

## HOW MAHARASHTRA VOTED

# BEHIND BJP, UPPER CASTES, OBCs AND RICH

Lokniti-CSDS post-poll analysis shows consolidation and fragmentation of community votes, a rich-poor divide between BJP and Congress voters, and BJP gains in various regions

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**S**INCE ITS formation in 1960, Maharashtra has never had a party other than the Congress that crossed the hundred mark in the state legislature. The highest was the Janata Party's 99 in 1977. Since 1995, no party, including the Congress, could by itself reach hundred. In the recent assembly elections, both these barriers have been breached. Looking back at the results of the 2009 and 2004 elections, one would have wondered whether the BJP was a third or fourth player in the state. The parliamentary elections altered that perception and the two Congress parties ended up locking horns for third and fourth places.

Looking back at their spectacular performance in the parliamentary election, both the BJP and the Shiv Sena took a tough posture on seat-sharing and let the 25-year-old coalition falter. Their breakup made it possible for the Congress and NCP, too, to break their alliance of 15 years. A complex and multi-cornered contest took place.

Simplistic analyses of the outcome would tend to take recourse to the "Modi magic" as the sole driver of the result. While the Modi factor did make a difference, the results are a product of many factors and represent the culmination of a long process of churning.

### ANTI-INCUMBENCY

The Congress and the NCP were in power for 15 years. Such a long incumbency does bring along with it the burden of disappointments, more so when the performance of incumbents is not seen as satisfactory. The parties in power and the government in general were seen as both corrupt and ineffective. Our post-election survey clearly indicates this: for every respondent who claimed to be "fully satisfied" with the incumbent government, there were more than two respondents who were "fully dissatisfied" (13% and 28% respectively). More importantly, for every person who thought that the government was not at all corrupt (and such people were rather few — 7%), there were more than five (36%) who believed that it was "very corrupt".

Such negative assessments of the Congress-NCP government became crucial in the backdrop of the massive victory of the BJP-Shiv Sena alliance in the parliamentary elections. The proximity of the two elections means that the outcome of the former election does retain its impact on the subsequent one. In 2004 and 2009, the mild success of the Congress in the parliamentary elections did help it and its ally, the NCP, post a borderline performance in the assembly elections defying anti-incumbency and similar perceptions of dissatisfaction among voters. The performance of the NDA in the 2014 parliamentary elections from Maharashtra was impressive. Given the high expectations and the large number of assembly segments in which the BJP and the Shiv Sena had registered a lead — 245 of 288, the assembly poll outcome may appear somewhat tame. But that background certainly weighed heavily in favour of the BJP (and partly the Shiv Sena too).



Newly elected Maharashtra MLAs with state BJP chief Devendra Fadnavis at party headquarters in Mumbai.

PRADEEP KOCHREKAR

### RESULT BY REGION (FIGURES IN BRACKETS SIGNIFY VOTE SHARES IN %)

REGIONS	TOTAL SEATS	CONGRESS	NCP	BJP+	SHIV SENA	MNS	OTHERS
NORTH	35	7 (16.7)	5 (22.9)	14 (29.1)	7 (18.7)	0 (3.2)	2 (9.4)
WEST VIDARBHA	30	5 (21.1)	1 (9.7)	18 (30.6)	3 (16.1)	0 (3.0)	3 (19.6)
EAST VIDARBHA	32	5 (23.3)	0 (9.7)	26 (39.4)	1 (9.0)	0 (0.9)	0 (17.6)
MARATHWADA	46	9 (18.6)	8 (19.9)	15 (28.7)	11 (16.9)	0 (2.4)	3 (13.5)
MUMBAI-THANE	60	5 (13.6)	4 (9.8)	24 (30.1)	21 (26.2)	0 (7.1)	6 (13.2)
WESTERN	70	10 (17.7)	19 (24.4)	25 (26.4)	13 (19.9)	1 (2.4)	2 (9.1)
KONKAN	15	1 (16.9)	4 (14.5)	1 (15.5)	7 (32.4)	0 (1.3)	2 (19.3)
OVERALL	288	42 (18.0)	41 (17.3)	123 (29.1)	63 (19.4)	1 (3.1)	18 (13.2)

### HOW COMMUNITIES VOTED

	BJP	SENA	CONG	NCP
MARATHA-KUNBI	24	30	11	18
OBC	38	18	13	20
SCHEDULED CASTES	19	13	28	17
SCHEDULED TRIBES	33	09	14	16
UPPER CASTES	52	09	16	10
MUSLIMS	13	11	53	16
OTHERS	32	17	18	15

### THE BIG PICTURE

<b>BJP+</b> 29.1% 122 WON OUT OF 282 CONTESTED	<b>SHIV SENA</b> 19.4% 63/282 CONTESTED
<b>CONGRESS</b> 18% 42/287 CONTESTED	<b>NCP</b> 17.3% 41/278 CONTESTED

The defeat of a three-term government is perhaps the least dramatic and unexpected part of the Maharashtra story. Contesting as allies, the NCP and the Congress polled 40 and 37 per cent votes respectively in 2004 and 2009. This time, contesting separately, they together polled 35 per cent. From 144, their seats have come down to 83, while the BJP has jumped from 46 to 122.

While on the face of it, the election had four major players, the last-minute breakup of both alliances meant that the real contest was limited to at the most three players locally. This had a regional dimension also (see table). In Vidarbha, where its main competitors were the Congress and the Shiv Sena, the BJP surged ahead. In Marathwada, the competition was more complex with all four main contenders in competition with one another; in north Maharashtra, the competition was limited to the NCP and the BJP; in Konkan, the Congress and the Shiv Sena were the main contestants, while in the Mumbai-Thane urban belt the main competition was between the Shiv Sena and the BJP. In western Maharashtra, there was a three-

way battle involving the NCP, the Congress and the Shiv Sena. The BJP gained in Vidarbha, Marathwada, North Maharashtra and Mumbai-Thane.

### CAUSE AND EFFECT

Of course, the aftereffects of the massive mandate of May 2014 and the expectations from PM Narendra Modi did play a role in shaping the outcome. The argument to have a state government of the same party that rules in Delhi, too, had some effect: over 40 per cent respondents agreed fully that "for overall development of the state, the ruling party at the Centre and the state should be the same".

Survey data also allows us to estimate the support received by each party from different social sections. The table on voting patterns among different communities broadly indicates the continued fragmentation of Maratha-Kunbi vote, fragmentation also among Scheduled Caste voters, mild pro-BJP trend among Adivasis, continued support to the Congress by Muslims (coupled with a turn towards new entrant the MIM) and a massive consolidation

of upper caste and OBC vote in favour of BJP. In particular, the BJP got more support among peasant OBCs than rest of the OBCs. Both the Congress and the NCP are losing their grip over Maratha-Kunbi votes and the Shiv Sena has got a larger share of the Maratha votes; in Vidarbha, the BJP has consolidated its base among the Kunbis.

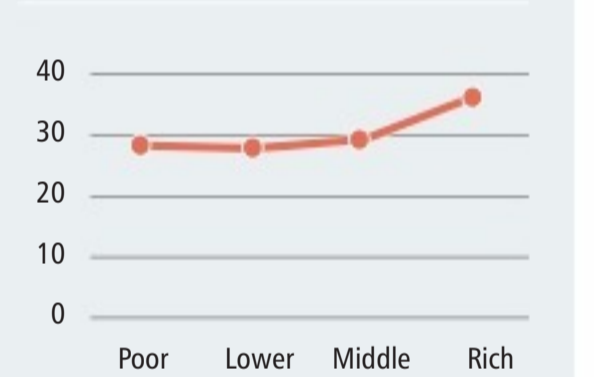
In terms of economic class, the voters' choice does not have much variation except that the BJP did get more votes among the relatively better off sections (35 per cent) than it got from any other income group. This contrasts the BJP rather neatly with the Congress as the graphs show; however, the difference is quite modest. Finally, the hype that young and first-time voters flock to the BJP in large numbers needs to be taken with a pinch of salt: among the first time voters, BJP surely leads with a share of 30 per cent but the NCP follows it with 25 per cent.

When more contenders are in the fray, the choice before the voters expands numerically. But do more parties always throw up a wider choice? Our survey indicates that this may not

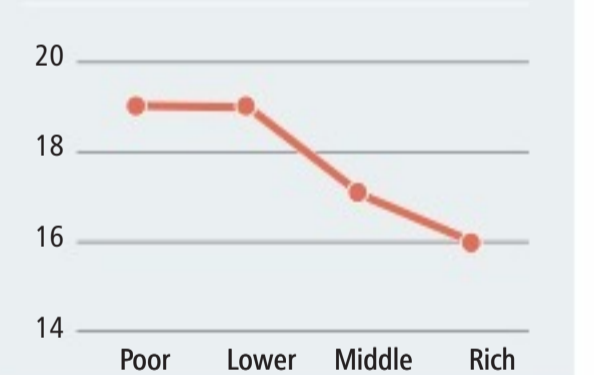
### BJP VOTERS BY AGE



### BJP VOTERS BY INCOME



### CONG VOTERS BY INCOME



be the case: only 23 per cent voters felt that there were major differences among the parties contesting elections. The move by the NCP to extend (uninvited) support to the BJP and efforts by the Shiv Sena and the BJP to underplay their differences post-election only underscore that voters may be correct in their assessment.

If that is the case, then, one could wonder whether this "first ever" major political change in Maharashtra will really bring any change to the state.

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### CM CHOICE NOT AN ISSUE

**43%** DID NOT TAKE ANY NAME WHEN ASKED WHO THEY WOULD PREFER AS CM.

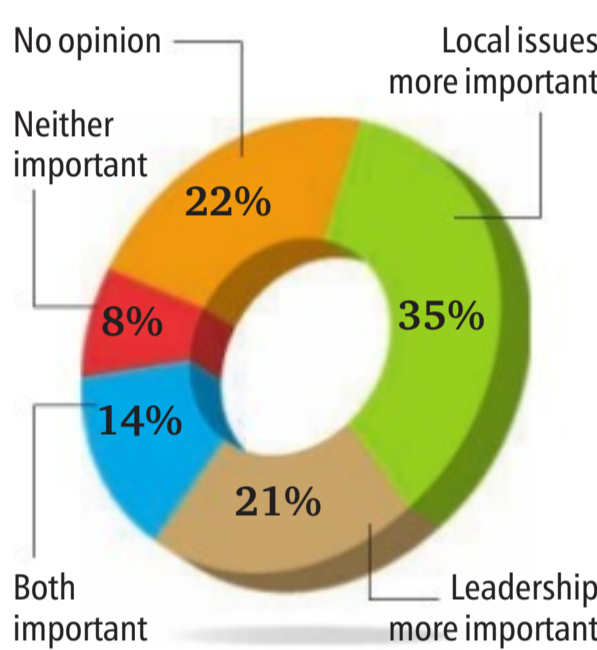
**UDDHAV THACKERY 11%**



**10% DEVENDRA FADNAVIS** **8% EACH** PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN, AJIT PAWAR

ALSO: 4% PANKAJA MUNDE, 3% EACH RAJ THACKERAY, NITIN GADKARI, SHARAD PAWAR, 7% OTHERS

### LOCAL ISSUES vs LEADERSHIP



### RULING PARTY ADVANTAGE



'For all-round development of the state, the ruling party at the Centre and the state should be the same. Do you agree?'

**FULLY AGREE 41%**  
AGREE SOMEWHAT 18%  
DISAGREE SOMEWHAT 9%  
DISAGREE FULLY 10%  
NO OPINION 22%

### 'Who can best protect Shivaji's legacy?'

**SHIV SENA 37%**  
BJP 11%

### CORRUPTION & COMMUNALISM

#### Was Congress-NCP govt corrupt?

**VERY CORRUPT 36%**  
SOMEWHAT CORRUPT 37%  
NOT CORRUPT 7%  
COULDN'T SAY 20%

#### Which was more corrupt?

**NCP 20%**  
CONGRESS 15%  
EQUALLY CORRUPT 39%  
REST NOT CORRUPT/COULDN'T SAY

#### Which is more communal, Shiv Sena or BJP?

	ALL	MUSLIMS
BJP	15	25
SENA	18	18
BOTH	23	21
NEITHER	15	11
CAN'T SAY	29	29

### THE URBAN-RURAL DIVIDE

	RURAL (135)		SEMI-URBAN (53)		URBAN (100)	
	WON	VOTE	WON	VOTE	WON	VOTE
CONGRESS	27	19.0	6	18.3	9	16.2
NCP	26	21.8	11	18.5	4	9.5
BJP+	42	25.3	28	30.1	53	34.5
SHIV SENA	31	19.2	6	17.8	26	20.6
MNS	1	2.2	0	1.6	0	5.6
OTHERS	8	12.6	2	13.8	8	13.7

### SHOULD VIDARBHA BE CARVED OUT?

NEARLY TWO THIRDS OF BJP VOTERS IN VIDARBHA REGION SUPPORTED THE CREATION OF A SEPARATE STATE. IN THE REST OF MAHARASHTRA, THE SENTIMENT AGAINST THE CREATION OF A VIDARBHA STATE IS NEARLY AS STRONG

'A SEPARATE VIDARBHA STATE SHOULD BE CARVED OUT'	VIDARBHA REGION	REST OF MAHARASHTRA	BJP+ VOTERS IN VIDARBHA
AGREE FULLY	51	10	65
AGREE SOMEWHAT	12	8	7
DISAGREE SOMEWHAT	10	15	2
DISAGREE FULLY	10	38	9
NO OPINION	18	29	17

### SPLIT ASSESSMENT



#### WHO'S TO BLAME FOR BJP-SENA SPLIT?

	ALL	BJP VOTERS	SENA VOTERS
BJP	29	14	51
SENA	20	27	3
BOTH	24	37	22
NEITHER	2	1	2
NO OPINION	26	22	23

#### WHO'S TO BLAME FOR CONG-NCP SPLIT?

	ALL	CONG VOTERS	NCP VOTERS
NCP	26	38	14
CONG	18	14	33
BOTH	30	17	30
NEITHER	1	1	2
NO OPINION	25	30	21

#### 'YES, THEY SHOULD REUNITE'

	BJP/SENA	NCP/CONG
ALL VOTERS	27	4
BJP+ VOTERS	40	3
SENA VOTERS	40	1
NCP VOTERS	11	13

MAHARASHTRA SAMPLES SIZE 1,542 (366 IN VIDARBHA)