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## Article For Reading –Against the odds: On the 2024 Haryana Assembly elections

The Congress could not counter the caste polarisation in Haryana

By winning a third consecutive term in Haryana, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has demonstrated that its pole position in the Hindi heartland remains **intact**. Its failure to win an absolute majority in the 2024 general election has not **eroded** its social base, and in Haryana, it increased its vote share when compared to the previous election. The Congress too saw its vote share and the number of seats increase, but not enough to win power. The simultaneous gains for both parties are indicative of a sharper polarisation, but that does not entirely end the importance of smaller outfits and influential independents as it turns out — they tilted the scale in several constituencies. The outcome mirrors a social reality of Haryana that the BJP cleverly engineered to its benefit and which the Congress overlooked, namely, a broad alignment of non-Jat communities against Jat dominance. **Incumbent** Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, who is set for a second term, became the face of the BJP's mobilisation of Other Backward Classes. The BJP's strategy of offering political space for marginalised Hindu communities is one that is working well for it.

Jats possibly united against the BJP, as the **eclipse** of the INLD and JJP suggest, but that worked in the BJP's favour by aiding the counter-mobilisation of **disparate** groups. The Haryana poll outcome also helps Prime Minister Narendra Modi reinforce his authority over the party.

The Congress failed to inspire confidence among a wider spectrum of society as former Chief Minister Bhupinder Singh Hooda and his son Deepinder dominated the campaign. Their own Jat community rallied behind the party which possibly caused a counter **consolidation** of the rest. The Hoodas have so controlled the Congress in Haryana that the party organisation is either non-existent or ineffective. They stalled the central leadership's efforts to form political alliances. The Congress's Haryana **setback** follows the pattern of the Madhya Pradesh and Chhattisgarh elections that it lost in 2023 — regional leaders who refused to accommodate party colleagues and broaden the social base which failed the party. The party is struggling to find a balance between having a **robust** regional leadership and ensuring that its national outlook is not undermined. Senior leader Rahul Gandhi could not enforce his social justice agenda in the party's Haryana strategy. Dalit party leaders were humiliated, opening space for others.

The BJP has been in power for 10 years and there was notable **resentment** against it among voters. But that did not translate into a change of guard as the BJP could beat anti-incumbency while the Congress failed to gain from it. A study of the Haryana outcome will be instructive of why the BJP wins so often and the Congress ends up second best.

## Summary –

The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has secured a third consecutive term in Haryana, highlighting its strong position in the Hindi heartland despite not achieving an absolute majority in the 2024 general election. The BJP increased its vote share, effectively mobilizing non-Jat communities against Jat dominance, while the Congress also saw a rise in votes and seats but failed to secure power. The outcome reflects a polarization of support, with smaller parties and independents playing a crucial role in several constituencies. The Congress, dominated by the Hooda family, struggled to broaden its appeal and faced challenges from within, leading to a failure to capitalize on anti-incumbency sentiments. Overall, the results illustrate the BJP's successful strategy in Haryana and the Congress's ongoing difficulties in adapting to changing social dynamics.



# Vocabulary –

## ① Eroded (Verb) नष्ट करना.

Meaning- Something being weakened diminished over time.

Synonyms-weakened, Deteriorated.

Antonyms-Strengthened, Restored, Rebuilt.

E.g. –In the 2024 general election BJP has not eroded its social base.

## 2. Incumbent (Noun, Adj) पदग्राही-

(N)- Someone currently holding an office / position.

Synonyms –Officeholder, Sitting officer, current

Antonyms –Challenger, opponent, successor

E.g.- The incumbent mayor is Second term running & a against a strong challenger.

## ③ Robust (Adj) मजबूत

Meaning – something that is strong, healthy, or resilient.

Synonyms- Sturdy, vigorous, Resilient.

Antonyms –weak, feeble, frail.

E.g. → The robust structure withstood the Storm.

#### ④ Resentment (Noun) विरोध, कड़वाहट

Meaning –feeling of bitterness

→ negative feelings towards someone Or something for a long time.

Synonyms –Enmity, Rancour, Indignation

Antonyms- Amity, Love, compassion

E.g. –His resentment towards the manager grew after he was overlooked for a promotion.

#### ⑥ Consolidate (Verb) (एकीकृत / मजबूत करना)

Meaning- To make something physically Stronger or more solid

Synonyms- strengthen, Integrate, coalesce

Antonyms- Separate, Dismantle, Weaken

E.g. – The Company aims to consolidate its various department into Single unit to improve efficiency.

#### 7. Intact(Adj) अक्षत –

Meaning –Not damaged or impaired in any way; complete

Synonyms - whole, undamaged.

Antonyms - Damaged, broken.

E.g. → Despite the storm, the ship remained intact and did not suffer any harm.

## **8. Disparate (Adj) भिन्न**

**Meaning – Essentially different in kind; not allowing comparison.**

**Synonyms –Diverse, dissimilar**

**Antonyms –Similar, alike**

**E.g.→ The study focused on the disparate impacts of the policy on different communities.**

## **9. Eclipse (noun)(ग्रहण)**

**Meaning –An event in which the shadow of one celestial body falls on another.**

**Synonym: Occlusion, overshadowing**

**Antonym: Shine, brightness**

**E.g.: The solar eclipse brought everyone outdoors to witness the rare event.**

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