

# The 2024 Indian Elections and the BJP: Toward a Genuine National Party System?

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**Abstract:** *The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has long been considered a major national party in India, significantly shaping the country's political landscape. However, the 2024 elections further solidify its status as a genuine national party. This status is marked by its widespread presence and electoral success across various regions of India, transcending its earlier strongholds.*

**Keywords:** 2024 Elections; National Presence; Governance; Genuine; Coalition - building; Narrative; SKM; Sengol

## 1. Introduction

In the aftermath of the BJP's defeat in the Karnataka Assembly election of 2023, political analysts and adversaries hastily labelled the party as antagonistic to the southern states, forecasting a dismal trajectory for its influence in the region. Contrary to these prognostications, the BJP undertook a strategic recalibration and launched meticulously targeted campaigns that not only augmented its seat count in the South during the 2024 Lok Sabha elections but also secured triumphs in the Assembly elections of two southern states. This development effectively refuted the narrative of the BJP's declining favour in the South. Despite experiencing a reduction in the overall number of Lok Sabha seats compared to previous election cycles, the BJP's performance in 2024 was marked by a more efficacious and widespread expansion, underscoring its adeptness in engaging with and attracting a heterogeneous electorate across various regions. The results of the 2024 elections dismantled the long-standing perception of the BJP as a party predominantly rooted in the Hindi-speaking belt and allegedly opposed to southern interests, thereby reaffirming its status as a bona fide national party. The 2024 election outcomes underscore the BJP's ability to transcend regional barriers and cultivate a pan-Indian appeal. This essay endeavours to scrutinise the multifaceted strategies and underlying dynamics that facilitated the BJP's enhanced penetration into diverse regional landscapes, thereby consolidating its national stature. The examination will encompass the party's strategic rebalancing post-2023 setbacks, its targeted electoral campaigns, and the broader implications of its victories and overall electoral performance in 2024. By delving into these aspects, the essay aims to elucidate the mechanisms through which the BJP has successfully navigated the complexities of India's political terrain, achieving a level of national integration and electoral resonance that transcends its historical strongholds.

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), having attained national party status since the 1989 Lok Sabha elections, has traditionally wielded significant political influence and enjoyed associated privileges. However, the 2024 elections represented a seminal juncture in its evolution towards becoming a genuinely national force. Despite a reduction in seat allocation compared to previous electoral cycles in 2014 and 2019, the BJP's performance in 2024 resonated more

profoundly on a nationwide scale, indicative of transformative developments and strategic victories. Following the BJP's notable setback in the 2023 Karnataka assembly elections, wherein it faced substantial electoral defeat, a prevailing narrative emerged among political adversaries, notably the Congress, suggesting diminished prospects for the BJP in southern states. Critics contended that the BJP's policies were perceived as antagonistic towards southern interests, forecasting adverse outcomes for the party in the subsequent 2024 Lok Sabha elections. However, contrary to these prognostications, the BJP not only increased its parliamentary seat count but also secured significant victories in the assembly elections of two southern states, effectively rebutting claims of regional decline and dispelling the purported anti-south sentiment. Furthermore, the BJP demonstrated formidable efficacy and presence in the North-Eastern states, exemplified by its successful formation of governments in Sikkim (friend party SKM) and Arunachal Pradesh (BJP itself). These achievements underscored the party's adept navigation of intricate political landscapes and its ability to cultivate robust alliances, thereby enhancing its strategic footprint and expanding influence across diverse geographical domains. Despite encountering setbacks in its traditional strongholds, the BJP exhibited resilience and adaptability, affirming its nationwide relevance and consolidating its position as a pivotal political entity. The 2024 elections underscored the BJP's capacity to adapt dynamically to diverse regional contexts, effectively mitigating electoral setbacks in its strongholds and reinforcing its credentials as a genuine national party capable of resonating with a broad spectrum of voters. The BJP's consolidation as a formidable national entity post-2024 elections rests upon a meticulous integration of various strategic components. Central to its success is a robust electoral track record that, despite fluctuations in seat numbers, underscores the party's proficiency in conducting effective campaigns and harnessing organisational prowess. This sustained electoral performance not only enhances its credibility but also amplifies its resonance across a diverse array of constituencies, significantly bolstering its national standing. Strategically, the BJP's deliberate and methodical endeavours to expand its influence beyond traditional strongholds have proven pivotal in the latest electoral cycle. By strategically mobilising support in historically challenging or uncharted regions, particularly by commencing its electoral outreach from the notoriously complex southern states, the

party has successfully broadened its electoral base. This strategic acuity highlights its adaptive capacity to navigate varying regional political landscapes, thereby fortifying its national presence and impact. Additionally, forging alliances with smaller regional parties across states exemplifies the BJP's recognition and accommodation of state - specific identities alongside its overarching national ideological framework, thereby optimising electoral gains. Moreover, by commencing its campaign efforts from the southern states, the BJP not only accorded special significance to the region but also adeptly countered opposition narratives portraying it as anti - South. This proactive stance effectively neutralised adversarial campaigns launched by opposition parties in southern regions, contributing to the BJP's electoral successes.

Furthermore, the BJP has subtly endeavoured to integrate southern cultural heritage into the broader fabric of Sanatan traditions, exemplified by initiatives such as establishing Sengol in the new Parliament building and conducting Pooja - Paath - Yagya by southern priests, and stylizing the idol of Ram Lalla at the Ram temple Ayodhya in southern architecture. These cultural gestures serve to bridge regional cultural divides, thereby fostering deeper cultural resonance and augmenting the party's cultural appeal nationwide. Strategically, the BJP's adept narrative management on pivotal themes of development, nationalism, and cultural identity has further consolidated its ideological coherence and electoral allure. By skillfully shaping public discourse, framing debates, and steering narratives in its favour, the party solidifies voter loyalty and reinforces its perception as a proactive and forward - thinking political force. Ideologically, the BJP's foundational principles grounded in Hindutva, coupled with its advocacy for economic reforms and social welfare initiatives, resonate broadly across diverse demographic segments. This ideological framework transcends traditional political fault lines, appealing universally and cultivating a cohesive and steadfast support base. The party's adept articulation and implementation of policies aligned with these core tenets not only bolster its credibility but also enhance its attractiveness across a broad cross - section of voters. Culturally, the BJP has underscored its commitment to promoting India's rich heritage, traditions, and values, thereby nurturing a broader cultural renaissance narrative. By advocating for cultural pride and unity, the party not only deepens its connection with voters but also reinforces its image as a custodian of national identity. This cultural narrative resonates deeply across various societal strata, enhancing the BJP's appeal and solidifying its role as a unifying force in the complex tapestry of Indian politics.

The BJP's emergence as a genuine national party post - 2024 elections is underpinned by its strategic prowess in electoral management, geographic expansion, adaptability to regional dynamics, narrative control, ideological clarity, and cultural promotion. These interconnected factors collectively underscore the party's evolution into a robust and cohesive political entity capable of navigating and influencing India's multifaceted political landscape with flexibility, efficacy, and enduring impact. By strategically mobilising support across diverse regions, including historically challenging southern states, the BJP has expanded its electoral base while adeptly countering opposition narratives. Initiatives such as

integrating southern cultural elements into national symbols and promoting cultural heritage have further strengthened the BJP's appeal, reinforcing its image as a guardian of national values and identity.

## 2. Conclusion

In conclusion, the 2024 elections were a watershed moment for the BJP, highlighting its evolution into a genuinely national party. This was achieved through strategic electoral manoeuvres, successful coalition - building, and an inclusive approach that resonated across the diverse Indian polity, affirming the BJP's comprehensive national stature despite the reduction in Lok Sabha seats. The BJP's evolution into a formidable national entity post - 2024 elections is thus underpinned by a multifaceted approach encompassing strategic electoral management, geographical expansion, narrative control, ideological clarity and cultural promotion. These integrated strategies have not only propelled the BJP beyond its historical strongholds but also positioned it as a dynamic and influential force capable of navigating India's intricate political landscape with flexibility and enduring impact. As the BJP continues to consolidate its national stature, its ability to adapt to evolving political dynamics while reinforcing its cultural and ideological foundations will remain pivotal in shaping India's political future.

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