CHAPTER- 3

PARTY POLITICS IN HARYANA: AN ANALYSIS

Political parties constitute an essential feature of modern political system and are indispensable for parliamentary democracies. They maintain, preserve and sustain democratic institutions and processes. They not only perform their primary function of forming a government or organizing an opposition, but also represent certain interests and ideologies whose point of view they articulate. They mobilize support for their cause; thereby act as a vital link between the government and the people.¹

The party systems are shaped largely by the interaction of various socio-economic and political forces in a society and vary from country to country and system to system. The origin, evolution, and development of particular parties are, therefore, ascertained by the fabric and edifices of the society in which it originates and operates. In the words of Weiner: “deep changes owing to the cultural and ethnic diversities often divided the society and the forces of tribalism, traditionalism, regionalism and the like have powerfully manifested in giving rise to the fragmentation and proliferation of the parties in the developing countries”.²

In India, the existence of deep social, religious and ethnic changes in its body politic has given rise to several political parties which are associated with the fragmented culture of Indian society. These political groups often aimed at reinforcing the subcultures with which they were identified. Further conflicts and struggles between the opposing factions in the parties especially in the Congress accentuated the process of fragmentation in Indian politics in the post-independence era. Conflicts and controversies arising out of these factions particularly at the state levels have led to the development of number of splinter parties. These splinter parties in their attempt to capture power in the states subsequently championed regional issues and grew stronger as regional parties.³

In the fifties and sixties many regional parties came into existence in India and most of them had brief life spans. The only exceptions have been Shiromani Akali Dal in Punjab, Dravida Munetra Kazagam (DMK) in Tamil Nadu and National Conference in Jammu and Kashmir which have had a long history. With the expansion of the democratic electoral politics, the regional parties have had made strong head ways in most of the states of Indian Republic and has given impetus to state politics in an eminent manner.

STATE LEVEL PARTY POLITICS IN THE 1990S

Since 4th general elections, Indian polity has witnessed a growing trend towards the federalization of party system in various states of India. Most significantly in the decade of 1990s the state has experienced the rise of bi-polarities which got manifested mainly in three categories of party system which can be categorized as bi-party system, bi-coalition system and multi-coalitional system with a trend towards bipolar coalitional systems.4 5

In a number of states, namely, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat, Delhi, Uttrakhand, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh the party competition has been defined between Indian National Congress and Bhartiya Janata Party. Further, in states like Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Punjab and Jammu and Kashmir the main contending political parties have been the national parties like Congress, BJP on the one hand and the regional parties like Telugu Desham Party and Telangana Rashtra Samiti in Andhra Pradesh, Shiromani Akali Dal in Punjab and National Conference and Peoples Democratic Party in Jammu & Kashmir on the other. The bi-party competition does not mean the absence of other minor political players but they have a very insignificant role to play. Despite the fact that these actors at times may help and influence the formation of government at the state level and can also become the partners in the governments.5

5 ibid. p. 2.
In the long run, however, they have a very minor role due to their presence and influence limited to a few constituencies. Bi-party system at state level marked with the political stability in electoral and organizational terms as two predominant parties served the purpose of ruling and opposition, despite of splits and factionalism within them.

Second set of states marked with a party system with the existence of two polarized political formations, each led by two different parties, constituents of which have an electoral understanding in terms of seats adjustment and power sharing. They also work on common minimum programme irrespective of their ideological differences. Such kind of political competition is known as bi-coalitional system which is in operation in states like Kerala, West Bengal, Tripura, Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Bihar and Jharkhand. In Kerala, Left Democratic Front (LDF) and United Democratic Front (UDF) are dominated by Communist Party of India (Marxist) and the Congress, respectively.

In Tamil Nadu, the DMK and AIADMK are the dominant parties who led their coalition partners. In Maharashtra, Shiv Sena-BJP coalition and Congress-Nationalist Congress Party (NCP) coalition are the major political forces. In Jharkhand, a BJP-Janata Dal (United), Congress-Rashtriya Janata Dal (RJD), BJP-Jharkhand Mukti Morcha coalition has dominated the politics. In Bihar, which earlier had experienced multi-coalition competition is heading towards bi-coalitional system especially after 2005 assembly elections. BJP-JD (U) and RJD-Congress are the two major coalitions in the state. In West Bengal, the Communist Party of India (Marxist) and Trinamool Congress are the two main coalitions. West Bengal may be called one party or coalition dominant system wherein Congress is only a minor force.

The third category of the party system includes the states like Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Goa and Uttar Pradesh (UP) where the multiple coalition of parties exist along with many other political actors contesting elections independently. The parties outside the dominant coalitions can also enter into limited electoral alliances. In such a system there are more than two important power contenders which aim to form the government but neither strong enough to achieve the goal on their own nor capable to

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6 ibid., p. 3.
7 ibid., p. 4.
undermine the smaller political forces completely. The polarization of contenders does take place while revolving either around the ruling coalition and or around the dominant contestant.8

Thus, Indian democracy during the last two decades has been witness to various structural and institutional changes with certain emergent trends like steady decline of Congress and subsequent rise of BJP, federalization of party system, assertion of dormant identities and finally the subsequent changes in Indian party system. To understand and contextualize these changes, one needs to take into consideration the influence of institutions especially electoral politics and federal character of Indian state as the catalyst in shaping the evolutionary nature of party system in particular and Indian democratic experience in general.9

The federal nature of Indian State, its working in concurrence with electoral politics along with the role played by social cleavages has given rise to coalition government at the national level and the bi-polarities at the state level.10 The decline of Congress and the changing pattern of social cleavages not only shaped the nature of party system but also facilitated the competitiveness of party system. The regional parties have played a major role in the Indian politics during past one and half decade. Although, the regional parties were present during 1950’s and 60’s, but what is new is the pan-Indian role of these parties and their relationship with these so-called national parties. No political party has been able to come to power at the centre since 1989, without the support of these state level regional parties.11 Almost all the states have political competitions between the national parties and state level /regional parties except in states like Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh where the competition has been mainly between Congress and BJP. In some states the electoral politics/competition revolves around regional/state level parties only. These regional groups represent various social forces and ideological viewpoints. Political parties at present are concentrating on specific factions and interests due to their incapacity of emerging strong players at the national level which, subsequently has resulted in the rise of

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8 ibid. p. 5.
10 ibid
increased number of state level parties. Many of these are confined to certain constituencies or regions in the states and have given rise to ad-hoc organizations based on individualist leadership and career politicians.12

**TEXTURE OF PARTY STRUCTURE IN HARYANA**

There are only a few studies on the political processes in Haryana and still fewer with specific focus on the political parties of the state. Most of the studies have been undertaken about political development and changes in the state and aimed to identify the working of the political system of the state. These studies have made references to the political parties in the state but in a limited manner.

Siwach in his *Haryana: Social Dynamics and Politics of Defections* (1976) presented a study of Haryana politics and observed that the socio-economic structures hold the key to the understanding of the political dynamics of the state.13 Ranbir Singh observed that the dominance in the power structure of the political elite from the agriculturist castes may be attributed to their economic power, numerical strength, demographic distinction and political awareness.14 Singh further asserts that their positions in the power structure has enabled them to influence the decision making process and consequently to promote their class interests. Agriculturist castes have adopted the strategy of entering into different political parties in general and the Congress party in particular.

Ranbir Singh in another study referred to the personality factor in the state politics. While referring to the leadership of Bansi Lal, Singh argues that his regime was marked by stability and gave rise to a new phase of authoritarian dominance. The centralization of power in the hands of Chief Minister, absence of inter-party and intra-party competition besides, the claims to the rapid development under his leadership strengthened his position. Induction of Bansi Lal into central government in December 1975 made him all the more powerful and his grip over the political and administrative apparatus in Haryana tightened further.15

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12 ibid.
Chaudhary in his study ‘Politics of Haryana’ and other related papers has observed that the politics of Haryana was to be seen and considered in the wider national context. The compact size of Haryana and its location has endowed it essentially important status for the central government in Delhi. “Its backward political culture, low level of consciousness, division of its people on caste lines are ideally suited to cast i: into the role of livered servant, a whipping boy and a bully at the beck and call of the central government.” Besides, the amplification of the caste conflict within the society, Punjabi versus local questions and the instability of opposition politics, he felt were some of the emerging trends in politics of Haryana.

Om Frakash Goyal like other scholars working on Haryana also found caste playing highly decisive role in state politics in Haryana. All political parties take the caste factor into consideration while selecting the candidates for the electoral process and also for mobilising the electorates. There has been an important study by P S Verma related to the profile of legislative and ministerial elite in Haryana. These studies revealed that the political elite in Haryana consist mainly of the peasant leaders whose source of income was mainly agriculture. An appreciable number of them were known political figures. They were familiar with the political nuances and socio-psychological dimensions of the village society from which they draw their basic support. The political scene shows an increasing centralization of political power in Haryana in the hands of the few families. Strings of the power at the state level are held by relatively better off groups having their hold over socio-economic and political institutions at the local levels. This was a micro group of certain groups, certain individuals and families.

The nature of the political parties influences the state politics to a great extent. It is imperative to understand the party politics in a state to understand its electoral politics. Socio-economic structure of Haryana has notably influenced its political structure. Since independence, there have been two types of political parties in the region - national parties and local/regional/state parties. The Congress (R), Congress (O), Congress (J), the Jan Sangh, CPI, CPI (M), SSP, Swatantra, RPI and BKD

17 Ibid., p. 162.
(Bhartiya Kranti Dal) were the national parties during early 60s in the region. At present Congress, BJP and BSP are the major national parties and Indian National Lok Dal as a regional player. CPI and CPI (M) have failed to make any significant headway in the state.

National Parties in the Politics of Haryana

Congress

The history of the Congress Party is closely linked with the history of the freedom struggle of India. Congress originated in December 1885 in Bombay with the efforts of A.O. Hume and the party remained on the forefront during the struggle for the freedom of the nation. Its aim was to get freedom for India from the British. In the Surat Session held in 1907, extremists left the Congress as they failed to get the support of moderates for active opposition to the British rule. In 1922, another split occurred during Gaya Session, when Desh Bandhu Chitrarjan Das and Moti Lal Nehru left the Congress and formed Swaraj Party. Earlier Congress had run some provincial governments under the Government of India Act, 1935 and joined the interim government in 1946. Jawahar Lal Nehru was the President of the Congress in 1947 and became the Prime Minister in the interim government.

After independence, the party became dominant in India’s political sphere and this dominance continued till 1967. The predominance of the Congress was partly due to the fact that its political and historical development was in conformity with the development of the country. Originating as the first ever political organization of the country, it had become not only the mother of all Indian political parties, but a gigantic national movement which drew to its powerful currents through the organized classes and the scattered masses. Its ideological non-conformism and social flexibility have made it the most-broad party comprehensive enough to provide space for the vast diversities, to work towards unity. All aspects and facts of India’s varied life find their conceivable expression or recognizance reflection in the Congress. The Congress has the unique capacity to create a state promising possession to the poor and to depend simultaneously, elements engaged in dispossessing them with its inherent contradiction. Its capacity to provide for diversities and for the co-existence of extremes, the Congress represents the complexity of Indian society and reflects the national mind to maintain its overwhelming hold over country.
The fourth general elections of 1967 proved very crucial for the Congress. The predominance of Congress has been challenged for the first time by non-Congress coalitions in some of the states like Kerala, West Bengal, and Tamil Nadu, which re-configured the Indian party system as a whole. The remarkable changes can be attributed to the decline of Congress in organizational, institutional and ideological terms. Congress was able to come to power afterwards; it however, did not come to power with the same preponderance that it had enjoyed in first two decades of the polity. Its decline started in 1969, although gradual but in many ways and directions.

In the post-1967 period Congress has found itself under pressure and strain to accommodate various socio-economic forces and upcoming multidimensional changes due to its internal weakness. Its internal pluralist and federal organizational processes were undermined due to centralizing tendencies. Congress has faced the problem of articulation and accommodation of newly mobilized and politicized sections of society. Its decline further can be explained in terms of its failure of generating a capacity to accommodate rising expectations of the electorates. Ideologically, it has been an era of populism and the erosion of ideologies to suit the popular taste. Although Congress has been able to gain its lost ground during 1970s and 1980s (except the period from 1977 to 1980) and dominated the political space of the nation but with diminishing returns.

During the 1990s, the Congress further witnessed the downslide. The period termed as the post-Congress polity marked the rise of the bi-nodal party system due to the emergence of BJP as the single largest party at the centre in 1998 and 1999. The 1993-1995 assembly elections marked the end of the Congress as the natural party of dominance. The party ceased to be among the first two parties in contention for power in most of the states of India as was the case earlier. The decade of 1990s has witnessed the rise of BJP due to its Hindutva nationalism in the backdrop of demolition of the Babri Mosque and its opposition to implementation of the recommendations of Mandal Commission.

Congress, however, remains the only party with an all India presence in organizational and institutional terms despite its decline over the years and BJP


21 ibid.
nowhere stands in comparison to the Congress. Congress faced the challenge in electoral sense both at the level of states and centre. But gradually Congress gained ground by the end of 1990s. During the year 2004, Congress for the first time went for forming a coalition government under the name of United Peoples Alliance (UPA), with outside support from the Left front because the formation of electoral alliance and post-poll coalitions both have become the need of the hour. In general elections of 2009 also Congress emerged as the single largest party in the house and again formed the government with its alliance partners. Congress is the leading party and the coalition maker within UPA.

The Congress adhered to an ideology based on certain fundamental values like socialism, secularism, welfarism and democracy. The party has also remained committed and reaffirmed its faith to national unity from time to time. The Congress party is better critic of racialism, colonialism and imperialism and the party has always opposed these evils at every national and international platform. The party claims to represent the interest of weaker sections of society including minorities. During pre-1991 period the party had favoured the socialistic pattern of society and had gone for mixed model of economy. In 1990, however, it favoured the liberalization and initiated the new economic policy. However, the party has always favoured reforms with human touch.

The party has always favoured the strong centre though, of late, it has entered into alliance with the regional/state level parties. In states also the party has almost same programme. Haryana Pradesh Congress is committed to work for all objectives and promises of National Congress (I).

**Congress in Haryana**

The establishment of Congress in 1885 A.D. definitely marked a turning point in the political history of India. Haryana region was represented by the young leaders of Ambala, Lala Murlidhar, the representative of the Tribune. In this region, the Congress found a new impetus with the joining of Lala Lajpat Rai, an eminent lawyer and an Arya Samajist from Hisar. Arya Samaj had a great influence in rural Haryana.

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region especially in Rohtak district. He attended the Allahabad session in 1888 for the first time and again in 1889 session along with others from the region. But in 1892, when Lala Lajpat Rai left Hisar to settle at Lahore, the activities of the Congress came to low ebb and continued to be so throughout the days of national movement in the region. Consequently, the national movement in the region remained weak and so was the hold of Congress.

To begin with, it was Congress opposition to the Land Alienation Act 1900 AD at the Lucknow session (1900 AD) that drove the peasantry of Haryana region away from the Congress. The Act had far-reaching influence on the social and political life of the region. The Act officially claimed to aim at putting limitation of mortgages which was supposed to prevent money lenders from securing possession of the land without purchase and keeping it indefinitely. The legislation was to protect the Zamindar who proved themselves loyal to the community and British government against the moneylenders. The Act was able to divide the people of Haryana and also made the peasantry especially the Jat peasantry to remain aloof from the Congress and loyal to British Government.

The Unionist Party (1923) leaders, at the later stage expressed their sentiments at the political platform and created a support base among them. Similarly, Brahmins stood apart from Jats as the latter under the influence of Arya Samaj were active against the orthodox Brahmanism. Thus, the Unionist Party headed by Mian Fazal-I-Hussain and Chaudhary Chhotu Ram came to play a dominating role in Punjab Legislative Council. To begin with, it was named as a rural party, it was mainly agriculturist party and its policy were pro-British and anti-urbanities both Hindu and Sikhs. To be specific, the legacy of Unionist Party and Sir Chhotu Ram as a peasant party and peasant leader respectively as well as the non-Congress tradition was what Haryana region politically inherited from the pre-independence days. The Congress was widely perceived as the party in the region as guarding the urban interests of Bania and upper castes like Khatris and Aroras.

After independence, the party came to dominate the area as it had inherited a status of dominance in Haryana as a legacy from Punjab. In fact the dominance of the Congress got further strengthened after the decision of the Union government to
accept the demand for the formation of Haryana as a separate state. The MLAs of the Progressive Independent Party floated by Devi Lal after 1962 elections returned back to the Congress fold. Only a few MLAs of SSP and Jan Sangh were left in the opposition. The return of Sher Singh and Ch. Devi Lal, who had a broad support base among the Jats, had strengthened its position.\(^{23}\)

The acceptance of the demand for *Haryana Prant* increased the support for the party among the agriculturist castes and rural areas. But, it adversely affected the support base of the party among the non-agriculturist, particularly Punjabi Hindus of urban areas as they were opposed to this demand. However, the increased factionalism in the party did immense harm to it. It soon revived its dominance and came to occupy a middle position and kept the opposition divided and scattered. It could successfully handle Vishal Haryana Party through its middle position and reduced the latter into a party of Ahirs limited to Mahendergarh district.

Congress hold and its image of umbrella like structure in the state helped the party to secure the majority of the seats i.e. 48 seats in both the elections held in 1967 and 1968. The party received 41 and 42 per cent of the votes, respectively. The economic development and political stability provided by Bansi Lal government further consolidated its position. This became evident from the success of the party in 7 out of 9 parliamentary constituencies of the state in 1971 Lok Sabha elections. The party’s position further improved in 1972 elections in which it won 54 out of 81 seats. The performance of the party has been wide spread in the state except in Gurgaon and Mahendergarh and the same can be explained in terms of popularity/clout of VHP in the Ahir belt during the period.

But the authoritarian rule of Bansi Lal led to the gradual erosion of the support base and the excesses committed during the emergency badly eroded the same. It became clear from the outcome of 1977 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. The Congress was successfully challenged during the second decade of electoral politics of the state and it has not been that secure as was in the first decade as it failed to secure majorities in all the assembly elections held during this period i.e. 1977, 1982 and

1987 where it got 3, 36 and 5 seats with 17, 15, 37.58 and 29.51 per cent votes, respectively. Its debacle in these elections was widespread in Haryana. In 1977, it was Janata Dal and then in 1987 it was Lok Dal which could achieve this feat. Even in Janata Party it was Lok Dal faction which dominated. The Challenge to Congress in Haryana came from peasant based parties. In 1977 Assembly elections it was almost routed out from the whole of Haryana with two seats from Jind district and one from Ambala district.

The party was, however, able to recover a major segment of its traditional support base in 1980 Lok Sabha elections due to the disenchantment of the masses with the performance of the Janata governments in the centre and at the state level. The defection of Bhajan Lal and his supporters from the Janata Party to the Congress (I) once again revived its dominance in 1980s. But the support base of the party again eroded to some extent, due to the image and performance of Bhajan Lal government. Consequently, the party failed to gain majority in 1982 Assembly elections in 10 out of total 12 districts with Hisar and Jind only giving majority of seats. Its performance was poorest in Jat belt i.e. Rohtak and Sonipat where it could not get more than one seat each. It, however, succeeded in forming government due to the partisan role of Governor G.D. Tapase and skill of Bhajan Lal in engineering defections. But the sympathy wave helped the party in getting increased support in 1984 Lok Sabha elections.

However, the Nyaya Yudh launched by the Haryana Sangharsh Samiti against the Rajiv-Longowal accord under the leadership of Devi Lal once again badly eroded its support base and it was routed in 1987 Assembly elections as it has been reduced only to 5 seats. The results indicated that the party has been sidelined both in the rural as well as urban areas. In the rural Haryana, Lok Dal has successfully challenged Congress and in the urban areas its ally BJP had captured its support and expanded its own space.

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But again the dissatisfaction with the performance of Devi Lal government (1987-89) helped Congress in recovering a major segment of its lost support base at the time of 1989 Lok Sabha elections. Its support base got further strengthened due to “Anti
Chautala” feeling among various sections of voters. Further, during the 1991 general elections, Congress performed well in the view of sympathy wave due to death of Rajiv Gandhi and also due to the misrule of Lok Dal government.

As a result, the party was able to win 54 out of 90 seats in 1991 state Assembly elections and nine out of total 10 seats in Lok Sabha elections. Bhajan Lal, elected leader of CLP further strengthened the party by engineering defections from the BJP, HVP and Janata Dal. But the factionalism in the party has accelerated the process/pace of erosion of its support base or following. The image of government has also made a negative impact. The decade of 1990s was very crucial for the Congress due to its continuance decline.

The Congress party faced a major debacle in the 1996 assembly elections in Haryana. A strong anti-incumbency factor against the Bhajan Lal led government resulted in the rout of the Congress regime. The feeling of resentment against the corrupt and non-performing Congress government reported to be responsible for turning the verdict against the ruling party, whereas, in the Assembly elections of 1991 the Congress had a comfortable majority which was reduced to a poor nine in the 1996 elections. Its vote share also came down from 33.7 per cent in the previous elections to 20.8 in 1996. The downslide of the Congress, which started in the Assembly elections of 1996, continued during the Lok Sabha elections of 1998 and it could win only three seats with a vote share of 26.02 per cent.

The Congress party supported HVP-BJP led government from outside but later on withdrew support, which proved a very immature judgment and it could not win a single seat even after winning 35 per cent of votes in the Lok Sabha elections. The Assembly elections of 2000 completely belonged to INLD-BJP alliance. Congress was able to won 21 seats with a vote share of 31.2 per cent. As a result Haryana became the third state after UP and Bihar where Congress lost two consecutive elections.\(^{25}\)

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Figure No.3:2

Performance of Congress in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
By the Lok Sabha elections of May 2004 Congress revived its lost support base in the state due to anti-INLD wave which got translated in favour of Congress. Congress won nine out of 10 seats that it had contested with a vote share of 42 per cent. The victory was critical for the Congress in the sense that it had lost two successive elections in the state.\textsuperscript{26} Again, the verdict of February 2005 Assembly elections was somewhat usual as state of affairs have not changed much since 2004 Lok Sabha elections. The elections witnessed the landslide victory of Congress, as there was again a clear wave against the incumbent INLD which have worked in favour of Congress. The Congress Party made a clean sweep while winning 67 seats out of 90 Assembly seats with an increased vote share of 37.83 per cent. The Congress had done so well in the state for the second time, first time, it was in 1972 that the party secured 52 seats, means a 2/3 majority.\textsuperscript{27} During the 2008 bi-elections in three Assembly constituencies Congress retains two seats\textsuperscript{28}.

The Congress created history by repeating its earlier performance in the 15\textsuperscript{th} Lok Sabha elections by repeating its performance of 2004 Lok Sabha elections. Congress won nine seats with 41.16 per cent of votes, while one seat was secured by HJC (BL). The Congress party secured decisive lead in 59 assembly segments out of total 90. Further, Congress formed the second consecutive government in the state after winning 40 seats with 35.07 per cent votes in the 2009 assembly polls. However, in the 2009 legislative assembly elections, Congress experienced loss both in terms of seats and votes secured in comparison to previous assembly elections.

\textbf{Social Support Base of Congress}

Before the formation of Haryana, the position of Congress in the Haryana region, then a part of post-partition Punjab was not very commanding. In the pre-independence days, the intensity of national movement was thin in the region and so was the influence of Congress. Congress had to strive hard against tough opposition given by the peasant based parties especially in the domain of electoral performance in rural

\textsuperscript{26} ibid.
\textsuperscript{27} ibid.
areas. It was only during post-independence period with the disappearance of Unionist Party that the region came under Congress influence and has been returning candidates to the state Assembly and Lok Sabha in great majority.

To be more specific, in the pre-independence days, when in Haryana Unionist Party emerged as peasant based party, Congress drew its main support among urban middle classes and rural schedule castes at the same time kept attracting peasantry to an extent. After independence, when Jan Sangh came over with base in the refugee and urban middle classes, Congress came to rely or represent rural rich and poor votes. Similarly, Ahir peasantry represented by Vishal Haryana Party and then Jat peasantry represented by Lok Dal undermined Congress rural support base. Although, Congress had met the challenge by consolidating its urban base as well the support of Scheduled Castes in rural area and has remained at the middle position.

Congress being a secular organization is open to all sections of voters regardless of their religious castes and linguistic affiliations. Congress party attempted not to be too closely identified with any single group not to block completely other avenues of support. It, therefore, has to deliberately balance and aggregate the claims and aspirations of various groups. The party has come to occupy so much of middle ground that opposition parties have been relegated to periphery. Such being the nature of Congress party, people who do not have better commitment with any other political party or an independent candidate vote for this party. Their being agriculturist, industrialist, rural-urban, rich-poor, local-refugee makes no difference whenever a particular group or party with a particular interest emerges in opposition to Congress all other sections and interest get together under the banner of Congress. Even that opposing group or interest starts getting priority within Congress to neutralize that opposition in the mass support base.

**Bahujan Samaj Party**

BSP has been inspired by the ideology of B.R. Ambedkar, though the party has deviated from his emphasis on social revolution. BSP, founded by Kanshi Ram in its present form has grown up through various phases. On 6th December 1978, Kanshi Ram established Backward (SC, ST, and OBC) and Minority Community Employee’s Federation (BAMCEF). It worked for lower middle class government employees.
After BAMCEF, a separate organization, namely, Dalit Soshit Samaj Sangarsh Samiti (DS-4) was formed on 6th December, 1982. Gradually, it started participating in political activities, and the organization changed its name to Bahujan Samaj Party on 14th April 1984. Since then it has become a full-fledged political party, with clear aims, objectives and programmes. BAMCEF and DS-4 were not registered with election commission from the very beginning and its initial electoral experiences were good and it got its support mainly from SCs and Muslims.

BSP has made poll adjustments and had formed the government in Uttar Pradesh (UP) in alliance with Samajwadi Party. It has got recognition as a national political party from Election Commission of India in 1991. In 1991 Parliamentary elections, it polled 16 per cent votes. Further, it got four per cent of votes in elections to Lok Sabha in 1996, 4.7 per cent in 1998 and six per cent in 1999. In 12th Lok Sabha Elections (1998) the party performed badly and could win only five seats. In the 13th elections of Lok Sabha (1999) BSP won 14 seats. But in Lok Sabha elections of 2004, the BSP won 19 seats and also registered rise of 1.64 per cent in its vote share from Lok Sabha elections of 1999.

In Haryana, BSP contested legislative elections for the first time in 1982 under the banner of DS-4. Although, it had contested on all the 90 seats but did not perform well as it secured only 1.18 per cent of total votes polled. Having performed badly in 1982, it contested in 1984 under the banner of B.S.P. By that time the party was constituted but not registered as a national party. It got only three per cent of votes without winning even a single seat. During 1991 elections, the party contested as a registered party on 26 seats out of 90 and won only one seat with 2.32 per cent vote share while its 22 candidates lost their deposits. Again in 1996, it contested on 67 seats but secured only 5.44 per cent vote share.

In 1999, Lok Sabha elections, BSP entered into political alliance with HVP. The alliance performed badly and could not win even a single seat and secured only 1.96 per cent of votes. During Assembly elections of 2000, BSP won one out of total 83 seats it contested with a vote share of 5.7 per cent. It seems that BSP is yet to pick up as a party of Scheduled Castes in Haryana, as only 16 per cent of the SC votes were being polled in its favour. Further, in Lok Sabha elections of 2004, it could not win even a single seat and secured only 4.98 per cent votes. In Legislative Assembly elections of 2005 too, it managed only one seat with 3.22 per cent of votes.
Figure No. 3.3

Performance of Bahujan Samaj Party in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
During 15\textsuperscript{th} Lok Sabha elections in 2009, the party not only fielded its candidates on all Lok Sabha seats, but also claimed to win all the 10 seats.\textsuperscript{29} BSP had led in eight segments, although, it was not able to win even a single parliamentary seat, but interestingly, it emerged as the second largest party in the state in terms of vote share as it secured 15.73 per cent votes. Further, it also managed to stand second in Gurgaon and Karnal and third in Ambala, Kurukshetra, Sonipat, Rohtak and Faridabad. However, it could win only a single seat in legislative assembly polls of 2009 with 6.73 per cent votes. Social engineering formula and Mayawati’s personal appeal to the Dalit voters failed in Haryana mainly due to her non-Jat slogan. Besides the lack of strong organization and able leadership in Haryana, failure of its alliance with HJC could also be sited as one of the reason for its poor performance. However, BSP is the only party whose vote share has increased from 3.22 to 6.73 in comparison to previous assembly elections in the state.

Electoral prospects of BSP in Haryana are a bit dim. On the basis of arithmetic calculations, on which BSP depends i.e. the support of BC’s, SC’s and minorities (Meos) proves the fact that BSP can never get into political power and form the government in Haryana as the percentage of these groups itself is not sufficient to win elections on a large scale. Further, demographically too, the Dalit population is scattered all over in the state. The support of BSP among Dalits is not enbloc because the support base has been divided between Congress and BSP since the 80’s. Second, the strong organization at various levels is an important factor in the growth of a party.

Given the inadequate organizational structure of BSP, it seems that the party will not get an edge over other parties in near future. Third, each state has its own specific characteristics and political patterns. Haryana has always been dominated by rich peasants and agricultural castes like Jats, Rajputs, Ahirs, Bishnois, etc. who incidentally do not belong to the BCs. BSP being a new party seems to have tough time to make its ground in electoral politics of the state. In Haryana, BSP is nothing much but mainly the divisor of Dalit vote share of Congress.

Performance of Bahujan Samaj Party in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
BSP does not offer any different line of development. On ideological front BSP does not have much to offer. The party feels the need of protecting the interests of Scheduled Castes, Scheduled Tribes and Other Backward Castes (OBC’s), as it also feels that the measures aimed at improving the conditions of these groups have not been implemented by Manuvadi parties. Thus, the party aims to act as the watchdog to protect the right of Bahujan Samaj, which according to its leaders 85 to 90 per cent of the total population of India.

The party also feels that the half-hearted attitude of Manuvadi parties towards solving the innumerable problems faced by various sections has been escalated. The main objectives of the party is to bring about social and economic equality like political equality which has been ensured in the Constitution of India, the socio-economic inequality has been intensified by the existing and ruling parties. These parties are controlled by leadership belonging to high castes that have used the lower caste people to advance their own welfare and has failed to provide social justice to oppressed classes.

The BSP aims to protect the democracy from its erosion. BSP considers its responsibility to enlighten and awaken the masses about the true nature of the dominance of Manuvadi parties. It believes that only a state ruled by the Dalit Bahujan i.e. the Dalits and backwards is capable of providing social justice by using the power of state from above rather than by a social revolution from below.  

Sudha Pai while discussing ideology of BSP writes that, “BSP promises an alternative social justice for Dalit Bahujan that will undo the historical wrongs penetrated by upper castes and establish a new social and political order, a Dalit Bahujan state in which the former will replace the Manuvadi social groups that have ruled the country since independence.” The capture of power by BSP is imperative. Moreover it is interested in political empowerment of the Dalits by capturing state power. Consequently, it is through constant competition in the electoral arena that it has been able to establish itself as a strong party especially in UP.

31 ibid.
Support Base of Bahujan Samaj Party

BSP is very weak in Haryana and has not been able to mobilize Dalits in its favour, as; it lacks strong organization and leadership in the state. BSP needs to opt for a more rigorous approach to mobilize Dalits in politics. The process of identity formation among the Dalits in Haryana is still at a nascent stage. BSP is mainly a fringe party in Haryana.

Bharatiya Janata Party

The Bharatiya Janata party (BJP) is the reincarnation of Bhartiya Jan Sangh (BJS) which was established by Dr. Shayama Prasad Mukherjee in 1951. The BJP came into existence on 6th April 1980. Significantly, the majority of the members were previously the members of Jan Sangh. The RSS backed the Bhartiya Jan Sangh ideologically, which was formed by Keshav Balram Hedgewar. BJS enjoys strong hold over the Hindi heartland in 60s. In 1977, it became the coalition partner in the formation of Janata Party.

During 1980, a controversy emerged in Janata Dal on the issue of dual membership of its members. On April 4th 1980; the National Executive of the Janata Party passed a resolution and imposed a ban on the members of party for having any kind of relationship with the RSS. But the members of Jan Sangh group of party did not accept this decision. They organised the national conference of their supporters in Delhi on 5th and 6th April to consider the decision, 4383 representatives from different parts of the country participated in the conference. On April 6th 1980, a new party named BJP came into being and Atal Behari Vajpayee was unanimously got elected as its first president.

In 1984, the first general elections that BJP contested, the party won only 2 seats. The performance of party was not very encouraging, but since 1989 till today the performance of BJP has been quiet good. During 9th Lok Sabha elections the party secured 11.36 per cent votes and 88 seats. In 10th Lok Sabha elections, the BJP got 119 seats and 22.9 per cent votes. Besides this, the BJP formed governments in Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan, which were dismissed on 16th December 1992 on account of unfortunate happenings of Ayodhya on 6th December 1992.

32 Some BJP members were having membership of RSS also.
There was a downfall in the electoral performance of the party from December 1992 to the first quarter of 1995. The party gave an encouraging performance in six state assembly elections being held in February/March 1995. For the first time, the party secured an absolute majority in Gujarat and also formed the government with the help of Shiv Sena in Maharashtra.

In 1996 parliamentary elections, the party secured 161 seats with a vote share of 23.5 per cent and emerged as the single largest party in the Lok Sabha. The BJP under the leadership of A.B. Vajpayee formed the government, which lasted only for 13 days due to lack of majority. In the 12th Lok Sabha, the party won 182 seats with 25.4 per cent votes and was able to spread its influence almost in the entire country. On March 19th 1998, under the leadership of A.B. Vajpayee, the party along with the support of about 18 national and regional parties formed the government at the centre. But due to the withdrawal of support by AIADMK, the government failed to win vote of confidence in the house, consequently, BJP led government had to resign after remaining in power for 13 months.

In 1999, the BJP and its allies floated National Democratic Alliance (NDA) with a common manifesto for contesting 13th Lok Sabha elections and won 182 seats and also emerged as a single largest party in the Lok Sabha. In all, the NDA won 304 seats and formed the government. In 2004 Lok Sabha elections, the party led NDA lost elections despite an aggressive electoral campaign currently NDA is the main opposition alliance at the Centre. In electoral terms, the BJP has experienced multidimensional rise in the sense that it has asserted itself in geographical, social and political terms. Over the years BJP has grown up geographically and has also been able to increase its social support base.

**Ideology of BJP**

BJP stands for Hindu nationalism and believes that Hinduism and the nation are same and all people without distinction are part of it. The party emphasizes on *Bhartiya Sanskriti*. BJP is committed to the concept of one nation, one people, one culture, this is not just what is defined by its geographical and political identity, it rightly believes, it is well explained by ancient cultural heritage also. From this belief is generated the concept of cultural nationalism which is the genesis of Hindutva. That is the identity of one ancient nation *Bharat Varsha*.
Figure No. 3:5

Performance of BJS/Bhartiya Janata Party in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Hindutva being considered as a unifying principle, that alone can preserve the unity and integrity of our nation. This is a collective endeavour to protect and re-energize the soul of India to make us a strong and prosperous nation. Hindutva is also the antidote to the shameful efforts of any section to benefit at the expense of others.

The party further views that only by recognizing the limitless strength of cultural nationalism can the nation be moulded. The party adopted the Gandhian socialism in coherence with the notion of cultural and economic nationalism. Basically, it emphasizes on Gandhian socialism and Swadeshi economy. In matters of foreign policy, it stem upon the need of strong national defence and also emphasizes the development of nuclear arms.

**BJP in Haryana**

The reorganization of Punjab on linguistic basis and the subsequent formation of Haryana in 1966 enabled the Jan Sangh to extend its support irrespective of the fact that the Jan Sangh had opposed the formation of Haryana. Jan Sangh was not in favour of separate state of Haryana; rather it supported the demand for Maha Punjab. Ever since the Congress government in the centre had accepted this demand, the support for Jan Sangh increased among Punjabi Hindus, who has opposed the demand as they feared the domination of peasantry in the new state due to their numerical strength.33

However, after the merger of small regional parties in the Congress, Jan Sangh remained the main opposition party in the state. This helped the party to obtain the support of a section of the anti-Congress voters.34 Consequently, Jan Sangh emerged as the second largest party in Haryana in the assembly polls of 1967 while winning 12 seats. It also becomes a partner in the United Front government which was formed after the fall of Congress government in 1967.

The support base of the Jan Sangh started shrinking because of its support to the Rao Birender Singh headed government. Even though, Jan Sangh was not a partner in the

34 ibid.
government, but its image was badly affected for supporting the defections in a way. “The anti-traders policies of that government and increase in the prices of food grains led to the alienation of a segment of the supporters away from it.” Consequently, it could win only seven seats in the mid-term state assembly elections of 1968. The position of the party further weakened in 1972 elections, because the Punjabi Hindus withdraw their support from the party as they realized that there were no chances of the BJS forming government in the state in near future on its own as it has won only two seats. It seemed that its supporters find suitable to support the ruling party Congress to protect their interest.

However, the merger of Jan Sangh in the Janata Party helped the former to revive itself to an extent during 1977 assembly elections. Due to Janata wave it, not only recovered its traditional support base among Punjabi Hindus, but also made headways in other sections of society. The Jan Sangh faction got its due share in the Janata governments headed by Chaudhary Devi Lal and Bhajan Lal (respectively).

However, the overnight defection of Bhajan Lal and his supporters from Janata Dal government to Congress Party led to the conversion of the Janata Dal government into Congress government after Congress won in 1980 Lok Sabha elections. As a result the former Jan Sangh faction subsequently received a major set back as it lost political power and also get narrowed its support base. Further, “the defection of Jat leader Mukhtiar Singh Malik led to the loss of its limited Jat support. Moreover, the Punjabis also withdrew support from it after realizing that its new incarnation, the BJP which was formed after 1980 elections cannot get power in the state; consequently they began to support the Congress (I).”

In the post 1980 period, the party was once again able to recover its eroded support base through the participation in Nyaya Yudh of Haryana Sangarsh Samiti from 1985 to 1987. During 1982 Assembly elections, the BJP secured largest number of votes i.e. 30.73 per cent of the total votes polled. During 1987 assembly elections BJP contested in alliance with Lok Dal (B) of Devi Lal and also joined the Devi Lal headed Government. However, it did not join the Janata Dal government headed by

35 ibid., p. 329.
36 ibid.
37 ibid.
O.P. Chautala which was formed after 1989 Lok Sabha elections, due to the realization that the participation in the Devi Lal government which was significantly pro-rural and pro-jat would alienate its urban support base among Punjabi Hindus.\textsuperscript{38}

This, however, failed to help the party in 1991 elections. It has secured only 10.17 per cent of votes in the 1991 parliamentary elections when it had contested all the 10 seats. Further, when the party contested assembly elections of 1991, it could win only two seats out of total 89 seats it contested, with a vote share of 9.38 per cent. Even the issue of Ram Janam Bhumi failed to help the party to take ground in the state. The party has been further weakened after 1991 assembly elections due to defections and electoral defeats.

BJP gained its lost support to an extent in 1996 parliamentary elections when it contested in alliance with Haryana Vikas Party (HVP); it secured 19.74 per cent of votes by contesting six out of 10 Lok Sabha seats. Its support base further got strengthened in assembly elections of 1996, when it again contested with its alliance partner HVP. Although, both the alliance partner gained enormously from the alliance but BJP came out to be the major gainer. As in the 1991 elections, it contested 89 seats but could win only two seats; in 1996 it contested only 25 seats and won 1 seats. However, its vote share went down from previous 9.4 per cent to 8.8 per cent.

HVP-BJP alliance formed the government but the government soon lost its popularity due to failure of its prohibition policy. Besides, the firing incident at the farmer’s agitation in Mahendergarh-Bhiwani area also made it unpopular among the peasantry. During the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, the alliance could win only two seats. The BJP again contested six seats as in 1996 and secured 19.89 per cent of votes. While realizing the situation the BJP withdrew its support from the three year old HVP-BJP government before the Lok Sabha elections of 1999.\textsuperscript{39}

During Lok Sabha elections of 1999 the party tied up with Indian National Lok Dal (INLD) and contested five seats and won all the seats. BJP received 29.21 per cent of votes in five parliamentary constituencies while winning in 45 assembly constituency

\textsuperscript{38} ibid., p. 330.
segments. The BJP and INLD combine decided to continue with their alliance in the Assembly elections of 2000. The BJP contested on 29 seats but could win only six seats. The coalition could not operate at the grass root level. Consequently, BJP could not succeed in recovering its lost political support base.

The setback for the BJP in Haryana was attributed to the harm caused by its ally INLD as its alliance with INLD was not perceived sincere and the BJP could not retain its gains which it made in 1999 Lok Sabha and 1996 Assembly elections. The BJP cadre worked sincerely and gave full support to the INLD candidates in all the 61 constituencies it contested and helped it to win 47 seats. But the lack-lustre support to the former by the INLD in the remaining 29 constituencies in which there were a large number of rebel candidates allegedly having the clandestine support of its leader Om Prakash Chautala pushed the BJP to a humiliating position as the party could win only 6 seats, which was almost half the tally of the party in 1996 elections. BJP’s support base limited to the upper castes and the Punjabis in urban areas, which further suffered a setback as these sections were not happy in its alliance with, INLD. BJP’s loss can be explained further in terms of its failure to provide dynamic leadership and effective organization in the state.

BJP which has won all the five seats in 1999 Lok Sabha elections had to contend with only one seat out of total 10 Lok Sabha seats it contested in 2004 parliamentary elections. Its vote share also decreased by 12 per cent. The loss of BJP can be explained in terms of its failure to project itself as a credible alternative to INLD and also its inability to convince the voters of the state that it is strong enough to take on INLD.

The role of BJP in the formation of INLD government in 1999 and its outside support to Chautala government in 2000-2002 along with its failure to take a stand against the anti-people policies of government resulted in shifting voter’s support in favour of Congress. BJP support base kept on shifting to other parties due to its incapacity to convince its supporters that it can attain the power and form the government on its

40 ibid., p. 340.
41 Ibid.
own too. Further, its failure to tie-up either with HVP or to keep its alliance intact with INLD take out its rural support base.43

In the state assembly elections of 2005, the party contested own its own as its leadership have decided not to tie up with INLD. BJP leaders claimed that their party would emerge as an alternative to the Congress party in the state. But it could win only two seats with a marginally increased vote share from 2000. In real terms, all the parties except Congress suffered a sharp decline in their vote share and seats per contested as well.

In 2009 Lok Sabha elections, BJP once again contested on 5 seats in alliance with INLD. But drew blank and could not retain its Sonipat parliamentary seat which it had won in 2004 Lok Sabha elections. It secured 12.09 per cent of vote share and led only in seven assembly segments. The BJP, decided to contest all the seats on its own in 2009 legislative assembly elections, and witnessed declined vote share from 10.4 per cent to nine per cent, although won four seats as compared to two in 2005. However, the BJP has much road ahead in the state.

**Support Base of BJP**

In Haryana, the BJP is considered an urban-based party which has its influence mainly among the Punjabi Hindus who migrated from west Punjab. The support base of the BJP has always remained very limited in Haryana due to historical, demographic, social, economic and political reasons. Its support base remained confined to the upper castes and the Punjabis in the urban areas.

Unlike other north Indian states where BJP has gained ascendance in 1980 and 1990s, in Haryana, BJPs prospectus has remained dim. Infact whatever vote and support it has attained during past one and half decade is due to its alliance with regional parties. So, the BJP remained a weak force in the state despite its leadership’s claims of having the potential of making the government on its own in Haryana.

43 ibid.
Figure No. 3:6

Performance of BJS/Bharatiya Janata Party in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Bar Chart of Seats Contested and Won](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

![Bar Chart of Vote Share](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
One of the main reasons for its poor support base in the state can be given in terms of its failure to mobilize any of the major community in its favour as its core or committed support base. Party’s support base is very weak among the majority community i.e. peasantry and particularly among Jats. Further, the party is not able to draw en-bloc support of upper castes of the state which forms the core of its support base in other states.

In Haryana, we have more or less a bipolar system with Congress being one significant pole and a regional party as the second major player in electoral arena of the state. BJP apart from being a catalytic player is a minor player with limited influence in the state. Although, it has facilitated the formation of government in the state at a couple of times in alliance with a regional party with strong rural support base, but, whenever it has attempted to play a larger role especially in recent elections while contesting on its own the electorate rejected it and it remains a marginal party till date.

The Communist Parties (CPI and CPM)

The Communist parties had failed to gain any perceptible support in Haryana because communist ideology was not liked by landowning peasantry of the state and the trade union movement remained very weak in this predominantly agriculturist state. Moreover, there was little class consciousness in Haryana where the casteism has a powerful hold on the people. Notwithstanding their present clout in politics at the national level, Left parties — CPI and CP I (M) — have over the years become a nonentity in the political arena in Haryana. The parties like CPI and CPM with their definite histories and ideologies which have not been able to make their presence felt in the politics of the state.

A cursory view of the performance of these parties in 1991, 1996 and 2000 reveals that the vote share of Leftists has shown a remarkable decline. Since the 1991 general elections not only the candidates fielded by both the parties failed to make their entry into the state assembly, but also forfeited their security deposits. While the CPI could get only 4.97 per cent votes in 1991 elections, the party’s vote share came down to 2.27 per cent in 1996 elections and to a meagre 1.64 per cent in the last Assembly elections in 2000. During 2005 assembly elections too they each secured 0.14 per cent of votes without winning a single seat.
Performance of CPI in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Figure No. 3:8

Performance of CPI in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Seats Contested and Won](image)

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

![Vote Share Secured](image)

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Figure No. 3:9

Performance of CPM in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Bar Chart of Seats Contested and Won](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

Source: [http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

(B) Vote Share Secured

![Bar Chart of Vote Share (%)](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

Source: [http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp](http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)
Performance of CPM in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1967

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Bar chart showing seats contested and won](https://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

(B) Vote Share Secured

![Bar chart showing vote share](https://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp)

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
However, the vote share of CPI (M) had fluctuated in the successive general elections in the state. While the party received 14.24 per cent of votes polled in 1991 elections, but in 1996 its vote share decreased to a mere 1.77 per cent. All the seven CPI (M) candidates in 2000 assembly elections lost their security and could only manage to gain 3.33 per cent votes. During the Lok Sabha and Assembly elections of 2009, both these parties achieved minimal votes. The last time when both the parties made their entry to the state assembly was in 1987.

STATE LEVEL PARTIES AND POLITICS OF HARYANA

There have also been some state level parties like Zamindara league, being formed by the former unionist followers of Sir Chhotu Ram. It was the first regional party that emerged in Haryana region in the post-independence period. The party did not achieve much success in 1952 elections, because of its narrow support base confined only to Jats. It was merged in Congress Party before 1967 elections. During first general elections, it was the main opposition party in the region. Haryana Lok Samiti floated by Sher Singh before 1962 elections was the second state level party which achieved little success in 1962 elections by raising the issue of discrimination against Haryana region in the matters of economic development and recruitment in government jobs in composite Panjab. The party was merged in the Congress party after the acceptance of the demand of Haryana Prant as a result of linguistic reorganization of Punjab in 1966. Gandhi Janata Party was another local party founded in 1954 by Pt. Sri Ram Sharma, the only MLA from the Zamindara League, but the party did not fare much well in the politics of the state.44

The formation of the state accentuated the phenomenon of factionalism in different political parties. The escalated factionalism in the Congress party resulted in the further formation of the regional parties. In the post- reorganization period, the first splinter group to step out of the Congress and form a separate regional party was the Vishal Haryana Party (VHP) in 1967. The party was primarily a personal triumph of its leader Rao Birendar Singh, who had a big following among the Ahir peasantry. He tried to protect the peasant interests but soon the party clout came to be limited only to Ahir belt comprising of Mahendergarh district. VHP remained the ruling party for a short while when Rao Birender Singh headed the United Front government after

the fall of the Congress government headed by B.D. Sharma. The party lost power after the dismissal of government in November 1967, but it succeeded in emerging as the main opposition party in 1968 elections; because of en bloc support of Ahirs’ who regarded Rao Birender Singh as their undisputed leader.

The support base of the party declined in 1972 elections as Rao could not retain the party’s support base; even the party’s Ahir support after failing to attain power in 1972 elections. The party was able to somewhat improve its position in 1977 Assembly elections by winning five seats. It was, however, merged in Congress (I) in 1978 because Rao Birender Singh (its leader) realized that, the party has no future in the state because the regional identity was weak in Haryana. The Bhartiya Kranti Dal (BKD) another regional party floated by Ch. Charan Singh after 1967 elections also failed to strike roots in Haryana because he had no following among the majority community of the state. His influence was at that time confined to western Uttar Pradesh. The party could win only one out of 81 seats in 1968 assembly elections.

Another regional party known as Arya Sabha organised by Swami Agnivesh in 1970 was based on the ideology of Vedic socialism. The party was able to get little support in 1972 assembly elections and its limited success could be attributed to the powerful influence of Arya Samaj on the Haryanavi society. The party ceased to exist after 1977 due to its merger in Janata Party.

**Lok Dal in Haryana**

The Lok Dal was born as Bhartiya Lok Dal in 1974 as a part of process of consolidation of opposition forces. Chaudhary Charan Singh was the moving spirit behind the merger of B.K.D., Muslim Majlis, Utkal Congress, SSP and Swatantra Party. In this process, the constituent units lost their identity. In the beginning, the BLD was taken in Haryana as the party of ‘Pars’ i.e. the people living across Yamuna, but this impression soon faded away, as the party gained ground in Haryana after Chand Ram and Devi Lal (the former Congress leaders) joined it. This was evident from its electoral triumph in the state immediately after its formation in 1974 bi-elections of three assembly constituencies, wherein the party begged 2 seats namely Meham and Rori.

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46 ibid.
In 1977, BLD was merged into Janata party along with Congress (J), Congress (O) and Jan Sangh. Janata Party swept the Parliamentary and Assembly elections as it won all the 10 Lok Sabha and 75 assembly seats in the state. After merger, it ceased to be a political party but the BLD faction of Janata Party remained powerful in Haryana till Devi Lal was replaced by Bhajan Lal as Chief Minister of the state in 1979. As a constituent of Janata party it had got 45 assembly seats out of total 75. Subsequently, this faction which had broad support base in the peasantry of the region, due to the pro-farmer ideology of Chaudhary Charan Singh and pro-farmer policies of Chaudhary Devi Lal government, got converted into Lok Dal after split of Janata Party.

In 1980 Lok Sabha elections, the party bagged four out of 10 seats, although, it polled highest number of votes in the state i.e. 33.54 per cent in comparison to 32.57 per cent of the Congress with five seats. The party did well in Lok Sabha elections with a rural based performance.

In 1982, Lok Dal contested the legislative assembly elections in alliance with the BJP for the first time. Lok Dal secured 23.6 per cent votes against 27.5 per cent secured by the Congress. The combined vote share of Lok Dal and BJP alliance was recoded 30.73 per cent. Similarly, in terms of 36 seats won by the Congress, INLD-BJP combine secured 37 seats. During 1982 assembly elections the party secured a majority of seats in 3 districts namely Rohtak, Faridabad and Bhiwani and went blank in Mahendergarh and Gurgaon. It secured the majority of seats only in “Jat-belt”. The performance of Lok Dal was rural based whereas its ally as an urban based party performed better in urban areas. Besides, its own seats, Lok Dal also had the support of the majority of independents. Its leader Devi Lal put forward his claim for the formation of the government. In the beginning, the governor asked him to prove his strength/majority but later on yielded before the pressure of centre and invited the Congress under Bhajan Lal one day earlier to form the government and got him sworn as Chief Minister. The Lok Dal then became the main opposition party until its member resigned in protest against the Punjab Accord. On the eve of forthcoming elections the party was engaged in projecting the Haryana’s regional interest in the wake of Punjab Accord. Lok Dal along with BJP under the banner of the Haryana Sangarsh Samiti caused the large-scale mobilization in the state especially in Rohtak and Jind rallies.
However, in the 8th Lok Sabha elections, the party got a set back in the state when it failed to get a single seat even after polling 19.10 per cent votes. It has electoral adjustments with Congress (J) which under Jagjivan Ram (Babuji)’s leadership polled 10.49 per cent votes. The party along with its ally gave neck to neck fight to the Congress in rural areas, but the urban areas under the strong sympathy wave held the key, resulting in the outcome of Congress sweeping out the 10 seats of Lok Sabha.

In Assembly elections of 1987, Lok Dal again had poll adjustment with BJP and secured 60 of the total 69 seats it contested in 1987 Assembly elections. Its ally BJP got 15 seats. The alliance gained the 2/3 majority in the house. Lok Dal-BJP alliance secured a combine vote share of 48.63 per cent. Lok Dal with its alliance partner BJP performed truly well as it secured 74 assembly seats. On the other hand Congress secured only five seats with 29.57 per cent votes. It could be said that in 1987 Lok Dal not only secured electoral victories in new areas but also consolidated its position in its old strongholds. The party opened its account for the first time in Gurgaon and Mahendergarh districts known as Meo and Ahir belts.

But Lok Dal neither was able to repeat its electoral performance in 1991 elections nor was able to keep its support base intact. Lok Dal contested 1991 elections under the name of Samajwadi Janata Party (SJP) and could retain only 15 seats out of its 60 seats that it had won in the previous assembly elections. Its vote share was reduced to 22 per cent. The electoral verdict exhibited the strong Congress wave in the wake of Rajiv Gandhi assassination combined with strong anti-incumbency factor against the (mis) rule of Lok Dal government. In Lok Sabha elections too the performance of Lok Dal was poor.

During 1991 elections, the loss of INLD became the gain for the Congress. But during 1996 elections, Lok Dal was not able to translate Congress’s loss in its gain. However, Lok Dal performed comparatively better in 1996 legislative assembly elections than 1991. Lok Dal won 24 seats although with a decreased vote share of 20.5 per cent. Haryana Lok Dal (Rashtriya) (HLD (R)) further improved its position in the state and won 4 Lok Sabha seats during 1998 elections. It contested in alliance with BSP and its alliance partner also won one seat and made a tally of five. The improved position of Lok Dal can be explained in terms of unpopular rule of HVP-BJP combine and continued downsride of Congress.

47 During 1998 Lok Sabha elections erstwhile Lok Dal contested as Haryana Lok Dal (Rashtriya) (HLD (R)).
Performance of J P/ BLD/INLD in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1977

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Bar chart showing seats contested and won from 1977 to 2009.]

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(A)Vote Share Secured

![Bar chart showing vote share from 1977 to 2009.]

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Lok Dal further gained enormously; when 14 defector MLAs of HVP-BJP government joined it which gave the party an opportunity to form the government with the support of BJP as the latter already had withdrawn its support from HVP-BJP led government formed in 1996. The party contested 1999 Lok Sabha elections in alliance with BJP and won all the 10 seats with a combined vote share of 58 per cent. Further, assembly elections of 2000 clearly belonged to the party, INLD won 47 seats out of 61 seats it contested and with an increased vote share of 29.2 per cent. The good image of Chaudhary Devi Lal, unpopularity of previous government and again the continuous erosion of support base of Congress helped the INLD to a great deal. INLD-BJP combine secured 53 seats. The verdict showed that INLD was no longer a party of Jats only but had struck its roots in other sections of society too. INLD received support both from urban and rural areas but again with a tilt towards rural sector.

However, the Lok Sabha elections of May 2004 clearly belonged to Congress as the party won nine out of total 10 seats that it had contested with a decent vote share of 42 per cent. There was an anti-INLD wave which got translated in favour of Congress. People were fed up of INLD rule and the party could not win even a single seat and its vote share fall by six per cent. Further, verdict of assembly elections of February 2005 was not much different, but it was somehow already decided in Lok Sabha elections of May 2004. In the Assembly elections of 2005 also INLD faced a crushing defeat. The party got an all time low nine seats in comparison to 47 seats it won in 2000. Besides, it secured a decreased vote share of 23.55 per cent from 29.61 per cent in previous assembly elections. The verdict must be seen against so called ‘Chautala Raj’- the reign of terror. That was a collective mandate of Haryanavi society to vote INLD out of power due to combination of certain factors.

The Congress witnessed a landslide victory while winning 67 seats with a vote share of 37.83 per cent. There was a strong anti-incumbency factor which worked in its favour. Further, INLD drew blank in the three assembly bi-elections held in May 2008 too. In fact it has finished third, behind the Congress and the newly formed

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48 Yogendra Yadav and Dhananjay Joshi, loc. cit.
Haryana Janhit Congress (BL). The INLD ’s hopes of winning at least one seat to get the status of the leader of opposition was not fulfilled and its tally remains poor nine.

The INLD could not win a single seat in Lok Sabha polls of 2009. Besides, it secured a vote share of 15.68 per cent in comparison to 22.43 per cent secured by the party in 2004 Lok Sabha elections. It led only in seven assembly segments. During these elections, the party in alliance with BJP was trying to give a tough fight to the Congress in the state.49 Winning at least one seat was necessary for INLD to ensure its political space in the state. The alliance has been rejected by the electorate. The humiliation for the INLD is further increased by the fact that its vote percentage, which was second to the Congress in 2004, has fallen to the third place, behind, of all parties, the BSP. It seems that the people had still not forgiven the INLD, for its autocratic ways of ruling when it was in power before 2005. 50

However, in the legislative elections of 2009, INLD has gained enormously when compared to 2005 when it could secure just nine seats but that time the party have gained 22 seats while winning 31 seats. Although, its share has dropped to just 1.10 per cent, from 26.8 per cent in 2005 assembly elections to 25.8 per cent in 2009. But the formation of 2nd consecutive Congress government is not a good sign for the political prospects of INLD.

From 2004 Lok Sabha elections to 2009 legislative elections, INLD was nowhere in electoral sense, but that never meant that it had ceased to be a force to reckon with in the state. It has proved from the recent electoral verdict that INLD is still the second largest party in the state with a decent vote share and support base. It has been very popular under the leadership of Chaudhary Devi Lal among the peasantry due to its pro-farmer rhetoric matched with specific pro-peasantry policies.

49 ‘Haryana’s Lok Sabha battle is for a bigger way’, retrieved on : 30th April 2009, from: www.jansamachar.net.
Figure No.3:12

Performance of J P/ BLD/INLD Lok Sabha Elections Since 1977\(^5\)

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Bar chart showing seats contested and won across election years from 1977 to 2009.]

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

![Bar chart showing vote share (%).]

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

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\(^5\) Contested with different names in different elections.
The Lok Dal has given tough fight to the Congress in the state and has provided the electorates a stable alternative to Congress at times. INLD has made a come back in the state politics. Although, INLD has a very strong organizational base in the state, but does have its own limitations, in the sense that it has to broaden its committed base beyond Jat-Land and rural areas.

**Ideology of Lok Dal**

The party stands for the welfare of the peasantry. Its ideology and programme is to guard the interests of the peasantry. Chaudhary Charan Singh, the father of Lok Dal has well summed up its ideology and action plan when he writes, “A farmer’s income, profit, saving and what is most important, his capacity to invest in land are determined by selling a bag of wheat, rice or any other agricultural commodity that he produces. The demand for high prices for farm products is not a plea for generosity or subsidy but a claim based on equality.”

The party came into being to safeguard the interest of the peasantry against the urban rich and capitalist class.

The party addresses the issue of need of bank loans, market for agricultural output and support price. The advent of Green Revolution, mechanization of agriculture has increased the dependency of peasantry on industrial goods. The increased expenditure on agriculture and lesser support price for agricultural goods as compared to industrial goods has raised the frustration among peasantry and had made the Lok Dal popular in Haryana as the party came forward with an agenda to safeguard the interests of the peasantry. The party further supports the witting off of bank loans. In the light of Punjab Accord, it demands more share in Ravi-Beas water as well as simultaneous transfer of Hindi speaking areas in lieu of Chandigarh. The party also stands for the construction of Satlej-Yamuna Link very strongly.

**Support Base of Lok Dal**

The party has strong support base in Haryana as it come to stand for the aspirations of the majority population (peasantry). Even during the mass movements against Punjab Accord it has been concentrating upon the issues related to the welfare of peasantry.

The party has come to suit appreciably the socio-economic and political background of the state. Haryana is primarily a rural state with majority population dependent on agriculture.

In the rural Haryana peasantry dominates due to its numerical and economic strength. Green Revolution has opened the prosperity as well as some new challenges to the peasantry. As a result they have started aspiring for more and more benefits in terms of political dominance. Lok Dal soon became popular with this section as the party ruled well to the economic interests and political aspirations of the farmer community. Moreover, Haryana region has a tradition of peasant parties which have stood for the interest of the peasantry. During pre-independence days it was Unionist Party which was popular among the peasantry in general and Jat Peasantry in particular. It guarded their interest against the city-based business class.

As the national movement and Congress both were weak in the region, the peasantry saw Sir Chhotu Ram as their saviour. After independence, it was Zamindara Party and immediately after the formation of state, the VHP along with the BKD represented the non-Congress ethos of the peasantry. But with the coming up of the Lok Dal the same non-Congress legacy/ethos became most convincing in the light of support and leadership of the Jat peasantry, which is the most numerous and dominating section not only among the peasantry but in the state as a whole too, the phenomenon which was present in Unionist Party, but absent in VHP. In the Lok Dal top leadership equation has always stood decided in favour of the Jat peasantry, this is the reason why VHP could not do that well in the state as the Lok Dal is doing.

In fact, the party’s rise to the seat of power became possible when its committed support base of Jats expanded among non-Jat peasantry. This non-Jat support base became possible under the banner of Haryana Sangarsh Samiti, when these different forces came together on a common platform with programmes of common interests of the various sections of society, Chaudhary Devi Lal get together Brahmin leader B.D. Sharma, Bania leader B.G. Gupta and Balwant Tayal, Meo leader Khurshid Ahmad and other such leaders, even BJP which has influence in city based Punjab was accommodated for time being, caste feelings were largely undermined in the name of regional interests. Under these circumstances Chaudhary Devi Lal could penetrate the support for his party among different castes and
successfully swayed non-Jats too. So, the most committed support of the party comes from the so-called Jat-belt. The voters from this belt are in fact committed voters who have voted for the party even in the face of strong Congress waves except once or twice like Lok Sabha elections of 2004 and 2009 and also in Assembly elections of 2005 and 2009.

However, the party has not been able to make very strongholds in Mewat and Ahirwal region dominated by non-Jats peasantry. The party has always done much better in Assembly elections than Lok Sabha elections, the phenomenon exhibits that there is a section of voters who have preferred to vote for the party only in legislative assembly elections and not in Lok Sabha elections. A feature in the arena suggests that this said section of voters is mainly located in the non-Jats belts. This further exhibited that these voters have preferred the Congress on national issues and Lok Dal on the regional and class interests. However, the economic regional, class and other issues have fallen short had Chaudhary Devi Lal not used Sangarsh Samiti’s platform for getting together leader of standing from different caste groups.

**Haryana Vikas Party**

In the 1990s, Haryana has got one more regional party - the Haryana Vikas Party. This party was floated by Bansi Lal after he left Congress in 1990 on account of his opposition to the leadership of Bhajan Lal who enjoyed the support of the Congress high command. The party contested 1991 Lok Sabha and Assembly elections in alliance with Janata Dal and the Communist Parties. It could win one out of 10 Lok Sabha seats and 12 out of 90 assembly seats.

Although, it attained limited success during 1991 elections, but the assembly elections of 1996 clearly belonged to Haryana Vikas Party and its alliance partner BJP. The main issue which has caught the imagination of voters was Bansi Lal’s promise of implementing prohibition in the state. The HVP gained enormously from the alliance. It improved both in terms of seats won and votes secured in comparison to the previous Lok Sabha and Assembly elections. But the HVP headed government lost its popularity by the time of 1998 Lok Sabha elections, as its policy of prohibition proved a failure. Besides, the government also lost support of peasantry during the 1998 Lok Sabha elections, consequently the HVP-BJP alliance could win only two out of 10 seats.
Figure No. 3:13

Performance of Haryana Vikas Party in Legislative Assembly Elections Since 1991

(A) Seats Contested and Won

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Figure No. 3:14

Performance of Haryana Vikas Party in Lok Sabha Elections Since 1991

(A) Seats Contested and Won

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Once BJP withdrew its support, the HVP tied up an alliance with BSP. And the HVP-BSP fared badly in Lok Sabha elections of 1999, as they could not win even a single seat. The vote share of HVP was a miserable 2.7 per cent. By the time of the 2000 Assembly elections the previous HVP-BJP government had already fallen down. The HVP was completely routed in these elections. It could win only two out of the total 82 seats that it contested and had a meagre vote share of just 5.7 per cent. HVP was the biggest looser and the continuous erosion of its support base in the Lok Sabha elections of 2004 finally and subsequently led its merger in its parental party Congress before 3rd February, 2005 Assembly elections.

**Haryana Janhit Congress (Bhajan Lal)**

With the formation of Haryana Janhit Congress (BL), by the former Chief Minister of the state and his MP son Kuldeep Bishnoi, a new regional party came up in Haryana in the end of year 2007. The symbol of the new party is the rising sun. In the 2005 assembly elections when Congress came to power in Haryana displacing the Om Prakash Chautala's Indian National Lok Dal government, Bhajan Lal was stumped to see Bhupinder Singh Hooda being appointed Chief Minister- a job that he thought was his right as Congress has won the elections under his PCC president-ship. He resigned from his post 'in a huff' as the PCC chief, though, later he agreed to make peace with the party high command and to let 'bygones be bygones'. It of course turned out to be tactical move.

The history of regional parties in the state, however, shows that regional parties formed by leaders after parting ways with their parent parties especially from Congress, usually have short life and also got merged into their parent party. The examples can be given in the form of Vishal Haryana Party and Haryana Vikas Party.

Going by the performance in bi-election 2008 and Lok Sabha elections of 2009, Haryana Janhit Congress has made an impressive beginning. Although, at that stage, it was difficult to predict how the people, particularly urbanites mainly non-Jats will rally around the party during the further elections. The then six month old Haryana Janhit Congress (BL) opened its electoral account in the 2008 state assembly bi-elections with the former Chief Minister Bhajan Lal retaining his traditional Adampur seat. Congress retains two of three assembly bi-election seats. With the BJP badly

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mauled in the bi-elections; the HJC has announced the arrival of a third alternative to the peoples of Haryana with its maiden victory.

**Figure No. 3:15**

**Performance of Haryana Janhit Congress (BL) in Legislative Assembly Elections in 2009**

(A) Seats Contested and Won

![Bar Chart showing Seats Contested and Won]

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

![Bar Chart showing Vote Share]

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
Figure No. 3:16

Performance of Haryana Janhit Congress (BL) in Lok Sabha Elections in 2009

(A) Seats Contested and Won

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp

(B) Vote Share Secured

Source: http://eci.nic.in/eci_main/statisticalreports/electionstatistics.asp
The Lok Sabha elections of 2009 were very crucial for Haryana Janhit Congress, which contested its first Lok Sabha elections. The party had at stake not only its political future but also the question of prestige and survival of legacy of Bhajan Lal in Haryana politics. It was being viewed that it could also emerged as vote splinter for Congress in certain areas, especially the areas falling nearby Hisar, the home town of former Chief Minister and its founder Bhajan Lal, even though the party was not likely to score any major victories. Interestingly, the Haryana Janhit Congress (BL) performed better than the INLD and led in nine assembly segments of Hisar and Bhiwani-Mahendergarh parliamentary seats. Although, it secured one seat and 9.89 per cent votes but its candidates fared badly in most of the constituencies. Thus, HJC along with BSP emerged as vote-splinter in some of the constituencies in the state.

The HJC was looking for a foothold in state politics and contested all the assembly seats on its own. Haryana Janhit Congress has won six seats with 7.4 per cent of votes. However, due to defection of five out of six of its MLA’s to the Congress has resulted into single HJC legislator in the house. HJC, however, has been able to make its presence felt in the electoral verdict to an extent but the series of events which took place afterwards brought the party’s survival at stake. Party does seem to have a dim future in the politics of the state. It was amply clear from the unconditional merger of five of its six MLA’s into Congress. Moreover, HJC is the only regional party of Haryana which could not even win 10 seats in its first Assembly elections. The other regional parties of the state namely Vishal Haryana Party in 1968, Lok Dal in 1982 and Haryana Vikas Party in 1991 secured 16, 31 and 12 assembly seats respectively in their first assembly elections. So, HJC would be counted as the weakest regional party in general and also as a party of one of the Lal of Lal trio of Haryana politics.

Conclusion

The nature of party politics in Haryana has been quite complex, in the sense that the state during four decades of its electoral history has not been able to develop a consistent and coherent party system. If one goes by the electoral experience of the state, Congress party is the only party in relative terms, which has always, has had a powerful and enduring base and presence in the state.

Haryana is one state where the space for opposition to the Congress is rather limited. It has been largely occupied by the Devi Lal family, now led by former Chief Minister, Om Prakash Chautala. The BJP, BSP and newly constituted HJC (BL) do have a presence in the state but not comparable to Chautala's Indian National Lok Dal. The electoral strategy to give a tough competition to the Congress in the last decade has been of forging an alliance of a regional party with rural base with BJP which draws its support from urban areas mainly. This strategy was for the first time tried in 1987 assembly elections. During 1996, it was HVP which has drawn the gains and the INLD tried it successfully again in 2000. Finally, Congress is the party with presence and base in the state followed by INLD. While BJP, BSP still have to make their headways in the state.

The challenge to the Congress has never been stable and has also not come from the same party. “There is some sort of adhocism in non-Congress parties in the state.”\(^{56}\) At one time it was Swatantra party that seemed to be gaining ground in Haryana but ultimately suffered the decline. The opposition parties which have given successful challenge to the Congress at one time or other were the Bhartiya Kranti Dal, the Lok Dal, the VHP, Janata Party and HVP but non except INLD (LD) has been able to stabilize its strength. The Jan Sangh/BJP and even BSP have some pockets of influence in the state but in no position to challenge the Congress. It can be said that Haryana has had roughly bi-party competition. Congress on the one side and all the non-Congress parties and groups on the other side.\(^{57}\)

The parties like BSP, Samajwadi Party and Nationalist Congress Party, which have strong support bases in their respective states but in Haryana they join the game at the time of elections only and are not among the significant players, besides, having no apparent stakes in its politics.\(^{58}\) Parties like CPI and CPM has been able to secure a

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57 Ibid., p. 25.

seat or two in the state at times but only with the support of Lok Dal party. These parties do not hope to play any decisive role in the power politics of the state due to their marginal support base. The leadership in the two main parties continues to be identified with rural identities. The electoral politics in Haryana continues to be traditional with political parties veers around castes and community combination which make and mars their political fortunes. BJP’s Hindutva agenda has no appeal for Haryanvi society. However, the party being viewed as representative of certain communities has helped it to continue in the politics of the state.

59 ibid.
60 ibid., p. 235.