

CHAPTER-2

BJP during the Years of Congress System

The Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), BJP's predecessor, or commonly known as Jana Sangh, was a Hindu nationalist party that existed from 1951 to 1977 and was the political arm of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu right-wing organization. In 1977, it merged with several other left, centre and right parties to dislodge Indian National Congress (INC) from power and formed the Janata Party. After the Janata Party split in 1980, it was reformed as the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) in 1980, which is currently India's largest political party by primary membership and representation in Lok Sabha.

Jana Sangh was a Hindu nationalist party. Modern Hindu nationalism has its ancestry in the British colonial era. More importantly, Hindu nationalism drew its energy from injustices dispensed by the British rule. In this respect, Hindu nationalism gained its structure and direction during British rule. Throughout the early 1900s, Hindu nationalism was given a structure with the creation of the Hindu Mahasabha (Great Hindu Movement) in 1913 by the fusion of two regional Hindu movements: United Bengal Hindu Movement (1907) and the Punjab Hindu Sabha (1907). The Hindu Mahasabha was the overarching umbrella under which Hindu nationalist movement operated. Furthermore, three geographically contrasting traditions merged under a single roof. Before the merger, the Hindu nationalist movements were located in three regions: Maharashtra, Bengal and Punjab. Some members of the Mahasabha were also alongside members of the Indian National Congress party. With the formation of Hindu Mahasabha, two stands of the Hindu nationalist movement, the modernist and western inclination group following Gokhale's legacy, and the Hindu revivalist and Hindu orthodox group following Tilak's legacy, were knotted. Although the Hindu nationalist movement was apparently under the same roof, it was by no means united. Moreover, the radical Hindu groups were not completely incorporated into the Hindu Mahasabha, and these groups in due course provide the backbone of the more radical Hindu nationalist movement.

Of the various radical Hindu nationalist organizations, none is better organized and better staffed than the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) or National Volunteer Association. Founded in 1925 by Dr. Keshav Baliram Hedgewar who worked under

Tilak, the RSS volunteers were easily recognized with their khaki colored shorts, a color which was borrowed from the British police. The RSS would later provide the ideological and organizational power to the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS), BJP's predecessor, and to the BJP itself. The RSS is organizational structure is widespread both vertically and horizontally. The RSS was mostly composed by Brahmins or members from the upper castes. Therein lay the disagreement of the RSS membership. Although the RSS espouses the principle egalitarianism, its members are enormously, Brahmin in background. Moreover, the RSS' ideology was Brahminical in nature. Many members were from the upper castes of the region of Maharashtra where historically the upper castes served as martial leaders.

RSS espoused the principle of 'Hindutva' or Hinduness and required as its goal 'Hindu Rashtra' or Hindu nation. Hindutva was codified as the ideology of the Hindu nationalist movement by the publication of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's work *Hindutva: Who is Hindu?* In 1923. According to Savarkar, Hindutva is constituted by: geographical unity, racial features and a common culture. Note that Hinduism as a religion is not one of Savarkar's criteria. Scholars have asserted that this was because Savarkar himself was not religious, but that he was only an ideologue or he saw no place for Hinduism as a religion in a diverse society such as that of India's (Jafferlot 1996). With religion relegated to the backburner, for Savarkar, it is race and ethnicity that constitute Hindutva.

With India's independence in 1947, the Hindu nationalist movement was given an electoral face by the formation of Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) in 1951. The BJS espoused the ideal of 'One Country, One Culture, One Nation and Rule of Law.' The formation of the BJS was partly precipitated by the ban of the RSS and the arrest of its members during 1948-49. Until then Hindu nationalist leaders saw the Hindu nationalist movement as less a political organization than a socio-cultural organization. The crack-down of the RSS during 1948-49 made it clear that first, the RSS was vulnerable to politically organized groups, and second the RSS had no political representation, particularly national representation. It is in this context that the RSS lent its support to formation of BJS. It must be emphasized that the RSS never sheds its socio-cultural anchor while supporting the BJS. The influence and diligence of the RSS lie in its non-political shade. As a result, there was a built in disagreement in Hindu nationalist movements such as the RSS. The BJS being a political animal and undergirded by the RSS, was Janus-faced and was pulled in two

different directions. The politicians in the BJS were sensitive to electoral winds while the RSS, who had significant representation in the BJS, was accustomed to Hindu nationalist ideology and principles even at the cost electoral support. This contradiction of the BJS was never resolved and was imparted to the BJP in the 1980s. Electorally the BJS was largely overshadowed by Congress from the 1950s to the early 1970s. This is all the more surprising since the BJS did not follow a tactic solely based on garnering support through ethno-religious planks (Jafferlot 1996). BJS's electoral strategy is not surprising when the political landscape is considered. Congress cast a huge shadow over Indian politics. What made Congress so powerful a party is its ability to control the central government supporting secularism and its control over local level politics. Incumbency provided Congress a powerful means of limiting the rise of communalism. In addition, many of local level Congress leaders were themselves Hindu traditionalist depriving the BJS political space to maneuver. The BJS was, in effect, deprived of one of its attractions- Hindu nationalism.

Furthermore, Nehru's socio-economic development program was much admired with the electorate further restraining BJS's space to maneuver. With little room to maneuver the BJS concentrated on two planks: attacking the state's interfering in the economy and highlighting the importance of national integrity. Note that BJS's anti-state intervention and the national integrity planks are almost identical with the current planks of the BJP.

Geographically, the BJS support base was limited to the northern 'Hindi-Belt' states. The northern states of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Punjab, Delhi, and Bihar provided the bulk of BJS's seats in the Lok Sabha and state assemblies. BJS' geographical limitation is steady with BJP's experience in the 1990s but the mandate of 2014 Lok Sabha general elections and further state assemblies elections are explaining a new phenomenon. It seems that BJP is going to be pan India party in the charismatic leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi who always advocates for "development for all" and "minimum government and maximum governance." Moreover, (during Congress system) the BJS and the BJP were strongest in the Hindi-belt while the Hindi -belt did not offer Congress with a large support base. The BJS, in effect, drew its support from a geographically narrow base while Congress drew its support from a geographically broader base.

It is fascinating to note that the BJS is the only party that had shown an upward trend in obtaining the popular vote and in capturing parliamentary and assembly seats in

each consecutive general election since 1952 with some exception. In the general election of 1967, the Indian Political system underwent a spectacular transformation. The dominance of the Congress party in the system was unexpectedly shattered and political power was dispersed between many parties on a regional basis. Until then opposition parties in India were not considered a threat to the rule of the Congress. But after 1967, at the state level, the power of opposition parties was no longer a threat, but a reality. The Jana Sangh had been in the forefront of this movement.

BJS's Ideology and Policies

The major sources of information of Jana Sangh party ideology is from election manifestoes, issued prior to the each of the five general elections of 1952, 1957, 1962, 1967 and 1971. The manifestoes reveal not only what the party positions are on various subjects, but also the changing trends in Jana Sangh policy. They also give us an idea about the slogans which are adapted to suit a particular election but later incorporated in party policy. As such manifestoes lean to specify the flexibility in the party ideology, the mood of the leadership at a given election, the target population for party appeal. It should not be understood that the manifestoes are the only sources of information on party ideology as frequently other forms of writings and speeches by the party leaders are also important. For the purpose of analysis, party ideology has been discussed under following.

Very early the Jana Sangh formulated its view on democracy declaring its fundamental philosophy as 'one country, one nation, one culture and rule of law.' Nationalism for Jana Sangh implied complete loyalty to the Bharatiya culture. The Jana Sangh declared that their policy of secularism treats every one equal as against the policy of Muslim appeasement. The party adopted the Deendayal Upadhyaya's concept of Integral Humanism which emphasizes the significance of a complete man comprising of body, soul and intellect. And individuals comprise society and a good system should try to satisfy the needs of an individual, material and spiritual non-material. Nationalism and the individual in a nation should be the deciding factor in a political system. He advocated democracy, yet opposed to both capitalism and communism. Party however also accepted the democratic principle of popular participation of all the citizens in the process of decision making. These policies of Jana Sangh were later adopted by the BJP.

The BJS declared its ideology of building a 'strong and prosperous Indian' nation by drawing inspiration from 'India's ancient culture'; and gave primacy to the establishment of a democratic state with reasonable participation by all members of the society. The Jana Sangh's concept of secularism also intent impartial treatment for all the members of the society. BJS emphasized the equal treatment of members of majority and minority communities; for, according to BJS, very special treatment to religious minorities is the same as to appeasement of religious minorities.

In terms of economic policies the Jana Sangh opposed the notion of a state controlled economy as the principal support base of the Jana Sangh consisted of mostly the private traders and petty industrialist. The Jana Sangh supported the view that greater encouragement and promotion must be given to the small scale and cottage industries. To the Jana Sangh five year plan must emphasize on the development of small scale and consumer sector as they see small entrepreneur as a prelude to get rid of unemployment.

The BJS emphasized on the swadeshi aspect as a significant portion of its economic and industrial policies and programmes. While the party shared the standpoint that the government should promote and encourage the establishment of small scale industries in private sector, but the party advocated for setting up of state controlled industries or public sector undertakings in the field of heavy industries and in sensitive areas like defense. Jana Sangh supported state ownership of defense and strategic industries, state regulation of capital goods and other vital industries.

Jana Sangh opposed the idea of giving special preferential treatment to the minorities, criticised the Congress government for following the policy of pseudo-secularism and advocated the immediate execution of Uniform Civil Code. Jana Sangh which passionately opposed the concept of majority and minority among Indians wanted the introduction of Uniform Civil Code at the earliest. The party was against the idea of giving special preferential treatment to minorities. The party believed that all citizens irrespective of caste, creed and community are equal in the eyes of law, yet reservation to the backward section of the society was acceptable to them.

Jana Sangh stood in favour of making Hindi as an official language as against English. For the Jana Sangh a major issue of disagreement with the incumbent in Uttar Pradesh was that the party did not want that Urdu to be accorded a second official language status in the state. For Jana Sangh Urdu was first and foremost responsible for the propagation of a two nation theory and anti-national sentiment in India.

For the Jana Sangh the abolition of the cow slaughter always remained an important issue. The Jana Sangh tried to organize campaign for the implementation of Article 48 of the Indian Constitution that stand for the prohibition of slaughter of cows, calves milch and draught cattle.

As far as the foreign policy is concerned for the Jana Sangh, Pakistan and Kashmir remained as the most important factor. BJS demanded the complete integration of Kashmir into India by abrogation of Article 370. In fact Shyama Prasad Mukherjee was the first one to oppose the grant of special status to Kashmir under Article 370. The BJS opposed the policy of appeasement towards Pakistan.

Electoral Performance of BJS

Elections reflect the mood of the people. A general election is also a major form of political participation by the masses of the people, who otherwise left out of it all. Elections are a recognized means providing succession in leadership. Elections can also control policy decisions of the government though devises such as initiative, referendum and repeal. Policy decisions of the government may be influenced by the elections. Furthermore, elections also serve to secure the legitimation of a regime or to maintain this legitimacy that may have already been established. It is also posited that elections may help maintain legitimacy by bringing together, in support of a single party, individuals who are otherwise remote from or in conflict with each other on ground of class, status or religion. On the other hand, an election may be functionless if it has no consequence for the political system. This could be possible in the case of a country where elections are unfamiliar, communication poor administration primitive.¹⁹

The above mentioned functional aspects of elections are significant in India. Elections in India can be unifying force, for people from other regions and speaking different language can unite under one party slogan. This has also led to a polarization of forces in a regional context where regional loyalties have been increasingly mobilized. With each successive election the individual voter is learning the meaning of the power of the vote and “increasing number of participants are maneuvering for their place in the system.”²⁰ Elections can also provide an effective channel through which the

¹⁹ Richard Rose and Harve Mossawir, “Voting and Elections: A Functional Analysis,” Political Studies, XV: 2, June 1967, p. 175

²⁰ Paul Wallace, “India: The Dispersion of Political Power,” Asian Survey, VIII: 2, Feb. 1963, p. 88.

Opposition can make its voice heard and can effectively perform as a pressure group, aggregating and articulating the interests of a certain section of the community. Jana Sangh was usually recognized, as the representative voice of the interests of the Hindu majority. It had contested seats in all the General Elections since its inception and had obtained an increased number of seats in the Lok Sabha and State Legislative Assemblies and an increased percentage of the popular vote.

In India general elections to the Lok Sabha are held every five years. The Lok Sabha represents citizens of India (as envisaged by the constitution of India, currently the members of Lok Sabha are 545, out of which 543 are elected for five-year term and the two members nominated by the president of India who represent the Anglo-Indian community). The 543 members are elected under the plurality (first past the post) electoral system. The Council of States (Rajya Sabha) has 250 members, 238 members elected for a six-year term, with one-third retiring every two years. The members are indirectly elected, this being achieved the votes of legislators in the state and union (federal) territories. The elected members are chosen under the system of proportional representation by means of the single transferable vote. The twelve nominated members are usually an eclectic mix of eminent artists, scientist, sportsperson, journalists and common people. Lok Sabha is composed of representatives of the people chosen by direct election on the basis of the adult suffrage. The maximum strength of the House envisaged by the Constitution is 552, which is made up by election of up to 530 members to represent the States, up to 20 members to represent the Union Territories and not more than two members of the Anglo-Indian Community to be nominated by the President, if, in his/her opinion, that community is not adequately represented in the lower house i.e. Lok Sabha. The Legislative Assembly elections in India are the elections in which the Indian electorates choose the members of the Legislative/State Assembly. They are held every 5 years and the members of the legislative assembly are called MLA. The assembly elections are never carried out in the same year for all states and union territories. The legislative assembly elections are held in all the 29 States and 2 of the 7 Union Territories of India.

The First General Election–1952

As mentioned earlier that the Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) came into existence on Oct. 21, 1951 as an all-India political party. It was only just two months before the first General election of 1952. At that time it was assisted by the RSS in all fields—organization of cadres, selection of candidates, donations etc.

The areas of real strength of the RSS were Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab. It was hoped that in “these provinces the Jana Sangh would do reasonably well in the 1952 elections and would build upon the RSS base for greater successes in future elections. In Punjab, the Sikhs distrusted the RSS, but the organization was strong in the urban Hindu areas”.²¹ In the other areas it had much less influence. In Rajasthan and Saurashtra it had penetrated into the princely states. But it was not to the same degree as it was in Madhya Bharat. In Maharashtra and Marathi-speaking parts of Madhya Pradesh, the RSS was mainly a Brahmin organization. In the south and east, the RSS was beginning to organize itself.

Although, the RSS was the main source of organizational power of the BJS, but it was not the only source of its membership. With the foundation of the BJS a considerable number of others came into its camp. Mookerjee, leader of the party and Mauli Chandra Sharma had no RSS background. A number of people, influenced by the policies of Mookerjee, came into the party. This included various former ministers, ex-judges, businessmen, zamindars and jagirdars.

In order to give a tough fight to the Congress, the BJS unsuccessfully attempted to bring other parties under its umbrella. Interestingly, its most natural allies, the Hindu Mahasabha and the Ram Rajya Parishad were also unsuccessful in resolving their differences. The party reached an agreement with the Uttar Pradesh Praja Party in Uttar Pradesh and with the Zamindar Party led by Rao Birender Singh in Punjab (Gurgaon and Rohtak District). Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee was the key campaigner and he addressed people in many constituencies in and out of Bengal. The principal speaker against the party was Nehru himself, who in the 1952 elections in fact feared the nationalistic and reactionary right more than the socialist and communist left. In

²¹ C. Baxter, “The Jana Sangh: A Bibliography of an Indian Political Party”, University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, p. 81-82.

a note to the Election Committee of the Congress, he said that they should be careful of any communal element in the Congress and should choose their nominees with great care.²² Mookerjee took care to repudiate such statements and the charges flew back and forth.²³

Results

In 1952 Lok Sabha election, the BJS out of the total 489 parliamentary seats fielded its candidates on 94 seats. The results of the election were disappointing to the Jana Sangh because it had expected to do better at the polls. The Election Commission had set a level of 3% of the total popular vote as the minimum to be polled by a party for it to be accorded recognition as an “all India Party.” The Jana Sangh managed to do this by a very narrow margin; it polled 3.06% of the Lok Sabha vote, and was there by allowed to have its election symbol the Deepak (lamp) reserved for the exclusive use its members. Four others parties obtained all India recognition – the Congress, the Communist Party of India, the Socialist Party and the Kisan Mazdoor Praja Party (the latter two later merged into the Praja Socialist Party, leaving four national parties in the field.)

The party in this election was quiet aware about its areas of strength and that was also reflected in the effectiveness of its regional campaigns.²⁴ It basically focused in Uttar Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, PEPSU, Delhi and Madhya Pradesh. West Bengal was an exception to the general trend.

The party had contested 41 seats (out of 86) in Uttar Pradesh, 9 seats (out of 18) in Punjab, 8 seats (out of 29) in Madhya Pradesh, 6 seats (out of 34) in West Bengal, 4 seats each in Rajasthan (out of 20), Madhya Bharat (out of 11), Mysore (out of 11) and Vindhya Pradesh (out of 6). The party also contested 3 seats in Delhi (out of 4), 2 seats each in Bihar (out of 55), Assam (out of 12), PEPSU (out of 5), Himachal Pradesh (out of 3), Tripura (out of 2) and one seat (out of 2) in Ajmer. In Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh elections the Jan Sangh was effectively helped by the volunteers of the RSS.

²² The Statesman (New Delhi), Sept. 27, 1951. Quoted in “Nehru on Communalism”, (New Delhi, 1965).

²³ The Statesman (New Delhi), Dec. 12, 1951. Quoted in Nehru on Communalism, op. cit., p. 237.

²⁴ Bruce D. Graham, “Hindu Nationalism and Indian Politics: The Origins and Development of Bharatiya Jana Sangh, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 198.

The party had polled 3.06 percent of the national popular vote. The party had shown significant support in Delhi (25.92%), Ajmer (16.20%), Vindhya Pradesh (12.71%), Himachal Pradesh (10.72%), Madhya Bharat (9.65%) and Uttar Pradesh (7.29%). In the home state of Mookiejee, the party had polled about 6 percent vote.

Table: 1 Electoral Performance of the BJS, 1952 Parliamentary Elections

	State/U.T.	Seats			Vote Polled (%)
		Total	Contested	Won	
1	Jammu & Kashmir	-	-	-	-
2	Himachal Pradesh	3	2	-	10.72
3	Punjab	18	9	-	5.6
4	PEPSU	5	2	-	2.94
5	Delhi	4	3	-	25.92
6	Uttar Pradesh	86	41	-	7.29
7	Madhya Pradesh	29	8	-	4.94
8	Madhya Bharat	11	4	-	9.65
9	Vindhya Bharat	6	4	-	12.71
10	Bhopal	2	-	-	-
11	Bihar	55	2	-	0.4
12	Odisha	20	-	-	-
13	West Bengal	34	6	2	5.94
14	Assam	12	2	-	3.64
15	Manipur	2	-	-	-
16	Tripura	2	2	-	6.14
17	Rajasthan	20	4	1	3.04
18	Ajmer	2	1	-	16.2
19	Saurashtra	6	-	-	-
20	Kutch	2	-	-	-
21	Bombay	45	-	-	-
22	Bilaspur	1	-	-	-
23	Mysore	11	4	-	4.16
24	Hyderabad	25	-	-	-
25	Madras	75	-	-	-

26	Travancore-Cochin	12	-	-	-
27	Coorg	1	-	-	-
	All India	489	94	3	3.06

Table: 2, Electoral Performance of BJS, 1952 State Assemblies Elections

Sr. No.	States	Seats	Contested	Won	Lost Deposits	Votes Polled (%)
1	Andhra Pradesh	241	-	-	-	-
2	Assam	105	3	0	3	0.29
3	Bihar	318	44	0	42	1.15
4	Gujarat	160	4	0	3	0.10
5	Kerala	129	-	-	-	-
6	Madhya Pradesh	339	126	6	68	5.66
7	Madras	198	-	-	-	-
8	Maharashtra	299	36	0	32	1.29
9	Mysore	212	25	0	21	1.21
10	Orrisa	140	-	-	-	-
11	Punjab	186	85	2	59	5.07
12	Rajasthan	189	65	11	35	6.34
13	Uttar Pradesh	430	210	2	153	6.44
14	West Bengal	250	85	9	60	5.31

Union Territories

1	Delhi	48	30	4	4	21.88
2	Himachal Pradesh	36	9	0	8	3.46
3	Manipur	-	-	-	-	-
4	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-
	All India	3283	722	34	488	2.76

Sources: Craig Baxter, "Jana Sangh: A Brief History" in South Asian Politics and Religion, (Princeton, 1966).

From Election Commission of India, Report of the First General Elections in India 1951-52, Vol. II, New Delhi, not dated.

Three Jana Sanghis were elected to the Lok Sabha – among them Syama Prasad Mukherjee. In the assembly elections, Mukherjee's personality and following brought the Jana Sangh success in Bengal which was distinct to its organizational strength. In all, the Jana Sangh won 34 assembly seats and 2.76% of the vote; eight seats were from Midnapur (West Bengal), and there it received 12.68% of the vote.

In the Punjab, the party had the greatest disappointment. The party was founded here and expected to achieve major success. Of the 85 seats contested, two were obtained in the election, and 59 contestants lost their deposits. (i.e., obtained less than 1/6 of vote) It seems that the Jana Sangh and the Akali Dal cancelled each other out.

In Delhi, the Jana Sangh showed signs of strength; three out of four contestants retained their deposits. This initial start would later lead to a near polarization between the Congress party and Jana Sangh in 1962 and by 1967, the Jana Sangh would be in control of the Delhi Municipal Corporation.

In Rajasthan, the Jana Sangh won eleven of the seats and in Madhya Bharat four. Elsewhere in central India the Jana Sangh won two assembly seats in Vindhya Pradesh. In Madhya Pradesh, as then constituted, the party failed to win any seats, but it began the foundations of an organization which would win seats in the future in the Hindi-belt. In the huge expense of Uttar Pradesh the Jana Sangh won but two assembly seats. In other states, the party made a token show. A few candidates managed to retain their deposits. In Mysore, a bare beginning was made in the south. No seats were won, but about 2% of the votes were obtained in the State.

Appraisal

Balraj Madhok writing after the election said:

Viewed in the light of the serious handicaps under which the Jana Sangh contested the election, it was an outstanding achievement. Being the youngest party it hardly had any time to make itself known to the people ...Lack of electoral and political experience in its workers, who were mostly young men, and paucity of resources badly handicapped it. But, perhaps, the greatest factor against it was the concentrated

and systematic attack on it by Nehru whose virulent denunciations of Jana Sangh were echoed by almost the entire press and all the leftist parties in the country...²⁵

The editor of the Organizer said it this way:

A major factor in Jana Sangh's election fight was the inexperience of its workers...

In the case of Jana Sangh, if the candidates were poor financially, the organization was even poorer in that respect.

...taken as a whole they (the Muslim) voted mostly for the Congress... The matter assumed a certain decisiveness by virtue of the fact that Muslims were concentrated in the North were the hope of the Jana Sangh particularly lay.

Another serious difficulty was the absence of supporting sectional organization... It did not have a women's organization... Also there was no Jana Sangh organization on the Harijan front... And above all the Jana Sangh lacked a Labour Front...²⁶

The RSS chief, Golwalkar gave the Jana Sangh a "well done" and said the party should not be pessimistic and "should go ahead with calm confidence in themselves and their mission."²⁷

In 1952 elections Jana Sangh had made a reasonable showing, was recognized as a national party and had its nationally known leader to carry on both in Parliament and in the organization. It also had the significant backing of the RSS and it had drawn in a number of non-RSS people. The party saw its weakness and was prepared to use the following five years to build itself into a stronger force before the next general election. The success of the Jana Sangh in 1952 elections accrued mainly from the North Indian region. This was a reflection of its membership base, and the appeal of its ideology. Its success in West Bengal was a reflection not of the party but of the personality of Syama Prasad Mukherjee. In the Southern parts of the country, the only state where the Jana Sangh obtained the some support was Mysore.

In other words, the electoral performance of the BJS in this election was more to do with the image of the Mookerjee than the organizational network provided by the RSS. In the areas of RSS strength Madhya Pradesh, Madhya Bharat, Vindhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Punjab, the party failed to win any seat. In terms of vote, the BJS showed signs of its strength in Delhi, Ajmer, Vindhya Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh.

²⁵ Balraj Madhok, "Political Trends in India", (Delhi, 1959), p. 155.

²⁶ Organizer, V: 29, March 5, 1952.

²⁷ Organizer, V: 29, March 5, 1952.

The Second General Elections–1957

Mookerjee's death in 1953 had left the BJS without a nationally known leader. Consequent upon his unfortunate death, the burden of leadership fell on the younger members of the party. Most of them were from the RSS background. Among them Madhok and Vajpayee were the most important.

However, in the absence of any effective national leader, the party had lost many of its members. The doubtful members, those who could not take the discipline and the disappointments of the period, left the party either voluntarily or by invitation. Many who departed objected to the increasingly strong role of the RSS in the party...But with the departure of the objectors, the RSS could take the unchallenged lead in the party".²⁸ The party, however, continued to welcome non-RSS persons.

The Jana Sangh organizations at the state level were of varying strength and effectiveness. "The Hindi-Speaking area in the north was the heartland of the Jana Sangh. Outside this area the party was either non-existent or very weak. The party undoubtedly strengthened itself in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh, in the latter especially in the areas formerly comprising Madhya Bharat. In Delhi the party was effective and provided the leading opposition both in the municipal corporation and in the legislative assembly... In Punjab, the party was most active in the cities of the Punjabi-speaking part of the state. In Rajasthan, too, the party had made its gains in the urban areas. The party in Bihar was in its early formative stages. Of the Hindi-speaking states, it was in Bihar that the RSS was weakest".²⁹

In this election, the BJS was much more careful in the selection of its candidates than what was the case in 1952. Only one of the three Lok Sabha winners was re-nominated. The basic policy of the BJS as declared by Upadhyaya was to oppose national alliance with any party. "He said the party would agree to local adjustments with all parties except the communists and communal parties, e.g., the Akali Dal, the Muslim League, the Dravida Munetra Kazhagam".³⁰

In the campaign of the 1957 general election, the BJS received support from Golwalkar (RSS sarsanghchalak) himself. The 1957 general elections were held after the reformation of Indian states. Nonetheless, that had barely influenced the policy of

²⁸ C. Baxter, op. cit., p. 154.

²⁹ Ibid. p. 154-155.

³⁰ Ibid. p. 160.

the party to focus upon. Deendayal Upadhyaya, General Secretary of the party had announced in June 1956 that “the party would concentrate on Uttar Pradesh, the Punjab, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh, which it considered to be its strongholds”.³¹

Results

The Jana Sangh made substantial gains over 1952. It improved its Lok Sabha representations only slightly from three to four seats, but improved its share of the poll from 3.06% to 5.93%. In the contests for state assemblies the party won 46 seats as compared to 34 in 1952. This time all the 46 remained with the party at least until the assembly opened while in the 1952, four abandoned as soon as the votes were counted. In assembly elections the party polled 4.03% of the vote as compared with 2.76% in 1952.

With two Lok Sabha seats and 17 assembly seats, U.P. became the leading state in terms of Jana Sangh representation. In Lok Sabha contests in Uttar Pradesh, the party raised its share of the poll from 7.29% to 14.79%. In the assembly poll in the state, the Jana Sangh raised its vote share from 6.44% to 9.84%.

In the Madhya Pradesh Lok Sabha poll the Jana Sangh contested 21 of the 36 seats, lost deposits on 6, and won no seats. In the assembly seats, the Jana Sangh contested 127 of the 288 seats, won ten, and 64 candidates lost deposits. The party won 9.89% of the vote.

In Rajasthan, the party contested only seven of the 22 Lok Sabha seats, winning none, but losing no deposits, while polling 11.10% of the vote. For the assembly, the Jana Sangh contested only 47 of the 176 seats winning six, losing 26 deposits and polling 5.52% of the vote, a decline in both seats won and percentage of votes in 1952.

Punjab was both a failure and an improvement to the party. Again it failed to do well in Lok Sabha contests. The party contested 16 of the 22 Lok Sabha seats and gained 16.04% of the vote, won none. With the exception of Delhi this was the highest percentage polled in any state by the Jana Sangh. In the assembly seats, the Jana Sangh contested 65 out of 154 seats, won nine, and 31 candidates lost their deposits. The party won 8.6% of the vote.

With the abolition of the Delhi Legislative Assembly, elections were held only for the five Lok Sabha seats. The Jana Sangh contested all fives, won none and lost two

³¹ B. D. Graham, *op. cit.*, p. 198

deposits while polling 19.72% of the vote. Balraj Madhok finished a far-away second to Mrs. Sucheta Kriplani, who was now the Congress candidate.

Table: 3, Electoral Performance of the BJS, 1957 Indian Parliamentary Elections

Sr. No.	State/U.T.	Seats			Vote Polled (%)
		Total	Contested	Won	
1	Himachal Pradesh	4	-	-	-
2	Punjab	22	16	-	16.05
3	Delhi	5	5	-	19.71
4	Uttar Pradesh	86	61	2	14.79
5	Madhya Pradesh	36	21	-	13.96
6	Bihar	53	2	-	0.51
7	Odisha	20	-	-	-
8	West Bengal	36	5	-	1.43
9	Assam	12	-	-	-
10	Manipur	2	-	-	-
11	Tripura	2	-	-	-
12	Rajasthan	22	7	-	11.15

13	Bombay	66	7	2	3.38
14	Mysore	26	5	-	2.48
15	Andhra Pradesh	43	1	-	0.04
16	Kerala	18	-	-	-
17	Madras	41	-	-	-
	All India	494	130	4	5.97

Table: 4, Electoral Performance of BJS, 1957 State Assemblies Elections

Sr. No.	States	Seats	Contested	Won	Lost Deposits	Votes Polled (%)
1	Andhra Pradesh	301	8	0	8	0.11
2	Assam	108	-	-	-	-
3	Bihar	318	29	0	22	1.10
4	Gujarat	133	5	0	1	0.55
5	Kerala	126	-	0	-	-
6	Madhya Pradesh	288	127	10	64	9.89
7	Madras	205	-	-	-	-
8	Maharashtra	263	18	4	7	2.00
9	Mysore	208	20	0	14	1.37
10	Orrisa	140	-	-	-	-
11	Punjab	154	65	9	31	8.60
12	Rajasthan	176	47	6	26	5.52
13	Uttar Pradesh	430	235	17	131	9.84
14	West Bengal	252	33	0	30	0.98

Union Territories

1	Delhi	-	-	-	-	-
2	Himachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-
3	Manipur	-	-	-	-	-
4	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-
	All India	3102	587	46	334	4.03

Sources: Election Commission of India, Report on the Second General Election in India, 1957, Vol. II, New Delhi, 1953.

Craig Baxter, “Jana Sangh: A Brief History” in South Asian Politics and Religion, ed. Donald E. Smith, (Princeton, 1966).

Maharashtra presented a special case. The Jana Sangh won two of the seven Lok Sabha seats it contested and four of 18 assembly seats. In the area covered by the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti the party won two of the three Lok Sabha seats and four of six assembly seats and it lost no deposit in this area. The victories for the Jana Sangh were almost solely attributable to the alliance on the unilingual state issues.

In West Bengal the rout of the Jana Sangh was all but complete. The sitting Lok Sabha member did not contest for re-election and only three of the nine elected to the assembly in 1952 stood again. All were defeated, although each retained his deposits. The vote polled for assembly constituencies dropped to 0.98% and for Lok Sabha seats to 1.43%. Elsewhere the party showed little strength. Seats were contested for the Lok Sabha in Mysore (5), Bihar (2), and Andhra Pradesh (1), but with the exception of the candidates in Belgaum, Mysore, all lost their deposits. Assembly seats were contested in these states as well in Gujarat but only in Rajkot District of Gujarat and South Kanara District of Mysore did the party poll more than 5% of the vote.

Appraisal

Malkani, editor of the Organizer assessing the early returns from the election wrote: “The Jana Sangh progress is real but hardly spectacular.”³²

The resolution of the working committee said:

...The committee feels that the Jana Sangh in spite of the odds against it has registered a definite advance both in respect of votes polled and seats won...

In respect of state assemblies the election results in U.P., Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Punjab and Bombay have quite encouraging...

The Jana Sangh however, had got a set-back in West Bengal, here it had not been able to maintain the position it had secured in the last elections – as also in Bihar and Karnatak...Lack of solid organizational base and lack of resources were found to be the main factor responsible...

The committee feels deeply concerned over the important part played by casteism and communalism, particularly Muslim communalism.³³

The party had obtained its largest measure of support from the state of U.P. and this has continued ever since. It made an important showing in M.P. too. Its success in Maharashtra was temporary, being based on one issue, the formation of the unilingual state of Maharashtra, while in W.B. it was nearly out. In Rajasthan support for the Jana Sangh ideology met intense fight from the most conservatives of Hindu parties the Ram Rajya Parishad. Although the Jana Sangh did obtain a fair representation in the state.

Thus the party had now faced its second electoral challenge. It had increased its seats slightly in Parliament and in the states. Beyond seats, the party had developed a good base from which to expand in some of the states, most notably in U.P. and Madhya Pradesh. It was now all set to refine and develop further in the period between the 1957 and 1962 elections.

In 1958, the municipal corporation of Delhi was elected. The result was a crushing setback for the Congress which lost its majority in the corporation. Of the 80 elective seats, the Congress took 31 and the Jana Sangh 25. (Communist 8, Mahasabha 1, Praja Socialist 1, and 14 Independents)³⁴

Organizer said...

³² Organizer, X: 28, March 28, 1957

³³ Organizer, X: 34, April 29, 1957.

³⁴ Organizer, XII: 26, Sept. 22, 1958.

This election has made it clear that the Congress is very much on the way out in Delhi. Also that it is thriving only on the divided vote of the opposition. In supporting Mirza the Jana Sangh taught Congress quite a few lessons. One of these is that, contrary to Congress propaganda, it has no animus against Muslim priestly class. And thirdly, it has reminded the Congress that it cannot overlook the place of the Jana Sangh in the political life of the Capital.³⁵

The Third Lok Sabha Elections-1962

In 1962 general elections the Jana Sangh ran more candidates both for Lok Sabha and for assembly seats throughout India than any party except the Congress itself. In no state, except Delhi, did the party contest all Lok Sabha seats but it did contest a majority of the seats in Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Punjab and half the seats in Rajasthan. No Lok Sabha seats were contested in either Orissa or Assam. The Jana Sangh, as usual, both made a statement that no electoral alliances would be contracted with other political parties, and went about attempting to make local adjustment with several parties. Talks were held with the other Hindu parties—Ram Rajya Parishad, Hindu Maha Sabha and also with the Swatantra Party. The results were few.

Results

The Jana Sangh was delighted with the results of the 1962 elections. This does not mean that there were not some considerable disappointments in certain states and in many key contests. The party however did increase its membership in the Lok Sabha to 14 from the four elected in 1957 and the seven sitting just before the elections. In state assemblies Jana Sangh now filled 116 seats as compared with but 46 elected in 1957. The increase in popular vote was modest: from 5.9% to 6.44% in the Lok Sabha and 4.03% to 6.07% in the assemblies. The party made a gain in the percentage of the poll received in assembly voting in each state contested, except West Bengal, and also in Lok Sabha voting the poll increased except in Maharashtra, West Bengal, Punjab and Rajasthan.

In the Lok Sabha the major disappointment came when all sitting members were eliminated from the house, the contesting six being defeated in the elections. On the other hand the Jana Sangh achieved the status of “official opposition” i.e., the largest opposition party having at least ten percent of the seats in both Uttar Pradesh and

³⁵ Ibid.

Madhya Pradesh. For the first time the party entered the assembly in Bihar; and for the first time it contested seats in Kerala. The seats gained in 1957 in Maharashtra as a result of the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti alliance were lost in 1962.

Uttar Pradesh continued to be the key state for the Jana Sangh. The Lok Sabha membership increased from two to seven and the assembly strength from 17 to 49. Vajpayee contested two Lok Sabha seats. He was defeated in Balrampur, U.P., the seat from which he was elected in 1957 by less than one percent of the total vote, by Subhadra Joshi of the Congress. He was also defeated in the Lucknow seat. The reason for this was that both he and Balraj Madhok, who was also defeated, spent excessive time campaigning for the party outside their respective constituencies. Raghuvira (party president) was also defeated in Benaras. In all, the Jana Sangh contested 74 of the 86 Lok Sabha seats, won seven and lost 33 deposits while polling 17.57% of the vote.

Madhya Pradesh also saw produced a Jana Sangh official opposition in the assembly and sent three Jana Sanghis to the Lok Sabha. In this state, the Jana Sangh received a higher percentage of the vote, 17.86%, than in any other state. The party contested 28 of the 36 Lok Sabha seats, winning three and losing 13 deposits. In another prominent contest a Jana Sanghi, Laxminarayan Pandey, defeated Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Kailash Nath Katju, by a small margin. In the previous election the fortunes had been in the reverse.

Rajasthan saw considerable gains by the Jana Sangh in the election for the assembly; the number of seats won increased from 6 to 15, as compared to 1957 and the percentage of the vote rose from 5.42% to 9.15%. The party also won a Lok Sabha seat, although its share of the poll for the Lok Sabha decreased as four of the eleven candidates lost their deposits while none of the seven contesting in 1957 had done so. The southeastern reaches of the state were the strongest areas of the party.

In the Punjab, the Jana Sangh won three Lok Sabha seats where none had been won before and the percentage of votes received was more than 15%; in the assembly, the number of seats dropped from nine to eight while the percentage of votes rose but moderately from 8.6% to 9.7%. The party was badly split after the division of Punjab and Haryana, and was brought together by the personal efforts of Balraj Madhok.

In Delhi, the Jana Sangh sharply increased its share of the Lok Sabha vote from 1/5 to 1/3 and lost the only seat it had before the election. There is no assembly in Delhi, but elections to the Delhi municipal corporation were held simultaneously with the

Lok Sabha polling. Here too, the Jana Sangh increased its share of the vote from 26.36% in 1958 to 30.97% and saw the number of seats held drop from 25 to 8. While the results in terms of seats won were more than disappointing to the Jana Sangh, the expansion of support for the party to new levels and in all areas of the Union Territory were taken as a source of encouragement.

In Bihar, the Jana Sangh had shown almost no progress at all between the 1952 and 1957 elections. The RSS base was comparatively weak, in comparison with other states of the Hindi-belt. Much of the southern part of the state was populated by tribals, many of them Christians, with whom the Jana Sangh was unable to make much progress. The hopes of merger with the Janata Party were dashed, because it merged with Swatantra soon after the latter was launched.

Table: 5, Electoral Performance of the BJS, 1962 Indian Parliamentary Elections

Sr. No.	State/U.T.	Seats			Vote Polled (%)
		Total	Contested	Won	
1	Himachal Pradesh	4	2	-	4.49
2	Punjab	22	17	3	15.18
3	Delhi	5	5	-	32.66
4	Uttar Pradesh	86	74	7	17.57
5	Madhya Pradesh	36	28	3	17.87
6	Bihar	53	13	-	2.34
7	Odisha	20	-	-	-
8	West Bengal	36	4	-	1.05

9	Assam	12	-	-	-
10	Manipur	2	-	-	-
11	Tripura	2	-	-	-
12	Rajasthan	22	11	1	9.28
13	Gujarat	22	5		1.44
14	Maharashtra	44	17		4.4
15	Mysore	26	7	-	2.68
16	Andhra Pradesh	43	8	-	1.17
16	Kerala	18	4	-	0.68
17	Madras	41	1	-	0.04
	All India	494	196	14	6.44

Table: 6, Electoral Performance of BJS, 1962 State Assemblies Elections

Sr. No.	States	Seats	Contested	Won	Lost Deposits	Votes Polled (%)
1	Andhra Pradesh	301	70	0	70	1.04
2	Assam	105	4	0	4	0.45
3	Bihar	318	75	3	61	2.77
4	Gujarat	154	26	0	23	17.47
5	Kerala	126	3	0	3	0.66

6	Madhya Pradesh	288	195	41	91	16.66
7	Madras	206	4	0	4	0.08
8	Maharashtra	264	127	0	100	5.00
9	Mysore	208	63	0	56	2.29
10	Orissa	140	-	-	-	-
11	Punjab	154	80	8	47	9.72
12	Rajasthan	176	94	15	55	9.17
13	Uttar Pradesh	430	377	49	192	16.46
14	West Bengal	252	25	0	24	0.45

Union Territories

1	Delhi	-	-	-	-	-
2	Himachal Pradesh	-	-	-	-	-
3	Manipur	-	-	-	-	-
4	Tripura	-	-	-	-	-
	All India	3122	1143	116	730	6.07

(Total includes Kerala mid-term assembly election of 1960)

Sources: Election Commission of India, Report on the Third General Elections in India, 1962, Vol. II, New Delhi, n.d.

Seminar 94, June 1967.

The gains of the Jana Sangh were modest. The party won three seats in the assembly; of 75 seats contested, 61 candidates lost their deposits. The percentage of the vote received by the Jana Sangh more than doubled, but it was still a tiny 2.77%. The party also contested 13 of the 53 Lok Sabha seats, lost 10 deposits and polled 2.3% of the vote. While the record was not terrific it was a beginning.

In 1957, the Jana Sangh won two Lok Sabha seats and four assembly seats in Maharashtra. In 1962, the party increased its share of the vote 2 1/2 times and won no seats either in the assembly or in parliament. The increase in vote is deceptive for it was attained only by increasing the number of candidates from 18 to 127 for the assembly and 100 of them lost their deposits. The situation is not difficult to explain.

The seats in 1957 had been won on the strength of Jana Sangh participation in the Samyukta Maharashtra Samiti. The Jana Sangh withdrew early from the Samiti and in any case, the *raison d'être* of the Samiti disappeared when the object of the alliance, a separate Maharashtra state, was attained on April 1, 1960. Having conceded a popular demand, the Congress both brought increased popularity to itself and fragmented the opposition alliance. The Congress which in 1957 had hardly won a majority of the seats in the areas that were to become Maharashtra swept all before it in 1962 and achieved in Maharashtra the largest victory in India for the ruling party. The Jana Sangh was simply swept aside. The party also continued to pay the penalty in Maharashtra for a large Brahmin membership and for its association with the RSS—"the murders of Gandhi" slogan was still a burden around Jana Sangh necks. In the South Indian states the Jana Sangh had not been very successful. In the state of Tamil Nadu (Madras) the Jana Sangh tends to be identified with a Hindu chauvinism and North India Brahmins. The Jana Sangh lacks the resources, leadership and mass media communication in the state.³⁶ Another factor acting against the Jana Sangh in Madras was the emergence of the Swatantra Party and its respected leader "Rajaji", who enjoys a much respected place in Madras politics.

In Andhra Pradesh, the Congress was very strongly well-established and had been able to soak up the Socialist party and defectors from the Congress party who have returned to its folds and hence there seems to be no room for the Jana Sangh in Andhra politics.³⁷ In Kerala, the Jana Sangh made bold to enter the election contest only in 1962, by contesting 4 parliamentary seats, and 3 legislative assembly seats in the mid-term poll. But the party was totally unsuccessful. The failure of the Jana Sangh was a very interesting phenomenon in the state. Since the Communist Party was powerful in the state, the rightist elements looked for a strong party to represent their interests, and the Congress party has been able to fulfill this need. And hence, the chances for the Jana Sangh being established in the state were not very great.³⁸ In Mysore state, caste worked against Jana Sangh expansion. Though the trading and peasant castes were numerically larger than the Brahmin, and though the Jana Sangh had been able to appeal to trading castes in other parts of India, in Mysore it had failed to do so. The

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Myron Weiner, "Party Building in a New Nation: The Indian National Congress, (Chicago, 1967), p. 155.

³⁸ Jhangiani, *op. cit.*, pp 164-65.

reason being that the Jana Sangh had been identified with the numerically small Brahmins; and there is enmity between the Brahmans and other castes, so the latter do not support the Jana Sangh.³⁹

Appraisal

The party was generally pleased with the results, and commentators and the press were by and large impressed. Upadhaya noted that the “party decided to set up candidates in as many areas as was organizationally possible...”⁴⁰ The Jana Sangh had shown “marked progress in numbers, but was still far behind the strength necessary for the fulfillment of the historic task assigned to it.”⁴¹ The Punjab and Maharashtra units expressed the feeling that had they concentrated on fewer seats they might have done better. The official party line was that as many candidates as possible should be exposed in the belief that this would pay off in the long run, even if it was conducive to a setback in the short run.

The Indian press commented on the increase in Jana Sangh votes and representation. The Times of India said:

Their hard organizational work paid dividends, but their success surely is primarily due to the fact that they voice the political aspirations of a large section of the electorate which is becoming increasingly critical of the economic policies of the Congress... The vote received by these two parties must... be regarded principally as a vote against the Congress Party’s socialism.⁴²

The Hindu also linked the increase in Jana Sangh votes with the emergence of the Swatantra:

If any clear outline is to be traced in this contradictory, and confusing, shift of electoral opinion in the various states, it must be sought primarily in a developing contest between pragmatic socialism of the Congress . . . and the extremism of the Communists, on the one side and, on the other, the progressive liberalism of the Swatantra and Jana Sangh parties, with their emphasis on limits to the State’s incursions in the economic field and greater realism in planning.

³⁹ Ibid. p. 162-64.

⁴⁰ Organizer, 88:4, May 28, 1962.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Times of India (Delhi), March 2, 1962, p. 7.

It is significant that both the Times of India and the Hindu omitted a charge of communalism and the latter coupled the Jana Sangh with the Swatantra Party as progressive and liberal.

The Eastern Economist remarked:

It is the Jana Sangh again that promised, because of its militant and disciplined character, a far greater opposition to the Congress in the years to come. One might or might not like this particular expression of opinion of the Hindi electorate but it is undoubtedly a force of great importance which needs quickly to be evaluated.⁴³

In Uttar Pradesh, it was seen that the Jana Sangh had increased its rural vote, but in the Punjab, it still relied on the urban vote. The Hindu parties opposed each other again in many contests, but the Jana Sangh succeeded to a greater extent than its rivals. To sum up, the effects of the 1962 election were:

First the Jana Sangh made no considerable development outside the Hindi-belt. All of its parliamentary and assembly seats were won in the states of north India. Outside this area approximately 90% of the Jana Sangh candidates lost their security deposits when they failed to poll one-sixth of the vote in their constituencies. Secondly, a study of the assembly constituencies in Uttar Pradesh shows that the Jana Sangh increased its share of the votes in rural areas, though both in rural and urban areas the share increased. Many observers had considered the Jana Sangh a party of the urban Middle-class Hindu. In Uttar Pradesh this seems to be changing, although in Punjab the party remains restrained to the cities and dependent upon the votes of the urbanized Hindu population rather than the rural Sikhs. Thirdly, another theory held that the Jana Sangh would poll best in areas where the number of Muslims was substantial. A study of the districts in Uttar Pradesh shows that there is no obvious correlation between the percentage of Muslims and the percentage of votes received by the Jana Sangh.⁴⁴

The emergence of the Swatantra Party brought a competitor to the Jana Sangh in its role as a conservative party as distinct from the role it plays as a Hindu party. The parties contested mainly in Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The future alliance of the parties was a question that was very much in the minds of the observers of the Indian political scene. The 1962 election brought a much stronger Jana Sangh

⁴³ Eastern Economist, March 2, 1962, p. 5.

⁴⁴ Craig Baxter, *op. cit.*, p. 99.

prepared to play the role of official opposition in Uttar Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh and ready to make its voice heard more frequently in the Lok Sabha.

The Fourth Lok Sabha Election-1967

For Legislative Assembly elections, the Jana Sangh contested almost all the seats in U.P. and Delhi. In Haryana the party contested 48 of 81 seats and 30 out of 60 in Himachal Pradesh. In Bihar 265 candidates were set up for 318 seats. In Maharashtra 165 of 270 seats were contested. In all other states the number was less than 50%. In Tripura, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Gujarat and Orissa candidates were selected in only a few constituencies.

Out of 520 Lok Sabha seats, the Jana Sangh contested 249. All the seats from U.P., M.P., Haryana, Punjab, Bihar and Himachal Pradesh were contested except where independents were supported or adjustments were made with other parties. In an interview with Madhok it was learned that the Jana Sangh was expecting victories in U.P., M.P., Rajasthan and Haryana.⁴⁵ The symbol of the party was broadly displayed. Widespread dissatisfaction with the Congress helped the Jana Sangh campaign.

Anti-Congress propaganda was used by all opposition parties to a substantial extent. The economic situation was exploited by all parties as being a remarkable failure of the Congress rule. With the Chinese invasion in 1962, and the war with Pakistan in 1965, national feeling could also be exploited. Even though the people were unhappy with the Congress, Deen Dayal Upadhyaya said,

...it is considered necessary and desirable that instead of basing our strategy on a negative approach to the Congress we would strive to present a positive programme and build an alternative. We therefore decided to keep away from the joint fronts forged with all sorts of combinations by other opposition parties. Instead we decided to contest the elections on our own ticket and programme. The Pratinidhi Sabha however permitted adjustments with national democratic elements.⁴⁶

Such adjustments were made with the Swatantra Party in Gujarat, Odisha, Rajasthan and Haryana. Attempts were made in Bihar and U.P., but they failed. The Swatantra leaders did not want to ally with the Jana Sangh for fear of losing communist support in Madras and Andhra.

⁴⁵ Indian Express, June 9, 1967.

⁴⁶ Organizer, XX: 36, April 3, 1967.

There was considerable debate in the Jana Sangh Pratinidhi Sabha about the party participating in post-election coalition governments. The General Council did approve of such a move, but there were arguments on both sides of the question. The strongest arguments put forth in favor of joining coalitions were that the people's choice ought to be respected and if they had given no clear mandate to one party, coalition government would be the result. When members were stunned about working with the Communists, a reasonable counter-comment was that the ministry could be better controlled by participating inside it.⁴⁷

Results

The results of the elections were broadly much-admired by all opposition parties. Congress had maintained its majority at the Center, but lost its majority in half the states in the Union. For the Jana Sangh, the results showed a general increasing trend in all the states and for Lok Sabha seats too. In the Lok Sabha, the Jana Sangh won a total of 35 seats; compared to 14 in the 1962 elections. They were won in the same states as in 1962 - M.P., Haryana, Punjab, Rajasthan and U.P. with one seat from Bihar. The popular vote polled for the Jana Sangh in the Lok Sabha seats rose from 6.44% to 9.37%.

In the contest for the Legislative Assembly seats, the Jana Sangh was successful in the North Indian "Hindi-belt" states, and made small progress in some other states as well. In U.P. the Jana Sangh was returned as the official opposition party with 97 seats out of an Assembly of 425 and was soon to participate in the United Front Ministry which followed when the Congress ministry fell on April 3, 1967.⁴⁸ A phenomenal success for the party was the capture of Kanpur city. In U.P. the party had nominated a number of Muslims too.

Table: 7, Electoral Performance of the BJS, 1967 Indian Parliamentary Elections

Sr. No.	State/U.T.	Seats			Vote Polled (%)
		Total	Contested	Won	
1	Jammu & Kashmir	6	3	-	20.35

⁴⁷ Organizer, April 30, 1967.

⁴⁸ Paul Wallace, Asian Survey, p. 10.

2	Himachal Pradesh	6	3	-	19.06
3	Punjab	13	8	1	12.49
4	Chandigarh	1	1	1	48.7
5	Haryana	9	7	1	19.85
6	Delhi	7	7	6	46.72
7	Uttar Pradesh	85	77	12	22.18
8	Madhya Pradesh	37	32	10	29.56
9	Bihar	53	48	1	11.05
10	Odisha	20	2	-	0.55
11	West Bengal	40	7	-	1.39
12	Assam	14	3	-	5.48
13	Nagaland	1	-	-	-
14	Manipur	2	-	-	-
15	Tripura	2	-	-	-
16	Rajasthan	23	7	3	10.27
17	Gujarat	24	-	-	-
18	Dadra & Nagar	1	1	-	4.09
19	Maharashtra	45	26	-	7.36
20	Goa, Daman&Diu	2	-	-	-
21	Mysore	27	5	-	2.25
22	Andhra Pradesh	41	4	-	1
23	Kerala	19	4	-	1.39
24	Madras	39	4		0.22

25	Pondicherry	1	-	-	-
26	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	-	-	-
	All India	520	249	35	9.31

Table: 8, Electoral Performance of BJS, 1967 State Assemblies Elections

Sr. No.	States	Seats	Contested	Won	Votes Polled (%)
1	Andhra Pradesh	287	80	3	2.26
2	Assam	126	20	0	1.86
3	Bihar	318	267	27	10.69
4	Gujarat	168	17	1	2.06
5	Haryana	81	47	12	1.35
6	Kerala	133	94	0	0.9
7	Madhya Pradesh	296	265	77	28.28
8	Madras	234	24	7	0.14
9	Maharashtra	270	165	4	8.34
10	Mysore	216	39	4	2.71
11	Odisha	140	19	0	0.54
12	Punjab	104	49	9	9.36
13	Rajasthan	184	63	22	11.61
14	Uttar Pradesh	425	400	97	21.53
15	West Bengal	280	58	1	0.9

Union Territories

1	Chandigarh	-	-	-	-
2	Delhi	-	-	-	-
3	Himachal Pradesh	60	33	7	*
4	Manipur	30	-	-	-
5	Tripura	30	5	-	**
6	Pondicherry	No Election			
7	Goa, Daman & Diu	30	-	-	-
	All India	3477	1575	267	8.74

**Sources: R. Chandidas, Leon Clark, Richard Fontera, Ward Morehouse (Eds.)
India Votes: A Source Book on Indian Elections, (New York, 1968)
Seminar 94, June 1967. Indian Express, Feb. 23, 1967.**

In Bihar the party won 26 seats and had members in the Bihar state Cabinet. This was a significant achievement because in 1962, it had claimed only 3 seats, and none in 1957. In the United Front Ministry there were Jana Sangh members in the state cabinet. Soon there would be Jana Sanghis in the M.P. cabinet and in the Punjab too, after the mid-term poll in February 1969.¹⁷⁹ In Rajasthan the party did not fare as well as was expected though it polled seven seats more than in 1962. This was partly due to the presence of the Swatantra and its support by the Jaipur Royal family.

In Delhi, the Jana Sangh won spectacular success. It won by 7 Lok Sabha seats; 33 of the 56 Metropolitan Council and 52 of the 100 Municipal Corporation. The Jana Sangh became the ruling party in the capital. Its success there is attributed to 2 important factors: its cadre of RSS workers and the people's dissatisfaction with Congress rule, and the exploitation by Jana Sangh propaganda of this disenchantment. Of those on the Metropolitan Council, one was a Muslim - Anwar Ali Delhvi.

Besides its success in the Hindi-belt, the Jana Sangh won seats in some other non-Hindi states as well—three in Andhra, one in Gujarat, four in Maharashtra, three in Mysore and one in West Bengal.

Appraisal

The election results were a shock to the Congress Party; the electorate had rejected the party, but its choice of another one party was not clear, primarily because there is no one all-India party of the competence of the Congress. Coalition governments had come into power in Punjab, Bihar, West Bengal, Orrisa and Kerala. The stability of

these coalitions was very much in doubt and it was anticipated that there would be substantial efforts to cause defections and collapse ministries. The Jana Sangh participated in coalitions in Bihar, U.P. and Punjab, In Haryana it was decided to support the government, not to accept any Cabinet positions. In M.P., the Jana Sangh would soon participate in the coalition government that was formed after the Congress ministry fell in July. The situation was enormously fluid and mid-term polls were predicted for many states.

The election results were a victory for the Jana Sangh, and showed the right wing trend of the electorate. The party had enhanced its position in all the states and Union Territories where it participated in the election. The results also showed an expansion base of Jana Sangh support by the seats outside the Hindi heartland. Leaders were beginning to speak of modified policies. Yet the RSS base of the party was strong. As the Indian political experiment entered a new phase portents of trouble ahead and signs of an increasingly effective participatory democracy appear in kaleidoscopic confusion giving an atmosphere of confusion and excitement to the changing Indian scene.”⁴⁹

The Fifth Lok Sabha Elections-1971

Since the 1967 elections there had been various changes on the Indian political scene. After the better performance in the 1967 elections to the Lok Sabha and state assemblies, the BJS reverted from its earlier policy and associated itself closely with the Akali Dal and the Communists in several states. However, the party’s alliance with the communists aroused considerable opposition within the party “Golwalkar himself advised the Jana Sangh leadership against working with communists. At the party’s general council meeting at Delhi in April 1967 the leadership was sharply questioned... on the issue”.⁵⁰

During this debate on Jana Sangh’s participation in ministries which incorporated Communists, Atal Bihari Vajpayee (Leader of the parliamentary Wing) emerged as the spokesman of the ‘left’ view point in the party. He preferred to continue the party’s support with the communists and ‘left’ parties and wished-for the party to

⁴⁹ Norman D. Palmer, “India's 4th General Election,” Asian Survey, VIII: 5, May, 1967, p.

⁵⁰ W.K. Andersen and S. D. Damle, “The Brotherhood in India: The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh and Hindu Revivalism,” Vistaar Publication, New Delhi, 1987, p. 178.

make a more dynamic effort to mobilize the under privileged and dissatisfied voters”.⁵¹ Deen Dayal Upadhyaya, while skeptical of the Communists, supported Vajpayee. In late 1967, Sunder Singh Bhandari (a former RSS pracharak) was elected to succeed Madhok; nonetheless, Upadhyaya himself assumed the position of party president. This reorientation of the party did not go unchallenged. Madhok ferociously resisted the party’s leftward twist. Madhok opposed any form of support with the communists and socialists. During the central government employee’s strike in 1968, he advised the party leaders to resist it, while the Jana Sangh general council had earlier decided to support the strike. There were some other issues also which annoyed Madhok and the conservatives in the party.

Due to lack of common set of policy objectives and ineffective system of mediation, the united front ministries, joined by the BJS, failed. Mid-term state assembly elections were held (Bihar, Haryana, Punjab, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal) in which the BJS leadership, because of its experience with the united front, opted to go alone in most places. However, the party performed “less well in the mid-term elections than in 1967. Some senior figures in the Jana Sangh believed that the party could have done better had it worked out electoral agreements”.⁵² With Deen Dayal Upadhyaya’s mysterious death on 11 February 1968, Atal Bihari Vajpayee became party president. He formulated policy and favored to avoid making alliances with other parties unless there had been a prior agreement on principles. Unofficial talks were held in March and April 1969, between leaders of the BJS, the Bharatiya Kranti Dal (BKD), Swatantra and the Praja Socialist Party (PSP). Vajpayee insisted that any merger or alliance must be followed by a common accepted set of principles.

After the party’s annual session at Bombay in 1969, the leaders of the BJS, Swatantra and BKD resumed their meeting. However, the same could not be materialized and the BKD and Swatantra continued their talks without the BJS. “While Vajpayee and most of the working committee members were moving away from participation in any “grand alliances”, Madhok and his supporters argued for a merger with other conservative parties”.⁵³ The party leadership, however, refused to attention his advice. Madhok compared his differences inside the BJS with the differences between Jawaharlal Nehru and Vallabhbhai Patel. He branded himself with the “nationalist”,

⁵¹ Ibid. p. 179.

⁵² Ibid. p. 180.

⁵³ Ibid. p. 181.

“democratic” and “conservative” Patel and his opponents to Nehru. The Jana Sangh parliamentary board met in Delhi in September, 1969, censured Madhok for his comments.

In spite of pressures from the right, Vajpayee remained unwilling on the issue of grand alliance. However, the circumstances had changed when, on 27 December, 1970, leaders of the Congress (O), Swatantra and the BJS met in Delhi to consider an electoral alliance. About a week later the Samyukta Socialist Party (SSP) also joined the meeting. The state units of these parties were instructed to set up committees to distribute the seats among the candidates of these four parties. The main point of agreement among these four parties was the issue of their resistance to Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. Nonetheless, there were grass roots apprehensions to fight the election against a prime minister, whose catchphrase was “garibi hatao”. The catchphrase had the power of cross-cutting different socio-economic cleavages and benefited the Congress.

Results

In this parliamentary election, the BJS contested 157 seats out of 518 seats and managed to get 7.35% vote share. The party in this election had contested 92 seats less than the preceding election and received a negative swing of 1.96 percent.

The party had contested all the seats in the union territories of Chandigarh and Delhi. The party had also contested 37 seats (out of 85) in Uttar Pradesh, 28 seats each in Madhya Pradesh (out of 37) and Bihar (out of 53), 13 seats (out of 45) in Maharashtra, 7 seats (out of 23) in Rajasthan, 5 seats each in Punjab (out of 13), Gujarat (out of 24) and Andhra Pradesh (out of 41), 4 seats (out of 40) in West Bengal, 3 seats each in Jammu & Kashmir (out of 6), Haryana (out of 9) and Kerala (out of 19), 2 seats each in Himachal Pradesh (out of 4) and Mysore (out of 27) and one seat each in Orissa (out of 20), Assam (out of 14), Tripura (out of 2) and Tamil Nadu (out of 39).

In this election, the party had polled 7.35 percent of the national popular vote. There were seven states (Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Bihar) and two union territories (Chandigarh and Delhi) where the party has polled above the national percent vote. The party had much better support base in terms of vote percent in the states and union territories of Madhya Pradesh (33.56%), Delhi (29.57%) and Chandigarh (23.31%). In other states,

the party had polled more than 10 percent in Rajasthan (12.38%), Uttar Pradesh (12.23%), Jammu & Kashmir (12.23%), Bihar (12.1%), Haryana (11.19%) and Himachal Pradesh (10.64%).

In this mid-term poll, the party had contested 157 seats and won only 22 seats with 7.35 percent vote. The party experienced a loss of 13 seats than the preceding election. Out of the 22 seats won by the party, 11 were from Madhya Pradesh, 4 each from Uttar Pradesh and Rajasthan, 2 from Bihar and one from Haryana.

In Madhya Pradesh the BJS won 11 seats and polled one-third of the vote with the help of former rulers of Gwalior.⁵⁴ The party managed to win 4 seats from Rajasthan, one more than in 1967.

Table: 9, Electoral Performance of the BJS, 1971 Indian Parliamentary Elections

Sr. No.	State/U.T.	Seats			Vote Polled (%)
		Total	Contested	Won	
1	Jammu & Kashmir	6	3	-	12.23
2	Himachal Pradesh	4	2	-	10.64
3	Punjab	13	5	-	4.45
4	Chandigarh	1	1	-	23.31
5	Haryana	9	3	1	11.19
6	Delhi	7	7	-	29.57
7	Uttar Pradesh	85	37	4	12.23
8	Madhya Pradesh	37	28	11	33.56
9	Bihar	53	28	2	12.1
10	Odisha	20	1	-	0.22
11	West Bengal	40	4	-	0.85

⁵⁴ Ibid. p. 183.

12	Assam	14	1	-	2.46
13	Nagaland	1	-	-	-
14	Manipur	2	-	-	-
15	Tripura	2	1	-	0.49
16	Rajasthan	23	7	4	12.38
17	Gujarat	24	5	-	2.22
18	Dadra & Nagar	1	-	-	-
19	Maharashtra	45	13	-	5.23
20	Goa, Daman&Diu	2	-	-	-
21	Mysore	27	2	-	1.9
22	Andhra Pradesh	41	5	-	1.57
23	Kerala	19	3	-	1.4
24	Tamil Nandu	39	1		0.02
25	Pondicherry	1	-	-	-
26	Andaman & Nicobar Islands	1	-	-	-
	All India	518	157	22	7.35

Maharaj Kumar Brij Raj Singh and Raja Hemendra Singh, members of the Kota and Udaipur princely families respectfully, won 2 of the party's 4 seats".⁵⁵

"Jana Sangh lost very badly in Delhi and U.P., two of its major strongholds, but managed to with stand the Congress wave in Bihar, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, where its percentage of votes increased. In the latter two states, however, the Jana Sangh increase was due to the support of the princes rather than to any stable social base and party organization. In these two states it is the princes who were strong, not Jana Sangh, and a change in the political loyalty of the princes would be at the expense of Jana Sangh".⁵⁶ The electoral grand alliance between the BJS, Congress (O), Swatantra and the Samyukta Socialists (SSP) proved to be a failure.

With 22 seats in the parliament, the BJS was one of the largest opposition parties. Among the opposition parties, only the Congress (O) with 10.43 percent of the popular vote out-pollled its 7.35 percent.

Table: 10, BJS Lok Sabha Seats Distribution

Year	Congress	BJS	BJS Seats from Hindi-belt
1952	364	3	3
1957	371	4	2
1962	361	14	14
1967	283	35	35

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 183

⁵⁶ Mynor Weiner, "The 1971 Elections and the Indian Party System", Asian Survey, Vol. XI, No. 12, p. 1161.

1971	352	22	22
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Source: Election Commission of India (ECI) and David Butler, Ashok Lahiri and Prannoy Roy. 1995. India Decides: Elections 1952-1995. New Delhi: Books and Things pp. 114 - 115.

Sixth Lok Sabha Elections-1977

After imposing the internal emergency in the country in June 1975, Indira Gandhi dissolved the Lok Sabha on January 8, 1977. Jayaprakash Narayan welcomed the PM's decision to hold the general election. He thought it a good opportunity for the opposition parties to fight unitedly against the Congress party. He said "I hope the opposition will rise to the occasion and come together and fight the elections unitedly as one party."

It is because the efforts of Jayaprakash Narayan that the four non-Congress and non-Communist oppositions i.e. the Jana Sangh, Congress (O), Bharatiya Lok Dal and the Socialist Party came together under the banner of Janata Party. Thus, the Janata Party was launched in New Delhi on January 23, 1977, with Morarji Desai as chairman and Mr. Charan Singh as Deputy Chairman. The Janata Party's manifesto promised to restore democracy and civil liberties, to remove all the anti-democratic laws, to promote economic development, to ensure decentralization of economic and political power etc.

Jayaprakash Narayan and other leaders of the party went round the important centers of the country encouraging people to vote for the Janata Party and put an end to the authoritarianism of Indira Gandhi. Having ascertained the fair chances for the win of Janata Party, Jagjivan Ram resigned from the government and the Congress party. He launched Congress For Democracy (CFD) on February, 1977. The leaders of Janata Party and CFD agreed to an adjustment of seats in Lok Sabha Election. Apart from this, the Janata Party also made the seat adjustment with other political parties i.e. the Communist Party of India (M), Akali Dal, Republican Party, Revolutionary Socialist Party, the Forward Block and the Peasants and Workers Party etc.

In fact nobody really expected that the Janata Party would be voted for power. The most optimistic expectation was that the party would emerge as strong opposition to the Congress party. But the election results showed that the Janata Party with its ally CFD secured 298 seats. The Congress party got only 153 seats. In this way, the Janata

Party assumed the power at the centre on March 24, 1977 and Morarji Desai became the PM.

Having captured the power at the centre, it was the duty of Janata Party to fulfill the promises made in the election manifesto. But the fact cannot be denied that the Janata Government had very limited time at its disposal and much of its time was spent in the beginning in holding the state assembly elections etc. Although inter-group rivalry surfaced within the party from the very beginning but the victory of the Janata Party in the state assembly elections further accelerated inter-group competition for electing state party leaders.

In spite of the group rivalries within the party, the Janata Party put into practice some of its election promises. The rights and civil liberties of the people were restored. But some the black laws still remained in the statute book. Moreover, the Janata Government had restored freedom of expression to a large extent but its action against the editors of various news-papers showed that the Janata Party leaders also shared some of the dictatorial traits of Indira Gandhi.

The Janata Party had carried on propaganda of the 42nd Amendment during the 1977 Lok Sabha election. But after coming to power, the party, instead of scraping the whole Amendment Act, chose to deal with different provisions of the Act on by one.

Table: 11, Electoral Performance of the Janata Party/BLD, 1977 Parliamentary Election

Sr. No.	STATE/UT	Seats			Votes
		Total	Contested	Won	Polled (%)
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	42	37	1	32.33
2	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2	-	-	-
3	ASSAM	14	11	3	35.78
4	BIHAR	54	52	52	64.98
5	GOA DAMAN & DIU	2	2	-	14.7
6	GUJARAT	26	26	16	49.54
7	HARYANA	10	10	10	70.35
8	HIMACHAL PRADESH	4	4	4	57.19

9	JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	2	-	8.23
10	KARNATAKA	28	28	2	39.89
11	KERALA	20	3	-	7.2
12	MADHYA PRADESH	40	39	37	57.9
13	MAHARASHTRA	48	31	19	31.39
14	MANIPUR	2	2	-	8.58
15	MEGHALAYA	2	-	-	-
16	MIZORAM	1	-	-	-
17	NAGALAND	1	-	-	-
18	ORISSA	21	20	15	51.77
19	PUNJAB	13	3	3	12.5
20	RAJASTHAN	25	25	24	65.21
21	SIKKIM	1	-	-	-
22	TAMIL NADU	39	-	-	-
23	TRIPURA	2	1	1	17.83
24	UTTAR PRADESH	85	85	85	68.07
25	WEST BENGAL	42	15	15	21.46
26	ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	1	-	-	-
27	CHANDIGARH	1	1	1	66.13
28	DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	1	1		31.82
29	NCT DELHI	7	7	7	68.15
30	LAKSHADWEEP	1	-	-	-
31	PONDICHERRY	1	-	-	-
	TOTAL	542	405	295	41.32

The fiscal policies of the Janata Government were inflation-oriented. The burden of extra taxes fell on the poorer sections of the urban and rural population. The rise in indirect taxation became a part of cost of production and of the prices of goods which are consumed by the large number of the people. The policy badly affected the standard of living of the people belonging to low and middle income groups.

It is well known fact that the Janata Party was a hotchpotch combination of contrasting groups and parties subscribing to opposing ideologies and led by men of incompatible temperaments. Due to this, after the declaration of 1977 Lok Sabha elections, the Janata Party leaders were unable to agree among themselves about who should head the government. This continued to be a bone contention throughout the Janata rule. It ultimately caused a split in the party.

Within the Janata Party there were advocates of two different kinds of organizations. The Jana Sangh group wished to have an organization the membership of which would be restricted to ideologically committed people. The other group in the party wanted to follow the Congress model in building up the Janata Party. The view of the latter group prevailed.

This inter-group struggle led to the resignation of Charan Singh from the cabinet on June 30, 1978. However, Charan Singh's exit from the cabinet proved damaging to his group. The group rivalry widened day by day in spite of Charan Singh's reentry in the cabinet.

The failures of the Janata Government were not the main factors for its collapse. The main cause of the breakup of Janata Party and the collapse of the Janata Government was the keen desire of some of its leaders for the post of Prime Minister and mindless strengthening of group policies to serve their individual interest.

Charan Singh carefully nursed the ambition of becoming the Prime Minister. He master-minded the defection of himself and his followers at a time when the Janata Government was facing a resolution of non-confidence in the Lok Sabha. He accepted the support of the Congress led by Indira Gandhi and on the basis of this support, he managed to satisfy the President that he enjoyed a larger following in the Lok Sabha than Morarji Desai.

It can be concluded that the Janata Party had come to power with the pledge that it would oppose dictatorship by all means. But after defecting from the Janata Party, Charan Singh and his supporters accepted the support of the Congress (I). Like Congress party leaders they were also not respectful of mandate of people. Had the defectors been respectful of people's mandate, they would have explained to the electorate the reasons for their defection. But this did not happen. The electorate had voted for them as members of a political party. But without seeking the opinion of the electorate they had defected from the party for which they voted. This was betrayal of the trust reposed by the people in their representatives.

The Eighth Lok Sabha Elections-1984

The Bharatiya Janata Party participated in electoral politics as a new party in May 1980. But it suffered the electoral setback during the formative years. The deep ideological crisis and the dilemma over the inheritance of the historical legacy of the BJS, kept the BJP worried adversely affecting its electoral performance. The “first past-the-post” system of elections became helpful to the Congress because of the divisions in the non-Congress votes. Towards the latter part of 1980s, the BJP restructured its ideological commitments with the new leadership of L.K. Advani. The party clearly inherited the legacy of the BJS and openly played the ‘Hindu Card’. This change stand paid good political dividends to the party in subsequent elections.

The Eighth Lok Sabha election provided the opportunity for the BJP to contest the election at the national level. It put up as many as 224 candidates in the different Lok Sabha constituencies of the country. It fielded large number of candidates, in those states where it had led the government or shared the power during the Janata phase. As such the party contested all the 40 seats in Madhya Pradesh, 24 seats in Rajasthan, 3 out of 4 seats in Himachal Pradesh, 5 out of 7 seats in Delhi, 32 out of 54 seats in Bihar, 50 out of 85 seats in Uttar Pradesh, 11 out of 26 seats in Gujarat, and 20 out of 48 seats in Maharashtra.

In its electoral manifesto, the BJP assured the voters to build up a new polity in India based on value based politics, democracy, positive secularism and Gandhian economy. The party expressed its commitment for fair elections; fighting against corruption; providing justice to the people: villagers, townsman, pensioners, woman, scheduled castes, and scheduled tribes... enriching the culture... building up national economy on the basis of agriculture, industry, finance, full employment and energy; and enhancing national security through foreign policy measures and defence mechanism. The BJP promised to defend the unity and integrity of India.

The party entered into selective seat adjustments with non-Congress parties. It shared seats adjustment with Lok Dal in Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh and Delhi. It made electoral adjustment with Telugu Desham in Andhra Pradesh, with Janata Party in Gujarat, and with Congress (S), Janata Party, Peasants and Workers Party in Maharashtra. During the electoral campaign the party emphasized the urban

anarchy and the rural negligence, which had degraded the quality of life, the erosion of moral authority and a total decline of the ruling party in the wake of the shocking assassination of late Prime Minister Mrs. Indira Gandhi., break down of law and order, and alarming poverty, aggravated by increase prices. The BJP called for a new polity, a new government and a new leadership which could be clean, effective and representative of the rich diversity of India.

But a sympathy wave swept the country in the wake of the assassination of Prime Minister Gandhi. Her son Rajiv Gandhi led the Congress (I) to a deciding victory in this election capturing a record number of 415 seats out of 518. The Congress party secured 48.1% votes polled. The entire opposition suffered the greatest ever setback with the division of their votes. However, the BJP could secure 7.74% of votes but seized only 2 seats. In reality the defective electoral system had caused the BJP to suffer a severe inconsistency so far as the gap between the percentage of votes it had polled and seats it had won, was concerned. In the 1984 election the BJP stood next to Congress by securing 7.74% of popular votes. With this percentage the party should have secured nearly 40 seats but it could get only 2 seats, i.e. less than 0.2%.

The BJP's performance in Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh, Delhi and Gujarat was decent. The party secured more than 18% of votes in these states and only few candidates lost their security deposits, showing a significant support base of the party in many constituencies. In Maharashtra it polled 10.07% of votes and 5 candidates out of 20 lost their security deposits. In Uttar Pradesh and Bihar the party suffered its worst setback. It secured 6.42% votes in U.P. and 6.92% votes in Bihar. In Haryana also the party made a miserable performance securing 7.54% of votes and loosing security deposits in 4 seats out of 6 seats contested. The BJP's poor performance in its strongholds was mainly due to the halfhearted cooperation from the RSS cadres. Nonetheless, the prominent leaders of the party lost the election still it could emerge next to the congress party. Its success in mustering popular support by polling 29.99% of votes in Madhya Pradesh, 23.69% in Rajasthan, 23.27% in Himachal Pradesh, 18.85% in Delhi, 18.64% in Gujarat (see Table 13) encouraged the leadership to a great extent for fighting the subsequent election.

The most horrible performance of the party in 1984 Lok Sabha election frustrated its workers. The miserable results led the party to change its leadership and venture for retrospection and reconstruction of the party.

Table: 13, Electoral Performance of the Bharatiya Janata Party, 1984 Lok Sabha Elections

Sr. No.	STATE/UT	Seats			Votes Polled (%)
		Total	Contested	Won	
1	ANDHRA PRADESH	42	2	1	2.22
2	ARUNACHAL PRADESH	2	-	-	-
3	BIHAR	54	32	-	6.92
4	GOA DAMAN & DIU	2	2	-	3.04
5	GUJARAT	26	11	1	18.64
6	HARYANA	10	6	-	7.54
7	HIMACHAL PRADESH	4	3	-	23.27
8	JAMMU & KASHMIR	6	1	-	1.71
9	KARNATAKA	28	6	-	4.68
10	KERALA	20	5	-	1.75
11	MADHYA PRADESH	40	40	-	29.99
12	MAHARASHTRA	48	20	-	10.07
13	MANIPUR	2	1	-	6.96
14	MEGHALAYA	2	-	-	-
15	NAGALAND	1	-	-	-
16	ORISSA	21	4	-	1.18
17	RAJASTHAN	25	24	-	23.69
18	SIKKIM	1	-	-	-
19	TAMIL NADU	39	1	-	0.07
20	TRIPURA	2	1	-	0.77
21	UTTAR PRADESH	85	50	-	6.42
22	WEST BENGAL	42	9	-	0.4

23	ANDAMAN & NICOBAR ISLANDS	1	-	-	-
24	CHANDIGARH	1	1	-	5.6
25	DADRA & NAGAR HAVELI	1	-	-	-
26	DELHI	7	5	-	18.85
27	LAKSHADWEEP	1	-	-	-
28	PONDICHERRY	1	-	-	-
	TOTAL	514	224	-	7.74

Source: STATISTICAL REPORT ON GENERAL ELECTIONS, 1984 TO THE EIGHT LOK SABHA, VOLUME I Election Commission of India

A PARTY FOR ALL INDIA, A PARTY OF ALL INDIANS



NATIONALIST MOVEMENT TAKES SHAPE AS RASHTRIYA SWAYAMSEVAK SANGH (RSS)...

September 27, 1925: Inspired by the public service and restoration of among others, Swami Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Lokmanya Tilak and Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Keshava Balaram Hegde (Doctor) founded the Sangh. The name 'Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh' was formally announced in April 1926.



1934: Mahatma Gandhi visited the RSS winter camp in Wardha in December 1934.

1940: Period of consolidation begins under guidance of second RSS chief, Mahatma Swami Vivekananda (Shri Guru). Sangh social service network starts to expand across India.

1947: Organised 3,000 relief camps for Partition refugees and victims of violence in Punjab and Bengal. RSS stands by Mahatma Gandhi's view that: "There is in Hinduism room enough for Jesus, as there is for Mohammed, Zoroaster and Moses".

October 17, 1947: Guraji flew to Srinagar to persuade the Maharaja of Jammu and Kashmir to accede to the Dominion of India. On October 31, Guraji briefed Sardar Patel that the Mahatma was ready.

January 30, 1948: Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated. RSS expressed shock and grief.

February 1, 1948: Guraji and 7,000 RSS workers were arrested by the Congress government. On February 5, the RSS was banned.

1940: Period of consolidation begins under guidance of second RSS chief, Mahatma Swami Vivekananda (Shri Guru). Sangh social service network starts to expand across India.

1946: RSS was banned by the Congress government.

1947: Organised 3,000 relief camps for Partition refugees and victims of violence in Punjab and Bengal. RSS stands by Mahatma Gandhi's view that: "There is in Hinduism room enough for Jesus, as there is for Mohammed, Zoroaster and Moses".

1948: Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated. RSS expressed shock and grief.

1949: RSS was banned by the Congress government.

1950: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1951: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1952: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1953: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1954: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1955: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1956: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.

1957: RSS was reformed and renamed as Bharatiya Jana Sangh.



July 12, 1949: As all charges were proven to be baseless and untrue, the Congress government unconditionally lifted the ban on the RSS and released Guraji from custody.

1950-51: RSS felt the need to nurture an independent political entity with a distinct, nationalised identity. This was to address a clear vacuum in the polity.

BHARATIYA JANATA PARTY (BJP)

BJP's rising trend continues...

Eleventh Lok Sabha (1996)
BJP was CLEAR WINNER
161 Seats

Twelfth Lok Sabha (1998)
BJP 102 Seats

Thirteenth Lok Sabha (1999)
BJP 102 Seats

Fourteenth Lok Sabha (2004)
BJP 138 Seats

Fifteenth Lok Sabha (2009)
BJP 116 Seats

Sixteenth Lok Sabha (2014)
BJP 31 Seats

Seventeenth Lok Sabha (2019)
BJP 234 Seats

Eighteenth Lok Sabha (2024)
BJP 234 Seats

Nineteenth Lok Sabha (2029)
BJP 234 Seats

Twentieth Lok Sabha (2034)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-first Lok Sabha (2039)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-second Lok Sabha (2044)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-third Lok Sabha (2049)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-fourth Lok Sabha (2054)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-fifth Lok Sabha (2059)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-sixth Lok Sabha (2064)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-seventh Lok Sabha (2069)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-eighth Lok Sabha (2074)
BJP 234 Seats

Twenty-ninth Lok Sabha (2079)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirtieth Lok Sabha (2084)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-first Lok Sabha (2089)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-second Lok Sabha (2094)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-third Lok Sabha (2099)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-fourth Lok Sabha (2104)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-fifth Lok Sabha (2109)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-sixth Lok Sabha (2114)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-seventh Lok Sabha (2119)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-eighth Lok Sabha (2124)
BJP 234 Seats

Thirty-ninth Lok Sabha (2129)
BJP 234 Seats

Fortieth Lok Sabha (2134)
BJP 234 Seats

Forty-first Lok Sabha (2139)
BJP 234 Seats

Forty-second Lok Sabha (2144)
BJP 234 Seats

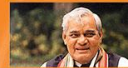
Forty-third Lok Sabha (2149)
BJP 234 Seats

Forty-fourth Lok Sabha (2154)
BJP 234 Seats

Forty-fifth Lok Sabha (2159)
BJP 234 Seats

Forty-sixth Lok Sabha (2164)
BJP 234 Seats

Forty-seventh Lok Sabha (2169)
BJP 234 Seats



May 1996: First leader of a prime minister from a non-Congress political tradition as Atal Bihari Vajpayee took oath.

May 11 & 13, 1998: BJP-led government overruled by Congress-led nuclear tests and governed the nation.

Late K. K. Abhishek: Thirteenth Party president, 1998 to 2000.

Lal Krishna Advani: Party president, 2004 to 2005.

Rajnath Singh: Party president, 2005 to 2009.

Nitin Gadkari: Party president, 2010-2013.

2010-11: Younger leadership pushed forward expansion phase.

2011: BJP-led NDA had CMs in 9 Indian states, covering 36 per cent of India's population.

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2040: BJP-led NDA had CMs in 9 Indian states, covering 36 per cent of India's population.



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Bharatiya Jana Sangh

October 1951: Bharatiya Jana Sangh (BJS) was formed by Dr. Srimo Prasad Mukherjee, a well-regarded public leader who had been part of free India's first cabinet in 1947.

First Lok Sabha (1952)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
3 Seats

Second Lok Sabha (1957)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
4 Seats

Third Lok Sabha (1962)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
14 Seats

Fourth Lok Sabha (1967)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
35 Seats

Fifth Lok Sabha (1971)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
22 Seats

Sixth Lok Sabha (1977)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
25 Seats

Seventh Lok Sabha (1980)
BJS (Bharatiya Jana Sangh)
31 Seats

Eighth Lok Sabha (1984)</