CHAPTER-VIII

CONCLUSION

As one unravels the history of the state, it is evident that Haryana was an important region during ancient times in historical, cultural and strategic terms. It was at the centre stage of both the Indus Valley Civilization and the early Vedic Civilization. The region, however, has remained strategically important for the rulers of Delhi, as it lay in the path of invaders from the north-east. The region has served as a route for invaders like the Greeks, the Sakas, and the Kushanas, the Hunas, the Turks and the Mughals to India. The zone, now known as Haryana was captured by East India Company on 30th December 1803. During the first war of independence in 1857, people of Haryana played a very significant role in combating the imperial forces. After the revolt was crushed and the British Empire was established replacing the rule of East India Company, Haryana was separated from the North Western Frontier Province and aligned with Punjab in February 1858, as a political punishment for the participation in revolt of 1857. As a result, Haryana remained a part of Punjab from 1858 to November 1966 till Punjab was reorganized on linguistic basis.

As Haryana was aligned with Punjab by the British, this administrative change could not bring about the socio-cultural and linguistic affinity of the former to the latter. The region has maintained its distinct identity in the sense that historically Haryana has never been a part of Punjab. Thus, people of Haryana have never been Punjabis in the sense that people of both the states historically had a different kind of identity both in cultural and linguistic terms. The distance between the two regions also widened as the region comprising of the present state of Haryana was consistently neglected in terms of development as compared to the region of Punjab. Apart from the economic deprivation, the elites from Haryana region also felt deprived from their proportionate share in the power structure in Punjab.

A study of the four decades of the state politics with special emphasis on its electoral politics encompasses the historical background, organization of the state and an analysis of its electoral politics since 1967. Although, the major focus of the present

study has been the period from 1996 to 2010, but it traces the electoral trends since 1967 ever since the formation of the state. As evident from the preceding chapters, the basic trends or factors before independence and the formation of the state, when it was a part of composite Punjab, have fore-bearing on the state politics even today. As discussed in the preceding chapters, one comes across factionalism, caste cleavages in terms of agriculturist versus non-agriculturist, Jats versus non-Jats, demographic cleavages like rural versus urban cleavages.

The first chapter laid down the theoretical moorings of the thesis. It deals with the significance of electoral politics in contemporary India, along with tracing the state politics over the years. It provided the trends and patterns of electoral politics in India during the last six decades of periodically held elections. For the purpose, the chapter delves in great details about the determinants of electoral politics at the state level i.e. class, caste, region, religion and other social cleavages like rural-urban divide. It also presented a synoptic overview of the electoral politics in Indian states, as has evolved during the decade of 1990s. The chapter emphasized over the emergent trends and argued that the state politics has gained tremendous importance as a separate field of study since 1967. Besides, in the post-Congress polity the state has emerged as the prime arena of political analysis. State electoral politics has witnessed the emergence of certain common trends like emergence of electoral bi-polarity at the centre in 1990s although the trend emerged at the state level much earlier. The second general trend visible at the state level has been the assertion of dormant identity groups, and emergence of regions as the basic category of political analysis. The chapter also argued that the study of the electoral politics of a particular state is useful to look into similarities and dissimilarities in the electoral politics of the other states. For the purpose data generated as a result of the empirical studies in the form of CSDS-NES have been taken up for academic consideration. The National Election Commission data as well as other relevant data have also been included for the detailed study of the level of electoral participation, contestation and representation.

The second chapter introduced the Haryana as a regional state while giving a brief account of its history, political geography, social demography and economy. It also broadly dealt with the basic determinants of electoral politics in Haryana like factionalism across the kinship lines, caste cleavages in terms of agriculturists versus
non-agriculturists, Jats versus non-Jats, demographic cleavage i.e. rural versus urban as well as region based cleavages. It provided an account of the factors responsible for the continuation of trends like the dominance of landowning Jats in the politics of Haryana, gender and Dalit question also have been taken up. The chapter illustrated and explained how caste, community, region and gender have impacted the electoral politics of the state. The chapter also argued that caste being the dominant factor holds special importance in the politics of the state. It is an important factor of electoral politics in determining political affiliations, loyalties, electoral behaviour and voting patterns. The chapter has therefore undertaken a detailed study of the numerical strength of various castes, their relationship with each other, and factors responsible for their political mobilization.

The third chapter has undertaken the study of the dynamics of political parties and party politics as it has emerged in Haryana. State of Haryana is known for its lack of a coherent political party system even after four decades of electoral politics. The party system for most of the period since the formation of separate Haryana state has not been stable in the state. The chapter provided an analysis of national parties namely Congress, BJP, and BSP and also traced the emergence of regional parties in the state, their rise and fall over the years. The chapter not only presented an overview of the historical background of the political parties but also examined their ideology, changing social support base, performance in Lok Sabha and state assembly elections in terms of seats won and votes secured along with the political strategies followed by these parties, over the years. The chapter argued that at present in Haryana, Congress and Indian National Lok Dal have been the major political players. Parties like BJP and BSP have always been minor players. The mainstream Left parties i.e. CPI and CPI (M) have failed to make any significant headway in the state. It further illustrated that the Congress is the only national political party with its significant clout among rural and urban voters. Congress occupying middle position in state electoral space has been the only party with permanent space in its politics. The opposition to Congress party in the state is neither stable nor strong.

The fourth chapter examined the Lok Sabha elections results in the context of Haryana in terms of the major issues, trends, alliance formations, seat adjustments, and campaign issues since 1967. The chapter has also undertaken the assessment of
the electoral verdicts in each election in terms of results in reserved constituencies, performance of female candidates and constituency-wise performance of various political parties. The chapter illustrated and explained as to why Congress as National party and a state level party i.e. INLD in its different avatars have been the main political contenders in the political arena of the state in recent decades. There have been ‘short-spell parties’ like Vishal Haryana Party and Haryana Vikas Party which have been able to make their presence felt from time to time but could not pose serious challenge to the Congress for a long time. Besides Congress, it was only Lok Dal since 1980s that presented a credible alternative opposition to the Congress with its continuous presence as a relevant opposition party. BJP, CPI (M), CPI and regional parties like HJC have remained the non-entities in the state in terms of their electoral performance and their potential to win political power. Hence, we can conclude that nothing is permanent in politics and there could emerge some new equations in coming years in the politics of the state.

The fifth chapter consisted of an analysis of the assembly elections results in terms of the major issues, trends, alliance formation, seat adjustments and the selection of the candidates and campaign issues since 1967. The chapter has also undertaken the assessment of the electoral verdict in terms of results in reserved constituencies, performance of female candidates and district-wise performance of various political parties. The chapter focused on the elections held in the last one and half decade though references have been made about the earlier elections also. The chapter argued that Haryana politics has not seen many new political entrants since the early phase of its politics. The game of electoral politics in Haryana has remained a privilege of Congress on the one side and the peasant parties like Unionist party, Zamindara League, Lok Dal or INLD and BJP on the other side. Although, there were and are some other parties which have, from time to time, been floated by rebel individual leaders from the major parties like Congress. These parties have not left much mark in electoral terms over a long period and have proven to be vote splinters for their parent party, which, however, have proved the short spell in the politics of the state and but at times also have enjoyed short stints in power politics like Vishal Haryana Party, Haryana Vikas Party. There are 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. Besides, there are also 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 elections only and are not among the significant players and have no apparent stakes in its politics. Parties like CPI and CPM happen to secure a 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 being having marginal base in the Congress.* * * 4

The leadership in the two main parties continued to be identified with rural identities. The electoral politics in Haryana continued to be in the ‘traditional mould’ with electoral politics still primarily veering around castes and community combination which make and mars the political fortunes of the parties and the candidates. BJP led Hindutva agenda has no appeal for Haryanvi society but its being representative of a community has helped it to survive in the politics of the state with a narrow social base.

The sixth chapter has taken up the analysis of data collected through the interviews of MLA’s based on critical questions related to the electoral politics of Haryana. In this chapter, a modest attempt has been made to prognosticate about the future political reconfiguration / realignment in the state under study. In this sense, Haryana’s electoral patterns and behaviour can be compared with other states. Some opinion related question dealing with socio-economic and political situation of the state were also included to grasp the elites’ viewpoints on larger questions.

The seventh chapter dealt with the leadership patterns in the state. Besides, an analysis of electoral trends in reserved constituencies, the trends in Meo-dominated constituencies and Sikh dominated constituencies also have been taken into consideration. The electoral participation and the voting patterns of the Dalits and women has been another area of research. The chapter argued that Haryana politics continued to be dominated by intermediate peasant castes and the legislative elites of Haryana belong to predominantly Hindu agriculturist castes. The Sikhs, women and backward castes (BCs), still remain under-nominated by the parties and therefore are also under-represented in the politics of the state. However, Muslims due to their numerical dominance in certain assembly constituencies where they are concentrated

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4 ibid., p. 235.
(unlike most of the other states of India) have managed to get adequate representation in the representative bodies. Same holds true for the Scheduled Castes also as they are beneficiaries of the reservation of the assembly and Lok Sabha constituencies in proportion to their population as evident from the recommendation of the fourth delimitation commission. Underlining the ‘exceptionality factor’ in the Haryana politics, there have been no clear or set patterns of voting or preference for a particular political party in the constituencies dominated by a particular caste or community.