

## A STUDY ON CHANGING DYNAMICS OF REGIONAL AND STATE PARTIES AFTER 2014 LOK SABHA ELECTIONS

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### **Abstract**

Since independence, India's party structure has changed. From a 'one-party dominating' system to unstable coalitions, fragmentation, and 'bipolarization' of regional parties, effective coalition administrations at the centre emerged. Since the previous two general elections, the Indian party system has undergone considerable modifications. The 2014 Lok Sabha election is considered a watershed for these shifts and a 'second dominant party system' by experts. BJP-led NDA won an overwhelming majority in this election, decimating its rivals. Also, the dynamics of regional parties will be studied in light of a possible party system change following the 2014 elections. The declining prominence of state-based and regional parties in national politics and its effects on Indian politics after 2014 elections.

**Keywords:** Changing Dynamics, Regional, State Parties, Lok Sabha, Elections.

### **Introduction**

Political parties are crucial to modern democracy, although their role, organization, and number vary. Any country's party system is determined by its federal or parliamentary political structure. Political and socioeconomic factors have influenced India's party system. After independence, a union-level elected parliament and state legislative assemblies were established up (Ghai, 2002). In a parliamentary system of government, the opposition continually monitors and controls the executive. Since the previous two general elections, the Indian party system has undergone considerable modifications. The 2014 Lok Sabha election is considered a watershed for these shifts and a 'second dominant party system' by experts. BJP-led NDA won an overwhelming majority in this election, decimating its rivals. In future elections, a single party won the majority (Hofmeister, 2011).

### **Lok Sabha Elections 2014 and Formation of the Third Front**

Since the country has had three successful coalition governments since 1999, another was predicted. This time, parties took stances for national elections. As the political war began, these parties' hopes to dominate national politics emerged. After months of meetings and rumours, a Third Front became an option to BJP and Congress. 11 regional and state-based parties resolved to integrate their activities for the next general election at a high-level conference on 5 February 2014. On February 10, leaders of the five parties, including JD(U) supremo Nitish Kumar, CPI(M) General Secretary Prakash Karat, CPI's AB Bardhan, and Forward Bloc's Debabrata Biswas, met in New Delhi at the house of former 'Third Front'

Prime Minister and JD(S) leader HD Deve Gowda. After it, 11 political groups, including left-leaning and regional parties, declared the 'Third Front' (Jaffrelot, 2012).

### **Research Methodology**

Research methods are often analytical, descriptive, and historical in scope. As with every other type of information, the existing one requires prior knowledge. This methodology is utilized to track the development of regional/state political parties at the federal and state levels of government. The evolution of state and regional political parties across states has also been studied using a comparative approach. Regional political party leaders were questioned, and their remarks and responses to a questionnaire were examined and included into the final data set.

Data, facts, and statistics included in the study are drawn from both primary and secondary resources. Statistics from the Election Commission of India (ECI), the Lok Sabha debates, data from the Centre for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS) Data Unit, and the questionnaire responses of regional political party leaders are the key sources of information used in this report. Secondary sources include print media such as books, scholarly journals, and magazine and newspaper articles.

### **Results**

#### **Regional Parties Kept Their Options Open-2014 Lok Sabha Elections**

- Despite launching an unified front with a "democratic, secular, federal, and pro-people" platform, certain regional parties maintained their options open for a post-election cooperation with the congress or BJP. RJD, SP, BSP, and JDU were major North Indian parties. In Bihar, which saw caste mobilization, the RJD merged with Congress while the JD(U) joined the Third Front.
- Ram Vilas Paswan's Lok Jan Shakti Party and the OBC Kushwaha-influenced Rashtriya Lok Samata Party joined the BJP. SP, which alternately controlled Uttar Pradesh for 20 years, did not join the Third Front. In Punjab, BJP ally SAD joined again.
- Regional and state political parties retained 212 seats with the same vote share (46.6% vs. 46.7%), although this election revealed substantial difference among them. Five regional parties got over 3% of the vote.
- Only the three regional parties led by Mamata Banerjee in West Bengal, Jayalalitha in Tamil Nadu, and Biju Patnaik in Orissa made an impact in this election. The north Indian caste-based state parties, SP, BSP, and RJD, were shocked.

### Failure of the Third Front

- The Third Front failed to enter national politics. Like preceding Third Fronts, this one had conflicting priorities and lacked a strategy for security, foreign policy, or the economy.

### Federal Front and Mahagathbandhan: An Attempt to Regain Lost Ground

- Caste-based regional parties in North India aimed to restore its performance after the 2014 Lok Sabha elections by forming a grand alliance. In Bihar Assembly elections, RJD, JD(U), and Congress formed a 'Mahagathbandhan' to oppose the BJP. In Bihar Assembly elections, 'Mahagathbandhan' won big.

### 2019 Lok Sabha Election-Continued Pattern of 2014

- The 2019 Lok Sabha election was another BJP victory. The BJP-led NDA won 349 of 542 contested seats, up 16 from the previous election. Early estimates predicted a bipolar fight between the BJP-led NDA and Mahagathbandhan. In most states, the NDA, Congress-led UPA, and regional parties fought a triangle war.

**Table 1: Regional Parties' Vote Shares and Seats in 2014 and 2019**

Party Name	2014		2019	
	Vote Share <i>(in percentage)</i>	Seats Won	Vote Share <i>(in percentage)</i>	Seats Won
Trinamool Congress*	38.41	34	4.11	22
CPI (M)*	22.71	2	1.77	3
BJD	44.77	20	43.32	12
AIADMK	44.45	37	18.72	1
DMK	23.64	0	33.18	23
TDP	29.36	16	40.19	3
TRS	14.03	11	41.71	9
YSR	28.94	9	49.89	22

Congress				
SP	22.35	5	18.11	5
BSP*	19.63	0	3.67	10
SHS	22.82	18	23.5	18
NCP*	15.04	4	1.4	5
JD(U)	16.04	2	22.26	16
RJD	15.46	4	12.11	0
LJP	6.50	6	8.02	6
SAD	26.37	4	27.76	2

### **Failure of Mahagathbandhan and the Federal Front**

- Uttar Pradesh's Mahagathbandhan fell short. Despite an active and competitive campaign, the alliance's results were similar to 2014. The SP won 5 seats, the BSP 10, and the BJP 62.
- BJP's seat share declined from 71 to 62, while its vote share climbed from 42.63 to 49.6%. SP and BSP's combined vote share fell from 42.2% to 37.3%. SP dropped 4 percentage points, but BSP maintained practically where it was in 2014.

### **2019 Lok Sabha Elections**

- In 2014, the BJP beat the Congress 88% of the time. It won 91% of straight races with regional and caste-based parties, but just 28% versus regionalist parties. In 2019, the BJP replicated its performance and won against the Congress and regional parties.
- It also strengthened its standing against regionalist parties, winning 50% of all direct contests. West Bengal, Telangana, and Odisha were successful.

### **Conclusion**

The regional or state-based political parties' roles have shifted in the previous two elections. Regional and state-based parties are losing power over the national government due to one-party rule. In-depth examination indicates not all regional parties fared equally. Some regional parties have maintained their seats, but their central importance is diminishing. It began in 2014 and got more prominent following the 2019 Lok Sabha elections. From 1998 to 2004, the BJP ruled with an alliance government amid a regionalized political landscape. BJP adopted a more reasonable-accommodating approach to regional diversity to gain power.



As regional parties' importance in national politics declined after 2014, the ruling party's centralizing tendencies emerged.

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