**Elections in India**

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September 11, 2023

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 BJP’s electoral politics makes for fascinating reading. It has thus far won elections through a virulent racist, su­premacist, extremist and divisive political agenda. Its domestic political strategy revolves around Hindutva which seeks to impose relentless Hindu hegemony in India.

The BJP’s assertive, multi-pronged political strategy essentially aims to create a Hindu versus the rest con­test. It mostly tends to split the electorate into hostile communal groups, aggravate their differences and pitch one against the other. It remorselessly exploits their perceived historical biases, slights, animosities and conflicting social and religious preferences.

It’s rhetoric to snatch AJ&K from Pakistan becomes more hysterical and toxic as each election season approaches. These make for explosive electoral slogans. It wants to present itself as a strong, proactive and aggressive defender of the Hindu faith and the nation. It aims to thus whip up the Hindus into a nationalistic and religious frenzy to earn their confidence, support and vote.

[Overcoming inflation](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Sep-2023/overcoming-inflation)

BJP’s political strategy came into its own in the last few de­cades. The demolition of the Babri Masjid in December 1992 gave it the impetus which has carried it thus far in Indian poli­tics. The next phase started with the pogrom of Muslims in Gu­jrat in 2002. It was further aggravated by the abrogation of Ar­ticles 370 and 35A from the Indian Constitution in 2019, which was a blatant attempt to subdue the Muslims of IIOJK and il­legally absorb the occupied territories into the Indian Union.

Pakistan’s and the PAF’s bold and audacious response to PM Modi’s Balakot Folly left the Indians and their military terribly shaken, red faced and the IAF shy of an SU30Mk1, a MIG 21 Bi­son, a helicopter and some personnel. The unsatiated demand for a UNSC mandated plebiscite in Kashmir as well as the vo­ciferous issue of an independent Khalistan continue to exacer­bate the ill-effects of this Indian policy even more.

[Past in Perspective](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Sep-2023/past-in-perspective)

The riots in Delhi in 2020 were a continuation of the same anti-Muslim policy. Of late the attacks on the Christian minor­ity in Manipur have worsened the national communal divide. Almost simultaneously, Hindu-Muslim clashes have upended peace and harmony in Haryana. It seems that gradually, albeit surely, the diabolical environment for electoral success is be­ing created yet again. It will expectedly peak just before the 2024 national elections.

The recent election defeat in Karnataka must have been a rude wake-up call for PM Modi. Further state elections in Mizoram, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Telan­gana this year will put his political and electoral strategy to a severer test. Has his policy of exacerbating and exploiting communal divisions run its course or is he likely to become more desperate and try something even more drastic than the Pulwama Massacre or the Balakot Folly?

[At a cross road; IMEEC and BRI](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Sep-2023/at-a-cross-road-imeec-and-bri)

In sheer desperation, the BJP could launch yet another false flag operation at the site of the Mandir which is to replace the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya. ‘Terrorists’ from across the border could be conveniently blamed and some local Muslims could be implicated too. This would instigate Hindu-Muslim riots and create the justification for a crackdown on Muslims in In­dia and IIOJK. It might also tempt the BJP government to yet another military misadventure against Pakistan.

It would not be beyond the BJP government to launch a ground incursion across the LOC. This would be a very fool­hardy option to exercise as it holds within itself the seeds of an explosive and rapid escalation. India’s political and military leadership ought to be very careful with its rhetoric and utopi­an plans of carrying out operations while remaining within the nuclear overhang. They must realise that they will neither be able to influence Pakistan’s reactions nor determine the extent and duration of the conflict. India will have no control over the dynamics of such an operation, once initiated. Pakistan will al­ways respond promptly, decisively, in equal measure and more to any threat that gets eventually materialised.

[Climate finance challenges](https://www.nation.com.pk/16-Sep-2023/climate-finance-challenges)

PM Modi’s policy of divide and rule is likely to come to grief sooner than later. That might make him that much more fran­tic. As India’s state and national elections approach, the BJP’s options and political strategy will emerge clearer. The worse the electoral results for the BJP, the more desperate are its measures likely to be to retain power.