

Topic: NO NDA in Bihar's DNA

In a major setback to Bharatiya Janata Party and Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the **Grand Alliance or Mahagathbandhan** made clean sweep winning **178 seats in the Bihar Assembly Elections 2015**. The NDA, on the other hand, secured **58 seats**, with the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) bagging **53 seats**, Lok Janshakti Party (LJP) and Rashtriya Lok Samta Party (RLSP) winning two seats each, and Hindustani Awam Morcha (HAM, Secular) securing one seat.

The defeat in Bihar Assembly Elections is a major blow for the BJP as the saffron party had won **91 seats in the 2010 Assembly Polls and 22 seats out of the total 40 Lok Sabha seats in the general elections last year**. BJP, which wrested to power in Maharashtra, Haryana, Jharkhand and Jammu and Kashmir after landslide victory in General Elections, failed to retain its 38 seats in Bihar. What went wrong in Bihar?

The controversial comments made by Narendra Modi, Amit Shah and RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat along with other BJP leaders on sensitive issues like **reservation and Dadri Lynching played vital role in stinging defeat in Bihar**.

1- Mohan Bhagwat and Reservation:

Political analysts believed that Mohan Bhagwat's comment on reservation damaged BJP's chances in Bihar. Mohan Bhagwat's statement infused the fear among backwards class people in Bihar that BJP might scarp reservation given to them if it wins election. Grand Alliance leaders also took advantage of the situation and saying BJP would scarp reservation of backward class people if come to power pushing the saffron party on back-foot. Later, BJP president Amit Shah took a press conference and said that no changes will be made in current reservation policy.

2- Amit Shah and firecrackers in Pakistan:

BJP president Amit Shah during electioneering brought the neighbouring country into boll battle. "If by mistake BJP loses the polls crackers will go off in Pakistan," Shah had said. Amit Shah's comment will now haunt him. Shah's statement was an attempt to aggravate existing differences between two communities to polarise the votes. But rejecting BJP's communal ideology Bihar sent message of peace, communal harmony, co-existence and growth.

3- Narendra Modi on Reservation:

In an attempt to woo Dalit voters, BJP played anti-Muslim card and accused the Grand Alliance of plotting to **reduce quotas for SCs, STs and OBCs by five per cent** in order to benefit 'a particular community'.

Modi's statement was direct attack at Muslims as the BJP next day of his speech gave an advertisement in which BJP said issue of Muslim reservation also figured in Lalu's poll manifesto for 2014 general elections, that Rahul Gandhi pitched for it at a Lucknow rally on December 11, 2011 and Salman Khurshid spoke of 9% reservation for Muslims in 2012 before the UP assembly elections. Modi's attempt to divide the secular votes turned futile and even backfired.

Topic Introduction

Whatever may be, certain trends look as clinchers:

- Greater women participation may be fuelled by them wanting to stop the state from receding into lawlessness and their own safety concern on roads.
- The increased youth presence at PM's rallies may be due to the triumph of aspirations over identity in Bihar polity.
- The **better-educated middle or upper class**, upper OBCs may not be much enamoured of Lalu brand of politics. After all, the middle class has a sizable OBC population.
- A considerable chunk of **EBCs and Dalits appear** to be with the NDA camp though afraid to proclaim it loudly compared to upper castes and OBCs.

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