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Lok Sabha election...

Nehru had served three consecutive terms. In his first speech after the results of the 2024 Lok Sabha elections, Modi laid out his vision for the third term saying it would be a tenure of big decisions and key emphasis would be on uprooting corruption.

It is the first time that 73-year-old Modi will be dependent on allies to be in the government since he came into politics.

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge termed the poll outcome as the "victory of the people and that of democracy."

"We had been saying that this battle is between public and Modi...This mandate is against Modi. This is his political and moral defeat. It is a big defeat for a person who sought votes in his own name. He has suffered a moral setback," Kharge told reporters at the AICC headquarters flanked by Congress leaders Rahul Gandhi and Sonia Gandhi after the good showing by the Congress.

The elections also highlighted the revival of the main opposition Congress party under Rahul Gandhi, and the unexpected role of the Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh - under Akhilesh Yadav -- as a giant slayer.

The trends and results did not throw up a landslide victory the BJP-led NDA had hoped for and what was projected by the exit polls. More than 640 million votes are to be counted in the world's largest democratic exercise.

The NDA was stirred into life mostly around elections in the last 10 years as the BJP's big majority and shrinking opposition in the Lok Sabha made its allies mostly redundant but this time around, allies will matter more than ever.

The Congress, which is part of the opposition INDIA alliance, was leading or winning 99 seats compared to 52 it won in 2019 eating into BJP's share in Rajasthan and Haryana. The INDIA bloc won or was ahead in over 200 seats.

As SP chief Akhilesh Yadav kept the INDIA bloc morale high in Uttar Pradesh, the Trinamool Congress, another key ally of the opposition alliance, was leading or winning in 29 seats in West Bengal, higher than its 22 in 2019. The BJP, which had 18 seats in the last Lok Sabha election, was ahead in 12 seats.

In UP, the BJP won or was ahead in 33 seats as against its tally of 62 in 2019 and the SP's numbers went up, largely attributed to three factors - consolidation of Muslim votes in favour of SP, smart seat sharing agreements with Congress to avoid splitting of non-BJP votes and widespread discontent with the BJP government over jobs and price rise. The SP was winning or leading in 37 of the 80 seats at stake.

Modi retained the Varanasi seat but with a reduced victory margin of nearly 1.53 lakh votes in Varanasi. In 2019, the margin was 4,79,505.

Rahul Gandhi won Wayanad(Kerala) and Rae Bareilly(UP) seats by a huge margin of 3,64,422 votes and 3,90,030 votes respectively.

The campaigning for the elections, which were conducted from April 19 to June 1 in seven phases, was marked by divisive communal issues and excessive reliance on Modi for getting votes. The prime minister held more than 300 rallies, travelling tirelessly almost every day to multiple locations.

The results also blew away the BJP narrative that it will score big in the southern states this time. It, however, returned a tally of zero in Tamil Nadu, and lost seats in Karnataka.

The BJP did make inroads in Kerala, winning a seat for the first time in a state where the Congress and the Left are the major political force, and in Telangana where it won or was leading in 8 seats. Popular Malayalam actor Suresh Gopi won the Thrissur seat in Kerala to help the lotus bloom.

In Andhra Pradesh, BJP ally Telugu Desam Party won



Congress Leader Rahul Gandhi addressing press conference at New Delhi on Tuesday. Party Chief Mallikarjun Kharge also present.

or was leading in 16 seats and the BJP was ahead or winning in three.

The biggest setback for the BJP, which faced a stronger challenge from the opposition, however, was in the north where, besides UP, the BJP also faced losses in Rajasthan and Haryana.

West Bengal also dealt the party a raw deal, although it more than made up for the losses in Odisha.

Madhya Pradesh went fully saffron with the BJP winning or leading in all 29 seats. In Gujarat, too, BJP was winning or leading in 25 of 26 seats.

The situation was not as decisive in other states.

In Bihar, the BJP was ahead in 12 and its partner JD-U in 13, a vote of confidence for its leader Nitish Kumar who swung from INDIA back to the NDA ahead of the elections. The RJD was poised to win four seats.

In Rajasthan, BJP was ahead only in 14 seats, against all 25 its alliance won last time. The Congress was ahead in eight. Haryana also threw up a shock result for the BJP, where the party was leading only in five and the Congress in five. In 2019, the saffron party had bagged all 10. It appeared that the election marked a return to regular politics, where voters were more concerned about bread and butter issues, especially in some Hindi heartland states where the opposition INDIA alliance managed to rally supporters around the issues of unemployment and price rise.

Maharashtra, with 48 Lok Sabha seats, saw the Shiv Sena split down the middle since the last election. The BJP, which won 23 seats five years ago, was down with leads in 11 seats, while its ally Shiv Sena could get seven.

On the other end of the spectrum, the Congress was ahead in 12 seats, up from one, and the Shiv Sena (UBT) in 19. The NCP Sharad Pawar faction could get seven seats, giving the INDIA alliance, forged together by the common dislike of the BJP, a possible 38 seats.

However, a silver lining was provided by Union ministers Nitin Gadkari and Piyush Goyal who appeared on course to easy victories in Nagpur and Mumbai North respectively.

In Odisha, the BJP was doing spectacularly well, with leads in 19 out of 21 seats, while the ruling Biju Janata Dal was down to just one. It was also ahead in the Odisha assembly elections, leading in 76 out of 146 seats, a suc-

cess show in the state it had never succeeded in capturing.

In Andhra Pradesh, the Chandrababu Naidu-led TDP was ahead in 16 seats of 25, the BJP in three and the YSRCP in four.

Trends for Karnataka showed potential gains for the Congress, with leads in nine seats, up from one last time. The BJP, which got 25 seats in 2019, was ahead in 17.

Tamil Nadu seemed to be scripting another story, not ceding any space to the saffron party. The ruling DMK was ahead in 22 and ally Congress in nine, a notch higher than their 2019 positions.

Dr Jitendra, Jugal...

Vikramaditya Singh by a margin of 353,272 votes. In 2014, he won against former Union minister Ghulam Nabi Azad by 60,976 votes and was subsequently appointed Minister of State in the Prime Minister's Office.

Choudhary Lal Singh, who previously won the Udhampur seat on a Congress ticket in 2004 and 2009, posed a formidable challenge. A former MLA and minister in the PDP-Congress and PDP-BJP governments, Lal Singh rejoined Congress in March 2024.

The Udhampur constituency has been alternating between the Congress and the BJP.

Congress won six consecutive times from 1967, while BJP's Chaman Lal Gupta secured three successive victories before Lal Singh's two-term win in 2004 and 2009.

Jitendra Singh's victories mark a significant achievement, underscoring the BJP's stronghold in the region. BJP's J&K unit president Ravinder Raina said.

"We won both the seats of Jammu and Udhampur with a large margin as people have reposed full faith in BJP and its candidates under the leadership of Modi ji," he said.

In Jammu, where the polling was held on April 26 with over 72 per cent turnout, BJP's Sharma got 6,87,588 votes against Bhalla's 5,52,090 votes. BSP's Jagdish Raj was third with 10,300 votes followed by Independent Satish Poonch (5,959 votes).

The NOTA got 4,645 votes in the constituency, which was higher than the rest of the 18 candidates including Ekam Sanatan Bharat Dal chief and lawyer Ankur Sharma who got a total of 4,278 votes.

Qari Zaheer Abbas Bhatti of All India Forward Bloc stood last with only 984 votes.

Setback for Ex...

"I am never going to participate in assembly election as long as Article 370 is not restored. Whenever I took oath as a member assembly, it was under two Constitutions - J&K Constitution and the Constitution of India - with two flags at the same time. Maybe it is foolish on my part but it is more of an emotional issue for me," Mufti said in an interview with PTI last year.

While this was the first electoral defeat for Abdullah in 22 years, 65-year-old Mufti has now lost two elections back to back. She had lost the Lok Sabha polls in 2019 and 1999 as well.

This is the first loss in Lok Sabha polls for Abdullah.

The other prominent loser in this election was PDP youth president Waheed Para, who is also facing terror charges. Para lost to influential Shia leader Aga Roohullah in the Srinagar Lok Sabha seat.

On the other hand, Kashmir has sent three first-timers to Lok Sabha this year with Rashid, who is currently in Tihar jail in a terror-funding case, emerging as the giant slayer of Kashmir politics.

Besides Rashid, National Conference leaders Mian Altaf Ahmad and Aga Roohullah have defeated their more fancied rivals Mehbooba Mufti in Anantnag-Rajouri and Waheed Para in Srinagar, respectively.

The Gujar leader has been a minister and MLA from Kangan in Ganderbal district for several terms and his selection as candidate for the newly carved Anantnag-Rajouri seat was a masterstroke by the NC leadership. Ahmad (67), who comes from a well-respected religious family and has a huge following among the Gujjars of Jammu and Kashmir, was initially reluctant to contest but was eventually persuaded by the party leadership.

The soft-spoken politician has a reputation of being an able administrator and has delivered in the past as minister in governments headed by Farooq Abdullah (1996-2002) and Omar Abdullah (2009-2014) in Jammu and Kashmir.

Roohullah, whose first step into politics was mired in controversy, will be the first Shia from Kashmir to go to the Lok Sabha since 1971. Roohullah's father Aga Syed Mehdi was killed by terrorists in an IED blast in 2000, forcing his young son to take a political plunge in 2002 assembly elections. When Roohullah filed his nomination papers on the NC ticket, one of his relatives filed a complaint with the election authorities, claiming he was underage to contest the polls. The complaint was dismissed and Roohullah won the election from Budgam seat. Both Mian Altaf Ahmad and Roohullah have not lost any election they contested so far.

Constitution our guiding...

The prime minister arrived at the BJP headquarters to a rousing welcome by hundreds of supporters who chanted 'Modi, Modi'. He was greeted by BJP President J P Nadda and Union Ministers Rajnath Singh and Amit Shah on the dais. The backdrop on the stage had 'Dhanyawad Bharat' written in various languages, including Urdu. Modi began his speech with 'Jai Jagannath' and thanked the people of Odisha for giving BJP a clear mandate for the first time. He also thanked TDP supremo Chandrababu Naidu and Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar - his NDA allies - for the electoral successes in Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

Over 400 Agniveer...

Staff, headquarters 14 Corps, Maj Gen Dinesh Kumar Singh and was attended by a spectrum of distinguished military officers, civil dignitaries and parents of Agniveers, the spokesperson said.

He said six young Agniveers were awarded medals during the parade for their outstanding achievements in training. 'Gaurav Padak' was presented to the proud parents whose wards have joined the regiment as Agniveers, the spokesperson said, adding that it was indeed a proud moment for the kin of the recruits, who had arrived from far flung areas to witness the grand ceremony.

In his address to the young recruits, Maj Gen Singh congratulated them for the impressive parade and urged them to devote their life in service to the nation, as proud soldiers of the Army.

He also complimented the parents for motivating their wards to join the Army and instilling a sense of pride in them for the nation. The reviewing officer also complimented the Ladakh Scouts personnel for their outstanding performance in all spheres and praised their exceptional valour and sacrifice while upholding sovereignty of the Nation. He exhorted the young soldiers to continue to strive hard in pursuit of excellence in all spheres and take a solemn vow to defend the sovereignty of the nation against all odds in the true spirit exemplified by the ethos of the Army.

67 candidates share top rank in NEET-UG, maximum from Rajasthan

STATE TIMES NEWS

NEW DELHI: Sixty-seven candidates have bagged the top rank in medical entrance exam NEET-UG, a majority of them from Rajasthan, the National Testing Agency announced on Tuesday.

The top rankers in the National Eligibility cum Entrance Test (NEET) also include 14 girls, the agency said.

It said the 56.4 per cent of the candidates have qualified the exam, which was conducted on May 5 at centres across the country and also abroad.

"Sixty-seven candidates scored the same 99.997129 percentile score, therefore, they shared the all India rank one. The merit list will be prepared using a tie-breaking formula with those getting higher marks or percentile score in Biology will be given preference followed by Chemistry and Physics," a senior NTA official said.

"Subsequently, candidates with less proportion of the number of attempted incorrect answers and correct answers in all the subjects in the test, or Biology, followed

by Chemistry and Physics, will be given preference," the official added.

Of these 67 candidates, maximum 11 are from Rajasthan, followed by eight from Tamil Nadu and seven from Maharashtra.

A record 24.06 lakh candidates had registered for NEET this year. The passing percentage is almost the same as last year at 56.2 per cent.

Among those who have qualified the country's biggest entrance exam for admission to MBBS and BDS courses at the undergraduate level, 5,47,036 are male, 7,69,222 are female and 10 are transgender persons, the NTA said.

The examination was conducted in 13 languages -- Assamese, Bengali, English, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Odia, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu, and Urdu.

NEET-UG is the qualifying entrance exam for admission to Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), Bachelor of Dental Surgery (BDS), Bachelor of Ayurveda, Medicine and

Surgery (BAMS), Bachelor of Siddha Medicine and Surgery (BSMS), Bachelor of Unani Medicine and Surgery (BUMS), and Bachelor of Homeopathic Medicine and Surgery (BHMS) and BSc (H) Nursing courses.

There are more than 80,000 MBBS seats in over 540 medical colleges in the country. Of the 13,16,268 qualified candidates, 3,33,932 were from the unserved category, 6,18,890 from the OBC category, 1,78,738 from SC, 68,479 from ST, and 1,16,229 from the EWS category. Besides, 4,120 candidates from the Persons with Disabilities category have also qualified the exam.

The exam witnessed an increase in qualifying marks this year. For instance, the qualifying marks range for the unserved category last year was 720-137, which has increased to 720-164 this year. Similarly, for OBC SC, and ST categories, it has increased from 136-107 last year to 163-129 this year.

"The Result of NEET (UG) - 2024 has been

declared based on the qualifying criteria prescribed by the National Medical Commission and Dental Council of India and also based on the information submitted by the candidates in their online application forms," the NTA said.

In terms of state-wise performance, Uttar Pradesh reported the highest number of qualified candidates (1165047) followed by Maharashtra (142665), Rajasthan (121240), and Tamil Nadu (89426).

Meanwhile, the NTA has also conducted post-exam data analysis, to detect cases of Unfair Means (UFM).

"Action on UFM cases is taken as per extant rules, which include cancellation of candidature and debarment from future examinations," the agency said.

"The qualified candidates may please note that they have to further complete the formalities with the respective Counseling Authorities viz DGHS, Medical Education Directorates of States, etc. for admission to MBBS/BDS Courses," the NTA said.

LOK SABHA POLLS: Celebrations by BJP in Jammu

