

From the Desk of the Editor-in-Chief

"In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness; in their welfare, his welfare; whatever pleases himself, he shall not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he shall consider as good."

Chanakya

Since independence, India, the world's largest democracy, has experienced not less than three distinct electoral phases or "systems". The first phase, commenced with India's first general election in 1952. It was synonymous with INC hegemony and a deeply fragmented opposition. In 1967, INC suffered a series of devastating electoral losses at the state level, which marked the unraveling of its preeminent era.

The second system started (1967-1989) where INC maintained power in Delhi (with the exception of 1977-1979), but its authority in the states was increasingly challenged by a group of regional, largely caste-based parties.

1989 brought the dawn of the coalition-era politics in Delhi and hence began the third electoral system. This system, which evolved within two and a half decades and prevailed until the present, is built around a series of principles. These core principles include a sharp rise in political competition at the national level and the declining margins of victory in the parliamentary races. The vote share belonging to regional parties has also expanded, while the growth in voter turnout in national elections has halted and the electoral politics has become "federalized."

The National Lok Sabha Elections of 2014 started the era of transformation in the Indian political system. Both the number of candidates and the political parties participating in the elections went up in 2014 and the votes appeared to be concentrated on a relatively small number of core parties.

The world's largest democratic exercise, the Indian general election of 2014 saw nearly 554 million voters who exercised their franchise, selecting 543 members of the parliament from a state of more than 8,000 candidates representing 464 political parties competing across 28 states and seven union territories. The money spent on elections hover around \$5 billion, second only to the 2012 presidential election in the United States. That elevation of Mr. Narendra Modi as Prime Minister of India and the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) victory surprised many analysts, yet the magnitude of the rout and the defeat endured by the incumbent Indian National Congress caught even longtime India watchers off guard. The BJP managed a tally of 282 out of 543 seats in India's lower house of parliament (the Lok Sabha). For the first time, a single party has won a majority in the three decades. The Congress tally, meanwhile, sunk to just 44 seats at their all-time low.

After 2014, the Nation saw many State elections with unpredicted and unprecedented results, specially mentioning the State of Gujarat in Dec. 2017, which was again very close. The marginal win of BJP has surely cast a shadow on the summer of 2019.

Change is the law of nature and the world is changing. ABR is also changing into a new league with indexing and impact factor and the trend of research papers is also changing.

I have an ardent hope that you will enjoy reading the articles in the current issue and will revert with your valuable comments.

Enjoy reading!

Sanjeev Bansal