Topic: Tight Race in a Divided Country

Topic Introduction

Donald Trump will be the **45th President of the United States**. These words echoed in the hearts of 324 million Americans, some shell-shocked and downcast, others **delirious** with joy. The sheer divergence of emotions over the surprise result is a poignant signal of how deeply divided the nation is, after a polarising **two-year election campaign**. **Bigotry, patriarchy** and racist **rancour,** which reared their ugly heads throughout this season of incivility, may find no welcome **catharsis** with the **apotheosis** of Mr. Trump. According to the exit polls, **58 per cent of whites and 21 per cent of non-whites** voted for Mr. Trump, whereas **37 per cent of whites and 74 per cent of non-whites** voted for his Democratic opponent Hillary Clinton. He also scored **higher with men than women**, and with those voters who did not have a college degree. In other words, blue-collared white men and women thronged to Mr. Trump in, droves angry about their perceived i**mpoverishment** and **disenfranchisement inflicted** by the country's political and financial elites. It had left them with only one option: to throw a metaphorical grenade at these power centres. At the heart of the shock result is the shock itself, which stemmed from what most analysts have been calling the vote of the **"silent majority".** Why did the U.S. media and pollsters fail to see which way the wind was blowing? They apparently did not suspect, when poll results suggested that **Ms. Clinton was the more acceptable candidate**, that some of the respondents to these polls may have been unwilling to admit to being supporters of Mr. Trump. It is likely for instance that women, 42 per cent of whom voted for Mr. Trump, were reluctant to reveal their preference after Mr. Trump was exposed for boasting about sexual assault and faced allegations of the same. What was not taken proper note of was that in almost every swing State, there were between **11 and 18 per cent "undecided" voters in late October** — a significant number of people that tilted the election in favour of Mr. Trump.

What led Trump to Triumph?

In what is seen as a major upset and an unexpected result, **real estate businessman and former reality television host** Donald Trump of the Republican Party managed to defeat pollster favourite, former senator Hillary Clinton of the Democratic Party to become the 45th President of the United States. The margins of defeat were close in the "swing States". It looked like **Hillary Clinton will win** the popular vote, bolstered by **high support in States like California**. But this was futile as she lost the Electoral College to Donald Trump. Mr. Trump's Electoral College triumph was aided by his surprising victories in previously Democratic strongholds in swing States such as **Wisconsin, Pennsylvania and Michigan and his defeat of Ms. Clinton in other swing States such as Ohio, North Carolina and Florida.** Wisconsin, Michigan and Pennsylvania have a large number of rural and working class voters who were **swayed by Mr. Trump's protectionist and anti-immigrant message**. The first two of these three States were also where Ms. Clinton had lost the primaries to Senator Bernie Sanders. But most polls held in these three States showed her leading Mr. Trump consistently, bringing into question whether polls have managed to track the strong antipathy to whom **many rural and working class voters** considered as a leading member of the ruling establishment. Ms. Clinton's strong support among Hispanics, many of whom voted early in key swing States such as Florida and Nevada were negated by the high turnout of white voters in the former State and the absence of a substantial **Hispanic population** in other key States. Beyond just the presidential election loss, it was a day of setbacks for the Democratic Party. The party managed to secure a **majority membership of at least 51 senators**, and retained its strong presence in the House of Representatives. This would enable the Republican President to nominate a conservative judge to the Supreme Court tilting its balance. Gubernatorial elections to various States also established a Republican majority.

A bleak future

This Republican dominance and the rise of the "populist" Right is a blow to liberalism in the U.S. but it remains to be seen whether the **rise of Mr. Trump is a threat to the operation of free and open markets in the country**. The entire campaign, including the primaries in the run-up to the presidential elections, featured significant discontent against the ruling establishment in Washington D.C. and Mr. Trump managed to channel this effectively despite severe flaws in his candidacy and his lack of experience in public office. Mr. Trump's campaign pitch was thin on policy – except for strong positions on immigration that bordered upon **xenophobia and hatred against the Hispanic and Muslim communities** in the country besides promises on protectionism. His support base also included the socially conservative evangelicals who saw beyond his own contradictory positions on religion and morality, but were opposed to Ms. Clinton's social liberal positions on abortion for example. It will get worse before it gets better. Mr. Trump's electoral mandate is to "take back" American institutions, and, as a populist, he is expected to do it. His promises include **filing charges and jailing Ms. Clinton, banning Muslim immigration, nominating ultra-conservative Supreme Court judges, and, most of all, imposing nativist control over the country's institutions**. There is little incentive for him to moderate his positions now.

Read further:

https://thelogicalindian.com/news/donald-trump-wins-the-2016-us-presidential-election-a-look-back-on-the-main-points-of-the-election/

http://www.nytimes.com/2016/11/09/us/politics/hillary-clinton-donald-trump-president.html?_r=0

http://www.nbcnews.com/storyline/2016-election-day/2016-election-donald-trump-wins-white-house-upset-n679936

http://www.bbc.com/news/live/election-us-2016-37899679