

Bread & butter issues VS Nationalism.

The recently declared results of the Maharashtra and Haryana assembly elections have given an important message to us.

The whole nation is in the midst of a serious economic slow down. The unemployment problem is getting aggravated by the loss of tens of thousands of jobs, caused by the economic slowdown. The agrarian crisis is also becoming more serious, bringing untold miseries to the farmers. However, the ruling BJP, instead of taking meaningful measures to lessen the hardships caused due to the economic crisis, is refusing to even accept that there is an economic slow down. On the other hand, both at the time of the Parliament election, as well as during the Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly elections, the BJP only projected the Hindutva Nationalism as it's main election plank.

In the Maharashtra and Haryana Assembly elections, the BJP focused the issues of the abrogation of Article 370, Ram Temple and NRC as it's election plank. In Maharashtra, the BJP campaigned that V.D.Savarkar, an accused in the Mahatma Gandhi murder case, would be conferred with Bharat Ratna. The BJP is of the view that, the sufferings caused by the economic slowdown can be successfully diverted by projecting the Hindu Nationalism as the main election plank.

On the other hand, the Opposition raised the bread and butter issues in their election campaign. They highlighted the economic slow down, job-loss, unemployment, farm-distress, etc., in the election campaign. For the BJP, none other than Prime Minister, Narendra Modi and Home Minister, Amit Shah, campaigned intensively. The demoralised Congress was not a match at all for the BJP juggernaut. Especially, after Rahul Gandhi quitting from the leadership, Congress Party became rudderless and is in shambles. A weak opposition was also a very big plus point for the BJP.

Still, the election results are surprising. Even though, the BJP got number one position in both the states, it is also a fact that it has received a big jolt. In the 90 member Haryana Assembly, "abki baar 75 paar" had been the election campaign slogan of BJP. However, it was able to win only 40 seats, less than 7 seats what it got in 2014 election. BJP's seven Ministers have have been defeated in this elections. Comparatively, the Congress Party, which had won only in 16 seats in 2014, is able to win in 31 seats this time.

In Maharashtra, out of the total 288 seats, BJP has got 105 seats, down from the 122 seats it got in 2014. It's ally, Shiv Sena got 56 seats, down from the 63 seats it had got in 2014. Nine Ministers, including the high profile Pankaja Munde have lost lost. BJP faced a setback in the Vidharba area, which is the home of the chief minister Devendar Fadnavis and the central minister, Nitin Gadkari. It is also important to note that, the BJP and Shiv Sena fought the elections in 2014 separately, whereas they had formed an alliance this time. Despite forming a formidable alliance, the BJP has faced this type of a serious setback. It will not be an exaggeration to state that the BJP would have been defeated, had the opposition taken some more timely efforts.

The election results has given an important lesson to the nation. The lesson is that, the sufferings of the people cannot swept the under the carpet of Nationalism any more. The ruling party has to address the bread and butter issues of the people, or else the Maharashtra and Haryana election results are likely to get repeated in the future elections also.
