indira Gandhi caused a pro-Congress sympathy wave and 1989 saw an anti-corruption, anti-Congress wave generated by the Bofors scandal. The 1991 election was dictated by the Ayodhya-Ram temple issue advanced by the BJP and the Mandal politics of the Janata Dal.<sup>19</sup> Finally, it may be indicated that all such features and development within the party system point towards one outstanding malaise, namely, a process of party system decline. Individual parties have grown and have become more or less effective but they have failed to constitute a strong party system.

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<sup>18</sup> S. D. Singh, *The fragmental Party Sytem*, Catholic Press (Ranchi), 1998, pp. 12-15.

<sup>19</sup> Meenu Roy, *India Votes, Elections 1996: A Critical Analysis*, Deep & Deep Publications (New Delhi), 1996, p.129.

## 2. BJP and the Indian Party System (1989–99)

Between 1989 and 1992, the BJP became the most dynamic political force in the Indian party system. In the 1989 elections, it emerged as the third largest party in the Lok Sabha after the Janata Dal and the Congress(I), winning eighty-five seats and 11.4 percent of the vote in the country. In state legislative assembly election held thereafter in 1990, the BJP won a majority of seats in Madhya Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh and the largest number of seats in Rajasthan, becoming the ruling party in the first two states and the leader of the ruling coalition in Rajasthan. It also made major gains in Gujarat.

Then, in the Lok Sabha elections of May–June, 1991, riding on the wave produced by the rath yatra of its leader, L. K. Advani, and the movement to construct a temple to Ram in Ayodhya, the BJP achieved its greatest electoral victory since its formation, becoming the second largest party in the Lok Sabha with a strength of 119 seats in the House and a popular vote share of 20.2 percent. The BJP also won a majority of seats in the U. P. Legislative assembly elections, after which it took power alone for the first time in the largest state in the country. In U. P., the BJP's success was achieved more at the expense of the Congress(I) than of the Jananta Dal, as a consequence of which the Congress was displaced to a very weak third place in the state's party system.

The BJP also made substantial gains in both vote share and seats won in Gujarat. However, in other states, it lost some ground gained in 1989 in either vote share or seats won. In a few states, the BJP gained in both vote share and seats won mainly because it ran a much larger number of candidates than ever before. Overall, while the results of the 1991 elections appeared on their face to constitute a major step forward in the BJP's drive for national power, they were less favorable than the BJP leaders had expected.

The BJP's drive for national power is based upon an explicit appeal to Hindu nationalism. Its leading slogans are that India is a Hindu country and that Hindus have a right to be proud of their history and culture and to draw the central symbols of national identity from them. They claim that the large Muslim minority in the country has been 'pampered' too long to the detriment of Hindus and the country's unity. They favor a strong hand to repress the militant and secessionist movements in Punjab, Kashmir, and the northeast.

In the 1991 elections, the BJP broadened its electoral support base considerably. It retained strong support from its traditional voters in the urban business and commercial sectors of the economy and from the descendants of 1947-48 refugees from Pakistan. It increased sharply its strength among upper castes angered by the decision of the V. P. Singh government to implement the Mandal Commission Report recommendations for reservation of 27 percent of jobs in public sector enterprises under the control of the central government., It also gained some support among segments of the backward castes.

However, the BJP failed to make substantial inroads among the Scheduled Castes and it drove most Muslim voters in each constituency, particularly in north India, into the arms of any party which appeared to be in the strongest position to defeat it. Moreover, the election campaign in north India was preceded and accompanied by months of Hindu-Muslim communal tension and severe rioting as a direct consequence of its movement and that of its ally, the VHP, to build the temple to Ram and remove the Babri Masjid from the alleged site of Ram's birthplace. Therefore, the BJP's drive for national consolidation has been inseparable from its opposite: an intensification of bitter communal conflicts.

The BJP must be seen as the latest and currently the most vital political force striving to build a united Indian nation, a dynamic economy, and a strong state. It seeks to overcome the heterogeneity and caste divisiveness of Indian society by consolidating a sense of Hindu nationalism around symbols common to all who claim to be Hindus. BJP claims that no party or movement in Indian history, including the Congress at its height, has been able to create a lasting integral nationalism of this type. The BJP's drive for national power is based on the belief that the time is coming soon when such nationalism can at last be achieved. But its base does not approve it.

### **3. Indian Party System's Transformation**

The Indian party system has undergone a dramatic transformation in the last decade.<sup>20</sup> This essay is a preliminary attempt at making sense of this transformation. It

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<sup>20</sup> Political scientist Yogendra Yadav of CSDS has identified three "electoral systems": the first operated in the first four Lok Sabha elections, in the era of the dominance of the Congress party; the second began with Indira Gandhi's "Garibi Hatao" ("Get rid of poverty") 1971 campaign; and the third system with the 1989 election that brought V. P. Singh to power. The third electoral system has four distinctive features. The first is the "participatory upsurge" among women,

delineates the major trends in the party system in the period 1989–99, empirically details them, and relates these developments to the theoretical literature on the determinants of party system. Finally, it outlines some of the consequences of party system change for policy outcomes.

A quick outline of major trends in the party system in the last decade must include the following developments:

- a. The single-most important development in this period has been the decline of the Congress, for long the inevitable nodal reference point of both political practice and theoretical reflection on Indian politics. It is true that the Congress has, in purely electoral terms, shown that it is capable of rebounding successfully—witness the results of a number of Assembly elections. But it has been definitively dislodged from the position of the Centre around which all political calculations must of necessity revolve. The trend towards federalization of the party system, a trend already strong in the 1980s, has been substantially deepened. It made its presence felt at the Centre for the first time with the National Front government in 1989, and has become a trend that shows every sign of enduring. Consequently, despite coalition and/or minority governments and related cabinet instability at the Centre, the state level has seen the maturing of bipolar party systems in a majority of states.
- b. This decade saw a sharp rise in political mobilization on the basis of social cleavages based on inscriptive identities, in particular of religion and caste.
- c. Central to parliamentary government is the process of government formation and the constitution of the cabinet. In this decade, this process resulted in, variously, majority coalition, minority coalition and single-party minority governments. In addition, by rational anticipation of the verdict of a hung Parliament, a number of parties have veered towards what can well be labeled ‘alliance culture’. Alliances have

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scheduled castes, and scheduled tribes, which has brought them much closer to the other, upper groups in society in terms of voter turnout. The second is the penetration of the belief systems, particularly concerning social justice, of these groups into political discourse. The third feature is the continuing change in the relationship of social cleavages (around caste and religious community) to voting, with a far greater weight given to state-wise general groupings of castes than before. The fourth feature is the primacy of politics at the state level. Yogendra Yadav, ‘The Third Electoral System’, *Seminar 480: Cruel Choices* (New Delhi) August 1999, pp. 14–20.

become part of the accepted rules of the game, rather than something to be resorted to in exceptional moments.

We now detail selected empirical facts about the party system in 1989–99 periods to examine whether these patterns can be put into an analytically coherent framework. Since explanation and description can hardly be separated, it is best to make clear what theoretical issues the description is meant to foreground.

The issues are two. The first is the influence of institutional variables in shaping the evolution of the party system. There are two institutions that need to be considered: the electoral system and the federal character of the state. They need to be considered jointly because, in ways to be spelled out, it is not each in isolation but both working in conjunction that produces their effect: a party system which produces coalition and/or minority governments at the national level, but at the state level yields two-party or more generally bipolar systems. The second issue relates to the role of social cleavages, or more precisely how these cleavages are ‘particized’ through the dynamic of party competition. The trajectory of the party system in India.

A particularly interesting trend in this decade is the emergence of a bifurcated or two level pattern in the party system in which the state pattern is significantly different from the national pattern. The following provides evidence for this claim.

At the national level, the first five general elections, 1952 to 1971, gave rise to a one-party dominant system in which Congress received over 40% of the vote. With the important exception of the 1967 elections, the pattern in the states was not dissimilar to that at the Center, replicating the pattern of Congress dominance. By contrast, the period from 1977 to the 1999 elections show a pattern of growing competitiveness in the party system (again, with one exception: the 1984 election, held in the shadow of Indira Gandhi’s assassination, which resulted in a large victory margin for the Congress). The vote margin between the first and second parties tended to decrease.

In particular, general elections from 1989 onwards reveal an unambiguous trend of Congress decline, accompanied by the rise of two other formations: the BJP and its allies and a coalition centred on the Janata Dal. In 1989, a minority coalition led by the National Front assumed office. Its main component was the Janata Dal, with outside support from the BJP and the Left Front. The 1991 general elections brought to power a minority Congress government, which during the course of its term transformed itself into majority status by carefully orchestrated defections.

In 1996, a 13-party coalition, christened the United Front, formed the

government with external support from both the Congress and the Left Front. Finally, the 1998 and 1999 election resulted in a coalition government led by the BJP, with a number of the partners being strongly anchored regional parties. Government formation at the national level thus revealed a definite move away from one-party majority rule; multiparty coalition and/or minority government seems here to stay.

However, the state level tells a significantly different story. The pattern revealed by state assembly election result is as follows:

- a. In a number of states, the decline of the Congress was caused by the growth of one other party, resulting in a two-party system in which both Congress and the other party have been able to form governments on their own. This is the case in M.P., Rajasthan, H.P., Gujarat, A.P., Orissa and Assam.
- b. Yet another set of states reveal a pattern that is not quite a two-party system, but analogous to it, in the sense that there exist two poles in the party system, with one or more parties clustered at each pole. This bipolar pattern occurs in Maharashtra, Haryana, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura. The last named three states have evolved a stable bipolar system comprising of a Left Front coalition opposed by a Congress or Congress-led coalition. Some change in this pattern has occurred in Bengal by the breaking away of Mamata Banerjee's Trinamul Congress from the Congress and her subsequent aligning at the national level with the BJP, but the consequent weakening of the Congress has left the party system in the state essentially unaltered, as a bipolar structure.
- c. A multi party system without a clear bipolar party system exists in U. P., Karnataka and Bihar. Recent developments in Karnataka in the run-up to the 1999 general election, however, augur a serious weakening of the Janata Dal after separated Janata Dal, and the two-party pattern seems likely to be established there as well.

The upshot of the above empirical pattern is that till the late '60s/early '70s, there existed a one-party dominant system in which a dominant party, the Congress, overwhelmed a fragmented opposition at the state level in both the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. The only exception to this in a limited number of states was the 1967 election. This pattern has now disappeared in all states, for both Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. It is reasonable to conclude that, leaving aside some important



exceptions, the state level party system has evolved towards either a straight forward two-party system, or multi-party system which is bipolar in terms of the pattern of party competition.

At the national level there is no visible tendency towards a two-party system. Rather, what has emerged is a multiparty system with three loose alliance structures, and a number of small parties that stand independent of these. This was only to be expected because the state level is characterized by a multiplicity of bipolarities. In one set of states it is Congress vs. BJP and allies; in another set it is Congress vs. Left parties; while a Congress vs. Regional party pattern prevails in Punjab, Haryana, A. P., Assam and the North-eastern states (except Tripura, where it is Congress vs. Left).

# Chapter 3

## March for Power: '89 to '99

The results of the last decade parliamentary elections have drastically changed the nature of the party system in India. The days of a dominant one-party system was gone as well as the unchallenged sway of the Nehruvian secular political ideology. The 1991 & 1996 emergence of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), proponents of right-wing Hindu nationalism, as the second largest party in the Lok Sabha and its virtual elimination of the Congress Party in the Hindi-speaking states of north India pose a major challenge both the secularist political ideology and to the Congress (I) and the other centrist parties that have ruled India since it became independent in 1947.

From the margins of Indian political scene in 1984, the growth of the BJP to the position of third largest party in the Lok Sabha elections of 1989 with 85 members, second largest party in 1991 with 120 members and single largest party in 1996, 1998 and 1999 with 161, 182 and 182 members respectively had shown that the BJP has made considerable progress in the parliamentary elections. So, Now I will trace the BJP's march to power during last decade ('1989-'1999).

### 1. BJP and pre-1989 General Elections

The BJP was Known as the Jan Sangh till the collapse of the Janata government in 1979. the Jan Sangh had merged with four other factions the rump Congress party headed by Morarji Desai, the Lok Dal of Charan Singh, a breakaway faction of the Congress party led by Indira Gandhi's Defense minister, Jagjivan Ram, and the Socialists.

In the 1984 Lok Sabha election, BJP fielded candidates in 229 Lok Sabha constituencies but could get the 2 seats. Its previous achievements as the Bharatiya Jan Sangh (BJS) were also far from noteworthy- 3 seats in 1952, 4 in 1957, 4 in 1962, 35 in 1967, 22 in 1971. In the election of 1977, it had formed the Janata Party along

with four other non-congress parties. The new coalition won a majority in the Lok Sabha, capturing 295 seats. The victory that lasted only 15 months was the voters' punishment to the last Indira Gandhi for declaration of Emergency in June 1975 with suppression of fundamental rights, press freedom and civil liberties and sterilization excesses in the name of population control<sup>21</sup>. In 1984, the BJP was able to collect only 7.4 per cent of the valid votes cast.

## 2. BJP and the 9th General Elections (1989)

At the 9th general elections held in November 1989, eight national, 33 state and 301 registered parties participated.

After the 1989 general elections, Balraj Puri wrote: "The major issues in the 1989 elections were (a) a concern for the stability and the integrity of the country; (b) consciousness of community, caste, and ethnic identities; (c) resentment against corruption and scandals; and (d) an urge for socio-economic equality." Adding "however, the election results show that Hindutva, Hindu consciousness, Hindu backlash, anti-minoritism, or whatever name might be given to the phenomenon, has emerged as the most significant new force in the politics of India."<sup>22</sup> It is the BJP, he asserted, which represents this emerging force.

In 1989 general elections, the BJP received 11.56% of the total valid votes and secured 85 of 529 seats or 16.07% seats i. e., 4.51 percent seats more than its poll percentage. The BJP contested 225 Lok Sabha seats in this election. They won the 85 seats of them and lost their security deposits in the 88 constituencies. This share went much beyond the expectation of the party. The BJP is largely confined to the Hindi belt (63 of its 85 seats), and even there it is rather weakly represented in the region's two largest states of Uttar Pradesh and Bihar where it won only 7.42% and 12.78, respectively, of the parliamentary vote. Party leaders acknowledge that the BJP has yet to make a significant impact on the peasant castes that are playing an increasingly significant role in the politics of those two states. Besides its strength in the Hindi belt, the BJP has pockets of support in the two western states of Maharashtra (10 seats)

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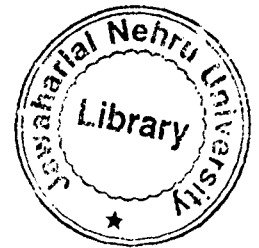
<sup>21</sup> Bhabani Sen Gupta, *India: Problems of Governance*, Konark Publishers (NewDelhi), 1996, p. 117.

<sup>22</sup> Balraj Puri, 'Can Caste, Region, and Ideology Stem Hindu Wave?', *Economic and Political Weekly*, January 6, 1990, p.15.



and Gujarat (12 seats). Everywhere else it performed poorly.<sup>23</sup> But, it is certainly great achievement of the BJP to reach 85 in 1989 from a score of 2 seats (229 contested) in 1984. Its spokesmen openly wondered whether the party had been sufficiently aggressive in bargaining for seats in the allocation process.

While the Congress (I) party led by Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi— though winning 196 of the 505 (of a total 529) seats it contested and thus remaining the largest party— was clearly the loser. It had captured less than one-half of the 397 seat won in the 1984 landslide. The Congress (I) polled almost as many votes as the allied opposition parties—39.33% for the Congress (I) and 44.14% for the opposition, as follows: Janata Dal— 17.73%, BJP— 11.56%, CPI—M— 6.32%, CPI— 2.61%, Telugu Desam— 3.32%, DMK— 2.25%, and Congress (S)— 0.32%.<sup>24</sup>



### 3. BJP and the 10th General Elections (1991)

At the 10th general elections held in May–June 1991, nine national, 39 state and 301 registered parties participated.

In this election the BJP going alone after parting company with National Front over the Ayodhya issue, emerged as the biggest gainer. The party hiked its tally to 120 seats from a mere two in 1984 to become the main opposition party. The BJP contested over 400 Lok Sabha seats, which it never had before, not even during its Jana Sangh days. In this election, of the 468 seats it contested as against 225 in 1989, it won 120 of them. Its popular support had also increased: compared to the mere 11.56 percent in 1989, it won 20.8% of the votes in 1991. The BJP got 23.03% seats. It means that the BJP secured again 2.23% seats more than the percentage of votes polled by them.<sup>25</sup> In addition to the this result, in as many as 167 constituencies the

<sup>23</sup> Walter K. Andersen, 'Election 1989 in India: The Dawn of Coalition Politics?', *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXX, No. 6, June, 1990, p.536.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, p.531.

<sup>25</sup> The standing of the registered parties declined for they could poll 2.19 percent votes and secured 0.76 percent seats as against 6.13 percent and 3.59 percent in the last elections. They could get only 0.76 percent seats by polling 2.19 percent votes. Thus the four national parties namely, INC, BJP, the two Communist Parties, secured higher percentage of seats than percentage of votes polled by them. The percentage of seats won by all other parties and independents was less to the percentage of votes polled by them. R. P. Bhalla, *Elections in India: Legacy and Vision*, S. Chand & Company Ltd, (New Delhi), 1998, pp. 193–194.

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BJP polled more than 16.33 percent of the votes, indicating a potential increase in popular support in many Lok Sabha constituencies.<sup>26</sup>

Launching its campaign with 'Temple' as its main plank, it switched to the stability theme after Rajiv Gandhi's assassination with L. K. Advani claiming it had been handed to him on a platter. The elections saw the BJP not only grabbing power in the largest and the politically pivotal state of Uttar Pradesh but also making inroads in Southern states where it had no presence earlier.

The BJP focused on three-failed government during the previous year-and-a-half, on from each of its major competitors, and the party asked the voters to give in a change. And L. K. Advani's nationwide tour the preceding fall on behalf of the construction of the Ram temple at Ayodhya had aroused massive public support.

In the post-assassination period, BJP's vote share dropped by 4.6% points.<sup>27</sup> Not, only did it finish second at the national level, about 130 BJP candidates came second. Even in states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and West Bengal, where it could not make its presence felt earlier, BJP pushed up its vote share substantially. In Andhra Pradesh it polled 9.64% votes, in Karnataka its share rose from 2.55 to 28.07% and in the Marxist bastion West Bengal its popularity soared seven fold – from 1.67% to 11.66%.

BJP's main gains came from the northern belt where it wrested 47 seats –30 from JD, 11 from the Congress(I) and 6 from others. The BJP's most dramatic win was in India's most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, where it won 51 of the 85 seats and about one-third of the popular vote.<sup>28</sup> BJP, however, did not do as well in the Western belt, considered its stronghold. In Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, where it runs state governments, the BJP lost 15 and 5 seats respectively. 8 more seats were lost in Maharashtra considered a party stronghold.

While falling short of its expected parliamentary gains, the BJP had much cause for jubilation over the results of the election and the considerably enhanced status of the party. For the first time it was talked about as a genuinely national party. In addition, the outcome undermines the theory that its candidates won in 1989 only because of seat adjustments with other opposition parties, for this time the party fought alone almost everywhere.

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<sup>26</sup> Yogendra K. Malik & V. B. Singh, *Ibid.*, 1994, p. 200.

<sup>27</sup> Arun Kumar ed., *The Tenth Round: Story of Indian Elections 1991*, Press Trust of India (Calcutta), 1991, p. 47.

<sup>28</sup> The party also won an absolute majority in the state assembly elections, which were held at the same time. This is the first time the BJP has taken control of the key state in the Hindi heartland.

There was a rise in the percentage of the votes and seats of the state parties. The states parties secured 9.61 percent of seats by polling 12.98 percent of votes as against 9.28 percent votes and 5.10 percent seats in the preceding elections.

#### 4. BJP and the 11th General Elections (1996)

In India's Eleventh General elections were held in April-May 1996, None of the three major political formations—the Congress(I), BJP, nor the National Front/Left Front (NF/LF)—gained a clear majority in the Lok Sabha.

Both of the major features of the 1996 election, namely, the decline of the Congress Party and the emergence of a major coalition of “regional” groups/parties, are manifestations of a much more complex dynamic that lies at the heart of Indian politics—one that revolves around the notions of nationhood and the serious contestations therein.<sup>29</sup>

The result of the 1996 elections shows a clear continuity with earlier trends. Increasing its share of seats and votes and consolidating its regional and social base, the BJP emerged as the single largest party in Parliament. The BJP bagged 161 of 543 seats (471 seats contested) in the Lok Sabha as against 120 in 1991 and 85 in 1989. The percentage of voting in favor of the party was 20.3% as against 20.8% on 1991. The party received 118 of 161 its seats from the six states of Hindi belt, namely, Uttar Pradesh (52 seats), Madhya Pradesh (27 seats), Bihar (18 seats), Rajasthan (12 seats) Haryana (4 seats) and Delhi (5 seats) and 34 seats from the western states of Gujarat (16 seats) and Maharashtra (18 seats). Only 9 seats came from other parts of the country. In the four southern states—Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh Karnataka, Kerala and the eastern states of Orissa and West Bengal, its performance was marginal. The party's performance in the seven states of north-east was dismal.

Following the 1996 election, anyway, the BJP was invited to form its first government in the Center. Its allies at the hustling the Shiv Sena had 15 seats, the Samata 8 seats, the HVP 3 seats and the SAD 8 seats. They could not prove the required majority of 269 MPs in the House and thus had to go within 13 days of the formation of its government. They failed to make a majority in Parliament, which led to the collapse of their 13-day government and to the formulation of 12-party United

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<sup>29</sup> Aditya Nigam, 'India After the 1996 Elections: Nation, Locality, and Representation', *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 12, December, 1996, p.1157.

Front government, supported also by the Congress Party. The Congress(I) serves as a key supporter to two shaky governments of center-left United Front headed by H. D. Deve Gowda and I. K. Gujral during 18 months.

## 5. BJP and the 12th General Elections (1998)

The twelfth Lok Sabha elections held in February–March 1998, less than two years after the previous round, failed to produce a decisive verdict in favor of any political party. The main results were improvement in the seat and vote tally of the BJP; maintenance of the Congress(I)'s seat total; and collapse of the United Front (UF), particularly of the Janata Dal(JD) party that formed its core. Despite emerging as the single largest party and forming a coalition government, the BJP and its allies have only succeeded in replacing the UF with another unwieldy, unstable, and perhaps short-lived coalition.<sup>30</sup>

In this election, the BJP contested 384 seats across the country and secured 182 seats in the Lok Sabha as against 161 in 1996. The percentage of voting in favor of the party was 25.5% as against 20.3% 1996. It is 21 seats and about 5% votes more than the 1996 elections. It maintained its seat tally in the north by its success in Uttar Pradesh (57 seats), improved its position in the east and the south, particularly in Andhra Pradesh, where BJP hadn't won any seat in last election, but dropped 6 seats in western India.

Following result of 1998 elections, the BJP forms a minority coalition with regional groups but loses majority after 13 months when key regional ally the AIADMK led by former Tamil Nadu Chief Minister J. Jayalalitha decides to withdraw support. Another mid-term election is called after Congress(I) fails to form an alternative government.

## (6) BJP and the 13th General Elections (1999)

Between September 5 and October 3, India is holding its 13th national elections. A central feature of the 1999 election is 'presidential style' mind-set. The voters in the election have an opportunity to choose between Vajpayee led National Democratic

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<sup>30</sup> Sudha Pai, 'The Indian Party System under Transformation: Lok Sabha Elections 1998', *Asian Survey*, Vol. XXXVII, No. 9, September, 1998, p.836.



Alliance or Sonia Gandhi led alliance. Actually it is a kind of a choice between two leaders much like the US presidential elections.

The BJP led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) achieved 'clear majority' in the thirteenth Lok-Sabha election (298 seats). The BJP contested 339 seats and secured 182 of 543 seats in the Lok Sabha same as 1998.

In this election, the most striking success of the BJP has been in Delhi where it captured all seven seats. Less than a year ago BJP was failed to get victory in assembly elections. In Rajasthan, the BJP made a comeback thanks to wide support from the Jat communities and the lack-lustre performance of the Ashok Gehlot government. In other states where major gains have been made, it was the allies who played the main role: the TDP in Andhra Pradesh, the DMK in Tamil Nadu, the Indian National Lok Dal in Haryana, the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, the Samata Party and JD(U) in Bihar, and the Biju Janata Dal in Orissa.

Whereas, there have been failures in Punjab and Karnataka but these have been primarily the failures of its allies. The BJP's own failure has been in Uttar Pradesh. In Uttar Pradesh, the BJP had won 57 of the 85 seats in the last general election. Both Vajpayee and Murli Manohar Joshi were contesting from this state. Most importantly the opposition was hopelessly divided. And yet the BJP could retain only half the seats it won last time. They secured only 27 seats.

There has positive fallout in spite of the BJP's Uttar Pradesh debacle. In the last Lok Sabha nearly one-third of the BJP's total strength of 182 came from this state alone. With the BJP's tally in UP drastically reduced, the party's influence is now much more evenly distributed across the country. The BJP now has an all-India presence barring a handful of states. It has picked up seats even in Goa and the Andamans.

# Chapter 4

## Change of BJP's Lok Sabha Seats

### 1. 1989 and 1991 General Election

1991 polls was fought on three major issues: "stability with change" in the case of the Congress(I), the National Front-Left Front combine's promise of "social equity", and the BJP's "Hindutva". Nearly 47 per cent of the total electorate of 510.5 million remained indifferent to these issues and did not turn out to vote. Among the 53 per cent that did exercise their franchise, there was obviously no unanimity on either of the three major issues. This, in fact, led to the conclusion – no party receiving a clear mandate. However, one thing is clear. The fact that the BJP could get only 23.5% of the votes and 120 seats in spite of their formidable resources and war-like machinery is indicative of the Ayodhya issue as a referendum. The common man largely remained indifferent to the "Hindutva" appeal. This, also, shows that to most of the people it matters very little whether Ram mandir is constructed in Ayodhya destroying Babri Mosque.<sup>31</sup>

The BJP secured 11.56 per cent of the total votes polled during 1989 and won 85 of the 225 seats it contested. In 1991 election, the BJP got the 23.5 per cent of the votes and won 120 constituencies. It kept the 44 and lost the 41 of 85 old seats respectively. And they won the 76 new constituencies from others party.

I will analyze the difference of BJP seats in Lok Sabha between the 9th and 10th general elections.

#### (1) North Zone (126 Seats)

In these regions, where BJP had won 15 of 126 seats in the 89 elections, they capture the 58 seats in this election. It means BJP has got 43 seats more than last

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<sup>31</sup> M. L. Ahuja & Sharda Paul, 1989-1991 General Election in India (Including November 1991 By-Elections), Associated Publishing House (New Delhi), 1992, p. 114.

election. The BJP retained the its 10 seats of last elections and got 48 new seats but lost its 5 seats.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. HIMACHAL PRADESH: In the 1989 elections, the BJP had won three seat as against the Congress(I)'s one seat. And the BJP and Congress(I) won two seats respectively in this elections. The constituency where BJP lost to Congress(I) is Mandi. The two seats won by BJP are Kangra and Hamirpur.
- b. UTTAR PRADESH: The BJP's most significant victory in 91 polls was in Uttar Pradesh because electoral promise of building a Ram temple at Ayodhya- the Single issue that has catapulted the BJP to power. This is perhaps the first time that the country's largest and politically most important state has slipped out from the hands of the ruling party at the Centre. The BJP got 51 out of 85 Lok Sabha seats and 33 per cent of the votes in 1991. There is no doubt that the BJP's astounding victory had a lot to do with Mulayam Singh Yadav's handling of the Kar sewa agitation in Ayodhya. In UP, the BJP had bagged only 8 seats in the last general election. In 91 elections, they sustained its 5 seats of the 89 elections and wrested 46 seat from others parties. The break up was: the JD 31, the Congress(1) 9 and the CPI 2 besides the BSP, the CPM, and the IND one seat respectively. But they lost its 3 old seats to JD.
- c. DELHI: In Delhi where BJP had captured 4 of the 7 seats in the 1989 polls, the BJP has won five constituencies in the 1991 elections. They kept 3 old seats and gained 2 new seats, East Delhi and Chadni Chowk, from Congress(I). But they lost one old seat, Delhi Sadar, to Congress(I).

<Table 3-1>

North Zone: 126 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	89	91	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
HARYANA	10	0	0				
HIMACHAL PRADESH	4	3	2	2		1	-1
JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	0	0				
PUNJAB	13	0	0				

UTTAR PRADESH	85	8	51	5	46	3	43
CHANDIGARTH	1	0	0				
DELHI	7	4	5	3	2	1	1
TOTAL	126	15	58	10	48	5	43

## (2) South Zone (132 Seats)

There are 7 regions in the south zone. In 89 elections BJP hadn't any seat in these states but in 91 elections they got 5 new seats at first time.

The detail is as follows.

- a. ANDHRA PRADESH: Andhra Pradesh is perhaps the best example of how the sympathy factor of Rajiv Gandhi's assassination worked in the Congress' favour. The BJP won 10.2 per cent of the vote – the great increase over the one per cent or so it polled in 1989, but they secured only one seat in this State. It seems to have been affected by the assassination factor. It polled 11.7 per cent in the first phase (voted before the assassination), which dropped by three percentage points in the second phase that voted post-assassination.
- b. KARNATAKA: The outstanding feature in this State was BJP's victory in four constituencies– Bidar, Tumkur, Mangalore and Bangalore South, based on a phenomenal increase in its vote from 2.89 per cent in 1989 to 28.8 per cent. The all of four seats came from Congress(I). Actually, Although, BJP has good performance, it couldn't bagged much seats as much as they expected because of sympathy factor of Rajiv Gandhi's assassination. In many places the BJP emerged as the second contender, pushing the Janata Dal into third place.

<Table 3-2>

South Zone: 132 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	89	91	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ANDHRA PRADESH	42	0	1		1		
KARNATAKA	28	0	4		4		
KERALA	20	0	0				
TAMIL NADU	39	0	0				

ANDAMAN & NICOBAR	1	0	0		
LAKSHADWEEP	1	0	0		
PONDICHERRY	1	0	0		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>

### (3) West Zone (143 Seats)

In these regions, the BJP, which had bagged 62 of 143 seats in the 89 Lok Sabha elections, got the 50 seats in this election. The BJP retained its 33 seats of 89 elections and secured 17 new seats and lost 29 old seats.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. GUJARAT: In spite of the sympathy factor of Rajiv's assassination, the BJP contested all 25 seats and grabbed 20 of them with a phenomenal 51.4 share of the vote by its high profile campaign against 10 seats of 1989 in Gujarat. It retained its 10 seats of 1998, it lost two seats, which are Kutch and Anand, to Congress(I) and gained 9 seats from JD and one seat from Congress(I).
- b. MADHYA PRADESH: Last time the BJP-Janata Dal alliance won 33 seats with 27 for the BJP. This time round although they polled 46.14 per cent with 42.0 for the BJP, the BJP got only 12 of 40 Lok Sabha seats and Janata Dal drew a blank. The BJP retained the 12 seats of 1989 elections, and it lost 15 old seats to the Congress(I). The reason is as follows: In this election, the BJP rather overplayed the Ram card. It failed to impress the tribals and Harijans who constitute almost one-third of the total vote. It also pushed the Muslims towards the Congress(I). The BJP is busy dissecting its defeat. Pressure is building up in the party to punish Patwa, widely held to be responsible for the poor showing. Nevertheless, what has been established in MP is a two-party set-up. The BJP has managed to retain its vote bank. In fact it has never polled less than 30 per cent of the vote since 1967. Nor has the Congress(I).
- c. MAHARASHTRA: In 1989, rightist Hindu alliance, BJP-Shiv Sena alliance established its credentials as the main opposition group in Congress(I) bastion of Maharashtra by winning 14 of State's 48 Lok Sabha seats. In last Lok Sabha poll, newly-formed BJP-Sena alliance

made a sensational debut, bagging more than 28 per cent votes. Sena won four seats, BJP 10, while alliance ended runner-up in many of the constituencies. In 1991 election, the BJP bagged only 5 seats against 10 seats of 89 elections. The BJP retained its 3 old seats (Bombay North, Akola and Thane) of the 1989 polls, and gained 2 seats, Jalgaon and Pune, from Congress. They, however, lost their 7 old seats to the Congress(I).

- d. RAJASTHAN: The BJP did not do as badly as in Madhya Pradesh but it lost five seats to the Congress(I) because of an anti-establishment vote. These constituency are as follows: Dausa, Salumber(ST), Udaipur, Jalore(SC) and Jodhpur. The failure of the Shekhawat Government to control communal riots and the disintegration of the Rajput-Jat combination dealt a blow to the BJP. Though its tally of 13 seat was reduced to 12, it nevertheless polled 41 per cent of the votes as against 29.64 in the 89 elections. The BJP main tained its traditional stronghold in the Hadoti region and also succeeded in penetrating the Congress(I)'s traditional constituencies in the north-east of the State. In 1991 elections, the BJP retained its 8 seats of 89 elections, it lost 5 old seats to the Congress(I) and secured from Janata Dal the 4 new seats which are Churu, Alwar, Bharatpur and Tonk(SC).
- e. DAMAN & DIU: The BJP won this constituency because D. J. Tandel who had secured this seat in the 89 polls, entered into the BJP.

<Table 3-3>

West Zone: 143 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	89	91	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
GOA	2	0	0				
GUJARAT	26	12	20	10	10	2	8
MADHYA PRADESH	40	27	12	12		15	-15
MAHARASHTRA	48	10	5	3	2	7	-5
RAJASTAN	25	13	12	8	4	5	-1
DADAR & NAGAR HAVELI	1	0	0				
DAMAN & DIU	1	0	1				
TOTAL	143	62	50	33	17	29	-12

#### (4) East Zone (142 Seats)

The BJP had won only 7 of 142 seats as against 9 seats in the last elections. The BJP retained its only one seat and gained 6 new seats and lost 7 seats.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. ASSAM: Of the 10th Lok Sabha seat in Assam, the BJP won two seats, Karimganj(SC) and Silchar. In 1989, the elections were not held in this State.
- b. BIHAR: In 91 election, the Bihar inflicted an appalling defeat on the Congress(I). The blame can be laid squarely at the door of a handful of forward caste leader who made the fatal mistake of leading a fierce anti-reservation agitation, branding the Congress(I) as an enemy of social justice. The left the field clear for Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav to mobilize the backward castes. The polarization on caste lines left the Congress(I) perching on the very narrow ledge of the forward castes (11 per cent), whose votes were split three ways – the BJP, the Congress(I) and the SJP – leaving it high and dry. The BJP, although, won only 5 seats in the 91 elections, it increased its vote share by about 5 per cent to 17 per cent. The BJP won 8 seats in 1989 elections. The BJP retained only one seat of the 89 elections, and snatched 4 seats from others parties. Its break up was: JD 2 seats and Congress(I) and MCOR one seat respectively. The BJP, however, lost 7 old seats to the other party. The break up was: JD 3 seats, CPI and JMM 2 seats respectively.

<Table 3-4>

East Zone: 142 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	89	91	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2	0	0				
ASSAM	14	0	2		2		2
BIHAR	54	8	5	1	4	7	-3
MANIPUR	2	0	0				
MEGHALAYA	2	0	0				
MIZORAM	1	0	0				
NAGALAND	1	0	0				



ORISSA	21	0	0				
SIKKIM	1	0	0				
TRIPURA	2	0	0				
WEST BENGAL	42	0	0				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>-1</b>

### (5) Total Result

The BJP emerging as a major party by nearly doubling its national vote share from 11 per cent of 89 polls to 20 per cent is the biggest surprise in 91 elections. The BJP came second, after Congress(I), winning 120 seats. Pertinently, the party had gone to the polls without any alliance, except with the Shiv Sena in Maharashtra, or seat arrangements as in the 1989 elections. The party has also chalked up impressive percentile gain – even where it received none or only a few seats – in states like Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal. Overall, the party had fielded its candidates from an unprecedented 480 constituencies. Significantly, BJP candidates came second, in about 130 constituencies.

In 1991 general elections, the BJP bagged 120 of 543 Lok Shaba seats against 85 seats of 1989. The BJP retained its 44 seats of the last elections. And the BJP newly gains 76 Lok Sabha seats in this time. The break up was: JD 46, Congress(I) 20, CPI 2, IND 2, HMS 1, BSP 1, CPM 1, MCOR 1 and previous not held election constituencies 2. It, however, lost its 41 seats to other parties. The break up was: Congress(I) 31, JD 6, CPI 2, and JMM 2.

## 2. 1991 and 1996 General Election

The result of 1996 polls is the classic example of the perverse relationship between votes and seats in Indian electoral system. The BJP had added 40 seats to its kitty without having increased its vote share last time. It has emerged as the single largest party in 96 elections although its all-India vote share is 8% lower than its nearest rival the Congress(I). In part the BJP's allies. Along with them, the party garnered more than 23 per cent share of the popular vote, a swing of 2.7% from 1991. In multi-cornered contests, these deftly worked out alliances enabled the BJP to convert its own old votes into seats. But the main explanation lies in the fact that BJP's entire support is concentrated in a belt, which now extends from Bihar to Karnataka (North and central Bihar and Haryana were added to it this time). So its average national vote share of 20% is deceptive. In the belt, the BJP and its allies have an average vote share of 36% compared to 23% of the Congress(I). And what is more, the BJP and allies have added 5 per cent votes to their share in this belt since 1991. That is what enable the party to get more seats here than the Congress(I). In the non-BJP coastal belt, it lost about 2%t votes this time. The loss was of no consequence in terms of seats. But it may prove crucial to the BJP's long-term expansion plans.<sup>32</sup>

In 1996 election the BJP took the lead in the north and the west while the United Front forged ahead in the south and the east. The Congress(I) lost its dominance in the south and the west. Winning 63 of the 126 seats in the north and 73 of the 143 seats in the west, BJP made gains everywhere, but failed to make a dent in the south where the it secured 6 seats of the 132. The BJP got the 20.3% of the votes polled and won 161 of the 471 seats it contested in 1996 elections. In this election, they kept the 86 seats of 1989 polls, but their some constituency was changed by lost (34 seats) or new won (75seats).

In this part, I will compare to the BJP's performance of 1991 and 1996 general elections and explain the difference of Lok Sabha seats between them.

### (1) North Zone (126 Seats)

In the seven regions where BJP had won 58 of 126 seats in the 91 elections, it

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<sup>32</sup> *India today*, May 31, 1996, p. 46.

secured the 63 seats in 96 elections. The BJP retained the its 39 seats of last elections and wrested 24 new seats. In turn, it lost its 38 of its dominant constituencies.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. HARYANA: An electoral alliance between the BJP and the Haryana Vikas Party (HVP) shared 34.93% of the votes. The BJP and the HVP secured 4 seats and 3 seats respectively in 96 polls. The constituency which BJP gain from Congress(I) is as following: Ambala(SC), Karnal, Mahendragarth and Faridabad.
- b. HIMACHAL PRADESH: The Congress(I) made a clean sweep of all the four seats in the state while the BJP lost their two constituencies, Kangra and Hamirpur, to the Congress(I). In Kangra, former BJP chief minister Shanta Kumar lost to Sat Mahajan of the Congress(I). The fight, however, was somewhat close with the Congress(I) polling 48.96% as against 45.92% of the BJP.
- c. JAMMU & KASHMIR: In Jamammu and Kashmir the BJP, which had drawn a blank in 1989 finished second in popularity stakes polling 19.63% votes – 12.4% more than last time. Only in 1967 as the Jan Sangh, it had polled more, 20.3%, but it had never won a seat before. In this election, the BJP contested in the five constituencies but it gain only one seat, Udhampur.
- d. UTTAR PRADESH: In the 1996 parliamentary elections, the absence of an understanding among the secular parties helped the BJP win 52 seats, although it polled only 34.32 percent of the popular vote. Its two major opponents – S.P.-led United Front and the BSP – together polled 45.6 percent of the vote but won only 18 and six seats respectively. In 34 of the 52 seats that the BJP won, its share of the popular vote was less than the combined vote share of the S.P. and the BSP. In UP, the BJP had bagged 51 of the 85 seats in the last general election. And in 1996 elections the BJP won 52 seats again. They sustained its 36 seats of the 91 elections and the captured new 16 seats. Most of the gains were at the expense of JD, which lost 11 to BJP and as many to others. Three more seats were gained from the Congress(I) and one each from the CPI and the Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP). Significantly, BJP won 14 of the 18 SC seats, leaving two each to the SP and BSP, which together polled 51.87% votes in the reserved constituencies as against BJP's 36.73%. In turn, BJP lost 8 seats to Mulayam Singh's SP

and two each to JD, BSP and the Tiwari Congress, besides on to Rao's Congress(I).

- e. CHANDIGARTH: In 96 polls, BJP's Satya Pal Jain turned the tables on Pawan Kumar Bansal of the Congress(I) to record the party's first triumph since 1967 when its forerunner Jan Sangh won the seat. Avenging his 1991 defeat at the hands of Bansal, Jain raised his party's vote share by over 10% from 28.8% to 39.05%.
- f. DELHI: BJP emerged a clear victor from the ding-dong battle in the capital which has seen the pendulum swinging between the erstwhile Jan Sangh and the Congress(I) since 1962<sup>33</sup>. Thanks to an over 9% swing in its favour, BJP not only retained its predominant share of five seats out of seven, but also enlarged the popularity gap with the Congress(I) to over 12% from less than one per cent last time. Polling its highest ever total of 49.54% votes, BJP held on to New Delhi, South Delhi and East Delhi seats, but lost Chandni Chowk and Karol Bagh(SC) to the its rival Congress(I). In turn, it also wrested the outer Delhi and Sadar Delhi seats from Congress(I).

<Table 3-5>

North Zone: 126 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	91	96	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
HARYANA	10	0	4		4		4
HIMACHAL PRADESH	4	2	0			2	-2
JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	0	1		1		1
PUNJAB	13	0	0				
UTTAR PRADESH	85	51	52	36	16	15	1
CHANDIGARTH	1	0	1		1		1
DELHI	7	5	5	3	2	2	0
TOTAL	126	58	63	39	24	19	5

(2) South Zone (132 Seats)

<sup>33</sup> Arun Kumar, *The Turning Point: 1996 Poll Story*, Press Trust Of India (Calcutta), 1997, p.103.

There are 7 states in the south zone. In 1991 elections BJP had won only 5 of 132 seats in these states. This time, the BJP tally of 6 included 3 new from Congress(I) even as it lost two seats, one each to Congress(I) and JD.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. ANDHRA PRADESH: In 96 polls, the BJP put up candidates in 39 constituencies, but even lost the one seat it had to the Congress(I). Its candidates collected 5.65% of the votes, nearly 4% less than the 9.63% it won in 1991.
- c. KARNATAKA: The BJP lost about 4% in votes, but still gained 2 seats. Wrestling three from the Congress(I) and losing one to JD, it finished with a tally of 6 seats instead of 4 seats last time, for a 24.86% vote share as against 28.78%. The constituencies, where BJP secured are as follows: Bidar, Kanara, Davangere, Mangalore, Dharwad North and Bangalore.

<Table 3-6>

South Zone: 132 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	91	96	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ANDHRA PRADESH	42	1	0			1	-1
KARNATAKA	28	4	6	3	3	1	2
KERALA	20	0	0				
TAMIL NADU	39	0	0				
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR	1	0	0				
LAKSHADWEEP	1	0	0				
PONDICHERY	1	0	0				
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>

### (3) West Zone (143 Seats)

In these states, the BJP, which had secured 50 of 143 seats last elections, tally of 73 seats include 35 seats even as it lost 12 seats to the other parties in this election. And BJP sustained its 38 seats of 91 elections.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. GUJARAT: In-fighting coupled with an over 8% swing in favour of the Congress(I) brought down the BJP tally from 20 to 16, making for a net loss of 4 seat. In all BJP lost 6 seats, all to the Congress, but recovered 2 others from the same party. Its popular vote share of 48.53% was 1.84% less than its highest ever vote of 50.37% in 1991 when it won 20 seats. Significantly, the BJP bagged all the three seats reserved for Scheduled Caste – Bulsar, Dhandhuka, Patan. But they lost all the three seats reserved for Scheduled Tribes which traditionally won by the Congress(I).
- b. MADHYA PRADESH: BJP grabbed the lion's share of 15 to take its own tally to 27 even as its vote share fell marginally from 41.88% to 41.31%. All of the gains were at the expense of Congress(I) which lost 15 to BJP. The six SC constituencies, BJP topped the popularity chart with 5 wins for 44.65% votes. And BJP was at the top with 4 wins for 37% votes in the nine ST constituencies.
- c. MAHARASHTRA: In 1999 election, The Congress(I) turned out to be the biggest loser conceding 14 seats to the BJP and 10 to Shiv Sena– its worst performance ever. In turn, BJP did not gain much in terms of votes in polling 21.77% votes – just 0.57% more than last time – but thank to the swing against the Congress(I), its seat tally went zooming from 5 to 18, a net gain of 13 seats<sup>34</sup>. In this election, the BJP kept 3 old seats of 1991 polls and it wrested 15 new seats 14 from Congress(I) and one from CPM but even lost the 2 seats to Congress(I) and SHS each one.
- d. RAJASTHAN: Arch rivals Congress(I) and BJP emerged with honours even from the battle of the ballot in Rajasthan. Both won 12 seats apiece, wresting 3 seats from and losing 3 seats to each other. There the similarity ended as the Congress(I) lost an additional seat to the breakaway Tiwari faction as its popularity suffered a 3.47% erosion. BJP, on the other hand, gained a modest 1.48% in votes. BJP did better in SC area, winning three seats with 47.06% votes, but 37.04% votes could not win it an ST seat.
- e. DAMAN & DIU: The BJP lost its one seat to Congress(I) in 96 general elections. The Congress won it again for the 6 time in 8 elections since the first in 1967.

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<sup>34</sup> The BJP won three of the four tribal seats in this state.

&lt;Table 3-7&gt;

## West Zone: 143 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	91	96	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
GOA	2	0	0				
GUJARAT	26	20	16	14	2	6	-4
MADHYA PRADESH	40	12	27	12	15		15
MAHARASHTRA	48	5	18	3	15	2	13
RAJASTAN	25	12	12	9	3	3	0
DADAR & NAGAR HAVELI	1	0	0				
DAMAN & DIU	1	1	0			1	-1
TOTAL	143	50	73	38	35	12	23

## (4) East Zone (142 Seats)

In these battle zones, the BJP captured 19 of 142 seats – 12 seats more than last time. Wrestling 5 seats from JD, 4 from JMM, 3 from CPI and one from CPM even as it lost one seat to Congress(I). Besides, BJP retained its 6 of 91 elections seats.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. ASSAM: BJP made a strong bid to make its presence felt in Assam putting up candidates in all the 14 constituencies, but ended up losing one seat, Silchar, to Congress(I). But its six additional candidates helped it garner 15.92% votes – representing a 7.32% swing.
- b. BIHAR: The BJP increases its tally more than three and half times from 5 to 18, making for a gain of 13. Five of these seats were wrested from the JD, four from the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha (JMM), three from the CPI and one from CPM. Increasing its vote share from 15.05% to 20.52%, BJP displaced Congress(I) as the second most popular party after Janata Dal. Poll figures suggest that the BJP has been picking up the Tribal vote in Bihar at the cost of JD and the Congress(I). In the 5 Scheduled Tribes seats, BJP collected the highest vote share of 26.50% followed by the Congress with 23.56%, and JMM-s 20.75%. In the 8 Scheduled Caste seats, however, BJP came next of JD with 3 seats won with 25.56%.

&lt;Table 3-8&gt;

East Zone: 142 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	91	96	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ARUNCHAL PRADESH	2	0	0				
ASSAM	14	2	1	1		1	-1
BIHAR	54	5	18	5	13		13
MANIPUR	2	0	0				
MEGHALAYA	2	0	0				
MIZORAM	1	0	0				
NAGALAND	1	0	0				
ORISSA	21	0	0				
SIKKIM	1	0	0				
TRIPURA	2	0	0				
WEST BENGAL	42	0	0				
TOTAL	142	7	19	6	13	1	12

### (5) Total Result

This was the first general election in 25 years without a “wave” in sight. In 1971 it was ‘garibi hatao, in 1977 it was the anti-emergency, anti-Indira Gandhi wave and three years later, after the fall of the Janata Party Government it was the “Indira lao, Desh bachao” (Bring Indira, Save India) wave. In 1984, the assassination of Indira Gandhi caused a pro-Congress sympathy wave and 1989 saw an anti-corruption, anti-Congress wave generated by the Bofors scandal. The 1991 election was dictated by the Ayodhya-Ram temple issue advanced by the BJP and the Mandal politics of the Janata Dal.<sup>35</sup>

But this the response to campaigns launched by the major parties and combines – the BJP, the Congress(I), the NF-LF, the BSP and All India Indira Congress(T) was largely one of indifference. The BJP’s call for parivartan (change) at the Centre, the Congress(I)’s stability theme and the S.P.-Janata Dal-Left combine’s forces on

<sup>35</sup> Meenu Roy, *Ibid.*, p.129.



secularism and social justice had all induced little enthusiasm.

In fact at 20.3% BJP's vote share is 8.45% less than its rival Congress(I) in 1996 general elections. Two things happened<sup>36</sup>. One its alliances in various states worked like a swing of about 3.5% at the all India level. Second, most of its seats came from a support belt extending from Bihar to Karnataka. And in this belt, the BJP and its allies have an average vote share of 36%, some 13 point more than that of the Congress(I). It was in this belt that BJP came out much stronger adding 5% more votes, while losing some 2% votes in the non-BJP coastal belt. But it mad no difference in terms of seats with BJP winning only one of the 213 seats in the zone instead of two the last time.

In terms of seats, BJP kept 86 of last seats and won 75 more seats. But it lost 34 to finish with a net gain of 41 seats. It major gains came from the Congress(I) (47), JD (15), CPI (4), JMM (4), CPM (2) and SJP (1). Among those who gained at its cost were the Congress(I) (18), SP (8), JD (3), BSP (2), AIIC(T) (2), and SHS (1).

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<sup>36</sup> Arun Kumar, *ibid*, pp.22-23.

### 3. 1996 and 1998 General Election

The decline of the Congress has been identified as a major factor in the BJP's electoral gains of the 1996 elections. In 1998, although this factor did (or may have) come into play in certain states – for instance in U.P., Bihar, Orissa, Haryana and Himachal Pradesh – it is perhaps a less significant factor than in 1996. Significantly, Congress consolidation in Maharashtra and Rajasthan, particularly the former handed out the most serious reversals of elections '98 to the BJP. In Maharashtra, the combined vote-share of the Sena-BJP combine remained close to stagnant (38.6% in 1996 and 41.6% in 1998).

The BJP, with its allies, has emerged as the largest-party in India.<sup>37</sup> It is for the first time in Indian electoral history that any party or combine has overtaken the Congress(I) in this respect. Although in 1996, it managed to squeeze a few more seats that made it the largest party in terms of seats, it appeared stuck at around 20% of the vote share, and even with allies could not reach the 25% mark.<sup>38</sup>

In the elections of 1998, the BJP's share of the national vote was 25.5%, or 5.2% points more than its national vote share in 1996. It won 182 of the 384 seats it contested, up only 21 seats from its national total in 1996. They sustained its 108 seats of the last election and captured new 74 seats. In turn, BJP lost 53 its old constituencies to the other parties.

So, I want to analyze the difference of BJP seats in Lok Sabha between the 96 and 98 general elections.

#### (1) North Zone (126 Seats)

The BJP bagged 73 of 126 seats in this battle zone where it had won 63 seats in the 96 elections. This time, it sustained its 45 seats and wrested 28 seats from other parties. But, the BJP has lost its 18 old parliamentary seats to other parties.

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<sup>37</sup> The BJP itself was able to manage 182 seats. Its allies have won: Shiv Sena 6 with 1.78% votes, Samata Party 12 with 1.77% votes, Biju Janata Dal 9 with 1% votes, Shirmari Akali Dal 8 with 0.82% votes, Trinamool Congress 7 with 2.43% votes, Lok Shakti 3 with 0.69% votes, Haryana Vikas Party 1 with 0.24% votes, AIADMK 18 with 1.84% votes, MDMK 3 with 0.44% votes, PMK 5 with 0.42% votes, Tamilaga Rajiv Congress 1 with 0.12% votes, Janata Party 1 with 0.12% votes. Thus, the BJP and its pre-poll allies have 255 seats.

<sup>38</sup> M. L. Ahuja, *Electoral Politics and General Elections in India (1952~1998)*, Mittal Publications (New Delhi), 1998, pp. 226-227.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. HARYANA: The HLD(R)-BSP alliance won 5 of the 10 seats, giving a serious jolt to the ruling HVP-BJP combine, which had to be content with only two seats. The BJP had 4 seats last time, now it lost the 3 seats to Congress(I), two and to BSP, one. The BJP could manage only one constituency, Faridabad, where Ram Chander Baidya has retained the seat. In this time, the BJP contested 6 constituencies and secured 18.89% of votes polled. The HVP-BJP's defeat in the elections was a result of its highly unpopular policies. The anti-establishment factor went against the ruling combine and HLD(R) President Om Prakash Chautala was projecting his party as one, which would free the people from the present State Government, this also appears to have paid dividends.<sup>39</sup>
- b. HIMACHAL PRADESH: The election results signified that the Congress(I) support base was eroding largely by the BJP. In the 1998 polls, the BJP wrested three seats from Congress(I). The seats won by BJP are: Mandi, Kangra, Hamirpur.
- c. JAMMU & KASHMIR: This was the first time that the BJP made inroads in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The BJP candidate for the Jammu-Poonch parliamentary seat, Vaid Vishnu Dutt was elected by defeating his rival Janak Raj Gupta of the National Conference.<sup>40</sup> The BJP shared 23.31% votes.
- d. PUNJAB: The SAD-BJP combine got a vote share of the 44.59% winning 11 of the 13 seats. The BJP for the first time has won all of 3 seats it contested, Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Hoshiarpur, in Punjab gaining 5.18% votes. Three of these seats were wrested from the Congress(I), 2 seats and from BSP, one seat. The reason of this result is as follows: The verdict was a major political and ideological triumph for the SAD-BJP combine. It is a rejection of the policy of divide and rule and communalism. The SAD-BJP combine's sweep of the Lok Sabha seats in Punjab illustrates the collapse of secular political formation in the State. Secular groups including the Congress, the BSP and the Left failed miserably in the state. The mandate for the

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.94.

<sup>40</sup> In 1977, Congress(I) had won the seat in alliance with NC. Thereafter NC had detained this seat. It went to the JD in 1996 because NC was not in the race.

combination of the BJP and the SAD assumes significance on two counts – the secularization of state politics and the entry of Akalis into the national main stream. Hindu–Sikh political alliance has been able to get the people to vote across the religious divide for the first time. If Sikh voters paved the way for the victory of BJP candidates in the Congress(I) strongholds, Hindu votes also tilted the balance in favour of Akali candidates in many a constituency.<sup>41</sup>

- e. UTTAR PRADESH: One Clear loser but no certain winner, that was the story of 98 elections in UP. The BJP increased its strength from 52 to 57 helped by three–way split in the opposition parties. Its alliance, Samata Party, snatched two seats from the opposition. The BJP’s vote percentage has shot up to 36.48% as against 33.43% polled in its favour in the 96 polls. It was for first time that the party crossed the 35% mark as its vote percentages in 1981 and 1996 it was 32.92% and 33.43% respectively. Significantly, the BJP performed well in Meerut, saharanpur and Moradabad division. It bagged 24 seats as against 19 seats of 1996 in western Uttar Pradesh. In UP, the BJP sustained 37 Lok Sabha seats and wrested 20 new seats from Samata Party, 9 and from the Congress(I), 5 and from the BSP, 3 and from the AICC(T), 2 and from the JD, 1. In turn, the BJP lost 15 seats, 13 to Samata Party and 2 to BSP. The BJP secured 11 of 18 reserved seats as against 14 of 96 elections.
- f. CHANDIGARTH: The lone Lok Sabha seat was won by BJP candidate Satya Pal Jain by a margin of 10,355 votes.
- g. DELHI: The BJP bagged 6 of 7 seats with 50.73% votes in Delhi where it had captured 5 of the 6 seats in the last general election. In this election, the BJP’s candidate Vijay Goel wrested 1 seat, Chandni Chowk, from Congress(I).

<Table 3–9>

North Zone: 126 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	96	98	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
HARYANA	10	4	1	1		3	–3
HIMACHAL PRADESH	4	0	3		3		3

<sup>41</sup> M. L. Ahuja, *Ibid.*, pp.92.

JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	1	2	1	1		1
PUNJAB	13	0	3		3		3
UTTAR PRADESH	85	52	57	37	20	15	5
CHANDIGARTH	1	1	1	1			
DELHI	7	5	6	5	1		1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>126</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>10</b>

## (2) South Zone (132 Seats)

In this battle zone, where the BJP had won 6 of 132 seats last time, it secured 5 old seats and took 15 new seats in 198 polls. But, the BJP's 9 of 96 Lok Sabha seats were snatched by others parties.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. **ANDHRA PRADESH:** In 1998 polls, the BJP was real winner in this state, although it won only 4 of 38 seats it contested. It took two seats each from the Congress(I) and the TDP. From a poor support base of 5.6% in the 96 elections, the BJP increased its vote share to 19% this time. The BJP's 19% vote share now shows that the party has finally arrived in the state. In this election, the BJP impressed voters with its door-to-door campaigns. It roped in popular film stars Vijayashanthi, Gowthami and Mohan Babu for electioneering. Its campaigners highlighted the party's capacity to provide a stable government.
- b. **KARNATAKA:** The impressive performance of the BJP-Lok Shakti alliance, which won 16 of the 28 seats (BJP 13, Lok Shakti 3) in Karnataka, is the most striking feature of the election verdict in the state. Although the Lok Shakti won only three seats, quantitative confirmation of the Lok Shakti factor in the BJP's victory comes from the fact that the Lok Shakti secured 11.5% of the popular vote. Added to the BJP's share 26.95%, this gave the alliance 38.45% votes. The BJP, which has 18 seats contested, retained 5 seats of 1996 polls – Bidar(SC), Chitradurga, Mangalore, Dharwad North and Kanara – and lost one seat, Davangere, to Congress(I). However, it wrested 8 seats from the JD, 5 and the Congress(I), 2 and the KCP, 1. There are several reasons for the dramatic improvement in the BJP's

performance. From six seats in 1996 to 13 now. The first is the definite electoral edge that the Lok Shakti provided the party: indeed, the gains from the alliance were more the BJP's than the Lok Shakti's. Ramakrishna Hegde was undoubtedly the BJP's star campaigner in Karnataka, after Vajpayee. Hegde gave stature and credibility to the BJP's campaign, which helped the party divorce, for the purposes of the campaign, its Hindutva agenda from the slogan of an "able Prime Minister and a stable government" However, an analysis of the BJP vote suggests that the Hegde factor may not have been the primary reason for the BJP's good showing. Of the 13 seats that the BJP won, five were seats it won in 1996; five others – Udipi, Shimoga, Belgaum, Gulbarga and Tumkur – were seats it lost by narrow margins in 1996. The remaining three seats – Mysore, Kanakapura and Chickmagalur – are constituencies where Hegde dose not have much of a base. There was a strong anti-incumbency factor working against the Janata Dal, which the BJP and the Lok Shakti fully capitalized upon.<sup>42</sup>

- c. TAMIL NADU: In 1998, the AIADMK and its then allies, the BJP, the MDMK, the PMK, the TRC and the Janata Party of Subramanian Swamy had won 30 seats. The break-up was: the AIADMK 18, the PMK four, the BJP and the MDMK three each, and the TRC and the Janata Party one each. The BJP took 2 seats from the TMC and one from DMK with 6.86% votes.

<Table 3-10>

South Zone: 132 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	96	98	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ANDHRA PRADESH	42	0	4		4		4
KARNATAKA	28	6	13	5	8	1	7
KERALA	20	0	0				
TAMIL NADU	39	0	3		3		3
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR	1	0	0				
LAKSHADWEEP	1	0	0				
PONDICHERRY	1	0	0				

<sup>42</sup> *Frontline*, April 3, 1998. p. 49.

TOTAL	132	6	20	5	15	1	14
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### (3) West Zone (143 Seats)

The BJP bagged 60 of 143 seats as against 73 seats in the last elections. The BJP retained 45 seats and hauled 15 new seats from others parties. It, however, lost 28 old constituencies.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. GUJARAT: The BJP appears to have a definite edge over other parties in the elections to the Lok Sabha seats in the State. This is despite the fact that the BJP has to be on the defensive in Gujarat with respect to its stability slogan. The BJP not only retained all the 16 seats it won in 1996, but also took three seats, Surendranager, Banaskantha and Vadodara, from the Congress(I). It contested 26 seats and shared 48.28% votes.
- b. MADHYA PRADESH: The Lok Sabha results in Madhya Pradesh indicate that the BJP has marginally improved its position. In this State, the BJP improved its tally of 27 seats by securing 30 seats. Although the BJP improved its position in terms of its share of the vote (41.3% in 1996 and 45.9% in 1998) and seats, its gains were small and are not based, as in the past, on a decline of the Congress (I) vote<sup>43</sup>. In Madhya Pradesh, the BJP retained 22 of the seats it held on the last polls and also took 4 seats from Congress(I) and 2 from the BSP and 1 from AICC(T). But it lost 5 seats to Congress(I).
- c. MAHARASHTRA: The verdict of the Maharashtra electorate has given the BJP-Shiv Sena combine a tally of seats in Lok Sabha that is nearly 70% lower than what it scored in the 1996 elections. In 1996 polls, the BJP-Shiv Sena had 33 seats (18 with the BJP and 15 with the Shiv Sena). But this time the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance, which contested all the 48 seats won only 10 seats. The BJP contested 25 parliamentary seats and secured 22.49% votes. It retained 4 seats, Mumbai North, Erandol, Jalna and Beed. The Congress(I) and RPI, however, snatched 12 and 2 seats from BJP respectively. The reason of BJP's low

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

performance is as follows: Why have things come to such a sorry pass for the BJP–Shiv Sena in Maharashtra where the allies were ruling since the last three years. Some factors worked against the alliance. Firstly, the united front of the Congress(I) in the state, Congress(I) projected Sharad Pawar as its leader. Secondly, Congress(I) alliance with the RPI and SP, the RPI supporters and the Muslims voted enmasse and backed the Congress(I). Thirdly, the Sonia factor had a big say in the success of the Congress(I). Whereas the Congress had won only six of these 13 seats in 1996, it won all of them except Beed this time. Fourthly, anti-incumbency factor and the arrogance and inability of the state government. The Congress(I) cleverly focused on the “unsatisfactory performance” of the Shiv–BJP Government which fell short of keeping several promises including one to provide pucca houses to all slum dwellers in Mumbai.

- d. RAJASTHAN: Rajasthan was state where the Congress(I) jolted the ruling BJP. In this election, BJP secured 5 of 25 seats, it contested, with 41.65% votes. The BJP retained the Jhalawar, Bayana and Jaipur constituencies, which it had won in 1996 and wrested Sikar and Udaipur from Congress(I). In turn, BJP lost in 9 seats to Congress(I). Significantly, most of the heavy weight BJP candidates, barring Speaker Shanti Lal Chaplot all lost. The reason of failed is as follows: The out come of the election was a referendum on the policies and programmes of the BJP government. The people punished the BJP Government for increasing power tariff, water charge and bus fare. Employees were dissatisfied with the government for its failure to release the pay scales in time. Local issues dominated the election campaign and stability issue would not cut much ice with voters. The entry of Mrs. Sonia Gandhi tilted the scales in favour of Congress(I) because women voters identified themselves with her. The Muslims also came in large number in different constituencies and supported the Congress(I) nominees. They had boycotted Congress(I) in 1996 elections and refrained from exercising their franchise. The congress(I) also performed better because it was able to garner the votes of Jats, SC and ST.
- e. DADAR & NAGAR HAVELI: in 1998, BJP's Delkar Mohanbhai Sanjibhai hauled the seat from Congress(I).



- f. DAMAN & DIU: In Daman & DIU, where secured by Congress(I) last time, Devijibhai J. Tandel of the BJP defeated his rival Dabyabhai v. Patel of Independent.

<Table 3-11>

West Zone: 143 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	96	98	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
GOA	2	0	0				
GUJARAT	26	16	19	16	3		3
MADHYA PRADESH	40	27	30	22	8	5	3
MAHARASHTRA	48	18	4	4		14	-14
RAJASTAN	25	12	5	3	2	9	-7
DADAR & NAGAR HAVELI	1	0	1		1		1
DAMAN & DIU	1	0	1		1		1
TOTAL	143	73	60	45	15	28	-13

(4) East Zone (142 Seats)

In these states, the BJP, which had bagged 19 of 143 seats in the 96 Lok Sabha elections, hauled 29 seats in this election. The BJP, which retained its 13 seats, wrested 16 seats and lost 6 old seats.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. ASSAM: The BJP again putting up candidates in all the 14 constituencies in 98 polls, but it wresting 1 seats (Silchar) from and losing 1 seats (Karimganj(SC)) to Congress(I). The BJP shared 24.47% votes.
- b. BIHAR: Bihar is another interesting case of BJP vulnerability. Unlike Orissa and Karnataka, Bihar was not a State where the BJP took away the winnings when the Janata Dal split. A dominant feature of the election scene in Bihar is fractured alliances and multi-cornered contests. The United Front has virtually broken up over the sharing of seats. The Congress(I) and the Jharkhand Mukti Morcha(Soren) have made a mockery of their alliance with the RJD led by Laloo Prasad Yadav. The only alliance that has survived the seat-sharing process is

the one between the BJP and the SP. The BJP contested 32 seats and the SP 22. The demand for a Jharkhand state is main electoral issue. In point of fact, BJP's vote-share has been stagnant, 20.5% in 1996 and 21.3% in 1998. In fact, the BJP could manage only a marginal increase on 2 seats as compared to its tally of 18 in 1996 while its ally, the Samata Party, before its merger with the JD(U), won 10 seats. The BJP retained the its 13 old Lok Sabha seats, and hauled the 4 seats from the JD, 4 and one from the Congress(I), JMM and SP respectively. But the RJD and Congress(I) snatched 3 and 2 seats from BJP respectively.

- c. ORISSA: The BJP won its first parliamentary seats from Orissa this time. It won 7 of the 9 seats it contested with 21.19% votes. Most of these were in western and northern Orissa. Most of the gains were at the expense of Congress(I), which lost 6 to BJP. One more seat was gained from the SAP. The BJP had built itself patiently among the poverty stricken western districts of the state.
- d. WEST BENGAL: The BJP opened its account in the state as an alliance partner of Trinamul Congress by winning Dum Dum which was a CPM citadel. The BJP's victory in Dum Dum was considered the biggest upset of this election. In West Bengal, it contested 14 constituencies and shared 10.20% votes of polled.

<Table 3-12>

East Zone: 142 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	96	98	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ARUNCHAL PRADESH	2	0	0				
ASSAM	14	1	1		1	1	0
BIHAR	54	18	20	13	7	5	2
MANIPUR	2	0	0				
MEGHALAYA	2	0	0				
MIZORAM	1	0	0				
NAGALAND	1	0	0				
ORISSA	21	0	7		7		7
SIKKIM	1	0	0				
TRIPURA	2	0	0				

WEST BENGAL	42	0	1		1		1
TOTAL	142	19	29	13	16	6	10

### (5) Total Result

In 1998, BJP's success is much more apparent. It has broken the 25% barrier in its own right, and the allies add a crucial 6 per cent to the total. The major change in the fortunes of the BJP stems from the alliances that have helped it break out of its central Indian heartland and into the south and east where previously it struggled to make an impact. In an area stretching from the southern states of Karnataka., Kerala and Tamil Nadu up the eastern coastal belt through Andhra Pradesh and Orissa to West Bengal, strategic alliance have seen the party make major gains both in terms of votes and seats.

In 1996, the BJP secured merely 9% votes in this region and a meager seven seats. This election has seen the BJP front emerge as the dominant player with 31% of the vote and a total of 72 seats, a quarter of the total up for grabs. In these seven states the vote swing to the BJP alliance was 22%, compared to 4% in the rest of the country. The BJP takes a smaller share of the seat won by the allies in all these states apart from Karnataka, but its gains add up to a substantial total and enhance its credibility as a contender for government.

The gain in the southern and eastern coastal belt far outweighs the fluctuating fortunes in states which were BJP stronghold. Big anti-incumbency swing in Rajasthan, Haryana and Maharashtra, where in recent elections it has done well, weakened the party.

The 1998 election result indicate that, for all its public pronouncements that it is a party whose time has come, the BJP, is electorally speaking, a strong but peculiarly vulnerable party. Its strength in the twelfth Lok Sabha is based. First, on alliances with parties whose reasons for allying with the BJP are at least as self-seeking and opportunist as the BJP's reasons for allying with them, and, secondly, on seats won in States - U. P. is the Prime example - where its strength seems to have peaked and where it is now dependent on the disunity of its opponents for sustenance.<sup>44</sup>

In terms of seats, the BJP bagged 182 of 543 Lok Shaba seats with 25.5% vote share in 1998 parliamentary elections. The BJP retained its 108 seats of the last

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

elections and newly took 74 Lok Sabha seats. Most of the gains were at the expense of Congress(I), which lost 35 to BJP. 10 seats were gained from the JD and SP respectively, 6 from the BSP, 3 from the AIIC(T), 2 each from the TDP and the TMC, and one each from the JMM, the KCP, the SAP, the DMK, the CPM and Independent. In turn, it lost its 53 constituencies of 1996 polls to other parties. The break up was: Congress(1) 32, SP 13, RJD 3, BSP 3, and RPI 2.

## 4. 1998 and 1999 General Election

What it had lost in UP, the BJP was more than making good in Bihar and other parts of the Hindi belt. Apart from its gains in Delhi, the BJP gained ground in Rajasthan and gave little away in MP. It lost Punjab but swept Haryana and Himachal Pradesh. There had been an intriguing possibility held out towards the end of the election campaign – that the BJP by itself would end with a lower tally and in consequence become more dependent upon its allies for sustenance. The dramatic results turned in from AP initially suggested that the possibility was being realized, not to mention the strong showing of the DMK, the NDA's senior partner in Tamil Nadu. These in themselves would not have caused serious concern for the BJP, since the TDP and DMK are not prone to whimsical political conduct that could endanger the stability of the prospective ruling coalition.

In 1999 election the BJP emerged as the biggest party in the Lok Sabha with 182 MPs(339 contested). The BJP got the same Lok Sabha seats as 1998 election. But, it is not same. Although they keep lots of their old constituency (115 seats), yet some constituency was changed by lost (64 seats) or new won (67seats).

So, I want to analyze the difference of BJP seats in Lok Sabha between the 12th and 13th general elections.

### (1) North Zone (126 Seats)

In the seven state where BJP had won 73 of 126 seats in the 98 election, they capture the 47 seats in this election. It means BJP has lost 26 seats than last election. The BJP retained the its 35 seats of last elections and got 12 new seats but lost its 38 seats.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. HARYANA: The BJP-INLD (Indian National Lok Dal) alliance made a clean sweep by bagging all the ten Lok Sabha seats in Haryana. Both parties secured five seats each leaving none to other parties (Congress(I), HVP, BSP). For the BJP, which bagged just one seat–Faridabad– in the last election. It was a big leap forward. The seats won by the BJP are: Ambala(SC), Kamal, Sonapat, Faridabad, Mahendragath. Two seats of them was from Congress(I) and other two

seats each one from BSP, HLD(R). The reason of success is as follows: The Indian National Lok Dal (INLD)-BJP combine, in what seemed an unexpected outcome, swept all the 10 Lok Sabha seats in the State. Both parties secured five seats respectively. For the BJP it was a tactical alliance that worked. The combine establish a more than comfortable lead in 85 of the total 90 Assembly segments. The BJP, which shared power with HVP earlier, dumped it to escape the anti-incumbency factor. Forging an alliance with Chautala was one of its many strategic moves. Also, the fact that the maximum of casualties in the Kargil war were from this State especially from Rohtak and Mahendargarh areas, aided it. The expected polarization of the Jat Versus the non-Jat votes did not take place in a manner beneficial to the Congress(I), though its vote share improved when compared to the last elections.

- b. HIMACHAL PRADESH: The BJP-HVC (Himachal Vikas Congress) combine won all the four seats with 3 seats for BJP in Himachal Pradesh, giving a jolt to the Congress(I). In the 1998 polls, the BJP had won three seats as against the Congress(I)'s one seat. The seats won by BJP are: Mandi, Kangra, Hamirpur. The results showed a marginal shift in voter preference in favour of the BJP. With both the key factions of the party, those led by CM Shanta Kumar, having buried their differences, it was a relatively united BJP that went to the polls.
- c. JAMMU & KASIMIR: Both the N. C.(National Conference), which took the three Lok Sabha seats in the Kashmir Vally as well as Ladakh, and the BJP which beat back the Congress(I) in Jammu and Udhampur, are celebrating in 1999 election. The BJP retained its two seats of last election.
- d. PUNJAB: The NDA in Punjab – the Akali Dal (Badal) and the Democratic Bahujan Samaj Morcha (DBSM), besides the BJP – suffered one of its worst defeats in the 13 constituencies and in the Union Territory of Chandigarh. The NDA won only three. The results smashed the theory that an Akali Dal – BJP combination is invincible because it supposedly brought about the union of the two dominant communities, the Jat Sikhs and Hindus. The extent of the popular feeling against the NDA is illustrated by the results in Faridkot, Gurdaspur, Amritsar and Jullundhar. According to Narendra Modi, BJP's national general secretary in charge

of Punjab, the anti-incumbency feeling against the Prakash Singh Badal Government and the split in the Akali Dal votes were the two principal factors that led to the NDA's reverses. Congress(I) State president Amarinder Singh, while admitting that the reasons cited by Modi did play a role, said three additional factors had contributed to the final result. These are the absence of the Vajpayee and Kargil factors, the Congress(I)'s electoral adjustments with the Left parties and a significant shift of the Dalit vote from the BSP to the Congress(I). The BJP-led alliance had won all of the 13 seats in 1998 but this time the National Democratic Alliance (NDA)—the Akali Dal(Badal) and the Democratic Bahujan Samaj Morcha(DBSM) besides the BJP won only three in Punjab. The BJP had kept only one seat, Gurdaspur—of 1998 and lost two seats— Amritsar and Hoshiarpur— to Congress(I).

- e. UTTAR PRADESH: There have been failures in Punjab and Karnataka but these have been primarily the failures of BJP allies. The BJP's Own failure has been in UP only. Five major factors contributed to the BJP's defeat: (1) The strong anti-incumbency mood against the Kalyan Singh-led BJP coalition government; (2) The shift in upper caste votes, particularly that of Brahmins and Jats, from the BJP to the Congress(I) and its alliance partner, the RLD; (3) The anti-BJP, pro- S. P. campaign by former BJP MP Sakshi Maharaj, who was denied the ticket, and its impact on large sections of the Lodh Rajput backward caste community, who were BJP supporters; (4) The vote arithmetic factor that is bound to give an edge to the party coming second in the previous elections; (5) and the tactical voting of Muslims, who more or less successfully identified the secular party capable of defeating the BJP in each constituency. While the benefit of the anti-incumbency mood was shared by the Congress(I), the SP and the BSP, the gains from the second factor went exclusively to the Congress(I). While, the shift of Brahmin votes towards the Congress(I) was evident in Kanpur, Shajahanpur, Rampur and Rae Bareilly, the shift of Jat votes came into play at Meerut, Muzzaffar Nagar, Baghpat and Kairana. All the seats were won by the Congress(I) alliance. The strong backward caste base and its growing influence among Thakurs and Banias stood the S.P. in good stead with the minorities. This is exactly why the party was

perceived as capable of defeating the BJP. The tactical voting of Muslims and the second factor, which essentially came into play in seats where the S.P. and the BSP took the second position against the BJP in 1998, helped the BSP the most. The BSP's success in Amroha, Ghosi, Sitapur and Shahbad are attributed to this factor. The S.P. was helped by this factor in Aonla, Unnao and Maharajgang. The voting pattern in U. P. shows that substantial sections of Dalits and members of the backward classes and minorities continue to be committed to the politics of social justice – or Mandal politics, as it is termed – and will settle for nothing less than a real share in power. Their message is that attempts to accommodate them in systems that serve only to perpetuate the hegemony of the upper castes are doomed to fail. In UP the BJP and allies had bagged 60 of the 85 seats with 57 for the BJP alone in the last general election. But this time, the BJP won only 29 seats. They sustained its 22 seats of the 98 elections and wrested 6 and one seat from SP and BSP respectively. But the BJP had lost its 35 old seats. The break up was: the SP 14, Congress(I) 10, BSP 9 and RLD 2.

- f. CHANDIGARTH: In 99 polls, The BJP lost its one seat to Congress(I) in Union Territory of Chandigarth.
- g. DELHI: The BJP had completed an unprecedented sweep of all seven seats in the National Capital Territory of Delhi. Observers looking for precedents went back to 1984, when the Congress(I) won all seven seats in Delhi as part of nation-wide sweep. Other instances were the 1977 Janata Party triumph, which was again part of a political wave that brought it an unambiguous majority in the Lok Sabha. This time, contrary on 1997, there was no perceptible swing one way or another, only voter fatigue, which manifested itself in the low voter turnout.

<Table 3-13>

North Zone: 126 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	98	99	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
HARYANA	10	1	5	1	4		4
HIMACHAL PRADESH	4	3	3	3			
JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	2	2	2			



PUNJAB	13	3	1	1		2	-2
UTTAR PRADESH	85	57	29	22	7	35	-28
CHANDIGARTH	1	1	0			1	-1
DELHI	7	6	7	6	1		1
TOTAL	126	73	47	35	12	38	-26

## (2) South Zone (132 Seats)

There are 7 states in the south zone. In 98 elections BJP had won 20 of 132 seats in these states. This time The BJP kept 11 old seats and got 8 new seats, but they lost 9 old seats.

The detail explanation is as follows.

- a. ANDHRA PRADESH: The BJP hauled 7 of 8 seats it contested in Andhra Pradesh. The BJP's Badam Balreddy lost in Hyderabad to four-time winner Salahuddin Owaisi of the All-India Majlis Ittehadul Muslimeen. Telugu Desam Party (TDP), BJP allied party, won 29 out of 32 seats it contested to become the biggest party. The BJP conceded their seat-Kakinada- lost to TDP in 99 elections, but they keep 3 old seats and got 1 new seat in Mahabubnagar.
- b. KARNATAKA: BJP-JD(U) alliance in Karnataka has shared the 10 seats of the total 28 in the state. In the 1998 elections, the BJP had secured 13 seats, its alliance partner the Lok Shakti got the 3 seats. But this time the BJP won only 7 seats, 6 less than the last time. The BJP retained its 5 seats of 1998 and gain 2 seats from Congress(I). But they lost 8 seats to Congress(I). The seats won by the BJP are: Bidar, Davangere, Bangalore South, Mangalore, Chikmagalur, Dharwad North and Bijapur. In this election, the reason of lost the 8 seat is as follows: Popular disenchantment with the performance of the Janata Dal government, combined with a rejection of the BJP, seems to have been the motivating factors. "Despite their claims, the BJP in rural areas is still an idea rather than a well-knit organization with traditional structures" Chandrashekhar said. It was evident that the BJP's project of using the Kargil and Vajpayee symbols had not made the desired impact on the voter. The BJP has been quick to put the blame for its defeat on the alliance with the JD(U). But the sheer scale of the anti-

BJP sweep, the losses for the party in its support areas, and the defeat of some of its stalwarts, suggests that the verdict should also be seen as a rejection of the divisive ideas of the party.

- c. TAMIL NADU: In 1998, the AIADMK (All-India Anna Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) and its then allies, the BJP, the MDMK, the PMK, the TRC and the Janata Party of Subramanian Swamy had won 30 seats. The break-up was: the AIADMK 18, the PMK four, the BJP and the MDMK three each, and the TRC and the Janata Party one each. The DMK-led alliance took the remaining 10 seats, with DMK getting six, the TMC three and CPI (Communist Party of India) one. This time, the BJP, the MDMK, the PMK and the TRC hived themselves off from the AIADMK and aligned with the DMK. The TMC pulled out of the DMK-led alliance and formed its own front. So this time, the BJP and MDMK (Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) have won four seat each, and the DMK (Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam) and PMK (Pattali Makkal Katci) has won 11 seats and five seats respectively. Two other allies, the MGR-ADMK and MGR-Kazhagam, got one seat each. The BJP, which maintained all 3 seats of last election, gain one seat from TMC(M).
- d. ANDAMAN & NICOBAR: The BJP wrested one seat from Congress(I) in 1999 Lok Sabha Elections.

<Table 3-14>

South Zone: 132 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	98	99	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ANDHRA PRADESH	42	4	7	3	4	1	3
KARNATAKA	28	13	7	5	2	8	-6
KERALA	20	0	0				
TAMIL NADU	39	3	4	3	1		1
ANDAMAN & NICOBAR	1	0	1		1		1
LAKSHADWEEP	1	0	0				
PONDICHERRY	1	0	0				
TOTAL	132	20	19				-1

### (3) West Zone (142 Seats)

In this states, the BJP, which had bagged 60 of 143 seats in the 98 Lok Sabha elections, got the 80 seats in this election. The BJP retained its 47 seats of 98 elections and secured 33 new seats and lost 13 old seats.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. GOA: The BJP, which opened its account in the Lok Sabha for the first time in 39 years, Congress(I) the liberation of this tiny state and a former Portuguese colony, has emerged as a major political force in the state, virtually replacing the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), a local party which was the main opposition party during the last decade and a half. The BJP had got all of two seats (North Goa and South Goa) from Congress(I) in this state of because of a consolidation of anti-Congress votes. The BJP's win is a further indication of the party's growing strength in Goa. It increased its tally in the Assembly from four to then in the June 1999 elections.
- b. GUJARAT: The BJP retained its 15 seats of 1998 in Gujarat, it lost four seats-Surendranagar, Mehsana, Patan(SC), Kapadvanj- to Congress(I) and gained five seats from it-Dohad(ST), Godhra, Anand, Chhota Udepur(ST), Mandavi(ST). The party bagged all the three seats reserved for Scheduled Tribes, traditionally won by the Congress(I). For the first time, the Congress(I) found all its tribal strongholds in Gujarat being decisively stormed by another party. And the Congress(I) debacle has raised question about the relevance of the party's endeavour to revive its traditional KHAM (Kshatriya, Harijan, Adivasi, Muslim) constituency, once successfully mobilized by the former CM, Madhavsingh Solanki. In this election, however, Solanki's father-in-law Ishwarbhai Chawda lost the Anand seat to Dipakbhai Patel (BJP). Solanki sought to revive KHAM by backing the merger of the RJP, led by Vaghela with the Congress(I). The rise of the Hindutva force in the late 1980s and 1990s made KHAM somewhat irrelevant. In 1998, the BJP and the Congress(I) had won 19 and 10 seats in Gujarat. Gujarat Congress(I) president C. D. Patel said that the BJP won by overplaying the issues such as the need for a stable government and the Kargil war.
- c. MADHYA PRADESH: The BJP repeated its 1998 performance in Madhya Pradesh winning 29 of the 40 Lok Sabha seats. The BJP retained the

24 seats, and wrested 5 seats—Gwallor, Raigarh(ST), Sarangarh(SC), Rajnandgaon, Seoni— from the Congress(I). But the 6 seats—Guna, Khajuraho, Rewa, Surguja, mahasamund, Khargone— lost to Congress(I). In this state, the A. B. Vajpayee factor (he hails from Gwalior) has once again favoured the BJP as in 1996 and 1998.

- d. MAHARASHTRA: In 1999 election, the Shiv Sena–BJP alliance bagged 28 of 48 Lok Sabha seats. While the NCP and the Congress(I) together won 16 seats. United they had taken 33 seats in 1998. The split of Congress(I) and NCP allowed the right–wing alliance to win the bulk of seats. This time, the BJP secured 13 seats against 4 seats of 98 elections. The BJP retained its all seats (Mumbai North, Erandol, Jalna and Beed) of the last time, and gained 9 seats from other parties. The break up of its were: the Congress(I) 7, SHS and RPI one each. Analysis of this election is as follows: Sharad Pawar's Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) has propelled secular political forces in Maharashtra to disaster. This time around, the chaos in the Congress(I) tore the winning combination apart. The powerful Republican Party of India (RPI) factions of Ramdas Athvale and Prakash Ambedkar went with the NCP and the Congress(I) respectively. Other peripheral RPI factions went their own way, with one leader, Namdeo Dhasal, endorsing the Shiv Sena. The SP chose to ally itself with the NCP. The sole factor in the Hindu Right's triumph was the division in the opposition's vote. Even in Pawar's Marathwada heartland, several constituencies won from the Sena–BJP in 1998, including Osmanabad, Aurangabad and Hingoli, were lost to the Hindu Right this time around.
- e. RAJASTHAN: In Rajasthan the BJP made a comeback thanks to wide support from the Jat community and lack–luster performance of the Ashok Gehlot government. So the BJP took 11 seats away from Congress(I). The BJP had won 16 of 25 seats. They kept its four seats of 98 elections and lost 1 seat to Congress(I). The reason of BJP's enlargement is as follows: Going into the polls in Rajasthan, there was a great deal of speculation over the prospect of a large–scale desertion of the Congress(I) by the Jat community, until now one of its most influential social constituencies. Jat ire had been aroused by the Ashok Gehlot Government's failure to deliver on a promise to extend the benefits of backward class status to the community. Jat influence

had begun to wane considerably on account of the reservations for backward classes in the local bodies.

- f. DADAR & NAGAR HAVELI: The BJP lost its one seat to independent candidate in this election.
- g. DAMAN & DIU: The BJP lost its one seat to Congress(I) in 1999 general elections.

<Table 3-15>

West Zone: 143 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	98	99	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
GOA	2	0	2		2		2
GUJARAT	26	19	20	15	5	4	1
MADHYA PRADESH	40	30	29	24	5	6	-1
MAHARASHTRA	48	4	13	4	9		9
RAJASTAN	25	5	16	4	12	1	11
DADAR & NAGAR HAVELI	1	1	0			1	-1
DAMAN & DIU	1	1	0			1	-1
TOTAL	143	60	80	47	33	13	20

(4) East Zone (143 Seats)

The BJP had won 36 of 142 seats as against 29 seats in the last elections. The BJP retained its 22 seats and obtained 14 new seats and lost 7 seats.

The detail thing is as follows.

- a. ASSAM: Of the 13th Lok Sabha seat in Assam, the BJP won two seats. In 1998, the BJP won only one seat, Silchar in the Bengali-populated Barak Valley. This time, however, the Congress(I) took the Silchar seat back from the BJP. The BJP, which won two seats from the Brahmaputra Valley – Guwahati and Nagaon – has benefited from the people's disillusionment with the Asom Gana Parishad (AGP). This poll outcome shows that the AGP has lost a substantial section of supporters to the BJP, especially in the urban areas.
- b. BIHAR: While BJP-JD(U) alliance bagged 40 of the 50 seats, the Congress(I)-RJD(Rashtriya Janata Dal) alliance was victorious in only

10 seats. The RJD suffered its worst disaster in north Bihar, where all the five Yadav candidates fielded by the BJP alliance, defeated their Yadav rivals from the RJD– Congress(I) including Laloo Prasad. Of the 50 seats for which elections were held, the BJP and allies bagged 23 and 17 seats respectively. In 1998 the BJP won 20 seats, while its ally, the Samata Party, before its merger with the JD(U), won 10 seats. The BJP retained the its 14 of 98 elections, and gain 9 seats from RJD(5 seats) and Congress(I)(4 seats). But the RJD and Congress(I) snatched 2 and 1 seats from BJP respectively. The landslide victory of the BJP– JD(U) alliance in Bihar shows that it has succeeded in eroding former Chief Minister Laloo Prasad Yadav's vote base among the backward Yadav community and Muslims. The RJD suffered its worst disaster in north Bihar, where all the five Yadav candidates fielded by BJP and JD(U) defeated their Yadav rivals from the RJD – including Laloo Prasad. The result suggests that Yadav voters, disenchanted with the 'Raja of Bihar', finally found an alternative. The results took the wind out of the sail of Laloo Prasad's much–vaunted Muslim–Yadav support. The RJD lost ground to the JD(U) and the BJP in central Bihar and in his own bastion to the north of the Ganga where the Muslim–Yadav factor was considered invincible until recently. While the anti-incumbency factor appeared to have affected his fortunes, his failure to strike the right alliance might well have been his undoing.

- c. ORISSA: The virtual decimation of the ruling Congress(I) and the emergence of the Biju Janata Dal(BJD)–BJP combine as a main political force are the most significant aspects of the electoral verdict in Orissa. A swing in favour of Prime Minister A. B. Vajpayee and the incumbency factor may have dealt a bodyblow to the Congress(I). The BJP–BJD alliance had also helped cement the Opposition vote, the split of which had earlier benefited the Congress(I). Weakened by factionalism, the Congress(I) seems to have been swept aside by an anti-incumbency sentiment. It won only two seats. The BJP–BJD alliance has registered a massive win with its candidates capturing 19 of the 21 seats (BJP had won 7 seats) in Orissa. The BJP–BJD (Biju Janata Dal) alliance had won 16 seats of the 1998 elections while the Congress(I) had won five. The BJP, which made its first foray in the Lok Sabha election from Orissa in 1998, won all the nine seats it

contested this time. BJP candidates emerged victorious in Nawarangpur and Berhampur(Congress(I)) that never went to non congress party sCongress(I)e 1957 Lok Shaba elections.

- d. WEST BENGAL: In West Bengal, the Left Front won 29 seats, four less than it did in 1998. The Trinamul Congress won eight seats, against seven in 1998; the BJP too bettered its performance, winning two seats against only one, Dum Dum, last years. The BJP gained one seat from CPI(M) in Krishnagar.

<Table 3-16>

East Zone: 142 Seats

STATES	TOTAL SEATS	98	99	KEEP	GAIN	LOSE	CHANGE
ARUNCHAL PRADESH	2	-0	0				
ASSAM	14	1	2		2	1	1
BIHAR	54	20	23	14	9	6	3
MANIPUR	2	0	0				
MEGHALAYA	2	0	0				
MIZORAM	1	0	0				
NAĠALAND	1	0	0				
ORISSA	21	7	9	7	2		2
SIKKIM	1	0	0				
TRIPURA	2	0	0				
WEST BENGAL	42	1	2	1	1		1
TOTAL	142	29	36	22	14	7	7

(5) Total Result

In 1999 general elections, the BJP bagged 182 of 543 Lok Shaba seats same as the 1998 polls. The BJP retained its 115 seats of the last elections. And The BJP got 67 seats of Lok Sabha from other parties. The break up was: Congress(I) 48, SP 6, RJD 5, BSP 2, HLD(R) 1, JD 1, TMC(M) 1, SHS 1, RPI 1, CPI(M) 1. The BJP, however, lost its 64 seats to other parties. The break up was: Congress(I) 64, SP 14, BSP9, RJD 2, TDP 1, IND 1.

## 5. Summary

The BJP improved its position in the Lok Sabha from two seats in 1984 to 85 in 1989, 120 in 1991, 161 in 1996 and 182 in 1998 and 1999 respectively. The march of BJP to power will be shown as its change seats in Lok Sabha over last decade as following table 1. This table shows that most of BJP's Lok Sabha seats were from six states—Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Delhi. And the BJP made no impact in the eastern and southern states in last decade.

<Table 3-17>

State-Wise BJP'S Seats Change (1989-1999)

STATES/UTS	Total Seats	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999
Andhra Pradesh	42	0	1	0	4	7
Arunachal Pradesh	2	0	0	0	0	0
Assam	14	N	2	1	1	2
Bihar	54	8	5	18	20	23
Goa	2	0	0	0	0	2
Gujarat	26	12	20	16	19	20
Haryana	10	0	0	4	1	5
Himachal Pradesh	4	3	2	0	3	3
Jammu & Kashmir	6	0	N*	1	2	2
Karnataka	28	0	4	6	13	7
Kerala	20	0	0	0	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	40	27	12	27	30	29
Maharashtra	48	10	5	18	4	13
Manipur	2	0	0	0	0	0
Meghalaya	2	0	0	0	0	0
Mizoram	1	0	0	0	0	0
Nagaland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Orissa	21	0	0	0	7	9
Punjab	13	0	0	0	3	1
Rajasthan	25	13	12	12	5	16
Sikkim	1	0	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	39	0	0	0	3	4



Tripura	2	0	0	0	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	85	8	51	52	57	29
West Bengal	42	0	0	0	1	2
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	0	0	0	0	1
Chandigarh	1	0	0	1	1	0
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	1	0	0	0	1	0
Daman & Diu	1	0	1	0	1	0
Delhi	7	4	5	5	6	7
Lakshadweep	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pondichery	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>182</b>

Source: Compiled from Election Commission. <http://www.eci.gov.in>.

\* Not held election.

They got over 50% seats, averagely, in northern-western states contrast against that they won below 20% seats in southern-eastern one. In 1999 election, the BJP gained 63 of 151 seats compared to 28 in 1989, 70 in 1991, 75 in 1996 and 77 in 1998, respectively, in northern states where in 1984 it had won a single seat (Gujarat); in the West- Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, etc., it got 64 of 118 seats as against 49 in 1989, 38 in 1991, 61 in 1996, 55 in 1998; in the Southern states- Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, etc., the party secured 19 of 132 seats compare with none in 1989, 5 in 1991, 6 in 1996, 20 in 1998 respectively; and in eastern states, they bagged 8 seats in 1989, 7 seats in 1991, 19 seats in 1996, 29 seats in 1998 and 36 seats in 1999.

<Table 3-18>

Zone-Wise BJP's Seat Change (1989-1999)

ZONE	Total Seats	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999
NORTH	151	28	70	75	78	63
SOUTH	132	0	5	6	20	19
WEST	118	49	38	61	55	64
EAST	142	8	7	19	29	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>543</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>161</b>	<b>182</b>	<b>182</b>

Source: As for Table 3-17.

## (1) BJP in North India

Most of BJP won seats were from northern-western states. There was continuity in the regional base of the BJP with the strongholds of the erstwhile Jan Sangh in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, and Himachal Pradesh. However, the party improved its position substantially in the northern Hindi states, gaining a total of 28 seats in 1989, 70 seats in 1991, 75 seats in 1996, 78 seats in 1998 and 63 seats in 1993 in region where in 1984 it had not won a single seat. See the <Table 3-19>.

- a. HARYANA (10 seats): In Haryana, the BJP had given a good account of its performance for the first time in 1996 elections. It was partly on account of its alliance with the HVP. The little known party in the states had emerged as a strong coalition partner in the HVP government by winning four Lok Sabha seats. It had not won a single seat before 1996 election. In 1999 election, the BJP-INLD alliance made a clean sweep by bagging all the ten seats. Both parties secured five seats each. For the BJP, which bagged just one seat-Faridabad- in 1998 election.
- b. HIMACHAL PRADESH (4 seats): The BJP could not win any seat in 1984 election but in 1989 they won 3 of 4 seats and polled 45.3 percent votes.. In 1991 its seats reduced to two and poll percentage to 42.8. But they could not get any seat in 1996 elections. In 1999 election, the BJP-HVC combine won all the four seats- BJP 3 seat and HVC 1 seat. In the 1998 polls, the BJP had won three seat as against the INC's one seats.
- c. JAMMU & KASHMIR (6 seats): Both the N. C.(National Conference), which took the three Lok Sabha seats in the Kashmir Vally as well as Ladakh, and the BJP which beat back the INC in Jammu and Udhampur, are celebrating in 1999 election. The BJP retained its two seats of last election.
- d. PUNJAB (13 seats): Historically the BJP had been a political misfit in Punjab. It had always drawn a blank in Lok Sabha elections. Before the 1998 election, it could not gain any seat in this state. But The BJP-led alliance had won all of the 13 seats in 1998 but this time the National Democratic Alliance(NDA)-the Akali Dal(Badal) and the Democratic Bahujan Samaj Morcha(DBSM) besides the BJP won only three in

- Punjab. The BJP had kept only one seat, Gurdaspur—of 1998 and lost two seats— Amritsar and Hoshiarpur— to INC.
- e. RAJASTAN (25 seats): In 1996 election, the BJP failed to maintain its tally of 12 seats it had won in 1996. There was some change in the social base of its candidates. The number of Jat candidates was reduced from five in 1991 to four this time. According to BJP calculation, the Jats are losing hold over Panchayati Raj and hence more non-Jat candidates were inducted in 1998 elections. And Non-performance of the BJP Government appears to have also been responsible for its defeat. During its rule, the party failed to enthuse farmers: poor irrigation facilities with higher power tariffs also affected party's chance.<sup>45</sup> But in 1999 elections, the BJP made a comeback thanks to wide support from the Jat community and lack-luster performance of the Ashok Gehlot government. The BJP bagged 16 of 25 seats in this Lok Sabha elections as against 13 in 1989, 12 in 1991 and 1996, five in 1998.
  - f. UTTAR PRADESH (85 seats): In 1991, the BJP improved its position in Uttar Pradesh where they secured 51 of 85 seats as against 8 seats in 1989, but suffered reverse in 1999 that it lost 28 seats compared with its 57 seats in 1998. In this election, the BJP has been failures in Punjab and Karnataka but these have been primarily the failures of BJP allies. The BJP's Own failure has been in UP only. In this state, the BJP and allies had bagged 60 of the 85 seats with 57 for the BJP alone in the last general election. But this time, the BJP won only 29 seats. Of the 18 reserved seats in the state, the BJP won 7 seats against 11 in 1998, 14 in 1996, 10 in 1991 and 2 in 1989.
  - g. CHANDIGARTH (1 seat): In this area, the BJP had won a single seat in 1996 and 1998 each, and it could not get one seat in 1989, 1991 and 1999.
  - h. DELHI (7 seats): Delhi was the most striking area to BJP in this election result. The BJP has swept all seven parliamentary seats, giving a jolt to the Congress(I), in Delhi where it had captured 6 of the 7 seats in the 1998 elections. It is first time to Congress (I) since 1977, when it was swept aside in Delhi by a tidal wave of popular anger following the

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<sup>45</sup> M. S. Rana, *India Votes: Lok Sabha and Vidhan Sabha Election 1998*, B. R. Publishing Corporation (New Delhi), 1998, pp. 210–211.

imposition of Emergency, the party has lost all seven seats in the national capital. This time, however, there was no perceptible swing one way or another, only voter fatigue, which manifested itself in the low voter turnout. The BJP has bagged four seats in 1989, five seats in 1991 and 1996 respectively.

<Table 3-19>

Northern States (151 Seats)

STATES	TOTAL	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999
Haryana	10	0	0	4	1	5
Himachal Pradesh	4	3	2	0	2	3
Jammu & Kashmir	6	0	N	1	2	2
Punjab	13	0	0	0	3	1
Rajasthan	25	13	12	12	5	16
Uttar Pradesh	85	8	51	52	57	29
Chandigarh	1	0	0	1	1	0
Delhi	7	4	5	5	6	7
TOTAL	151	28	70	75	77	63

Source: As for Table 3-17.

## (2) BJP in South India

For the 13th Lok Sabha election in 1999, the BJP was left with no option but to manage pre-poll alliance with the DMK in Tamil Nadu and TDP in Andhra Pradesh. This strategy paid dividends as the tally in these two states could substantially compensate its loss in Uttar Pradesh and the BJP was able to form a coalition government at the center. Unlike its main political rival Congress(I), the BJP has a sizeable number of committed cadres in the southern States but they have hardly achieved any noticeable success in 'Hinduising' the electorate. The leaders of the DMK and its Dravidian allies in Tamil Nadu, and Telugu Desam in Andhra Pradesh accepted the BJP only when the latter maintained its identity as a junior partner. While the DMK was mainly interested to keep its main opponent AIDMK away from power, the main challenger for Telugu

Desam was the Congress(I). This game of alliance between the BJP and its southern allies will continue so long as they do not pose a challenge to each other.<sup>46</sup>

In this zone, the BJP could not secured any seats in 1989, but improved its position, of gaining a total 5, 6, 20 and 19 in 1991, 1996, 1998 and 1999 respectively. See the <Table 3-20>.

- a. ANDHRA PRADESH (42 seats): Improved parliamentary poll performance of the BJP in Andhra Pradesh from four seats in 1998 to seven in 1999 could be partly attributed to its tactical poll alliance with Telugu Desam Party (TDP), the ruling regional party in the state and partly to the consolidation of anti-Congress votes in its favor. Due to large presence of Urdu speaking Muslims and non-Telugu Hindus, the voters were by and large polarized on communal lines and thus the BJP could for the first time open its Lok Sabha account in the State in 1984 by winning Secunderabad seat with the support of TDP. In this state, The Reddys and Khammas is the two dominant agriculturist castes who continue to maintain their political domination and hegemony in Congress(I) and TDP respectively. Despite the factional fight within the Congress(I) and family feud in TDP, the BJP could not become a serious challenger to any Lok Sabha seat in the State. It was only when a sizeable section of educated middle class turned towards the BJP, that it could improve its tally in Lok-Sabha from one till 1996 to four in 1998. In spite of being a junior partner, BJP's support did result in improved performance of TDP from 12 in 1998 to 29 in 1999 Lok-Sabha election. The BJP has the potential to improve its performance and be a force to reckon with. The party had won seven seats in 1999 elections compare to four seats and one seat in 1998 and 1991 each.
- b. KARNATAKA (28 seats): Karnataka is considered to be a strong base of BJP among southern states of the country. The BJP opened its Lok Sabha account from Karnataka in 1991 when it won four seats. It also secured 6 seats and 13 seats in 1996 and 1998 each. In 1999, the BJP was allied with JD(U) and won only seven seats. After this election the BJP has been quick to put the blame for its defeat on the alliance with the JD(U). But the sheer scale of the anti-BJP sweep, the losses for the party in its support areas, and the defeat of some its stalwarts,

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<sup>46</sup> R. Upadhyay, 'BJP in South India', in <http://www.saag.org/>

suggest that the verdict should also be seen as a rejection of divisive ideas of the party.

- c. KERALA (20 seats): Kerala with twenty Lok –Sabha seats has so far not allowed the BJP to open its legislative account.
- d. TAMIL NADU (39 seats): In this states, the DMK, it defined its politics as ‘war for supremacy between north and south as well as Tamil versus Hindi’, emerged as a main political force. Thus, against this Tamil cultural nationalism supported by DMK, there was hardly any attraction for the BJP, it emphasized Hindu nationalism, in this state. So it could not get any seat till 1996 election. However, in 1998 general election the BJP succeeded in managing its electoral alliance with AIADMK and made its first entry in the Lok Sabha with three seats. In 1999 Lok Sabha poll, the BJP managed an electoral alliance with DMK, AIADMK’s rival party, and succeeded in increasing its seats to four.

<Table 3–20>

Southern States (132 Seats)

STATES	TOTAL	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999
Andhra Pradesh	42	0	1	0	4	7
Karnataka	28	0	4	6	13	7
Kerala	20	0	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	39	0	0	0	3	4
Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	0	0	0	0	1
Lakshadweep	1	0	0	0	0	0
Pondicherry	1	0	0	0	0	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>132</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>19</b>

Source: As for Table 3–17.

### (3) BJP in West India

As already mentioned, western states with 118 Lok Sabha seats has contributed to be a strong regional base of BJP with northern states. In this zone, the BJP improved its position had won one seat in Gujarat in 1984 elections. But the party

improved its position in the Lok Sabha from one seats in 1984 to 64 in 1999. The BJP bagged 49, 38, 61 and 55 in 1989, 1991, 1996 and 1998 respectively.

- a. GOA (2 seats): The BJP, which opened its account in the Lok Sabha for the first time in 39 years, since the liberation of this tiny state and a former Portuguese colony, has emerged as a major political force in the state, virtually replacing the Maharashtrawadi Gomantak Party (MGP), a local party which was the main opposition party during the last decade and a half. The BJP had got all of two seats (North Goa and South Goa) from INC in this state.
- b. GUJARAT (26 seats): Once a strong hold of INC, Gujarat is steadily going into the BJP fold. Gujarat is one of states that are strong regional base of the BJP. In 1999 elections, the BJP winning 20 of the 26 Lok Sabha seats in this state against 12 in 1989, 10 in 1991, 16 in 1996 and 19 in 1998.
- c. MADHYA PRADESH (40 seats): The BJP repeated its 1998 performance(30 seats) in Madhya Pradesh winning 29 of the 40 Lok Sabha seats. In this election, the A. B. Vajpayee factor (he hails from Gwalior) has once again favored the BJP as in 1996 and 1998. The BJP is steadily moving up and up to occupy the tip rung in the state politics. The party won 27, 12 and 27 seats in 1989, 1991 and 1996 respectively. There are nine ST's reserved seats and six SC's reserved seats in this state. The BJP secured 12 of these seats in 1999 General elections as against 8 in 1989, 2 in 1991, 9 in 1996, 11 in 1998, 12 in 1999.
- d. MAHARASHTRA(48 seats): The BJP succeeded in enticing the Marathas to its fold. It preferred to project maximum number of Maratha candidates in the elections. Traditionally, the Marathas and Brahmins had been strongholds of the INC. the BJP-SS (Shiv Sena) alliance wooed them to its fold. The Dalit constitute 13 percent of the electorate and have created a distinct political identity through their political spokesman- the RPI. Because of instability and frequent splits in the RPI it could not unite the OBC's with it, which preferred the INC. the OBC's constitute 52 percent of the electorate. The BJP had been able to win 13 seats against 4 in 1998. The party, also, had secured 10 in 1989, 5 in 1991 and 18 in 1996.

&lt;Table 3-21&gt;

## Western States (118 Seats)

STATES	TOTAL	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999
Daman & Diu	1	0	1	0	1	0
Goa	2	0	0	0	0	2
Gujarat	26	12	20	16	19	20
Madhya Pradesh	40	27	12	27	30	29
Maharashtra	48	10	5	18	4	13
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	1	0	0	0	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>64</b>

Source: As for Table 3-17.

#### (4) BJP in East India

Contrary to northern and western states, the BJP made no impact in the eastern states. Especially in the seven states of north-east- Arunachal Pradesh (2 seats), Manipur (2 seat), Meghalaya (2 seats), Mizoram (1 seat), Nagaland (1 seat), Sikkim (1 seat), Tripura (2 seats)- the BJP had failed to get seat last decade. But the party was improved its position gradually in the eastern-states. In 1999 Lok Sabha elections, the BJP has secured 36 of the 142 seats against 29 seats in 1998, 19 seats in 1996, 7 seats in 1991, 8 seats in 1989.

- a. ASSAM (14 seats): Of the 13th Lok Sabha seats, the BJP won two seats. in 1998, the BJP won only one seat- Silchar in the Bengali-populated Barak Valley- as same as 1996.
- b. BIHAR (54 seats): Starting as a flop in 1984 when it contested Lok Sabha elections in the state, the BJP has since then made significant inroads in the state. It had won eight seats in 1989 and five in 1991. In 1996 elections it won 18 out of 32 seats it had contested and its poll percentage marked an increase from about 17 percent inn 1991 to about 18 percent in 1996. In 1998, the party won 20 seats, while its ally, the Samata Party, before its merger with the JD(U), won 10 seats. In 1999 elections, the BJP-JD(U) alliance bagged 40 of the 50 seats, with 23 seats for BJP alone.



- c. ORISSA (21 seats): The BJP could not open its account on the Lok Sabha till 1996 elections. The party opened its account in the state with 7 of out the 21 seats in 1998 elections. The party benefited most from its alliance with the RJD. The BJP wrested six seats from the INC and one from the Samata Party. In 1999 election, the BJP was allied with BJD (Biju Janata Dal) and won 19 of the 21 seats. The party, which made its first foray in the Lok Sabha elections from Orissa in 1998, won all the nine seats it contested this time. Also, The BJD, which contested 12 seats, secured 10 seats. The BJD-BJP alliance had won 16 of the 21 seats in the 1998 elections.
- d. WEST BENGAL (42 seats): In this state which is well established by CPI(M) and CPI, the BJP-TC (Trinamul Congress) won eight seats against seven in 1998; the BJP too bettered its performance, winning two seats against only one last year. Until 1996 election, the party had not won a single seat.

<Table 3-22>

Eastern States (142 Seats)

STATES	TOTAL	1989	1991	1996	1998	1999
Arunachal Pradesh	2	0	0	0	0	0
Assam	14	N	2	1	1	2
Bihar	54	8	5	18	20	23
Manipur	2	0	0	0	0	0
Meghalaya	2	0	0	0	0	0
Mizoram	1	0	0	0	0	0
Nagaland	1	0	0	0	0	0
Orissa	21	0	0	0	7	9
Sikkim	1	0	0	0	0	0
Tripura	2	0	0	0	0	0
West Bengal	42	0	0	0	1	2
Total	142	8	7	19	29	36

Source: As for Table 3-17.

# Chapter 5

## BJP's Growth Factors

Quite distinct from the use of ideologies are certain factors, which determine the election strategies of different parties on the occasion of elections. Ideologies are generally too complex for the voters who are generally disinterested in ideologies. Their main concern is the realization of tangible benefits and the reduction of their existing problems. This kind of awareness among the voters in India is of recent origin but there is no doubt about the increasing awareness of benefits to be realized through elections. The attitudes emanating from a 'market situation' and the position of 'bargaining' in the electoral field is not fully established yet. But there is no doubt of an increasing tendency in that direction. The most important factor that has contributed toward such awareness is the growth of a group consciousness. The development of a group consciousness has been rapid and all pervasive and its effect on electoral behavior has become more decisive than before.

This study has taken five factors in account for explaining growth of BJP. These are as follows. First one is changing social base, which includes caste and religious factor. Second factor is organizational forte and leadership, the third factors is the communal factor. The fourth factor is coalition strategies and election campaign and the fifth factor is anti-Congressism. There is no specific pattern of the effect of these factors. They have varied at national and regional level. These factors have also at time increased or reduced the effect of each other. The wave of anti-Congressism paid dividends when the opposition parties showed unity and formed coalition. Anti-Congressism was otherwise more effective for BJP where third group was not present to split anti-Congress(i) votes. Similarly, the communal appeal was more effective when proper organizational machinery was there to carry propaganda but at times when anti-incumbency effect operated, the communal appeal lost its edge.

In 1989 whole of the country has a wave against Congress(i) but this wave had no effect in south India. No one issue has been important in all the elections but a mix of most of the factors have worked, with one at focus one time and another at another time. The other factors have remained important too but at periphery. Like in 1991 focus was on caste and religion, 1996 and 1998 on leadership and stability and in

1999 it was on ability to form coalition. Some immediate issues like that of Kargil war or onion price have also shown a dramatic effect.

## 1. Social Base

In political arena, the ultimate expression of the plural character of Indian society was a multi-party system. A stable multi-party system is based on an effective linkage between social cleavages and political parties.<sup>47</sup> The nature of the party system typically follows the complexity of social cleavages. Political systems with the first-past-the-post system, where social class constitutes the main cleavage, tend to develop two-party systems. India's multi-party system exhibits the effects of multiple cleavages, as we shall see in <Table 4-1>, and political parties. The Congress(I), occupying the ideological center of Indian politics cutting into all social cleavages. Parties of the left, such as the Communists and social democratic left, such as the National Front, tend to get more support from the lower social classes, whereas parties of the right, such as the BJP, get more support from the upper social groups. However, religion, at the heart of the controversy about the secular credentials of the states in India, divides the electorate into those who are for a closer relationship between Hinduism and the state, and others, who wish to retain the wall of separation between religion and the state, that Jawaharlal Nehru at the head of the Congress party had drawn on as the basis of India's institutions during the first phase of the party system.<sup>48</sup> On this issue, the BJP finds itself closely identified with a strong 'Hindu' position, as compared to the National Front and the Left Front, who have allied themselves on a 'secular' agenda. One faction of the Congress(I) would like to count itself as a member of the secular, but, keeping to its centrist character, the party itself tends to be ambiguous on the issue. The election of last decade to Lok Sabha produced the best result for the BJP, considered to the main symbol of Hindu nationalism. The data presented in <Table 4-1> reveal the strong support it enjoys among the more educated, urban, affluent and younger voters.

Since in 1989, the election was being fought on issue of corruption and performance of government so people voted for change. Among the age group of 18

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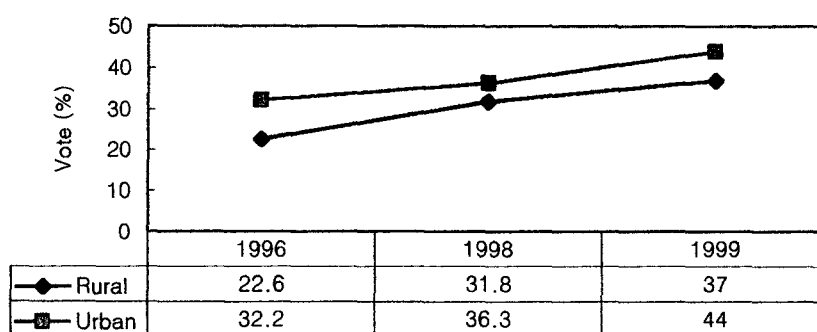
<sup>47</sup> Subrata K. Mitra & V. B. Singh, *Democracy and Social Change in India*, Sage (New Delhi), 1999, p. 132.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 133.

t0 21, BJP and Janata Dal got maximum number of votes<sup>49</sup>. Among them also BJP got more youth votes owing to its earlier base in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, etc. It was in alliance with National Front, so it enjoyed the support of V. P. Singh's saintly and honest image too. Even before BJP has enjoyed support among trading community and in urban areas so they could build on this by being in a powerful coalition. This percentage has continuously increased in successive areas. In 1996 graduate and alone supporting BJP 36.7%. In 1998, it increased to 42.8 and in 1999 to 51%.

BJP has also consolidated its base in urban areas. It has retained its old voters and had attracted new voters to due to its strengthened position. In urban areas its support base was 32.6% in 1991, which increased to 36.3% in 1998 and in 1999 it has gone up to 44%. See <Figure 4-1>.

<Figure 4-1>  
Shift in Locality vote for BJP+ (1996-1999)



Since 1989 itself BJP has been raising some type of movement. This dynamism and activism has helped BJP in keeping its youth voter intact. In 1996, it got 27% votes in 1998 38% and in 1999 it got 40% votes. See <Figure 4-2>

<Table 4-1>  
Social Bases of Political Parties (1996 - 1999)

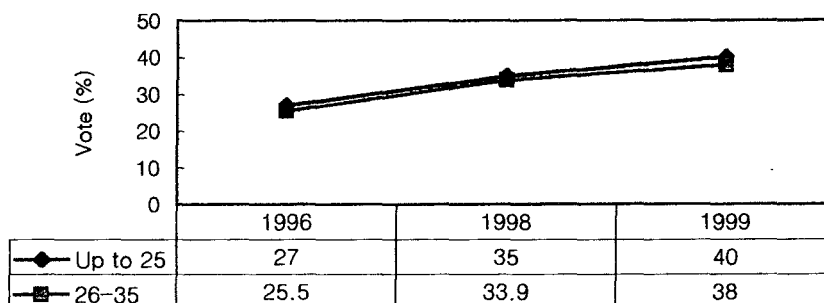
Background Characteristic		1996	1998	1999
All-India Average		22.7	31.5	39.2
Gender	Female	23.0	29.5	34.0
	Male	26.8	36.3	40.0
Locality	Rural	22.6	31.8	37.0
	Urban	32.2	36.3	44.0
Age	Up to 25	27.0	35.0	40.0

<sup>49</sup> *India Today*, 15 December, 1989.

	26-35	25.5	33.9	38.0
	35-45	25.1	32.4	38.0
	46-55	23.6	32.0	37.0
	56 and above	21.3	29.9	39.0
Education	Illiterate	21.1	28.9	34.0
	Up to 9 th	23.8	34.3	39.0
	Matric/+2	31.3	36.5	48.0
	Graduate and above	36.7	42.5	51.0
Caste	Scheduled Caste	14.4	20.9	22.0
	Scheduled Tribe	19.0	25.6	27.0
	OBC	23.6	34.6	43.0
	Upper Caste	33.6	38.5	60.0
Religion	Hindu	28.9	37.4	49.5
	Muslim	3.1	6.8	13.0
	Christian	3.0	9.1	24.0
	Sikh	14.3	39.8	53.0
Economic Class	Very poor	16.1	27.1	30.0
	Poor	23.1	31.8	38.0
	Middle	31.1	37.3	45.0
	Upper	40.1	38.9	55.5

Source: Yogendra Yadav, 'The BJP's New Social Bloc', *Frontline* (Madras), November 19, 1999 and Subrata K. Mitra & V. B. Singh, *Democracy and Social Change in India: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the National Electorate*, Sage (New Delhi), 1999.

<Figure 4-2>  
Shift in young age vote for BJP+ (1996-1999)



(1) Caste Factor

This phenomenal growth in the influence of caste has been produced by the awareness of the 'weight' of numbers' of particular castes. In every electoral constituency the number of persons belonging to particular castes has become a decisive factor in the conduct of elections. Every party today takes into consideration the weight of numbers for every election area and the selection of candidates is determined by the caste factor. It is important to state here that the importance given to caste is not of recent origin. Even during the days of the first general elections caste has played a decisive role in the marking out of the electoral constituencies and the official nomination of candidates by political parties. But in the early stages the caste consciousness among the voters was rudimentary. Today it is all enveloping. During the first two decades after independence the use of 'caste' for electoral purposes was still in a developing stage and its influence was marginal. But since 1967 its development has been most outstanding. Caste has become more important than money for harnessing electoral support. Various parties who proclaimed a general concern for the poor actually based their concern for the backward castes and the exploited sections of the population who were, again, members of particular castes who came to be given the name of the Dalit castes. By 1989, this magnification of caste differences reached a final culminating point when the government led by V. P. Singh announced the adoption of the Mandal Commission Report transformed the whole situation and caste became the most important criteria for the entire mechanics of electoral behavior. The upper cast Hindus resented this announcement, resulting in the violent outbursts at several place. In Delhi, a student even immolated himself. The BJP saw in it an attempt by V. P. Singh to divide BJP's carefully consolidated Hindu vote bank. The Mandal Report served the function of creating a rift between the forward and backward castes.

Mandal Commission provided reservations for OBCs who are more than 50% of the Indian population. Seeing the voting capacity of this block no party dared to oppose Mandal. People (especially upper caste) were very angry with V. P. Singh for sudden implementation of Mandal and a strong anti-Mandal agitation was going on BJP selected a tactical move, it kept a low profile on Mandal and started its Mandir campaign. L. K. Advani started his Rath Yatra for Ayodhya and when he was stopped, BJP withdraw support ensuring end of V. P. Singh government. This fulfilled the wishes of upper caste people who were not much interested in how but wanted to see end of BJP.

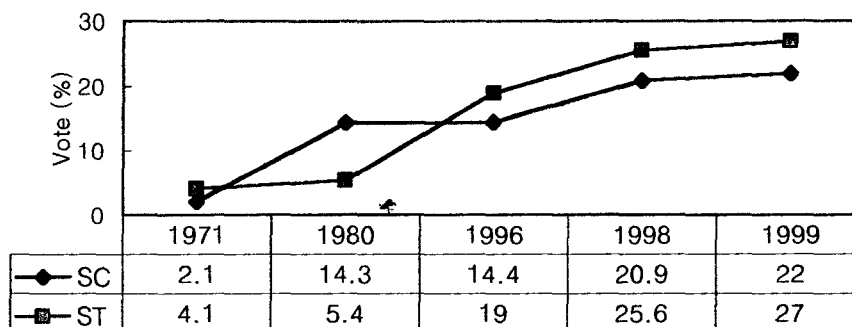
In 1991 election manifesto, all parties showed commitment towards Mandal Commission but BJP added a rider to its commitment, in its manifesto. It said that any

reservation policy should also promote 'social harmony'. Moreover, even without mentioning the term 'economic criteria', the BJP has stated its decision to start a chain of first class residential schools for poor children of all castes. It also promised reservations to upper caste on economic basis. The manifesto of BJP 'Pledged to the socio-economic uplift of other backward castes, particularly the more backward among them; reservation policy as an instrument of social justice and for promoting social harmony; reservation for OBCs broadly on the basis of the Mandal Commission report, with preference to the poorer among them; reservation for people of other castes on the basis of their economic condition; to energetically enforce anti-untouchability laws' a financial agency to meet the credit needs of SC/ST; to fill up promptly the shortfalls in jobs reserved for SC/ST; to protect SC/ST from exploitation and indebtedness'. So in this way when caste divisions were taking place, BJP has shown its tilt in favour of upper caste and the response of these sections to BJP is one of the important reason for its rise in 1991 to a position of prominence. In 1989, it got 85 seats with the support of National front in 1991 it got 120 seats nearly alone.

## (2) Caste in Elections

In 1989, BJP has better support of upper caste. This support got more consolidation in its favour in 1991 elections due to BJP's position on Mandal. A clear evidence of this is that in spite of Rajiv Gandhi's assassination minimum shift occurred in favour of Congress(I) in upper caste votes. Over all swing was of 9%. In Muslim it was 18.3%, in Dalit 11.9%, in Backward caste 10.7% but in upper caste it was only 1.9%.<sup>50</sup> See <Figure 4-3>.

<Figure 4-3>  
Shift in SC/ST vote for BJP+ (1971-1999)

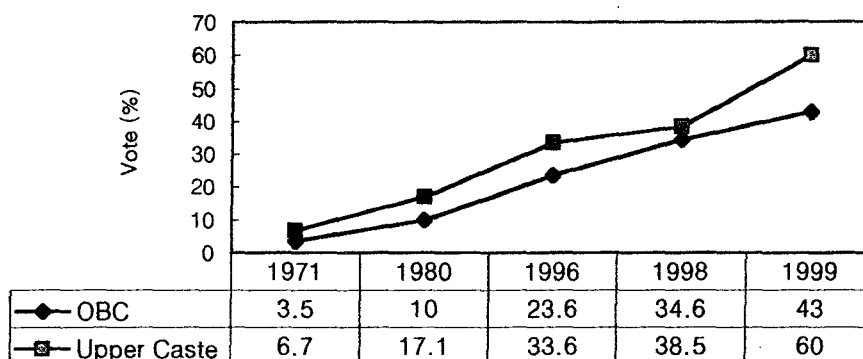


<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 15 July, 1991.

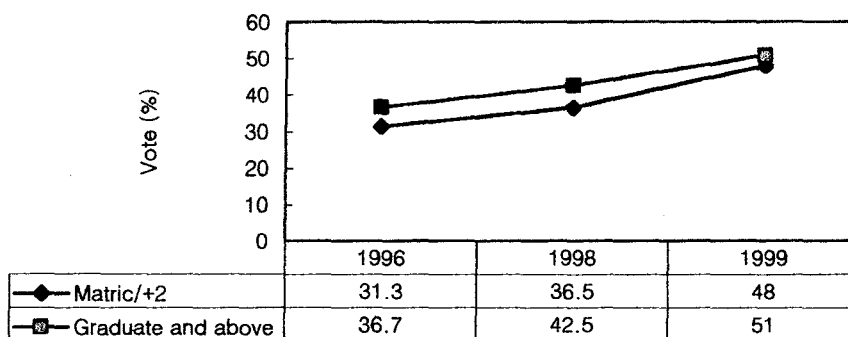


In 1996, BJP alliance got 33.6% votes of upper caste, in 1998 38.5% and in 1999 it got around 60%. (See <Figure 4-4>) The other data also supports this view. Since class and caste overlap in India. So similar trend is true about education. We find maximum support of BJP among graduates in <Figure 4-5>. The all India average of BJP and alliance were 22.7% in 1996, 31.5% in 1998 and 39.2% in 1999. It was 36.7% in 1996, 42.5% in 1998 and 51% in 1999. Similarly in upper economic class it got maximum support which was 40.1% in 1996, 38.9% in 1998 and 55.5% in 1999 (See <Figure 4-6>). <Table 4-1> also show that BJP enjoys better support among men. It got 26.8% in 1996, 36.3% in 1998 and 40% in 1999. See <Figure 4-7>. The reason was this seems to be less vote turnout among the female voters of BJP supports. It is of common knowledge that the upper caste and upper class women do not come out for vote in large numbers.

<Figure 4-4>  
Shift in OBC and Upper Caste vote for BJP+ (1971-1999)



<Figure 4-5>  
Shift in educated group vote for BJP+ (1996-1999)

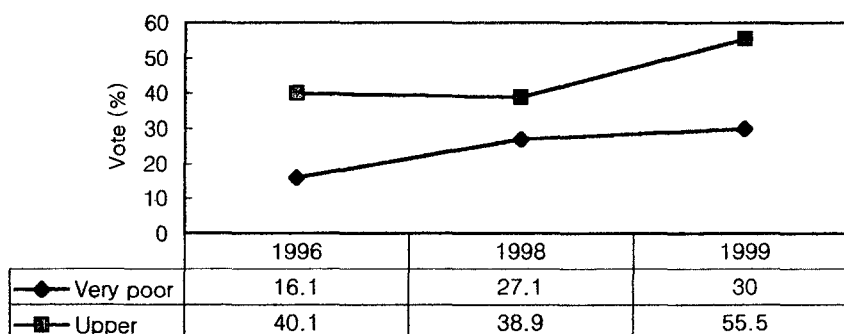


The <Table 4-1> shows sizeable increase in BJP and allies vote share among

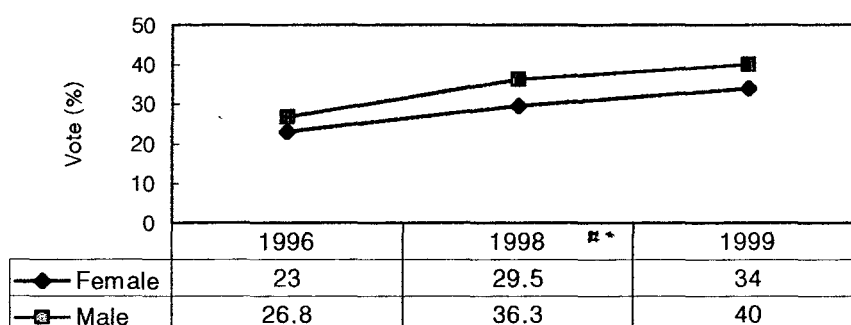
Dalits, backwards and even Muslim, which is 13% in 1999 polls. See <Figure 4-3> and <Figure 4-6>. The psephologists like Yogendra Yadav have analyzed it. They argue that this growth is due to the intra caste differences and increase done by BJP allies. BJP has got Dalit votes because of allies like Ram Vilas Paswan, and DMK. It got Muslim support because of allies like Samata Party, DMK, Trinmool Congress and Telegu Desam.

The intra caste struggles of leadership has created differences among the leaders of same caste and one set of leaders have always chosen to remain in the opposite camp of another set of leaders. The case of Laloo Yadav, Neelish Kumar and Ram Vilas Paswan is perfect example of it. We find the latter two leaders' main concern as anti-Lalooism, so they have chosen to back BJP, the party most clearly posed against Laloo Yadav's Rasthya Janata Dal.

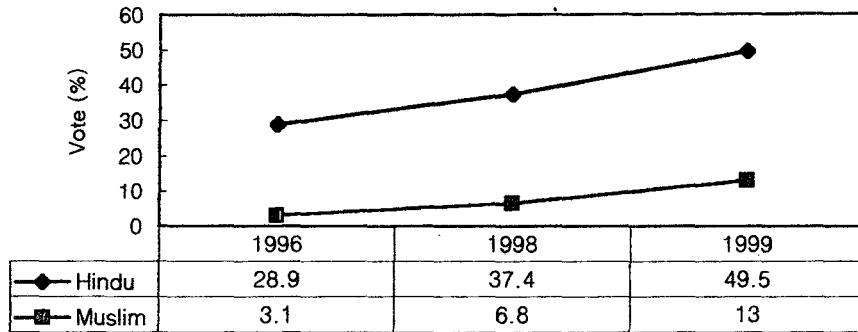
<Figure 4-6>  
Shift in economic class vote for BJP+ (1996-1999)



<Figure 4-7>  
Shift in gender vote for BJP+ (1996-1999)



<Figure 4-8>  
Shift in Hindu and Muslim vote for BJP+ (1996-1999)



### (3) Religious Factor

Political party's extension of their power is also dependent upon a religious consciousness, which is utilized by several political parties. Every political party denounces the use of religion for politics but in practice every political party proclaims that it stands for the protection of religious minorities. Protection of religious minorities become a general proclamation of safe guarding the interest of religious minorities which include the Muslims, the Sikhs, and the Christians and also the other minor religious group which may be not politically important. The most important religious groups are the Muslims and the Sikhs. The Christians do not matter in the general all India context although they are important in local areas. In practice, protection of minorities is the basic concern of all political parties for securing their votes.

The most crucial vote is the voting strength of Muslims, which very often determines the strength is now referred to as a 'vote-bank' and Muslim constitute the decisive vote bank which all leading political parties endeavour to secure<sup>51</sup>. In this effort, the BJP is generally segregated as being a Hindu communal party whereas all other leading parties such as the Congress(I), the CPI, the CPM and other parties emerging from the former socialist parties do not proclaim themselves as protectors of Hindu interests. Even the regional parties and other state parties act in the same way. Without going into the background of communal politics, it is enough to point out the main features in the inter-play of political forces at the present time.

<sup>51</sup> The Muslim are the second largest religious community in India, constituting nearly 12% of the population. In a democratic polity, a minority community of this size cannot be ignored.

The awareness of the crucial nature of the Muslim vote has compelled all leading parties to give due regard to the size of the Muslim vote or the Muslim vote bank in order to increase their number in various legislatures. On the other hand, the BJP claims itself to be only secular party in the proper sense. It proclaims the adoption of positive secularism by giving importance to all religious groups on the basis of equality<sup>52</sup>. It indicates that secularism proclaimed by other parties is partial and pseudo-secularism which disregards the interests of the Hindus.

The BJP proclaims the equality of all religions and tolerance of all religious groups. It also upholds the basic moral values contained in all religions should form the integral part of the Indian culture. Any separate identity of my religion which considers itself to be different from the integral Indian culture is not secular in the true sense. On this basis the BJP regards itself as committed to 'Sarva Dharma Samabhava' which implies the equality of all religions. It is on this basis that the members of the majority and the minority religious groups have to be treated equally, and no special protection or privilege would accrue for the members of minority religious groups. It is on this ground that the BJP becomes distinguishable from the Congress(I), the JD and the left parties who support special protection and privileges for religious minorities. Thus, religious consciousness becomes manipulated by those political parties who aim at appeasing the religious minorities for the purpose of obtaining their political support. The BJP in spite of its proclamations of religious equality and equal treatment of the members of all religious groups, becomes singled out as being 'non-secular'.<sup>53</sup>

## 2. Organizational Forte and Leadership

### (1) BJP's Organization

BJP has succeeded to the earlier BJS which had already established an all India organization. The BJP is organized much on the same pattern as established by the Congress party and it has two distinct levels of organization, namely the national or the all India level and the state level. Its organization is generally tightly knit and the party

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<sup>52</sup> The BJP followed the other path of consolidating the non-Muslim votes by exploiting the religious sentiments of the religious the majority community on issues such as Ayodhya dispute, Article 370, and the demand for Uniform Civil Code. It also challenged the secular policy of the Congress(I) by calling it 'pseudo-secular'.

<sup>53</sup> S. D. Singh, *Ibid.*, pp. 215.

is able to mobilize electoral support by using its distinct political ideology and a highly disciplined cadre of members. In recent elections it has gained widely in acquiring political and electoral support.<sup>54</sup> The BJP has its organizational wings in almost all section of people. It has a youth wing, it has a Kissan (Farmers) wing, traders wing, women wing. But the main strength of BJP comes from it being itself wing of RSS. Though it claims distinct identity but their proximity is quite clear.

Sunder Singh Bhandari, BJP Vice-President, began with a neat tripartite disjunction. The BJP is 'political', the VHP 'social', and the RSS 'organizational', and each is independent in its own domain. The distinction quickly broke as he went on to add that all three were 'nationalist, and all were guided by a culture, which was promptly equated with the Hindu ethos. Bhandari has been in the RSS since 1937, and belongs to the original batch of cadres (along with Deen Dayal Upadhyay, Vajpayee, and Advani) sent by Golwalkar in 1951 to start the BJS.<sup>55</sup>

Before we go any further, let us take a good look at the history and ideology of the RSS and its relationship with the BJP.

The RSS was founded in the year 1924 by Hedgewar of Nagpur. Hedgewar was influenced by the power and splendour attained by the Peshwas, the Brahmin rulers of Maharashtra in different parts of India in the 18th century. His aim was to establish the Maharashtrian – Brahmin supremacy in the country by strongly mobilizing the Hindu masses. He greatly admired the courage of Shivaji in his relentless fight against the Moghuls. This resulted in setting up the Hindu masses against Muslims, Hedgewar propagated the revival and glorification of the Hindu culture and the establishment of Hindu Rashtra.<sup>56</sup> Hedgewar was succeeded in 1940 by Golwalkar, affectionately known to his followers as 'Guruji – the indomitable'. Golwalkar imparted military training to its followers.<sup>57</sup>

Suspected by the government of India that the RSS was responsible for the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, the RSS was declared unlawful by the government of India. The ban against the Sangh was lifted in 1949 on the assurance given by Golwalkar that the Sangh would not take part in politics and confine themselves to cultural activities.

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<sup>54</sup> S. D. Singh, *Ibid.*, 203.

<sup>55</sup> Tapan Basu, Pradip Datta and Sumit Sarkar, *Khaki Shorts and Saffron Flags: A Critique of the Hindu Right*, Orient Longman (New Delhi), 1993, pp. 47–48.

<sup>56</sup> Between "Hindu Rashtra" and "Hindu Raj", the difference is small but significant. Hindu Rashtra means 'a state having a Hindu character', Hindu Raj means 'rulership of the Hindus'. Koenraad Elst, *The Saffron Swastika: The Notion of 'Hindu Fascism'*, Voice of India (New Delhi), 2001, p. 661.

<sup>57</sup> V. Henry Devadas, *Ibid.*, p. 18.

The RSS and other organizations with similar ideologies, together cover almost all the sections of Indian citizens. They claim to be distinct but their organic link can be identified with their overlapping membership. Mr. Giriraj Kishore and Mr. Chinmayanand who are senior VHP leaders are Members of Parliament of BJP. Mr. Vinay Katiyar the head of 'Bajrang Dal', youth wing of VHP, is also a BJP's Member of Parliament.

Most of the leaders of BJP including Mr. Advani, Mr. Vajpayee and M. M. Joshi has been active RSS cadres and most of the BJP leaders have been leaders of ABVP during their student life. Mr. Arun Jetily and Mr. Vijay Goel ex-leader of ABVP Delhi university are also Members of Parliament of BJP. In 1980 when BJP was forced to take position about RSS, it decided to quit Janata Party. The main leader of BJP, Mr Vajpayee wrote an article in 1995 in 'The Organizer', by the title 'RSS is ms soul' in which he explained his association with RSS. These different organization maintain distinction but practically all of them mobilize support for BJP as a sister organization or as political wing of RSS.

C. P. Bhambrri states on the relationship between the RSS and the BJP: "Indians have opted for a democracy where they are governed by elected leaders who have considerable autonomy to take political decisions. The BJP is an exception to this rule. The Sants and Sadhus, the Singhals and RSS Sarsanghchalaks are more important than the political wing of the BJP and their agenda is clear: opposition to the secular democratic state of India as it exists now. For them, politics is a tool to convert India into a Brahminical Hindu Rajya. This is the real face of the BJP. Let us not forget it."<sup>58</sup>

The different organizations which provide organizational strength to BJP are as follows. The **Rashtriya Sevika Samiti**, The women wing of RSS formed in 1936 by Shrimati Laxmi Bai Kelker (mausiji) after consulting Dr. Hedgewar. It organizes shaka for women. **Akhil Bharatiya Vidyarthi Parishad** is the students organization and helps in building support base of BJP and RSS among students. Vanvasi Kalyan ashram is an organization which works among the tribal people to connect them with the Sangh Parivar. **Bharatiya Majdoor Sangh** is the works organization of Sangh Parivar. It was formed in 1955 by Dattopant Thengdi, a senior pracharak of Sangh. It provides opportunity to Sangh to intervene in works' politics. **Vidya Bharti** is one organization which runs school and through it ideological indoctrination and control on youths is attempted since childhood only. **Bharat Vikas Parishad** is an organization which involves entrepreneurs and well off section of the society. VHP was established in 1964. It claims to unite and purify Hindus but in last decade it has been politically very important and has provide solid support to BJP. **Akhil Bharatiya Sahitya Parishad** is an

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<sup>58</sup> *Sunday Times of India*, April 1, 1998.

organization of scholarly personalities at ensures the availability of literature, supportive to RSS, BJP and VHP. **Bhartiya Kissan Union**, is an organization to look into farmers interest and ensure mobilization among them. **Rashtriya Sikh Sangat**, organizes Sikhs under banner of Hinduism. **Swadeshi Jagaran Manch**, an organization which focused an use and encouragement to Indian good and industry and opposes liberalization and globalization. These are many other organization like **Akhil Bhartiya Adhivakta Sangh**, **Hindu Jagsan Mach**, **Seva Bharti** etc would provide support to BJP organizationally. Then even these organizations have their own state wings, youth wings and women wing. These provides an effective organizational network to BJP for mobilizing support.

The states like Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajsathan, Orissa, Gujarat and even Bihar where RSS and its different supportive organization were active resulted in providing good support for BJP. Actually, in the 1999 polls, BJP secured 126 of 251 seats, although its bad performance in UP where it bagged only 29 of 85 seats, against 68 of 1989.

But organization alone was not responsible, as in spite of strong RSS base in Kerala, the BJP did not succeeded much because of strong communist organization and some other reasons. The BJP hasn't any seat so far but It has increased its vote sharing.

The availability of proper condition of mobilization also became important. As the disputed site of Ayodhya was in Uttar Pradesh and due to the mishandling of Congress(I), this issue came on agenda, which provided opportunity to RSS, VHP and BJP. Secondly in the Hindi belt Ram is more respected as God and the other areas of the Country have other important Gods. The south Indian states had already had anti-Brahmin movement and the dominance of dalits and OBCs had got established in these areas. During the anti-Brahmin movement, the religious symbols of Brahminical Hinduism were challenged by Hindus itself. Religious ceremonies were conducted without Brahmins and even Ravana (demon whom Rama killed) was worshipped, as the God of downtrodden. These different organization of RSS family claim their different identity and concentrate on one specific issue or theme. So when BJP does something against their issue, they even temporarily agitate against BJP. Thus they stop people going away from RSS fold to other ideology supportive groups. And when election come, all these organizations become active and start supporting BJP by reducing dissatisfaction of people by giving different reason. These organizations also provide lot of manpower during election.

<Figure 4-9> RSS Organizational Chart<sup>59</sup>

- I. Sarsanghachalak.
- II. Kendriya Karyakari Mandal (Central Working Committee).
  - A. General Secretary.
    - 1. Assistant General Secretary.
  - B. Karyalaya Pramukh (Office Secretary) – Responsible for correspondence and expenditure of funds.
  - C. Zonal Joint Secretaries.
  - D. Programme chairmen.
    - 1. Prachar Pramukh – responsible for recruitment and placement of Pracharaks.
    - 2. Shararik Shikshan – arranges physical exercises at Shakha and camps.
    - 3. Boudhik Pramukh – determines songs to learn, books to be read, topics at shakha and baudhik
    - 4. Nidhi Pramukh – arranges for collection of funds at Guru Dakshina.
    - 5. Vyavastha Pramukh – co-ordinator of activities.
- III. Akil Bharatiya Pratinidhi Sabha (All-India Representative Assembly). This meets once a month in Nagpur. Resolutions are discussed and voted by the Sabha. Members are elected by Swayamsevakas over 18.
- IV. Kshetra (Zone)
  - A. Pracharak
- V. Prant (State)
  - A. Sanghchalak
  - B. Karyavah
  - C. Pracharak
  - D. D. committee
  - E. Pratinidhi Sabha
- VI. Vibhag (Division)
  - A. Sanghchalak
  - B. Karyavah
  - C. Pracharak
  - D. Committee
- VII. Zila (District)
  - A. Sanghchalak
  - B. Karyavah
  - C. Pracharak
  - D. Committee
- VIII. Nagar (City)
  - A. Sanghchalak
  - B. Karyavah
  - C. Pracharak
  - D. Committee
- IX. Mandal (Neighbourhood)
  - A. Karyavah

<sup>59</sup> K. Jayaprasad, *RSS and Hindu Nationalism: Inroads in a Leftist Stronghold*, Deep & Deep Publications (New Delhi), 1995, p. 364.



- B. Committee
- X. Shakha
  - A. Karyavah
  - B. Mukhya Shikshak
  - C. Shikshak
  - D. Gatanayak

## (2) BJP's Leadership

Much more than the organization of parties, the personality of the party leaders has determined their viability to a very large extent.<sup>60</sup> The general mass of people are not affected by ideologies or even election manifestoes of the various parties in any way which could be described as crucial in the determination of their electoral performance. But they are definitely influenced by the personality of the party leaders. The people generally recognize particular leaders as representing their interest and as a person who would work for realizing their interest. Such recognition of party leaders is to a large extent subjective and is derived from some emotional attachment. It is seldom based on any analytical understanding of ideologies and manifestoes. Such emotional attachment may be the product of a historical development, as in the case of the leaders of the national movement or it may be based on charismatic appeal of their personality. This has been generally true of the leader of the Congress party as they emerged out of the national movement into an era of national freedom. Mahatma Gandhi, Jawaharlal Nehru, Indira Gandhi, Rajive Gandhi even Sonia Gandhi's had this kind of charismatic appeal.

The appeal favored Congress(I) a lot in earlier days but not it seems favoring BJP. The recent decade produced many influential leaders but national stature was attained by only few and Mr. Vajpayee proved to be the leading one. Mr. Vajpayee has a five decade career as a politician, and Mrs. Sonia Gandhi was relatively inexperienced. The third major group i. e., the third front has no identified leader for the top job i. e., Prime Minister. So party projected Vajpayee and the latter was successful increasing support base of BJP on the basing of his liberal image his speech delivery etc. Consistently criticizing the Congress(I) for promoting a personality cult BJP is today doing the same without batting an eyelid. The videshi versus swadeshi slogan of the BJP is design to emphasis Vajpayee's five decades of public life in congrast to Sonia Gandhi's relative

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<sup>60</sup> S. D. Singh, *Ibid.*, p. 205.

inexperience.<sup>61</sup>

The advertisements given in various newspapers clearly show the importance of the leader. The BJP advertisement made appeal like 'Vote for the leader you can trust in war. In peace', 'proven experience or unproven inexperience? Whom should you trust to guide India in these perilous times.' The appeal made by Congress(I) clearly showed its defensiveness in recent election. It was comparing Congress(I) and BJP, but BJP was comparing Vajpayee and Sonia Gandhi because in this comparison Vajpayee had a clear edge.<sup>62</sup> Advani in his own words expressed the importance of Vajpayee leadership. He said that Vajpayee had emerged as Prime Minister 'without a peer'; he 'has won the confidence of all sections. He has succeeded in his own style – without sweating out on the small stuff and by focusing on larger issues by consensus and consultation.'<sup>63</sup>

### 3. Communal Factor

#### (1) Communalism in India

Communalism, in the Indian context, has mainly been used to describe the tensions between the Hindus and the Muslims, the former being the majority, and the latter a minority.<sup>64</sup> The British policy of 'divide and rule' led to the formation of communal identities. The rulers allowed "language and ethnicity insulations to grow so as to keep the people divided. The epigenetic seat of central power had a wider knowledge base that covered all the sub-systems or the peripheries."<sup>65</sup> Introduction of electoral politics as part of the process of democratization further cemented the process and helped in making communal sentiments into a sort of 'ism'. It is for this reason that some scholars consider communalism as an outgrowth of religious and cultural differences between the Hindus and Muslim.<sup>66</sup>

Most authors agree that communalism as an ideology prevails only when two or

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<sup>61</sup> R. N. Sharma, Y. K. Sharma & R. K. Sharma, *India Votes Again: Maneuvering Millenniums Mandate*, Shubhi (Delhi), 2000, p. 34.

<sup>62</sup> Yogesh Atal, *Ibid.*, p. 295.

<sup>63</sup> See, *Ibid.*, p. 163.

<sup>64</sup> Harish Sharma, *Communal Angle in Indian Politics*, Rawat (Jaipur), 2000, p. 26.

<sup>65</sup> Yogesh Atal, *Dynamics of Nation Building: Communities in Crisis Situations*, Vol. II, UNESCO/RUSHSAP (Bangkok), 1988, pp. 8-9.

<sup>66</sup> Harish Sharma, *Ibid.*, p. 27.

more communities become 'negatively oriented' to each other. G. R Thursby feels that the two Communities adopt different interpretations of history to express their sense of loss and a feeling of being under threat. The Hindu feeling is summed up as a 'dying race', and the Muslim feeling as 'backwardness'. The members of the community take actions to preserve and protect their identity and take a confrontationist *vis vis-à-vis* the other group.<sup>67</sup> Humayun Kabir believed that in a plural and democratic society communalism is inevitable because of clash of interests between minority groups and the majority community.<sup>68</sup>

A number of writers consider communalism as opposed to secularism. They treat communalism as a negative connotation of secularism implying thereby that what is communal is not secular and what is secular is non-communal. Secularism, by contrast, is defined in terms of communal harmony between Hindus and Muslim in India.<sup>69</sup>

Zebnab Bano regards communalism as essentially a political phenomenon. She believes that "the outcome of communalism in the form of group prejudices, communal contradiction, tensions and riots is due to the struggle for control over the resources of power. Communalism's roots are deep in economic power and domination".<sup>70</sup> And Asghar Ali Engineer considers communalism as a manifestation of the conflicts of the elite of the community and strategy to protect their class interests. However, Rasheeduddin Khan has a different view about communalism. He does not like to equate it with either religion or religiosity. According to him, "it is a process of demeaning religion for narrow and expedient power politics. It is exploitation of religiosity for subverting and fragmenting national identity. Adherence to religion, and religious system is not communalism; exploitation of it is communalism. Using a religious community against other communities and against nations is communalism"<sup>71</sup> Paradeep Nayak believes that communalism should be perceived as a state of consciousness and a strategy of mobilization of a community for a political purpose to form a political community out of religious issues.<sup>72</sup>

Broadly speaking, the phenomenon of communalism has come to be associated

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<sup>67</sup> G. R. Thursby, *Hindu-Muslim Relations in British India: A Study of Controversy, Conflict and Communal Movement in Northern India 1923-1928*, E. J. Brill (Leiden), 1975, p. 2.

<sup>68</sup> Humayun Kabir, *Minorities in a Democracy*, K. L. Mukhopadhyay (Calcutta), 1968, p.6.

<sup>69</sup> Harish Sharma, *Ibid.*, p. 30.

<sup>70</sup> Zenab Banu, 'A Political Scientist's View of Communalism', in Asghar Ali Engineer and Moin Shakir ed., *Communalism in India*, Ajanta Publications (Delhi), 1985, p. 80.

<sup>71</sup> Rasheeduddin Khan, *Bewildered India: Identity, Pluralism, Discord*, Har Anand Publication (Delhi), 1994, p. 202.

<sup>72</sup> Pradeep Nayak, *The Politics of Ayodhya Dispute: Rise of Communalism and Future Voting Behaviour*, Commonwealth Publishers (New Delhi), 1993. p. 13.

with the strategy of political mobilization usually perpetuated by the various political parties in their quest for political power. It is a different issue altogether that BJP has gone to a greater extent in using this strategy of political mobilization which has yielded significant political dividends in course of time, whereas Congress(I) have used communal tactics for perpetuation of their political power.<sup>73</sup>

## (2) BJP and Communalism

Ever since 1952, almost all the political parties attempted to mobilize people along caste and religious lines, but this was initially done covertly, almost in a clandestine manner, as no political party wanted to depart from the solemn pledge of building India as a secular democracy. But the politics of vote overwhelmed this pledge in subsequent elections when communal and regional considerations began to surface. The rulers of the princely states and the feudal chief who lost their special privileges, and the Hindu refugee who fled their homeland that became a part of Pakistan, became vociferous critics of 'secularism'. They viewed it as a garb to protect the interests of the Muslims at their cost. But these criticisms remained more at the verbal level, and the country did not witness any major violent clashes between the communities. The continuous victory of the Congress in elections, making it an unchallenged party in power, made the opposition parties impatient, almost desperate, to change the power equation. 1980's provided a opportunity to BJP to play its communal game because the Congress(I) mishandled the religious issues. The other political group also raised the grievances of others oppressed groups. This stuck on the support base of the Congress(I), which was the minority communities, including the Muslims, and the oppressed groups within the Hindu society, called the 'Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes'. Such reaction clearly got crystallized in the 1980s when the political parties came out openly, and started playing the communal card in the power game. This brought the BJP at center stage of Indian politics. Earlier, the political confrontation was between the Congress and the rest of the political parties. But, in the 1980s, BJP emerged as a major political force challenging the Congress. From just 2 seats in the Lok Sabha in 1984 it succeeded in winning 85 seats in 1989 and 120 in 1991. Its strength in the 11<sup>th</sup>(1996) increased to 161; and in 12<sup>th</sup>(1998) and 13<sup>th</sup>(1999) Lok Sabha it maintained a clear lead of 182 seats emerging as the single largest party breaking the monopoly of the Congress. As a result, communalism in the present context is seen in terms of the rise of BJP, the growth of other communal

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<sup>73</sup> Harish Sharma, *Ibid.*, p. 36.

parties and pressure groups, and the continuation of communal violence, as well as alleged attacks on minority communities. The trend is toward politicization of the communal factor.<sup>74</sup>

While the BJP's emergence was seen, on the one hand, as an attempt to provide a viable national alternative in terms of challenging Congress hegemony, on the other, its aggressive and consistent stand on Ayodhya dispute came to be perceived by various religious and linguistic minorities, especially the Muslim, as a threat to their distinct identity and culture with the assertion of Hindu hegemony.

### (3) Communal Factor in the Election

In the 89 elections, all the major political parties – BJP, Janata Dal and Congress(I) – played the communal card. Due to the polarization caused by the Ayodhya dispute, the BJP had no option but to concentrate on the Hindu vote; other parties, particularly the Congress(I), could not ignore the Hindu vote either; the Muslim vote alone was not enough for it to win. As it turned out, it was not the case of either – or for the secular parties. The voters were landed in a state of uncertainty.<sup>75</sup> In its anxiety to retain the Hindu support with it, the Congress(I) party allowed the VHP to perform the shilanyas ceremony on 9 November 1989 notwithstanding objections from the Muslim organizations, such as the Babri Masjid Action Committee and Muslim League. A feeling developed among the Muslims that the Congress(I) had let them down: their leaders asked them not to vote for the Congress(I). Taking advantage of this, the JP formed the National Front with the left and regional parties and made seat adjustments with the BJP in order to defeat the Congress(I). In the 91 polls, Muslims voted en block for the JD. Secular factors, including the support of the Shahilman and the issue of Bofors pay-off, led to the defeat of the Congress(I). The Congress(I) got 197 seats with 39.5% of votes, BJP got 85 seats with 11.56% of votes whereas the JP got 143 seats with 17.8% of votes. The National Front formed its government. In this election, the Ram factor are smashed the Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh – where BJP showed good performance.

The 1991 elections were held in a communally surcharged atmosphere. In this election, the main issue was Ram Temple at Ayodhya. Although there were some other issues also, i. e., 'stability with change' in the case of the Congress(I) and 'social equity' in case of the National Front-Left Front combine. BJP's main agenda for this

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<sup>74</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 150.

election was: Ram, Roti and Insaf (Ram, bread and justice). However, due to the assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991, in the midst of the election campaign, the BJP changed its election strategy by toning down its aggressive Hindutva campaign and advocating the need for 'political stability'. In these elections, once again, the Congress(I) failed to get an absolute majority. The BJP also did not get absolute majority despite its exploitation of the Ram Temple issue. But, the BJP improved its position by securing 120 seats with 23.5% votes. By 1991, the religious-communal issues had become the predominant factors in Indian politics. That should explain the success of the BJP in winning over most of the Lok Sabha seats from north India, especially, Uttar Pradesh.

For BJP it was an impressive gain but it reached a plateau fairly rapidly. BJP drew important lesson from its failure to secure a majority, both at the polls and in parliament during its 13 day government, when BJP was trying to gain support of other parties. While stressing that the rapid advances made by the party during the period 1989-96 were due largely to ideological factors, party president L. K. Advani admitted the limits of the Hindutva agenda: "But since (the) 1996 elections, it is not the same ideological factors which have sustained our growth. Equally emphatically, it is not these ideological factors, which have brought us new political allies in different states."<sup>76</sup>

So since then the BJP has made an attempt to keep the communal question in cold store for some time. 1998 and 1999 elections Vajpayee and associates consistently emphasized on running successful coalition government in place of communal issues. During the election campaign, Vajpayee consistently skirted the issue of a programme-based coalition. He said, "You have to make a distinction between our allies. There is one set of parties with whom we are already sharing power in (the) states such as the Shiv Sena, Akali Dal and HVP. In addition, we have found some new allies. They are part of a movement that we are leading and if we have to take their support for forming the government, we will have to work out a programme. Controversial issues will not come in the way."<sup>77</sup> But the contradiction, which is emerging is that for the hard-core, ideologically committed cadres of RSS-BJP-VHP combine this can be beyond tolerance because they have worked with more concern with the communal question. As a result the BJP leadership often seen fluctuating on

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<sup>76</sup> Presidential address at the meeting of the National Executive on 11 April 1998, cited in *The Hindu*, 12 April 1998.

<sup>77</sup> Vajpayee quoted in Balveer Arora, 'Regional Aspirations and National Cohesion: Federal Coalitions in the 1998 Lok Sabha Elections', in *West Bengal Political Science Review*, Vol. 1, No. 1-2, January-December, 1998, p. 78.

this issue. Sometime they declare the this is the core issue of our agenda, at other time they say that since we are in a coalition so, this is hot of our immediate concern. The crux of the issue is that communal factor has not remained the central issue in at least BJP's campaign of 1998 and 1999 elections.

## 4. Coalition Strategies and Campaign

### (1) Coalition

Many scholars specially Jafferlot have maintained that the BJP has come to power because it has deftly and intelligently used the strategy of coalition-formation with many secular parties during last four decades and it has been the beneficiary of this strategy of coalition-making with secular leader and secular parties. A few facts may be mentioned to substantiate the argument that BJP has grown in strength on the basis of its capacity to make alliances with others.<sup>78</sup>

First, whenever Indian voters failed to give a clear verdict for a single dominant party either during the Lok Sabha or State Assembly election, the BJS and its present Avatar BJP was available either to participate in the coalition governments or it supported a party of its own choice by remaining out of power. The BJP participated in the Morarji Desai-led government in 1977 and it supported the V. P. Singh-led government in 1989-90 without sharing power with it. The Lok Sabha election of 1996 witnessed that no single party had a majority to form the government at the Centre and the President of India invited A. B. Vajpayee to become the Prime Minister because the BJP had obtained 160 seats and it formed a bloc of 194 with the support of Shiva Sena, Akali Dal, Haryana Vikas Party etc. Vajpayee failed to receive a vote of confidence in the Lok Sabha in 1996 but a point was made that BJP can form coalition government at the Centre and in the States of India. The story was repeated by the BJP in 1998 and 1999 and BJP-led coalition government was formed at the Centre. The BJP has mastered this art of forming coalition and has used them to consistently increase its base. The 1989 coalition was important because V. P. Singh was the hero of that moment and represented an honest and credible leadership. By getting into alliance with it BJP mustered legitimacy for itself too. In 1993, in the state of Uttar Pradesh, BJP supported BSP government of Mayawati, to get BSP support at Centre. Although

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<sup>78</sup> C. P. Bhambhri, *Ibid.*, 2001, p. 50-51.

she was more critical of BJP and both the parties had contradictory base in terms of inter-caste relations. In 1996, BJP made a pact with same BSP for running a coalition in which each of the party was to have a Chief Minister for six months in an year in Uttar Pradesh. The pact could not be successfully followed because of Mayawati's rigid postures after completion of her term.

Second, the Hindu 'joint Family' of RSS, VHP, Bajrang Dal, ABVP have actively participated and supported movement and struggles lauded by opposition parties and opposition leader. This has helped BJP in getting legitimacy. As it actively participated in JP movement and JP hailed RSS by calling its cadres as 'devoted nationalist'. Such legitimizations have helped BJP in ensuring its entry into different coalition and reducing its image of an untouchable.

Third, it has been suggested that the most important asset of the BJP has been its highly committed and motivated RSS cadre. The BJP has gained strength because it has successfully practiced the strategy of coalition making in politics and its devoted and committed cadre has proved a great asset for the survival and expansion of the BJP. The limitation of BJP of not having base all over the country (i. e., it was limited largely to Hindi belt, Maharashtra and Gujarat) has also proved helpful for it in making coalitions. Its main contender, Congress(I) though failed in ensuring electoral success in many state but it has a full fledged organization in these states. So accepting a position of junior partner in an alliance would have hurt its organizational interests and the local/state leaders didn't allow this. BJP easily accepted the position of a junior partner as its organizational expansion was not such that BJP or its leaders could accept a senior partner's role. While many political parties or groups or leaders have effused to enter into any alliance with the BJP, many others have legitimized it by working together with the BJP. BJP has never considered any party or group or leader as 'untouchable in politics' and every such association with them has brought political dividends to the party.

## (2) BJP's Campaign

In 1999 polls, the concern with economic issues, and the sense of urgency about them, is understandable. During the election campaign, the two main formations in the fray – the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) and the Congress(I) – pushed economic issues into the background. The NDA campaigned almost solely on the plank of A. B. Vajpayee's virtues, and the fact that he was "able and stable" prime ministerial material, while the Congress(I) claimed that it alone had in the past provided a stable



government, and it alone could do so again. It was only the Left parties that projected economic issues, both in their manifestoes and in their campaign. However, the Left had accorded primacy to the issue of secularism even while attacking the economic policies of the BJP, which constituted both the continuation and intensification of neo-liberal policies pursued by the earlier Congress(I) and United Front governments. Given this fact and the limited reach of the Left, economic issues did not figure prominently in the election campaign.

It is interesting to note that while the NDA manifesto had spoken of continuing with the reform process, it also claimed that it would "... give it a strong swadeshi thrust... and reappraise and revitalize reforms through giving primacy to removal of unemployment..."

During the election campaign, while the NDA manifesto steered clear of the contentious issues of Ayodhya, Article 370 and a uniform civil code, this was not necessarily true of the actual campaign itself. In communally sensitive constituencies (such as Coimbatore in Tamil Nadu), a clear effort was made by the BJP to consolidate the 'Hindu vote', with a not insignificant degree of success. It would, therefore, appear somewhat naïve to assume that the presence of such parties as the DMK or the TDP would ensure that the dominant partner BJP will abjure communal mobilization and stick to the parameters agreed upon among the NDA partners.

In an important sense, this election has shown that communal mobilization is not always efficacious even in electoral terms. Where clear alternatives to the BJP's communal -plus-neoliberal agenda were present, they have received popular support. The performance of the Left forces in Kerala, West Bengal and Tripura and that of the S.P. and the BSP in UP bear this out. On the other hand, Communal mobilization has helped the BJP win in several constituencies. The political and social forces which seek to fight for a secular and democratic polity will need to keep this complexity in mind, and hence also the need to retain the focus on the three inter-related goals of secularism - social justice and economic equity and self-reliance.

The opposition might have or might not have kept this in mind but BJP has been very sensitive in planning out its campaign. In 1989 election when corruption and anti-Congressism was main issue, BJP remained in the National Front alliance with lot of restraints. But just after elections it speeded its movement for Mandir, which culminated in 'Rath Yatra' of L. K. Advani.

In 1991, seeing the caste and religious tensions at a high, BJP came forward with the unexpected killing of Rajiv Gandhi. BJP changed its strategy for the second phase of election. The strategy was; Delete Rajiv references; Focus on Congress(I)

lack of leadership; Project BJP as the only stable party; Reduce anti-minority tirade.<sup>79</sup> The death of Rajiv Gandhi created a space of a well-accepted leader of Congress(I), National Front also had problem. So in 1996 and 1998 elections BJP brought up Vajpayee at the central focus of their campaign. The slogan of 'Able leader and stable government' took the Centre-stage. This slogan became more meaningful with decline of Congress(I) strength in Lok Sabha furthers and with fractionalization and pre-mature end of the United Front government. So, the main plank of 1998 and 1999 elections was that Vajpayee was the most efficient Prime Minister and BJP the most effective party in running a coalition.

At times the leadership of BJP-RSS-VHP has not even hesitated from making use of false campaign. When Chandra Shekar, the then Prime Minister claimed that only 15 people have died in Kar Sewa at Ayodhya and challenged if there were more, than to name them. Mr. Vishnu Hari Dalmia the President of VHP and Mr. Giri Raj Kishore the vice-President of VHP and Member of Parliament of BJP released a list of 'Martyars' out of which money were found alive. This story was broken by 'Danik Jagran' a hindi newspaper of Uttar Pradesh and it was given a wide coverage in the 11 May to 21 May issue of Frontline, 1991.

So it is clear that the campaign of BJP has been very effective and according to the circumstance, populist needs and the focus of campaign has been very smartly shifted, this has resulted in large dividends to the party.

## 5. Anti-Congressism

Ever since free elections started taking place in India, or rather earlier (in early 20<sup>th</sup> Century itself) only, the Congress Party has dominated the national elections. It formed all the government except between 1977 and 1989-91 till 1996. For long Congress remained synonym with Indian government. The overwhelming dominance of Congress led Rajni Kotari (1964) and Morris-Jones (1978) to describe India as a 'dominant party system' that is a multi-party system in which free competition among parties occurred but in which the Congress party dominated all political action.

Due to dissatisfaction with the Congress policies, which resulted in regional disparities, the forces against Congress started emerging. Under the leadership of Congress, regional aspirations of many groups were not fulfilled. So these groups

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<sup>79</sup> *India today*, 15 June, 1991, p. 114.

started organizing themselves. Many of these issues of opposition were also related with the regional identity of the different groups. These factors resulted in a trend in Indian politics which is known as 'anti-Congressism'. In the post-1989 era this phenomenon has been of a great advantage to BJP.

The single party dominance of Congress broke in 1967 for the first time when 9 States had governments opposed to Congress. The Congress leadership was harsh towards these government by using article 356 of Indian Constitution as and when it got the chance. This attitude strengthened anti-Congressism. The 1977 election was contested on the plank of anti-Congressism only, where all opposition got united. Same was the case in 1989, where the common denominator to be part of National Front Alliance was that the particular party should be opposed to Congress. The post-1989 era (also called as coalition era) has been marked by growth of regional parties. Since, most of these parties have come up opposing Congress(I) and Congress(I) is their main opponent in their States, so it is more convenient for these parties and groups to ally with BJP.

The most clear case is of Andhra Pradesh where owing to its rivalry with Congress(I) the Telegu Desam Party went to BJP's block. Although Chandra Babu Naidu was coordinator of coordinating committee of United Front government in 1996. But he knew that his closeness with Congress(I) would cost him more in State. Due to the issue of Sikh identity and 1984 riots, the Sikh community was angry with Congress, so the Akali Dal in spite of having ideological differences with BJP, decided to become the part of BJP alliance.

In Orissa, too, Congress(I) and Janata Dal were traditional rivals, so the Biju Janta Dal found it more convenient for it to ally with BJP. Similarly, the former leaders of Haryana developed anti-Congress(I) feelings among their supports for a long time. The result is that the opposition block of Congress(I), which is Indian National Lok Dal and Haryana Vikas Party, finds it convenient to get into alliance with BJP.

In Karnataka too, it becomes very difficult for Janata Dal to go with their main opposition Congress(I), so the group of leaders like Ram Krishna Hedge who are the creation of anti-Congressism prefer BJP as their alliance partner. The case of West Bengal is unique in itself. Due to the strong rivalry at State level between Congress(I) and communists, one block of Congress led by Mamata Banerjee preferred to leave Congress(I) and aligned with BJP.

These is another group of parties like some communists and the Samajwadi Party of Uttar Pradesh who have kept distance with BJP but are not ready to align with

Congress(I), especially if they have to offer support to Congress(I). This is because of their strong anti-Congress(I) position since years.

In the past in 1977 and in 1989, the opposition parties aligned with BJP on anti-Congress plank and neglected the communal ideas of its political philosophy. These events have helped BJP in ensuring legitimizations. The same anti-Congressism is also helping BJP in gaining alliance partners, more seats and vote share.

Chapter 6

## Conclusion

The RSS, the main mentor of the BJP and other ideologically similar forces, was formed in 1925. The Sangh Parivar was always a marginal force due to its extremely communal views, it was considered as the 'lunatic fringe' of a section of Hindus. The decade of the 1990's saw a rapid growth of BJP as a political force. These forces could not succeed in 1946-47 when the communal feelings (during partition) were very high. In the elections of 1952 they got just 3 seats. It is surprising that after 40 years of relatively harmonious relations the BJP could play its game, which resulted in its mustering of support and power. So an attempt to study the growth of BJP and factors responsible for it was made.

The BJP got 85 seats in the 1989 election, 120 in the tenth Lok Sabha elections of 1991. Its share in Lok Sabha further increased to 160 seats in 1996. It got 182 seats in 1998 and 1999 polls. It is repeated its performance of 1998, in spite of serious reversal from the Uttar Pradesh, which has maximum number of seats. In the 1991 elections, the main achievement of the BJP was that it projected itself as an 'independent' political force while other parties talked of its isolation. The BJP has formed three governments by 1996, 1998 and 1999. It has had governments in 5 states on its own, which are Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. In many others it has been an alliance partner.

The result of this study makes it evident that fundamental changes have taken place in the party system in India since 1989. The Congress party's dominance is almost over and the BJP has sharply emerged to a position of prominence. The earlier situation, in which there use to be two polls – the Congress(I) block and the non-Congress(I) block, has changed. Now three polls are emerging, especially after 1996, i. e., one of Congress(I), another of the BJP and third one of others with communists and socialists as their core. Among these three polls too, BJP seems leading. The situation in states is different and varies state wise. But one common trend is that in most of the states where third force is non-existent i. e., the contest is bipolar, the Congress(I) is in the struggle. Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Maharashtra

are such States. The strengthening of third force whether it was BJP or other parties has largely harmed the Congress(I) base.

The result of the study shows that BJP's electoral support has grown since the 9<sup>th</sup> general elections. It got 11.56% of the total votes polled. These gains in terms of votes and seats have started with small inroads in northern zone of India, which is constituted by Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh, Chandigarh and Delhi. The specific gains were in Delhi, Uttar Pradesh and Himachal Pradesh. Out of its total 85 seats the BJP got 15 seats from this area, that too from a total of 126 seats. In south zone the BJP has a marginal presence. It got no seat in 1989, from a total of 132 seats. In west zone main existence of BJP was felt. This zone consisted of Goa, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Dadar and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu. This area has total 143 seats and out of its 85 seats 62 came to BJP from this zone, especially from Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra and Rajasthan. These were the States where BJP has presence since earlier and the anti-Congress(I) wave has helped it a lot. In east zone which consisted of north-eastern States and Bihar also BJP's presence was not much. It got 8 seats out of a total 142 seats in 1989 elections. All these came from Bihar. The strong presence of Janata Dal and its other allies didn't allow it to have many seats.

The sharp rise of the BJP begins since 1991. This election was conducted after the sharp polarization on the issue of caste and religion. The BJP's president, L. K. Advani has successfully (in terms of mobilization) carried the Rath Yatra and was arrested in Bihar. So, these events showed their effect and BJP's vote share rose to 20.3% from 11.56%. The main dividends for it came from the northern zone. Out of a total 120 seats BJP increased its share from 15 to 58 seats. The main inroads were made in Uttar Pradesh and Delhi, perhaps this was the effect of Rath Yatra and Mandal. The BJP lost its 5 old seat but gained 48 new ones especially 46 seats in Uttar Pradesh. In south zone too, the first presence of BJP was seen and it got 4 seats in Karnataka and one in Andhra Pradesh. All these were gains for BJP. In west zone, BJP could not repeat its performance. It got 5 seats and lost 12 seats in final tally. It has got 17 new seats but it lost 29 old ones in this region. Anti-establishment vote against State government and polarization of Muslim votes seems to be important as third force has little presence here. In east zone, BJP's performance was quite similar. It lost 2 seats here. But notable thing was that it gained 2 seats in a state like Assam for the first time.

The 1996 polls were historic for BJP. It did not increase its vote share but it increased its 40 seats, and emerged as the single largest party for the first time. Its

over all vote share was 8% less than its nearest rival Congress(I). But it still won because of concentration of its votes in few States only and because of division of secular votes. BJP increased its vote share by 5% the belt of running from Bihar to Karnataka, it lost vote share in coastal areas but this had no consequence on the seats, as it has no seats in coastal areas. In north zone, the BJP kept its performance and increased 5 more seats since 1991. Its tally increased to 63 seats. Most of the gains came from Haryana, where it was not having seats till now. It improved its seats by one seat in Uttar Pradesh and got 52 out of its total 63 seats in this region. In south zone BJP further increased its presence in Karnataka where its tally increased from 5 to 8 seats. Still in most of the state it drew a zero and even allies were also not available to it. The regional parties were with Congress(I) or with United Front. The west zone again provided strength to BJP. It registered a sharp increase of 23 seats in this area. Its tally increased from 50 to 73 seats from 1991. It gained 35 new seats but lost 12 old seats of 1991. It made up its losses of 1991 in Madhya Pradesh and also gained in Maharashtra. In Madhya Pradesh, a section of Congress(I) has dissociated Congress(I) leading to split of Congress(I) votes. In east zone, BJP showed impressive growth for the first time. Its tally increased from 7 seats in 1991 to 19 seats in 1996. The division in Janata Dal has provided new allies to BJP. The Jharkhand Mukti Morch has got discredited in this election and the gains have gone to BJP, especially in southern Bihar. This was the one election in which no specific wave operating. The Congress(I) saw lot of fractionalism and this decline of Congress(I) was seen as an important factor for BJP's growth.

In 1998 elections, the BJP's vote share was 25.5%, i. e., 5% more than its national average of 1996 but it won only 182 seats, which were nearly same to its tally of 1996. But with the strength of allies Shiv Sena, Akali Dal, Biju Janta Dal and TMC, it emerged as the largest group and formed the government at Centre. It continued its growth in north zone. This time it got 73 seats, which were 10 seats more than the last time. It lost some seats in Haryana but gained in Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, with the help of its allies, i. e., Samata Party and Akali Dal. It gained 28 new seats but lost its 10 old seats. In south zone, BJP showed significant growth. Its tally increased from 6 to 20 seats, which means gains of 14 seats from other parties. Keeping the total seat (132) of this zone in mind, 20 seats is a small number but it is important because till this election the BJP's presence in this area was very less. The BJP has entered Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh too. In west zone, which has been a stronger area for BJP since 1989, the BJP suffered losses in 1998. Its tally came down from 73 to 60 in 1998. It suffered a major loss in Maharashtra and Rajasthan. In Maharashtra, Congress(I) was



not divided in 1998 as it was in 1996 rather in this election it consolidated the secular votes by forming an alliance with Samajwadi Party and RPI. In Rajasthan, the third force was not present. Anti-incumbency vote due to non-performance of BJP government in the State also worked in favour of Congress(I). This factor weighed more at regional level than 'able leader and stable government' formula. In east zone, BJP increased its number of seats significantly. In 1996 polls, it got only 19 seats but this increased to 29 seats in 1998 elections. This gain for BJP was especially from Bihar and Orissa where its allies Samata Party and Biju Janta Dal has helped it in increasing seats in Orissa and 2 seats in Bihar. The alliance made by BJP has helped it. The 1998 elections showed though electorally speaking BJP is a strong but a peculiarly vulnerable. Its strength in Lok Sabha increased on the basis of alliances and most of these alliances were self-seeking and opportunistic. Secondly, its success was more based on disunity of its opponents.

In 1999 elections BJP again won 182 seats. The progress shown by it in between 89 and 96 polls has stagnated around 180 since 1996. But still on the basis of the support of its allies BJP won majority in Lok Sabha and formed its government. In north zone, BJP suffered heavy losses in 1998 it won 73, which got reduced to 47. The BJP lost 38 seats and gained 12 new seats. It significantly gained in Haryana due to its alliance in INLD but it lost heavily in Uttar Pradesh due to infighting in party, split of upper caste votes and tactical voting by Muslim community. In south zone, the BJP almost repeated its performance by just losing one seat as compared with 1998. But this time its presence was more scattered. It lost in Karnataka due to a break in its alliance with Ram Krishna Hedge but it gained in Andhra Pradesh due to the help of Telugu Desam. In west zone, which was a stronghold of BJP since long, it again did well. It made up its old losses in Maharashtra due to split in Congress(I) and it gained heavily in Rajasthan due to anger of Jats (supporters of Congress(I)) with Congress(I). So it gained 33 new seats but lost 13 old ones and this resulted in the gain of 7 seats. In eastern region, the gain of BJP continued. It secured 7 more seats and its tally increased from 29 to 36. Again its allies helped in Orissa and Bihar to maintain its performance.

When the reasons for the growth of BJP were located it was formed that BJP has gained some social base, which is one of the causes of its consistent performance. The BJP was urban-based party but it has a limited support, in this period its support grew in urban areas sharply and it almost swept the cities and towns of north India in particular. Its support in rural area also grew but it more relied on urban centers. It

remained a party of appeal for younger generation more, might be because of its appeal to nationalism and its reach among youth since school time itself.

The analysis of its base from caste-class angle shows that it has remained more powerful in upper caste-upper class section of society. The BJP's support comes from the formation of new social bloc. This is formed by the convergence of traditional caste community differences. The rise of BJP has been accompanied by the emergence of this new social group that is defined by an overlap of social and economic privileges. Now, it is not surprising to note that BJP has made support among the more educated section and among males.

This does not mean that BJP draws no support from other sections. The trend is that down the social order more of its support comes on the basis of its allies and it keeps decreasing too as one proceeds down the social order. Such allies are Janta Dal(U), Telugu Desam, DMK, etc. The second most important reason found for growth of BJP was the strong organizational backing of Sangh Parivar and effective and popular leadership. For BJP, lot of political support has been garnered by these supportive organizations. These organizations have shaped up issue, mobilized public and in elections worked hard to ensure votes for BJP. They organize activists since childhood and ideologically indoctrinate them. At times these organization also agitate against BJP and thus limit the debate on the issue within the Sangh Parivar itself. The BJP organization also has many faces - the liberal face (Vajpayee), the hardliner (Advani and Joshi). Who dominates whom is never clarified and according to the situation they are used. The death of Rajiv Gandhi provided an opportunity for emergence of effective national leader and this BJP fulfilled by projecting Vajpayee (a, so called, liberal face), the other parties, for a long time, could not create consensus around anyone for the leaderships of their groups.

One other important factor was BJP's ability to form coalition. It accepted its organizational limitation and accordingly looked for allies. By effectively forming alliance and by diluting its position on political issues according to allies, it has increased its support since 1996. Its limited presence in many parts of the country also enabled in its accepting a junior partners' role and enabled its allies to form alliance because they considered it harmless (regionally) and also it can ensure them share in power at Centre. The Campaign of BJP has been according to the public mood and the emotions of the public. It has not stuck very firmly to even the core issues of its agenda and has accepted to put them back according to the populist needs. This has also helped it in ensuring mobilization. It has fluctuated from pro-upper caste to extreme pro-Dalit positions. One important trend of Indian politics, i. e., anti-

Congressism has also given natural advantage to BJP. This trend has helped BJP by ensuring a division among the opponents of BJP and had stopped them from coming on one platform. Anti-Congressism has provided allies to BJP too. The initial tolerance for BJP's communal agenda by non-Congress parties was shown for the sake of anti-Congressism. Now when the communalism gained strength, then some of these parties have given up anti-Congressism. Anti-Congressism has been of use for BJP specially in State where contest has been bipolar or where Congress(I) was main rival to a third party (non-BJP party).

The analysis shows that for ensuring power at Centre BJP has done all sorts of alliances and compromises (putting back its core agenda at least publicly). The main problem to it is to improve in south zone and east zone. So, it needs to improve in these regions and should maintain its performance in north and west.

If we look at the best performance of BJP without keeping election years in mind, then we find that in Andhra Pradesh, its best was 7 seats in 1999, in Karnataka it scored 13 seats in 1998, in Madhya Pradesh its best was 30 seats in 1996, Assam 2 in 1991 and 1999, Bihar 23 in 1993, Goa 2 in 1999, Gujarat 20 in 1991 and 1999, Haryana 5 in 1999, Himachal Pradesh 3 in 1999, Jammu and Kashmir 2 in 1998 and 1999, Maharashtra 18 seat in 1996, Orissa 9 in 1999, Punjab 3 in 1998, Rajasthan 16 seats in 1999, Tamil Nadu 4 in 1999, Uttar Pradesh 57 in 1998, West Bengal 2 in 1999, Andaman & Nicobar 1 in 1999, Chandigarth 1 in 1998, Dadar & Nagar Haveli 1 in 1998, Daman & Diu 1 in 1998 and Delhi 7 in 1999.

Then we find that if BJP secures its best performance in each state it has ever produced then the total comes to 227 seats. It would still need 44 seats to form a government of its own. First of all repeating its best performance in each state at a time is not easy. Still, if it happens, then also BJP needs expansion in east and south. At both the places, the issues related with regional identity are contradictory with the philosophy of Hindu nationalism.

So, today BJP stands with a dilemma, which is whether, it should go into alliance with regional parties compromising its basic political philosophy or it should expand its own base by following its party line. In the first case it may gain allies but might lose its traditional support base. In the second case, it may have to wait for long to gain power. The BJP's strategies show that it doesn't want to wait long for power. It is to be seen now that how long can it survive by this dilution of its core issues, if it is an ideologically sound and cadre based party.

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